

**'Liberties and Licences': Gender, Stream of Consciousness
and the Philosophy of Henri Bergson and William James
in Selected Female Modernist Fiction 1914-1929**

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Abstract

This thesis reconsiders in detail the connections between a selection of innovative female modernist writers who experimented variously with stream-of-consciousness techniques, May Sinclair, Dorothy Richardson, Katherine Mansfield and Virginia Woolf. It describes in this context the impact of the philosophy and thoughts of both William James and Henri Bergson upon these women writers' literary work. It also argues for a fundamental revision of existing understandings of this interconnection by considering the feminist context of such work and recognising that the work of these four female writers in effect incorporates a 'gendered' reading of James and Bergson (encountered both directly and indirectly through the cultural and intellectual *zeitgeist*).

In establishing a feminist perspective as key elements of their aesthetic the thesis explores the vital influence of existing tradition of female autobiography upon their reception and usage of both James and Bergson. The latter's impact on such women writers were so distinctive and powerful as the work of these philosophers seemed to speak directly to contemporary feminist concerns and in that context to represent a way of thinking about society and culture. This echoes and has parallels with existing attempts at revisions of patriarchal society and creating new spaces for female independence.

In the above context the thesis reviews existing research on the impact of James and Bergson on these four writers and offers new insights into how each of them made use of these two seminal thinkers by analysing the relationship between theories, selected literary and philosophical texts. Stream-of-consciousness ought to be seen as a distinctive, specific tradition connected with feminist concerns and as a way of writing the inner and hidden self, rather than just a narrow formal feature of literary texts; it offers women a continuing, creative exploration of its possibilities as fictional practice. The female modernists included in this account represent the celebrated: Virginia Woolf and Katherine Mansfield, together with writers largely and unjustly forgotten in subsequent periods: Dorothy Richardson and May Sinclair. However, the thesis demonstrates that such female modernist writers gained much from being part of a range of informal networks, being almost within a tradition in which they learnt, borrowed and reacted to each other; an interconnection that requires new critical recognition.

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'Liberties and Licences': Gender, Stream of Consciousness and the Philosophy of Henri Bergson and William James in Selected Female Modernist Fiction 1914-1929

Introduction

The quotation from Virginia Woolf's essay 'A Room of One's Own' suggested in the title of this thesis ('making use of all the liberties and licences of a novelist') indicates that female modernist fiction tells the story of an extremely important period for both women and feminism, one where new freedoms and possibilities seemed to be offered by developments in society with new thinking about culture and human beings that emerged. Though these in turn were balanced by the female writer's acute awareness of the restrictions of traditional patriarchal society. While women benefitted from the license to explore new ways of thinking and writing, often they did so by repurposing or gendering popular, cultural thinking of the day drawn from the work of many thinkers, including in particular William James and Henri Bergson (whether encountered directly or in a more diffuse manner). In doing so they linked a variety of concepts explored in this thesis to specifically feminist concerns.

This thesis therefore seeks to explore and scrutinize the influence of James and Bergson on selected British modern female writers of the early decades of twentieth century, whose work is often characterised by the epithet 'stream of consciousness' - namely May Sinclair, Dorothy Richardson, Katherine Mansfield (a New Zealander born in 1888, educated in London from 1903 until 1906, and then relocated to the city in 1908) and Virginia Woolf - focusing on their fictional output particularly from the beginning of World War One, chosen as a seminal event in British and European history which considerably altered gender relations in Britain. Any such conceptual shaping or imprint is not necessarily as a matter of direct, straightforward adaptation by these writers—although that possibility remains in certain cases, despite the subsequent denials by Richardson and Woolf of any intimacies with the texts of these thinkers. This may well be disingenuous, much as many regard Leonard Woolf's claims that his wife had no knowledge of Freud's theories, which seems increasingly

less than credible¹—but more an encounter with of suggestive possibilities, gleaned either directly or equally by drawing on the intellectual *zeitgeist*, in which concepts from James and Bergson featured. As Kennan Ferguson argues saliently in terms of both the principles of influence and the often under-acknowledged influence of and interconnections between these two critical thinkers (with their radical emphasis on the experiential):

Lines of influence, as James argued, are hard to track precisely: such a large number exist, and act in such multiplicitous ways, that drawing connections can never be an absolute project. To trace Bergson's influence on French philosophy for the next century, even if that influence remains little recognized in English, is also to trace James's. The connections between the two thinkers, their mutually constituted recognition that truth and thought often have lacuna between them, echo throughout the century that followed them. (N.Pag.)

My periodisation ends in 1929, when the advent of the economic depression, which led to not only considerable social unrest, but gave literature a whole new set of issues and trajectories, offering arguably an entirely different overall emphasis and mood. After 1930 much of British literature becomes ostensibly far more concerned with conflicts between Marxism, the emergent and growing forces of Fascism, inculcating fears of a future war.² In this respect the period which is being examined is largely that of the so-called Roaring Twenties—also known as the Jazz Age in America—when not only a post-war economic boom occurred but considerable concomitant changes in the lifestyles and representation of women. These might

¹ Interestingly Mary Ann Gillies writes in *Henri Bergson and British Modernism* (1996) 'Despite Leonard Woolf's claim that Virginia Woolf had not read Bergson's work nor even such secondary sources as her sister-in-law Karin Stephen's book on Bergson, a survey of Woolf criticism reveals that many critics have noted a Bergsonian strain in her work' (107) as she demonstrates with reference to an early French essay and another by Winifred Holtby as early as 1932. Karin Stephen published *The Misuse of Mind: A Study of Bergson's Attack on Intellectualism* in 1922. She writes 'The immense popularity which Bergson's philosophy enjoys is sometimes cast up against him by those who do not agree with him, as a reproach' (9). She adds later 'According to Bergson, the only actual reality is the changing fact itself [...] it includes besides everything that we are in a sense aware of but do not pay attention to, together with our whole past: for Bergson, in fact, reality coincides with the field of virtual knowledge [...]' (76). Sounds like a reasonable Bergsonian crib for much of Woolf's subsequent fiction. John Batchelor remains entirely sceptical about Leonard's claims and says in *Virginia Woolf: The Major Novels* 'it seems to me inescapably the case that Bergson's ideas are part of the intellectual climate in which she lived and worked, and that we can legitimately refer to her treatment of interior time as Bergsonian' (47).

² Valentine Cunningham, *British Writers of the Thirties*. (1988). Samuel Hynes, *The Auden Generation: Literature and Politics in England in the 1930's* (1977). Feminist critics however argue that the emphasis on Fascism and Communism by critics such as Hynes and Cunningham marginalises the continued feminist preoccupations of female writers of the period: Janet Monette, *Men and Women Writers of the 1930s: The Dangerous Flood of History* (1996); Gill Plain, *Women's Fiction of the Second World War: Gender, Power, Resistance* (1996); Maroula Joannou, 'Ladies, Please don't Smash these Windows': *Women's Writing, Feminist, Consciousness and Social Change 1918-38*. (1995); Chris Hopkins, *English Fiction in the 1930s: Language, Genre, History*. (2006).

be summarized as being variously the age of working women, the flapper, and the independent woman.³ However, the thesis recognises that many of these changes as regards fiction written by women have earlier roots in the late Victorian and Edwardian periods. In particular the crucial conjunction between feminism, autobiography and political activism partly in the form of the suffragette movement⁴ was certainly as important for creating a fertile ground for the impact of philosophy on these female fiction writers as the events of the war. As Tess Cosslett, Celia Lury, and Penny Summerfield remark in *Feminism and Autobiography* (2000) that autobiography is: ‘a central preoccupation and testing-ground for feminism’ (2). In certain key respects the thesis postulates a distinctly female tradition of self-conscious, modernist fiction where female writers learned from the preceding generation and from each other; a loose intellectual network of like-minded feminists focused on the aesthetic preoccupations of the exciting new modernist novel. In this regard the thesis follows and builds upon the contention of Sydney Janet Kaplan in *Feminine Consciousness in the Modern British Novel* (1975) that we should see stream-of-conscious fiction by women as a distinctive, specific tradition connected with feminist concerns, as much as with any broader modernist rejection of realism. For this reason, the thesis argues that the impact of James and Bergson should be thought of as ‘gendered’ in terms of their reception by such writers.

Virginia Woolf’s declamation in ‘Character in Fiction’ that ‘on or about December 1910 human character changed,’ (2009: 38) represents her view, mirrored by that of others, that the revolution of modernism was decisively important for culture in the period being examined; which changes by the twenties had even at least superficially permeated popular culture.⁵ However, Woolf’s famous assertions needs to be read as part of a gendered investigation into human nature driven not just by her as a singular modernist but as much by other experimental female writers such as Sinclair, Richardson and Mansfield. All the writers being examined are not only committed to the importance of women’s experience but are stylistic innovators, highly interested in their contemporary world, and all are or should be considered modernists, although perhaps Sinclair might also be held to be one of the transitions to

³ Judith Mackrell, *Flappers: Six Women of a Dangerous Generation*. (2013).

⁴ Rebecca Hogan, (1991: 95-107) ‘Engendered Autobiographies: The Diary as a Feminine Form’, David Amigoni ed. *Life Writing and Victorian Culture*. (2006). Catherine Delafield, *Women’s Diaries as Narrative in the Nineteenth-Century Novel* (2009)

⁵ Intriguingly this is the year in which William James died, and Bergson was left to champion their distinctive, reading of truth and philosophy focused on an individualized apperception or consciousness.

modernism. These writers also emphasize the importance of aesthetic innovation focused on the intensities of personal perspectives, with recalibrations of this concept.⁶ Wayne C. Booth (1961) explains that Henry James suggested within a point of view there exists ‘a central intelligence’ that offers a convincing portrayal, powerful enough that the reader can understand the character’s inner thoughts, thereby making a story seem authentically real, as if experienced by a reader in unmediated fashion.⁷

In the immediate post-war period as well as changes in women’s lifestyles, alongside modernism, Bergsonism and fragmenting class structures, the influence of James and feminism emerged as positive elements in an ongoing re-evaluation of experimentation by the selected writers (and others) as a viable mode for feminist writers, especially regarding the relationship between one’s inner self and the outside public self that will be explored in detail throughout this thesis through the prism of fiction (and its possibilities for self-reflection). The First World War accelerated existing changes because the old established social order had been damaged irrevocably by the experience of the war. Gail Braybon notes ‘the importance of the war—good or bad—on women as individuals’ (162) where as she adds much was disrupted for both men and women on the Home Front after cessation of hostilities. As T.S. Eliot’s *The Waste Land* (1922) famously registered the feeling of the bankruptcy and disillusionment with western culture. Equally important was the effect of continental forms of artistic experimentation that Anglophone female modernists found conducive. Such writers were usually excluded from the modernist canon and are only being reclaimed now. Hope Mirrlees (1887 –1978) created a long poem: ‘Paris: A Poem’ (1920/ 2011- 1-20) that influenced Eliot’s *The Waste Land* in its collage technique and polyphonic method, but she chose a mood of ecstatic celebration of modernity rather than despair. Djuna Barnes (1892 – 1982) explored the use of extreme stream-of-consciousness technique in her deliberately bewildering, experimental novel *Nightwood* (1936) (Gerstenberger, 1989: 129-139; Parsons, 2001; Caselli, 2009).

⁶ For the purposes of my argument in the thesis I have largely ignored connections with male, modernist, stream-of-consciousness novelists which are already well known, long-established, and have been extensively debated. This does not mean they do not exist. Mrs. Dalloway walking the streets of London in *Mrs Dalloway* echoes Richardson’s *Pilgrimage* but Woolf’s novel is also influenced by Joyce’s vision of Dublin’s streets in *Ulysses*.

⁷ Wayne C. Booth, ‘Distance and Point-of-View: An Essay in Classification’ *Essays in Criticism* (1961) XI (1): 60-79.

In the above context, the thesis considers closely and recognizes how women represent a gendered perspective through their choices with emphases made as authors and expressed through narrators; articulated through the unfolding of their own intensely private and personal experiences. Consequently, for such women writers the most subjective of literary modes of writing, autobiography, which had already proved critical to women writers in their struggles to be heard and seen within the confines of patriarchy, becomes central.⁸ As will be seen subsequently, their style and method of writing emphasise variations of stream of consciousness (albeit utilised in an intensely gendered fashion) and a fluid, figurative and intuitive (to adopt Bergson's terms) language used consciously for aesthetic reasons. While the term stream of consciousness was first used with reference to a literary method by May Sinclair when reviewing Dorothy Richardson work.⁹ Woolf's notebooks show this same review which was then used by Woolf in writing her essay 'Modern Fiction'. Though Woolf did not mention either Richardson or Sinclair in the published version; lending credence to Bonnie Kime Scott's contention in *Refiguring Modernism Vol I. The Women of 1928* that Sinclair represents one of the: 'midwives of modernism' (2006:59).

In addition, although the Suffragette Movement had been largely suspended during World War One, the post-war years saw intensification in the renewed struggle to gain the vote for women. Women's wartime experience had shown just how capable they were at fulfilling many traditional male ones. The suffragette movement¹⁰ certainly had an artistic branch of women arguing for suffrage¹¹, but the female writers (selected in this thesis) seem more implicitly rather than explicitly concerned with suffrage. Although in *Feminism*, published by The Women Writers' Suffrage League, 1912, Sinclair had argued that suffragette violence against property was legitimate and Woolf was known as a feminist essayist. However, they

⁸ Autobiography is a distinct literary genre that deals with 'a range of ideas including authorship, selfhood, representation and the division between fact and fiction' (Linda Anderson, *Autobiography* Routledge, 2001:1-2). Maroula Joannou. 'She who would be Free Herself must Strike the First Blow: Suffragette Autobiography and Suffragette Militancy', and Julia Swindells, 'Conclusion: Autobiography and the Politics of 'the Personal'', Julia Swindells, ed. *The Uses of Autobiography*. (1995) 25-31, 205-214.

⁹ See: May Sinclair. 'The Novels of Dorothy Richardson'. *The Egoist*. 5 (4). April 1908: 57. James had first posited this idea in 1890; see: William James, 'The Stream of Thought.' In *The Principles of Psychology Vol. I*. Fredson Bowers, Frederick H. Burkhardt and Ignas K. Skrupskelis (eds). London: Harvard University Press, 1981, 233.

¹⁰ Sylvia Emmeline, Pankhurst. *The Suffragette: The History of the Women's Militant Suffrage Movement, 1905-1910*. (2012). Elizabeth, Crawford. *The Women's Suffrage Movement: A Reference Guide, 1866 – 1928*. (1999). Angela K. Smith, *Suffrage Discourse in Britain during the First World War* (2005).

¹¹ Irene, Cockroft. *Art, Theatre and Women's Suffrage*. (2010). Carolyn Christensen, Nelson. *Literature of the Women's Suffrage Campaign in England* (2004). Sowon S. Park, 'The First Professional: The Women Writers' Suffrage League'. *Modern Language Quarterly* 58.2 (June 1997): 185-200.

are all motivated in interpreting the political limitations of their experience within a patriarchal externalised order which contrasted to their world of inner female experience where they felt liberated. Such a radicalisation of the inner self was conveyed through an emphasis on *élan vital*¹², understood in Bergsonian terms, where the philosophical validation of subjective life chimes with a feminist emphasis on the innate value of private experience, felt with intensity. For example Elizabeth von Arnim's (Mary Anne Beauchamp's) *Elizabeth and Her German Garden* (1898), is a heavily fictionalised autobiography, which blurs the boundaries between fiction and autobiography. This might be considered a proto-modernist story that deals with private and subjective experience of Elizabeth's gardening and her interaction with her friends, again subtly expressive of a radically gendered perspective. As Jennifer Walker (2013) and Isobel Maddison (2013)¹³ have recently discussed, Elizabeth von Arnim was a bestseller in her day, enormously popular with women readers and something of a feminist role model.

In a general sense the thesis will examine how in their fiction Sinclair, Richardson, Mansfield and Woolf convey variously the quantitative and qualitative, private and public experiences either through conscious memories or reflections concerning the world and social order which they encountered. It will be argued that for them the autobiographical or quasi-autobiographical is increasingly a crucial mode of literary expression, most especially because this affirms a woman's subjective experience; their bursts of *élan vital* allowing critical reflection on the onerous demands of patriarchy within women's everyday life.

Important to my analysis will be the certain conceptual ideas drawn from European feminist theorists particularly of Hélène Cixous, Luce Irigaray and Julia Kristeva. All emphasize both female experience and an associated mode of writing, an *écriture féminine*, a mode of expression (and consciousness) that is prefigured by perspectives developed in fiction by Sinclair, Richardson, Mansfield and Woolf; offering at least a tentative anticipation of later feminist concepts. Accordingly, some texts appear uncannily similar to Kristeva's ideas of the interplay of the 'semiotic' and 'symbolic', perhaps unsurprising because Kristeva's

¹² *Élan Vital* (*Élan Vitale*) is a term invented by Henri Bergson in *Creative Evolution* in 1907, it is translated into English as 'life force', 'vital force' or 'vital impetus'; it is an imaginative explanation defining one's evolution and development as an organism.

¹³ Jennifer Walker, *Elizabeth of the German Garden: A Biography of Elizabeth Von Arnim* (2013). Isobel Maddison, *Elizabeth von Arnim: Beyond the German Garden* (2013).

theories were often worked out precisely in terms of modernist texts, although not modernist texts by the particular women writers who are the subject of this thesis, it should be said.¹⁴ Irigaray and Cixous' idea of 'phallogocentrism' and its antagonist *écriture féminine*, a radical and disruptive women's writing practice that challenges and subverts patriarchy, is described by the feminist theorists as showing the fluidity and creativity of women's own writing.¹⁵

Hélène Cixous coined the term *écriture féminine* in her essay 'The Laugh of the Medusa', published in 1975, and asserted that women in general must write for themselves in order to better represent their gender. According to Cixous, language is a vital creator of women's oppression and she invites women to write in a way that reimagined masculine languages into a feminine mode of writing. She further insists that *écriture féminine* can be accessed through a rediscovery of the lived female body and may lead to a collapse of invasive phallogocentrism, thus leading to new ways of thinking and living. As she wrote:

Woman must herself: must write about women and bring women to writing, from which they have been driven away as violently as from their bodies – for the same reasons, by the same law, with the same fatal goal. Woman must put herself into the text – as into the world and into history – by her own movement. (Cixous, 1976: 875)

Contesting patriarchal ideas of successful writing which emphasises such writing as male, the more feministic discourse challenges the normative values on which logical (male) writing is based. In doing so also reveals something about the nature of a feminist femininity, particularly its intuitive and yet everyday orientations.

Intriguingly James and Bergson created the idea of an evolution in the human being's capability to consciously self-discover alternative selves, thereby radicalizing the sense of an inner life, one subject to change. Such alternative selves whose elaboration in prose depends upon ideas of stream of consciousness as a narrative and fictional technique became a means of feminist self-exploration, particularly the capacity to analyse their own inner memory and mind as it moved from one state to another, central to Jamesian and Bergsonian thinking. Such theories also enabled modern writers to highlight their own perspective on the visual,

¹⁴ Among modernist writers Kristeva discussed in *Revolution in Poetic Language* (1984) are William Faulkner and James Joyce.

¹⁵ Rebecca Hill, *The Interval: Relation and Becoming in Irigaray, Aristotle, and Bergson* (2011) argues that Bergson's work has significant parallels with that of Irigaray: specifically 'interval' in Bergson and 'sexual difference' in Irigaray.

physical or tactile elements of memory, a famous example being when the narrator in Marcel Proust's *À La Recherche du Temps Perdu* (1913-1927) with his subjective memory of childhood famously brought back by the little biscuit he tastes.¹⁶ In Bergsonian terms human being's inner thoughts are coloured and eloquent image-memories that are most probably associated with the state of 'pure memory' which is subjective and qualitative memory. In the case of women whose depiction is the primary interest of these female modernist writers the depiction of image memory and pure memory allows a feminist critique to challenge patriarchal normalcy by working from an autobiographical or pseudo-autobiographical mode. As Bergson explains in *Matter and Memory*, 'perception is never a mere contact of the mind with the object present; it is impregnated with memory-images which complete it as they interpret it. The memory-image, in its turn, partakes of the 'pure memory,' which it begins to materialize, and of the perception in which it tends to embody itself: regarded from the latter point of view, it might be defined as a nascent perception' (170).

For this reason the metaphorical language used by women writers often centres on images that focus on those aspects of traditional feminine activity and the private sphere that were permitted by patriarchy. For example, the language of flowers and the activity of gardening as well as the domestic sphere of activity were amongst the routine daily artistic activities in which women were allowed to excel, and regarded as female spheres of influence. Women had traditionally been associated with flowers and nature because of the emphasis on their physical appearance, and therefore had long been associated with designing the gardens in country estates; managing such aspects as the herb and medicinal gardens. For example Gertrude Jekyll was a famous female garden designer who was extremely influential in Britain – although this was partly through her somewhat subordinate partnership with the famous architect Edwin Lutyens who designed houses while she designed gardens. This is a classic patriarchal split between male and female activities. Women writers as in the case of the aforementioned Elizabeth von Antrim in *Elizabeth and her German Garden* explored gardens because they were associated with female activity and then radicalised the discussion of gardens to make feminist statements and critiques of patriarchy. As Shelley Saguro,

¹⁶ Proust, Marcel. *In Search of Lost Time. Swann's Way* Trans. Scott Moncrieff, D.J. Enright and Terence Kilmartin. (2005).

argues in *Garden Plots: The Politics and Poetics of Gardens* (2006), depictions of gardening and gardens in modernist texts are bound up with political contestations.

Another example of a gendered feminist perspective can be found in Dorothy Richardson's *The Tunnel* where the narrator suggests that Miriam has been so marginalized and brutalized by misogyny that in part she loathes her own gender for its abject condition, ruminating that there is: 'no hope for women. No future life could heal the degradation of having been a woman' (222). Richardson incorporates the irony of patriarchy's capacity to alienate women from themselves, developing in them self-hatred. Overall, as will be demonstrated, her novel sequence serves as a feminist reclamation and re-legitimation of the value of being a woman, with Richardson's protagonist refusing the pattern of a deadened existence serving as a state of captivity, and rather gesturing towards a possible liberated future. Perhaps even more keenly aware of such subjection than the far more privileged Woolf and Mansfield, Richardson knew of a life in relative poverty, the reality of dead-end jobs such as working as a receptionist at a dentist's for one pound a week. Richardson, unlike Mansfield or Woolf, had a sense of earning her own living in a typical example of one of the new female roles created by early twentieth century capitalism, a receptionist and saw this in feminist terms as giving her financial and therefore personal independence. Although the generous Sinclair was an early supporter of Richardson's literary and narrative style, yet Mansfield and Woolf were rather more circumspect and critical.

In William James's 1884 essay, 'On Some Omissions of Introspective Psychology'¹⁷ (which curiously is not mentioned by Bergson), he talks of 'the "transitive parts," of the stream of thought' (3) in describing one's expressive capacity for remembering the elusive experiences of one's interaction with others. These were suggestive ideas for writers, especially his concept of capturing the introspective qualities of the ephemeral and transitory being 'like seizing a spinning top to catch its motion' (3). For many the metaphor was suggestive of an elusive quality art might capture. Such concepts proved influential and were germane in people seizing upon neglected or marginalised aspects of their reflections upon their daily lives. Predominantly for women who could thus validate directly or indirectly their subjective experiences that had been largely peripheral to mainstream culture and make these emphatic

¹⁷ William James, 'On Some Omissions of Introspective Psychology', *Mind*. (1884).

specifically charged in a gendered and feminist fashion. Partly because modernist writers regarded themselves in a self-conscious manner, as has been argued elsewhere that modernists were often influenced by Bergson and James.¹⁸ However, most discussion of Bergson's and James' influence ignores both gender and feminism. So one of the aims of this thesis is to show how these women writers react in different ways and pioneer interrelated but not equivalent narrative techniques, and thereby to trace the relationships between these generations of British women modernists. Virginia Woolf is often regarded as the single representative figure of British female modernism, but this thesis will demonstrate that this is far from the case, and her work engages at least informally in a kind of thoughtful dialogue with that of the other writers. Mansfield and Woolf start off using indirect interior monologue through their personal narration – based on diaries and other autobiographical writing. While Mansfield dies very young and never attempts a novel, Woolf goes on to develop novels where direct interior monologue and extended focalisation¹⁹ of the inner self of a character through the third person narrator becomes commonplace.

There are two types of 'Interior Monologue'²⁰ technique, aptly titled 'direct' and 'indirect' (after the relevant parts of speech). 'Direct Interior Monologue' is the type that is consciously represented to the reader without the intrusion of a narrator: the character speaks like a character in a play delivering a speech to an audience. For example, the last section of James

¹⁸ Paul Ardoin, S. E. Gontarski, and Laci Mattison, eds. *Understanding Bergson, Understanding Modernism*. (2013). Robert M. Crunden, *American Salons: Encounters with European Modernism, 1885-1917*. (1993). Robert D. Richardson, *William James in the Maelstrom of American Modernism*. (2007).

¹⁹ Focalization is originally termed by the French theorists, Gerard Genette in *Narrative Discourse Revisited* (1988) where within third person narration that narrator takes on the view point of a character. It is also related to 'free indirect discourse' or 'free indirect speech' or 'free indirect style' that is where the third person narration sounds like the character whose point of view is taken. For example, Mansfield use of first person narrative, without using 'he said or she said' is a kind of intense focalisation.

²⁰ Interior Monologue may deal with character's inner thoughts and feelings either directly and indirectly. According to Robert Humphrey in his *Stream of Consciousness in the Modern Novel* (1954) interior monologue is 'the technique used in fiction for representing the psychic content and processes of character, partly or entirely unuttered, just as these processes exist at various levels of conscious control before they are formulated for deliberate speech' (24). According to Humphrey (24), the technique was firstly claimed by Edouard Dujardin in his novel *Les Lauriers Sont Coupés* (1887). Dujardin later describes the technique as: 'the speech of a character in a scene, having for its object to introduce us directly into the interior life of that character, *without author intervention* through explanations or commentaries;...it differs from traditional monologue in that: in its matter, it is an expression of the most *intimate thought that lies nearest the unconscious*; in its form, it is produced in direct phrases reduced to the minimum of syntax; and thus it corresponds essentially to the *conception we have today of poetry*' (Edouard Dujardin, *Le monologue interieur, son apparition, ses origines, sa place dans l'oeuvre de James Joyce* [Paris, A. Messein, 1931] cited in Robert Humphrey (1954:12). James Moffett and Kenneth McElheny (1966:13) also make a link to poetry: 'Interior monologue thrives in poetry as well as in drama, because rendering the ongoing inner life often demands extraordinary uses of language. Such poems as Amy Lowell's "Patterns," Robert Browning's "Soliloquy of the Spanish Cloister," T.S. Eliot's "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock," and John Keats' "Ode to a Nightingale" are interior monologues'.

Joyce's *Ulysses* (1922) is 'direct interior monologue' which 'represents the meandering of the consciousness of Molly Bloom while she is lying in bed' (Humphrey 26).²¹ This contrasts indirect interior monologue, which is most often in third person, a type of narration where the author serves as selector, presenter and guide to the characters through their private subjective narration within a framework of exterior and mental encounters with the objective world.²² Many modernist writers deployed literary versions of stream of consciousness as either direct or indirect interior monologue (or sometimes even in combination) including Virginia Woolf, William Faulkner, May Sinclair, Dorothy Richardson, and Gertrude Stein (variously in first, second or third person). Although in British fiction the term as a literary technique is often associated with Molly Bloom's famous monologue, as we have discussed it was used first in English in a literary context by May Sinclair about Dorothy Richardson, as one older and established woman writer responding to an emergent new female voice articulating a new or fresh mode of fiction. Walter Allen in *The English Novel: A Short Critical History* (1954) explains the recognition of stream of consciousness, though perhaps significantly he does not attempt to tie it to preoccupations about gender and does not allow the full importance of Sinclair's use of the term to apply to literature:

[...] the phrase Stream of consciousness was taken over - first, it seems, by May Sinclair, in 1918 reviewing Dorothy Richardson's novels - to denote the new method of rendering consciousness itself as it follows from moment to moment, a method used with varying degrees of intensity by Dorothy Richardson, Joyce and Virginia Woolf, though never by Lawrence. (354)

The intensity varies perhaps not just aesthetically, but according to its value for female writers in terms of self-affirmation and exploration of new gendered ideas.

²¹ Similar to the speaker of a stage-monologue, the character, Molly Bloom is not speaking to anyone particularly within the fictional scene, nor is the character necessarily speaking to the reader. Molly Bloom's direct interior monologue continues in spite of the reader's expectations of conventional grammar in representing the actual consistency of stream of consciousness. This also represents a species of Free Direct Thought (FDT) which effaces the author, naturalizing the consciousness. A narrator is still implied, but appears omniscient in an understated fashion, with the flow of thoughts foregrounded, emphasizing character orientation.

²² Such narration will often involve Free Indirect Thought (FIT) where an impressionistic description offers the impact of externality on the consciousness of a character expressed in the third person, but close to the character's interior consciousness, such as perhaps most famously in the opening sequence of *Mrs Dalloway*.

The Influence of William James (1842-1910)

William James, the brother of Henry James the novelist, was an American psychologist and philosopher whose work explores the human's inner mind and its perception of the outside world. After they met in 1889, James was taken with Pierre Janet's concept of the symptoms of hysteria (a disease seen as distinctly female at the time)²³. They met at the 'First International Congress of Physiological Psychology and the overlapping First International Congress of Experimental and Therapeutic Hypnotism' (Richardson, 2007:393). At the event Janet had presented his work on 'The Psychological Automation', a detailed analysis of hysteric patients and according to Richardson (293-297), James was so struck by Janet's discussion of the hypothesis of the 'hidden self' of the female hysteric that Janet dubbed 'Lucie'. James quickly wrote a short essay 'The Hidden Self' (1890) that was much admired by his sister Alice for its discussion of the idea of a private self, hidden below the public demeanour of an individual.

William James originates the idea of 'streams of consciousness' in *The Principles of Psychology* (1890) when James formulated a psychological theory that postulated feelings, memories and thoughts exist outside the primary consciousness as a stream but not as a chain (239). To James, 'every definite image in the mind is steeped and dyed in the free water of consciousness that flows around it; with it goes the sense of its relations, near and remote, the dying echo of whence it came to us, the dawning sense of whither it is to lead' (*The Principles of Psychology* I 255). Accordingly James's stream of consciousness in the characters' 'minds, selves,' and subjective experiences serves to recognize and represent one's intuitive perception, along with a gendered perspective. Therefore, James's pragmatic depiction of the experience of awareness within conscious perception correlates with feminist

²³ Peter Melville Logan, *Nerves and Narratives: A Cultural History of Hysteria in 19th-Century British Prose* (1997). Liza Veith, *Hysteria: The History of a Disease* 1970). Juliet Mitchell, *Mad Men And Medusas: Reclaiming Hysteria* (2001). Lisa Appignanesi, *Mad, Bad and Sad: A History of Women and the Mind Doctors from 1800 to the Present* (2009). Elaine Showalter, *The Female Malady: Women, Madness and English Culture, 1830-1980* (1987). Andrew Scull, *Hysteria: The Disturbing History* (2012). Claire Kahane, *Passions of the Voice: Hysteria, Narrative and the Figure of the Speaking Woman, 1850-1915* (1995). Elisabeth Bronfen, *The Knotted Subject: Hysteria and Its Discontents* (1998). Charles Bernheimer and Claire Kahane, eds. *In Dora's Case: Freud-Hysteria-Feminism 2nd Edition*. (1990).

modernist's narrative technique, such as constructing their own conception of conscious experience. This motivated readers and writers to consider one's own subjective experience methodically and what it reveals about one's inner feelings, thoughts and actions. In this sense one part of the crucial impact upon women of the development of the psychological sciences is the emphasis on subjective experience – which is really all women were allowed to have in terms of patriarchy and the only location they could begin to resist.²⁴ Stream of consciousness was translated from the conceptual realm of James after it arrived during the 1890s – the period when the 'New Woman'²⁵ genre of fictions rose to prominence.

The fact that Joyce chose a stream-of-consciousness technique to illustrate the inner life of a female character is not coincidental, as not only did James develop his ideas of stream of consciousness with regard to women in an general sense in terms of hysteria, he did because of his relationship to his sister Alice who suffered from nervous hysteria.²⁶ She dis so while

²⁴ For women in effect the aim of articulating or describing in detail such subjective experience in fiction is to investigate or explore how women as individuals understand the ways society might be capable of change and to allow them to comprehend that a better grasp of the lived experience framed by gender might indicate how social transition under a dominant and patriarchal cultural lifestyle might be subtly achieved by even initially small attitudinal shifts. Women in the period featured in this thesis were undergoing significant private and public ideological radicalization reflected in the fiction of the time through subtle yet dramatic changes in everyday living, thinking and acting. Thus, the subjective experiences could potentially disclose different levels of and ways of engagement with various social challenges, some though adopting a more radical and bohemian lifestyle.

²⁵ Andrzej Diniejko (2011) suggests that the term, coined by the writer and public speaker Sarah Grand in 1894 describes some women as significant cultural icons because of their independence. They included middle-class radicals, factory and office workers who all played a vital part in major social changes at the end of the nineteenth century, as novelists, suffragists, and female students . Sally Ledger (1997) suggests the figure was exemplary of fast-moving, cultural change, that the New Woman phenomenon found interesting representation in late Victorian fiction and anticipated various discourses of a new womanhood in the twentieth century. Lyn Pykett (2001, xii) states: 'The New Woman was by turns: a mannish amazon and a Womanly woman; she was oversexed, undersexed, or same sex identified; she was anti-maternal, or a racial supermother; she was male-identified, or manhating and/or man-eating or self-appointed saviour of benighted masculinity; she was anti-domestic or she sought to make domestic values prevail; she was radical, socialist or revolutionary, or she was reactionary and conservative; she was the agent of social and/or racial regeneration, or symptom and agent of decline'. Such contradiction and ambiguity suggest how the redefinition of the figure of 'woman' was a contested site.

²⁶ Hysteria catches the idea of the conflict between an inner life and the outer (patriarchally constructed) life, and the effect of repressed desires and memories. which can be read as distinctly feminist, for example as regards Bertha in Mansfield's 'Bliss' as low level hysteric or in *Mrs Dalloway* Septimus is figured as a hysteric because shell-shock as Showalter (1987) argues became seen as a kind of epidemic of hysteria that applied to men and reconstructed them as 'feminine'/ emasculated. Elaine Showalter, *The Female Malady: Women, Madness and English Culture, 1830-1980*. (1987); Peter Leese, *Shell Shock: Traumatic Neurosis and the British Soldiers of the First World War* (2002); Paul Lerner, *Hysterical Men: War, Psychiatry, and the Politics of Trauma in Germany, 1890-1930* (2003).

being an accomplished writer, thinker and diarist and autobiographer.²⁷ His brother Henry developed a forerunner to fictional ‘stream of consciousness’ in order to depict the rich inner life of his female characters in such novels as *The Portrait of a Lady* (1881) and several influential short stories. Feminist modernists were therefore drawn to William James’s idea because he was seen as being sympathetic to women, unlike the majority of male psychologists (such as the infamous Henry Maudsley²⁸) and his theorisation were grasped as being relevant to depicting women’s alternative; inner lives by influential writers as Henry James and dozens of female autobiographers²⁹ (such as Elizabeth von Arnim).

T.S. Eliot, not known for his feminism, wrote an entire poem ‘Portrait of a Lady’ (1915) which might be titled after a Henry James novel that arguably shows a male narrator’s inner thoughts and something like stream of consciousness. Feminist modernist women writers were as interested in the theory of James’s stream of consciousness because of modernism and the opportunity of this new technique to depict characters’ reality. For instance in *The Turn of the Screw* (1898) the story turns on the first person narration of a governess who may or may not see ghosts, who might or might not be a sexual hysteric, as the critic Edmund Wilson argued³⁰ – but she is certainly a character with a rich and very complicated inner life that Henry James tries to catch in prose. Arguably the gendering of stream-of-consciousness technique was implicit in James’ discussion of the psychological reality from the start, just as much as it presupposed the kind of internal subjectivisation of psychology that Bergson also suggested.

²⁷ Jean Strouse, *Alice James: A Biography* (2011). Janet Bottoms, ‘Writing Herself: The Diary of Alice James’, Julia Swindells, ed. *The Uses of Autobiography*. (1995, 110-119).

²⁸ Henry Maudsley published his oft-quoted ‘Sex in Mind and Education’ in 1874, arguing that women would suffer immense harm to their health by following study regimes similar to men. Rachel Malane, *Sex in Mind: The Gendered Brain in Nineteenth-Century Literature and Mental Sciences* (2005).

²⁹ Autobiography as a retrospective narrative discovers the author’s journey from childhood to adulthood, or one that focused on significant events in the writer’s life. So through their moment-to-moment subjective perceptions, the female autobiography offers absorbing accounts of women’s lives, particularly through diaries as in Virginia Woolf’s ones. There are other major female writers like the British social theorist Harriet Martineau (1802 – 1876), women’s rights activist Annie Wood Besant (1847 – 1933), the Irish feminist, religious writer Frances Power Cobbe (1822 – 1904), the Scottish novelist Margaret Oliphant (1828 – 1897), and Emmeline Goulden Pankhurst (1858 – 1928). Their unidimensional autobiographies focus on their professional lives, which are self-conscious about their careers and the new role of women.

³⁰ Edmund, Wilson, “The Ambiguity of Henry James.” *Hound and Horn* 77 (1934): 385-406.

It can be argued that James's work parallels European developments because so many people were thinking of the similar way of approaching subjectivity at the time.³¹ There are a constellation of interests that links James to Sigmund Freud and Jean-Martin Charcot as well as Bergson, including interest in subjectivity, interest in a kind of humanistic response to understanding the mind as opposed to a mechanistic one; interest in women which is more compatible with feminist ideas such as autobiography. Autobiography could be perceived as a writing of qualitative memory that opposes quantitative or public, patriarchal perceptions which elide the value of female experience. Freud's analysis of female hysterical patients such as Dora can also be seen as an attempt at autobiography encouraging the analysand to write/speak their hidden selves as part of the talking cure.³²

The public including writers and artists would have been influenced by James' ideas and his pragmatic philosophy particularly through cultural practices that borrowed from James. Such as in fiction or which were discussed in magazines like *The Blue Review (Rhythm)* which included Mansfield's early works 'How Pearl Button Was Kidnapped' (September 1912) and 'Sunday Lunch' (October 1912). Like D.H. Lawrence and T.S. Eliot, James was one of the contributing writers to a magazine that had a significant impact on the British culture *The English Review* (1908) edited by Ford Madox Ford.³³ The magazine itself dealt with such topics as unmarried mothers and women's suffrage, which suggests a connection between James's interests and those of the liberal intelligentsia, especially women.³⁴

William James's *stream of consciousness* describes the multiple inner lives of fluxes of thoughts that characterize human consciousness physically (and which parallel Bergson's idea of the movement of consciousness). Within the *stream*, habit covers a very large part of life because the daily behaviour of a human being is the result of education: 'the habits to

³¹ Crunden, Robert Morse. *American Salons: Encounters with European Modernism, 1885-1917*. (1993).

³² R. Somer, 'The Use of Autobiography in Psychotherapy' *Journal of Clinical Psychology* 2003 Feb; 59 (2):197-205.

³³ Cliff, Wulfman, 'Ford Madox Ford and the *English Review* (1908-37)' in Peter, Brooker, and Andrew Thacker (2009: 226-239).Cliff, Wulfman, (2009).

³⁴ Cliff, Wulfman, (2009).

which there is an innate tendency are called instincts; some of those due to education would be [...] called acts of reason' (*Principles of Psychology* I 104). In one sense what James is describing here is a distinction between outer and inner life where stultifying habits are the way society imposes patterns on the individual as patriarchal society imposed on women; the idea of being the 'angel in the house,' while the inner life may offer a resistance to such habitual ways of thinking.³⁵ He describes the impressions and images of consciousness in the 'Stream of Thought' by firstly arguing that consciousness 'does not appear to itself chopped up in bits,' and words like 'chain' or 'train' do not describe it fitly as it presents itself in the first instance. However, he argues that it is 'a river or a stream,' that naturally flows and he calls it '*the stream of thought, of consciousness, or of subjective life*' (*The Principles of Psychology* I 239). 'The stream of our thought is like a river. On the whole easy simple flowing predominates [...] But at intervals and obstruction, a set-back, a log-jam occurs, stops the current, creates an eddy, and makes things move the other way' (*The Principles of Psychology* I: 451).

James's work is a contribution to theories of subjectivity. He emphasises that consciousness 'does not appear to itself chopped up in bits,' it has to be approached holistically. This might explain the organic, natural and romantic metaphor of the river or stream – itself a feminine metaphor from the position of French feminists – which contrasts with James's dislike of a mechanistic or linear image of a chain or a train. Consciousness is something that grows within a certain time and experience, and James' original metaphors might have appealed to female writers as much as their male counterparts with an interest in the natural and the organic as opposed to the mechanistic.³⁶ James suggests that the entire range of an individual's mental activity (including the stages of pre-speech) pre-form our responsiveness to the outside world of objects that will produce this stream of thoughts. William James's influence on the British society and culture was also arguably achieved by his association with the more famous French philosopher Henri Bergson. Jaime Nubiola explains the close correspondence between close friends James and Bergson: 'France was the golden door for James's introduction in Europe ... [both] ... Henri Bergson and Emile Boutroux were friends

³⁶ There is arguably a connection here to the way many female writers write about gardens and nature as opposed to cities, preferring the organic over the technological perhaps perceived as intrinsically male. Of course some male writers followed suit and reinvigorated pastoral conventions such as D.H. Lawrence.

and interlocutors of William James in the first decade of the twentieth century' (79). Ralph Barton Perry³⁷ writes in *The Thought and Character of William James*, 'without any doubt the most important philosophical and personal attachment of James's later years was that which he formed with Bergson' (599); this is indicated by Bergson's letter to James on 20th July 1905 about his views on *Pragmatism*:

[...] to my mind, one of the most striking arguments that one can invoke (from the external point of view) in favour of American "pragmatism" and the "new philosophy" in France is precisely that these two doctrines have established themselves independently of one another, with different points of departure and different methods. When, under such conditions, two doctrines tend to coincide, there is a good chance that both of them are in the vicinity of the truth. (Perry 616-617)

It is noteworthy here that Bergson talks of the coincidence and parallels between James' philosophical work and his own. James's philosophy had a profound impact on Bergson's own thinking and their mutual understanding grew to the point where they supported each other's perspectives. Alfred Schuetz³⁸ in a phenomenological exploration of James' 'stream of thought' remarked: 'James and Bergson found themselves attracted to each other, entered into correspondence, and met personally several times' (442). In addition, the concept of stream of consciousness and Bergsonian life force both share an emphasis on individual creativity that explains why some modernist writers look to these thinkers for methods and techniques. Writers found the distinction between consciousness as subjectivity and the mechanistic cerebral activities of thinking alluring (which indicates Bergson's anti-positivist scientific bent - that was sometimes misinterpreted by his contemporaries as anti-scientific - and thus his importance to those modernists who wanted a non-religious form of spirituality).

Bergson emphasised the distinction between the soul/spirit and the body of a human being, adopting a non-materialist view of the subject. This perhaps also explains Bergson's and James' mutual interest in the Society for Psychical Research (hereafter generally referred to as SPR) as a ghost is arguably a spirit without a body. On 6th of January 1903 Bergson explained his appreciation and gratitude to James for sending him a copy of *The Varieties of Religious Experience: A Study in Human Nature* (1902) and that the book had a 'profound

³⁷ American philosopher and pupil of William James, who wrote a celebrated biography of James, won the 1936 Pulitzer Prize for Biography. Perry also edited James's *Essays in Radical Empiricism* (1912).

³⁸ Alfred Schuetz was a prominent Austrian social scientist who investigated sociological phenomenological traditions and wrote on James' ideas.

impression' on him. James explained in a letter to Bergson on July 28, 1908 that they should call each other friends and not use their professional titles: 'Dear Bergson,—(can't we cease "Professor"-ing each other?—that title establishes a "disjunctive relation" between man and man, and our relation should be "endosmotic" socially as well as intellectually, I think), [...]' (James, 1920 Vol. 2: 308).

The Bloomsbury Group³⁹ was constituted shortly before 1910, a loose association of writers and artists noted for their unconventional Bohemian lifestyles⁴⁰, which were sympathetic to women and the struggle for women's rights. Some of them further experimented with and developed the stream-of-consciousness concept with a 'moment-to-moment' stream of subjective thoughts and perceptions embedded in an individual character's mind. Both Virginia Woolf (1882 – 1941) and E.M Forster (1879 – 1970) were two of the most prominent representatives of the Bloomsbury group, though of these two only Woolf made much use of stream-of-consciousness technique. Mansfield, Richardson and Sinclair were less involved in Bloomsbury. Woolf, as her career developed was more like Richardson than Forster, and pushed towards the more radical form of stream of consciousness— associated with Joyce – where the characters' voice almost breaches the frame of the narration in the text.

In Woolf's *Mrs Dalloway* (1925), Clarissa's 'moments of being' are revealed while she strolls in the streets of London, creating a world of her own as she shifts between the present and memories of her past. However, as the thesis shows this strategy was largely derived from Richardson's existing model of a London centred narrative. In *Mrs Dalloway* Woolf merges her character's inner conscious thoughts with a modernist perspective on the external

³⁹ To Stephen Spender (1995: 393): 'the positive qualities of Bloomsbury were shared not only by Forster and Eliot, but by nearly all the best talent of this period. Roger Fry, Lytton Strachey, and T.S. Eliot in their different ways, introduced the influences of French impressionism, French prose, and in poetry the French symbolists. All these writers were pre-occupied with re-examining and restating the principles and aims of art and criticism. They were interested in experiment, and were amongst the first to discuss and defend James Joyce and Proust.'

⁴⁰ They spoke about various subjects like sexual relationships, life and gossip, art and paintings; rejecting materialism and bourgeoisie society at the time. Bohemia may be then considered as a state of independence that potentially challenges establishment values, when one can openly choose the life he/she fancies. Peter Brooker, *Bohemia in London* (2007). Virginia Nicholson, *Among the Bohemians: Experiments in Living 1900-1939*. (2003).

world describing everyday qualities and things in a new form of language. She thereby shifts the focus of fiction more upon the inner life of human being in a manner consistent with a conjunction of feminism, autobiography and psychology. These are intertwined in Woolf's aesthetic rendering of larger cultural issues; simultaneously creating in Bergsonian terms an intuitive and intense understanding and a critique of the external world. Bloomsbury as a powerful cultural network formalises and makes popular the idea of stream of consciousness – especially through the works of Woolf as a writer, essayist⁴¹ and publisher⁴². While this conjunction of an interest in feminism, alternative female selves, autobiography and modernism preceded Bloomsbury, it seems highly probable that they did much to concretise it for the public imagination (in Woolf's case by foregrounding the profundity of an inner self traditionally effaced by men both in fiction and apparent biography).

Other female modernist writers followed William James's concept of a stream-of-consciousness applied to inner thoughts, like the experimental fiction of Dorothy Richardson who captures the flow of both ideas and immediate impressions of Miriam Henderson in *Pointed Roofs* (1915). This is a third person narrative whose intense focalisation and free indirect discourse can be seen to breach the narrative frame and become a kind of stream of consciousness that has affinities with that of Joyce (with sudden, brief transitions to the first person, thus indicating fluctuations of consciousness, with a rapid transition from the visual to the auditory consciousness) and which predates Woolf's own third person narratives:

Then nothing matters. Just one little short life....
A few more years shall roll...
A few more seasons pass...
There was a better one than that... not so organ-grindery.
Swift to its close ebbs out life's little day;
Earth's joys grow dim, its glories fade away;
Change and decay in all around I see.
Wow-wow-wow-wow-whiney-caterwauley.... (*Pointed Roofs*, 170)

Richardson is writing about life and death and how thinking about both controls one's inner mind in relation to the outer physical world. This writing style with its sudden emphatic

⁴¹ Hermione Lee, 'Virginia Woolf's Essays' (2010); Rachel Bowlby, 'A More Than Maternal Tie': Woolf As A Woman Essayist.' (1997).

⁴² J.H. Willis, *Leonard and Virginia Woolf as Publishers: Hogarth Press, 1917-41*. (1992).

outburst of language miming an emotional state, ‘Wow-wow-wow-wow-whiney-caterwauley...’, is attempting to give the reader direct access to the mind of Miriam and the contradictions and inconsistencies that define it. This is the same kind of way of representing subjectivity that Woolf was to undertake – albeit perhaps less radically in *Mrs Dalloway* ten years later in 1925 and arguably, even in *To the Lighthouse* Woolf is reluctant to breach the narrative third person frame as completely as are Richardson or Joyce.

William James’s philosophy leads to a new understanding of the concepts of self, subjectivity, mind, awareness and consciousness by disentangling and analysing the human ability to think about experience. He argues that human thoughts create a character that represents their inward sense of self and self-consciousness. For example, in Mansfield’s ‘Prelude’ the character Linda tries to create her own role by listening to her intuitive thoughts as an independent woman, while consciously and simultaneously she is trying to gain her independence from her husband, and to exclude her intrusive and demanding family and act decisively.

In *The Principles of Psychology*, James explains at length what he sees as the five characteristics of human thought and how they represent the inner experience of human’s consciousness. The first character is that ‘*thought tends to personal form*’ (I 225), as he further clarifies it:

In this room - this lecture-room, say - there are a multitude of thoughts, yours and mine, some of which cohere mutually, and some not. They are as little each-for-itself and reciprocally independent as they are all-belonging- together. They are neither: no one of them is separate, but each belongs with certain others and with none beside. My thought belongs with my other thoughts, and your thought with your other thoughts. Whether anywhere in the room there be a mere thought, which is nobody's thought, we have no means of ascertaining, for we have no experience of its like. The only states of consciousness that we naturally deal with are found in personal consciousnesses, minds, selves, concrete particular I's and you's. (I 225 - 226)

Here James argues that each thought of a human being is related to a personal event, and through them to an individual life which is independent in itself and the stream of thoughts are all interconnected to one another. What is important here is the idea of revaluing

subjectivity and individuality, as has been shown crucial to feminist writers to foster an alternative to so called ‘objective’ patriarchal views of the world – which exclude women from power and elide the lives they live. It is the gap between subjective experience and the ‘objective’, patriarchal world which James’s stream-of-consciousness technique makes women writers and others attentive. For James one should lead his/her own individual life with courage, openness to possibilities and awareness to what James referred to as the ‘fringe’ of experience. This fringe includes the instincts, inexpressible feelings, and haunting memories that influence human thoughts and actions.

Secondly, James identifies that ‘*thought is in constant change*’ (229), which is artistically suggestive. That is, each conscious state changes from one form to another without having the same sensation. So human beings perceive and feel things differently as time progresses although sequentially engaged, as he puts it: ‘Now we are seeing, now hearing; now reasoning, now willing; now recollecting, now expecting; now loving, now hating; and in a hundred other ways we know our minds to be alternately engaged’ (230). So, human thoughts are always in the process of changing and this suggests opinions and judgments are not static, but can also be altered in light of progressive social politics. This is mainly at major complex amendments of ways of thinking about the ‘objective’ state of social reality – existing judgments and beliefs of the early twentieth century that were tested and changed by social experiences such as World War One and the struggles of the women’s movement for universal suffrage. The writers studied in this thesis can often show alternative, non-patriarchal ways to live for women and underline the possibility of personal growth towards a more equal society.

Thirdly, ‘*within each personal consciousness, thought is sensibly continuous*’ (237). In addition to its process of change, human thought is continuous without any break or division apart from sleeping and external interruptions that cause the conscious states to break out and come back to existence with a different content. So the thought that follows another thought may have had little to do with the thought that went before, even though it is related to similar experiences, it is like taking naps that result in different dreams. Therefore, every thought is potentially best expressed in a sentence with its own language and pace. An example of this is the work of the female modernist writers chosen in this study, in which

each writer uses a narrative technique with a different form and approach that creates a highly personal style.

Fourth, is that '*human thought appears to deal with objects independent of itself; that is, it is cognitive, or possesses the function of knowing*' (271). Despite the subjectivity of consciousness concerning experience, it is still knowledge of the external world that is potentially valid as any other representation of the world. For feminist writers it therefore suggests the possibility to promote social justice and political growth, then for women can be actualised. James suggests that there is another world out there discovered using stream of consciousness that leads the reader to understand the objective reality of these apparent subjective memories and emotional states, as when discussing spiritual experiences. He further argues that spiritual experience depends upon '*a sense of reality, a feeling of objective presence, a perception of what we may call 'something there,' more deep and more general than any of the special and particular 'senses' by which the current psychology supposes existent realities to be originally revealed*' (*The Varieties of Religious Experience* 58).

James's fifth characteristic of stream of consciousness is '*always interested more in one part of its object than in another, and welcomes and rejects, or chooses, all the while it thinks*' (284). Thus, consciousness is a stream of responsive mental states and each state is the experience of some external content; consciousness is not material or matter (hence James's resistance to straightforward materialism), though it is a process where some perceptions can lead to actions in the environment as a consequence. Intentionality requires experience which is a standard empiricist doctrine. Thus one literary consequence is perhaps Imagism with its emphasis on a style, which focuses on the exact perception of objects; prominent practitioners included H.D., Amy Lowell and Ezra Pound.⁴³ Gertrude Stein (a student of William James)

⁴³ Dorothy Richardson, although a prose writer, also often considered at the time as an Imagist, and increasingly feminist critics are insisting strongly as regards Imagism that it was shaped by women as well as men: see Bruce Clarke's *Dora Marsden and Early Modernism: Gender, Individualism, Science* where he argues Pound exaggerated the masculine dominance abetted subsequently by critical orthodoxy. He notes 'The first imagist history— Glenn Hughes in *Imagism and the Imagists*—written on the basis of testimonies biased against Marsden's editorial hand at the *Egoist*, began a tradition of misinformation that has gone mostly unchallenged for more than half a century' (4). Of Richardson Joseph Warren Beach (1932: 385) argues: 'Her long series of novels under the general title of "Pilgrimage" was begun during the great vogue of the imagist poets. The first three books "Pointed Roofs," "Backwater," "Honeycomb" appeared in, respectively, 1915, 1916, and 1917, the years of publication of the three anthologies entitled "Some Imagist Poets," which followed upon the volume entitled "Des Imagistes," published in 1914'. Helen Carr notes that on his appointment to the *Egoist* "Marsden's

while more typically considered a cubist shared an interest in perceptual areas with many of the imagist writers.

Taken together the five characteristics imply that James's notion of the 'self' can be viewed as much an object of thought as the subject of thought. In effect the value of subjective experiences and all that goes with it are just as valid and real as more traditional ideas of objective experience; a fact equally important for feminist and modernist writers. Individual experience when represented through characters is potentially no less objective than accepted external reality. In *Mrs Dalloway*, Septimus' view of the world is no less valid because of its apparently fantastical, poetic nature than a more accepted view. James's theory of the 'self' as detailed in *The Principles of Psychology* deals with the experiential 'self' or 'me' which links one's body in terms of sensory experience to society and culture; effectively linking the personal and the political. The more tradition model of 'self' that James discusses deals with the pure ego or 'I', like the Cartesian subject disconnected from the world, that stands apart from experience. However James' view, like that of empiricists such as Hume, shows that self and experience cannot easily or meaningfully be separated. Women during the struggle for suffrage were often accused of unnatural irrationality and subjectivity as a way to delegitimise their critiques of society. As a result, those female modern writers who have tried to capture the total stream of their character's consciousness through representing a gendered self are potentially engaged in political and social rebuttal to attempt to challenge such delegitimation.

Within its literary use by diverse writers, stream of consciousness attempts to describe the individual's intuitional approach by showing rather than telling a written equivalent of the character's thought progressions. So the purpose is to feel and think differently, to distinguish between one state of experience and another, or two periods of personal time such as childhood in Victorian/Edwardian times and adulthood in modern times; between Septimus' (almost pantheist) vision of the world and objective reality. Thus, experience can be themed according to James rather than merely represented chronologically. For instance through the

individualism sat comfortably with his own" (582). See Helen Carr. *The Verse Revolutionaries: Ezra Pound, H.D. and The Imagists*. (2010).

use of memory Woolf shows Mrs. Dalloway's memories of the past to make her question her life in the present and this expresses how individuals can reimagine their perceptions into an understanding of life externally and internally. As Bergson explains, 'My memory is there, which conveys something of the past into the present. My mental state, as it advances on the road of time, is continually swelling with the duration which it accumulates: it goes on increasing – rolling upon itself, as a snowball on the snow' (*Creative Evolution* 2).

The Influence of Henri Bergson (1859 – 1941)

Henri Bergson's philosophical ideas led to a focus on the development of the value of inner worlds, emphasis on subjective experience of artists and writers in the United States and Britain. Bergson defines and values immediate experience and one's intuition⁴⁴ (subjective experience) as just, as if not more valuable than public and objective knowledge. This personal experience which Bergson calls it qualitative came to be regarded as offering significant advantages in the perception of reality over the public, objective world view (which Bergson calls quantitative) that is foregrounded by rationalism and science as ways to apprehend reality. In a sense his emphasis on the qualitative lent legitimacy to the renewed emphasis on the revaluation of the subjective that was to play such a strong part in modernism. While his critique of established ways of thinking was perhaps inevitably to parallel the thoughts of a disillusioned post World War One generation, as in Eliot's great poem of disillusionment *The Waste Land*. If modernist sought a new objectivity it was by means of revaluing the subjective, as in not simply taking as true the objective account of the necessity of war which was offered by the establishment. As John Mullarkey (1999) emphasises, Bergson was at one point the 'greatest thinker of the world' and at the same time regarded by some upholders of scientific rationality as 'the most dangerous man in the world' (1).

⁴⁴ To Bergson intuition 'is meant the kind of *intellectual sympathy* by which one places oneself within an object in order to coincide with what is unique in it and consequently inexpressible' and is opposite to straightforward rationality, (*The Creative Mind* 7). The term arguably also anticipates concepts of *écriture féminine* in terms of refusing linear, straightforward, factual narrative.

During the modernist period, Bergson's combination of science and metaphysics, his emphasis on the concept of intuition and the human subject over society, and his inclination towards flux over constancy energized many of the modernists in their search for the new. Bergson's major books (discussed later in the chapter) further defined the perception of stream of consciousness among modernists. Bergson published the English version of his book *Time and Free Will* (1889), translated by F. L. Pogson in 1910. The book deals with the concepts of the human mind, intuition, and experience of time or duration in one's interaction to the outer world. Woolf as we saw regarded the same year, 1910, in her dictum as a turning point in British cultural and intellectual life, in part because of the impact of European art. Also there was the context reason that the Edwardian continuities with Victorian culture were being tested by such movements as Imagism and the work of Ezra Pound and others. George Bornstein (1999) argues in 'Ezra Pound and the Making of Modernism' that Imagism was central to Modernism and he cites T.S. Eliot's trenchant dictum from an address, 'American literature and the American language' (1953). Later collected in *To Criticise the Critic and Other Writings* (1991 53): 'The *point de repère*, usually and conveniently taken as the starting-point of modern poetry, is the group denominated 'imagists' in London about 1910' (cited Bornstein 28).

Time and Free Will was widely circulated in the early modernist period along with the publications of the English translation by Nancy Margaret Paul and W. Scott Palmer in 1911 of *Matter and Memory* translated, and *Creative Evolution* translated by Arthur Mitchell in 1911. Mary Ann Gillies in *Henri Bergson and British Modernism* (1996) argues: 'The reviews of these books 'were found in most major philosophical journals; they were also found in journals such as the *Lancet* and other more mainstream publications such as the *Athenaeum*, the *Saturday Review* and *Nation*' (29). This meant that Bergson, much like James, was not simply the interest of professional philosophers but general medical doctors. The *Lancet* is one of the most prestigious general medical magazines, and well-informed general readers like the *Athenaeum*, the *Saturday Review* and *Nation*. These translated books and reviews therefor introduced and disseminated Bergsonian philosophy widely across Britain as 'common currency' and helped attract leading modern writers, intellectuals and scholars when he gave 'celebrity' lectures in a visit to Britain in 1911. As Gillies (2003) sums up:

His lectures were open to whoever wished to attend them. His approach to intellectual life was one of inclusion, rather than the more typical exclusion brought about because of the ever-increasing specialization of academia. His appeal to those who were actively involved in intellectual and aesthetic pursuits was great, but so was his appeal to the many who aspired to greater intellectual awareness but who had neither the training nor the time to acquire it. (98-99)

Bergson's philosophy was also introduced in other literary magazines such as *The New Age* edited by an eccentric Nietzschean ex-schoolmaster called A. R. Orage.⁴⁵ Claire Tomalin suggests the magazine discussed (2012):

'[...] marriage reform, socialism, free love, protests against sweated labour and capital punishment, women's questions from abortion to the vote, psychoanalysis, foreign affairs, philosophy and theatre criticism, together with drawings of Augustus Johns and Walter Sickert, sometimes candid studies of nudes'. (48)

Among the prominent writers that contributed to the magazine was Katherine Mansfield, in which her stories were published for the first time as a professional writer. Others like T. E. Hulme (1883 –1917), the English literary critic and leading Imagist poet knew Bergson personally and wrote for *The New Age* between 1909 and 1912 'almost exclusively on the subject of Bergson' (Henry Mead, no date, *Modernist Journals Project*) to promote better understanding of Bergson's philosophy. In a 1907 reading of Bergson, Hulme (1994) argues that 'it was almost a kind of physical sense of exhilaration, a sudden expansion, a kind of mental explosion. It gave one the sense of giddiness that comes with a sudden lifting up to a great height' (126).⁴⁶ Bergson was the kind of thinker who shifted Hulme's focus away from the world of science, mathematics and mechanics to the vertiginous world of inner thoughts and of a human method of imagining and interpreting the physical world.

Bergson's argument in *Time and Free Will* introduces two ways of demarcating reality: Intellectual and Intuitive. Intellectual reality (objective, public reality) describes the way that the human being chronologically conceives 'time' by analysing the minutes and hours of an entity in relation to the external world; this could almost be called clock time. While intuitive

⁴⁵ Alfred Richard Orage (1873 – 1934) was a British intellectual and editor of the English weekly magazine *The New Age*, in which he focused on social politics, art, religion and modernist culture.

⁴⁶ Edward P. Comentale, and Andrzej Gasiorek. *T.E. Hulme and the Question of Modernism*. (2006)

reality understood subjectively is to perceive 'time' or as Bergson calls it 'duration' psychologically through human's consciousness. The former type of time can be associated with quantity (and is thus quantitative) and the latter can be characterized by quality (and is thus qualitative). *Time and Free Will* opposes and simultaneously characterises these two concepts or practices of time: historical time (that is to say the objective, public time of intellectual reality) which is external, linear and chronological opposes the psychological time of intuitive reality which is intensely subjective, internalized, and importantly is discontinuous and non-linear. The idea of qualitative time or duration was the one which had the greatest impact on the formal organisation of the experimental texts of modernism. Such as the way in which in *Mrs Dalloway*, the protagonist's experience of the world jumps between past and present and does not necessarily follow straightforward chronology while also considering different possible futures.

In *Time and Free Will* Bergson also distinguishes between times as it can actually be experienced, the mechanistic time of the external world as in hours and minutes, and the lived time as he calls it 'duration' (*durée*), or the experience as chronological, and measurable. Thus he speaks of time as: "we generally think of a homogeneous medium in which our conscious states are ranged alongside one another as in space, so as to form a discrete multiplicity" (90). On a separate note, Bergson defines 'duration' (*la durée*) as a temporal immediacy of data and of consciousness; in 'duration' there is no contact or closeness of events, but there is the lived experience of freedom. As he plainly explains it:

When I follow with my eyes on the dial of a clock the movement of the hand which corresponds to the oscillations of the pendulum, I do not measure duration, as seems to be thought; I merely count simultaneities, which is very different. Outside of me, in space, there is never more than a single position of the hand and the pendulum, for nothing is left of the past positions. Within myself a process of organization or interpretation of conscious states is going on, which constitutes true duration. (107-108)

Bergson's book further analyse two fundamental interpretations of life that accord with its author's dualistic way of apprehending time. Just as it is the qualitative or subjective view of time that was to offer so much to both modernists and feminists (and which suggested direct

parallels with William James's work on consciousness as has been shown in the thesis). There was a corresponding theory of life which matched the valuing of the subjective. This is the theory of the *élan vital* ('life force' but sometimes translated as 'vital impetus' or 'vital force') which is an immaterial force embodied in the individual subject that continually creates and expands the growth and development of the individual life through qualitative experiences. For Bergson, the instinct of human's mind is to follow a creative, humanist impulse that focuses on personal growth.

The *élan vital* is further defined as potentiality and something that is continually coming into being determined by pure duration that is to say qualitative time. It comes from the inner psyche of human's personal life and not from historical quantitative time or the public time of intellectual reality. Bergson thinks this type of life is the only authentic one life that offers personal creative growth. This for feminist modernists, such as the ones dealt with in this thesis ask them to explore their subjectivity, creative practice and the subjective lives of their fictional characters that argue against accepting the status of patriarchy, which is represented as public time of reality. As Virginia Woolf further sums up with the idea of the way the stereotype of the 'angel in the house' had become normalised and legitimated. That is to say women writers of the time are creating a gendered Bergsonism to enable a critique of patriarchy that also empowers them as individuals.

Within this understanding, Bergson insists that only intuition and then probably imagination can give meaningful knowledge about reality that is creative, empowering and which does not simply accept the status quo. Furthermore, as Bergson suggests in *The Creative Mind*: 'There is one reality, at least, which we all seize from within, by intuition and not by simple analysis. It is our own personality in its flowing through time – our self which endures'. (9) Bergson's intuition deriving from the intimacy of the self, according to Helen Carr in *Verse Revolutionaries*, is also defined as the 'ceaseless flux of being' that allows one to plunge into the flux to know the basic reality (162). And according to Bergson in *The Creative Mind*, 'no image can replace the intuition of duration, but many diverse images, borrowed from very different orders of things, may, by the convergence of their action, direct consciousness to the precise point where there is a certain intuition to be seized' (28). In this sense both inner and

outer, the conscious and the concrete cohere to offer a way of comprehending the self in the world precisely by validating visceral and sensory qualities.

The second division of life according to Bergson is the material force of established public reality that disables and refuses change, resists the progress and growth of life and denies continuous experience by favouring conservatism. For feminists this is the very establishment world they wished to critique and for others too was epitomised in the conservatism of the establishment. This non-intuitive force is epitomised in a materialist, scientific approach that seems to have little to say about individuals or social organisation, as well as art. To some extent Bergson's idea of the *élan vital* is an attempt as with James to represent a spiritual alternative to materialism that nonetheless avoids established religion and which is perhaps epitomised in the modernist idea of the epiphany as a spiritual; but non-religious moment of intuitive understanding of the world which emphasised subjective interiority.

Both intuition and *Élan Vital* create an alternative approach to understanding the nature of human's life and also just as importantly, how it should be lived, in such a way that the vital inner force develops and allows authentic living. While the concept of intuition explains the process of how human being perceives and experience objects outside one's self. Intuition in Bergson's terms is necessary to avoid misunderstanding intellect reality. As Gilles (2003) puts it:

[F]or when we turn our gaze inward, we intuitively enter into an understanding with ourself [sic] and then employ our intelligence to explain what intuition has revealed. Intuition becomes the means by which we may apprehend the essence, the organic wholeness, of other organisms and ourselves'. (107)

'Wholeness' in these terms is of particular relevance to a world after World War One in which people felt spiritually bankrupt, disillusioned with what science and the establishment had created (machine guns, barbed wire and poison gas), often alienated and split apart as Eliot (1991) writes in 'The Waste Land': 'I can connect nothing with nothing' (62). Modernist and non-modernist fiction after the First World War and for feminists from before this period have a definite sense of pure duration, an emphasis on the subjective; due the pace of change and the effect of it on their inner lives. The First World War triggered ideas of alienation and psychological trauma as discussed immediately above for the general

population. Though for female writers in the context of the long struggle for equality and suffrage there was already much alienation, and a powerful gap between their desires for subjective view of reality; it valued their inner lives in how public reality dismissed their subjectivity as well as their aspirations to be free and treated as equal as men.

Again in *Mrs Dalloway*, one of Clarissa's pure periods of duration occurs as the narrator describes the impact on Clarissa of a day in London in June 1923 through the character's own inner stream of thoughts. Big Ben's striking the hours epitomises public, chronological time as well as an obviously phallic symbol representing the patriarchal dominance of parliament, which still restricted female equality. The texts set up an opposition between Clarissa's personal, subjective sense of time and the public time indicated by Big Ben.⁴⁷ Here Big Ben is a parliament's clock at the Palace of Westminster / Houses of Parliament and therefore links to her civil servant husband's role in the public sphere. This is a gendered Bergsonianism in emphasizing the value of subjective consciousness, and Woolf was writing the Houses of Parliament as standing for the whole of the patriarchal, imperialist British Empire.

The subjective and private moments of Clarissa's management to override the public nature of Big Ben, parliament's clock striking and measuring the hours of the then British Empire in a heavily underlined example of linear, chronological time. Therefore, humans' experiences define time to produce pure duration as Suzanne Guerlac⁴⁸ suggests below in *Thinking in Time: An Introduction to Henri Bergson* (2006). While the subject lives in psychological, subjective time which Bergson calls duration this can be turned into public time by being communicated – after all feminists and modernists did not just want to critique patriarchal time they wanted to rewrite and reimagine it:

[t]he difference between time and duration is thus not exactly a difference between two concepts. It is more exact to say that time is the concept of what we experience directly

⁴⁷ In contrast, Nataliya Gudz (2013:4) argues that: 'Big Ben strikes the hours and quarter hours, uniting time with place and the consciousness of that character who is present' (4). She suggests historical and psychological times are integrated to complete a full picture of what was happening during the characters' experiences.

as Pure Duration. Time is the symbolic image of Pure Duration. It stands in for it in reflective consciousness; it is what duration becomes when we think and speak it. (69)

The reality of the external world is given through one's immediate experience or in Bergsonian terms it is a flux or a continuous process of becoming intuitively involved, as one of the themes in *Matter and Memory*. In this sense Bergson argues like an empiricist from sense experience.

Bergson further acknowledges that the moment of experience is concerned with the process of time; whether the experience is still in the process of growing or it has already passed. For example, when time is running along with an experience one will not be able to sense what might happen next. Whereas, when time has already passed an experience then one might argue that something has already been done and one lacks freedom to change because the experience is over.⁴⁹ Bergson argues time and experience are necessity of life while 'Freedom' as he underlines it in *Time and Free Will*, 'is the relation of the concrete self to the act which it performs. This relation is indefinable, just because we *are* free' (219). This emphasis on freedom, as a given assumption then uniting individual thought and action, clearly rang correct with a new generation of women writers and others determined to increase democracy and social justice in the world for their gender.

Bergson's *Matter and Memory* published in English in 1911, discusses the continuous link between time and space, intellect and intuition, using the concept of image-copy to bridge the relationship between mind/spirit and matter. This is designed to avoid a potential absolute dualism between those two terms that can be considered part of the way Bergson attempts to challenge and critique a completely materialist/ scientific way of the world. Part of Bergson's appeal was to the valuing of subjective experience and a reuniting of spiritual values as well as material reality in a non-religious fashion. *Matter and Memory* 'affirms the reality of spirit and the reality of matter, and tries to determine the relation of the one to the other by the study of a definite example, that of memory' (vii). It is considered to be the most significant

⁴⁹ Eiko Nakano, (2002) "Intuition and Intellect: Henri Bergson's influence on Katherine Mansfield's representations of places."

of his books because of the ambitious nature of the text's desire to reconcile these apparently dualistic qualities.⁵⁰ Bergson introduces to the reader the term 'image' by arguing that one's qualitative memory does not belong wholly to her or his own body, but has an innate relationship to sense experience and therefore an implicit objectivity. In consequence emotional reaction by the subject, however minute, is called 'an image'. So to Bergson there are many 'images' in the universe (*Matter and Memory*):

We will assume for the moment that we know nothing of theories of matter and theories of spirit, nothing of the discussions as to the reality or ideality of the external world. Here I am in the presence of images, in the vaguest sense of the word, images perceived when my senses are opened to them, unperceived when they are closed. All these images act and react upon one another [...]. (1)

He argues therefore that the notion of perceiving 'images' is the way to understand and shape one's identity; the inner self-images and senses are interconnected and both represent the uniqueness of a human being. Bergson (*Matter and Memory*) is keen to affirm the real world that is sensed and is no solipsist, though he argues that the idealist calls an image a representation while the realist calls it a thing, but what they have in common is the mind as perceiver (9).

Therefore, matter is composed of images that human perceive insofar as we only have human perception to work with and without it there is no world as such to be perceived (even though for Bergson the world obviously exists). Although what human perceive is not the objective world as perception introduces subjectivity. Culturally speaking Bergson saw this introduction of subjectivity as a good thing when it came to the distinction between qualitative and quantitative memory and time. The most important thing for women writers is that Bergson is suggesting the intrinsic value of the subjective over the so called objective, public cultural reality. In a way, this is reminiscent of Romanticism, puts emphasis on the individual suggesting and legitimising that subjective experience does have as much access to actually material reality as anything taken for granted the public realm.

Pure memory (subjective memory) is memory that is created based on sensory information but is only indirectly related and is different from memory images because pure memory is

⁵⁰ Leszek Kolakowski, *Bergson* (2001) and F.C.T. Moore, *Bergson: Thinking Backwards* (2008).

more independent from the material world. Memory images can be a disruption to the subject's pure memory as material reality forces itself upon the subject, and Bergson is unclear as to how the process of transition between pure memory to memory images functions in such case (Trifonova 80). Nevertheless, the important point for women writers is that the creativity of pure memory allows new formulations about the world of culture which can then be put into practice. Perhaps investigating how women can lead independent lives not determined by patriarchal views of women can then translate thesis ideas into the possibility of changing culture, as with Woolf's critique of the popular, patriarchal image of the perfect wife and mother to which women should aspire.

In Bergson's analysis, the relation between the reality of spirit and the reality of matter is created by the tension or relaxation of one's individual consciousness. So when human's consciousness is tense, it is connected with matter in the external world, though when the consciousness is relaxed, it is associated with the memory and particularly pure memory, which is a little like saying creativity lies in unconsciousness. However, Bergson argues that in reality such polarisation is uncommon, as there are many different types of duration that makes it impossible to have either a completely tense or completely relaxed consciousness. Therefore human's thinking is never straightforwardly either matter or memory, but rather combines both to different degrees.

Additionally, Bergson identifies that memory is deeply located in the spiritual system and suggests that there are two forms of memory: automatic memory and pure memory. Automatic memories are those recalls that are related to the past and have the same content though when using it in the present time there may be a different form. It is kind of a physical habit of routine day to day activities and does not involve any mental images or representations, or any of the creativity of pure memory. Whereas, pure or 'true' memory records and stores the events (and their related meaning) of one's daily lives because it is spiritual and it relates to the consciousness of the pure duration. This type of memory often involves a creative dimension, as well as being emotionally meaningful, which attests to an idea of human potentiality and growth. When Dorothy Richardson's character Miriam Henderson in *Pilgrimage* remembers her childhood and adolescence she is considering it, partly because she was freer before she took up her routine work life, and secondly, she

considered the way her life could have been different from the present if she'd married her loved ones.

Bergson's *Creative Evolution*, which was also published in English in 1911, put forward a philosophy capable of explaining the continuity and the discontinuity of living creatures. In this volume he talks about the way life has developed and doing so in a way that reconciles spiritual and materialist views. Rather than simply accepting Darwin's theory of the evolution of species *per se* or taking the orthodox religious view of creationism. Bergson does not agree with Darwin's theories of evolution and thinks that all forms of life develop from one single source or organism during the progress of time. Unlike Darwin, Bergson sees evolution is not driven by competition for biological success alone, but rather that mutations with favourable characteristics in terms of an environment can lead to species change.

Bergson's evolutionary process is driven by the *Élan Vital*, which is the principal source of life that pushes human being into the limit of their decision making. The evolutionary movement Bergson says in *Creative Evolution* '[...] proceeds rather like a shell, which suddenly burst into fragments, which fragments, being themselves shells, burst in their turn into fragments destined to burst again, and so on for a time incommensurably long' (98). So within each shell, there is a life force that explodes and creates another life and another shell and so on. Therefore, '[...] the real and profound causes of division were those which life born within its bosom. For life is tendency, and the essence of a tendency is to develop in the form of a sheaf, creating by its very growth, divergent directions among which its impetus is divided' (99).

In this rather lyrical and evocative image, Bergson sees evolution as the 'essence of life' which is to say that life and by implication society is always in a process of continual change. This thesis contends that this is one reason why his theories appealed to anti-traditional thinkers such as feminists, and his evolutionary theory follows the evolution of life through the understanding of 'mind and being'. That is to say human consciousness strives to develop and growth because of the *Élan Vital*, as in *Creative Evolution* Bergson further explains: '[Life] must be compared to an impetus, because no image borrowed from the physical world

can give more nearly the idea of it' (257). In this sense we might agree that Bergson has a concept of cultural evolution. Therefore, the progression of life is similar to the progression of consciousness: '[...] the more we fix our attention on this continuity of life, the more we see that organic evolution resembles the evolution of a consciousness, in which the past presses against the present and causes the up springing of a new form of consciousness [...]' (29). In one respect feminism and modernism could be seen as exactly such new kinds of consciousness by intellectuals of the time that represented humanity's continuing cultural evolution.

Consequently, the 'essence of life' as seen in modern characters and writers can be considered as the *élan vital*, propelling them to express their pure, subjective consciousness and the experiences they get through their inner-self or intuition following the *élan vital*. This occurs in order to creatively unite random, separate thoughts in one's mind with the process of time, and thus concretise previously unforeseen or un-thought possibilities. In certain ways this is akin to the theory of the value of the writer's imagination which would be comprehensible in more traditional Romantic terms which emphasise the power of the artist as a self-creator of world view, but Bergson is arguably less self-centred and egocentric.⁵¹ The intuition in one's own mind partially coincides with the essence of the self and eventually with the process of life itself. For instance, Woolf may not have read Bergson, but her books show characters seeking from subjective experiences to build new ways of existing in society and new forms of consciousness about life. Mary Ann Gillies (2006) briefly describes Woolf's relationship with Bergson: 'Whether or not Mrs Woolf read Bergson, she seems to have been familiar with him. Her novels reflect his hostility to concept, logic, character and external time, and his fidelity to flux' (58).

Bergson probably did more than William James to emphasise the importance of life as creation and the production of new forms of consciousness which valued subjective experience and individual memory. Dorothy Richardson's *Pilgrimage* captures the moment of total presence through the eyes of protagonist Miriam Henderson; showing the fragmented thoughts of memories and feelings in the character's mind. The text is partly

⁵¹ Cecil Maurice Bowra. *The Romantic Imagination*. (1949)

autobiographical, but nonetheless makes implicit claims that the subjective experience of the character is legitimate and creative and is thinking through the possibility of new forms of consciousness appropriate to a changing world.

Most accounts of Bergson and William James's influence on modernist writers, especially on female prose writers, treat these two figures separately (explained with examples later in the study) in terms of their impact on these writers. However, it is a central contention of the thesis that the two thinkers' work has so much in common, as Bergson himself said to William James, (thesis 19-20) that there is an effective continuum between their ideas, at least as far as they are used by the female modernist writers who are the subject of this thesis. Also, a second contention central to the argument of the thesis is that both Bergson and William James, in terms of the implications of their thought, were perceived as offering a range of significant contributions to feminist struggles against patriarchy. One can therefore think of the female prose writers concerned as deploying aspects of William James and Bergson's work in a more explicitly gendered fashion. Indeed the thesis contends one can talk of a gendered Bergsonism and a gendered Jamesian. As has been suggested for women, William James in particular was a liberal figure whose humanist ideas on psychology and the human subject stood in stark contrast to prevailing medical ideas about how to treat such illnesses as hysteria and did not assume women to be automatically inferior in their mental capacity to men. The fact that Henry James, William James's brother was known for his detailed portraits of women's inner lives, no doubt contributed to the way the two thinkers were perceived as being especially important for women.

The impact of Bergson for women writers can be therefore perceived as part of this continuum and had already been prepared for by James's success in Britain. If modernists turned to Bergson for a variety of reasons, then female modernists had a particular additional interest in his ideas in terms of what they found in his work that might facilitate feminist struggles against patriarchy. Thus, explorations of female subjectivity in a world that appeared to feel that such subjectivity was meaningless. The enduring conflict over female suffrage in Britain in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century (full equality with men in terms of voting at twenty-one) was only won in 1928, although only women over the age of thirty were allowed to vote in 1918. This is not, of course, to say that James or Bergson's

ideas initiated feminist ideas amongst these writers, but rather these ideas and theories paralleled existing preoccupations among female writers, such as the keen interest in the autobiographical mode as a way of exploring female experience and subjectivity.

Thus Bergson and James's ideas lent legitimacy and additional empowerment to existing feminist preoccupations. For this reason the thesis argues for women providing a gendered rereading and usage of these sympathetic thinker's ideas. In many ways the contention that modernist, feminist writers discovered a gendered Bergsonism extends and relocates similar arguments by contemporary feminist philosophers such as Elizabeth Grosz (2005 and 2006), Dorothea Olkowski (1999, 2000 and 2010) and Rebecca Hill (2011) who see Bergson, suitably critiqued, as offering the grounds for a positive, emancipatory feminist practice. In this case they read Bergson via Deleuze and sometimes Irigaray, while recognising the problems for feminism of Bergson's dualisms reinforcing gender characterisation. Grosz in particular claims that Bergson's emphasis on becoming rather than being, evolution, creativity and potentiality for change can also be seen as positive in feminist terms.⁵²

An implication of this study is the possibility that the influence on literature of Bergson and James pushes together two related narratives of Modernism: one characterised by Bergsonian influence on ideals of nature, time and subjectivity and the other by James's emphasis in the importance of a singular perceptive consciousness. These are driven together by the facts of how feminist modernists appreciate these two influential thinkers connecting them to issues of gender, using their concepts to establish their own language of expression in the novel and short story.

⁵² Elizabeth. Grosz, *The Nick of Time: Politics, Evolution, and the Untimely* (2004); Elizabeth, Grosz, "Bergson, Deleuze and the Becoming of Unbecoming". *Parallax*, (2005).

The Influence of the *Feminist Movement*

After the emergence in Britain of a Feminist Movement in the late nineteenth century (much later also referred to as Women's Movement or Women's Liberation), new forms of understanding developed concerning reform of the individual and collective experiences of women. A newly-inflected modernist and feminist language was used both polemically and ideologically, but also aesthetically, reflecting Woolf's much cited claim that 'on or about December 1910, human character changed'. Also Jane Goldman (2003) says: 'Retrospectively, 1910 has been understood as the historical gateway to cultural change, cataclysm and catastrophe' (38). The fight for suffrage was central; Emmeline Pankhurst was an eminent modern feminist who confronted the patriarchal society and introduced the idea of a liberated woman who might challenge the barriers of the Victorian stereotypes that women are simply tender and cannot express themselves publicly.⁵³ Equally the women in the modernist movement highlighted certain critical concerns such as sexual violence, women's suffrage, and a need for egalitarianism in other aspects of existence. Some influential and artistic women like Woolf, Mansfield, Lady Ottoline Morrell, Dorothy Brett and Frieda Weekley as Tomalin (1987) explains: 'shared a common determination to escape from the worlds they had been born into, to reject the moral, social and cultural rules inculcated into them in their childhood, however diverse those childhood were' (54).

The first wave of feminism that lasted from the late nineteenth century until the Second World War secured basic civil rights such as the right to vote in what was still a patriarchal society. Woolf in *A Room of One's Own* (1929) uses a reflective and polemical version of autobiography that recalls her experiments with stream of consciousness, to argue how women are dominated socially and physically, previously being primarily imagined and represented through their partners or parents. Woolf for a variety of reasons that include her own dogged campaign to attain prominence became as Gilbert and Gubar suggest in *No Man's Land* (1994), the sole British female fiction writer to be an emblematic modernist, engaged in establishing her own institutions. Her publisher, the Hogarth Press, and through

⁵³ Emmeline Pankhurst, prominent suffragette, established the Women's Social and Political Union in 1903. She also opened reformation campaigns for the divorce laws so that women could have the right to keep their own property and wealth rights after marriage.

her essays argued passionately against the soft-centred Victorian age and promoted the modern (vol. 3, 3-56).

However, this thesis contends that these women writers sought to incorporate a challenge to the external patriarchal world by foregrounding experience in radical ways through imaginative reworking of that world: embracing the domestic, the urban, interiority and events with proceedings proximate to the observer. Arguably then life after 1910 can be understood as a historical gateway to cultural change, and the struggle to positively represent women's inner voices in modern society. Introducing different fashion and clothing was certainly one of the first visual signs of women's freedom since '[...] the Edwardian lady in her whalebone corset and elaborate bustle and the working-class woman with her "hobble" skirt [...]' changed into designing skirts that reached their knee lengths as clerks, dancers, singers, and such likes; by 'the 1920s "flappers" were to shock their elders with their short-skirted abandon' (Smart, 2008: 13). Along with the transient culture, the use of language and certain expressions also transformed the language eloquently and aesthetically like the word 'flapper', described as the highly noticeable, pleasure-loving and modern girl. Even to this day 'flapper' means a fashionable young woman in the 1920s showing independent behaviour. Flapper and new women culture figure prominently in Dorothy Richardson's work.

Accordingly a feminine and fluid writing undertaken by women initiated and sustained new levels of understanding of conscious subjectivities whereby women might at least putatively seek an alternative self. This context was reflected thematically in fiction, as in Margaret Kennedy's *The Constant Nymph* (1924), Mary Webb's *Precious Bane* (1925), and Rebecca West's *The Return of the Soldier* (1918) regarded as the bestsellers of the time. The *Freewoman* was a feminist orientated journal, published between 23rd November 1911 and 10th October 1912, created by Dora Marsden and Mary Gawthorpe.⁵⁴ This publication dealt

⁵⁴ Dora Marsden, ed. *The Freewoman: A Weekly Feminist Review*. The Modernist Journals Project Brown University/University of Tulsa. Marsden subsequently started a new journal more focused on literary modernism than feminism, *The New Freewoman* in June 1913 and 1914, was renamed *The Egoist* on 1 January 1914. On Dora Marsden see Bruce Clarke (1996).

with the relationship between feminism and modernism as well as gender politics. Another example was the modernist journal titled *Blast* - a transitory literary magazine of the Vorticist movement in Britain, and associated with Ezra Pound. Only two editions were published, the first was on 2nd July 1914 and the second on 15th July 1915 written by Wyndham Lewis. Richardson and May Sinclair on the other hand continued to write for journals and significantly ‘it was in the *Egoist*⁵⁵ that Sinclair wrote the famous review of Richardson’s *Pilgrimage* which launched the phrase “stream of consciousness”’ (Trodd, 1998: 41).⁵⁶

Although the First World War altered in large part the roles of women because of the effect of the war in terms of mobilised men being unavailable for work and subsequently the loss of a generation of young men. Being freed from the burden of repeated motherhood was critical; the war increased the development of feminist consciousness. Marie Stopes wrote in *Married Love* (1918) ‘about contraception in clear language and helped to dispel the mist of vagueness that had often surrounded sex in Victorian and Edwardian times’ (Smart 2008: 26). The version of the new woman’s narrative self in modernism was a determined response to the material emphasis of Edwardian culture, if not a direct challenge. For example, in Mansfield’s ‘Bliss’ (1918) the pear tree is perhaps a symbol of stability and masculinity that is subverted by a veiled lesbian, bohemian narrative. This contrasts the life of Bertha’s imagination and its significance in her life with her reality. Therefore, the concept of new woman was to focus on an alternative self that is more determined. For instance Woolf’s essay ‘Women and Writing’, published in *Women’s Fiction* (1929), expressed passion and emotion rather than traditional patriarchal concerns: ‘[...] it is courageous; it is sincere, it keeps closely to what women feel. It is not bitter. It does not insist upon its femininity. But at the same time, a woman’s book is not written as a man would write it’ (Hale, 2006: 584).

⁵⁵ Dora Marsden and Harriet Shaw Weaver, eds. *The Egoist: An Individualist Review*. The Modernist Journals Project Brown University/ University of Tulsa.

⁵⁶ In *Dora Marsden and Early Modernism: Gender, Individualism, Science* Bruce Clarke argues strongly that Marsden exerted an influence on the journal she founded and was proactive in shaping its particular emphasis, something Pound refused to accept publicly, however, in truth ‘Marsden was not to be dislodged’ (97) despite his criticism of her in artistic circles. In this context, Gilian Hanscombe and Virginia L. Smyers argue for the importance of ‘the inter-connectedness, of H.D., Bryher, Dorothy Richardson, Harriet Weaver, Marianne Moore, Amy Lowell, Mary Butts, Mina Loy, Margaret Anderson and Sylvia Beach’ especially as regards first ‘the anomaly of being “women writers” or “literary women”’ and the second is to see how they dealt with the consciousness of being “modern”’ (114).

The following sections briefly discuss the biographical selected writers in the order they appear in the thesis: May Sinclair, Dorothy Richardson, Katherine Mansfield and Virginia Woolf.

May Sinclair (1863 – 1946)

May Sinclair was the pseudonym of Mary Amelia St. Clair, a creative and prolific British writer who was a practicing poet, author of twenty-four novels, two novellas, five volumes of short stories, as well as numerous essays, reviews and introductions to novels of other authors between 1886 and 1931. Sinclair was a best-selling female author, who was older by a generation than Richardson, Mansfield and Woolf (as well as male modernists like Ezra Pound and T.S. Eliot). Her first publication in 1886 began a wide-ranging career including essays and philosophy that spanned before, during and after the First World War.

Unlike the other three writers examined in the thesis, May Sinclair is of an earlier generation born in 1863 she grew up during the Victorian period at the height of the British Empire's sense of self-assurance and Imperial greatness. In contrast Richardson was born in 1873, Mansfield in 1888 and Woolf in 1883. She thus spans the late Victorian and Modernist period, with some concerns that are not reflected in her younger contemporaries. She is becoming a woman when British feminism is beginning its first challenges to the patriarchal Victorian stereotype of domestically-oriented women and first advocating the value of the new woman over such Victorian values. According to Suzanne Raitt, Sinclair's Victorian reservations were focused on her reputation and included the nature of biography's indiscretions – even though her own novel *Mary Oliver: A Life* (1919) was a pseudo-autobiographical, bildungsroman account of her childhood early life (2000: 3-5). Sinclair followed conventions that were far more formal than the younger writers, who were less concerned about a woman's reputation. She felt adrift with those Bohemian experiments that mixed art, politics and the social classes in a hotchpotch fashion, for example expecting

Dorothy Richardson and her husband to adjourn to another room for coffee after dinner (Raitt 2000: 3).

Sinclair was the youngest child of six born in Thorncote, Rock Ferry, Higher Bebington, near Liverpool where her father, William, was a part owner of a successful shipping business. The house was one of an exclusive estate of substantial new Victorian villas, and her father was not very interested in the children, preferring his hobby of sailing, but did have access to a good library covering literature from the Renaissance to the Victorians. Though after losing his business due to unwise investments in the late 1860s (when May was about 7), he became an alcoholic. In certain ways this experience corresponded to that of Richardson – of a bourgeois father reduced to bankruptcy – though in this case there are also differences. Sinclair's father was evidently a rather more distant figure than Richardson's Bohemian father, while correspondingly her mother was a more influential figure in the family. However her father's financial problems, chronic alcoholism, and what some biographers argue was his separation from the family from the 1870s all affected her upbringing. According to Boll (1973) it also seems likely that one source of discord between William and his wife, Amelia, who was seven to eight years older than him, was that she brought capital to the marriage which underwrote his ship owning-business and he had subsequently lost this in bankruptcy (23 - 24).

The Sinclairs appear to have been largely forced to depend upon the charity of their relatives, after their father's financial and physical decline, which all suggests an experience similar to that of Richardson prompting a crisis of belief in the strength and power of the patriarchal figure. Her mother, Amelia, was the dominant power in the house, as to Raitt, she was an 'unimaginative and inflexible woman,' who much preferred her sons to her youngest daughter. Her mother ruled with an 'austere Northern Irish Protestantism', that Sinclair later described as 'cold, bitter, narrow tyranny' and which one suspects has more than a hint of the Ulster semi-Calvinist beliefs about it (19). From her comment it seems probable that Sinclair felt unloved and deprived of affection by her mother. She was also most likely subject to a religious upbringing based on guilt, self-abnegation and a need to prove she and her family were good in God's eyes that set her apart from the other writers studied in the thesis.

Sinclair's first collection of poems, *Nakiketas and Other Poems* appeared in 1886, while her first novel *Audrey Craven* was published in 1897, indicating how she was of an earlier generation to the other women writers discussed in the thesis. She was also a recognized Idealist philosopher, as she published two major theoretical books: *A Defence of Idealism: Some Questions and Conclusions* (1917) and *The New Idealism* (1922). Sinclair was a Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature (1916-1941) which showed her recognition as a professional woman writer who had had a large impact on the public. Contemporary critic William Phelps judged that she was: 'the foremost living writer among English-speaking women' (1916: 226).⁵⁷ In her own-way Sinclair was as much of a populist figure as William James himself, a figure of the late Victorian and Edwardian public imagination.

Sinclair was good friends with a diverse range of female authors such as the influential, celebrated Anglo-Catholic writer on mysticism, Evelyn Underhill (1875 –1941). Sinclair certainly possessed a wide social circle, despite moving to Primrose Hill and Hampstead with her mother in 1896, through her mother's death in 1901 until 1907, when she moved to a Kensington flat, and particularly after the signal critical and commercial success of her best-selling novel *Divine Fire* (1904). Sinclair can be regarded as both a mentor of younger writers and a financial and social facilitator. She was creator of artistic networks, crucial for the next generation of writers such as the Imagists and other modernists especially women writers such as Rebecca West and Rose Mcaulay. Her promotion of Richardson's work through her key review⁵⁸, for example, used Sinclair's own reputation as a best-selling and influential female writer to advance the younger Richardson's experimental fiction.

Sinclair's interest in stream-of-consciousness technique for her own fiction would appear to predate her use of the term concerning Richardson's novels in 1918. Somewhat, it is part of her attempt to discover the consequences of a richer account of the individual subject's

⁵⁷ James Homer Thrall, *Mystic Moderns: Agency and Enchantment in Evelyn Underhill, May Sinclair and Mary Webb* (2005); Evelyn Underhill, *Essential Writings* (Maryknoll NY, Orbis Books: 2003); Evelyn Underhill, *Practical Mysticism: A Little Book for Normal People* (London: J.M. Dent 1914). Justine Scott McCarthy, (2000).

⁵⁸ "The Novels of Dorothy Richardson": Book Review of *Pointed Roofs*, *Backwater*, and *Honeycomb*. *The Egoist*. Vol. 5 No. 4(April 1918).

intuitive experiences, in contrast with that of the traditional empiricists who suggests sense data from the outside world are more important than any subjective filtering. In similar fashion, Sinclair's shared interest in the SPR, with William James and Henri Bergson, is about her idealist view of how empiricist derived science. It emphasises on the directly observable world that has important limitations when it comes to any understanding of the psyche and consciousness, of which actual psychic phenomenon were a small part. Her interest in James' idea of stream of consciousness and what it meant for the human subject, as outlined in his psychology, did not preclude her towards acceptance of his entire philosophy. Sinclair in *A Defence of Idealism* argued that 'I believe in Pragmatism ... [as] ... a method not a philosophy. Pragmatism is one long argument ad hominem' (1917: ix-x).

Dorothy Richardson (1873 – 1957)

Dorothy Miller Richardson a British author and journalist practically applied stream-of-consciousness technique in her autobiographical novel-sequence *Pilgrimage* (1915-1967) through the main character's, Miriam Henderson's, adventurous consciousness. Miriam leaves her family's house at the age of 17 in 1893 until she is becoming a writer at the age of 36 in 1912. Miriam Henderson's subjective consciousness was the focus for exploring her relationship to the world. As Fromm (1977) suggests, 'With a penchant for observing nuance and detail that was admittedly Proustian, she nonetheless seemed critical of everything and everyone, of women as well as of men' (xi). Richardson, despite a critical revival that began in the 1980s is much less well known to the general public than Virginia Woolf or James Joyce, though at one point she had been one of the more celebrated and controversial figures in British fiction.

Richardson's extraordinary thirteen-volume novel *Pilgrimage* defines the impact of modern urban life on Miriam's conscious experiences and her gradually emerging from the domestic constraints of the Victorian tradition to the wild, and bohemian busy lifestyle of London at the time. Horace Gregory, described Richardson's novels as 'a rarity in English prose, "a true and humanistic comedy"' and Gregory said he liked to think of Miriam Henderson as a moral realist, "as a seeing eye, awake on a long journey" (Fromm, 1977: xii).

In the novel, Miriam uses her qualitative inner life to transform the outer world, to develop a sense of her alternative self; acting as an independent woman in a different way than before. William James claims in a way that is similar to Bergson:

the outer world inevitably building up a sort of mental duplicate of itself if we only give it time, is so easy and natural in its vagueness that one hardly knows how to start to criticise it. One thing, however, is obvious, namely that *the manner in which we now become acquainted with complex objects need not in the least resemble the manner in which the original elements of our consciousness grew up.* (*The Principles of Psychology*, II, 630)

When Mansfield reviewed Richardson's *The Tunnel* unfavorably she drew attention to the emphasis on perception for its own sake as the driving force:

There is no plot, no beginning, middle or end. Things just 'happen' one after another with incredible rapidity and at break-neck speed. There is Miss Richardson, holding out her mind, as it were, and there is Life hurling objects into it as fast as she can throw.⁵⁹

This is rather a good description by Mansfield of the extreme type of method of literary impressionism and stream of consciousness that she considered to be Richardson's method in her review in *Athenaeum* (4 April 1919). Mansfield sees it as a kind of undifferentiating impressionism without creating any underlying sense of unity or coherence. Except perhaps for the subject's process of formation itself and that is due to the highly autobiographical nature of Richardson's fiction, despite its use of limited third person narration. Mansfield continues in the review to argue that Richardson makes 'everything ... [...]... of equal importance' and thus 'of equal unimportance' (140-1).

The first three books, *Pointed Roofs* (1915), *Backwater* (1916) and *Honeycomb* (1917), portray Miriam Henderson in the last stages of her girlhood as a prelude to her London life. In *Pointed Roofs* one can see Miriam's experiences in Hanover, mirroring Dorothy Richardson's six months teaching at a German school. The book is narrated in the limited third person, but through extremely heavy if not exclusive focalisation on Miriam's point of

⁵⁹ Katherine Mansfield, 'Three Women Novelists'. (1990: 309). For her involvement with the *Athenaeum* see Jenny McDonnell, "'Wanted, a New Word": Katherine Mansfield and the *Athenaeum*' (2009). The magazine connected J.M. Murry, Mansfield, Woolf, D.H. Lawrence and T.S. Eliot, see Sydney Janet Kaplan, *Circulating Genius: John Middleton Murry, Katherine Mansfield and D. H. Lawrence* (2010).

view it feels almost as if Miriam is narrating in first person mode. The writing style flows from perception to thought or emotion and back again because the emphasis is on the subjective experience of Miriam in the world. During the story Miriam learns of the jealousies and rivalries of young women provoked by her own 'friendship' with a handsome pastor, Lahmann, and leaves on a sour note; the novel frustrates reader's expectations of a romantic story. When Pastor Lahmann gave French lessons to the girls in the school including Miriam, he spoke about his visit to Geneva lyrically in terms of its flowery spring with quiet lake:

His words brought her no vision and her mind wandered, half tethered. But when he began reading the poem she sank into the rhythm and turned towards him and fixed expectant eyes upon his face [...] there was a slight movement in Fraulein's sofa-corner. Miriam did not turn her eyes from Pastor Lahmann's face to look at her, but half expected that at the end of the next verse her low clear devout- tones would be heard joining in. (*Pointed Roofs*, 106)

Thus the Fraulein becomes annoyed with the pastor's behaviour towards the girls including Miriam, and the Fraulein chastises the female teachers for talking about men in front of the schoolgirls.

Backwater continues the depiction of the profession of education from a women's standpoint, discussed in the chapter on Sinclair as a very important arena of the early feminist struggles, where Miriam is resident teacher in a North London school. Of her own overall experience as an educator in 'Beginnings', Richardson reflects: 'Teaching, abroad, at home, in school and in a family. Each a brief and fascinating and horrible experience' ('Beginnings', 1989: 112).

In *Honeycomb*, Miriam becomes a governess and experiences her mother's tragic death which appears to parallel Richardson's own traumatic loss of her mother. The death of her mother and father had been foreseen by Miriam when she was a child. But after their death she happens to see them in a ghostly way while recalling their presence:

Her father and mother, whose failure and death she had foreseen as a child with sudden bitter tears, were going on now step by step towards these ghostly things in the small bright lamplit villa in Gunnersbury [...], she had heard them laugh together as they talked in their room. (*Honeycomb*, 426)

The shock and grief of her mother's death made Miriam feel empty and vacant and things become evanescent:

Miriam clasped her hands together. She could not feel them [...] There were cold tears running into her mouth. They had no salt. Cold water. They stopped. Moving her body with slow difficulty against the unsupported air, she looked slowly about. It was so difficult to move. Everything was airy and transparent. (*Honeycomb*, 489)

Her mother becomes an image of perfection and nurturing: 'The love of God was like the love of a mother; always forgiving you, ready to die for you, always waiting for you to be good' (*Honeycomb*, 391).

It is unclear what Dorothy Richardson may have known directly or indirectly of concepts drawn from the work of Bergson and William James, particularly in terms of stream of consciousness. However, the text itself suggests otherwise. To the reader there appears to be no obvious and significant beginning, middle or end in the plotting of *Pilgrimage*; the eventfulness of Miriam's life and the narrative of the stories within. In fact *Pilgrimage* is so autobiographical (Laura Frost [2000:274] calls it 'loosely autobiographical'), it is common for critics to be unsure whether one is discussing Miriam's experiences or Richardson's own thinly disguised ones. Joanne Winning, *The Pilgrimage of Dorothy Richardson* (2000) in seeing a hidden lesbian sub text operating throughout the novels, frequently links the narrative to Richardson's own life, and the first chapter suggests that information linking Richardson to celebrated lesbian Natalie Barney was suppressed. There is a blurring between third person narration in the novels in the *Pilgrimage* sequence with their extensive focalization through Miriam, use of free indirect discourse in Miriam's voice and use of literal interior monologue. This subjectivity in formal narrative terms (as Davis [2013] discusses) is consistent with being influenced by James and Bergson. It accompanies a validation of the gendered significance of such subjective views of the world, in terms of Miriam's development as a free human being.

Richardson, like the other female writers examined in the thesis, made use of a gendered vision of Bergsonian concepts that anticipated many of the later developments of French

feminism. Her fiction could be regarded as an early example of such *écriture féminine*⁶⁰, perhaps the strongest such example explored in the thesis. The theoretical structure of this feminist literary theory emphasizes the unique qualities of femininity and the potential for a critical gendered perspective about women in the capitalist, patriarchal and industrial age of the twentieth-century age.⁶¹ Richardson's protagonist's narrative consciousness seeks to penetrate the topographical illusions of the social order, much as Bergson and James seek to do, but she does so with a feminist perspective and voice.

Dorothy Richardson's life on some levels offers a similar story to that of Sinclair, Woolf and Mansfield, although her background was considerably less grand than Woolf. Richardson also suffered from a life shaped by the experience of patriarchal dominance, but also like May Sinclair she had been let down by her father. Her father, Charles Richardson had sold his own father's very successful chain of grocer's in 1874 (when his daughter was born). He lived a well-to-do life but he can be considered a failure compared to Woolf and Mansfield's fathers. Years of financial profligacy led in 1890 to bankruptcy, when Dorothy Richardson was seventeen years old. Charles Richardson's own father (Thomas) had been a self-made man, a shopkeeper who had become rich through business. (Fromm, 1977:18) Dorothy Richardson's teenage years were lived in genteel impoverishment and anxiety about money and her father was in certain ways an undependable patriarchal figure. While Richardson

⁶⁰ This approach is best analyzed and understood with reference to thinkers such as Julia Kristeva, Hélène Cixous, and Luce Irigaray, where their explicit objective (more aesthetically implicit in Richardson) is to denote and support a gendered way of modernist writing.

⁶¹ Late capitalist industrial society and the gathering speed of modernity like new industries, media and consequent changes in patterns of social organisation, labour and leisure were major changes which meant women could move into work outside of the home. These had further impacts on the way women perceived themselves and their society (for example the suffragettes). Dorothy Richardson herself made her living for much of her life as a receptionist. Morag Shiach (2004) in *Modernism, Labour and Selfhood in British Literature and Culture 1890-1930* says that 'the entry of women into the office was by no means an inevitable result of the invention' (63) of technology in general at the modern time. Shiach continues that 'one version of the position of women within modernity sees wage labour, with increasing literary and access to the vote, as part of the progressive emancipation of women' (64).

Lawrence S. Rainey in 'Fables of Modernity: The Typist in Germany and France' argues that representations of woman's work in such texts 'combines theoretical depth with a strong commitment to historical accuracy and sociological explanations'(2004: 339). Luce Irigaray argues in 'Women-Amongst-Themselves: Creating a Woman-to-Woman Sociality', that feminist solidarity was enhanced by changes in women's roles that allowed them to leave the domestic home and enter the workplace: 'it is probably the economic conditions bound up with industry that have allowed us to come together again... to teach us to love other women... to live with them'(1991: 191-192).

started off idolizing him, she ended up hating him because of both his treatment of her mother and very possibly his financial failure. (Fromm, 1977: 11-22)

Charles Richardson varied between being forceful and passive although he remained married to Richardson's mother but he had fallen out of love. Nonetheless, her father did bring a certain intellectual tenor to her life. He was a member of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, an important British learned society (who had supported the work of Thomas Huxley) and frequently entertained intellectuals discussing art, politics and music (Bach, Chopin and Wagner); this explains Dorothy Richardson's original paternal idolization. Their less wealthy life was transitory, moving houses frequently while Richardson was young - (Abingdon, 1873, Worthing, West Sussex, 1880 and Putney, London, 1883s) but the family remained at the mercy of a problematic, patriarchal provider figure. Richardson therefore experienced more freedom as a young woman than many middle class contemporaries. She worked as a teacher and governess out of necessity, but as the character of Miriam suggests this was not always seen as a blessing but instead provoked anxiety, as in the quotation above where she discusses the cost of freedom.

Richardson's original home was a semi-rural one, a 'large white-stoned house with a walled garden,' replete with flowers and greenery. (Fromm, 1977: 4) This explains why her childhood memories seem often romantic and lyrical in contrast to her protagonist's subsequent views of London. This usage of a past before a character resembles the emphasis on a halcyon past of a number of women writers in the period (such as Mansfield and Woolf), which emphasizes the potentiality of girlhood before patriarchy fixes the female subject into place. Dorothy Richardson and her sister enjoyed their social life as young women, much as Miriam does with her sister Eve:

At the musical evenings, organized by Eve as a winter set-off to the tennis-club, she had both played and sung, hoping each time afresh to be able to reproduce the effects which came so easily when she was alone or only with Eve. (*Pointed Roofs*, 42).

Richardson holidayed in Dawlish on the south Devon coast – in the 1880s this was a distant and less commonly visited middle class seaside resort - as a child with her family every summer. Much as Woolf holidayed in Talland House memorialized in *To the Lighthouse*,

although Woolf's father chose a more singular vacation destination. Miriam's memory of a heavenly childhood, filled with potential that represents an amalgamation of the two locations, is also compared to her father's subsequent declining fortunes:

No one else's father went with a party of scientific men 'for the advancement of science' to Norway or America, seeing the Falls and the Yosemite Valley. No one else took his children as far as Dawlish for the holidays, travelling all day, from eight until seven . . . no esplanade, the old stone jetty and coves and cowrie shells. . . . (*Pointed Roofs*, 33)

The beauty and freedom associated with childhood are challenged in mature society's social codes and responsibilities; its moral structure are specially constraining for women.

In 'Data for a Spanish Publisher' Richardson recollects 'life was dimmed by the presence of a governess, a worthy being who, if she could, would have formed us to the almost outmoded pattern of female education: the minimum of knowledge and a smattering of various "accomplishments"' ('Data' 1989: 131-140). This lyrical, subjective focus on childhood should be understood in terms of qualitative time, which allows the expression of an inner self and mediation on alternatives for women to the patriarchal world. As Bergson describes it, duration is in relation to one's personal growth: 'we do not *think* real time, but we *live* it, because life transcends intellect' (*Creative Evolution* 49). We can see such concentrated subjectivity within qualitative duration in Virginia Woolf's *To the Lighthouse* when Mrs. Ramsay says to Mr. Bankes that the food recipe is a French one:

It was rich; it was tender. It was perfectly cooked. [...] Of course it was French. What passes for cookery in England is an abomination (they agreed). It is putting cabbages in water. It is roasting meat till it is like leather. It is cutting off the delicious skins of vegetables. (320)

Cooking at the time was about subtle adaptation rather than developed presentation of originality. According to Alexandra Harris (2015) 'their debates about style, about inheritance, about plainness and excess were concerned not only with the design of the world around us, but also with what we choose to take into our bodies' (115).

However, surprisingly the other aspect of Richardson's memories of childhood is her father's creative, enabling effects on her life. He does not come across simply as a typical patriarchal figure who forbids all female independence – as for example seems to be the case with Mansfield and Woolf's fathers. St. Helen, the church her father praised so much was

remembered by Richardson directly as a primarily aesthetic and sensuous experience. Gloria Fromm (1977) describes it as ‘a thing of beauty with a sweet-sounding name and without a trace of religious piety’ (10).

Mary Richardson became mentally ill and suffered with depression and in 1893 this situation was much worsened after the father’s complete bankruptcy. Eventually Richardson’s mother committed suicide in 1895, despite the fact that Dorothy Richardson had given up work in 1895 to try to care for her. A mother’s death under such tragic circumstances would no doubt have given Dorothy Richardson considerable feeling of primal guilt and failure – a situation unlike Woolf or Mansfield. It is therefore unsurprising that Richardson is particularly interested in the nature of female roles within the family (daughter as protectors, mother as a source of nurturing). Plus the world of work has simultaneously something of a more ambivalent attitude towards patriarchy than other female writers. Her experience was of a patriarchy, while powerful initially and eventually exploded by her father’s bankruptcy whose absence as much as its presence led to her mother’s despair and subsequent death. Her father’s ill-treatment of her mother was therefore a more complex phenomenon in many ways and this is echoed in the novels by a lack of domineering, patriarchal figures.

Richardson’s father Charles despite his bohemian credentials and desire for a life of the mind may have tended towards the ‘Angel in the House’ view of woman, as is suggested by Miriam’s father in *Pointed Roofs*. In Richardson’s view he was not particularly helpful to her mother; among other problems he perhaps heightened her own sense of worthlessness. In a letter to Peggy Kirkaldy on 22nd August 1940, Richardson describes her father as having a lavish and entertaining lifestyle: ‘My Pater, a connoisseur in most things, kept an excellent cellar. [...] I still see him, on dinner party days, climbing upstairs tenderly carrying cobwebby bottles the maids were not allowed to touch, & the array of variously shaped wine-glasses... [...]...’ (Fromm, 1995: 479).

Juliet Yates has commented that: ‘Miriam is either taken back to Eden in her childhood garden memories or to Hades with surfacing memories of her mother’s suicide; her ability to deal with the latter, more painful, memories signals her progress in *Bildung*’ (2010, n.p). Her

mother's despair can be analyzed as both a symptoms and a symbol of a traditional mother ruled and dominated by her husband; her fate the real one that was endured by women who acceded to Victorian stereotypes imposed by dominant fathers and husbands, and, simultaneously as a kind of protest using madness and death against patriarchy. It is further discussed in Elaine Showalter's *The Madwoman in the Attic* (1979), or contemporary feminist texts such as Charlotte Perkins Gillman *The Yellow Wallpaper* (2009) [1892], in which the woman diagnosed with hysteria becomes increasingly alienated due to the prescription of a complete rest cure and is slowly driven mad; believing she has become part of the wallpaper. Like the suffragette's non – violence did not preclude a strategy of self-harm and martyrdom, and it seems likely that Dorothy Richardson saw her mother as someone whose depression and inner sufferings indirectly led to her suicide.

It is worth saying that Richardson started late as a writer (when she was thirty), like her protagonist Miriam, and her restructuring of her private thoughts on the day. While writing at night in her attic garret, suggest the importance she attached to her life as an independent female artist and the use she made of the writer's diary as a preparatory tool. Richardson believes in the importance of the professional life of the woman writer and draws on autobiography as a mode. Just as Sinclair, Mansfield and Woolf do, recognizing that this is an essential feminist activity and equally essential feminist literary strategy, this connected with Bergson's idea of the duty of the artist to foster their *élan vital* and by implication for artists to write from their own experiences.

Richardson had a fairly Romantic view both of stream of consciousness and creativity, where she preferred the term 'fountain' (thesis 137 - 138) over that of 'stream'. Thereby she gives it a more directed and intentional image that recalls Wordsworthian descriptions of the imagination and the power of the individual or subjective imagination. It was May Sinclair who first suggested that Richardson was reworking James' 'Stream of Consciousness' to show the inner workings of Miriam's perception, although this usually occurs within the working of the third person limited narrator. Richardson's emphasis on an intuitive literary approach (in Bergson's terms) interpreted, recognized and represented her female gender as both a writer and a modern woman. In using literary techniques derived from James' (stream of consciousness) and Bergson's philosophy (the *élan vital* and the qualitative) she does so in

a gendered and feminist way that explore women's emotion and sensations as well as the possibilities and difficulties of personal transformation for women at this point in history. As has been suggested, the bankruptcy of Richardson's reckless father when she was teenager, after her very comfortable upbringing, had a significant impact on Richardson's work and life. His life made her acutely aware of issues of social class and economic necessity – rather than being a straightforward celebrator of feminist independent women.

Katherine Mansfield (1888 – 1923)

Katherine Mansfield is a colonial from a white settler country in New Zealand living in England and affected by how the English reacted towards the colonials. The significance of Mansfield's life is shown in her adventurousness demonstrated by travelling and living in different locations; transformed her subjective experiences from the stereotyped Victorian image of a woman to a more modern-woman. This combines elements of the new woman and the bohemian woman. She was nineteen years old when she left for Britain⁶² and subsequently encountered famous writers such as D.H. Lawrence and Virginia Woolf. Mansfield was educated⁶³ in Britain from 1903-1906 and later she lived most of her adult life in Europe; between New Zealand, England, France, Italy and Switzerland.

⁶² Mansfield sailed to London in the summer of 1908, hoping that an exciting and a new life must be awaiting her there (Tomalin 2012: 46).

⁶³ Mansfield's intention for a literary career in London started in Beauchamp Lodge, a hostel in Paddington for music students, and her semi-artistic lifestyle continued with 'performing witty and entertaining skits at fashionable parties' in London. She then became fully involved with A. R. Orage's *The Little Review* and John Middleton Murry's new avant-garde *Rhythm* magazine. (Boddy, 1988:33-38) Middleton Murry was first her lover during this period and then later became her husband on 3rd May 1918. Mansfield was from a relatively wealthy family in New Zealand and was originally bankrolled by her banker father but he was not happy about her settling in England. However, as a younger woman before her final movement to England in 1908, she attended Queen's College from 1903 – 1906 in Harley Street in London. Over there, she met lifelong fellow writer Ida Baker also known as Leslie Moore, and Ruth Herrick who described her as 'a girl of great vitality, impulsive and strong willed' (Boddy, 1988:7-9). In addition, she became editor of the Queen's school magazine when she wrote 'five stories' and particularly she was interested in the works of Oscar Wilde and the French Symbolists. (Boddy, 1988:9-11). Orage was introduced to Mansfield through George Bowden, a music teacher and Mansfield's first husband from 1909 - 1912. (Brooker, 2007) Through Orage, his mistress and co-editor Beatrice Hastings, Mansfield began to write for the magazine. Perhaps through the influence of these friends her writing 'was frequently cruelly malicious, sarcastic and spiteful' (Boddy, 1988: 33). Later Mansfield expressed her appreciation to Orage: 'you taught me to write, you taught me to think, you showed me what there was to be done and what not to do' (Tomalin 2012: 81).

Mansfield's private and modernist life was marked by its Bohemian qualities, as she experienced exciting aesthetic occurrences such as art and music in London's theatre, concerts and art galleries. At first, London life was different from her previous childhood life in New Zealand and Mansfield found it difficult to cope with, as Daly Saralyn notes: '[L]ife in London, begun in 1908, proved as painful as her life back in New Zealand had been, and strengthened the feeling of homelessness, which is a recurrent theme in Mansfield's writing' (1994: 22). Mansfield's experience of the city of London as 'a woman and "the little colonial" operates as a focal point for examining the interconnections of social class, economic systems, gender and space in Mansfield's work' (Janet Wilson, *et al* 2011:704).

Mansfield's professional self-image as a writer expressed, in a specifically modernist fashion, Bergson's idea of the *élan vital*. Such aspects include: the effects upon her understanding of the aesthetics and formal properties of her own writing as shown in her fiction; some of her reviews and other comments on literature; the role of her conscious experiences as a woman in society in how they were reflected or interpreted in her short stories; the effect of the theories of James and Bergson upon the way she lived her life, and her career as a professional writer (either in direct or indirect fashion in terms of influence). Mansfield may have approached Bergson's philosophy through his critics, Bertrand Russell and George Santayana as well as directly. Eiko Nakano maintains that 'the name of Bergson is never mentioned in Mansfield's extant writings, while the names of Bertrand Russell and George Santayana, who both criticized Bergson, are favourably referred to in some of her personal writings [...] However, Mansfield destroyed substantial parts of her personal writings, and it is possible that there were notebooks and letters in which she wrote about Bergson' (2005: 3).

Even though there are some parallels between the struggles Mansfield herself faced between her public role and those private experiences which are the results of the duration of qualitative time that Bergson describes, and the types of conflicted situations in which her characters find themselves. Mansfield's characters are seldom even loosely autobiographical equivalents for Mansfield's own life in the way that Richardson's Miriam is. Mansfield described her position on writing in a letter to her husband, Murry in 1918 before the end of the First World War:

[o]ne is joy – real joy – the thing that made me write when we lived at Pauline, and that sort of writing I could only do in just that state of being is some perfectly blissful way *at peace*. Then something delicate and lovely seems to open before my eyes, like a flower without thought of a frost or a cold breath – [...] The other ‘kick-off’ is my original one, [with] [...] an extremely deep sense of hopelessness – of everything doomed to disaster – [...]. (O’Sullivan and Scott, Vol. II, 1987:54)

Accordingly there are two types of writing: one is the ‘real joy and blissful way *at peace*’ which gives life the opportunity of a renewed and mature awareness that comes from personal experiences and conscious memories; it is the life of the new woman that opens like a ‘flower’. Yet, the second joyful and peaceful type of writing contradicts with considerable moments of suffering, pain and a ‘deep sense of hopelessness.’ Such moments are then inevitable and cannot be avoided.

The chapter also explores the affinities between Bergsonian views of Mansfield with that of how a theorization of *écriture féminine* may explore the same texts, while *écriture féminine* was admittedly developed as a thesis long after Mansfield’s death. This is a concept that can be applied to literary texts and the symbolic images used by them. Their concepts can be used to analyze how certain events, actions and so forth constitute a world described in the selected texts that can be perceived; offering a gendered perspective through analysis of both the author’s overall style and of the character’s own conscious language. One intention of this thesis is to show a certain affinity in this sense of recuperating a radical female view in both the ideas of such a feminist criticism and the perspective of female modernist writers. In the case of this chapter through close analysis of Mansfield’s aforementioned short fictions: ‘Prelude’ (1918), ‘Bliss’ (1920), and ‘The Garden Party’ (1922). Therefore, the aim is to argue that Mansfield’s feminist use of Bergsonian and Jamesian concepts in her fiction anticipates the theoretical concepts developed in *écriture féminine*.

Mansfield’s feminist inclination for leading a bohemian life was more self-determining since her personal life reveals much about her inner conscious feelings and also her attempts to put Bergsonian theories into a gendered practice, in terms of her actual life and fiction. Her intuitive emotions particularly came to the fore after the death of her brother during World War One, which motivated her to write about her New Zealand childhood memories. Simultaneously Mansfield felt her husband was restricting her independent state by looking

after her, since she was ill through her short life with tuberculosis. Arguably, through her changing narrative technique, the development of stream of consciousness and her growing use of indirect discourse Mansfield tries to revitalize her own second 'self' (the more gendered bohemian self) by conversing with this through the medium of her characters.

Virginia Woolf (1882 – 1941)

Among the four female writers here, Woolf was the one who was closest to the literary establishment, possessed of very considerable cultural capital and born into the upper-middle classes. She was emerged from an educated, distinguished literary family; her father, Leslie Stephen (1832–1904), was a prominent historian and critic, as well as being the editor of the *Dictionary of National Biography*⁶⁴. Her mother, Julia Prinsep Stephen (1846–1895) was a famous beauty of the period, having been painted by several pre-Raphaelites and was the daughter of the novelist William Makepeace. Woolf to some extent resented her mother as an archetypal 'Angel of the House' with no desire to cultivate her intellect. Woolf was denied any formal education, but was educated by means of her father's extensive library. However, throughout her life she resented that most university places and professions were reserved for men. Hyde Park Gate in Kensington was where the family lived stimulated Woolf's interest in gardens as an example of nature turned into art, and as the locations of significant female activity. Vanessa Bell, Woolf's sister, helped introduce her to European post-impressionist art, and Woolf often chose Vanessa's art for Hogarth Press book covers, such as the cover of 'Kew Gardens' (1919).

Yet again it was her father's library that included many texts from the eighteenth century, considered as immoral by the Victorians, that guided her to form her writing style, as detailed

⁶⁴ *The Dictionary of National Biography* (DNB) is a work of reference about notable figures of British history, first published in 1885 (later updated as the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* from 2004). Leslie Stephen 'spent ten years' on the dictionary and as Ruth Webb explains, while 'highly respected as a scholar and writer, Virginia's father nevertheless agonised about his work on the *DNB* – as he did about much else – and was the dominant figure in the family' (2000: 11).

by Lyndall Gordon in *Virginia Woolf: A Writer's Life*: 'he [her father] not only shaped her tastes [...]' but '[...] the very format of her drafts follows his: brief clauses, punctuated by semicolons, pile up adding a new observation, a new nuance to the basis of the sentence' (1986: 77). This recognition of self leads to the often autobiographical nature of Woolf's texts and can be seen as a kind of self-creation in Bergsonian terms – as well as more traditional feminist ones - based upon the qualitative experience of her inner life. As previously suggested the auto-biographical or pseudo-autobiographical and the creation of a professional writer's life are as much as Bergsonian as a feminist gesture.

Woolf's life was haunted and traumatised especially her childhood period when she experienced several traumatizing events including the deaths of both her mother in 1895 and her stepsister, Stella Duckworth. However, perhaps most shockingly she claimed to have been sexually abused by her half-brothers Gerald and George Duckworth.⁶⁵ Arguably it was such events that overwhelmed her and she suffered a series of nervous breakdowns. Perhaps structurally similar in certain ways to the shell-shock suffered by Septimus Smith in *Mrs Dalloway* that were probably a source of recurrent depression when she looked back into her childhood. This problem was augmented by the patriarchal authority wielded by her father and then her brother; their tendency to deny what had happened to her and to unconsciously control her life. These family events are reflected in the main fictional themes of Woolf's novels and short stories such as *The Voyage Out* (1915). Here, Woolf is mirrored in Rachel, the main character, who explores her gender through a conscious, subjective sense of the duration of time. Rachel's journey starts from a sheltered upbringing in a wealthy London suburb and ends in freedom, while the challenges of intellectual encounters and discussion perhaps reflect her discovery of the Bloomsbury Group.

After the death of her father, Woolf experienced a severe nervous breakdown that was combined with scarlet fever and made her to move from her Kensington home to Bloomsbury where she was more influenced by the liberal Cambridge 'Apostles'⁶⁶ and more innovative

⁶⁵ See: Louise DeSalvo, *Virginia Woolf: The Impact of Childhood Sexual Abuse on Her Life and Work* (1990).

⁶⁶ The Apostles were intellectual Cambridge University secret society who had strong influences on Bloomsbury as several members of the group including Leonard Woolf and John M. Murry (Katherine

artistic circles (Gilbert, Sandra M., and Susan Gubar, *Norton* 1985:1340-1349). Therefore, Woolf's life can arguably be regarded as a psychic transformation shifting from her 'classical case of a manic-depressive' (Caramagno 10) into becoming a great visionary writer of the twentieth century.

All of the four female modernist writers discussed in this thesis, while in some ways very different, can be seen as part of an informal network of writers simultaneously putting the autobiographical mode to use in the context of their own fiction as utilisers/creators of 'stream of consciousness' as method. While making use of the powerful paradigm of thinking introduced and provided by William James and Henri Bergson. They made use of their own subjectively apprehended lives to create experimental fictions that spoke to a moment when women were trying to mark out new lives for themselves in a modern world, mainly where patriarchy and tradition were under sustained feminist critique.

Mansfield's husband) belonged. W. C. Lubenow, *Cambridge Apostles, 1820-1914: Liberalism, Imagination, and Friendship in British Intellectual and Professional Life*. (2007) and Richard Deacon, *Cambridge Apostles: A History of Cambridge University's Elite Intellectual Secret Society* (1985). G.E. Moore's *Principia Ethica*, published 1903 was important: the Apostles and Cambridge Men (specifically Keynes, Strachey, and Leonard Woolf), 'imported Moore's ideas to London and Bloomsbury, sharing them with the other members of the Bloomsbury group, most importantly Vanessa and Virginia Stephen' (Llana Carroll, 2009: 7).

Chapter One

Memory, Élan Vital and Stream of Consciousness in May Sinclair's Philosophical Writings and *Mary Olivier*.

This chapter explores May Sinclair's use of stream-of-consciousness technique in terms of her gendered use of Jamesian ideas and key concepts drawn from Bergson. In addition it considers the variety of her employment in her fictions and the range of her female protagonists. She purveys a distinctly feminist understanding of women during the period: among the roles detailed are working women as secretaries, nurses, patients (as characters) and her own as news columnist and diarist reporting the conditions during World War I. In experimenting with the representation of the 'crowded interior' (Suzanne Raitt, 2000, 2) of the minds of her characters, Sinclair's work is broadly similar in one sense to later more radical modernist writers like Richardson, Mansfield and Woolf. However, in another sense she is very Victorian as regards her use of realism and emphasis on the development of a female protagonist figure as a character situated in a lived social and cultural world. Although once highly celebrated (as established in the Introduction) Sinclair's work became largely ignored and her critical rediscovery is recent.

Andrew Kunka and Michele Troy argue that her current critical neglect stems from her relatively sudden conversion from realism to modernism: 'the traditional realism of an early novel such as *The Divine Fire* to the more impressionistic style of *Mary Olivier*' (2006:3). Raitt argues that 'Sinclair's evolution into a modernist, coupled with her nostalgic attraction to Victorian literary, especially poetic styles, meant that [...] she found herself caught up in a contradiction she describes as characteristic of modernity itself' (2000:183). The difficulty of determining to which period her work belonged during the transitional period she wrote was compounded when her writing career was abruptly cut short by Parkinson's disease in the 1920s. This was at the peak of her transformation into a Modernist, and by 1930 her illness had forced her silence.

In 1908 Sinclair was already an established, well-known writer after publishing *The Divine Fire* (1904) which focuses on the exploration of psychology and questions of identity, and in particular according to George Johnson ‘the problems of identity particular to a genius’ (2006: 123). It was this novel which became a best-seller and turned Sinclair into a celebrity figure who was one of the best known women of her time: in this sense she was a self-made woman. *The Divine Fire* charts the life of the young Savage Keith Rickman, who ‘has not yet found himself’ (1905: 29). It is about the son of a second-hand book seller in London and a poet, whose alienation from contemporary capitalist norms is indicated by his poetry imitating Greek models and which according to Boll functions as ‘a form of protest against the gross modernity of which he is a part’ (1973: 178). The novel follows his love for Lucia Harden and his eventual (successful) quest for psychological integration of the different aspects of his personality. This is to say psychological health requiring his inner and outer lives to be interconnected by valuing his subjective, qualitative experience. While focusing on a male figure, which shows some conventionality, it indicates Sinclair’s developing interests demonstrating a protagonist’s struggle for psychological progression and integration. A more feminist interest in the way women’s lives are constrained and repressed by patriarchy was represented by *The Three Sisters* (1914). It focuses on the three sisters of the title: Gwenda, Mary and Alice and was deeply influenced by Sinclair’s interest in the Bronte’s (Pykett, 2004: xvii). According to Lyn Pykett the ‘psycho-sexual portraits of the three sisters refers back to the New Woman in the 1890s but it also looks forward to the modernist fiction of Dorothy Richardson and Virginia Woolf’ (xviii).

Sinclair’s intellectual life moved toward a depiction of the concept of a ‘New Woman’ contesting the values of a patriarchal society, nurtured by the growth of the feminist and suffragette movements. The setting (and hence representation) of the social structure of her fictional stories before 1914, are generally Victorian. However, the characters seem more modernist because of the narrator’s focus on subjective feelings, their qualitative sense of experiences, which interweaves their mental processes and defines their relationship to the outside world. Her texts after 1914 have more positive new female figures (although these women are not as independent as examples in Richardson or Woolf) that are more modern in sensibility (unlike in *The Divine Fire* where Lucy is simply a muse for the male poet). Novels such as *Mary Oliver* (1919) and *The Life and Death of Harriet Fren* (1922) are not only explore the anxieties, the frustrations, the annihilation and deprivation of the self, that is to

say, all the negative social forces acting upon women, but simultaneously consider the impulses toward freedom and independence away from these constraints. Besides, the rules imposed and the desire for self-realization, even at the expense of the feelings of loneliness and alienation from contemporary society. As Christine Battersby says 'Mary Oliver deserves to be far better known for its courageous and creative use of theory to reimagine the artist as *female*, and in ways that do not implicitly gender the "I" or the "ego" [...]' (2002:120).

In terms of Bergsonian and Jamesian thoughts (which Sinclair discusses in *The New Idealism*), fictionally speaking Sinclair stresses the importance of self-development in the private versus public time of her female characters and how their inner voices can be made public and audible. In this sense they express the gendered implications inherent in James' and Bergson's philosophy thereby representing the female subject. Matt Ffytche in *The Foundation of the Unconscious* identifies Sinclair as a key figure exploring and popularizing Jungian, Freudian and in particular Bergsonian concepts of 'the "secret of Personal Identity and Individuality" and the nature of acts of will [...]' (2011:30).

As we have considered, stream of consciousness, a Jamesian concept deployed to describe a novel, was first used by Sinclair when reviewing Dorothy Richardson's *Pilgrimage* (thesis 13 - 14). It is one of the key areas of this thesis, because it links theories and interests in psychology and philosophy (in terms of James and Bergson), with the practice of female modernist writers, for whom feminism and the exploration of female experience in a limiting, patriarchal world is absolutely critical. Sinclair's fictional interest in stream-of-consciousness technique seems to predate her above usage of the term, representing part of her attempt to discover the consequences of a richer account of the individual subject's intuitive experiences. This is in contrast with that of the traditional empiricists who suggests sense data from the outside world are more important than any subjective filtering.

In similar fashion, Sinclair's shared interest in the SPR along with William James and Henri Bergson, confirms her view concerning empiricist derived science, sceptical of its emphasis on the directly observable world. She was aware of its important limitations in understanding the psyche and consciousness, of which actual psychic phenomenon may contribute only a

small part. In *A Defence of Idealism* argued Sinclair that ‘I believe in Pragmatism ... [as] ... a method not a philosophy. Pragmatism is one long argument ad hominem’ (1917: ix-x). In *The New Idealism* Sinclair says explicitly ‘We have to think of Space-Time as subsisting in and through the subject-object relation’ (296). Like the other female modernists examined Sinclair represented such private experiences to challenge patriarchy. As Allison Pease notes: ‘May Sinclair focuses on the experience of boredom in women's lives to explore the ways that late-nineteenth and early-twentieth-century British culture rewarded women for renouncing their desires and developing self-inhibited characters whose lives appear meaningless and empty’ (2012: 168). Such critical representations of the mundane moments of everyday life meant she became a key figure that influenced later women writers who shredded such stereotypes of self-abnegation, such as Richardson, Mansfield and Woolf. Her determined mode of writing is strongly allied to an awareness of the value of the specific interiority of the female and modernist subject; both through utilizing stream of consciousness and in exploring the importance of Bergson’s distinction between qualitative memory and quantitative memory. In addition to her prizing of the authenticity of the *élan vital* that allows the development of a genuinely individual subject, perhaps shown most strongly in the loosely autobiographical *Mary Olivier*. As explored below self-creation and self-realization are crucial themes in that novel.

This chapter also charts Sinclair’s intellectual development as a philosopher (her interest in writing about idealism from a more technical point of view, distinguishes her from other female modernists). Her fiction is examined from the perspective of the autobiographical mode as a key feminist literary strategy. Sinclair focuses on her childhood and adulthood memories within a conscious duration, creating pseudo-autobiographical fictional characters in novels such as *Mary Olivier*, much as Richardson will later do in *Pilgrimage*. Through reflection on her own writing practice, she explores her style but less obviously anticipates *écriture féminine*, following a broadly more realist strategy, despite her emphasis on the value of the subjective and qualitative. Raitt points to why Sinclair maintains realism when she says her novels are about: ‘women’s struggle with their sexual desires, the demands of creativity, and the fiction of family relationships’ (2). Sinclair works in her narratives to incorporate her characters’ inner minds from past to present and their subjective experiences of society and public time. Through such a Jamesian stream-of-consciousness technique, Sinclair’s characters are able to further explore their subjective moment-to-moment experiences and

subsequent reflections from a gendered perspective. Kaplan argues that Sinclair was the first female modern writer to apply and give a ‘literary connotation [to] James’s Stream of Consciousness’, and that Sinclair’s ‘stream-of-consciousness novel was the outgrowth of her own ideas and development as a novelist’ (1975: 48).

Unlike the other female modernist writers discussed in the thesis, Sinclair saw herself as at least partly located within the academic discipline of philosophy. Not least because of her idealist defense of the suffragette position and the relevance of violence against property in her pamphlet *Feminism* (published by The Women Writers’ Suffrage League, 1912). Jim Gough (2009) has astutely argued that Sinclair’s Defence of Feminism and Idealism in this pamphlet, against opponents of the women’s movement for emancipation such as Sir Almroth Wright, depends upon a use of the idea of the ‘life force’. Although Gough does not explicitly say so, this demonstrates Sinclair’s interest in Bergson’s idea of the *élan vital*, and the value of subjective thinking to counter claims of female mental inferiority as well as the continuing charge of female hysteria. As Gough concludes: ‘May Sinclair defines, evaluates and demonstrates the individual’s conscious agreement to participate in self-definition and self-fulfilment in the feminist movement’ (16).

Sinclair’s paper⁶⁷ on ‘Primary and Secondary Consciousness’⁶⁸ (which demonstrated her theoretical interests in human consciousness were similar to Bergson and James, also argues for the role and importance of the subjective experience) was read on 5th of February 1923 in London at the Aristotelean society and earned her admission⁶⁹ as a woman member of this august professional philosophical association, first founded in 1880. Boll argues that this represented the summit of her progress as a philosopher, as later Sinclair would serve on the Aristotelean Society’s executive committee. (1973: 19) Sinclair had a profound interest in

⁶⁷ Boll contends that Sinclair should be titled as an ‘Emancipated Woman, in the sense in which George Gissing most clearly defined the term *emancipation*’ (1973:22).

⁶⁸ *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* 23, no. 7 (1923), 111-120.

⁶⁹ Boll (1973: 20) explains that she was the first female member of the Aristotelian Society, which she had joined in 1917. Her paper was commented on by Alfred North Whitehead, and the Society’s chair and president at the time, as well as the philosopher and later broadcasting personality, Cyril E. M. Joad.

Pantheism and mysticism⁷⁰ as an alternative to materialism, which links her to Bergson in particular, a shared affinity explored later in this chapter. She was an active suffragette⁷¹ and as a celebrity best-selling writer was an influential member of the Woman Writer's Suffrage League.⁷²

May Sinclair was also a member of the SPR founded in 1882 in United Kingdom,⁷³ and her elected membership spanned between 1914-1943. The Society, whose important active members included both William James (President SPR 1894-1895) and Henri Bergson (president SPR 1913), explores alleged psychic abilities such as telepathy. The society also scrutinized paranormal phenomena such as mediums, alleged hauntings and the existence of life after death in a logical and neutral way. Although according to Boll, Sinclair first met William James in 1905, shortly before she joined the SPR, as it seems likely she was active before becoming elected as a member. (1973: 81) In its early history, when Sinclair would

⁷⁰ According to Raitt (2000:10) Mysticism was part of Sinclair's questioning of her traditional Christian faith, but she also suggests that Sinclair changed her ideas from tending towards Kantian thinking to a form of Hegelian idealism (which is a system of Absolute Monism). As will be clear from this chapter, the contention is that Raitt seriously underestimates the importance of both Spinoza and Bergson in Sinclair's philosophical thinking.

⁷¹ Through her literary and philosophical work she offered valuable contributions to feminism and the struggle for suffrage. She was involved in the universal suffrage debate (1908-1912) and deployed idealist feminist arguments, such as the pamphlet mentioned above which defended the campaign of suffragette violence against property. According to Laurel Forster, Sinclair uses her text *The War of Liberation from a Journal*, where she was ostensibly acting as a nurse and secretary in Belgium, in order to resist traditional representations of passive women in Victorian Christianity, arguing in favour of more active and independent women (2008: 241).

⁷² Sowon S. Park, 'The First Professional: The Women Writers' Suffrage League' (1997) in an effective analysis of the movement, describes how the League formed in 1908 as the organization of professional women writers supporting suffrage and included May Sinclair and Violet Hunt. Carolyn Christensen Nelson in *Literature of the Women's Suffrage Campaign in England* points out that WWSL's 'members decided that they would use their writing to get the vote for women on the same terms as it was given to men. Its colours were black, white, and gold' (2004: xli). Glenda Norquay (1995) offers important examples of texts from the period, that amongst other things show the importance of autobiography as a fundamental feminist literary and political strategy. On this point see Maroula Joanna 1995. 25-31.'

⁷³ The Society for Psychical Research can be found online at <http://www.spr.ac.uk/>. Founded in 1883 by, among others, Frederic W. H. Myers (1843-1901). Histories of this important research organisation include Renee Haynes, *History of the Society for Psychical Research: 1882-1982*, (1982), John J. Cerullo, *The Secularisation of the Soul: Psychical Research in Modern Britain* (1982), Deborah Blum, *Ghost Hunters: William James and the Search for Scientific Proof of Life After Death* (2006). The SPR has become a central focus for recent discussion about content and techniques in late Victorian and Modernist fiction. See Tatiana Kontou's (2009. 43 – 82) chapter on telepathy, the interiority of the female self and the relations of spiritualism and narrative technique in *Mary Olivier: 'Well Tuned Mediums: May Sinclair and Dorothy Richardson'*, Leigh Wilson (2000: 204-264) discusses Sinclair and the SPR in *The Domestication of Death: May Sinclair's 'Uncanny Stories'* of her unpublished doctoral thesis. See also Gary Crawford (1986: 37-38) 'May Sinclair'; Roger Luckhurst (2002: 258-262); and George M. Johnson (2006), in *Dynamic Psychology in Modernist British Fiction* (x- xi, 4-5, 33-4, 37-8, 40-1, 50, 55-68).

have been a member, the emphasis of the SPR was perhaps more on trying to scientifically prove the existence of life after death and to be able to perhaps communicate with them; something which no doubt appealed to many after the carnage of World War One as discussed in George M. Johnson (2015) *Mourning and Mysticism in First World War Literature and Beyond: Grappling with Ghosts*.⁷⁴

William James in particular was drawn to the SPR by his skeptical, but nonetheless genuine interest in the work of mediums. According to Deborah Blum it was after the death of his son Herman that his mother in law and wife took him to see a medium called Leonora Piper. (2007: 96-100)⁷⁵ Bergson shared a similar viewpoint to James and Sinclair, being sceptical but determined to investigate psychic phenomenon fairly. He believed that what one called ‘magic’ represented ‘the general structure of the human mind’ and by implication, so did psychic phenomena such as those investigated by the SPR such as telepathy (F.C.T. Moore, 1999: 142).⁷⁶ Leigh Wilson points out Sinclair never published an essay directly about the SPR, though there are occasional comments about psychic phenomenon. (2000: 204-206) Wilson explains Sinclair authored an article in *The Medical Press* that defended the spiritual writings of the physicist and SPR member Sir Oliver Lodge against Charles Mercier’s critique, stressing her scepticism towards communication from the dead, but affirming her belief in telepathy. Her view seems very similar to James and Bergson both in their emphasis on scepticism, the need to scientifically study psychic phenomenon and their willingness to

⁷⁴ Sinclair’s *Uncanny Stories* (1923) combine the tradition of the English ghost story with insights into psychology and an attention to the phenomena that the SPR investigated. As several critics have commented, they are connected to her interest in such psychic phenomenon as telepathy, showing the clear evidence of the role of the SPR in her Idealist philosophy. Luke Thurston, (2012: 99-126); Leigh Wilson (2000:204-264), and Justine Scott McCarthy (2000: 107-171).

⁷⁵ William James’ many essays for and on the SPR and the question of the investigation of psychic phenomenon can be found in *Essays in Psychical Research* (1986) and the sheer number of fifty or more essays indicate more than passing interest. James outlines his project as tackling the relationship between ‘cosmic consciousness and matter’ and suggests that human experiences ‘appear to be only an extract from the larger psychological world’ (1986: 374-375). For James’ extensive involvement in the SPR see Deborah Blum, (2007), who argues that as an active member of the SPR, James was ‘determined to operate on purely scientific methods, to use only trained researchers as investigators’ (86). Robert D. Richardson, (2006) and Paul Stob ‘Speaking up for Spirits’, in Paul Stob, (2013: 111-149).

⁷⁶ Henri Bergson’s Presidential addresses to the SPR from 1913, ‘Phantasms of the Living’ and ‘Psychical Research’ are reprinted in Henri Bergson, Keith Ansell Pearson and Kolkman, Michael, eds. *Mind - Energy* (2007, 59-81). Leigh Wilson, *Modernism and Magic: Experiments with Spiritualism, Theosophy and the Occult* (2012: 5, 26-28, 38, 48, 169).

accept that telepathy could really exist. The attraction of telepathy, unlike communication with the dead, is it seems merely an extension of an idealist or at least non-materialist theory of human communication. As Sinclair remarks in passing in *A Defence of Idealism*:

We have authentic evidence bearing on the existence of a fairly extensive borderland, lying between Magic and Mysticism - the region of the so called 'psychic powers'... that there are 'powers', some powers, is, I think, no longer in dispute. (1917: 260-261)

All three figures, Sinclair, James and Bergson seemed to share a belief in the possibility of telepathy, communication by thought alone, which had the potential to undermine a reductive materialism and provide overwhelmingly strong evidence for the idealist principle that thought and consciousness existed outside of the material body. In his address (which begins with his almost ecstatic sense of honour at being elected President by the Society), Bergson remarks: 'If telepathy is a real fact, it is a fact capable of being repeated indefinitely. I go further: if telepathy be real, it is possible it is operating at any moment and everywhere' ('Phantasms of the Living' 2007: 62). After affirming his own belief in telepathy he relates the facts of investigating psychical phenomenon to his theory of mind. Proposing telepathy as an example of a 'phantasm of the living', in which the more one accustomed to the idea of a 'consciousness overflowing the organism, the more natural we find it to suppose the soul survives the body' (2007:77). Within Bergson's idealist theory of reality and its emphasis on the power of consciousness driven by the *élan vital*, it almost follows logically that telepathy if unusual, must surely be possible. As it implies that the power of consciousness is greater than any material (bodily) constraints. It is also unsurprising that he is skeptical of claims that only mathematical proof can evince scientific investigation of psychical phenomena, as such a view would demonstrably undermine his own philosophical system with its emphasis on the value of subjectivity and intuition.⁷⁷ The value of subjectivity and intuition are to some extent presupposed by allowing the possibility of psychic phenomenon in the face of a doubting scientific rationality.

That a Frenchman, Bergson was appointed President, shows both how important he was to British culture at this time and how importantly his work was regarded. Bergson's emphasis on the value of the subjective experience, struck a receptive chord with women, especially

⁷⁷ G William Barnard. *Living Consciousness: The Metaphysical Vision of Henri Bergson* (2011); Leonard Eslick, 'Bergson, Whitehead and Psychical Research' (1987: 249-25).

those who believed in a realm of ghosts and spirits, a range of beliefs dismissed by modern scientific materialism. As Raitt reports Sinclair claimed in a letter of 16th October 1915 to H.G. Wells that she had seen an apparition as a child and believed there might be another dimension, rarely glimpsed in which the dead lived and that women were more sensitive to psychic phenomenon. (2000: 129) Interest in the SPR's work was widespread among writers and intellectuals. According to Luckhurst (2002: 262), Sinclair's preface to Catherine Dawson Scott's *From Four Who Are Dead* (1926),⁷⁸ a book of automatic writing, equivocates between spiritualist and psychological (thus materialist) explanations for the phenomenon presented by her friend. George M. Johnson suggests that in the séances Sinclair attended with Scott she was 'contacted' by her late brother Frank, who died in 1889, but we do not know how sceptical or not she remained. (2015: 170) Woolf was equally familiar with the work of the SPR but was more sceptical still. Though according to George M Johnson Woolf's work demonstrated mysticism as part of its response to mourning: for example in the visions of Septimus in *Mrs Dalloway*. (2015: 170-180)

William James' many essays for and on the SPR and on the question of the investigation of psychic phenomenon can be found in *Essays in Psychological Research* (1986), and the sheer number of fifty or more essays and review indicate more than passing interest.⁷⁹ Significantly, James in 'The Confidences of a "Psychical Researcher"' outlines his larger project as tackling the relationship between 'cosmic consciousness and matter' and suggests that human experiences 'appear to be only an extract from the larger psychological world' (1986: 361-375, 374-375). Robert A. McDermott in his introduction to the volume of James' essays suggests several key areas of James' interest: the removal of barriers between psychology, philosophy, and religion; the reconciliation of science and religion; commitment to radical empiricism based on what people actually experienced; a recognition of the personal, subjective nature of knowledge; and blurring the western dualism between the mental and the physical. (1986: xii-xxxvi) In this sense they are consistent with aspects of his theory of the stream of consciousness and particularly the emphasis on the value of the subjective and what might be hidden behind the surface of accepted reality.

⁷⁸ Catherine Amy Dawson Scott (1865-1943) was a feminist, poet, novelist and describer of psychic phenomena. She also co-founded PEN.

⁷⁹ Marcus Ford, (1998) 'William James's Psychological Research and Its Philosophical Implications'.

James seems also to have been drawn to the SPR by the remarkably hybrid and energetic nature of the institution: it mixed professional scientists and amateur investigators; thinkers from emergent sciences such as psychology and those from the established, traditional physical sciences and medicine; believers in intuition and hard edged rationalists; philosophers, writers and artists; and importantly, women as well as men. This last point seems crucial for James, as he believed in part that women possessed an ability to see beyond the straightforwardly rational (or in his terms marginalized women's greater subjectivity and 'intuition' (in Bergsonian terms) gave them advantages which male scientists dismissed to their own loss). His essay 'What Psychical Research Has Accomplished' attempts to argue that Psychical Research united different forms of enquiry that were sadly seen as alternative to one another in society. (1897: 299 – 327) In particular the opposition between what societies defined as the opposition of masculine and scientific ways of investigation on the one hand and dismissed feminine non-scientific intuitions on the other. James had always attempted to include within mainstream discussion the marginalised discourse of women, which is arguably one reason why he was so popular with feminist women like Sinclair:

Something escapes the best of us, not accidently, but systematically, and because we have a twist. The scientific-academic mind and the feminine-mystical mind shy away from each other's facts, just as they fly away from each other's temper and spirit (301)

James suggests the controlled, scientific work of the academics conducting psychical research (including those involved in psychology and the SPR) contrasts sharply with more undisciplined studies in mysticism, but that both are equally necessary and neither is dispensable. The two, James argues, differ in 'temper and spirit' and an approach needs to be developed in order to 'pay attention to facts of the sort dear to mystics, while reflecting upon them in academic-scientific ways' (302-303). Consequently, for James, the 'feminine-mystical mind' is the other of science, thereby implying that the realm of mysticism is fluid, overwhelming, intuitive and non-logical. This does not belong to the patriarchal symbolic order but can recognize and represent unseen aspects of reality. One can see that after World War One such investigation would gain greater urgency and that simultaneously the war had considerably damaged the establishment's belief in both patriarchy and rationality. Luke Thurston is not wrong to argue that James is reiterating classic, hierarchical binary oppositions between male rationality and female irrationality here. (2012:100) However, in James' favour we should add that he does seem sympathetic to women's marginalisation in

science and does not wish to legitimate the secondary status of the ‘feminine-mystical’. Besides, his desire for hybridity does attempt to challenge and deconstruct these binary oppositions through the SPR’s practice. Of course, the same charge of repeating gender based, binary oppositions and gender based essentialism has been made against *écriture féminine*. Bergson could be made against female modernist stream-of-consciousness fiction itself as a form that reinforces the idea of woman as essentially subjective and inward looking. Most of the female writers analysed in the thesis could be accused of the same reinforcement of hierarchical, gender based binary oppositions

Sinclair was always interested in the Bronte sisters and published a family biography, *The Three Brontes* (1912), a work which combines her interests in these mysterious feminist icons and the uncanniness of the ghost story; hence as Raitt argues its continuing popularity. Sinclair’s short story, ‘The Intercessor’ (1911) alludes to the opening of *Wuthering Heights*, with its image of a child beating at the window of a cottage demanding to be let in. (2000: 129) A story of maternal deprivation (based on Sinclair’s own feelings towards her mother as shown in *Mary Olivier*) and ghosts, it attests to the power of using the supernatural to examine the problems of the family unit. Other supernatural fictions such as her *Uncanny Stories* (1923) shows her investigating the possibility that through particular experience one can glimpse a spiritualist world different from the natural, materialist one. This is following the suggestions implicit in James’ and Bergson’s address to the SPR and James’ emphasis on women’s privileged ability to see beyond a straightforward material realm. These stories present supernatural events open to psychological interpretation but do not preclude a supernatural one, much Henry James’s *The Turn of the Screw* (1898) they remain ambiguous. Sinclair’s understandings of idealist philosophy in this sense open the possibility that subjective experience, historically and pejoratively seen as the realm of women, might allow a view of the world that is fundamentally transformative and mystical. It echoes James and Bergson’s own interests and belief in the value of women underpinned by general concepts drawn from the SPR research.⁸⁰

⁸⁰ Eugene Taylor argues William James’s primary focus at the SPR ‘was actually on the spiritual self-realization of the person, where psychic phenomena were seen as guideposts of one’s progress along the way’ (2010:11).

George Johnson (2006) argues that William James's chief contribution to psychical research was to bring the role of memory and habit as aspects of psychological functioning, as well as human's intuitive psychology with its fluidity and dynamism to modernism. James's view of consciousness and the psychic was arguably extended through the interests of his brother (Johnson, 2006: 32-34), which according to Martha Banta, show that 'Henry identified as his fictional project "the great extension, great beyond all others, of experience and of consciousness"' (1972:57).⁸¹ Johnson suggests that Bergson's contribution, to 'dynamic psychological discourse' and his importance to writers, was because of his philosophical discussion of such topics as 'selfhood – time, space, consciousness, memory, creative evolution, psychopathology, psychical research, and aesthetics – [...]' (2006: 35). Johnson continues by arguing that: '[L]ike James's philosophy, Bergson's was less a system than a method which recognized the need to account for the empirical facts of psychology, but also insisted that psychology must transcend empiricism to address metaphysical issues. James's and Bergson's mutual, active interest in psychical research reflects this expansionist view. Both rejected psychic atomism and described psychic process as a dynamic continuum' (2006: 4). Sinclair seems very much to share the view with James that women are privileged in avoiding straightforwardly materialist thinking, though she clearly accepts rationality as a published philosopher. Yet this is unsurprising for an Idealist and Absolutist Monist with an interest in sympathy to Bergson who was a fairly hostile critic of the paradigm of scientific rationalism.

World War One for Sinclair was a defining experience which allowed her to emphasize the value of her subjective experiences; even though it began as an adventure, Sinclair serving as a nurse for the shortest of periods (25th September 1914- 11th October 1914). As Raitt argues Sinclair was very pro-War initially and remained so, perhaps seeing an opportunity to show she was as good as any man. On 18th September 1914 she was among twenty-five writers who signed a declaration in *The Times* arguing Britain should go to war (she was not alone amongst feminist supporters of the suffragettes, in supporting military action). (2000: 149) As Claire M. Tylee argued, for Sinclair, the 'war was a chance to show that women could be as good as men' (1990: 38). Raitt continues: 'In order to think of war as she did, as an opportunity for intense authentic *personal* experience, it was necessary that she should refuse

⁸¹ Banta's book discusses the value of the SPR to Henry James' fiction.

to consider its significance as a political event' (2000:150). While too old at fifty-one to train as a nurse, she was offered an opportunity to join as a volunteer the Munro Ambulance Corps, which was founded by Dr. Hector Munro⁸², a supporter of feminism and the suffragettes. Although according to Raitt, Sinclair mostly worked as a book-keeper and possibly helped fund the private ambulance corps itself (154-157). This twofold emphasis on a chance for adventure and near parity with men who were fighting and dying, (therefore fulfilling her feminist ideals of equality) and the intensely experience that war offered, helps explain why Sinclair describes in *A Journal of Impressions in Belgium* (1915) an ecstasy akin to orgasm:

A curious excitement comes to you. I suppose it is excitement, though it doesn't feel like it. You have been drunk, very slightly drunk with the speed of the car. But now you are sober. Your heart beats quietly, steadily, but with a little creeping, mounting thrill in the beat. The sensation is distinctly pleasurable. You say to yourself, "It is coming. Now – or the next minute – perhaps at the end of the road." You have one moment of regret. "After all, it would be a pity if it came too soon, before we'd even begun our job." But the thrill, mounting steadily, overtakes the regret. It is only a little thrill, so far (for you don't really believe that there is any danger), but you can imagine the thing growing, growing steadily, till it becomes ecstasy. Not that you imagine anything at the moment. At the moment you are no longer an observing, reflecting being; you have ceased to be aware of yourself; you exist only in that quiet, steady thrill that is so unlike any excitement that you have ever known. (12-13)

Such a state of self-oblivion with its foregrounded sexual overtones of orgasm as 'le petit mort' and loss of the self, is also at once part of modernism's valuing of the epiphany as a central artistic strategy and evidence of a mystical desire for a state of non-being (found also in Woolf, Richardson and Mansfield). What begins as a re-evaluation of subjective and qualitative experience perhaps mutates into a negation of the subject, refusing its domination by quantitative time or history. In terms of her own paper delivered to the Aristotelean Society, her primary consciousness merely feels sensation while her secondary consciousness interprets this in terms of excitement and an experience akin to sex or a mystical revelation. Sinclair's *A Journal of Impressions in Belgium*⁸³ serves as a testament to the value of

⁸² Baroness De T'Serclaes remarked Munro was 'an eccentric Scottish specialist, one of whose primary objects seemed to be leadership of a feminist crusade, for he was far keener on woman's rights than most of the women he recruited' (Raitt, 2000: 152-153). Negative accounts of Sinclair's role as a nurse can be found in Baroness De T'Serclaes' *Flanders and Other Fields: Memoirs of the Baroness de T'Serclaes, M. M.* (1964) and in Andrew Hallam and Nicola Hallam eds. *Lady Under Fire on the Western Front: The Great War Letters of Lady Dorothe Feilding MM*, (2010).

⁸³ Originally published in 1915 as 'The War of Liberation: From a Journal'.

personal experience and its relationship to the imagination, following James and Bergson. Yet despite its accounts of war horrors, it remains curiously apolitical. While considering the suffering of the soldiers, it exudes patriotic values rather than anti-War ones, to which some critics have objected. Tylee argues that Sinclair's *Journal* is 'narcissistic and myopic' (1990: 30), because of the way it prefers to focus on her own interior subjectivity. While Raitt argues that 'Sinclair continued to see the war as a route to self-realization, and even in 1917 longed to return to it' (2000:167).

Attending the pioneering Cheltenham Ladies College, which had opened in 1853, (her studies probably funded by a relative) in the autumn of 1881, Sinclair was encouraged to study philosophy and probably learnt from the example of the famous Principal, Dorothea Beale.⁸⁴ Beale was a strong and intellectual woman, a passionate suffragist and prominent feminist (vice-president of the Central Society for Women's Suffrage) and one of the leading proponents and advocate of reform of women's education. Beale had become Principal of Cheltenham's Ladies College in 1858 (she also later founded St Hilda's College, Oxford) and undoubtedly served as a role model to Sinclair of what women could achieve and the importance of the suffrage moment, as well as encouraging Sinclair to study philosophy at Oxford. As Raitt says: 'Beale consolidated her [Sinclair's] emerging sense of herself as a thinker, a woman of ideas' (26). Boll also suggests that Sinclair was to some large extent an autodidact, a self-educated intellectual and 'she taught herself German, Greek, and French, as well as studying Plato, Hume, and Kant' (29). This account finds parallels in *Mary Olivier: A Life*, where the eponymous protagonist:

[...] taught herself Greek in the hour after breakfast before Miss Sippett came to give her music lesson [...] Mamma did not actually forbid it; but she said it must not be done in lesson time or sewing time, or when people could see you doing it, lest they should think you were showing off. (78)

⁸⁴ Dorothea Beale (1831-1906) had a role in both the early history of female suffrage and women's education. Elizabeth Helen Shillito, *Dorothea Beale: Principal of the Cheltenham Ladies' College, 1858-1906* (1920); Joan Burstyn, *Victorian Education and the Ideal of Womanhood* (1980); Robert Anderson, 'Learning, Education, Class and Culture' (201: 492-493).

Clearly, Sinclair as a young woman aspired to be an intellectual rather than follow patriarchal Victorian stereotypes of womanhood. Mary Olivier, in Sinclair's pseudo-autobiographical novel, appears interested in the Greek gods like 'Apollo and Hermes and Aphrodite and Pallas Athene and Diana', because the Greek Gods 'didn't hate each other; not as Jehovah hated all the other gods' (78). Such an ironic interest in pagan polytheism perhaps implies rebellion against her mother's orthodox Protestant values and would develop later into Sinclair's questioning of her Christian faith. She may also incorporate an interest in literary classicism that attests to a Romantic literary inheritance, where many poets particularly favoured the Classical Greek period, including Sinclair's preferences such as Keats and Shelley. Mary attests that the Greek Gods' imaginations favoured 'trees and animals and poetry and music and running races and playing games' (79); all examples of the primacy of the rich, sensual world.

Sinclair's coining of the term 'stream of consciousness' for Richardson's first novel, simultaneously synthesizes Sinclair's keen interests in the thinking of James and Bergson and writing that centred on female experience from a feminist perspective. Arguably she recognized a new tendency in writing long before other critics had grasped the transformation. Charlotte Mary Mew (1869 - 1928) was an English poet and friend of Sinclair's, whom the latter attempted to help by placing her poems. While in terms of form Mew appears very Victorian, her intensity of passion and anguish seems more akin to the Romantics that Sinclair so admired. She has also been seen by Nelljean Rice (2002), as a complex, feminist figure who is palpably far more a proto-Modernist than residually Victorian.

Jane Dowson and Alice Entwistle suggest Mew's later poetry, such as 'The Cenotaph', (1919) represents 'Imagist clarity' (2005:48).⁸⁵ Very probably Sinclair influenced Mew to become more of a modernist in her technique. Raitt discusses whether Mew wanted a sexual

⁸⁵ Penelope Fitzgerald's biography, *Charlotte Mew and her Friends* (1984) and Nelljean Rice, *A New Matrix for Modernism: A Study of the Lives and Poetry of Charlotte Mew and Anna Wickham* (2002). For an account of her critical rediscovery see Jeredith Merrin (1997) 'The Ballad of Charlotte Mew;' In *A History of Twentieth-Century British Women's Poetry* (2009). Jane Dowson and Alice Entwistle (2005) make the case for Mew as a Modernist, who was influenced by Imagism, arguably via Sinclair who must have won her over to a movement to which Mew had been originally been hostile.

relationship with Sinclair or not, and a story circulated that Sinclair rebuffed Mew's intentions. (185-192) Certainly Sinclair was always willing to help out less successful writers, whom she admired or liked. In addition, Anglo-Irish poet and novelist Katharine Tynan Hinkson (1859-1931), was a close friend of W.B. Yeats, who befriended Sinclair as an adult in the 1890s and was sympathetic as Sinclair struggled with grief over her mother's death. During World War One Hinkson accompanied Sinclair for dinner in Regent Street along with T.S. Eliot, Violet Hunt, Ford Madox Ford, Ezra Pound, and Richard Aldington, (Boll 110).⁸⁶ A figure in the Irish Celtic Revival, who favoured change in Ireland, she demonstrates how Sinclair's progressive reputation attracted other strong women with liberal and intellectual tendencies.

If she knew William James and Bergson and their work through the SPR, Sinclair also greatly admired of Henry James, who as discussed in the introduction was influential on female writers because of his giving a voice to troubled women and offering a method which was a forerunner to literary stream of consciousness. He was important for women as it emphasised marginalised female experience, although James remained ambivalent towards the suffragette movement.⁸⁷ They became friends in 1912 and in 1915, May Sinclair wrote to Mew that

⁸⁶ Sinclair for instance financially supported the first publication of Eliot's *Prufrock and Other Observations*. *Prufrock* was demonstrably influenced by contemporary French modernist poetry, with a Bergsonian emphasis on valuing the subjective apprehension. It was inflected by Jamesian ideas, such as in the poem 'Portrait of A Lady'. According to Raitt Pound's financial 'defence of Eliot appeared several months earlier than Sinclair's [...]' (199). In Eliot, Sinclair (1917) identified similar intellectual views to her own. Her supportive review, 'Prufrock and Other Observations: A Criticism,' took issue with a negative review by Arthur Waugh (1916). The latter claimed the best thing to be said about Eliot's poetry was that it served to demonstrate what was wrong with the new poetry, in effect it was like the notables of a family 'displaying a drunken slave among the sons of the household, to the end that they, being ashamed at the ignominious folly of his gesticulations, might determine never to be tempted into such a pitiable condition themselves' (1917:74). Pound subsequently glossed this as a combative response, accusing Waugh of ignorance, and claiming in 'Drunken Helots and Mr. Eliot' that Waugh had suggested Eliot was a 'drunken Helot' (1917:74) [The Helots were the serf class of ancient Sparta and according to Plutarch Helots were made publically drunk by their masters to show young Spartans an example of inferiority and loss of control)]. For Sinclair *Prufrock* as a character speaking stream of consciousness, exemplifies directly presented subjective experience and consciousness displacing public reality; Eliot choosing directness over abstraction (like an Imagist), which is distinctly Bergsonian. Sinclair remarks: 'Observe the method. Instead of writing round and round about Prufrock, explaining that his tragedy is the tragedy of submerged passion, Mr. Eliot simply removes the covering from Prufrock's mind: Prufrock's mind, jumping quickly from actuality to memory and back again, like an animal, hunted, tormented, terribly and poignantly alive. [...] But it is a great deal to the few people who care for poetry and insist that it should concern itself with reality. With ideas, if you like, but ideas that are realities and not abstractions' (1917: 13).

⁸⁷ Though feminists and suffragettes might be suspicious of Henry James' attitude toward suffragist views, they still recognized his interest in women as individuals. Leslie Petty, 'The Political is Personal: The Feminist Lesson of Henry James's *The Bostonians*'; Alfred Habegger, *Henry James and the 'Woman Business*'; Victoria Coulson, *Henry James Women and Realism*; Donatella Izzo, 'Nothing Personal: Women Characters, Gender Ideology, and Literary Representation'.

James ‘has influenced me considerably and I’m not ashamed of it’ (Boll 109). She was invited to James’ funeral in 1915, which she attended at Chelsea Old Church. She also became friends with Thomas Hardy in 1910, after he invited her to tea (Boll 81). He was another older male, liberal novelist who had become infamous with the Victorian establishment for his endorsement of women and attacks on social conventions. Perhaps surprisingly, Hardy was an admirer of the younger female novelist’s work because of the way it illuminated women’s thinking (Boll 87). It must however be stressed that like the prominence which Sinclair’s work brought her, after *The Divine Fire* was a bestseller and critical success, the literary/ intellectual networks she went on to forge were all testament to her hard work and enthusiasm. Moreover, unlike Virginia Woolf, Sinclair was not born with a set of powerful literary connections.

Sinclair’s relationship with the Imagists in particular and the younger generation of Modernists more generally, demonstrates her keen interest in their development, especially to those who seemed to be most driven by an interest in the work of Bergson and James (such as the Imagists), and most especially those who were women. In a letter to Charlotte Mew, June 9th 1915, she confessed she was unsure of the stature of the Imagist poets as their work lacked great passion, but still admired their poetic method, particularly the work of HD (Boll 109-110). Sinclair mentored and supported the Imagists’ aesthetic and poetic programme in terms of supportive articles, ardent, sometimes combative reviews, but also by giving financial help where appropriate, for example to Ezra Pound. She liked him, partly because she was always sympathetic to the underdog. She shared the Imagists interest in the reformulation of English poetry after a French poetic model. Since her own interest in Bergson and the new Idealism was supportive to other key imagists such as HD, Richard Aldington, and F.S. Flint. Lastly, according to Andrew Kunka and Michele Troy, she sympathised because of the ‘harsh critical attacks’ on Pound and other Imagists by the literary establishment. (2006: 99)

According to Helen Carr, Sinclair had first befriended Pound and praised his poems in *Quinzaine for This Yule* (1908) calling some of them ‘perfect’, (he had eagerly told his anxious parents about the famous novelist’s interest in his work) and had introduced him to Ford Maddox Ford. While at Pound’s instigation Sinclair had had the young poet H.D. to tea.

(2009: 114, 119, 369) Jane Dowson and Alice Entwistle explain that ‘May Sinclair’s (1865-1946) poems were printed in literary journals’ (2005:21), which suggests she took an active part in the little magazines that launched Modernism. Carr explains that Sinclair contributed a war poem ‘After the Retreat’ to the May 1915 Special Imagist Edition of *The Egoist* which appeared to be: ‘something of a coup [for the Imagist movement], [...] the signal that this prestigious and well-established writer was throwing in her lot with the imagists was invaluable’ (2009: 741). In June 1915, Sinclair had written her now famous article defending the Imagist movement for *The Egoist*.⁸⁸ While the notes hit at Pound and H.D.’s critics, it can also be seen as evidence of how Imagism corresponds to Sinclair’s interest in the interiority of stream of consciousness and an Idealist view of apprehending reality directly, which holds many correspondences with that of Bergson.⁸⁹ In 1915 indeed, it seemed as if Sinclair was something of an Imagist herself, both in terms of her diary *A Journal of Impressions in Belgium* and the poems therein, which show that Sinclair (who began her career as a poet) had tried to take on Imagist method.⁹⁰

H.D. Zegger suggests that Sinclair shares a similar preoccupation with the Imagist movement (in Sinclair’s case deployed through imagery and stream-of-consciousness narrative techniques): ‘the same attempt to get closer to reality, to recapture the innocence of memory, and to become as far as possible, the pure perceiver’ (1976:96). These represent Bergsonian principles, emphasising the value of the subjective perception and a very positive view of how the individual personal memory can serve as an authentic source for the subject’s self-definition. Thus while it is traditional to argue that Bergson’s influence on Imagism was primarily due to his emphasis on the concept of the image, which Pound then took up as his

⁸⁸ May Sinclair, ‘Two Notes - I: On H. D.’ and ‘Two Notes - II: On Imagism’ *The Egoist*. 11.6 (June 1915): 88-89.

⁸⁹ Diane F. Gillespie (1978: 134-142) argues that Sinclair’s defence of Imagism is an emphasis on presentation rather than representation and that for all intent and purposes can be seen as one aspect of the origins of her interest in stream of consciousness. Laurel Forster ‘Imagism ... Is a State of Soul’: May Sinclair’s Imagist Writing and the *Life and Death of Harriett Freaen*’ (2006: 99-122).

⁹⁰ In Laurel Forster ‘she draws attention to how Sinclair invests depictions of landscape with a mystical, epiphanic quality which suggest the directed primacy of the object of Imagist poetry, while the maintaining ‘focuses on the inner life in a time of physical brutality’ (2008: 243).

‘doctrine of the image,’⁹¹ more recent critics have amended this view (and the evolving definition by Pound of the image) to consider Imagism and Bergson’s relationship less straightforwardly and more as part of major currents in modernist thought. For example, Laci Mattison argues in ‘H.D.’s Intuitionist Imagism: Memory, Desire and the Image in Process’ (2013) that H.D. not only made use of far more Bergsonian concepts than any straightforward emphasis on a doctrinal emphasis on the image alone, but also transform these in important gendered, political ways. This takes her version of imagism far beyond Pound’s arguably simplified idea of what she was actually doing in his definition of her poetry. Pound failed to understand that an emphasis on Bergsonian intuition and memory yielded according to Mattison the possibility of transforming the future in political terms from the past’s ‘inactualised trajectories’.

Sinclair’s poems record her own experiences after she served in Belgium. Just as in *A Journal*, her subjective experiences are held to be as valuable as any objective description, taking a key role in developing her subjectivity in a manner that parallels the feminist use of autobiography and pseudo-autobiography as a mode of self-affirmation and development. In this regard we can see Sinclair’s interest in Imagism as being situated within both a feminist context, insofar as it drives the gendered preference for the autobiographical towards a form of expression that heightens the value of the reflections of the interiorised self. Seen for example in *A Journal* and *Mary Olivier*, and is simultaneously reflective of cultural interests in William James and Bergson’s valuing of subjective experience over what came simply from the public world. While Imagism has been seen as masculine and emphasising the impersonal in poetry, rather than the subjectivity implicit in the traditional lyric. For example by Maud Ellman (1987); there have been other critics who have seen in the poet H.D. an alternate feminist tradition, to which should be added May Sinclair.⁹²

⁹¹ Mary Ann Gillies argues that the traditional critical view is that T.E. Hulme was initially influenced by Bergson, but later abandoned his ideas after his return from visiting Canada, progressing to those of Wilhelm Worringer, whose lectures he attended in Berlin in 1913, in the move from Imagism to Vorticism (143). Rather Gillies insists that Helen Carr’s position of seeing a continued co-influence is persuasive and Gillies finds that ‘The philosophy or aesthetics of both Bergson and Worringer were necessary ingredients in Hulme’s articulation of his own aesthetic, and their very contradictions speak to the opposing forces at work within Hulme’s construction of the image and within Imagism itself’ (145).

⁹² Although many critics have followed Maud Ellman (1978) who argues that Imagism cultivated impersonality and a masculine way of looking at the world, this view is not universal. H.D.’s work in particular has allowed critics to suggest a strong connection between Imagism as a technique and feminist literary work, especially through the mode of autobiography. See Elizabeth A., Hirsh (1986), “New eyes”: H. D., Modernism, and the

The Imagist-influenced poem 'Field Ambulance in Retreat' describes the beginning of the war when Allied troops retreated before the German onslaught and was published in December 1914 (before Sinclair undertook work in Hector Munro's Ambulance Unit). Subtitled 'Via Dolorosa, Via Sacra', it recalls Imagist practice in using Classical or historical allusions as part of their work, while the title itself suggests a desire to concentrate on actual objects themselves.⁹³ 'Via Dolorosa' means the 'way of grief or sadness' which is a reference to the road in Jerusalem, where Jesus journeyed, carrying his cross to the place of execution. Whereas 'Via Sacra' or 'sacred way' is the 'famous old road in Rome', that leads from the Capitoline Hills, through the Forum to the Colosseum and along which many Roman triumphs were staged:⁹⁴

A straight flagged road, laid on the rough earth,
A causeway of stone from beautiful city to city,
Between the tall trees, the slender, delicate trees,
Through the flat green land, by plots of flowers, by black canals thick with heat.

This first stanza creates an image of the road itself, surprising the reader, expecting images of wounded, miserable soldiers. Instead she uses a series of images of the road that stress its dolorous, autumnal, sacrificial nature when seen by a retreating army and it clearly owes as much to Pound's idea of the image as to a principle of terse; almost classical and emotionless precision, with Sinclair eschewing any sentimentality or explicit patriotic impulse. The first stanza also describes the transitional period between the tranquil portrayals of the attractive road in the country side into the second verse where war intervenes. Such contrasting depiction of the environment, shifting from peacefulness to warfare offers an example of Sinclair's interpretation in 'Two Notes - II: On Imagism' as 'direct naked contact with

Psychoanalysis of Seeing.' More recently the topic is discussed in Polina Mackay (2011) 'H.D.'s Modernism'. May Sinclair should be placed in this more gendered and nuanced tradition of Imagist technique rather than Pound's more limited version.

⁹³ The poem describes the Allied retreat from 'Ghent and – a la Wilfred Owen – the beauty of the "red and white harvest" the "dripping ambulance" gathers from the fields' (Raitt 165).

⁹⁴ May Sinclair, 'Field Ambulance in Retreat'. The poem was originally published in J.W. Cunliffe, (ed.) *Poems of the Great War* (Macmillan, 1916) pp. 238-240. John William Cunliffe (1865–1946) was a prominent Professor and U.S. scholar of English literature at Columbia University, as well as head of the Pulitzer School of Journalism at Columbia. He likely saw this in part as a project of war reporting, with pro-Allied sympathies, as much as a literary one. The USA was neutral at the time and did not enter the war until August, 1917.

reality,' which allows one to 'get closer and closer' to the basic conscious reality where there is nothing between 'you and your object' (1915: 88-89). The two ideas, firstly the road of Christ's passion and sacrifice (but simultaneously attesting to the affirmative value of the intentional sacrifice, as a kind of negative triumphalism) and the road where Rome displayed its very positive triumph over its Empire and its enemies seem to contradict one another. However, in fact this represent Sinclair's ambiguous response to how such a depiction combines a sense of defeat, sacrifice and perhaps a kind of curious, ironic triumph in the well-disciplined retreat.

By 1913, if not before, Sinclair had become very interested in the new medical science of psychoanalysis⁹⁵ in particular the psychoanalytic theories of Sigmund Freud, which she introduced into her novels. As Lyndsey Stonebridge suggests, psychoanalysis and literary modernism appear in one of 'their most visible encounters' in Sinclair's fiction. (2005: 275) In addition, Sinclair was to be crucial in supporting the practical applications of psychoanalytic therapy in British society, most importantly as Rhodri Hayward indicates by being a founder member of the Medico-Psychological Clinic of London (1913-1922) with a donation of £500. (2014: 53) Sinclair served on the clinic's Board of Management, as well as wrote articles in its support, and as Elizabeth R. Valentine describes her involvement was prompted by her friend Dr Jessie Margaret Murray (1867-1920), who was also prominent in the Suffragette movement (2009: 145-161).

The clinic offered a diverse range of therapeutic treatments and even more ambitiously, as Raitt explains, it had as part of its intention to 'offer a place of study for medical practitioners' (2000: 65). Jessie Murray in 1915 offered the first identifiable psychoanalytic training programme in Britain. Sinclair's short experience of working in the ambulance unit at the front in Flanders, Belgium during the war, (Hector Munro, director of the ambulance unit, was himself one of the directors of the same clinic) is thus connected in some ways to

⁹⁵ Sinclair's relationship to psychoanalysis and psychology has seldom been explored in a thorough way, although short discussion in works about modernist women more generally is not uncommon; such a relationship is mentioned only *en passant* as an element of a set of other concerns expressed in Sinclair's work. However, significant critical texts include: George M Johnson (2006: 101-143); Emma Domínguez-Rué, (2013: 152-65); Leigh Wilson (2000); Leslie De Bont (no date).

her interest in psychoanalytic therapy.⁹⁶ However, George M Johnson (2006) and Leigh Wilson (2000) have both made argument to the effect that Sinclair's work is dominated by themes of therapeutic cure, whether Freudian or otherwise, from an earlier stage. Furthermore, Johnson argues that this is because Sinclair was keenly interested in one of Freud's most significant precursors, Pierre Janet, (1859-1967), the psychologist, philosopher and psychotherapist whom she referenced extremely positively in texts such as *A Defence of Idealism* (290-291). (2006: 48-52) Johnson argues Sinclair's novella *Superseded* dramatizes her protagonist, Dr Bastion Cautley, using Janet's therapeutic technique of 'psychological synthesis' to treat a hysterical teacher. (1901: 51) Janet was also an active psychical researcher and corresponding member of the British SPR as was William James and Bergson. According to Johnson, Janet's work on psychopathology was influential on William James and Bergson, just as they in turn influenced him. (2006: 51)

Seeing the war first hand, may have increased Sinclair's enthusiasm for new treatments such as psychoanalysis for mental problems, which may be particularly true if she saw examples of shell-shock (Post Traumatic Shock Disorder) which, as discussed in my introduction, were increasingly tied to notions of male hysteria; an illness for which psychoanalysis was seen as an effective treatment. Though there is nothing about shell-shock in Sinclair's *A Journal*, Andrew J. Kunka has argued that Sinclair's *The Romantic* (1920) and *Anne Severn and the Fieldings* (1922) explore shell-shock, albeit in a very ambivalent way. (2006: 237) Neither

⁹⁶ Sinclair's role in the founding of this historically important clinic, its subsequent development as a highly heterogeneous institution, its relationship to World War One and its final closure is discussed in a number of works: Laura Marcus (2012: 105-128); Rhodri Hayward (2014); Philippa Martindale (2004: 177-200); T.E.M Boll (1962: 310-326) and Suzanne Raitt (2004: 64-85). They argue that the Clinic was deliberately repressed and written out of being part of the history of British psychoanalysis, despite training many seminal figures, because of the preponderance of lay (non-medical) practitioners, as well as lesbians and suffragettes, which made it unpopular with those analysts trying to establish the serious credentials of psychoanalysis with the British medical profession. Laura Marcus in addition explains that as 'psychoanalysis developed as an international movement in the first two decades of the twentieth century' (2012: 105-107) it became professionalised and heavily institutionalised. Martindale has also made available the correspondence regarding the clinic, from Ernest Jones to Freud and other members in Vienna, in her unpublished doctoral thesis (2003), showing Jones' particular hostility to the project. In effect the Clinic was a wide-ranging, heterogeneous experimental and not strictly psychoanalytic practice. This, as well as the people who ran the clinic and practiced there, was perceived by Jones as the problem. Martindale has also made available *The 'Special Appeal in Time of War'* (1917) published by the clinic.

novel is an equivalent to Rebecca West's *The Return of the Soldier* (1918) which suggests that psychoanalysis can be an effective cure for the trauma of shell-shock.⁹⁷

Although the clinic began in 1913 by offering psychoanalytic and other new therapeutic treatments for a mainly middle-class and progressive female constituency⁹⁸; from 1917, as Hayward specifies, there was increasing focus on the psychoanalytic treatment of shell-shock, practiced by Dr James Glover in a residential setting (54). Hayward places the clinic and its work squarely within discourses about medicine, psychoanalysis and the self in the early part of the century. It demonstrates the increasing importance of ideas of the interiority of the subject and the value of subjective experiences of the world. Hayward largely ignores the hostility of orthodox Freudian psychoanalysts like Jones that is discussed in other sources to argue for the Clinic's value. This matrix of interests has strong and clear parallels with the Bergsonian and Jamesian models of the relationship of the self, which place emphasis on the value of the qualitative experience, memory and the inner thoughts of the subject respectively. Sinclair, perhaps archly (after all, the war could hardly be termed everyday life), remarked in her *A Journal* that she crammed into the Commandant's (Hector Munro's) Gladstone bag for use in Belgium. It was a copy of Freud's *The Psychopathology of Everyday Life* (1901), suggesting that she, as well as he, were most likely cognizant of the growing importance of psychoanalysis for the treatment of a variety of psychological problems. (231)

Dean Rapp has argued that psychoanalysis quickly became extremely popular with the Bloomsbury intelligentsia, and one might add this is probably because in many cases there were existing interests in the work of James and Bergson. (1990: 217-43) It seems true that Sinclair was not an orthodox Freudian, but rather that she was interested in the therapeutic method itself. Leslie De Bont suggests Sinclair's thinking of psychology incorporated elements from Jung's antithetical system, while Johnson argues that she is significantly influenced by Janet. (2006: 51) Finally Sinclair makes use of her own thinking about psychology, so that for example her important idea of the libido while derived from Freud, seems to owe much more to Bergson's idea of the *élan vital* that the subject must strive to realise. While, as Emma Domínguez-Rué indicates, her idea of sublimation seems rather

⁹⁷ Misha Kavka, (2008), "Men in (Shell-) Shock: Masculinity, Trauma, and Psychoanalysis in Rebecca West's *The Return of the Soldier*".

more positive than Freud's. (2013: 152-165) What is important however and what connects her thinking with Bergson and James is the preoccupation with the interiority of the subject and the way that repressed or hidden material can be brought to the light. Besides, the fact that their subjective experiences and thoughts of life are more, not less pertinent than the public discourse which surrounds marginalised subjects such as women or later, traumatised male soldiers.

Mary Olivier: A Life (1919) and Sinclair's Idealism

This chapter reads *Mary Olivier* as one of Sinclair's most philosophical novels in the light of Sinclair's own writing on idealism and philosophy, within the context of her relationship to the concepts of James and Bergson regarding stream of consciousness and idealism, memory, duration and creative evolution respectively. *Mary Olivier* use a version of stream of consciousness to create its deeply interiorised modernist narrative of a life that has been seen as a pseudo-autobiographical novel; a privileged mode for feminist exploration of the relationship between women and patriarchy by a number of Sinclair's critics and biographers. In this sense it has affinities with Dorothy Richardson's epic novel sequence, *Pilgrimage*, with its pseudo-autobiographical narrator Miriam Henderson, which is explored in the next chapter.⁹⁹

Sinclair saw herself as an Idealist Monist and claims her *A Defence of Idealism* (1917) as 'an Apology for Idealistic Monism' (vii).¹⁰⁰ Her defence of such a position attempts to rebut

⁹⁹ Christine Battersby (2002: 193) refers to *Mary Oliver* as a 'semi-autobiographical *Künstlerroman* which employs a modified stream-of-consciousness technique,' and proceeds by listing points of comparison between the novel and Sinclair's own life, [a *Künstlerroman* is a narrative about an artist's growth into maturity]. Boll claims that 'May Sinclair told Florence Bartrop that *Mary Olivier* was substantially her own life story' (1973: 244).

¹⁰⁰ Todd H. Weir (2012) discusses the significance of Monism in Europe and America in the nineteenth and early twentieth century. Weir portrays the expectations of a monistic worldview in which the seemingly impractical duality of object and subject, matter and mind, nature and spirit was resolved in the vision of an impending unity that is fully pierced by 'the gaze of natural science' (2012: ix). David Boucher and Andrew Vincent argue 'British Idealism by the end of the nineteenth century had taken deep roots in the society because it fulfilled a number of social purposes,' such as counterbalancing 'the individualism of utilitarianism, offering a philosophy that emphasized social cohesiveness, social justice and equality of opportunity' (2011: 2). For the

attacks on what had become seen as a rather old-fashioned philosophical idea. From contemporary challenges by Pragmatism and Vitalism that do so partly by adding arguments from psychoanalysis. Sinclair's book begins with a discussion of psychoanalysis in terms of Freud and Jung; Jean Michel Rabate cogently argues that Sinclair uses psychoanalysis, alongside mysticism, to try to defend her philosophical position. (2008: 15-16) Christine Battersby argues that Spinoza is the key influence on *Mary Olivier*, a factor Battersby considers Raitt omits, thereby signally failing to take Sinclair's philosophy seriously. (2002: 104) Spinoza's version of Absolute Monism is important because it is deeply Pantheistic, like much Romantic poetry, and this feature can be seen in *Mary Olivier*.¹⁰¹ Idealistic Monism can be defined as a belief that an all-inclusive Absolute Reality exists; that is singular and that such a reality is fundamentally a production of mind and consciousness rather than of matter. Sinclair disagreed with James's pragmatism because it was firstly pluralist (accepting many realities) as opposed to monist in its conception and secondly, James did not endorse the view that she held that the universe was primarily a production of consciousness.¹⁰²

Raitt remarks of *Mary Olivier*, 'The novel dramatizes all the contradictions that ran like fault-lines through its author's thought and experience' (2000: 213), referring to those between Victorian and Modernist sensibilities, focusing on the role of the female subject's relation to society mediated via her family. Mary Olivier, the protagonist, is the youngest of four children and the only girl, her Victorian parents neither allowed her to be educated nor afforded her any freedom equivalent to that of her brother. Moreover, bookish, imaginative Mary is in effective conflict with her religiously rigid mother, both emotionally and

broader context of its historical importance, see Jeremy Dunham, Iain Hamilton Grant and Sean Watson who describe Idealism as a philosophy 'combining micro and macroscopic problems into systematic accounts of everything from the nature of the universe to the particulars of human feeling. Consequently it offers perspectives on everything from the natural to the social sciences; from ecology to critical theory (2012: 4).

¹⁰¹ Beth, Lord (2010); J Thomas Cook (2007); Charlie Huenemann (2013).

¹⁰² On James's relationship to the history of pragmatism, see Richard J. Bernstein, *The Pragmatic Turn* (2010). Bernstein (60) argues that 'James combines sensitivity to imaginative vision with a pragmatic appreciation of the role of argument in articulating a philosophical vision'. Israel Scheffler (2012) and Robert D Richardson (2006) combine analysis of James' life with a critical discussion of the evolution of his world-view. Concerning James' popularity and mass appeal, George Conkin suggests that William James appealed to wide audiences because he 'confronted the essential problems of modernity – the metaphysics of the abyss, the bewildering plurality of a world growing at the edges, the nightmare of reason, and the numbing freedom of subjectivity' (1994: 1).

physically; while her qualitative (subjective) consciousness drives her to a desire for independence that her family calls 'stubbornness, her stupidity, her sinfulness' (Olivier 127). Mary rejects Victorian formulations and stereotypes to become a published poet, while nonetheless struggling to remain a dutiful daughter. As Sydney J. Kaplan argues in *Feminine Consciousness* Mary 'is ambivalent about her role as a woman, intellectual, rebellious and mystical. But all of these qualities are related to a tremendous sense of oppression and restriction in the case of Mary Olivier' (1975: 56).

The novel chooses a structure suggestive of autobiography and is divided into five periods of time that resemble Sinclair's own life: Infancy (1865-1869), Childhood (1869-1875), Adolescence (1876-1879), Maturity (1879-1900) and Middle Age (1900-1910), ending before the outbreak of the First World War. Like Joyce's *Portrait of the Artist as A Young Man* (1916), Sinclair's text adopts a highly pseudo-autobiographical style to tell of the development of an artist, but here family serves even perhaps more as a site for conflict, being the conduit by which hegemonic social ideology is imposed on the female artist protagonist. The novel focuses extensively on the problematic mother-daughter relationship. For Mary's mother, Caroline, both fears and restricts her daughter's creativity and potential expressions of sexuality, restricting Mary in her struggles to become herself. Sinclair seeks to preserve a sense of mystery in the universe, exploring the relationship between the individual self and the greater whole of which that self is part (as Monism would understand the problem). This is seen in *Mary Olivier*, when Mary as a child tries to understand the enigmatic relationships within her own family:

You never knew when Aunt Charlotte mightn't send something. She forgot your birthday and sometimes Christmas; but, to make up for that, she remembered in between. Every time she was going to be married she remembered. (12)

Mary fears to become a spinster like this unmarried aunt, hence the intense interest in assessing the reality of her marital status, but Mary's childish obsession with the unpredictability, generosity and independence demonstrated by her Aunt serve as pointers to Sinclair's feminist interests. Later Aunt Charlotte is seen as a kind of sexual hysteric, proffering a tiny china doll to Mary that has served as a child substitute, which she tells her niece to hide:

Aunt Charlotte put her hand deep down in her pocket and brought out a little parcel wrapped in white paper. She whispered:

“If I give you something to keep, will you promise not to show it to anybody and not to tell?”

Mary promised.

Inside the paper wrapper there was a match-box, and inside the match-box there was a china doll no bigger than your finger. It had blue eyes and black hair and no clothes on. Aunt Charlotte held it in her hand and smiled at it.

“That’s Aunt Charlotte’s little baby,” she said. “I’m going to be married and I shan’t want it any more.”

“There—take it, and cover it up, quick!” (37)

Later confined to the nursery of Mary Olivier’s uncle’s house, hidden partially by a barred window, a wardrobe is set against the room’s door. Charlotte’s fate mirrors this striking recreation, the Victorian trope of the mad woman in the attic reduced to a kind of child. In her madness Charlotte believes in a conspiracy:

‘He says he’s sold the house to Victor. That’s a lie. He doesn’t want it known that he’s hidden me here to prevent my getting married.’

‘I’m sure he hasn’t,’ Mary said. Across the room Britton looked at her and shook her head.

‘It’s all part of a plan,’ Aunt Charlotte said. ‘To put me away, my dear. Dr Draper’s in it with Victor and Emilius.’

‘They may say what they like. It isn’t the piano-tuner. It isn’t the man who does the clocks. They know who it is. It isn’t that Marriott man. I’ve found out something about *him* they don’t know. He’s got a false stomach. It goes by clockwork.’ (150)

In some senses Aunt Charlotte perceives hegemonic restrictions everywhere. She lived in a house where ‘the doors and partitions, the nursery and its bars, the big cupboard across the window,’ are barriers to ‘keep her from getting away’ (Olivier 151). After this episode, Charlotte is indeed taken away to an asylum by the doctors, (a common enough solution in dealing with the embarrassment of insane relatives for bourgeois families in the nineteenth century). Subsequently Mary worries less about remaining unmarried, than some familial inheritance of madness that might prevent her from marrying (348). In many ways such a fear is prompted by deterministic theories of heredity and degeneration, popular among Victorians, who feared the concomitant shame that mental illness engendered (369). Hence,

this contextualizes young Mary's search for the kind of idealist philosophy that rebuts any emphasis placed on biological materialism suggested by theories of heredity, while, foregrounding the possibilities of the self-determining individual is an alternative, though simultaneously engaging, in a gendered critique of patriarchy and its connections with these sexist theories of hybridity from an idealist position. James Mirack in *Regenerating the Novel: Gender and Genre in Wool, Forster, Sinclair, and Lawrence*, calls this Sinclair's continued 'battle against heredity and the pursuit of idealism' (2003:71).¹⁰³ George M. Johnson reminds us that Freudian psychoanalysis and its predecessors such as the work of Janet, began in large part as deliberate ripostes to the theory that hysteria was essentially heredity, and as had been argued by Charcot (1825-1893) and was instead psychosomatic, which was more consistent with idealist theories. (2006:2-5)¹⁰⁴

Christine Battersby has argued cogently that the key question for this gendered account of an artist growing up is how the self becomes an individual within the family, rather than society itself and this plays a much larger aspect in the novel than in contemporary accounts of a (male) writer's development, such as Joyce's *Portrait of the Artist As A Young Man* (1916). (2002: 106-109) Mary's early exposure to Spinoza's Pantheism, allowed Sinclair as a writer to embrace private and public intuitive unification between the individual and the universal in a conscious dialogue leading up to a goal of representing the subject (Bergson's pure consciousness) as mirrored in the universe. In *A Defence of Idealism*, Sinclair refers to this as: 'exchanging God the Father for God the Absolute Self' (1917: 289). Mary's frequent moments of ecstatic, epiphanic vision thus deliberately express the inexpressible. According to James Homer Thrall (2005) these are in stark opposition to her mother's Christianity, which may explain Sinclair's experimentation with the elemental vividness of Imagism and the heightened subjectivity implicit in the stream-of-consciousness narrative. A mesmerised Mary realizes in a moment where the third person narrative is fully focalised on her: 'She saw that the beauty of the tree was its real life, and that its real life was in her real self and that her

¹⁰³ This aspect of the novel tends to show its cultural roots in Victorian ideas about the fear of inherited disease and weakness; relevant commentaries include: Allan Hepburn (2007: 196-201); James Mirack (2003: 66-102); George M. Johnson (2006: 135-138). Useful background on the debates of the period that informed literature can be found in Staffan Muller-Wille and Hans-Jorg Rheinberger (2014) and William Greenslade (2010).

¹⁰⁴ A similar point about the impact of Freud's work and his case studies of hysteria on culture is made by David Trotter (1993:140-141). Freud shows convincingly that hysteria is acquired from the environment, rather than a sign of inherited degeneration.

real self was God' (Olivier 373). It should be added though that in their emphasis on immanence, such ideas are also strikingly suggestive of Pantheism whatever their mystical leanings.

Hence the text focuses a great deal on the protagonist's childhood, precisely because battles against authority occur in the oppression of the family home, rather than predominantly in the public world against patriarchal oppression. In childhood Mary continually thinks about the world outside her room through a deeply subjective lens, which shows the emphasis on qualitative time and memory through the process of articulating subjectivity:

At night when you lay on your back in the dark you thought about being born and about arithmetic and God. The sacred number three went into eighteen sixty nine and didn't come out again; so did seven [...] There was the day you were born, January the twenty-fourth, eighteen sixty three, at five o'clock in the morning. When you were born you weren't any age at all, not a minute old, not a second, not half a second. But there was eighteen sixty-two and there was January the twenty-third and the minute just before you were born. [...] You couldn't really tell when the twenty-third ended and the twenty-fourth began; because when you counted sixty minutes for the hour and sixty seconds for the minute, there was still the half second and the half of that, and so on for ever and ever.

You couldn't tell when you were really born. And nobody could tell you what being born was. Perhaps nobody knew. (Olivier 45-46)

In one sense this passage evokes an extremely Bergsonian view of the fact of conscious time for the subject, as public time in the shape of calendars and dates is shown to be of limited relevance ('when the twenty-third ended and the twenty-fourth began'), although in this case the subject's view of the world from within her own room is also dissolved into a mystical epiphanic experience ('you thought about being born and about arithmetic and God. The sacred number three went into eighteen sixty nine') which leaves her confused. The young Mary is always concerned by the spiritual as much as the material nature of the world, much like James and Bergson. As Brian Richardson points out Sinclair's novel employs second person narration, which he defines as 'the protagonist will usually be the sole focalizer, and is often (but not always) the work's principal narratee as well' (2006: 18-19). Through such second person limited narration,¹⁰⁵ the voice one hears is the interior monologue of the

¹⁰⁵ Brian Richardson points out Sinclair's *Mary Olivier* employs second person narration, which he defines as 'the protagonist will usually be the sole focalizer, and is often (but not always) the work's principal narratee as well' (2006: 18-19).

protagonist Mary Olivier and thus it functions as ‘stream of consciousness’ in terms of James’s theory, even within this then unusual narrative style.

Sinclair effectively connects Mary’s intuitive understanding to the outside world through the process of her qualitative thoughts in this passage. In Bergson’s essay ‘Brain and Thought: A Philosophical Illusion’ he argues that idealism and realism can be recognized as ‘conventional terms’ that mean ‘two notion of reality, one of which implies the possibility, the other the impossibility, of identifying things with their ideas, that is with the presentations [...] which they offer to a human consciousness’ (2007: 187-206, 191). In effect, Bergson argues that the qualitative lies at the heart of Idealism and is equivalent to the quantitative, which remains central to a realist understanding of the world. Mary’s hopeless attempt to work out the time of her birthdate at the beginning of the novel, using external chronological coordinates is doomed to failure, whether calibrated in days or seconds. Instead she accepts that an idealistic theory of consciousness and perception emphasizes what is meaningful in her own personal duration; rejecting restricted public time. As Eric Berlatsky argues: ‘For Bergson , there is no experience more “qualitative” than time, an experience that “endures” in consciousness [...] While we may choose to draw a parallel between the ticks of a clock and time itself, in fact there is “no point of contact” between these things’ (2013: 265). Clearly much of the opening of *Mary Olivier* is indebted to Bergson’s understanding of both the signal importance of conscious time, especially in terms of what it tells the reader about the unreliability of public methods that ‘pretend’ to measure time.

Sinclair’s two major philosophical works were *A Defence of Idealism* (1917) and *The New Idealism* (1922). According to Boll, Sinclair’s purpose in writing *The New Idealism* was to explore how far Idealism should be revised in the light of the work of such figures as Whitehead, Alexander, Russell, Bodin, and Laird. (1973: 304) Sinclair herself argued further that this new Idealism: ‘must somehow contrive to reconcile the universe of things with the universe of thought, without doing violence to its palpable objectivity. It must cease to make nonsense of the plain principles of physical science, and of the plain man’s progress in the world of so-called physical realities; and it must be proof against all attacks based on the behaviour of that world’ (1922: 14). These bold ambitions might well have been unrealisable in a single volume. Indeed an anonymous reviewer in *The North American Review* (1922),

questioned such ambitiousness while yet pointing out that Sinclair's argument to reconcile such opposing system hung on her distinction between primary and secondary consciousness. As Gillespie indicates 'Primary and Secondary Consciousness' are the favoured terms Sinclair uses as 'responses to the threat to a particular form of metaphysical idealism posed by the "new realists"' (1978: 135).

Interestingly enough, Sinclair unlike in her earlier philosophical volume, makes no claims for unusual psychic phenomenon to elaborate and augment her arguments for an expanded materialism. She was unhappy with the fact that the New Realism was moving away from Idealism, determining material reality as the only reality, not even discerning 'objects from perception'. Jane Dowson further suggests: '[For Sinclair] Idealism went further by distinguishing between primary and secondary consciousness and by pointing towards an Ultimate Consciousness' (2006: 160). Sinclair's desire for an Absolute Monism could not permit a Materialist position as she needed an over-arching consciousness, though whether this was at the level of God (theism) or of the Universe (pantheism) is harder to discern. As Sinclair explained in the earlier *A Defence of Idealism*: 'Unity, then, or Ultimate Reality, or both, are the objects of the metaphysical quest [...] You cannot get away from it. The quest of Ultimate Reality is as much a necessity of thought as it is a passion of the soul. And the idea of this Absolute is *not* primitive. It is a very late and highly sublimated idea' (941-945).

Gillespie argues that 'Sinclair's definition of reality is inseparable from her definition of consciousness, confirming an Idealist position regarding consciousness which must determine matter' (1978:134), rather than vice versa. According to Sinclair in *The New Idealism* the independence of consciousness from matter is a basic distinction, and consciousness as an entity contains objects among a possible range of objects in the universe, although that universe is the work of thought (29). In addition, one's self discovers reality through perceiving relationships from qualitative time mainly through the subject's inner thoughts; thus one's intuitive and subjective thoughts have the power to transform old experiences, as Sinclair further explains in *The New Idealism*:

Thought is not the builder and the mover, it is the discoverer of reality. Thought moves, so far as it can be said to move at all, always in the path of discovery; it corrects experience by experience, finding complexity in the given simple, simplifying relations in the given complex; it has the power, a power that any critical on-looker might have,

of adjusting old experience to new...each thought-category will be a little absolute on its own account. (29)

Qualitative Thought and reflection on thought are the lynch pin of consciousness that allow the articulation of objects to occur. As Sinclair suggests in the *The New Idealism* consciousness is ‘a pure, featureless transparency [...] between subject and object,’ and everything else of interest and importance should be attributed to the object (31-32). Sinclair has recourse to the idea of the ‘stream of consciousness,’ in order to prove the fundamental unity of consciousness in James’s account, a position necessitated by her Monist sympathies. James’s key concept is used both fictionally and as part of her Idealist understanding of the world; whether that stream is in flux as a Bergsonian might expect or not, is less important than the issue of its singular unity:

‘Say that consciousness is nothing but a stream, and that though it appears to have islands in it, the islands are really only part of the stream; still the stream would not be a stream if it had not a certain unity’ (*The New Idealism* 38).

Sinclair defines ‘Primary Consciousness’ as that which deals with the world of objects and events with the related relations and conditions: ‘whether *perceived* or *conceived*, remembered, anticipated or willed. It thus includes space and time, motion and all the other categories, all the empirical qualities of matter, all empirical quantities’ (*The New Idealism* 274-275). It also includes one’s feelings and emotions as a subject towards such events and entities. Such a definition of consciousness explains sudden perceptual excitement, giving one’s intuitive perception the task and experience of realizing the object as an object for the subject.

However ‘Secondary Consciousness’ describes the functionality of the mind as ‘it has its own concentration on its object in the form of *secondary attention*. It is comprehensive. It includes observation, reflection and meditation [...] It may turn on itself and analyse its own work.’ (*The New Idealism* 290-291) Her Idealist position thus depends upon the distinction between the two types of consciousness. In Bergsonian terms Sinclair’s distinction between primary and secondary consciousness equates to the difference between quantitative consciousness and qualitative consciousness respectively, where the latter is primary to understanding the world. Lived duration is qualitative but also heterogeneous, relating to the deeper,

fundamental, authentic and interiorised self, while the quantitative duration is a homogeneity that permits spatial representation and which corresponds to the social, superficial self that is determined by ideology. While one must in effect live with this dual sense of self, usually the quantitative tends to overpower the qualitative and only introspection can reveal the deeper self. In James' terms the distinction between primary and secondary consciousness can be understood as that between abstract and concrete consciousness, the latter is where the stream of consciousness comes in. In *The Principles of Psychology* James argues of this 'concrete' form of a secondary consciousness (via a citation from Reverend Jas Willis) that: 'At every instant of conscious thought there is a certain sum of perceptions, or reflections, or both together, present, and together constituting one whole state of apprehension' (I 241).

During infancy at five years old, Mary excitedly opened a birthday present, however, subsequently she re-evaluates her toy lamb:

Suddenly in the middle of the night she was five years old. She had kept on waking up with the excitement of it. Then, in the dark twilight of the room, she had seen a bulky thing inside the cot, leaning up against the rail...The birthday present...When she poked it, stiff paper bent in and crackled; and she could feel something big and solid underneath...Its large, slanting eyes stared off over its ears into the far corners of the room, so that it never looked at you. This made her feel sometimes that the lamb didn't love her, and sometimes that it was frightened and wanted to be comforted. (*Mary Olivier* 17-18)

In Sinclair's own terms, Mary's primary consciousness recognizes a birthday gift, but her secondary consciousness is embodied in her ambivalent reaction to the object, finding it distracting. In psychological terms she projects her own complex and ambivalent feelings towards the maternal object, because she feels her mother (substituted by the lamb) may or may not love her, or else it might displace her as regards that maternal role. The overall narrative, as G.B. Stewart (1979) argues, demonstrates how Mary Olivier as an artist must undergo a painful, traumatic separation from the maternal figure. But here, what is most important for my argument is the way that this scene elaborates within the very narration the distinction between primary and secondary consciousness. Mary's mind must use secondary consciousness to create something of psychological and cultural worth, both in terms of her own subjectivity and her gender, and the narrative recognizes this in Bergsonian and Jamesian terms. William James in 'The Scope of Psychology' in *The Principles of*

Psychology argued that without the proper role of the brain within the framework of the senses, one's qualitative consciousness will fail and all that will be left is unprocessed sensory data: '[...] the brain, is the part whose experiences are directly concerned. If the nervous communication be cut off between the brain and other parts, the experiences of those other parts are non-existent for the mind [...] if the brain be injured, consciousness is abolished or altered' (I 4).

The above quotation from *Mary Oliver* also demonstrates a third person narrator in the novel, the conventional use of the third-person "she". However, it is so close to a first person perspective, as to suggest stream of consciousness, a form of third person limited narration that is very heavily focalised through the inner thoughts and feelings of the protagonist. Such third person narrative obviously represents a compound narration constructed from the imaginary consciousness of Mary, besides a more formal, neutral consciousness, presumably indicative of a residual form of more traditional third person narrator from the conventions of the realist novel (although in such an autobiographically framed narrative one is tempted to almost describe it as an authorial voice). However, such is the strength of the stream-of-consciousness technique with its emphatic focalisation towards Mary, the protagonist. That the novel on occasion crosses over from third person to second person narration, a phenomenon that can be observed at several points in the narrative. Kaplan remarks:

There is an omniscient narrator for Mary... but it is not an impersonal one; it is Mary herself. Usually this narrator describes the thoughts in Mary's mind through the conventional third-person 'she'. This is where the writer Mary, looking at her own life from a great distance in time or feeling, separates herself from the thoughts of the character Mary [...] But when the omniscient narrator gets closer and closer to identification with the character Mary, the pronouns change. Thus she speaks to that other self. 'You,' she calls it. And then, almost with a startling-seeming inconsistency, she switches to 'I' ... The narrator, then, is also 'you', but the 'you' who looks back. (1975: 51)

Arguably Kaplan is correct in terms of the spirit of text, but wrong in terms of her formal description of this narrative. There is an extremely strong focalisation by the third person narrator regarding Mary, and there is equally free indirect speech by the narrator which adopts the expressions characterizing Mary's own manner of speaking. Yet, Kaplan is incorrect in stating that the third person limited narrator is simply Mary herself, which would reduce the text in formal terms to simply an equivalent of a first-person narrative and perhaps

actual auto-biography. It is more nuanced than that. Rather, this is typical of the stream-of-consciousness technique developed by such female modernists as Sinclair and Richardson, which allows a character's inner life and thoughts to erupt into the externalities of narrative. This clearly develops in large part from more straightforward autobiographical feminists' works such as Elizabeth Von Anrim, still using a first person narrative mode but definitely located within a variety of narrative methods which include second person narration.

Such dramatic changes of narrative mode, while somewhat confusing for the reader and sometimes even seeming awkward stylistically, deliberately emphasise the power and primacy of Mary's subjective reflections (her secondary consciousness) upon the external world, as third person suddenly becomes second person narration: 'Mamma took her in her lap. She lowered her head to you, holding it straight and still, ready to pounce if you said the wrong thing' (28). Unusually the novel moves very quickly from third person to second-person narration, even at its opening. So readers quickly inhabit Mary's developing consciousness from her very first memories of lying in her cot at the age of two years old; the scene shows Sinclair's emphasis on stream of consciousness as a means of making her protagonist's psychological development vivid:

The curtain of the big bed hung down beside the cot. When old Jenny shook it the wooden rings rattled on the pole and grey men with pointed heads and squat, bulging bodies came out of the folds on to the flat green ground. If you looked at them they turned into squab faces smeared with green. Every night, when Jenny had gone away with the doll and the donkey, you hunched up the blanket and the stiff white counterpane to hide the curtain and you played with the knob in the green painted iron railing of the cot. (3)

Sometimes the move towards second person narration transforms itself into first person narration in the manner of stream of consciousness, as can be seen when Bertha Mitchison, Mary's neighbourhood friend, discusses with Mary a child's relation to the Virgin Mary: 'Bertha Mitchison, saying things, things you wouldn't think of if you could help it' (211). After Bertha said 'I know something you don't know' (96), Mary's inner thoughts show an ambivalent opinion, expressed through second person narration and use of the pronoun 'you':

You listened. You couldn't help listening. You simply had to know. It was no use to say you didn't believe a word of it. Inside you, secretly, you knew it was true. You were frightened. You trembled and went hot and cold by turns, and somehow that was how you knew it was true; almost as if you had known all the time. (96)

Sinclair's experimental stream-of-consciousness technique distorts the boundaries between narrator and protagonist, in consequence readers feel as if they were sharing Mary's own innermost thoughts in her own voice, thereby exploring Mary's female subjectivity within what in Bergson's terms is her own qualitative duration. The passage shows Mary's pursuit of Bertha's opinion and Mary's consequent self-realization of matters in the objective world. Through the narrator, Sinclair explores women's struggles through their intuitive, interiorised journey as a subject, one opposed to a patriarchal, objective reality. At the level of language, one engages with a conflict between the female subject's ability to express herself publically (including the expression of active sexual desires and demands to be allowed to be creative), and her communication through a psychological language of considerable passion, opposed by an exterior discourse that denies such communication in the public sphere.

Reflecting on the experience of Mary receiving her birthday present in her cot, the narrator relays the impression that the child: 'lay quiet and happy, trying to guess what it could be and fell asleep again' (18). This sudden interruption of falling 'asleep again' in the middle of her conscious perceptions, reminds one of William James's comments in *The Principles of Psychology* (I 199), as regards the relation of the subject's consciousness to time. Mary's falling asleep breaks her stream of intuitive thought, creates a lacunary gap, in which sleep seems like what James called the 'other unconscious conditions [which] are apt to break in upon and occupy large durations of what we nevertheless consider the mental history of a single man'. Sinclair suggests much the same in her own Idealist theorising of consciousness in *The New Idealism* where for Sinclair both 'primary and secondary' consciousness is 'dependent on ultimate consciousness' (295).

Sinclair and Bergson's shared affinities with Imagism, create a context in which characters like Mary Olivier describe their intuitive feeling through visionary moments, reflecting heightened consciousness of subjective experience, using Imagist techniques. Bergson's theory of the extension of one's Free Will and consciousness, within qualitative time, is elaborated by Sinclair's use of very concrete and vivid imagery. This shows the characters intuitive comprehension of their world as a profoundly immediate phenomenon. According to Laurel Forster such a use of semi-poetic language deliberately interlinks 'what it felt and

what is known' (200:102), which is to say between secondary consciousness and cognitive knowledge, the subject's intuitive perception becomes a concrete insight. Woven in her early period of development, infancy, Mary Olivier consciously perceives everything around her including her mother's breast experience, showing the importance Sinclair attaches to the value of such perception:

The knob in the green painted iron railing of the cot [...] fitted the hollow of your hand, cool and hard, with a blunt nose that pushed agreeably into the palm [...] The big white globes hung in a ring above the dinner table. At first, when she came into the room [...] she could see nothing but the hanging, shining globes [...] Mamma was sitting at the far end of the table. Her face and neck shone white above the pile of oranges on the dark blue dish. (3-4)

She perceives the external world through her imaginary thoughts, again a qualitative experience or her secondary consciousness, through a third person omniscient narration, but in this case so focalised it creates stream of consciousness. In this epiphany Mary associates complete happiness with her mother, providing Mary with comfort and a shelter with her 'raised hip and shoulder,' feeding her on demand. So Mary's consciousness of the mother-child unit symbolizes security, situated in her own cot, her hunger assuaged. However, later Mrs. Olivier sees a version of herself in Mary, wanting her child to act more appropriately, according with her mother's idea of suitable female behaviour.

Sinclair draws upon her knowledge of Bergson in her own philosophical work to argue the correlatives of space and time, perception and memory function in effect as a fusion of experience and thought for the subject. In *A Defence of Idealism* Sinclair states of vitalism:

For it is true that in action, in life taken in the thick as it is lived, we do get a fusion of perception and of memory and interest and will, of time and space, in a continuity and oneness which knows nothing of the contradictions, the dilemmas, the presuppositions, the infinite dividing and limitings of the intellect. (63)

Sinclair refers to the Bergsonian doctrine of the reality of the past memories, his belief that within one's psychical existence one's whole past still exists. Memory of the past is an important resource for female modernist writers such as those featured in this thesis. Memories survive because past experience can recur mentally, contributing to new perceptions, the past evoking unique subjective time. With such 'fusion of perception and of

memory [...] of time and space' provides a flashback of her previous self, lying in her cot. Although only a memory, according to Bergson and Sinclair, it constitutes part of the narrator's psychic understanding of a self as constituted by unity and continuity. For feminists like Sinclair the past also allows access to a time of un-actualised possibilities before an adulthood restricted by patriarchy. With Sinclair this reveals that the development of the female artist is first and foremost a struggle within the confines of the family as a patriarchal structure. The Olivier family wants to raise their daughter as a Victorian woman; her full name is Mary Victoria Olivier recalling Queen Victoria, her naming signifying the family's desire for a female subject conforming to acceptable patriarchal values:

It was like a birthday. [...] you drank raspberry vinegar out of the silver christening cups the aunts and uncles gave you when you were born. Uncle Victor had given Mary hers. She held it up and read her own name on it. MARY VICTORIA OLIVIER 1863. (33)

As Raitt points out Sinclair shares a birthdate with her protagonist. (2000: 27) Cheryl A. Wilson argues her middle name suggests specifically the Olivier's family hopes she will build her 'life around the pillars of moral duty and family responsibility' (2006: 221). However, as the novel clarifies, Mary is engaged in a struggle to achieve precisely the opposite. Her cot is in a room shared with her parents and her earliest abstract memory (in Jamesian terms) shows simultaneous attraction to her mother's breast (as we have seen) while being repulsed by her authoritarian father's lifted nightshirt (if that is what the dream means). Although the passage is much later, nonetheless it returns the reader almost effortlessly to the original scene, emphasizing the unity of past and present for the subject as Bergson and Sinclair both argued. Her account is as much surreal, as it is poetic, as much a dream and reality, which indicates that concrete perceptions can gain emotional value despite the evident distortion of what is a dream.

Tip-fingering backwards that way you got into the grey lane where the prickly stones were and the hedge of little biting trees. When the door in the hedge opened you saw the man in the night-shirt. He had only half a face. From his nose and his cheek-bones downwards his beard hung straight like a dark cloth. You opened your mouth, but before you could scream you were back in the cot; the room was light [...]. (3-4)

Both father and mother force Mary and her brothers to obey rigid patterns of patriarchal, conservative behavior, while dissension reminds Mary of her extended family. In contrast to the 'mad' Aunt Charlotte, whose example she is threatened with, there is Emilius' rational

sister Lavinia, a spinster who has decided to join the more radical and intellectual Unitarianism tradition.¹⁰⁶ Mary's parents fear her 'opinions': "All I can say is," Mamma said, "that if Lavvy Olivier brings her opinions into this house Emilius and I will walk out of it" (30).

Later Mary draws attention to Aunt Lavinia's 'opinions' and to the fact the family regarded her as the 'clever one' despite their more traditional opposition to Unitarian beliefs:

When Aunt Lavvy stayed with you Mamma made you promise not to ask her about her opinions. But sometimes you forgot. [...] You couldn't help feeling that she knew things. Mamma said she had always been the clever one, just as Aunt Charlotte had always been the queer one; but Aunt Bella said she was no better than an unbeliever, because she was a Unitarian at heart. (81)

As has been previously mentioned most critics have accepted that *Mary Olivier* is a largely autobiographical text, and Boll suggests it was Sinclair herself who stated this to her French translator, which was further endorsed by Florence Bartrop, Sinclair's companion. (1973: 244-245) However, the status of Mary's two Aunts on her paternal side, Charlotte and Lavinia, remains unclear as to the level of its biographical linkage. It is perhaps simply an imaginative construction, even though Sinclair's father did have three sisters who lived in Essex. Significantly in the novel Lavinia was not allowed to marry the man she wanted when

¹⁰⁶ The Unitarians (Rational Dissenters) emerged in the Eighteenth Century. Defined by their denial of the Trinity and opposition to the doctrine of original sin, but were famous for their progressive politics and interest in the sciences and the arts. They are important in this novel in the shape of Aunt Lavinia, whose Unitarianism serves as a model of a different kind of femininity to Mary Olivier's mother. They were historically associated with the radical, liberal political tradition in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth century. Mary Wollstonecraft (1759 – 1797) was a Unitarian, as was novelist Elizabeth Gaskell, (1810–1865); while the young Samuel Taylor Coleridge (1772 – 1834) was close to Unitarian thought. See Stuart Andrews (2003) and for a concise history see Leonard Smith (2006). The Unitarians had a particular importance for Nineteenth-Century feminists, and in 1863, the Unitarians appointed the first woman religious minister; subsequently playing an extremely important part in the beginnings of the Suffrage movement, as discussed in Kathryn Gleadle (1995).

Unitarians were also very significant within the field of the education of women, as discussed in Mary Hilton (2007), which is reflected perhaps in Aunt Lavinia's desire to have been a teacher when she was young. Unitarian and prominent Victorian Harriet Martineau (1802-1876), an eminent woman of letters and social theorist, like Dorothea Beale she is important in the development of women's education, having written the article 'On Female Education' (1822/ 1985 88-92), and in 1866 joined with Beale in petitioning parliament for women to be given the vote. Alexis Easley (1999) discusses Martineau's view of women as agents and subjects. See Ella Dzelzainis and Cora Kaplan (2010) for further background. Unitarians were often accused of pantheism at the time, which goes back to the Romantic thinkers and writers' relationship with pantheism (as discussed by H.W. Piper (1965) and Julia A. Lamm (2010). Russell B. Goodman (2004) explains Unitarianism was regarded as related to the American Transcendentalists, such as Henry David Thoreau (1817-1862) and Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803 – 1882).

young perhaps in part because he was a Unitarian and also had to give up her dreams of teaching: ‘Because your Uncle Victor and I had to look after your Aunt Charlotte’ (221). Earlier, we discover that Lavinia had visited the Unitarian Chapel when she had lived in Liverpool with the rest of Mary Oliver’s father’s side of the family, and continues to attend a Mr Robson’s Unitarian Chapel, now that everyone has moved to Essex.

‘If you insist on knowing, Caroline, I went to Mr. Robson's church.’

‘You went to Mr.—to the Unitarian Chapel?’

‘To the Unitarian Chapel.’

‘Emilius—‘ You would have thought that Aunt Lavvy had hit Mamma and hurt her.
(104)

Interestingly, despite her mother’s view of the unconventionality of Aunt Lavinia’s beliefs, which presumably included their association with various forms of more radical, progressive politics in the period, a young Mary suggests a connection between Unitarianism and pantheism. ‘The Encyclopaedia man said that Unitarianism was a kind of Pantheism. Perhaps that was it. Perhaps she knew the truth about God’ (108). Though it later turns out that Lavinia is disturbed and made rather unhappy by the suggested connection of Unitarianism with Pantheism, it has derived from her reading of Spinoza, and represents a position close to the contemporaneous debates when Unitarians adopted various attitudes towards the subject.

At this point the text introduces a real person, Dr James Martineau,¹⁰⁷ (1805-1900) one of the most famous Unitarian theologians of the period and the brother of the aforementioned Harriet Martineau. Mary remarks: ‘Lavvy who had actually known Dr. Martineau. Dr. Martineau was not dead’ (59). Martineau certainly preached in Liverpool where the narrative suggests Aunt Lavvy first met him, as he spent 25 years there and his influence within debates within Victorian theology were powerful, although he remained a staunch theist.¹⁰⁸ Although his work was engaged in a dialogue with German theological rationalisers, his book *A Study of Spinoza* (1882/ 2005), in contrast was extremely critical and suggested Spinoza

¹⁰⁷ Sinclair had probably read Martineau’s work according to Boll (1973: 36) by 1886 or so. Dorothea Beale ‘[...] recommended the reading of Martineau's *Types of Ethical History* [...] to help her [Sinclair] see the unity underlying all possibility of knowledge’.

¹⁰⁸ Alan Rushton and Ralph Waller (2005); Frank Schulman (2002); Ralph Waller (2004/2006).

was more of an atheist than a pantheist. Martineau is mentioned frequently in this short section of the novel, as is his celebrated book *Endeavours After the Christian Life* (1906: 55). In the novel, Mary's mother Caroline accuses Martineau of being an 'infidel', with 'no right to call himself a Christian' (56). It is probable that Martineau's place in the novel is intended to locate the text firmly within actual debates about Victorian religion, and simultaneously to point us towards the more radical possibility of a pantheist view of the universe. Mary searches for a deeper identity within herself, using her aunts as examples. Particularly appealing is the intellectual, free-thinking Aunt Lavinia, even though Mary is convinced she will have to care for her mother, Caroline: 'My body'll stay and take care of her all her life, but *myself* will have got away' (252). Her interests in Aunt Lavinia's unconventionality reflects Mary's refusal of both Victorian culture and the established Anglican church.

Secondary consciousness from past, present and future, which may be present experiences or memories, are equally important to Mary's subjective intuitions in making sense of the external world. In the section 'Infancy' Mary's qualitative thoughts about her father shift from third person narration to second person, becoming more vivid and immediate. The narrator moves a relative distance toward immediacy, again arguably a striking use of Imagist technique:

Papa sat up, broad and tall above the table, all by himself. He was dressed in black. [...] You knew he was smiling because his cheeks swelled high up his face so that his eyes were squeezed into narrow, shining slits. When they came out again you saw scarlet specks and smears in their corners. (4 - 5)

While Raitt suggests that Mary is 'anxious about how to define and maintain her selfhood' (2000: 219), nonetheless the novel's narrative techniques surely emphasize Mary's sense of psychological continuity even as it demonstrates her continuing desire and quest for independent selfhood. As seen above, certain of Mary's internal perceptions extend back into infancy, as when her vivid perceptions and feelings reflect her excitement as a small child about building a tower which utilizes the metaphor of her body literally 'bursting.' This comes to dominate the limited third person narrative, which is the overall narrative frame of the book: 'Something swelled up, hot and tight, in Mary's body and in her face. She had a big bursting face and a big bursting body. She struck the tower, and it fell down. Her violence made her feel light and small again and happy' (10). The child's reaction is both liberating

and exhilarating, directed against her mother (who showed no interest in the construction of the tower). The second sentence is a narrated perception, expressed in terminology reminiscent of how an infant might articulate.

In contrast the first sentence encapsulates a sudden consciousness about an external perception, what Sinclair referred to as secondary consciousness. The focus shifts from Mary as subject perceived externally to an experiential reflection of meaningful interiority. The third sentence takes on Mary's viewpoint as a focaliser, but while its initial vocabulary lies beyond the range of the infant, its simplicity still captures the visceral meaning in the final word, again indicative of the simple, straightforward vocabulary available to a small child, particularly as it initially learn to express itself in language. In combining the analytical voice of the narrator and the awareness of the young child, Mary, the effect shows using a physical sensation moored in the body, like the relationship to the mother as an internal psychological feeling (the outburst of emotion is caused by her mother's indifference), in which Mary's qualitative and subjective consciousness figures prominently.

Despite figures who think independently such as Aunt Lavinia being frowned upon as dangerous nonconformists, or, like Aunt Charlotte held out as examples of a madness which must be avoided at any cost by sticking to established ways of thinking, Mary follows her intuitive perception in trying to establish her own selfhood, a rebellious role within the family. As a child, she is often observed trying to make sense of adult behaviour, while experiencing an inability to articulate her inner feelings to a family who cannot understand them. Mary is curious both as a child and adult, anxious to explore but her family simply interpret her desires as stubborn and selfish. Later when Mary challenges Christianity, her mother accuses her of glorying in 'pride' and 'self-will' since she had been a baby: 'Self-will has been your besetting sin ever since you were a little baby crying for something you couldn't have. You kicked before you could talk' (169).

Mary constantly argues with her mother about the everyday routines and her mother's Christian piety. At one point, she uses the image of the garden (a female centred image which

the female modernist writers discussed in this thesis often use as a resource in a variety of ways), as a method to articulate her difficult relationship to her mother:

The garden flowers wouldn't let you love them. They stood still in their beauty, quite arrogant, reproachful. They put you in the wrong. When you stroked them they shook and swayed from you; when you held them tight their heads dropped, their backs broke, they shrivelled up in your hands. All the flowers in the garden were Mamma's; they were sacred and holy. You loved best the flowers that you stooped down to look at and the flowers that were not Mamma's: the small crumpled poppy by the edge of the field, and the ears of the wild rye that ran up your sleeve and tickled you, and the speedwell, striped like the blue eyes of Meta, the wax doll. (16)

Her use of her mother's flowers allows her to discuss their mutual relationship, and as Mary perceives matters they are characterized by certain maternal qualities, especially the refusal of love, reproachfulness and withdrawal into religiosity. Unsurprisingly, Mary loves those flowers that do not belong to her mother, which match those experiences of the world that her mother does not control. Through flower metaphors Mary expresses her independence figuratively, redeploing a traditional metaphor for women with reference to unwanted weeds and wild flowers, (such as 'wild rye', 'speedwell' and field poppies). Here Mary associates herself with these plants because of her refusal to conform, her disruption of cultivated gender expectations. Cheryl Wilson further argues, that Victorian 'ideas of femininity – embodied by Caroline – are associated with repressed emotions and polite performance' (2006: 224). The rational order of Victorian gardens was giving way to freer approaches in the period when Mary Olivier was written and she uses this distinction to show the difference between her mother's Victorian image and her own sense of herself as a new kind of young woman.¹⁰⁹ In Bergsonian terms her experiences of the garden are subjectively cognizant,

¹⁰⁹ There are strong parallels between Sinclair's use of the concept of garden viewed by a child and that depicted in Dorothy Richardson's much later story 'The Garden'. It is possible that Richardson may be consciously alluding to Sinclair. All of the modernist female writers examined in this thesis make use of gardens at some point in their work, as discussed regarding Mansfield and Woolf. This suggests gardens' importance to an understanding of the connections between women and artistic work, as well as investigating the association between women and natural objects such as flowers and plants. Shelley Saguaro (2006: 6-34) offers a useful account of the critical connection between gardens and modernism in Mansfield and Woolf. Beverly Seaton (1979: 101-120 and 1982: 253-266) connects writing about gardens and autobiography. Elizabeth von Arnim's *Elizabeth's German Garden*, while not a straightforward autobiography shows this alignment of feminist interests.

John Ruskin's remarked in 'Of Queen's Gardens' in *Sesame and Lilies* (cited by Deborah Nord, 2002: xviii) that a young girl, 'grows as a flower does', connecting flowers and a chivalric, ideal of girlhood and womanhood. If this book became a fixture of bourgeois homes, its binary logic of sexual difference was nevertheless contested by female short story writers, Kate Krueger (2014: 1-17). Lynn Voskuil (2013: 559-561) in 'The Victorian Novel and Horticulture' argues that the advent of successful Victorian female gardeners, garden designers and writers demonstrate more ambivalence in Victorian attitudes towards the association of women with flowers. When Sinclair and other female modernists wrote, this linkage had been problematized even further by such

deployed to discuss her mother, while the garden serves as a bridge that connects her own pure consciousness to the outside world: ‘When you smelt mignonette you thought of Mamma’ (*Mary Olivier*).

However, later in the story, her mother’s unthinking cruelty becomes more prominent, awakening Mary’s inner self in adolescence. It is a time when her body is changing and she starts to think of sexual desire and marriage as possibilities, along with her new identity as a young woman, no longer a child, possessing a certain social and cultural values within the patriarchal system. She is therefore annoyed when her mother whispers to Aunt Bella, her mother’s sister, about Mary being fourteen, rather than discussing the implications with Mary directly:

Mamma whispered to Mrs. Draper, and Aunt Bella whispered to Mamma: ‘Fourteen.’ They always made a mystery about being fourteen. They ought to have told her. Her thoughts about her mother went up and down. Mamma was not helpless. She was not gentle. She was not really like a wounded bird. She was powerful and rather cruel. You could only appease her with piles of hemmed sheets and darned stockings. If you didn’t take care she would get hold of you and never rest till she had broken you, or turned and twisted you to her own will. She would say it was God’s will. She would think it was God’s will. (124)

The passage above encapsulates Mary’s clear resentment concerning her mother’s capriciousness and rigidity, especially her evocation of religious guidance, or ‘God’s will’, rather than honestly admitting her own preference. Mary’s qualitative self perceives her mother’s will as an emotional disorder that threatens Mary’s growing sense of selfhood. This is rather than an unthinking quantitative world-view of the world conforming to patriarchal values. Instead Mary prefers an authentic selfhood responding to her inner, subjective voice. In Bergsonian and Jamesian terms, Mary’s qualitative selfhood is expressed through an inner subjectivity and its perception of the world, transforming her into a very different kind of gendered female subject than her unthinking, conformist mother. Her rejection of her mother’s Victorian ideal of the Angel in the House leads to her putative steps towards becoming a positive form of New Woman. Cheryl Wilson argues: ‘this cultural conflict between the gender ideals of these two different generations underpins the battle of wills

innovative and ‘radical’ Edwardian garden designers as Gertrude Jekyll (1843-1932), and later, Woolf’s lover, Vita Sackville-West (1892-1962). See Richard Bisgrove (1992), Vita Sackville-West and Sarah Raven (2014).

between Mary and her mother; Caroline repeatedly entreats Mary to adhere to God's will, which is conveniently synonymous with Caroline's will' (2006: 224). Her mother would like Mary to act like a well behaved middle-class Victorian woman who can be a suitable for marriage. When she was a child, Mary's mother makes this clear when Mary asks her a question:

'Why do you look at me so kindly when I'm sewing?'

'Because I like to see you behaving like a little girl, instead of tearing about and trying to do what boys do' (70).

The narrative style changes between the 'Infancy' and 'Childhood', the former showing the infant Mary's consciousness in dialogue with her surroundings and particularly her mother, while in the latter Mary's consciousness is increasingly described as being in an internal dialogue within herself, the external world perceived qualitatively. 'Childhood' opens with a memory of Christmas of 1870, presented as a Victorian tradition, given a religious resonance in her young mind, reflective of the rhythms of her home environment:

Eighteen-seventy was a beautiful number. It sounded nice, and there was a seven in it. Seven was a sacred and holy number; so was three, because of the three Persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, and because of the seven stars and the seven golden candlesticks. (41)

Mary's parents give Mary what they call the 'Children's Prize', a set of Bible puzzles, which she liked, but the blue covering is reminiscent of the colour of the ceiling in St. Mary's Chapel in Ilford, and the blue of the 'Virgin Mary's dress'. Yet for an earlier present, she received the lamb doll, all of which have religious overtones, the lamb symbolizing Christ. Religiosity and its symbols permeated every aspect of the child's life. These primary memories (to utilize a Jamesian vocabulary) show how Mary's secondary memories create a pattern that revolves around the presence of religion in her early life. However, such symbolic memories also allow her to express an 'alternative self' as she matures, that challenges the dominating effects of religion. Later, for example, she opines not being born a Roman Catholic, which seemed to her less prohibitive, allowing play on Sunday afternoons, rather than suffering the restrictions of her Puritanical family household.

'In Roman Catholic countries Sunday was all over at twelve o'clock, and for the rest of the day the Roman Catholics could do just what they pleased; they danced and went to

theatres and played games, as if Sunday was one of their own days and not God's day' (42).

In *A Defence of Idealism* Sinclair views her 'real self' as a continuity defined by a relationship to memory (4-5), her qualitative intuitions shaping her capacity to see and comprehend the outside world. Mary's desire animates her incipient individuality, the revelation of an alternative subjective self, more liberating and more aesthetic than her familial role, arguably even emergent at seven years old when she 'moved out of Mamma's room to sleep by herself' (44). As a child with her mother, she practices 'walking very fast and never looking back, she pretended that she had gone out by herself' (48). Much later she will feel her intellectualism and status as an independent thinker. This also creates a kind of alienation, a proto-modernist intellectual estrangement from her background which is sharpened by refusing to abide by gender norms. This is becoming a compulsion, despite her mother's admonishment.

“‘There-take Mark's books. Take everything. Go your own way. You always have done; you always will. Some day you'll be sorry for it.’”

She was sorry for it now, miserable, utterly beaten. Her new self seemed to her a devil that possessed her. She hated it. She hated the books. She hated everything that separated her and made her different from her mother and from Mark.' (128 - 129)

Her mother closes the door before Mary's attempted apology is complete. Mary's inner impetus (in Bergsonian terms the *élan vital*) drives her towards an alternative, more authentic life, evoking an incipient feminist framework, whereby the subject might challenge patriarchy as acted out in her wish to know more of the external world and objective reality on their own terms. Rather than simply accepting norms, Bergson's idea (or at least the way it could be read by those willing to) is that the subject might engage in a process of self-alteration through a sceptical re-examination of the world that actually exists. Albeit expressed in naive terms, Mary Olivier imagines a future of activity and independence with her brother, Mark, a very different life from her existing one at home:

I shall paint pictures and play the piano and ride in a circus. I shall go out to the countries where the sand is and tame zebras; and I shall marry Mark and have thirteen children with blue eyes like Meta. (60).

The latter is a Chinese doll given her by Aunt Charlotte, who significantly named it using the term 'Beyond' in Greek, linked therefore to Aunt Charlotte's exoticism and her radical

difference from the norms of the family. Its intensity as experience increases its reality: as William James argues in *The Principles of Psychology*, ‘the more a conceived object *excites* us, the more reality it has’ (II 307).

Like Aunt Lavinia, Charlotte represents new, alternative ways of being female though in this case hysteria or some form of mental illness seems to have become her fate. In her middle-age Mary reminisces about the past through her ‘secondary memories’ and realizes that perceiving the outer world comes primarily from one’s inner self, that is to say it is imbued with qualitative significance primarily:

If you looked back on any perfect happiness you saw that it had not come from the people or the things you thought it had come from, but from somewhere inside yourself. When you attached it to people and things they ceased for that moment to be themselves; the space they then seemed to inhabit was not their own space; the time of the wonderful event was not their time. (378-9)

Her realization of future potential anticipates the feminist ideal that happiness comes from independence of thought and action, and Mary notes ‘Everything had changed; she heard herself speaking, speaking steadily, with the voice of a changed and unfamiliar person’ (127). Mary’s intuitive self uncovers and explores the qualitative perception of her characteristics towards the external reality, firstly refuting and escaping the concept of ‘The Angel in the House’ and then experiencing subjectively the possibility of a different and alternative kind of life for a woman so revealed. Such a reimagining of the relationships between private and public memories within a heterogeneous time also enables Mary to change a life that might have otherwise been shaped by trying like her mother to prove God’s love by following the Bible literally, having access to a radically new world. In adolescence Mary realizes that nature offers experiences of epiphanic bliss, prefiguring her proto-Modernist interests in alternative forms of spirituality, a Spinoza-inspired Pantheism which so markedly contrasts to her rigid Protestant upbringing based on literal interpretations of the Bible:

Mary went slowly up the lane between the garden wall and the thorn hedge. The air, streaming towards her from the flat fields, had the tang of cold, glittering water; the sweet, grassy smell of the green corn blades swam on it [...] By the gate of the field her sudden, secret happiness came to her. She could never tell when it was coming, nor what it would come from. It had something to do with the trees standing up in the golden white light. It had come before with a certain sharp white light flooding the fields, flooding the room. It had happened so often that she received it now with a

shock of recognition; and when it was over she wanted it to happen again. [...] But it never came twice to the same place in the same way. (93 - 94)

A pantheistic sense permeates her experiences in this lyrical passage; in her childhood home in Ilford, her happiness was mixed with ‘the flat fields and the tall, bare trees, [...]’ (50). Trees always remind her of Five Elms, the tall house nearby where her stream of consciousness emphasises the capacity of natural views to set her free from external opinions, reminiscent in part of romantic poetry. Such total, blissful epiphany suggests her ‘real self’, rather than her other selves, which she calls ‘queer glimpses of the persons that were called Mary Olivier’ (94). All such ‘queer glimpses’ revolve around images of a woman behaving in traditional Victorian ways, doing acceptable chores around the home: ‘There was Mrs. Olivier’s only daughter, proud of her power over the sewing-machine. When she brought the pile of hemmed sheets to her mother her heart swelled with joy in her own goodness’ (94). In sharp contrast, Mary perceives an alternative self which is joyful about a physical world explored through a liberated perspective.

There was Mark Olivier’s sister, who rejoiced in the movements of her body, the strain of the taut muscles throbbing on their own leash, the bound forwards, the push of the wind on her knees and breast, the hard feel of the ground under her padding feet. (94)

Such an everyday occurrence is transformed by Mary’s subjective views of her life. With such multiple selves each speaks of possibilities, none necessarily truer than another, the very ambivalence and open-endedness prefacing new modernist and feminist styles of discourse. In ‘Adolescence’ for example, as a young woman, Mary is linked to her brother’s military rank at a party: ‘The first time she could remember being important at a party. Her consciousness of being important was intense, exquisite. She was Sub-Lieutenant Mark Olivier’s sister. His only one’ (117).

Mary’s *élan vital* prompts her to fall in love with the half-French atheist Maurice Jourdain, (although her first love seems to have been her brother’s friend, Jimmy, who goes off to Australia) against her family and society’s censure, importantly repeating her Aunt Lavinia’s much earlier rebellious desire to marry a Unitarian and to create a new life for herself as a teacher. Jourdain ‘did beautiful things. She was charmed, suddenly, by his inner, his immaterial beauty,’ (132). Her love for Jimmy was unique and infinite, perhaps recalling her

Aunt Charlotte's extreme passion. She sees him as a kindred spirit who also has a secret rebellious, socially-unacceptable self:

He belonged to her real life. Her self had a secret place where people couldn't get at it, where its real life went on. He was the only person she could think of as having a real life at all like her own. (211)

The narrator by focalising on Mary implies that her love for Jimmy was both physical and spiritual. This recalls Spinoza's radical insight, favoured by the Romantics, that there was no intrinsic dualism between body and soul when it came to the experience of love, in contrast to the view of traditional Christianity.¹¹⁰

Perhaps she had loved Maurice Jourdain with her soul and not with her body. No. She had not loved him with her soul, either. Body and soul; soul and body. Spinoza said they were two aspects of the same thing. What thing? Perhaps it was silly to ask what thing; it would be just body and soul. (226)

Mary's love for Maurice, whose name suggests the exoticism and sensuality of France, derives from her desire to abandon her upbringing, most especially her mother's religious sensibilities; enshrining her own spirituality in physical love, part of a modernist sensibility with its rejection of traditional Christianity. Her love affair with Jimmy will end in failure. Mary's intellectual studies lead to a deep concern with philosophical issues, mirroring her creator, Sinclair. Gesturing towards the appearance of the independent New Woman, and both a growing female suffrage movement and the feminist struggle for equality, Mary changes herself externally and internally, leaving Jimmy disappointed in her refusal of the masquerade of Victorian femininity. She cuts her hair short like a man, wears 'horrible clothes' and obsesses about 'Space and Time and the *Ding-an-sich*' (215).¹¹¹ Affected by her mother's warning of his being a much older man, Mary herself decides to sacrifice her potential marriage in favour of her friend Catty, who also loves him.

¹¹⁰ Michael Della Rocca, (1996).

¹¹¹ 'Ding an sich' is a term derived from the German Idealist philosopher, Immanuel Kant (1724–1804), introduced in his *Critique of Pure Reason* (1781), typically translated into English as thing-in-itself. According to Kant there are *a priori* truths that comes not from experience, but from the constitution of the mind itself. We can never know what the world is really like without the operation of the reason and understanding of our mind: the world as it is before our mind mediates it is the *noumenal* or the 'thing-in-itself.' Kant insisted that the 'thing-in-itself' is completely unknowable by the senses and so Sinclair is actually making a philosophical witticism here when describing Mary's seeming confusion. The literature on this problematic, but influential term is immense. Additional helpful discussion is found in Sebastian Gardner (1999: 21-43) and T.K. Seung *Kant: A Guide for the Perplexed* (2007: 23-27).

The importance of philosophical study to Mary's process of subject formation as opposed to her family's rigid religiosity, with its enforced stereotyped gender formation, is assigned to the topic of the 'Maturity and Middle Age' section, whose value cannot be underestimated. In these periods she becomes a more active agent, an initiator of action, rather than reacting to her family and events as she previously did. For Mary, books by Spinoza and Plato among others awaken her to art, emotional adventure and her own sexuality. In this sense books allow the development of her inner subjective life because they represent a cultural resource differently oriented to, associated with sexual desire and the scandal attached to any woman reading certain material of which society disapproved precisely in a gendered fashion. As Cheryl A. Wilson remarks: 'The depiction of reading as a means to challenge the gender and class roles assigned to middle-class Victorian women underlies the scenes of reading in *Mary Olivier*' (2006: 378). However, in addition to a scene of contestation, books serve to allow an intellectual self-fashioning or re-fashioning of the female subject as a philosopher. The German neo-Kantian philosopher and theologian Albert Schwegler (1819 –1857)¹¹² offers an account broadly similar to Sinclair's own philosophical accounts of idealism. Then reading Schwegler is precisely how Mary forms her idealist view of the universe (with thought rather than matter being the prime moving force, determining the categories of space and time):

In Schwegler, as you went on you went deeper. You saw thought folding and unfolding, thought moving on and on, thought drawing the universe to itself, pushing the universe away from itself to draw it back again, closer than close. Space and Time were forms of thought. They were infinite. So thought was infinite; it went on and on for ever, carrying Space, carrying Time. If only you knew what the Thing-in-itself was. (208)

Such reading offers a rapture of intellectual study of philosophy that builds to almost orgasmic ecstasy, what Sinclair calls in *The Three Sisters*: 'a great climax of the soul' (1914: 7). Mary's challenges to her Victorian mother's unthinking adherence to the strictures of patriarchal society, lead to emotionally painful exchanges, her mother regarding Mary's quest

¹¹² Albert Schwegler began his career as a theologian of the 'Tübingen School', researching the early history of 'heretical' sects in Church history. However, after rousing controversy and the ire of the Church authorities, he switched to philosophy, which he taught at the University of Tübingen. Mary may be reading his *Geschichte der Philosophie im Umriss (History of Philosophy in Epitome)* (1848), translated into English by J.H. Seelye in 1856, a widely available, esteemed history of philosophy, still in print. For a discussion of the intellectual context of Schwegler's work, as part of the Tübingen School in creating a 'scientific' form of Christian theology, that recalls the rationalism of the Unitarians, see Johannes Zachhuber (2013). To understand his approaches teaching philosophy in the period, see Ulrich Johannes Schneider (2004).

for an authentic self, revealed and awakened through qualitative experience, guided by philosophical books, as a kind of innate narcissism:

Her mother turned at her bedroom door and signed to her to come in. She sat down in her low chair at the head of the curtained bed. Mary sat in the window-seat.

‘There’s something I want to say to you.’

‘Yes, Mamma.’

Mamma was annoyed. She tap-tapped with her foot on the floor.

‘Have you given up those absurd ideas of yours?’

‘What absurd ideas?’

‘You know what I mean. Calling yourself an unbeliever.’

‘I can’t say I believe things I don’t believe.’

‘Have you tried?’

‘Tried?’

‘Have you ever asked God to help your unbelief?’

‘No. I could only do that if I didn’t believe in my unbelief.’

‘You mean if you didn’t glory in it. Then it’s simply your self-will and your pride. Self-will has been your besetting sin ever since you were a little baby crying for something you couldn’t have. You kicked before you could talk.’

‘Goodness knows I’ve done everything I could to break you of it.’

‘Yes, Mamma darling.’ (168-9)

As the third person narration gives way to dialogue, moving from a ‘tell’ to ‘show’ mode, Mary’s emergent alternative self finds the freedom of will to express her independence. Concerning her struggle with her mother Mary says: ‘there’s a part of me that doesn’t care and there’s a part that cares frightfully’ (170). In one sense Sinclair alerts us here to the human costs, in terms of family life that confronted these new independent women, where feminists faced alienation and estrangement. Mary also worries that she might be confined to an asylum like supposedly ‘hysterical’ Aunt Charlotte. She is not indifferent to her mother, despite the evident conflict, suffering trauma after her mother’s stroke, the horrors of fear and death, amplified by guilt. Sinclair uses second person narration to emphasize the quality of the shock, conveyed as a series of impressions impacting upon her primary consciousness:

You mustn’t feel your eyelids. You mustn’t feel any part of you at all. You think of nothing, absolutely nothing; not even think. You keep on not feeling, not thinking, not

seeing things till the blackness comes in waves, blacker and blacker [...] Then the blackness was perfectly still. You couldn't feel your breathing or your heart beating. ... It's coming all right. ... Blacker and blacker. It wasn't like this before. *This* is an awful feeling. Dying must be like this (351)

In struggling to comprehend the event, her philosophical idealism allows her to rationalise the primary experience into a secondary consciousness, making sense of such qualitative experience. Her understanding matches God and herself as a subject in a way that recalls both Spinoza and Bergson:

'The time of time': that was the Self. ...Time where nothing happens except this. Where nothing happens except God's will. God's will in your will. Self of your self. Reality of reality. ...It had felt like that. (351)

If she recovers some belief in God, it remains very much at odds with traditional Christianity, much more radical than even her Aunt Lavinia's Unitarianism, which her mother had regarded as little better than Atheism. Mary further explains: 'Free-Will was the reality underneath the illusion of necessity. The flash point of freedom was your consciousness of God' (377).

Raitt remarks: 'Even though *Mary Olivier* is a novel, Sinclair drew on vignettes and events from her own history to many of her intellectual passions (Mary Olivier reads Spinoza, Kant and Hegel)' (2000: 217). Spinoza is a valuable source for *Mary Olivier* because his philosophy is strongly associated with mystical Pantheism, and the cult of nature emerges as the best place to find spiritual value which informed both the Romantic tradition in English and American cultural forms such as Transcendentalism.¹¹³ Female writers, whether late Victorians verging on Modernism like May Sinclair, or more evident Modernists like Virginia Woolf were interested in pantheism and panpsychism because it offered an alternative view of spiritual values outside of established patriarchal institutions such as the Church.¹¹⁴ In addition, it placed emphasis, as does the tradition of romantic poetry (with which pantheism and panpsychism are associated) on the lyrical, subjective view of the world

¹¹³ On Pantheism see Julia A. Lamm, (2010); Piper, H. W. (1965); Michael P Levine, *Pantheism: A Non-Theistic Concept of Deity* (2014). On Panpsychism see David Skrbina, *Panpsychism in the West* (2007).

¹¹⁴ Pantheism and panpsychism also play an important role in the visions of Septimus in *Mrs. Dalloway*.

through that subject's perception and exploration of nature. For women such as May Sinclair gardens often found a privileged place in such discussions of nature for a variety of reasons, not least those of subverting contemporary expectations of the link between women and flowers. Such emphasis on interiority was itself affirmed by William James and Bergson, who valued the speech of the subject's inner self as a stream of consciousness. Such in turn allowed the creation of an alternative self for female individuals to the one offered women by patriarchy. 'Stream Of Consciousness', while it did not require attention to the mystical epiphanies of the experience of nature, could certainly benefit women who were seeking alternative ways of understanding the world and their place in it.

As this thesis suggests, it was the early interests of women writers in feminism and the value of gender when considering autobiographical/diary accounts of experience which provided such fertile ground for Bergson and James' work on the interiority of the subject, and the way that subjectivity was articulated within the world. Sinclair in particular is important because she demonstrates how their formulated connection between gender, mapping alternative selves for women and the value of expressing subjective experience was already evolving before the impact of James and Bergson's work was at its height – though the latter two thinkers grew famous because their work was so sympathetic to this formulation and interest. Bergson and James' views were more a confirmation that an initiating influence of existing tendencies created the stream-of-consciousness modernist novel. While Bergson denied having a Pantheist view of the universe in which God existed as part of the natural work, rather than apart from it, he was often accused of this. As Antliff indicates in 1916, his books were placed on the Catholic Church's Index of prohibited books for this specific reason. (1992: 4)

It is probably more accurate as Michael Foley (2013) suggests that Bergson took the view of panpsychism (that the world is suffused with consciousness but that it is not identical with God).¹¹⁵ By all account William James was interested if not completely persuaded by such views of the universe, but it is probably true that for James, Bergson and Sinclair their interest in the SPR was contiguous with if not determined by a shared interest in pantheism and panpsychism, regarding the universe as if alive, with the potential that such psychical

¹¹⁵ A. E. Pilkington, (1976: 20-22); Michael Foley *Life Lessons from Bergson* (2013: 102-106).

phenomenon as life after death having actual existence within spiritualized matter. Such intellectual connection between pantheism and the type of evidence offered by psychical research is supported by G. William Barnard, regarding William James' 'pluralistic pantheism' as drawing equally upon such spectral evidence and a 'willingness to speculate that reality may be patterned analogously to one's everyday experience of the compounding of consciousness' (2011: 260-264, 261).

A major part of Sinclair's contribution to a gendered Modernism derives from being a foundational figure for stream-of-consciousness fiction, and developing this tradition through a feminist-oriented linkage of pantheism, nature, interior subjectivity, alternate lives and the autobiographical as a mode. However, one should not discount her stylistic influence on the next generation of female writers whose work is yet to be discovered. Her development of a style which included ellipsis and fragmentation to represent the inner thoughts and consciousness of her protagonist in *Mary Olivier*, her use of second person narration and her fluid and shifting narratorial perspectives all gave a fundamental push to the feminist and modernist stream-of-consciousness novel. This would become such a dominant force in the hands of other female writers. Her fiction may be based on autobiographical experience, but it is not written as such, rather written as generic fiction which calls for the development of the method of stream of consciousness, a formal innovation which was followed by the next generation of modernist writers: Richardson, Mansfield and Woolf.

Chapter Two

‘Singing the Abyss’ of Feminine Consciousness¹¹⁶: Dorothy Richardson, James, Bergson and the ‘Invention’ of Female Stream of Consciousness

May Sinclair, as this thesis has argued, is a crucial figure in facilitating the influence of a Jamesian stream of consciousness deployed as a narrative technique upon other writers, and she early appreciated its presence in Dorothy Richardson’s work. The evolution of the autobiographical, as a mode for women driven by feminist goals, allowed other associated ways of representing female experience that challenge patriarchy and foregrounded aesthetic interest in the specific interiority of the female subject. This is accessed through both Jamesian derived stream of consciousness, and Bergsonian qualitative time and the valuing of the authenticity of the *élan vital*. The latter is related to memory as Henri Bergson argues in *Matter and Memory*, for ‘Just as there are *different planes*, infinite in number, for association by similarity, so there are with association with contiguity’ (2004: 222).

This thesis contends a gendered, autobiographically-inclined literary mode deployed in texts that are not strictly autobiographical, remains the signal most important example of a feminist literary strategy in texts by modernist female writers of fiction, and became the basis for stream of consciousness. Such an autobiographical mode (as demonstrated in the Introduction) is a well-established textual strategy in feminist writing that can assume various forms: whether in direct feminist autobiography (such as Elizabeth von Arnim), or disguised as pseudo-autobiographical fictional writing, using stream of consciousness (such as Richardson), or even fiction which uses a pseudo-autobiographical mode in which characters seem to express an inner, subjective life as if expressing a hidden autobiographical voice (such as Sinclair, Mansfield and Woolf). In all cases, such autobiography foregrounds a gendered view that such inner and subjective lives were ignored or marginalized by a patriarchal society. In effect, such versions of interiority represent as much a political project as a literary and aesthetic one, part of the struggle for female representation and social justice.

¹¹⁶ Hélène Cixous in ‘La – The (Feminine),’ (1994. 57–68, 59) describes woman’s feminine writing as the art of ‘singing the abyss’.

Dorothy Richardson had a lengthy working life and her thirteen-volume autobiographical epic *Pilgrimage* remains her primary achievement. She certainly regarded it as *sui generis*:

Monstrously, when I began, I felt only that all masculine novels to date, despite their various fascinations, were somehow irrelevant, & the feminine ones far too much influenced by masculine traditions, & too much set upon exploiting the sex-motif, as, hitherto, seen & depicted by men. (Richardson, 'Letter to Henry Savage, 6 Jan. 1950.' Fromm, 1995: 629)

It arguably serves as a great feminist Modernist epic, following closely the life of a woman struggling to be independent in a patriarchal world, rather than from the traditional male perspective.¹¹⁷ Critically esteemed it is still much less well-known and read than Proust's similarly lengthy, multi-volume *À La Recherche de Temps Perdu*, although it shares with the latter the combination of considerable experimentation in narrative strategies, with a kind of disguised autobiography that strives to tell the story of a single character's interior life and subjective experiences in the world, rather than focusing on the importance of public events in the outer world.¹¹⁸ Benstock argues the complexity of autobiography as practice necessarily undermines, shapes or attempts to theorize and delineate the practice from a feminist perspective.¹¹⁹ The secretive autobiography of *Pilgrimage* is well accepted in Richardson studies, and while no wholly reliable biography of her exists at present, many have argued for the autobiographical dimension in her work.¹²⁰ The comparison with Proust

¹¹⁷ Richardson began *Pointed Roofs*, the first 'Chapter' of *Pilgrimage* in 1912 and published it in 1915. The first eleven 'Chapters' of *Pilgrimage* were published between 1915 and 1935. The fifth *Interim* (1919) was serialised in *The Little Review*. A four volume collected edition, published in 1938, included the twelfth 'Chapter' *Dimple Hill*. Extracts from the unfinished thirteenth 'Chapter', *March Moonlight*, were published in instalments in the magazine *Life and Letters* and the *London Mercury* (1946) as 'Work in Progress'. Nineteen Sixty Seven saw the posthumous four volume edition of all thirteen volumes.

¹¹⁸ If Richardson has proved less popular than writers such as Proust and Joyce (who are also known as difficult modernists who wrote lengthy works), then it may be for a combination of reasons. First, her work is about marginalised female experience, rather than the experience of men. Jonathan Coe (2007). Second, as John D Rosenberg (1973) argues there is little of the romantic lyricism in her writing style, or larger-than-life characters that has helped Proust, Woolf or Joyce to win general readers. Instead there are the lists and paratactic sentences that often focus on mundane experiences, that so irritated Mansfield (1919/1990) and Woolf (Anonymous) (1919) when they reviewed *The Tunnel*. Third, unlike female writers such as Woolf, she lacked the resources of economic and cultural capital or the desire to turn herself into a mythic figure who gripped (and continues to grip) the popular imagination and never wrote a commercially successful fantasy novel such as *Orlando* (1928).

¹¹⁹ Shari Benstock, (1991) and Liz Stanley (1995).

¹²⁰ This includes: Horace Gregory (1967); John D. Rosenberg (1973); Gloria G. Fromm (1977); George H. Thomson (1999); and Joanne Winning (2000).

is instructive, as he was deeply influenced by Bergsonian theory because his focus (much like Richardson's) is on the depiction of the minutiae of inner life, not the world of public events. Though unlike Richardson, his romanticism includes his celebrated attempt to literally grasp the actuality of the past events of childhood from a subjective point of view.¹²¹

In her landmark review in *The Egoist* (April 1918), May Sinclair first suggested that Richardson used a 'stream of consciousness' as a way of denoting and distinguishing her from what was more conventionally called 'literary impressionism'.¹²² 'Literary impressionism' was a contemporary term for a variety of proto-modernist and modernist-narrative techniques pursued by a range of authors in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century that stressed a psychological fidelity to the truth of subjective experience over traditional objective realism. This gestured towards French Impressionist painting and to Henry James' (1986, 170) famous dictum from 'The Art of Fiction' that a 'novel is in its broadest definition a personal impression of life' (1884/ 1986: 165-197).¹²³ William James had also remarked: 'Introspective Observation is what we have to rely on first and foremost and always' (*The Principles of Psychology*, I: 185). Literary impressionism in this way focused on representing the inner self and that self's individual perceptions, rather than the realism of the external world, and although on one level represented a predecessor to stream of consciousness, as a term remains both vaguer and is typified by first person narration, although admittedly also deriving much of its intellectual justification from thinkers such as William James and later Henri Bergson. Literary impressionism, as a loose literary movement, as we have suggested, was linked to figures such as Conrad and Henry James and focused on representing the subject's perceptions and consciousness as opposed to that of external reality. The emphasis on individual psychology and subjective experience over straightforward apprehension of public reality may be considered as having parallels to

¹²¹ Proust's relationship with Bergson while generally taken as self-evident is also more complex than it seems. As Pete A. Y. Gunter argues in 'Bergson and Proust: A Question of Influence' (2013), 'Proust, in the milieu of pre-World War I in Paris, would have been well aware of Bergson's "take" on memory and, in any case, that he was well aware of Bergson.' (157) On Bergson's relationship to Romanticism, discussed in chapters on Mansfield and Woolf in this thesis, see Sarah Posman who suggests that the concepts of memory and duration are key to understanding Bergson's debt to Romanticism (2013: 213-225).

¹²³ Jesse Matz, *Literary Impressionism and Modernist Aesthetics* (2001); Max Saunders, 'Literary Impressionism' (2005: 204-211).

Bergsonian intuition. A form of initial modernism, it has also been linked to the work of later writers such as Katherine Mansfield and Virginia Woolf.¹²⁴

Sinclair's review of Richardson is probably best viewed as attempting to differentiate stream-of-consciousness fiction from that characterized by more limited third person narrators, seeking to highlight a more precise practice, moving away from the more general term 'literary impressionism' (typically with unreliable first person narrators), and thereby marking Richardson's novels as a revolution rather than just evolution.

Joseph Conrad and Ford Madox Ford, as well as contemporary female writers Katherine Mansfield and Virginia Woolf were often linked to the movement.¹²⁵ Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* (1899) is a first-person narrative of intense narratorial unreliability, where any literal truth seems slippery and without much literal truth value, as is Ford Maddox Ford's influential, impressionistic autobiography *Ancient Lights and Certain New Reflections, Being the Memories of a Young Man* (1911). Ford remarks humorously: 'This book, in short, is full of inaccuracies as to facts, but its accuracy as to impressions is absolute [...] I don't really deal in facts, I have for facts a most profound contempt' (1911: xv).⁷ Much the same could be said of Ford's more celebrated novel *The Good Soldier*. May Sinclair's *A Journal* makes a similar claim: 'This is a "Journal of Impressions," and it is nothing more. It will not satisfy people who want accurate and substantial information about Belgium. Or about the War [...]' (1-2). The differentiation of stream-of-consciousness fiction from such literary impressionism is part of Sinclair's contribution to the development of awareness of a new sensibility, another way of writing.

Other reviews offered supporting evidence that Richardson was something bold in the English novel's form. Virginia Woolf anonymously reviewed *The Tunnel* in February 1919 for *The Times Literary Supplement* and noted that it was Richardson's literary method or

¹²⁴ Julia Van Gunsteren, *Katherine Mansfield and Literary Impressionism* (1991), and Adam Parkes', "Violent Moments of Being": Woolf, Pater and Fry.' (2011 146-177). Jesse Matz, *Literary Impressionism and Modernist Aesthetics* (2001); Max Saunders, 'Literary Impressionism' (2005: 204-211).

As in Woolf's *Mrs Dalloway*, Adam Parkes explains the relations between the scientific and 'wide range of shell-shock effects that characterize an entire modern culture [...]' (146).

¹²⁵ John G. Peters, (2001), Julia Van Gunsteren, (1991), and Adam Parkes (2011).

narrative strategy that stood out: 'she must still expect to find her reviewers paying a great deal of attention to her method. It is a method that demands attention, as a door whose handle we wrench ineffectively calls our attention to the fact that it is locked' (n.p). Woolf then praised its author's experimental intentions: as 'one of the rare novelists who believe that the novel is so much alive it continually grows ... [...] ... That Miss Richardson gets so far as to achieve a sense of reality far greater than that produced by the ordinary means is undoubted' (n.p). The problem for Woolf is whether any of this dazzling method really achieves anything:

[...] the critic is thus absolved from the necessity of picking out the themes of the story. The reader is not provided with a story; he is invited to embed himself in Miriam Henderson's consciousness, to register one after another, and one on top of another, words, cries, shouts, notes of a violin, fragments of lectures, to follow these impressions as they flicker through Miriam's mind, waking incongruously other thoughts, and plaiting incessantly the many-coloured and innumerable threads of life.

Woolf went on to offer a rather tepid concluding assessment, admiring the intention, but not the final product:

We want to be rid of realism, to penetrate without its help into the regions beneath it, and further require that Miss Richardson shall fashion this new material into something which has the shapeliness of the old accepted forms. We are asking too much; but the extent of our asking proves that 'The Tunnel' is better in its failure than most books in their success.

Woolf seems to argue that Richardson's innovations, while opposed to realism, are too unstructured and chaotic, a literary impressionism without a clear, traditional narrative structure. For Woolf, Richardson's version of literary impressionism is too much like the flux of Bergson's sensory experience - without the shaping of subjective and qualitative factors - or a Jamesian hysterical, babbling stream of consciousness without the structuring of critical reflection. To some extent there is some irony in the review's comments, as it was Woolf rather than Richardson whose early career was dominated by literary impressionism, such as the unreliable first person narrators of introspective stream-of-consciousness stories like 'The Mark on The Wall' (1917) or 'An Unwritten Novel' (1921).

If anything, Mansfield's review of Richardson is even more damning and reiterates many of Woolf's negative comments:

[It is] composed of bits, fragments, flashing glimpses, half scenes and whole scenes, all of them quite distinct and separate, all of them of equal importance. There is no plot no beginning, no middle or end. Things just “happen” one after another with incredible rapidity and at breakneck speed. [...] [A]t the appointed time Miss Richardson dives into its recesses and reproduces a certain number of these treasures – a pair of button boots, a night in spring, some cycling knickers, some large, round biscuits – as many as she can fit into a book. (1990: 309)

As Ellen G. Friedman and Miriam Fuchs suggest there was perhaps little room for mutual support between female modernists struggling for their own sense of identity as writers in a patriarchal world, although one should add that May Sinclair is a noteworthy exception (1989: 10-12).

Despite Woolf and Mansfield’s negativities, Dorothy Richardson’s way of conveying through her narrative the subjective experiences of time, with her own distinctive, innovative voice and style was soon recognized as a vital contribution to what is now labeled modernism. Woolf in particular was to borrow much from Richardson’s method, but to shape and select experience in such a way that it perhaps came more to resemble the traditional realist novel in certain ways (in its coordination of themes, motifs, symbols and plot development, for instance, with the consciousness of others), the most successful example being *Mrs Dalloway*. In Richardson such complex third person limited narrative is focalized through the often bewildering character, Miriam Henderson, although at times it becomes hard to distinguish between the character’s thought and the narrator’s representation of them (a deliberate blurring, arguably). María Francisca Llantada Díaz (2007) argues for a continuous breakdown between the third person narratives and that aspect which is focalised through Miriam and her thoughts, a radical destabilization of the relationship between narrator and Miriam’s stream of consciousness. Perhaps unsurprisingly in a loosely autobiographical novel, this is so intensely centred on a main protagonist.

Díaz continues that there are ‘varying degrees of ambiguity regarding attribution to the narrative instance’s paralepses by means of narrated monologue or free indirect style, psycho-narration and quoted monologue’ (2007: 54). The novel sequence is unfinished, since like a genuine autobiography it only finishes with the death of the main protagonist. Steinberg (1979) argues it is characteristic of and makes it a classic example of unfinished,

modernist texts. Allison Pease argues that *Pilgrimage* is ‘endless and yet unfinished’ (2012: 78-79), and clearly boredom or ennui was recognised as a characteristic of Richardson’s text, both by the author herself and her critics, as they are essential components of a single middle-class woman’s life in this period who was dependent on her own income. Hence the novel sequence functions as a critique of these same conventions and social pressures from which Miriam is struggling to escape.

Miriam follows her creator’s explorative journey, thereby charting the coordinates of womanhood for Richardson and her protagonist in a changing age, considering in Bergsonian terms what constitutes both a feminine and feminist consciousness, a struggle for independence framed by a feminist perspective. The innate multiple points of view lie with Miriam as she grows, which like Bergson’s understanding of the nature of memory in *Matter and Memory*, ‘creates anew the present perception; or rather it doubles this perception by reflecting upon it either its own image’ (123).¹²⁶ Aspects of Miriam’s story are told intermittently through direct/indirect interior monologue, others by Miriam in an internalized discourse with herself. Periodically a third person narrator intrudes, creating an indirect interior monologue. Such novels as *The Tunnel* (1919) and *Interim* (1919) by Richardson possess a humanistic, realistic emphasis focusing on the minutiae and mundane qualities of everyday working life and social experience. It sometimes resembles the realism of H.G. Wells (1866 – 1946) in intent if not narrative strategy.¹²⁷

Mary Ann Gillies (1996) in her account of Anglo-French philosophical and literary relations argues convincingly that Bergson influenced Richardson, especially in terms of the subjective experience of time seen as duration within the narrative structure of the text. Richardson’s use of stream of consciousness and its narrative representation are perceived through the fluidity of her character’s life, which according to Gilles: ‘involves devising a new fictional form that might accommodate the radically different time of the inner world, new methods of

¹²⁶ The important fact about such a long novel sequence is that it is as difficult for writers as much as readers. Richardson spent some 34 years writing this epic novel, which remained unfinished, though it does evidence Miriam’s growing maturity. Like all epic autobiographical or pseudo-autobiographical texts, the writer, their contemporaneous audience and society change dramatically in real time during this process of publication.

¹²⁷ H. G. Wells was Richardson’s friend, as well as for a period her lover, and remained a staunchly realist writer able to detail lower middle class reality, although as a social and political radical, his fiction often had a didactic purpose. In *Pilgrimage* Richardson’s character Hypo is based on him.

characterization, and a new narrative structure that would lend the various incidents of the inner world shape and unity' (1996:152). Bryony Randall (2007) argues Bergson's ideas about the relation of time and the everyday working world was influential, especially for female subjects existing within patriarchy. Shiv K. Kumar suggests: 'Bergson's thought seems to be as much the distinguishing feature of *À La Recherche du Temps Perdu* as of *Pilgrimage*, for the entire work of Dorothy Richardson bears a very close resemblance to his theories of *la durée* and "pure memory"' and that there is 'an example of parallelism between the stream of consciousness technique and the Bergsonian flux' (1979: 36, 40). Paul Douglas suggests that Dorothy Richardson's 'novels are deeply Bergsonian' (2013: 120). In addition many close friends of Richardson did respond to the two philosophers who were part of the contemporary *zeitgeist*.¹²⁸ In any case this thesis argues for a continuum between the ideas of James, Bergson and feminist women writers of the period.¹²⁹

These critics indicate the possibilities of a further detailed linkage of the work of Bergson with that of Richardson, which this chapter explores, by drawing upon Bergson's qualitative concepts of duration and memory as well as his descriptions of the evolutionary process driven by *élan vital* (building upon earlier observations by Darwin)¹³⁰. I argue Richardson

¹²⁸ As H. G. Wells' friend Dorothy Richardson would have been aware of his admiration of William James and Henri Bergson; see Wells (1941: 281).

¹²⁹ According to Shiv K. Kumar Richardson's indirect interest in the philosophy of Bergson came via 'Proust, the Symbolists and May Sinclair' (1979: 37). Richardson corresponded with Proust and she writes in her 'Foreword' to *Pilgrimage* '[Proust] was said to be producing an unprecedentedly profound and opulent reconstruction of experience focused from within the mind of a single individual' (1979: 10-11) [emphasis in original]. Kumar also suggests that French symbolist poets form 'another link with Bergson' since the symbolists and other writers 'showed a marked influence of Bergson on their work' (perhaps reflecting an affinity between the poetic and philosophical) and Richardson's poetic language had 'a strong leaning towards the symbolist mode of expression' (1979: 66). Dorothy Richardson also wrote poetry. Her poems appeared in the *Spectator*, *Life and Letters*, *Outlook*, *Fortnightly*. Kumar further discusses the close relations between Bergson and Symbolism as follows: 'Symbolism represented a new way of rendering reality free from traditional conceptualization, so was Bergsonism a plea for a free intuitive process of creative evolution against the more mechanistic theories of nineteenth-century materialism' (1979: 80).

¹³⁰ In addition to her anticipation of Bergson's *Creative Evolution*, Dorothy Richardson was also interested and very probably influenced by the ideas of evolution in general particularly through her father Charles Richardson who read Charles Darwin's *Origin of Species* (1859). John Rosenberg explains: 'Young Charles Richardson, living only seven miles from Oxford, had university friends and, reading Darwin, he was totally converted to his theories. Charles was no doubt present at the Oxford debate of 1860, when Thomas Huxley, Darwin's supporter, who was to go much further than Darwin himself in opposing orthodox beliefs, refuted Bishop Wilberforce' (1973: 1-2). At one point Richardson uses Huxley's sexist dictum that 'women can never reach the highest places in civilization' ironically, in her novel *The Tunnel* (1919) to describe those women as hopeless who gave in to patriarchal assumptions regarding the inability of their gender, as opposed to those women who chose to fight for their inner self, and to recognise the possibilities of their own *élan vital*, to create a new possible identity within a durational environment opened up by the possibilities of subjective experience. (*The Tunnel*

both anticipates and adapts such concepts, employing them to underpin Miriam's confrontation with life's challenges right from her earliest childhood memories found in *Pointed Roofs* (1915).

In that novel, the first volume of Richardson's *Pilgrimage* sequence, Miriam's inner monologue and subjective observations constitute almost the exclusive focus, despite it being written in the limited third person. She comes from a well-mannered family living in genteel poverty, with lively sisters and an independent mind, particularly on the subject of religion (which she dislikes) and the social restraints of women's roles (which she resents). Undertaken to aid her impoverished family, her transition from daughter at home to governess at a girl's school in Germany animates Miriam's self-conscious and slightly indecisive personality, contextualizing her emotional ebb and flow from moment to moment. Her narrative reveals the intuitive thoughts and feelings of a young woman beginning adult life, drawing clearly on Richardson's own experience of teaching English in Germany. Richardson's posterior reflective animation of events mirrors Bergson's comment in *Matter and Memory* that:

But the truth is that our present should not be defined as that which is more intense: it is that which acts on us and which makes us act, it is sensory and it is motor; - our present is, above all, the state of our body. Our past, on the contrary, is that which acts no longer but which might act, and will act by inserting itself into a present sensation of which it borrows the vitality. (2004:320)

Miriam expresses her inner world with great intensity within the personal space of her room, a spatialization of meaning, for as Bergson observes in the 'Author's Preface' to *Time and Free Will*: 'we necessarily express ourselves by means of words and we usually think in terms of space' (1910: xxiii). Miriam's focus perhaps foreshadows the thesis underpinning Virginia Woolf essay 'A Room of One's Own' concerning a woman writer's need for her own specific space and support: 'Give her a room of her own and five hundreds a year, let her speak her mind and leave out half that she now puts in, and she will write a better book one of these days' (1929/ 2004: 97). Richardson however only earned £48 a year, but still wrote, which suggests she knew the ideological value (but also the cost) of creativity and writing from a feminist point of view; regarding it as a way of reshaping a woman's identity. Miriam

222). Bergsonian creative evolution could be seen by women as more gender neutral when compared to traditional Darwinian evolution, as it depended far less on the biological.

contemplates the working realities for most women of her time, from which she can temporarily withdraw by fictionalizing, as well as attempting to imagine an alternative life away from patriarchal constraints.

While Miriam's narrative can also be understood in terms of William James's stream of consciousness as an 'interior monologue' technique, particularly her inner perception of the complexities of her life and her relation to the social order. This is further mediated both directly and indirectly by a limited third person narrator. Miriam's point of view is the focalizing coordinate, which explains the novel's subjective tone. The narrative's technique is similar to that used by Woolf and Mansfield; certain differences remain insofar as their texts do not deploy pseudo-autobiographical strategies in the shape of the same, single protagonist with all of the texts as does Richardson, though as Díaz argues, there is progression in the *Pilgrimage* sequence tracing Miriam's growing maturity with the narrative moving away from the need for third person narrative to express Miriam's feelings and position, and instead exhibiting a later preference for her independent thought in the form of monologue (2007: 54-55).

The reader enters the eventfulness of Miriam's life *in media res*. In her fiction Richardson uses qualitative descriptive narration to outline the movement of her life through her pure consciousness, shifting from her early unsatisfactory childhood through constant changes and development to the point in life where she acquires the status of an independent woman. The Jamesian ebb and flow of consciousness allows the subject to be aware of a myriad of possibilities, alternatives and missed chances, since Miriam as a female character can easily vacillate. However, Richardson's method of writing remains critical rather than simply reflective or descriptive, exploring the relation between what Rosenberg calls 'objective and subjective reality' (1973: 71). Rosenberg criticizes elements of her style as 'at times too austere in this way; and her work occasionally suffers from being too compressed, too high-grade a mixture, with too little ordinariness in it; and sometime she omits to give us connecting links that we need when a character suddenly appears or reappears in the story' (1973: 71). Here Rosenberg discusses her style and its formal qualities, but not the extraordinary normality Richardson seeks to incorporate into her novel, concerned as it is with the everyday lives of working women.

Contrary to Rosenberg's stance, one might argue that the very absence of such segues represents an attempt to mirror the abruptness and unexpectedness of life itself, and as such express the limitations of Miriam's subjective point of view on the events described in the book. The unusual third person Modernist narrative evokes such a limitation.¹³¹ The writing introduces its critique through mirroring the ebb and flow of Miriam's inner life, mapping observed details through the protagonist's conscious perception of her overlapping roles as a woman, lover, artist and individual, a progression only very gradually to emerge through Miriam's coherence. However, and most importantly, it is the very act of writing in her attic room on her own, that creates and offers an understanding of the pure self of Miriam. She recollects each day's events, creating identity through a protracted process of working toward an emerging feminist view of the world.

This section of the chapter focuses on Richardson's use of language and narration (especially stream of consciousness and limited third person narration)¹³², as well as her use of the autobiographical mode in her pseudo-autobiographies, analyzing the character's inner thoughts – that is to say, their subjectivity (a key element of Bergsonian theory¹³³) and Miriam's extreme curiosity as emblematic of a feminist desire is to re-conceptualize the world around her. Miriam redefines her selfhood in a feminist way, largely by reaching for the blissful freedom of achieving her own decision-making, a sense of personal autonomous

¹³¹ Third person limited (or restricted) narration is the opposite of the omniscient mode, where the third person narrator is restricted by their strong focalisation on one character's point of view, according to Suzanne Keen, (2003: 38-39). It is therefore a little like first person point of view in its effect for the narrative and there are cognate issues of unreliability and partiality. As has already been suggested this confusion of narration and character is an important part of *Pilgrimage's* technique. As Keen suggests, the most celebrated writer of this style is Henry James who pioneered it and as this thesis has argued, he had an important influence on modernist female writers, because of his concern with depicting female subjectivity. (31)

¹³² Richardson (like the other female writers examined in this thesis), made use of a gendered vision of Bergsonian concepts that anticipated many of the later developments of French feminism; her fiction could be regarded as an early example of such *écriture féminine*, perhaps the strongest such example explored in the thesis. Again the theoretical structure of this feminist literary theory emphasizes the unique qualities of femininity and the potential for a critical gendered perspective of women in a capitalist, patriarchal and industrial age.

¹³³ Subjectivity derives from conscious and unconscious memory, and in *Matter and Memory* Bergson says 'Pure perception, in fact, however rapid we suppose it to be, occupies a certain depth of duration, so that our successive perceptions are never the real moments of things, as we have hitherto supposed, but are moments of our consciousness' (2004:75).

space, and the aesthetic rendering of this in ways that suggest she intuitively explored what would be later called *écriture féminine*. Richardson represents a female subject's intuitive perception through a description of her social experiences. Doing so within a private metaphorical language, her key feminist strategy validates the autobiographical mode of thought in a pseudo-autobiographical fictional frame, seeking not only an independent voice, but also independent status for women. It suggests feminine writing, not just because of its fluid, evasive style but because it delineates the subjective experiences of Miriam's confrontations with life and the world. Hélène Cixous in 'La – The (Feminine)' describes feminine writing as the art of 'singing the abyss.' Cixous' term 'abyss' suggests the emptiness of Miriam's identity as a woman in patriarchal society; she is struggling to counteract, reclaim and reconstruct as a positive plenitude, through joyful engagement with her world. (1994. 57–68, 59)¹³⁴

Woolf was more positive than Mansfield about Richardson and as we noted in the Introduction (thesis 7-9) made use of Sinclair's review of Richardson in 'Modern Fiction'.¹³⁵ Woolf's argument shows that Richardson's style emphasizes the autobiographical mode as gendered in a feminist way as Richardson was keenly aware of 'the discrepancy between what she has to say and the form provided by tradition for her to say it in' (1919 n.p). Woolf also claims in the same review that in Richardson's novel, '[t]he reader is not provided with a story; he is invited to embed himself in Miriam Henderson's consciousness, to register one after another, [...] to follow these impressions as they flicker through Miriam Henderson's consciousness' (1919 n.p).¹³⁶ Julia Briggs argues that Woolf recognized Richardson's ability to demonstrate the voice of the female subject, and that Richardson's concentration on her subject's perception permitted her style to create 'a feminine absorption in the nature of

¹³⁴ Rebecca Bowler argues that Mansfield's criticism of Richardson shows that she is keen to move beyond literary impressionism, and presumably as well as an emphasis on Bergsonian and Jamesian views regarding the pure value of the perceiver's view of reality as opposed to objectivity, in exchange for a greater worldliness (2011: 81-94).

¹³⁵ It seems entirely possible that Woolf might have named Charles Tansley, the insecure young philosopher in *To the Lighthouse*, after Tansley Street which Dorothy Richardson featured in *Pilgrimage* and where Miriam lived. If as seems likely, it is based on Endsleigh Street, where Richardson lived, the location is literally an extension of the west side of Tavistock Square, where Woolf lived, minutes away.

¹³⁶ For an extended discussion of the critical views of Richardson held by Woolf and Mansfield amongst others, see Heather Morrall, *Dorothy Richardson's Pilgrimage: the Superficial or the Profound?* (2010).

living for its own sake,' but that Woolf feared 'Richardson's approach was unselective and limited in its viewpoint ...[...] Too close to monologue' (2005: 75).

Woolf and Mansfield seem to have felt Richardson focused too much on the humdrum, the subjective, qualitative perception of an individual leading an ordinary, uneventful life (matched by the expression of this through unfettered stream of consciousness). For instance, both mention Richardson's use of lists unfavourably. Nonetheless Woolf recognises it as highly gendered writing, which impels Woolf's subsequent emphasis on and praise for Richardson's potential invention or development of a style for her psychological gendering of the feminine. Richardson's mode of writing seems more elastic than older modes, capable of stretching the extremities of the text, of suspending the frailest particles, of enveloping the vaguest shapes. Richardson fashioned her sentences consciously, in order to reflect the emotional subtleties and vicissitudes facing Miriam's consciousness. Richardson asserted: '*Feminine prose, as Charles Dickens and James Joyce have delightfully shown themselves to be aware, should properly be unpunctuated, moving from point to point without formal obstructions.* (Italics in original)' (1979:12). Deborah Parsons argues that Woolf recognises the importance of this style typified in Richardson's work:

The 'feminine' sentence and the 'woman's' sentence are different kinds of categories for thinking about fiction. What Woolf refers to when she speaks of the former is 'a particular *style* of writing – psychological in focus, innovative in technique – that might be described as 'feminine' by virtue of its opposing dominant 'masculine' ideology (of which materialist literary realism was a part) but that could be written by either a man or a woman. (2006: 96)

Woolf according to Parsons recognizes that Richardson's work is feminist in its orientation, in its determination to find a style that is not simply a reiteration of pre-existing male style. Like *écriture féminine* Richardson's style as much as her anti-realist method challenges male ways of depicting reality and arguably both offer equally a style available to men or women writers keen to challenge patriarchy. Parsons further analyses how Richardson's *The Tunnel* showcases several layers of intertwined awareness, allowing the reader to travel through the character's immediate intensity of feeling, as well as the character's external perception. The third person narrator describes Miriam's thoughts about her domestic space in *The Tunnel*:

She was surprised now at her familiarity with the detail of the room . . . that idea of visiting places in dreams. It was something more than that . . . all the real part of your

life has a real dream in it; some of the real dream part of you coming true. You know in advance when you are really following your life. (13)

The passage above illustrates Richardson's use of qualitative perception, which Parsons describes as Miriam's '*perceptual* impression' of the room drawing on Miriam's '*intentional* thought' and which are 'articulated in fragmentary sentences, which move into the conscious' where 'the narrative shifts to the conscious first-person but without the direction of speech marks or the third person insertion of "she thought"' (2006: 59). The use of ellipses to show elision mark the pattern of Miriam's inner thoughts, their hesitancy presumably representing a characteristic of feminine thinking - that is the refusal of the linear, the already decided, and the public world.

Richardson's own private life further demonstrates how Miriam's inner thoughts, feelings and most importantly her emotions show her transformed from a traditional dependent woman to an ambitious 'new woman'.¹³⁷ Bergson points out in *The Two Sources of Morality and Religion* 'an emotion is an affective stirring of the soul', so it is important that her thoughts are emotional (1954: 43). Hélène Cixous explains in 'The Laugh of Medusa' that the act of writing (which for Cixous often includes the autobiographical) is itself a feminist action, for woman it will 'give her back her goods, her pleasures, her organs, her immense bodily territories which have been kept under seal...' (1976: 88).

According to Bowler, Richardson agreed with Sinclair's evaluation of her novels as 'void of drama' ('there is no drama, no situation, no set scene. Nothing happens') (2009 n.p.). She argues that Richardson, 'emphasizes this herself, in a letter to a critic in 1952, and extends it to include all the writers to whom the phrase 'stream of consciousness' has been applied':

This, I feel, was a natural development from the move away from 'Romance' to 'Realism' (the latter being a critical reaction to the former). It dealt directly with reality.

¹³⁷ William Barry says of the New Woman that she 'ought to be aware that her condition is morbid, or at least hysterical' (1894: 213). Lyn Pickett argues, progressive male and female writers were intent to challenge and confront pejorative views of the New Woman who they instead associated with feminism and the suffragette movement. However, certain pejorative elements of the term may explain why Miriam occasionally feels lonely and isolated in London as an independent woman worker. (1992:7)

Hence the absence of either ‘plot’, ‘climax’ or ‘conclusion’. All the writers concerned would agree with Goethe that drama is for the stage.¹³⁸

Richardson’s *Pilgrimage* rejects any omniscient narrator in preference for a deeply limited third person narrator, focusing on what is real within the protagonist’s qualitative experience of time¹³⁹, rather than attempting to deal with the characters from without. As Richardson suggests she is hostile to the idea of the dramatic interplay of characters within a novel, which sets her apart from most of the other novelists being examined in the thesis. Richardson focus on Miriam’s consciousness in the first place is to demonstrate that rendering of perceptions is to give her novels a fidelity to experience. As May Sinclair recognized:

All that we know of reality at first hand is given to us through contacts in which those interesting distinctions are lost. Reality is thick and deep, too thick and too deep, and at the same time too fluid to be cut with any convenient carving-knife. The novelist who would be close to reality must confine himself to this knowledge first hand.... [Richardson] must not know or divine anything that Miriam does not know or divine; she must not see anything that Miriam does not see [...] Miss Richardson has only imposed on herself the conditions that life imposes on us all. (1918: 58)

According to Sinclair, through Richardson’s uses of indirect interior monologue and refusal of omniscient narration, the character’s consciousness allow her reader closer access to reality by examining her intuitive and quantitative experiences in relation to the physical world.

Throughout *Pilgrimage*, Miriam struggles to understand external reality, seeking harmony between her intuitive world and that outer unknown world. In *Deadlock* Miriam considers the relation between one’s freedom and physical life in terms of potentiating other possibilities:

¹³⁸ A Letter to Shiv K Kumar on 10th of August 1952, box four, Dorothy Richardson Collection. General Collection: Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library. (See: Maysinclairssociety.com).

¹³⁹ In *Time and Free Will* Bergson further defines duration as a ‘qualitative multiplicity’ and as ‘an organic evolution which is yet not an increasing quantity; a pure heterogeneity within which there are no distinct qualities’ (1910: 226). ‘Qualitative Multiplicity’ is a term introduced by Bergson that describes the link between the many and the one in consciousness, exploring how qualitative moments can be combined into a whole without recourse to an external conception of space (225-226).

Why does being free give a feeling of meanness? Being able to begin all over again, always unknown, at any moment; feeling a sort of pity and contempt for the people who can't; and then being happy and forgetting them. But there is pain all around it that they never know. It is only by the pain of remaining free that one can have the whole world round one all the time.... (1921/ 1979: 19-20)

Such inner equivocation about the value of freedom (which one might have thought a feminist would have uncritically endorsed), recognizes one's potential ability to reach her/his *élan vital*, that is denied to many, thereby, discovering more about the external world through the qualitative experience of time. However, she also implies there might be a cost to Bohemian independence and living at odds with social norms. A new experience for Miriam in *Deadlock* is her relationship with a Russian Jew named Michael Shatov, whom she meets at her bedsit (her first love affair). She becomes attracted to Shatov when she realizes he is interested in philosophy, and they became 'students together, exchanging photographs of their minds' (*Deadlock* 1, 23). Together they go to the British Museum and talk about Englishness and Jewishness, which suggests openness to considering the identity of those marginalized by the establishment. Miriam's journey is both an intellectual and implicitly an ideological one, defined in terms of humanist freedom (a secular pilgrimage in effect, in terms of one's freedom to develop as a person). Her interior life is affected by such intellectual interests and they show (from a feminist point of view,) a desire for personal growth and development, mirroring key aims of the feminist movement, particularly concerning those of the suffragettes. Eventually Miriam and Shatov discover that they are in love, despite a transitory disruption of intense disappointment when his Jewishness stands as a significant obstacle for both of them. Such obstacle derives from society's implicit injunctions regarding one's own individual desires, creating religious and national barriers internalized by the subject.

Joanne Winning argues that Richardson was sometimes treated by her father as a pseudo-son and the writer incorporates this into her depiction of her protagonist, Miriam and this sometimes complicates gender identity. In *Backwater* the character's mother accompanies Miriam to her post at a North London school, and on the journey after a disagreement the older woman comments, '[...] "You ought to be a man, Mimmy"' (1979: 193). Seen enjoying her Bohemian freedom in a café, the narrator describes Miriam in *Interim* as: 'She was there as a man, a free man of the world, a continental, a cosmopolitan, a connoisseur of women'

(1979: 394). At one point Miriam explains to Michael Shatov in *Deadlock* that ‘a mother turns to her sons for the understanding that she does not receive from their father; and as Winning explains it is Miriam, the “longed – for son,” who offers herself to her mother as replacement for her father’ (90). Richardson makes this clear in *Deadlock*:

‘If anything I am my mother’s son.’

‘Ah-ah, what is this, you are a *son*? Do you see?’[...]

‘She hopes *they* will give her that understanding she never had from their father. In that I *am* my mother’s son forever.’ (220)

Winning sees this as evidence for a coded lesbian narrative and that of a skewed Oedipal narrative where Miriam like a son ‘superseded her father in her mother’s affections and successfully takes his place’ (2000:91). However, it can also be seen as the sheer ambivalence evoked by the portrayal of the New Woman, her independence threatening the implied view of a male, patriarchal world which cannot easily fit Miriam into a box.

Dorothy Richardson led an independent and rather Bohemian life after her mother’s death liberated her, as she worked as a teacher, dental secretary and then a journalist and writer.¹⁴⁰ Showalter says that she ‘had affairs with selfish and unscrupulous men, and made contact with both the solid center and the louche fringes of London intellectual society’ (1977: 248). London was her home and in *The Tunnel* walking back to her room after work at night was refreshing and comforting:

Strolling home towards midnight along the narrow pavement of Endsleigh Garden, Miriam felt as fresh and untroubled as if it were morning. When she had got out of her Hammersmith omnibus into the Tottenham Court Road, she had found that the street had lost its first terrifying impression and had become part of her home (29).

One can analyze this, in Bergsonian terms, as an example of Richardson and her character Miriam demonstrating a desire to be truthful to her *élan vital* and intuition, which is to say to celebrate her inward subjective qualities as an independent woman. Richardson was

¹⁴⁰ The traumatic suicide of Richardson’s mother, in which Mrs. Richardson cut her throat with a carving knife, was nonetheless the cause of independence, but may have provoked ambivalent and perhaps guilty feeling about her unexpected gain. According to Showalter her mother’s suicide: ‘freed her from the emotional demands of her family and allowed her to move to an independent life of London’ (1979: 249-250).

indirectly forced to live as an independent woman earning income for the family as well as herself, but still found time to explore her potential as a human being and writer. According to Winning, Richardson had a complex and potentially lesbian relationship with drama student Veronica Leslie-Jones in 1906 with whom she shared a bed. (2000: 22) Despite the fact there is no clear equivalent of this biographical moment in the novels featuring Miriam, Winning has argued that these texts constitute an example of lesbian modernism. Winning asserts: '*Pilgrimage* is a text with dual purpose: merging the project of rendering this modern fragmentation into language with the need to find a 'new,' autonomous language for lesbian desire and identity' (11).

The novel sequence *Pilgrimage* is a peek into the consciousness of Miriam's constant inner thoughts and reflections, and a quest to define her alternative self – in feminist terms – through Miriam's repudiation of the traditional domestic stereotype of life of a woman within the domestic sphere that was so dominant in mid-to late-Victorian culture. Accordingly, Miriam is seeking outside reality and tries to discover the 'true freedom of action as well as thought,' through what Kaplan calls 'an examination of the contents of her mind, and it is a mind seemingly without boundaries' (1975: 49). Scenes and people impact impressionistically upon Miriam's consciousness, meaning familiar situations are only sketchily described, important people recognized only by name, and Richardson usually avoids contextualization within the text. In *Interim* the narrator describes people in London at Christmas who do not know each other, living as if distant and alienated, overwhelmed, accessing memories and past impressions:

Trams jingled up and down the centre of the roads bearing the names of unfamiliar parts of London. People were standing about on the terminal islands and getting in and out of the trams. She had come too far. Here was the wilderness, the undissembling soul of north London, its harsh unvarying all-embracing oblivion. . . . Innumerable impressions gathered on walks with the school-girls, or in lonely wanderings; the unveiled motives and feelings of people she had passed on the street, the expressions of noses and shoulders, the undefinable uniformity [...].(1979: 313)

Such an impression of Londoners inhabiting a sublime 'wilderness' is one she confronts alone and the narrator tells us it seems 'unknown to anyone in her London life [...]' (314).

Understood in Bergsonian terms *Pilgrimage* could also be described as a psychological novel that portrays external reality primarily, if not exclusively, through the subjective

consciousness (though this is also a feminine one because the novel's gendered use of Bergson's ideas) of Miriam Henderson. In that sense it is not dissimilar to Proust's non-feminine consciousness in *À La Recherche du Temps Perdu*. The narrator focalizes in terms of Miriam mainly through her expressive ideas, feelings and verbal expression as delineated through the duration of qualitative time. As previously discussed the third person narrator's focalizing of Miriam intersects the character's own thoughts and the consequence is the kind of literary impressionism which both parallels and goes further than May Sinclair's work of the period such as *Mary Olivier*. In *Pointed Roofs* Miriam's inner stream of thoughts describe her impression about teaching at the German School:

She imagined one of the rooms at the old school, full of scornful girls. . . . How was English taught? How did you begin? English grammar . . . in German? Her heart beat in her throat. She had never thought of that . . . the rules of English grammar? Parsing and analysis . . . Anglo-Saxon prefixes and suffixes . . . gerundial infinitive. . . It was too late to look anything up. Perhaps there would be a class to-morrow The German lessons at school had been dreadfully good. . . . Fraulein's grave face . . . her perfect knowledge of every rule . . . her clear explanations in English . . . her examples. . . . All these things were there, in English grammar. . . . And she had undertaken to teach them and could not even speak German. (1979:29)

Through the use of ellipses and pauses Richardson conveys a vivid sense of Miriam's complex impressions and reactions. Her fears and hesitations using a variant of a Jamesian stream of consciousness combined with a Bergsonian subjective perception to impressionistically capture the nervousness, of Miriam regarding the process of teaching, without having adequately mastered the requisite understanding of English grammar. In a strategy also found in Mansfield and Woolf, Richardson's *Pilgrimage* deploys many ellipses (rather more than her peers) that mirror inner consciousness, giving the impression of a mind in process before words are fully articulated, full of pauses and hesitations. She does so in *Honeycomb* when Miriam writes home from her post as a governess to her sister, after the death of her mother has dissolved her girlhood sense of family:

A long letter to Eve.... Eve would think that she was showing off. But she would be excited and interested too, and would think about it little. If only she could make Eve see what a book was... A dance by the author, a song, a prayer, an important sermon, a message. Books were not stories printed on paper, they were people; the real people; ... 'I prefer books to people'... 'I know now why I prefer books to people. (1979: 385)

Richardson's elliptical style is often associated with moments of reflection, and here she reads rather than contemplate her sister Eve's forthcoming wedding. Books seem more

reliable, closer, and more intimate to her than people. A series of past events and memories are apprehended qualitatively and subjectively combined with present ruminations about possible reactions by her sister, which permeate at every level - both spoken and unspoken - Miriam's thinking. The ellipsis and full stops with which sentences are separated suggest unspoken thought, deeper impressions, and darker unvoiced ideas. As Annika J. Lindskog (2013-2014) says: 'In the modernist novel, ellipses, brackets, commas, and semicolons are not only used to mark syntax: they also add a new level of meaning to the text. Here, punctuation suggests a form of non-verbal content, inviting readers to engage more actively with the literary work' (n.p.).

Ironically, Miriam's sister's reaction to the letter is negative, regarding Miriam's intellectualism as egocentricity. Additional to such lacunar elements, Miriam's narration changes into the mode of stream of consciousness within a third person restrictive narrative. Her purely subjective voice describes books in lyrical and metaphoric terms as 'dances', 'songs', 'prayers.' It is telling that they seem more authentic than actual people. This preference suggests her underlying problems and difficulties in knowing what to communicate with others at a personal level. The language conveys her difficulties in even articulating such thoughts, as the reader follows her breathless train of conflicting ideas. Reader and character are combined within the structure and syntax of the language, and the subject mirrors our engagement, adding a further reflexive level. Richardson's prose style foregrounds fluidity and a certain aesthetic lyricism in depicting the experiences of her everywoman as female writer/thinker.

Richardson's Bergsonian Narrative Technique

In the next section the chapter will discuss specifically how Bergson's ideas impacted upon aspects of Richardson's writing style. A feature of her writing technique consists of reporting perception as a sharing of her concern identifying a positive gendered identity as a woman, both experientially and at least through putative insights derived from self-reflection. I will discuss Richardson's use of stream of consciousness, and her desire for independence

particularly through the language of expression, her deployment of flashing images, and her description of inner turmoil that occurs as Miriam attempts to rationalize her experience as her aesthetic process. Her determined emphasis on gender identity is found even in usage of punctuation such as ellipses, semi-colons, creating a feminist form of writing by which Richardson, in a typically modernist fashion, offers an impression of the complexity and indeterminacy of life. They also echo a writing voice seeking to convey its own tentative and provisional ways of creating new meaning as Richardson's novels change from third-person to what seems like first-person narration within it (interior monologue). She combines this with shifts between present and past experiences using abstract and automatic memories (in Bergsonian terms). In addition, disconnected phrases, images and fragmentary impressions serve to represent the continuous nonverbal operations of the subjective mind. Though as argued in this chapter, the narrator and the protagonist merge within the narrative frame, the severely restricted narrator knows, perceives, and expresses only what is available to Miriam's consciousness, in which the narrator seldom frames or contextualises. Shirley Rose suggests that in *Pilgrimage* form and content combine to create a fiction of psychological subjectivity rendered through Miriam's feminine consciousness:

In describing the phenomena of existence, including the passage of time, the construction and use of language, the verbal expression of ideas and feelings, the associational processes of thought – we are justified in using words like flux, flow, stream, as appropriate metaphorical equivalent. However, in speaking of the consciousness as Dorothy Richardson conceives of it, we require metaphors that indicated expansion without movement or change. We therefore must regard consciousness in spatial terms without the usual correlative of time. (1969: 369)

As with Proust, Joyce or Freud's theory of dreams, space rather than time predominates in narration. In this sense Miriam's 'Pilgrimage' takes her intuitive thoughts within a Bergsonian flux while trying to create stability (not always very effectively). She is highly aware of the body as Bergson describes it in *Matter and Memory*: 'Our body occupies its centre; it is, in this material world, that part of which we directly feel the flux; in its actual state the actuality of our present lies' (2004: 178). Richardson's metaphors often follow the passage of time in an intensely personalized qualitative and subjective perception directed towards the external world of her social interactions. Richardson's stream-of-consciousness technique is seen in her emphasis on Miriam's inner life as experiencing successive, subjective moments which articulate an explicit and reflexive consciousness of lived time rather than the simply chronological. In novels such as *Pointed Roofs*, *The Tunnel*, *Deadlock*

Richardson explores the nature of such consciousness through innumerable details that demonstrate the intensity of the relationship between the external world and one's personal reality (that of both her personal and professional lives, including dentistry). Sydney Janet Kaplan further characterises Richardson as an explorer who looks into Miriam's mind and describes how she observes life from 'moment to moment,' thus 'the perspective of the novel is limited; its point of view is contained within the power of this young woman to see and analyse her own life' (1975: 8).

According to William James's *The Principles of Psychology* the individual should lead his/her own individual life with courage, openness to possibilities and awareness to what James referred to as the 'fringe' of experience. This fringe includes the instincts, inexpressible feelings, and haunting memories that influence human's thoughts and actions. He concludes that 'the only states of consciousness that we naturally deal with are found in personal consciousness, minds, selves, concrete particular I's and you's' (I 226). Clearly such 'personal consciousness' deals with one's daily life intuitively. At the same time, James describes consciousness as a 'stream' or 'river' that is constantly attacked by external flux of sensations from the physical world:

'It is just this free water of consciousness that psychologists resolutely overlook. Every definite image in the mind is steeped and dyed in the free water that flows around it. With it goes the sense of its relations, near and remote, the dying echo of whence it came to us, the dawning sense of whither it is to lead.' (*The Principles of Psychology* I 255)

Accordingly, the literary representation of James's stream of consciousness by writers emphasises the characters' 'minds, selves,' and subjective experiences which recognize and represent one's intuitive perception. In the case of female characters like Miriam this necessarily involves a different, gendered perspective. Therefore, James's pragmatic depiction of the experience of awareness within conscious perception correlates with Richardson's narrative technique for constructing her own conception of subjective experience.

In such a long novel sequence there is inevitably change and progression – if not of style or method – then of the protagonist's emotional and psychological maturation. In the early fictional texts, Miriam is a self-preoccupied, narrow-minded adolescent, oppressively

conscious of people's appearance and social class, annoyingly absorbed in wondering what they might think about her, defensively judgmental. In *Backwater* as she prepares for bed, she reflects 'Everyone would be trained and efficient but herself' (1979: 244). Of the area she decides: 'Off every tram-haunted main road, there must be a neighbourhood like this where lived the common-mouthed, harsh-speaking people [...]. To enter one of the little houses and speak there to the inmates would be to be finally claimed and infected by the life these people lived [...]' (*Backwater* 289). Despite her refined self-awareness and a certain ambivalence as to whether she thinks herself superior or merely an outsider compared to ordinary people, she also grows proficient, in later volumes especially, at suppressing impressions or fragments of self-knowledge that she does not want to admit to her consciousness. As Miriam's interior monologue becomes gradually more complex as she grows older, her consciousness widens and deepens; incomplete phrases show her making connections with her earlier experiences and perceptions, while her understanding of past events is altered with later awareness experiences. As Jesse Matz argues this new approach to 'consciousness' necessarily gives a new idea of the human subject: 'A new concept of 'consciousness' and all that it entails - subjectivism, interiority, idealism, psychologism, relativism, impressionism, and an aleatory, fragmented, and dispersed selfhood - is Richardson's main claim to modernity [...]' (2008, n.p).

Richardson rejected the characterization of her work by the metaphorical idea underpinning a stream of consciousness as inner images, but still foregrounds the centrality and focus of the interior life of her characters. In an autobiographical sketch 'Dorothy M, Richardson', provided to Stanley J. Kunitz she comments:

What do I think of the term 'Stream of Consciousness' [...]? Just this: that amongst the company of useful labels devised to meet the exigencies of literary criticism, it stands alone, isolated by its perfect imbecility. The transatlantic amendment, "Interior Monologue," though rather more inadequate than even a label has any right to be, at least carries a meaning. (562)

Dorothy Richardson thought 'fountain of consciousness' is more appropriate as a metaphor or label than 'stream of consciousness', as she suggested in a letter to Shiv K. Kumar of 'August 10, 1952' (Kumar 1979: 150). As Kumar argues: 'Fountain may signify more contemplative intensity than mere surface-flow, [but] the new label also does not seem to be a happier

choice' (499).¹⁴¹ Kumar is correct that this is a quarrel about figures of speech, however it may be because he suggests that Richardson's subject enshrines the Bergsonian idea of 'flux', he feels Richardson's term 'fountain' inappropriate (499). I disagree with him and take a view closer to that of Shirley Rose (1962), who differs from Kumar and emphasises the changelessness and core stability of the subjectivity articulated in Richardson's text. While Rebecca Rauve Davis (2013) argues coherently for a duality or unresolved dialectic concerns the principles of flux and changelessness within a subject perceiving the world. Richardson's Miriam is too concerned to explore her new female identity in feminist terms to simply surrender to the flux of perception.

In *Deadlock* Richardson describes the image of the room in a way that justifies her emphasis on a 'fountain of consciousness.'¹⁴² Such combines flux and self-creation in way that alludes to Wordsworth's image of poetic creation as 'emotion recollected in tranquility' in the 'Preface to Second Edition of Lyrical Ballads':¹⁴³

Freely watching the peaceful face in the mirror, she washed with an intense sense of sheltering companionship. Far in behind the peaceful face serene thoughts moved, not to and fro, but outward and forward from some sure centre. (*Deadlock* 56)

A sense of flux, her obliviousness of the room itself, and a final centering free her from externality, diminishing distractions. This parallel she suggests in 'Dorothy M. Richardson'

¹⁴¹ According to Kumar Richardson suggested other alternatives to 'stream', increasingly expansive and sublime but all emphasising the fluidity of swimming in water: '[S]tream of consciousness is a muddle-headed phrase. It's not a stream, it's a pool, a sea, an ocean. It has depth and greater depth and when you think you have reached its bottom there is nothing there, and when you give yourself up to one current you are suddenly possessed by another' (1959: 499).

¹⁴² In addition, fountains are usually either in gardens, which is one of the more privileged realms of female work and creativity, or in public spaces like Trafalgar Square, while water as an element is traditionally linked to women – consider the principle of fluidity in *écriture féminine*. What's more, the garden is an image of contemplation that is associated with being a woman – just as in Woolf and Mansfield.

¹⁴³ Wordsworth remarked: "I have said that poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings; it takes its origin from emotion recollected in tranquillity" (2005: 504). The fountain image arguably comes in part from Wordsworth and in part from Coleridge's 'Kubla Khan' (2005: 621-623). In this way Richardson makes clear that for her, the way in which the subject is conscious and in charge of the experiences it receives, which it then uses to reproduce its sense of itself is crucial. She probably disliked the idea of the randomness, lack of both control and the sense of a strong subject implied by the criticism of reviewers such as Woolf and Mansfield. Besides, the idea of a stream of consciousness as a fountain from a Romantic point of view rebuts this charge. As the thesis has shown, Romanticism provides strategies frequently used by women writers, especially when utilising childhood memories as a time before patriarchy intervenes. However, it is also popular with these women because of its frequent radicalism, Bohemianism and attention to gender issues. Fountains are strongly associated with Romanticism and an image of the natural world.

(1933) is that for the mind, 'its central core, luminous point [...] remains stable, one with itself throughout life'. In this room of her own, Miriam can think intensely, her private and public memories combined consciously by a subjective focus, allowing her to be herself in a way undetermined by patriarchy, exploring her alternative self (selves), reflective of her life as an independent woman. In *Deadlock*, Richardson further depicts the scene of her intuitive thoughts¹⁴⁴ rushing back to her present-self through the narrator's indirect interior monologue:

Miriam ran upstairs narrowly ahead of her thoughts. In the small enclosure of her room they surged about her, gathering power from the familiar objects silently waiting to share her astounded contemplation of the fresh material. She swept joyfully about the room ducking and doubling to avoid arrest until she should have discovered some engrossing occupation. But in the instant's pause at each eagerly opened drawer and cupboard, her mind threw up images [...] she paused in laughter with clasped restraining hands. (11)

In her room Miriam appears to almost tunnel in time moving between her inner self speculating her inner subjective thoughts on memories and the public measured time. She perceives herself and her response consciously yet metaphorically, seeing her consciousness as if floating blissfully in the air. In order to act freely, she consciously draws memories into her present awareness, for as indicated and summarized by Bergson in *Time and Free Will*: 'To act freely is to recover possession of oneself, and to get back into pure duration.' (1910: 231-232) Or to put it in more Romantic terms, freedom means a return to the subject's own subjective sense of the world rather than what is imposed on the subject externally. Bergson clearly associates freedom and independence with the act of qualitative memory, which, when seen from a gendered point of view, is transformed into a powerful feminist statement avowing individual female self-development. In Richardson's terms Miriam is literally making herself as a 'fountain' of consciousness to aid in her self-creation.

Miriam's experience as a working woman is a central theme in *Pilgrimage*. For feminist analysis this explains why Richardson's oeuvre is so central to understanding women's novels in the early twentieth century (it is not present in the work of Woolf, Mansfield or Sinclair). Such attention to work occurs alongside Miriam's sustained analysis of a woman's

¹⁴⁴ Since for Bergson in *The Creative Mind*: 'to think intuitively is to think in duration' (2002: 22), so Bergson's theory of intuition is a particular mode of knowledge coming from the subject, that is in tune with the emotional connection with time for that subject.

subjective evaluation of life's experience, which continues when Miriam takes on a post in central London. *The Tunnel* (1919) depicts Miriam's early years in London and introduces her job as a dental receptionist, the bed-sit at Mrs. Bailey's lodging house, her friends Mag and Jan, the traditional woman, Eleanor Dear,¹⁴⁵ and Alma, who has married the writer Hypo G. Wilson (modelled on H.G. Wells, Richardson's lover). Significantly in her room she recollects and reorders the public world of quantitative time that she experiences outside, turned into something that emphasizes her own personal, qualitative experience. In *The Tunnel* her room represents everything she has in material terms, to which she adds the experiential and its intense value to her:

Tansley Street was a soft grey gloaming after the darkness. When she rattled her key into the keyhole of number seven, she felt that her day was beginning. It would be perpetually beginning now. Nights and days were all one day; all hers, unlimited. [...] Someone must know she was in London, free, earning her own living. (1979: 30)

While *Interim* (1919) continues Miriam's exploration of working in London, an additional emphasis is the city's Bohemian life with artists, writers and intellectuals. *Deadlock* (1921) and *Revolving Lights* (1923) focus more on Miriam's sexual life – part of her subjective view of the world - and a growing but ultimately unsuccessful engagement with her friend, the Bohemian intellectual Michael Shatov. This failure increases a romantic involvement with Hypo G. Wilson (reflecting Richardson's own affair with H. G. Wells). *The Trap* (1925) suggest Miriam's life has become emotionally blighted – she is too disconnected from the world around her - she is sharing an overcrowded flat with a spinster social worker.¹⁴⁶ As a modernist novel the emphasis is on the momentary as offering depth and complexity, yet each single impression is still fragmentary, the narration consisting of successive qualitative and measurable perceptions of Miriam's surroundings and her situation:

¹⁴⁵ Eleanor Dear is a nurse with whom Miriam had a friendship, which Eleanor wants to be sexual. According to Kaplan this friendship 'reveals another part of her complex psychological situation. In this case Miriam is involved with a woman who is totally dependent, always in trouble, has a bad reputation, and is charming, flighty, and courageous' (1975: 30).

¹⁴⁶ Although they are outside of the scope of the thesis, subsequent novels explore the connections between feminism, work and the interplay of the public and private. Among them is *Dawn's Left Hand* (1931), in which Miriam begins her affair with Wilson and befriends the suffragette Amabel. According to Kaplan, 'the very recognition of Miriam's femininity by Amabel – Amabel who notices her attributes and appreciates them, who makes her aware of her feminine feelings – eventually will allow Miriam to experience what sexual adventures she finally does have' (1975: 32).

Miriam sat feeling wretchedly about in her mind. Mr. Leyton was busily finishing his lunch. In a moment Mr. Hancock would re-assert himself by some irrelevant insincerity. She found courage to plunge into speech, on the subject of her two lessons at the school. Her story strove strangely against the echoes and fell, impeded. It was an attempt to create a quiet diversion. ... It should have been done violently . . .’ (*The Tunnel* 170)

The book concentrates overwhelmingly on such moments as are important to Miriam’s interior experience, expressed through a fluid language, full of ellipses, representing her qualitative reaction within her intuitive stream of consciousness.

Pilgrimage represents the most extensive female and feminist modernist *Bildungsroman* of its time and its pseudo-autobiographical mode, charting the evolution of Miriam’s inner self from her childhood immaturity into an established, independent serene woman capable of her own decision-making. It is arguably a formal fictional equivalent to the extended autobiographical sequence of books charting a life provided by the feminist Elizabeth von Arnim discussed in the Introduction. The earlier volumes show Miriam in terms of more sensory impressions and direct emotion. Later, as Miriam grows more self-aware, she possesses greater explanatory skill and reflects more explicitly on her gendered responses within a feminist framework – for instance, in *The Trap* when she considers being an intellectual woman: ‘The only suggestion of life in the room would be the backs of the books stacked in piles on the mantelshelf. She found relief for her oppression in the minute gilded titles of some of the books. They gleamed faintly in the gloom, minute threads of gold. Well, here it was, the lovely little sitting-room...’ (1979: 440).

According to Ganesan Balakrishnan, the author uses a long thread of interior monologue to take the reader into Miriam’s psyche. In particular, ‘her expectations, with her likes and dislikes, memories of her past and anxiety about her future are all at once presented in the form of broken musings’ (2009: 4). This strategy can be traced in *Pointed Roofs*:

There would be a garden and German springs and summers and sunsets and strong kind arms and a shoulder. She would grow so happy. No one would recognize her as the same person. She would wear a band of turquoise-blue velvet ribbon round her hair and look at the mountains. ... No good. She could never get out to that. Never. She could not pretend long enough. Everything would be at an end long before there was any chance of her turning into a German woman. Certainly with a German man she would

be very angry at once. She thought of the men she had seen-in the streets, in the cafes and gardens, the masters in the school, photographs in the girls' albums. They had all offended her at once. (167)

As Rebecca Bowler reflects: 'the only way Miriam can visualise making that future career work is by becoming a different person: a different person with a different nationality, but she is also questioning her suitability for the role of teacher' (2009, n.p). Miriam's musings about the future also perhaps alluded to the situation described in Von Anrim's first text, *Elizabeth's German Garden*, where the garden becomes the narrator's solace from an unhappy marriage to a Prussian aristocrat and leads to a recreation of herself. Such an intensely romanticized, almost pre-Raphaelite version of an alternative self – with a sky or sea-coloured band of 'turquoise-blue velvet' – hints towards the possibility through creativity of an entirely new and (as the narrator suggests) an unrecognizable self. The passage above concerns Miriam's reflections on and impressions of life; her dreams and fantasies of an alternative self are prominently figured, her subjective experiences amid heterogeneous moments as she recognizes within herself her own qualitative experience of durational time.

In common with many female modernist writers, Richardson sought aspects denied a female consciousness, through a language untouched and unrepresented by patriarchal culture. Richardson for example, writes in Bergsonian terms in a subjective and qualitative manner, while in a language that simultaneously foregrounds experience elided by patriarchy. It would devalue such moments, reduced by being framed as the inconsequentiality of women's poetic musings about gardens or working as a humdrum receptionist. Luce Irigaray in 'The Power of Discourse and the Subordination of the Feminine' argues 'the "feminine" is never to be identified except by and for the masculine' (131). To some extent *écriture féminine* allows a sense of the ruptures, contradictions and incompletions of feminine writing which exists within a patriarchal frame. Richardson demonstrates these aspects in a short story, 'The Garden'¹⁴⁷ (21-24) from *Journey to Paradise*¹⁴⁸. Gardens are a favoured topic amongst both

¹⁴⁷ After Richardson visited Paris in 1924, the American writer and journalist, Ernest Hemingway edited and published 'The Garden' in *The Transatlantic Review*, August 1924 edition, which was a monthly literary magazine edited by Ford Madox Ford in 1924. The magazine was based in Paris and published in London by Gerald Duckworth Company. Ernest Hemingway was the guest editor of the August 1924 edition (Fromm 1977: 165-166).

¹⁴⁸ Trudi Tate, 'Introduction' to Dorothy Richardson, *Journey to Paradise*, points out it is a collection of short stories detailing Richardson's family holidays in Dawlish, Devon in the 1870s, before their father's bankruptcy,

female autobiographical writers (von Arnim's *Elizabeth's German Garden*) and female modernist writers (Mansfield's 'The Garden Party' and Woolf's 'Kew Gardens'). Gardens represent a privileged space of female-centered work, artistry and creative expression, while simultaneously subverting the way that flowers are traditionally linked with women in patriarchal society. Richardson describes the beautiful flowers in a way that draws attention to the fact that they exist without human experience, but paradoxically only matter when humans perceive and interact with them via qualitative experience, making use of convolution and repetition to convey this paradox. The style through its complexity and fluidity resembles *écriture féminine*, but also draws attention to the fact that those women often associated with flowers both exist within and outside of patriarchal representation. Such a perspective is denied men, for no one knows how women exist in qualitative terms, except other women and the story suggests a quantitative approach cannot fully express experiences:

There was no one there. The sound of feet and no one there. The gravel stopped making its noise when she stood still. When the last foot came down all the flowers stood still. Pretty *pretty* flowers. Standing quite still, going on being how they were when no one was there. No one knew how they were when they stood still. They had never seen them like this, stand quite all together in this little piece.

[...] Whenever she looked she could see this one different flower, growing taller. It was Nelly on a stalk. She went nearer to see if it would move away. It stood still, very tall. Its stalk was thin. She put her face down towards it to keep it down. It had a deep smell. She touched it with her nose to smell more. It kissed her gently, looking small. A tiny plate, cut into points all round the edge. Perhaps now it would go away. 'Dear little flower.' (21-22)

Although initially appearing to be simply a dreamlike, lyrical account of a little girl sniffing and observing flowers at very close quarters, it is her response as perceiver that animates them. Oddly she refers to a flower using a woman's name, 'Nelly on a stalk', one which matches no obvious wildflower title, thereby inverting the traditional naming of women after flowers. She also creates an amorous subtext, her actions resembling the interactions of lovers, one dominant, and the other vulnerable, thereby reversing traditional sexual stereotypes. She highlights the connection between femininity and flowers both in terms of being subject of observation and observer.

as well as essays and autobiographical pieces (1989: xxix). Tate explains that the Richardson family 'travelled with all the paraphernalia of their class, including special clothes for the journey and servants to assist them' (xxi).

This story focuses on one of Richardson's earliest childhood memories, what Carol Watt calls her 'bee-memory'; this 'bee-memory', according to Watts, serves 'to dramatize the event of a small child first discovering herself through her relation with the natural world' (1995: 20). A very young child spends a few minutes in the family's garden, creating a conscious perception of the external world; the relations between herself and the object are similar to that of the flower and the garden in which it grows. As with Bergson in *Matter and Memory* the subject must feel to know: 'there is no perception without affection' (2004:60). Bergson's explanation on the synthetic relationship between qualitative experience and external objects is linked with one's conscious perception of external reality, detailed in *Time and Free Will*:

[Y]ou experience on suddenly perceiving a shooting star: in this extremely rapid motion there is a natural and instinctive separation between the space traversed, which appears to you under the form of a line of fire, and the absolutely indivisible sensation of motion or mobility. A rapid gesture, made with one's eyes shut, will assume for consciousness the form of a purely qualitative sensation as long as there is no thought of the space traversed. In a word, there are two elements to be distinguished in motion, the space traversed and the act by which we traverse it, the successive positions and the synthesis of these positions. The first of these elements is a homogeneous quantity: the second has no reality except in a consciousness: it is a quality or an intensity [...] (1910: 111-112)

Similar to rapid shooting stars, the presumed growth and motion/stillness of the flower for Richardson's narrator creates a subjective relation between her and it, existing within her qualitative time, unaffected by quantitative time from the external world. The character and little flower share friendship in the garden for they can meet or greet and embrace each other; yet this is all from the point of view of the little girl. Through these flowers she is able to breathe the scent of life along with her inner senses and emotions; in this way it connects the child with her inmost subjectivity, or in Bergsonian terms *élan vital*.

Watts further comments that 'Richardson uses synaesthesia, one sense evoked in terms of another, to represent the child's dissolving of the boundaries between her own experience and the garden, between subject and object' (1995: 21). Such strategies typify those used by writers and artists influenced by Bergson's philosophy, in which the multi-sensory approaches permitted by new technologies such as flight and cinema are echoed in literature by experiences in which one sense can influence or become mixed with another to allow resonant symbols of recaptured memories. For example in Proust's *À La Recherche de Temps Perdu* tasting a small biscuit leads to the sights and sounds of childhood because memory is

naturally synaesthetic. In Richardson's story, the narrator never attends to any parental point of view, but only to that of the child as Watts argues 'without the controlling parental free indirect discourse, it leads the reader directly into a child's consciousness' (1995:21). I would suggest this is because the qualitative experience of the child is regarded by Richardson as being far more foundational and significant than any calculable experience of the patriarchal adult world. The experience of the flower is a totally subjective and self-possessed experience. Tate in her 'Introduction' argues the little child cannot 'distinguish between her own actions and the things around her,' which is why when she moves around 'she is surprised to hear the sound of feet when there is "no one there"' (1989: xxix). However, Tate does not notice that this rendering of complex negativity is symbolic of the way women's experiences are represented pejoratively in the patriarchal order.

The above description of the child in the garden is a good example of a woman-centred, qualitative perception from the inner self where the experience of life is depicted through a fluid and simple yet evocative language. In examining her intuitive perception one perceives her inner motives projected upon the external world. Illustrating and establishing harmony between the child subject and the flower represents the world of nature. This illustrates Hélène Cixous' idea in 'The Laugh of Medusa' of woman's need for an 'inventive language': 'She must write herself, because this is the invention of a *new insurgent* writing which, when the moment of her liberation has come, will allow her to carry out the indispensable ruptures and transformations in her history' (2000: 261).

In Cixous' understanding such a new female, insurgent writing – based on the different way women see the world – would undermine and successfully contest the more traditional, patriarchal style of writing. As Watts suggests, the striking nature of this representation of the child's consciousness derives from 'its direct connection of perception and actions,' and thus, 'body and consciousness are here indivisible; knowledge is tactile, a creative form of improvisation; a mimetic mastery of the world. It is in this active material sense, then, rather than in any ineffable grounding of subjectivity, that the child can be seen here' (1995: 23). I would disagree with the fact that this does not ground subjectivity as it seems to show that the subject is intrinsically required for the material world to be filled with any relevant meaning. Such concept of knowledge must be embodied to function and an emphasis on creativity as

improvisation, as a performance can be thought of as continuous with Bergson's theories about memory and consciousness that have already been discussed, as well as foreshadowing the theories of Cixous.

Virginia Woolf in her review of *Revolving Lights* remarked:

Miss Richardson has fashioned her sentence consciously, in order that it may descend to the depths and investigate the crannies of Miriam Henderson's consciousness. It is a woman's sentence, but only in the sense that it is used to describe a woman's mind by a writer who is neither proud nor afraid of anything she may discover in the psychology of her sex. (1923, n.p)

Virginia Woolf memorably called Richardson's style the 'psychological sentence of the feminine gender' and claims it to be different from what modernism has already produced. Richardson created and represented the moments of thought before speech reaches the level of consciousness, through Miriam's inner psychological, 'fountain of consciousness' (using Richardson's preferred term for the subject's stream of consciousness). She emphasizes fluidity in her expressive language that tries to show qualitative experience by becoming highly metaphorical. As John Middleton Murry explains Richardson presented 'the content of [her] consciousness as it was before it had been reshaped in obedience to the demands of practical life' (1922: 98). In Bergsonian terms Richardson tries to present her qualitative and subjective experience of reality before it becomes reformed by patriarchal, public and quantitative language. Murry also added that Richardson explored the 'limbo where experiences once conscious fade into unconsciousness' (1922:98).

Secondly, through Miriam's use of language one apprehends that the text is not male-dominated or male-centered, as the limited third person narrative continuously focalizes through Miriam as if it were an autobiographical text. The female subject is centred and this style encourages the participatory activity of the contemporary reader for both feminist and modernist reasons, making the narrative feminist in the sense of undermining the power structures of patriarchal language. Such sabotage prefigures and is central to *écriture féminine* with the idea of insurgent writing. Miriam's central feminine consciousness elaborates her world of subjective experiences, because here subjectivity, as for other

novelists this thesis examines, is the means by which feminism can critique patriarchy and create a separate space for distinctively female experience and concerns.

London is particularly important to Dorothy Richardson's fiction and Miriam Henderson's act of strolling in the streets of London as an independent woman or as some critics suggests an effective *flâneuse* (feminine of *flâneur*). This is provocative by her very actions with regard to patriarchal constraints, while simultaneously introducing the reader to modernist representation of London as a fast-changing city. Miriam's fluid imagination is always tempered by a critical and gendered perspective. Importantly Richardson herself was working and walking in London during the period, mirrored by Miriam strolling through London streets despite her near poverty. She ruminates in *The Tunnel* on her sensations as regards the metropolis:

[T]hat feeling when you live right in London, of being a Londoner, the thing that made it enough to be a Londoner, getting up, in London ; the thing that made real Londoners different to everyone else, going about with a sense that made them *alive*. The very idea of living anywhere but in London, when one thought about it, produced a blank sensation in the heart. What was it I said the other day? 'London's got me. It's taking my health and eating up my youth. It may as well have what remains....' (265-266)

According to Tate, London 'marked her final departure from the situation of her childhood and it was through this class mobility that she began to realize that the role of "woman" was not innate or natural, but cultural and subject to change' (1989: xiv). In 'Three Women Novelists' Katherine Mansfield describes Richardson as having a 'passion for registering every single thing that happens in the clear, shadow-less country of her mind' (1990: 309). May Sinclair in her review of Richardson claims that Richardson's use of stream of consciousness necessitates a focus on the 'painfully acute senses' of Miriam's inner life. (1918: 58) This is to say that the joy and travails of being in London as a young woman are crucially significant as Miriam struggles to achieve her own identity.

***The Tunnel* (1919)**

The Tunnel is the fourth autobiographical volume of Richardson's multi-volume novel, *Pilgrimage* (1919-1935), concerning the arrival of the main protagonist, Miriam Henderson in London at the age of twenty one, becoming an adult, and an independent worker in

London. The gentleman's daughter (albeit of a father who became bankrupt), becomes a working woman, and therefore alters her class status and the social expectations of a woman of her origins, true for both Richardson, the author and her protagonist, Miriam. Miriam's journey towards a new self begins with her subjective perception of the London's streets and its inhabitants. As Elisabeth Bronfen (1999) says, she creates her new female self through her encounter with the opportunities and examples offered by the fast growing metropolis; this allows her to change her identity and to claim a different sense of self as a New Woman (in Bergsonian terms through 'creative evolution'). Miriam smokes, is single, and earns her own living, all of which are characteristics of the 'New Woman' that became central to the suffragette struggle, and then the figure of the flapper after World War One. To Miriam being a Londoner is the experience of being free from tradition:

[S]he was free again, to be just a Londoner she would ask nothing more of life. It would be the answer to all questions; the perfect unfailing thing, guiding all one's decisions. And an ill-paid clerkship was its best possible protection; keeping one at a quiet center, alone in a little room, un- touched by human relationships, undisturbed by the necessity of being anything. (*The Tunnel* 266)

Therefore, embracing London is described here as liberating, as being with a sexual lover, who helps her to find herself anew. In this positive, almost spiritual sublimity in *Revolving Lights* (1979) she becomes as powerful as London itself, as she and her imaginary lover merge and become one in what functions as an unusually passionate hymn to London:

No one in the world would oust this mighty lover, always receiving her back without words, engulfing and leaving her untouched, liberating and expanding to the whole range of her being [. . .] She would travel further than the longest journey, swifter than the most rapid flight, down and down into an oblivion deeper than sleep [. . .] tingling to the spread of London all about her, herself one with it, feeling her life flow outwards, north, south, east and west, to all its margins. (272-273)

Being away from the traditional familial ties constituted within patriarchal structures allows Miriam to develop an awareness of her alternative selves. She pursues more modern trends of independent women, choosing to loving someone outside of her class and perhaps most importantly riding bicycles without a corset. The latter item of costume epitomized the Victorian ideal based on restraining women's bodies shaped into supposedly perfect hourglass figures, rebellion against which costumes was prominently linked to the suffragette

cause (as were bicycles). Richardson writes of Miriam's intense sense of embodied liberation in *The Tunnel*:

To be able to go down the quiet street and on into the squares – on a bicycle.... I must learn somehow to get my balance. To go along, [...] in knickers and a short skirt and all the summer to come. . . . Everything shone with a greater intensity. Friends and thought and work were nothing compared to being able to ride alone, balanced, going along through the air. (145-146)

There was a keen debate ('the rational dress debate') in which more radical women argued there was no need to wear a corset while riding a bicycle (Miriam delights in 'knickers and a short skirt'), although this threatened Victorian ideas about female modesty while encouraging literal independence of body ('to ride alone') and qualitative female experience ('shone with greater intensity'). According to Bella Bathurst in *The Bicycle Book*, the bicycle was significant to the feminist struggle. American suffragette Susan B. Anthony said in 1896: 'I think it has done more to emancipate women [...] than anything else in the world' (2011: 101). Bella Bathurst in *The Bicycle Book* (2011) suggests such a debate about clothes was epitomised in terms of the rational dress society, which advocated bloomers over long skirts unsuitable for riding bicycles.¹⁴⁹

The novel opens with Miriam's scrutiny of her little room, although cramped and dreary, represents the very freedom of which Miriam had dreamed about *The Tunnel*:

She closed the door and stood just inside it looking at the room. It was smaller than her memory of it. When she had stood in the middle of the floor with Mrs. Bailey, she had looked at nothing but Mrs. Bailey, waiting for the moment to ask about the rent. Coming upstairs she had felt the room was hers and barely glanced at it when Mrs. Bailey opened the door. From the moment of waiting on the stone steps outside the front door, everything had opened to the movement of her impulse. She was surprised now at her familiarity with the details of the room . . . that idea of visiting places in dreams. It was something more than that . . . all the real part of your life has a real dream in it; some of the real dream part of you coming true. You know in advance when you are really following your life. These things are familiar because reality is here. (13)

¹⁴⁹ H. G. Wells's comic novel, *The Wheels of Chance: A Bicycling Idyll*, features a male draper bewitched by the sight of a woman, he believes to be a lady, riding a bicycle. 'Rational dress didn't look a bit unwomanly' and '[...] How fine she had looked, flushed with the exertion of riding, breathing a little fast, but elastic and active! Talk about your ladylike, home keeping girls with complexions like cold veal!' (1896: 31, 28).

We should note the anticipation of exploring her inner world and structuring her qualitative experience, an emotional precursor symbolizing the possibility of female independence. Although the room does not meet her dreams, being small and only partially lit, she considers it as her refuge; a place where she can live independently under her own rules. The room is the ‘tunnel’ of the title (interconnecting private and public space), which allows Miriam to examine the influences of the past and the probabilities of her future in order for her to reach a different; perhaps truer version of herself. In Bergsonian terms this is the freedom to contemplation of an alternative self.

As Michel de Certeau argued in *The Practice of Everyday Life* (1988), there are tactics for city dwellers which form oppositional, subversive practices challenging the establishment. For a woman to have control of her own space (she is neither in her father’s house, nor her husband’s) may be considered an oppositional practice to patriarchal norms and constraints. Besides, being a flâneuse (discussed earlier) and both practices share the idea of woman as active originator and observer rather than being passive and observed. Miriam travels through the ‘tunnel’ with the hope seeing a light at the end of it, even if that light is not yet visible. This is a psychological and to some extent perceptual journey, which emphasizes the value of her own subjective and qualitative experiences. Miriam has not experienced living completely alone and independently before, and at the same time she needs to work very hard to earn a living as a woman. Thus Miriam appears on the brink of creating an alternative self, rather different from her previous childhood self within the family or even as a young adult where she was a teacher in school in quite controlled circumstances, or else working as a governess. She is creating an alternative self within the flux like possibilities of the new existence she lives in, akin to the transformational forces Bergson describes in *Creative Evolution* (1911):

[...] I pass from state to state, I am warm or cold, I am merry or sad, I work or I do nothing, I look at what is around me or I think of something else. Sensations, feelings, volitions, ideas – such are the changes into which my existence is divided and which color it in turns. I change, then, without ceasing. (1)

Accordingly, Miriam’s intuitive perception within a subjective time experience towards the multitude of varied external experiences that constitute London as a forward-looking metropolis drives her interior life force to create a new Miriam. She finds a hidden Miriam

that is different, challenging the self externally foisted on her by her previous life as a governess, as a teacher and as a child. She is evolving. As the narrator further explains in *The Tunnel*: ‘Twenty-one and only one room to hold the richly renewed consciousness, and a living to earn, but the self that was with her in the room was the untouched tireless self of her seventeenth year and all the earlier time. The familiar light moved within the twilight, the old light...’ (16). In Bergsonian terms then, Miriam’s intuitive self uncovers and consequently explores the similarities and differences between what she contemplates in her room and the outside; frequently Bohemian world of London as the evolutionary process of creating a ‘new woman’. Bergson suggests in *Creative Evolution*:

The impetus of life, of which we are speaking, consists in a need of creation. It cannot create absolutely, because it is confronted with matter, that is to say with the movement that is the inverse of its own. But it seizes upon this matter, which is necessity itself, and strives to introduce into it the largest possible amount of indeterminations and liberty. (251)

Therefore Miriam’s excitement and inner joy shows as her *élan vital* striving for more personal development and freedom, in both her personal life in her own room plus her working life at Wimpole Street. *The Tunnel* demonstrates such a sense of growth, discovery and joyful exploration:

Her life and work at Wimpole Street were something extra, thrown in with her own life of endless day. Sarah and Harriett, their lives and friends, her own friends, the Brooms, the girls in Kennett Street, all thrown in. She lit her table lamp and the gas and two candles, making her little brown room brilliant under a brilliant white ceiling, and sat down, eager to tell someone of her wealth and freedom. (30)

So despite her actual rather impoverished existence and arduous work Miriam nonetheless is eager and enthusiastic to share her life, probably with her close friend Alma Wilson, about her newly found freedom. During the day Miriam experiences the formality and practicality of her new life as a professional woman, while at night she experiences the secluded small world of her room, which functions as a refuge for meditation. In there, she travels back and forth through her experiences and thoughts about the day she had:

[T]he strange moment in her room, [...] the strange, rich, difficult day and now her untouched self here, free, unseen and strong, the strong world of London all around her, strong free untouched people, in a dark lit wilderness happy and miserable in their own way, going about the streets looking at nothing, thinking about no special person or thing, as long as they were there, being in London. (*The Tunnel* 76)

London for Miriam is both a romantic and gothic zone, representing an enchanted universe of gorgeous plenitude and a kind of blasted and sublime region. This is indicated in the use of the oxymoron ‘dark lit’, perhaps conjuring up Milton’s well known description of Hell as ‘darkness visible’.¹⁵⁰

London also can be said to epitomize for its inhabitants the Bergsonian idea of flux and perpetual self-creation, because London is ever-changing, growing and certainly was a focus for emerging modernity and immigration at the period about which Richardson wrote. In 1910 Le Corbusier in *The City of To-morrow and its Planning* gave a figure of 7.2 million people for London, as opposed to New York – 4.5 million – and Paris – 3 million. (1987: 94) In addition, Lisa Tickner suggests, Londoner’s experienced high modernity and a constant sense of dizzying changes: via the introduction of the typewriter, the telephone, the gramophone, electric lighting, the internal combustion engine, the underground tube train, wireless telegraphy, the cinema, the mass-circulation daily newspaper, the motor bus and powered flight. (2000: 190) Miriam does not sharply distinguish here between herself as observer and *flâneuse* and the people she observes, enjoying the process of being in London; seemingly the complete opposite of the undead inhabitants of the city in T.S. Eliot’s ‘The Burial of the Dead’ in *The Waste Land*:

Unreal City,
Under the brown fog of a winter dawn,
A crowd flowed over London Bridge, so many,
I had not thought death had undone so many. (1991. 61-62)

In contrast to Eliot, and perhaps because she is an independent woman leading a somewhat unconventional, bohemian lifestyle, the unknown streets and personalities seem wonderful and rich, and to her in *The Tunnel*: ‘[...] London life was sacred and secret, away from everything else in the world. It would disappear if one had ties outside...’ (89). London is a dominating entity; in her imagination it has the jealous nature of a lover, which will not allow connections or flirtation with the countryside.

¹⁵⁰ As Steven Barfield and Lisa Russ Spaar (2009) point out London for poets was simultaneously a site of alienation and gloomy foreboding (T.S. Eliot in *The Waste Land* or James Thomson in *The City of Dreadful Night*), as well as a place of freedom and the ability to change and empower individuals. London is a sublime city if that very sublimity may seem ambivalent.

The journeys to and from work, sometimes by bus and at other times on foot, become the highpoint of Miriam's day, a way of feeling part of London life. Miriam's new public self and social identity within a patriarchal environment is created by working at Mr. Hancock's dental practice. Miriam strives to understand the qualities of the people at work as dialectic between herself and the other. As Elisabeth Bronfen argues:

[H]er life in London in fact consists wholly in forming, and communicating with, various groups (worlds) [...] Miriam's contact with others is much more a process of recognizing aspects of herself through differentiation from the other. This is exemplified most clearly by Miriam's involvement with her employer Hancock. Since he represents two, in her view, separate worlds – the world of the Wimpole Street dental practice and of independent work and the world of the “professional Englishmen” (II, 200) which is also her family's world that she has left behind – her relationship with him irritates a comparison between the two worlds. (1999: 125)

The belief in and idea of the ‘new woman’ who has now become a feminist image of an independent female worker depends on the impact of external social and professional encounters onto Miriam's intuitive consciousness. There is dialectic of sorts between her qualitative past memories of her wealthy childhood funded by her father and her new professional self-image as a working woman constituted through reflections on her life in London. In ‘Data for a Spanish Publisher’ Richardson compares such experiences directly with her past, ‘In its place stood London and what London can mean as a companion’ (1989: 137). Both in life and in her fiction there is a sense in which she is being propelled towards the future, embracing life as it happens, which expresses a type of experiential metaphor for stream of consciousness as a process. In *The Tunnel* Miriam's speech is driven relentlessly forward to meet experience head on:

I mustn't stay here thinking these thoughts ... it's that evil thing in me, keeping on and on, always thinking thoughts, nothing getting done ... going through life like – a stuck pig. If I went straight on, things would come like that just the same in flashes – band, bang, in your heart, everything breaking into light just in front of you, making you almost fall off the edge into the expanse coming up before you, flowers and light stretching out. (42)

The ‘stuck pig’ is movement towards experience that is mired in procrastination and interminable reflection on the present, demonstrated through the use of many ellipsis and dashes that show broken off and inconclusive thought. Ellipses as seen previously are continuously used as elements of Richardson's style. Miriam is gesturing perhaps towards an

opposition between a traditional sense of self as permanent, governed by the existing social order and a more Bergsonian concept of self-open to the flux of reality and ongoing self-creation and self-discovery. London as already indicated represents an image of Bergsonian flux and change in which Londoners, especially women, have potential for growth and development. Miriam's professional life in London requires engagement with practice and newness rather than tradition and indecision: 'I must stop thinking, from now, and be fearfully efficient. Then people will understand and like me. They will hate me too, because I shall be absurd, I shan't be really in it. Perhaps I shall. Perhaps I shall get in' (*The Tunnel* 43). Such ruminations also suggest her inner quest on her journey of self-discovery; exploring alternative selves and their potential.

In addition, Richardson's narrative presupposes a type of difficulty that often confuses readers in mimetically representing how her inner quest towards making sense of the external world functions on a moment to moment basis via language, accepting that as one has seen that the subject already exists in a state of potentiality and futurity within a world constantly in flux. Therefore Miriam's inner consciousness changes from one striking and vividly apprehended moment to another. Dorothy Richardson is a difficult writer because her style depicts rather than constrains the linguistic representation of meaning. John Mepham notes that '[with *The Tunnel* and *Interim*] Richardson introduced new layout, punctuation and notations for reported speech that were unlike anything that she used in any other volume of *Pilgrimage*' (2000:449). As Katherine Mansfield suggests in 'Three Women Novelists':

[C]omposed of bits, fragments, flashing glimpses, half scenes and whole scenes, all of them quite distinct and separate, all of them of equal importance. There is no plot, no beginning, no middle or end. Things just "happen" one after another with incredible rapidity and at break neck speed. (990: 140)

The reader comes to understand that Miriam's intuitive perception and reception of a variety of external data are conceived of by Richardson as an unstable process, since Miriam has to confront every new experience subjectively. While assessing and drawing upon the differing experiences she confronts. Perhaps for this reason London with its multitude of possibilities, endless vivacity and continual change is such an effective region to encounter or represent such a creative flux, as Samuel Johnson remarked 'when a man is tired of London, he is tired of life'. In 'Data for a Spanish Publisher' Richardson describes the many groups she

encountered during this phase of her life, all fascinating and inspiring ‘to each of which in turn I wished to belong and yet was held back, returning to solitude and to nowhere, where alone I could be everywhere at once, hearing all the voices in chorus’ (1989: 137).

On occasion Miriam repeats her thoughts, ideas and feelings which are reflected in long passages using stream-of-consciousness within the limited third person narration. Such repetition offers a kind of verbatim example that shows the very process of consciousness being articulated, much as Mansfield suggested. In *The Tunnel* Miriam contemplates life and one’s youth: ‘If it all ended in sadness and envy of youth, life was simply a silly trick. *Life* could not be a silly trick. Life cannot be a silly trick. That is the simple truth ... a certainty. Whatever happens, whatever things look like, life is not a trick’ (97). Miriam continually questions and reflects on her inner self. Richardson emphasizes her character’s repetitive process of reflection seems overshadowed at times by Miriam’s sense of isolation when exhibiting her outside public self. Following the modernist trope of making things new, *Pilgrimage* is a lifetime’s experiment in discovering a hidden self and creating a new self in London and elsewhere. Miriam feels an estrangement and inferiority when among certain characters, particularly Mrs. Binkley, Alma and Mr. Wilson or Hypo (Alma’s husband) because she feels her relative economic poverty compared to them, although she still feels part of the middle-class because of her upbringing.

However, she is uncomfortable with aspects of their intellectual life, particularly the well-read Hypo continually talking about books. Such an environment discomforts her, because she feels that in her circle there was insufficient discussion allowed of different peoples’ own opinion. In Bergson’s terms her life force is unattainable or unrealizable due such circumstances, and she resents that she: ‘must remain in the corner, not moving, all the afternoon. If she moved in the room the bright light would show the scrappiness of her clothes [...] everyone here was doing something; or the wife of somebody who did something. They were like a sort of secret society... all agreed about something...’ (*The Tunnel* 177).

The narrator also suggests concerning such women that they lack any feminist perspective or desire for independence and this typifies what is wrong with the women: 'It was as if she were here as a candidate to become an Alma or a Mrs. Binkley; imitating the clever sayings of men, or flattering them' (*The Tunnel* 117). Miriam feels troubled by her plain dull dress and red hands; suffering from relative poverty compared to their bourgeois success, but she also sees limitations in their lifestyle. When Miriam attends Mr. Hancock's summer festival and the narrator explicitly describes her rejection of their mores:

Never, never could she belong to that world. It was a perfect little world; enclosed; something one would need to be born and trained into; the experience of it as an outside was pure pain and misery; admiration, irritation, and resentment running abreast in a fever. (202)

When Miriam plays the piano among her new friends, including Mr. Tremayne and Gerald, Miriam's brother-in-law, she is conscious of her pose and her attitude. She plays in an aesthetic and imaginative way but also is conscious that such an activity evokes a very feminine and traditional woman. Such is the well-mannered domestic-goddess stereotype so beloved by Victorian patriarchy which she cannot fulfil:

Opening a volume of Mendelssohn she played, from his point of view, one of the *Songs without Words* quietly into the conversation. The room grew still. She felt herself and Mr. Tremayne as duplicates of Harriett and Gerald, only that she was a very religious, very womanly woman, the ideal wife and mother and he was a bad fast man who wanted to be saved. It was such an easy part to play. She could go on playing it to the end of her life... She felt all these things expressing themselves in her bearing. At the end of her piece she was touched to the heart by the look of youthful adoration in his eyes, the innocent youthfulness shining through his face. (27)

Mr. Tremayne is an old businessman with a pink rose in his buttonhole. Miriam found him impossible to like him as she 'grew weary of his bantering tone. It smeared over everything he touched and made him appear to be saying one thing over and over again in innuendo' (26). *Songs without Words* (1829-1845) by the composer Mendelssohn is a series of romantic short lyrical piano pieces that were extremely popular among the Victorian middle classes (perhaps explaining her choice, as they are also relatively easy to play and represented a safe, conventional choice). Miriam fills the room with these meditative songs with their romantic sensibility and bourgeois tranquility.

In Bergsonian terms this situation acts like a melody within a ‘concrete duration’ as Miriam is qualitatively conscious of herself as an accomplished pianist, but also her capacity of being perceived, therefore as a conventional middle-class Edwardian woman. Her mind moves backward and forward, recollecting past and present moments, and experiences within a conscious duration. However, Miriam realizes that Mr. Tremayne is unhappy – he wants a traditional unchallenging woman playing light music. As a consequence Miriam alters her way of playing and she chooses the far more intellectually rigorous, aesthetically serious and musically difficult choice of a Beethoven sonata; subverting Mr. Tremayne’s bourgeois, patriarchal expectations. Therefore, her second performance is less fluidly ‘feminine’, as the position of her arms is inelegant. As Diaz argues: ‘she consciously declines to fit into the pattern of the feminine woman playing the piano described in a passage of *Interim* as a delicate lady, dressed in an elaborate dress, who adopts a fragile and elegant pose and is conscious of her role of affected delicacy’ (2007: 232):

She found the Beethoven and played the first movement of a sonata. It leapt about the piano breaking up her pose, using her body as the instrument of its gay wild shapeliness, spreading her arms inelegantly, swaying her, lifting her from the stool with the crash and vibration of its chords. ... [...] The Largo came with a single voice, deep and broad and quiet; the great truth behind the fuss of things.... Daylight and gaiety and night and storm and a great song and truth, the great truth that was bigger than anything. Beethoven. [...] The party was wrecked ... a young lady who banged the piano till her hair nearly came down. Mr. Tremayne had heard nothing but noise ...
(*The Tunnel* 28)

This evokes not just her subversion of expectations about traditional stereotypes of the bourgeois woman playing at the piano, but also indicates the kind of music popular among modernists for its aesthetic seriousness and virtuosity (one can compare the use of Beethoven’s ‘sublime’ Fifth symphony in E. M. Forster’s *Howards End* [1910]). The narrator suggests the environment is fluidly poetic since Miriam is using ‘her body as the instrument of its gay wild shapeliness’, in effect refusing the elegant woman’s figure presupposed by the patriarchal system. Miriam’s wildness and abandonment to the requirements of the music are echoed in Kristeva’s evocation in *Revolution in Poetic Language* of the ‘semiotic’ with its emphasis on the bodily, rather than the ‘symbolic’ language of a pose acceptable to patriarchy. (1984:1-20) In contrast to women, Miriam believes men ignore the finer points of creative meaning, rather desiring authority over other’s experiences, since they:

[...] read in loud harsh unnatural voices, in sentences, or with voices that were a commentary on the text, as if they were telling you what to think ... they preferred reading to being read to; they read as if they were the authors of the text. Nothing could get through them but what they saw. They were like showmen...' (*The Tunnel* 261).

However, not all men were the same and some found such New Woman figures on bicycles erotic, as well as sympathetic politically speaking. Miriam's thoughts continues on the idea and the democratic value cycling: 'If everyone were on bicycles all the time you could talk to everybody, all the time about anything ... sailing so steadily along with two free legs ... how much easier it must be with your knees going so slowly up and down ... how *funny* I must look with my knees racing up and down in lumps of skirt' (*The Tunnel* 230).

***Interim* (1919)**

In this fifth volume of *Pilgrimage*, the story opens with Miriam spending Christmas at one of her former pupils from Miss Perne's school, an old friend called Grace Broom, in the area of Banbury Park. She finds difficulty in communicating her feelings and thoughts with the family; her isolation is evident. There is a vertiginous quality of thesis and anti-thesis about Miriam's reflections where her anxieties are mirrored at certain some points, distortions of grammar mimicking her troubled thoughts:

Why would people insist upon talking about things – when nothing can ever be communicated? ... She felt angrily about in the expectant stillness. She could see their minds so clearly; why wouldn't they just look and see hers instead of waiting for some impossible pronouncement? Yes would be a lie. No would be a lie. Any statement would be a lie. All statements are lies. [...] I have nothing to do with any one. You shall not group me anywhere. I am everywhere. Let the day go on. Don't sit there worrying me to death. ... (*Interim* 306-307)

The 'I' pronoun indicates the 'struggle' between Miriam and the outside world of public reality, in recognizing her conscious qualitative experience towards the public's inquisitiveness. Miriam is recognizing a Bergsonian sense of the complexity and flux of reality, as her thoughts travel through a heterogeneous duration in her own interior monologue. She knows of the plurality of life, seeking to 'winnow' the perceptual, of which Bergson says in *Matter and Memory* 'Every image is within certain images and without others; but of the aggregate of images we cannot say that it is within us or without us, since interiority and exteriority are only relations among images' (13).

Unlike the Brooms, Miriam ventures out of the house at Christmas, following her own instinct to explore and commune with her *élan vital* subjectively, while knowing as Bergson says in *Matter and Memory* ‘we can only grasp things in the form of images, we must state the problem in terms of images, and of images alone’ (13). London remains a governing character within this novel (as in the previous volume of *Pilgrimage*) and often figures as an image of sublime excess in the way already discussed. She goes for a night-time walk alone in the ‘wilderness, the undissembling soul of north London’ (313). It was clearly extremely unusual and radical for a single woman of the middle classes to go for such a solitary night time walk, and this activity as a *flâneuse* may well have influenced Virginia Woolf’s later novel *Mrs Dalloway* and Clarissa’s own London walk, although arguably Richardson’s account remains more powerful and romantic in its depiction. For Miriam’s act consciously defying convention which indicates both her fearless sense of evolving self, but also the changing nature of women in society. She wants to ‘move like the wind [...] alive without personality or speech’ (*Interim* 321).

Her decidedly romantic image recalls Shelley’s ‘Ode to the West Wind’ (1819), a poem concerning the value of freedom, with its simultaneous power of destruction creativity.¹⁵¹ When Miriam strolls through the heart of Bloomsbury (a *flâneuse* observing social reality), she is walking among symbol of a British literary and cultural establishment. If her description of London asleep and waking recalls Wordsworth famous ‘Lines Composed on Westminster Bridge’ (1807); this is doubtless intended, but her own account is more positive than Wordsworth’s. She emphasizes London (in fact a Bloomsbury landmark) as a liberating and emancipating experience.

St. Pancras clock – striking down the chimney. She ran across to the dark lattice and flung it open. In the air hung the echo of the first deep boom from Westminster. St. Pancras and the nearer clocks were telling themselves off against it. They would have finished long before Big Ben came to an end. (*Interim* 322)¹⁵²

¹⁵¹ Here the poet pleads with the west wind to provide him with some of its power, for he feels depressed and helpless. The wind, similar to Miriam’s stroll in the darkness, takes control over clouds, seas, and becomes a metaphor for nature’s breathtaking spirit. The poet has come to terms with the wind’s power over him, and he requests inspiration and subjectivity; he looks to nature’s power to assist him in his work of poetry and prays that the wind will deliver his words across the land through a freer. As Edward Duffy argues (2013) Wordsworth and Shelley’s poetry are ways into the ‘secular mysteries’ of the ordinary, which explains why an author with mystical but not religious leanings can be, interested their work.

¹⁵² Clearly there are echoes of this experience in Woolf’s *Mrs Dalloway*.

Yet Miriam's qualitative present memory of spending a particular time of day and year alone in the silence of London is interrupted by the chiming and striking of several clocks that represent public time and reality. Big Ben chimes from the Houses of Parliament along with the St. Pancras Church (1819-1822) clock, a Greek revival building associated with a grand revamping of the area. This has become important to the Victorians, combining the rigorous timetabling of both reality and the afterlife. In perceiving the clocks, Miriam recognizes the difficulty of a synthesis of conflicting parts of her consciousness, her subjective experience of blissful moments in the silence of her Tansley Street room contemplating her positive experiences, and a public demand implicit in the chiming clocks (yards away).¹⁵³ Both Big Ben and St. Pancras represent the patriarchal and public time that Miriam sets out to challenge (much as clocks do in the opening of Woolf's later novel *Mrs Dalloway*) with her wandering through London. She reflects on the cold, darkness of the silent city and the difficulty of a woman's role in such a society. Yet, she continues: 'Let it be St. Pancras'. The two clocks, one on Mrs Bailey's mantelpiece and the St Pancras Church clock, show how Miriam moves her thoughts between different periods of time, subverting the clock's traditional notion linearity in favour of qualitative time as Bergson envisaged it.

Another of Miriam's intense moments of subjective awareness within a qualitative duration occurs when waiting for her sister, Eve at a coffee shop in Tansley Street. The Café provides a central image of modernism and bohemianism, allowing the articulation and sharing of one's own thoughts and feelings among both men and women in a more democratic and less patriarchal space than was normally available. The most famous example of such a café in London was the Café Royal (1865-2008) which was patronised by the Decadents and early Modernists, which according to Markman Ellis included figures such as Ezra Pound, the Imagists, Woolf and Bergson.¹⁵⁴ Miriam describes the café in *Interim* (394) as follows: 'It

¹⁵³ It might have been that she could hear the original Dent clock of the station under which travellers met for generations (destroyed accidentally in the 1980s). Or the clock tower of Sir George Gilbert Scott's opulent hotel that adjoin St Pancras Station (originally the Midland Grand hotel opening in 1876, now the St Pancras Renaissance hotel). However, most likely is the clock of St Pancras (New) Church, discussed in Humphrey (2011: 104) striking the hours with its clock tower chimes. The clock still strikes the hours and can be heard despite the traffic on the Euston Road from outside Winston House; a post-war block that replaced the original house, 7 Endsleigh Street where Dorothy Richardson herself lived in a tiny attic flat. On 4th August 2014 the church clock could still be heard.

¹⁵⁴ This was in Regent Street, at the Piccadilly end. Ellis, Markman, 2011: 219-220.

was like a sort of dance, every one coming and going poised and buoyant, separate and free, united in freedom'. As Bergson observes in *Matter and Memory*: 'Here is a system of images which I term my perception of the universe, and which may be entirely altered by a very slight change in a certain privileged image, - my *body*' [emphasis in original] (2004: 12). Miriam portrays the coffee shop as an important site of emancipation, equality and modernity, while simultaneously her mind is influenced by the words in the book she reads:¹⁵⁵

Miriam ordered another cup of coffee and went on reading. There was plenty of time. Eve would not appear at Tansley Street until half-past. In looking up at the clock she had become aware of detailed people grouped at tables. She plunged back into Norway, reading on and on. Each line was wonderful; but all in darkness [...] Walking along Oxford Street with a read volume of Ibsen held against you is walking along with something precious between two covers which makes you know you are rich and free. (*Interim* 382-384)

Here Miriam balances her intuitive inner world with the austere, elemental world of *Brand*, a play by Ibsen and its arguably misguided but nonetheless heroic protagonist who finds herself in conflict with the public world. Oxford Street for Miriam is '[...] lifeless and hopeless [...] because life was near at hand. Oxford Street was like a prison' (393). 'Near at hand' refers to the imaginative life she can live in the café, as opposed to the commercial, materialistic life epitomised by Oxford Street, much the same then as it is now.

In all the clamour that had passed she had no part. In all the noise that lay ahead, no part. Strong people came and went and never ceased, coming and going and acting ceaselessly, coming and going, and here, at her centre, was nothing, lifeless thoughtless nothingness. (*Interim* 389)

In this view of London, which has been argued is a profoundly Romantic one, Richardson sometimes finds a kind of negative sublime in which the 'clamour' is separate from her perceptions. Although it presents an image of individual freedom (as the sublime usually does), it does so by representing that freedom as nothingness and that the subject is almost reduced to nothingness by the tumult of the world, much as when the poet comes to London in Wordsworth's *The Prelude*. If for Woolf and Mansfield Romanticism figures prominently because it allows them to oppose the freedom of the past to the present, in Richardson's case it is more the Romantic treatment of London in the present which serves a similar feminist

¹⁵⁵ Importantly Miriam is reading Henrik Ibsen's play *Brand* (1865). Ibsen was important as a figure to women, liberals and many modernists after the success of his 'feminist' play *A Doll's House* (1879).

and Bergsonian purpose. At other moments she renders time and freedoms in London as positive and empowering. Even her periodic negativity attests to the power of Bergsonian qualitative and subjective thinking about external experience. Everything is filtered and apprehended via Miriam's qualitative perception of time and her subjective view of the city.

On entering Mr. Bowdoin's room Miriam unexpectedly finds an emblem of Bohemian London, (something gestured at by many writers, but not as explicitly as Richardson, Miriam comparing every element to her own tiny attic):

This was Bohemia! She glanced about. It was the explanation of the room [...] It was Bohemia; the table and chairs were *Bohemian*. [...] A Bohemian room could hold its own anywhere. No furniture but chairs and a table, saying, when you brought people in, 'I am a Bohemian,' and having no one but Bohemians for friends. (*Interim* 367)

Richardson regards the category of Bohemian as both powerful and self-defining for Miriam's account, the latter categorizing Bohemians as a typology, their trace in the very furniture, implicitly pared down in comparison to Victorian clutter. Also implied are directness, argument and creativity. The room offers a sensory symbol of the Bohemian, valorising the passion for virtuous poverty (although Mr Bowdoin seems to be a wealthy man who could easily afford conventional furnishings); appealing to Miriam with her own straightened circumstances.

As has been demonstrated above variously in *The Tunnel*, *Interim* and *Pointed Roofs*, Richardson uses the representation of qualitative time experiences to set up the possibilities of an alternate life as a 'new woman' exploring her feminist possibilities in London. Becoming a more autonomous figure Miriam is a young working woman who nonetheless finds time to be an artist and explore what the affirming contingencies of the metropolis and its Bohemians. In 'Data for a Spanish Publisher' she recalled this period: 'For a moment the Suffrage Movement diverted me from all else' [...] [but the] 'material that moved me to write would not fit the framework of any novel I had experienced' (1989: 138,139). Hence her radicalization of the novel, her overall writing practice is directed toward an explicit feminist path, particularly in terms of the way the pseudo-autobiographical characters of Miriam is positioned within the limited third person narrative; through Richardson's use of interior

monologue and 'stream of consciousness'. Through a consideration of James's 'pure experience' through contemplating one's own private confrontations with the external world, Richardson shows that Miriam can think independently by discovering her hidden 'self' of possibilities and can also transform external experience through the same strategy.

This chapter has demonstrated in detail how Richardson's style moved beyond the key literary strategy of feminist autobiography in her own pseudo-autobiography *Pilgrimage*. To making use of a style that anticipates *écriture féminine* as it fluid, non-linear and subjectively orientated (in Bergson's terms it is durational). Richardson's use of what Woolf called the 'psychological sentence of the feminine gender' is as much as anything recognition of how close her style is to such a gendered way of expression (arguably the closest to *écriture féminine* of any of the four writers discussed here). Her wandering in the city, in which she becomes a *flâneuse* of London, and emotional relationships with work, her room, her friends and her past allow her to experiment using her intuitive 'pure experiences' together with her *élan vital*, in order to replicate all sorts of humans' lives through her self-perception. In conclusion for all these reasons Richardson can be argued to be a formative figure in the reworking of Bergson and James for early modernist feminist fiction.

Chapter Three

Alternative Selves, Alternative Women's Lives: Duration, Memory and the Élan Vital in Katherine Mansfield's Short Stories

Introduction

This chapter examines a number of aspects of Mansfield's fiction in terms of Bergson's and James' theories. The argument will be pursued that Mansfield does not simply reflect Bergsonian and Jamesian theories in an unmodified fashion, but rather, like other early female modernist writers discussed in the thesis, she uses their theories in gendered ways. Although unlike Sinclair, Richardson or Woolf, Mansfield's often expresses ambivalence in her work. The short stories to be considered in details include: 'Prelude' (1918), 'Bliss' (1920), and 'The Garden Party' (1921) and illustrate the main concepts that interest this analysis such as Mansfield's ideas of gender and class identity both in childhood and adulthood. Also, the impact and aftermath of the World War One 1914-1918; consciousness directed toward alternative life possibilities: childhood and adolescence as states of awareness; bohemianism, and modifications of stream of consciousness. The key theoretical concepts that the argument will be using from the two thinkers are Bergson's duration, memory and the subject's Élan Vital, and from James's idea of 'stream of consciousness.'

This chapter will explore specifically how Mansfield adapts these main concepts to her gendered perspective; representing a female's experiential perception, and the way she consequently interprets the social world. Like other female writers examined, her understanding and usage of Bergson's and James's work is part of a more general gendered appreciation of their thought; contributing to a feminist tradition of a gendered autobiographical discourse, connected to the inner life of the subject with a potential to gesture towards an alternate life that resists/challenges patriarchy. Because the traditionally well-constructed story with a definite conclusion would omit much of what counts in female experience. Mansfield's stories are often impressionistic in terms of their style (much like

Woolf) and seldom have definite endings which tie together the narrative and thematic strands, examples being the 'Prelude' and 'The Garden Party'.

Although she is not always regarded as a stream-of-consciousness writer, her work represents an unusual example of how this technique could be put to work in third person narratives which attempt to show multiple viewpoints of the inner lives of different female characters (switching between varieties of FIT, even adding elements of FDT). However, unlike many explicitly feminist writers Mansfield was far more conscious of how her female characters represented different responses to living within patriarchy. The 'alternate selves' of her female characters which are revealed by her narrative method show women afraid to live independent, feminist lives (Linda in 'Prelude') as well as women who wish they could live more traditional lives and regret their independence (Beryl in 'Prelude'). Other stories show women shying away from what their élan vital suggests ('Bliss'), or discovering they are rather more traditionally a member of their social class and gender than they had previously believed ('The Garden Party'). And Mansfield is interested in the complexity of female positions in the period – in terms of social class and economic necessity – rather than being a simple idealiser of feminist independent women, for example, and shown in her complex attitude towards upper- middle class bohemians in her short stories.

Close textual analysis will allow close examination of how character's worlds are constructed and how they perceive those worlds within Mansfield's use of stream of consciousness in both individuals' characters, besides in respect of elements of the narrative voice. By stream of consciousness I do not simply mean the presentation of a character's inner thoughts as an explicit monologue, such as in Molly Bloom's famous closing paragraph in Joyce's *Ulysses*, but how individual characters' inner thoughts are represented within such aspects of omniscient narration as 'free indirect discourse' and focalization. Unlike Richardson or Sinclair, Mansfield prefers more traditional omniscient third person narration over limited third person narration. Mansfield uses 'interior monologue' (whether this occurs with stream of consciousness or not), this is not just a question of style and aesthetics, rather it is integral to her creation of characters in fiction. So their perspectives as presented are fundamentally modernist, incorporating the socio-political aspirations of early twentieth century women, their choices and opportunities. What Bergson's term 'intuition' is an essential element of positioning Mansfield's gendered characterization. As in the 'The Garden Party' (401) the

story starts: ‘And after all the weather was ideal. They could not have had a more perfect day for a garden party if they had ordered it’, an example of free indirect discourse where the third person narrator abruptly speaks in the voice of the characters as well as sharing their point of view.

Bergson’s term ‘intuition’ is an essential element of positioning Mansfield’s gendered characterization. By intuition Bergson means the conscious experience of individuals of the external world as subjects; intuition overwhelms the normal working of intelligence and Bergson uses this as part of an articulation of the difference between socially experienced quantitative time and the possibilities of more intense subjective experiences. Something similar occurs in the many epiphanies that occur in modernist texts, also in the belief in a more truthful portrayal of objects can be obtained through such subjective experience. As argued elsewhere in the thesis female modernist writers had certain allegiances to romanticism because of its value as a radical alternative to tradition and its concentration on inner experience such as autobiography. Mansfield’s use of epiphany can be considered part of this inheritance as her interest in women’s relation to nature as oppositional to quantifiable (male) ways of classifying and schematizing experience.

Mansfield’s short stories are valuable contributions to literary modernism, in which she introduced radical narrative developments (for example with interior monologues and free indirect discourse). Gerri Kimber and Janet Wilson claimed that Mansfield is modernism’s ‘most iconic, most representative writer’ (2011:1). Mansfield was from a relatively wealthy New Zealand family and was originally bankrolled by her financier father, Harold Beauchamp (1858 – 1938).¹⁵⁶ Boddy explains Mansfield became involved with modernist magazines such as A. R. Orage’s *The Little Review* and John Middleton Murry’s new avant-garde *Rhythm* (36). Influential critic Middleton Murry was first her lover during this period and later became her husband on 3rd May 1918.¹⁵⁷ In December 1909 after editing by Orage, Mansfield’s first story was published in *The New Age*¹⁵⁸.

¹⁵⁶ A director of the Bank of New Zealand, he was knighted in 1923, but remained unhappy enough about his estranged daughter settling in England to keep her extremely underfunded.

¹⁵⁷ John Middleton Murry (1889 – 1957) was an influential English writer and editor of literary magazines such as *Rhythm* (1911 – 1913) that was later renamed *The Blue Review*, *The Signature* (1914) with D. H. Lawrence

Boddy remarks that Mansfield described London as: ‘erratic,’ having a ‘bohemian existence’ (25), though this was better than the ‘little cottage on the rock between the bush and the sea’ in New Zealand. Mansfield’s unconventional lifestyle, the spirited and non-bourgeois aspects of her new life, represents a re-invention of herself as an independent artistic woman. Peter Brooker describes an impromptu Bohemian afternoon dance which Mansfield and Murry attended, the former wearing an impressive Chinese silk dress (79-88). However, as I suggest later in this chapter, Mansfield’s view of Bohemianism in London is as complex and ambivalent as her view of the British upper-middle and upper classes, as the story ‘Bliss’, suggests her outsider’s satiric view of the superficialities of the Bohemian class.

Claire Tomalin (2012) details the frequent love affairs, along with the various friendships Mansfield had in and out of the Bloomsbury Group, as well as the journeys made between London and France that had a major autobiographical impact on her fictional writing. Bohemianism is redefined by the practices of its female participants, arguably challenging patriarchy. As Peter Brooker (2007) has suggested, Bohemians reconfigured established roles of gender, sexuality and social class; while simultaneously establishing a different perspective of what constitutes authenticity in enacting and experiencing life. While Bohemian behaviour might have simply represented a kind of subversion licensed by the bourgeois, it can also be seen as associated to the movement of art for art’s sake that presaged Modernism.¹⁵⁹ Few of Mansfield’s biographers, however, have mentioned the importance that her aunt, Elizabeth von Anrim, provided as an example to Mansfield of a female writer/ autobiographer who was extremely successful in the period and a resolute feminist celebrated

and *The Adelphi* (1923) that was renamed *The New Adelphi* (1927 - 1930). For Murry see Hankin, Cherry A. (ed.) *Letters Between Katherine Mansfield and John Middleton Murry* (1988); Sydney Janet Kaplan *Circulating Genius: John Middleton Murry, Katherine Mansfield and D. H. Lawrence* (2010); Katherine Middleton Murry. *Beloved Quixote: The Unknown Life of John Middleton Murry*. (1986) David Goldie. *Critical Difference: T. S. Eliot and John Middleton Murry in English Literary Criticism, 1919-1928*. (1998).

¹⁵⁸ *The New Age* was a British literary magazine, edited by A. R. Orage (1873-1934) from 1907 – 1922. Alfred Richard Orage was a British intellectual and editor of the English weekly magazine *The New Age*, in which he focused on social politics, art, religion and modernist culture. Orage was introduced to Mansfield through George Bowden, a music teacher and Mansfield’s first husband from 1909 – 1912; through Orage and his mistress Beatrice Hastings, Mansfield began to write for the magazine See Robert Scholes, (n.d.) ‘General Introduction to *The New Age* 1907-1922’.

¹⁵⁹ Daniel Cottom. *International Bohemia: Scenes of Nineteenth-Century Life* (2013); Jerrold Seigel, (2013); *Bohemian Paris: Culture, Politics, and the Boundaries of Bourgeois Life, 1830-1930*. (1999); Virginia Nicholson. *Among the Bohemians: Experiments in Living 1900-1939*. (2003); and Michael .J.K. Walsh (ed.). *London, Modernism, and 1914* (2010).

publically for her independence. While by no means a writer of modernist fiction, her realist autobiographies (with fictional elements) are as has been argued a potential source influence on female modernist, stream-of-consciousness fictions.

There are three main avenues by which critics have approached the relationship between Bergson and Mansfield: first via *Rhythm* magazine (including Angela Smith, [2003]) where Mansfield is not always central to the discussion; next via literary impressionism (Julia Van Gunsteren, 1991) and directly (Eiko Nakano, 2002 and 2005). However, apart from Nakano, these accounts are slight, stressing rather an existing tradition of women's writing including May Sinclair and Dorothy Richardson, ignoring the potential of any direct influence from the two philosophers, Bergson and James. Similarly there have been few attempts to explore how Mansfield's experimental Modernist forms developed an existing tradition of female stream-of-consciousness fiction, itself derived in large part from a feminist autobiographical mode, as much as from William James.

Using Bergsonian concepts of 'Habit',¹⁶⁰ and their limiting force on achieving self-development and the *élan vital* this chapter argues that Mansfield's stories demonstrate how the public roles of characters determine their interaction, such as mothers and daughters, or men and women which in stark contrast to an inward subjective aspect that Bergson details as 'qualitative time'. For instance, Linda Burnell, the mother figure in 'Prelude' does not leave her husband even when tired of him, but instead dreamt about such possibilities. Hence Linda provides an example of a woman who failing to embrace the choices suggested by her inner life. Arguably, Linda's intuitive thought understood in Bergsonian terms, changes from one view of the world to another, in love with her husband because he was the 'soul of truth and decency' and 'for all his practical experience he was awfully simple, easily pleased and easily hurt . . .' (87). Yet on the other hand she states that 'for all her love and respect and admiration she hated him'. Some of her fear seems prompted by erotic engagement and sexual intercourse with her over-powering husband but some seems to be prompted by the habitual nature of their relationship.

¹⁶⁰ In *Matter and Memory* Bergson argues that 'our whole life is passed among a limited number of objects, which pass more or less often before our eyes: each of them, as it is perceived, provokes on our part movements, at least nascent, whereby we adapt ourselves to it. These movements, as they recur, contrive a mechanism for themselves, grow into a habit, and determine in us attitudes which automatically follow our perception of things' (2004: 96).

If only he wouldn't jump at her so, and bark so loudly, and watch her with such eager, loving eyes. He was too strong for her; she had always hated things that rush at her, from a child. There were times when he was frightening – really frightening. When she just had not screamed at the top of her voice: 'You are killing me.' And at those times she had longed to say the most coarse, hateful things.... (87)

Mansfield's omniscient narrator describes Linda's husband as akin to her Newfoundland dog, just been mentioned in the previous paragraph. It indicates Linda's sense of freedom versus social expectations as a wife in a patriarchal world or even the freedom of sexual relations versus the constraints of her sexually unhappy marriage. Arguably Linda has bohemian fantasies, becoming conscious of her *élan vital* in a partly feminist fashion, and she fights back against her husband's 'strong' and conventional habit that conforms to patriarchal society. Mansfield deploys Linda to explore radical possibilities of an alternate life understood in feminist and Bergsonian terms, although propelled by such a developing sense of herself, yet finally Linda cannot accept any such opportunities. Mansfield does not show a New Woman developing her own sense of self in the way that Richardson does.

Mansfield also depicts female-to-female relations in terms of her exploration of patriarchy and its social consequences: a key theme for her is the relationship between women who gained freedom during and after World War One, when patriarchy and traditional values were affected by the loss of a generation of young men. Pam Morris remarks that the scale and horror of the war: 'destroyed any easy reliance on established beliefs, social and spiritual' (2002, 136).¹⁶¹ Such ambivalent feelings were possibly sharpened after the death of Mansfield's brother¹⁶² and grief for him led to a certain level of melancholia in her writing. This theme is further developed as regards her imaginative depiction of the moment-to-moment experiences of the female characters, such as the close friendships of Kezia and

¹⁶¹ In a letter to Murry, 16th November 1919, Mansfield describes the conclusion of the war: 'How can that be the same life? It doesn't mean that life is the less precious or that 'the common things of light and day' are gone. They are not gone, they are intensified, and they are illumined. Now we know ourselves for what we are. In a way it's a tragic knowledge: it's as though, even while we live again, we face death. But *through Life*: that's the point' (Hankin, 1998: 211).

¹⁶² Mansfield's brother Leslie Beauchamp died in October 1915 in Belgium at Ploegsteert Wood when he was instructing men on throwing grenades when one malfunctioned and killed him. (Boddy 1988: 47) Philip Waldron suggests Mansfield shows in an article in her journal, that she was deeply hurt by the loss of her brother and reacted by 'seeing her writing as a "debt for love"' (1974: 14). Mansfield described her lost brother as 'Oh, I want for one moment to make our undiscovered country leap into the eyes of the Old World' (Waldron 14).

Lottie, and the mother and daughter relationship of Linda and Mrs. Fairfield in 'Prelude'. In addition, there is Laura's close if complex relation to her mother, Mrs. Sheridan in 'The Garden Party'. Both Kezia and Lottie experience their moment-to-moment relations intensely, particularly when they move to their grandmother's house with the store-man. One passage in 'Prelude' demonstrates the difference between the girls and the working class store-man:

'Keep close to me,' said Lottie, 'because otherwise you pull the shawl away from my side, Kezia.' But Kezia edged up to the storeman. He towered beside her big as a giant and he smelled of nuts and new wooden boxes. (59-60)

The store-man is like a 'tower' with the smell of 'nuts,' which symbolizes masculinity compared to Kezia's female body, with this 'phallic' symbol suggesting the powerful sexual attraction he exerts. The close gap between Kezia and the store-man arguably represents Mansfield's allusion to an incipient bohemian manner of living since Kezia 'edged up' to the man and perhaps flirts with him; symbolizing how bohemian propensities allow her to ignore how proper middle-class women ought to behave. Bohemianism also often presupposed an indifference towards social necessities of distinction between the social classes, although it had more usually meant interaction between middle-class men and working class women.

Similarly the other generation: Linda, Beryl and Mrs. Fairfield have also close associations, a strong solidarity between mother and daughter, arguably influenced by the consequences of World War One; when women lived in a world largely composed of their own company. Linda feels hungry and Beryl joins their conversation in this gendered environment:

'I'm so hungry,' said Linda: 'where can I get something to eat, mother? This is the first time I've been in the kitchen. It says "mother" all over; everything is in pairs.'

'I will make you some tea,' said Mrs. Fairfield, spreading a clean napkin over a corner of the table, 'and Beryl can have a cup with you.' ('Prelude' 70)

This passage above demonstrates Mansfield's language-technique as clear and precise; her understanding of emotions and reaction to female experience are carefully concentrated, the pairing of the woman like couples. The domestic sphere has become new and transformed due to the war with men having gone abroad to fight. Mansfield's themes focus on the difficulties and ambivalences of family relations where female sexuality and longings are set

against a critique of patriarchy and exploration of the issue of female freedom, defined within the allure of a gendered bohemianism. She also analyses the instability and liability of all relationships between men and women as well as between two women. Such will delineate the insecurities and difficulties of middle class women due to the social and cultural consequences of war. Importantly, her emphasis as a writer is on the intensification and illumination of the everyday; just as Bergson's and James' theories were not of extraordinary moments in public life, but of commonplace events which when explored investigated through subjective experience became richer and more resonant.

In 'Prelude' women's choices and fantasies within a patriarchal society are illuminated by focusing on the small, seemingly trivial events in a family in New Zealand moving house, which are better understood in the light of Bergsonian theorization of the everyday. Van Gunsteren (1991) correctly sees this emphasis on the detail of the everyday as evidence of Mansfield's literary impressionism. Though with Richardson (who uses a similar literary technique), the result is to offer clarification and illumination of the significance of the everyday that illuminates women living under patriarchy. Van Gunsteren's prioritizes Mansfield's affinities with other literary impressionists in privileging subjective mood, flashes or snapshots of meaningful time, apprehending objects through an intense subjective perception. Such is not solely Mansfield's aesthetic objective as it omits her use of Bergson's 'qualitative experience' to make something meaningful of such impressions.

Mansfield's Writing Technique

By discussing stream of consciousness, focalisation and indirect free discourse, I will explore how Bergson's idea impacted upon aspects of the style of Mansfield, as her writing techniques and methods included exciting new ways of reporting perceptions, and therefore sharing women's concerns in identifying their gendered identity through their experiences, besides the putative insights into patriarchy that they acquired from this. This emphasis on gender identity is a feminist aspect of Mansfield's writing. Unable to type, Mansfield's handwriting according to William Herbert New (1996) emphasised fluidity, using punctuation such as ellipses, semi-colons, and so forth to show how her complex writing style attempted to follow the stream of thought. For Mansfield (like many modernists) writing was

a difficult and trying activity. Mansfield's writing practice can be categorized with regard to three writing styles.

Firstly, focusing on rhetorical figure and performance where for example in 'Prelude' Mrs. Fairfield confirms that Linda's hands are cold suggesting a feminist critique that woman is alienated and unable to connect to patriarchal reality:

Linda pulled a piece of verbena and crumpled it, and held her hands to her mother. "Delicious," said the old woman. "Are you cold, child? Are you trembling? Yes, your hands are cold. We had better go back to the house. (88)

Here, there is solidarity between the women as regards mother-daughter relationships; they are in control of comforting themselves in a land with no men due to the War. In contrast Mansfield remains ambivalent regarding female alienation from society, which offers both the possibility of recognition and challenge to patriarchy, and being cast adrift from that same society. The double self in Beryl, another female character in 'Prelude' shows both conventional and more radical female possibilities, a duality. One aspect of Beryl's self finds the letter that she sent to Nan Pym as 'flippant and silly' and 'twaddle', while to Nan Pym it is full of 'animation' (90), a side Beryl neglects. Yet, as she remarks to herself: 'It was her other self who had written that letter. It not only bored, it rather disgusted her real self' (89). Mansfield conceives of a feminist understanding of Bergson's *élan vital* in this double-sided nature of Beryl, where a feminist reading of *élan vital* privileges the authentic and creative female life over that life which merely follows patriarchal conventions. Mansfield's character is often half or semi-conscious of the buried or alternative life which offers feminist possibilities of freedom that exists; suppressed beneath the 'normal' or conventional life lived according to limiting patriarchal conventions. Her strategy propelled by Bergsonian thinking, is recalibrated by Mansfield in feminist terms as a relationship between the alternative life and authenticity. Raising the question of a 'real' or partly buried deeper self is explosive in terms of patriarchy as Beryl knows only too well: 'What rot. What nonsense. It wasn't her nature at all. Good heavens, if she had ever been her real self with Nan Pym, Nannie would have jumped out of the window with surprise' (90).

Secondly, Mansfield focuses on lexicon and syntax, in which she rearranges the sentence structure, using colloquial language and demonstratives like exclamation marks, along with ellipses that mark missing or fragmented thoughts. Arguably she is following the example set

by Sinclair and Richardson regarding feminine writing. Indirectly such changes impact on the intonation of words. In the following paragraph Miss Brill (from 'Miss Brill' [1920]) persuades herself that she has a part in the play, she imagines that everyone is taking part in and that is why she comes every Sunday to the gardens:

Oh, how fascinating it was! How she enjoyed it! How she loved sitting here, watching it all! It was like a play. It was exactly like a play. Who could believe the sky at the back wasn't painted? (253)

Reducing the real world to a dramatic presentation renders a sense of its artificiality and its corrigibility. Mansfield demonstrates Miss Brill's alienated character, her inner happiness at creating an illusion of happiness, sustaining a sense of the theatricality. These external happenings merely a performance in which everyone takes part, a hegemonic conspiracy of which she is apart.

Thirdly, she focuses on alterations in the narrative mode including the shift of tense between past to present. As suggested by W. H. New, this can be seen in 'Life of Ma Parker' (1921) where the old woman, Ma Parker begins to thinking almost obsessively about her deceased grandson, Lennie. (1996, 51-63) The passage below demonstrates how the narrative mode changes from present to past when 'the literary gentleman' asks Ma Parker if she has thrown away any cocoa. Ma Parker's response 'No, sir,' is vague; the style changes abruptly to her remembering/ reliving the past and looking after Lennie:

The door banged. She took her brushes and cloths into the bedroom. But when she began to make the bed, smoothing, tucking, patting, the thought of little Lennie was unbearable. Why did he have to suffer so? That's what she couldn't understand. Why should a little angel child have to arsk for his breath and fight for it? There was no sense in making a child suffer like that. (296)

Mansfield captures her colloquialism and dialect (such as 'arsk'), and the time shifts from past to present and vice versa, representing discontinuity. Its pattern analogous to stream of consciousness and the way Bergson says qualitative memory ignores distinctions between past and present. Her 'unbearable' thought of Lennie, disrupts her routine daily work as a cleaner; this alienating, melancholic event allows the past to invade and disrupt the present. This is an intuitive understanding, a moment of clarity. Mansfield indicates that her reader needs to sense the particular moments of consciousness during which a human being might

find her own 'authenticity' (in this case of pain and suffering) or at least be aware of why she has chosen not to do so.

While Mansfield's short stories often evoke a sense of the entrapment of women in patriarchal society, they also introduce female independent voices. Mansfield represented these women in a new way; she consciously deployed her own original perspective on the earlier idea of the 'new woman'.¹⁶³ For example, Rosemary Fell in Mansfield's 'A Cup of Tea' (1922) is represented as experiencing a crisis of identity in which she does not know whether to act as a dutiful wife to her husband, Philip, or an independent woman to help the poor beggar girl, Miss Smith. Mansfield shows Rosemary as 'young, brilliant, extremely modern, exquisitely well dressed amazingly well read in the newest of the really important people and ... artist – quaint creatures, discoveries of hers, some of them too terrifying for words, but others quite presentable and amusing' (461). The narrator's description suggests Rosemary indebted to the positive idea of the New Woman. Conversely, Rosemary is shown as uncertain, seemingly in fear that her husband's interest in her is only temporary, dependent on her looks. Hence she seeks assurance: "Philip," she whispered, and she pressed his head against her bosom, "am I pretty?" ('A Cup of Tea' 467). This sounds quite unlike the New Woman as an independent feminist, suggesting how many of Mansfield's characters are caught between divided selves, between patriarchal conventions and an independence that asserts their *élan vital*. Bergson explains it by describing the universe as a perpetual, innovative burst of energy, the universe and human beings are completing each other: 'For a conscious being, to exist is to change, to change is to mature, to mature is to go on creating oneself endlessly' (*Creative Evolution* 1911: 7). For feminist this suggested a process that would lead gradually to progress and self-realization for women.

Rosemary Fell is struggling to understand her anxieties, finding it difficult to make her choice, to behave independently of her husband and his and society's expectations of her, shown through the conscious conflict between her internal and external selves. She typifies for Mansfield a woman caught between her established normalised self and an alternative self

¹⁶³ According to Sally and Alison C. Ledger, the 'new woman' had multiple identities: 'a feminist activist, a social reformer, a popular novelist, a suffragette playwright, a women poet; she was also often a fictional construct, a discursive response to the activities of the late nineteenth-century women's movement' (1997:1).

which cannot fully emerge, similar to a figure such as Beryl in 'Bliss.' However with Rosemary there is the additional strain of confronting her anxieties about the poor, whether how women ought to be involved in helping them. Kate Fullbrook suggests: 'Mansfield's early fiction is both more overtly aggressive and more obviously politically embattled than the later work' (1986, 35). While I would agree with Fullbrook that her work becomes less aggressive in its later phase, I would suggest rather that her later work is not inherently less political when it comes to feminism or indeed commenting on social class, but rather more nuanced and implicit. Her consideration of women's role in society and issues of gender and life choice were transformed into a bolder and more philosophically informed social critique as shall be shown.

Mansfield's writing technique and aesthetics were influenced by her involvement with certain art styles emerging in the modernist era, particularly with her editing of *Rhythm Magazine* (1911-1913), where increasingly she developed an interest in painting and sculpture.¹⁶⁴ Nakano addresses how Mansfield used Bergson's theories to write about geographical places and comments that: 'Mansfield could be regarded as one of the artists who helped introduce Bergson to a British audience' (2005: 5). This was undertaken indirectly through Mansfield's reviews and articles, however; Mansfield does not write directly about Bergson. Angela Smith argues Mansfield's engagement with aesthetics via *Rhythm* led to her work becoming more attuned to a concentration on perception and its value for the subject, ideas demonstrating Bergson's influence. (2003, 103) According to Smith the group's 'radicalism' and non-English expatriates fascinated Mansfield and she became friends with 'American painter Anne Estelle Rice; Rice's partner, the Scottish colourist J.D. Fergusson; and Francis Carco, a poet and novelist' (2003, 103)¹⁶⁵; as well as John Middleton Murry, later her husband. Gerri Kimber says Carco became one of the main correspondents between Mansfield and Murry's avant-garde *Rhythm* magazine by 'sending articles from France, with a bias towards Symbolism, the arts and Post-Impressionism, the music of Debussy and

¹⁶⁴ An analysis of the magazine's place in Anglo-French literary culture is further discussed by Faith Binckes *Modernism, Magazines, and the British Avant-garde: Reading Rhythm, 1910-1914* (2010) and Mark Antliff. *Inventing Bergson* (Princeton University Press, 1992).

¹⁶⁵ Anne Estelle Rice (1877-1959) was the main illustrator for *Rhythm*. John Duncan Fergusson (1874- 1961). Francis Carco (1886-1958) like Mansfield was born in the Pacific region and is best known in Britain for his affair with Mansfield in 1915 and his memoir of the '20s and '30s: *The Last Bohemia: From Montmartre to the Latin Quarter* (1928).

Mahler and the philosophy of Bergson' (2008: 52). Kimber (2011) refers to the journal having a 'transnational' and cosmopolitan identity.

After Mansfield lived in Paris for only three months from 1912 – 1913, she became part of a group of painters, writers and theorists who were involved in what Mark Antliff's calls: 'Inventing Bergson'. Mark Antliff shows how various artists in pre-war France positioned themselves and their art in a radical political and aesthetic discourse that understood itself through Bergson. By interconnecting such movements as Futurism, Cubism, and Fauvism, Bergson's thought and theory of living form became associated with the anarchist and communist Left along with progressive politics by the work of these artists and art critics. Sometimes at least a limited gender and female equality were on the agenda, at least insofar as the promotion of women as writers. Angela Smith suggests that Mansfield's writing in *Rhythm* developed an 'increasingly Fauvist aesthetic, underpinned by a Bergsonian emphasis on élan vital and intuitive response,' in particular she was interested in 'Fauvist painting: sharply defining round figures or aspects of the landscape; a rhythmical design; [...] a thematic concern with the empowerment of any restricted person, including of course women' (2003, 113).

Rhythm helped inform Mansfield's network of peers and her influence group, allowing her to experiment with new ideas and new voices under different identities. She also used various pseudonyms such as Lili Heron, The Tiger, KM, and Boris Petrovsky. *Rhythm's* notorious slogan was: '[b]efore art can be human it must learn to be brutal' (Kimber and Wilson, 2011 14). More than just a marketing slogan to compete with Futurism, this responded to Bergson's ideas in *Creative Evolution* that life lived in faith with the élan vital was explosive. This is matched by Mansfield's recognition that feminism confronts women with a volatile sense of self division, in which alternative and conventional senses of self and their connected social implications are contested, carrying violent and in certain ways destructive consequences, that should not be taken lightly. Bergson argues in *Creative Evolution* that the evolution movement 'proceeds like a shell, which suddenly bursts into fragments'. Each fragment is further 'destined to burst again' (98), which is caused by the impetus inside life itself; 'the real and profound causes of division were those which life bore within its bosom.

For life is tendency, and the essence of a tendency is to develop in the form of a sheaf, creating, by its very growth, divergent directions among which its impetus is divided' (99).

The stream-of-consciousness technique was also used to create certain effects in 'The Daughters of the Late Colonel' (1922). The story considers the fate of two sisters who have lived with their dominant father, an Army doctor, who has died. The story is built up through a series of scenes in which the world of the sisters is revealed through their relationship with different people. It combines flashbacks and scenes of the present, while showing the internal recollection of the two sisters detailing their own perspectives and experiences. In the passage below Josephine thinks that Cyril, the late colonel's grandson is most likely to receive their father's watch:

She had suddenly thought of Cyril. Wasn't it more usual for the only grandson to have the watch? And then dear Cyril was so appreciative and a gold watch meant so much to a young man. Benny, in all probability, had quite got out of the habit of watches; men so seldom wore waistcoats in those hot climates. Whereas Cyril in London wore them from year's end to year's end. And it would be so nice for her and Constantia, when he came to tea, to know it was there. 'I see you've got on grandfather's watch, Cyril.' It would be somehow so satisfactory. (275)

In Bergson's terms, Josephine's inner stream-of-thoughts shifts from one perception to another while imagining Cyril wearing the watch at different times. Particularly between conscious time as the subjective perception of the value of the watch ('it would be so nice for her and Constantia') and also in terms of public time – as the actual minutes and hours which determine how he must arrange his punctuality. Bergson commented on such thinking: 'we are simply confronted with a confusion between concrete duration and abstract time, two very different things,' and secondly he argues that 'concrete reality or dynamic progress,' is the time that 'consciousness perceives' (*Time and Free Will* 1910: 190). In addition, Cyril's watch also symbolises male inheritance from one generation to another as a marker of patriarchal power – the late Colonel has no sons. Mansfield then portrays the relation of the daughters with their deceased father like the filmic technique of montage in showing a series of short scenes that constitute their habits within public, abstract time. Such is punctuated by the more subjective form, in which time and perception are aestheticized consciously.

After the death of their father, Constantia and Josephine were devastated by nervousness and indecision, not knowing how to react or deal with the absence of their father's judgment and his patriarchal power. His death also reminds the reader of the way World War One affected gender relations, creating an ambivalent freedom for women, giving them more power, but at the expense of the men who had died as patriotic soldiers¹⁶⁶:

Josephine had had a moment of absolute terror at the cemetery, while the coffin was lowered, to think that she and Constantia had done this thing without asking his permission. What would father say when he found out? For he was bound to find out sooner or later. He always did. 'Buried. You two girls had me buried!' She heard his stick thumping. Oh, what would they say? What possible excuse could they make? (270 - 271)

The daughters are still scared to act independently now that they are free, even worrying what the dead father would do if he were to find out, their moment of terror akin to a kind of hysteria mixed with melancholic grief. Josephine seems to undergo an auditory hallucination where she hears her father's stick thumping. All of this recalls the ambivalence towards the lost object discussed by Freud in 'Mourning and Melancholia' (1917) where unconscious hostility as a child towards the parents leads to feeling of guilt when that parent dies. His status as the Colonel evokes the war and the military, one of the most patriarchal of hierarchies, memorably defined as such by Virginia Woolf in *Three Guineas* (1938). One effect of the war was to encourage young people to question and criticise the older generation. Having led them into what was widely viewed as a pointless conflict, and the passage above considers the attitude of a new generation towards their elders including their own father.

Combining Bergson's concepts of duration, memory and *élan vital* illustrate how the consciousness of Mansfield's characters' inner world functions; as the above passage demonstrates the insecurity of daughters for being unable to act independently without the presence of the ultimate symbol of male-dominance, their father. Mansfield shows their virtual panic of the women throughout the lowering of his coffin into the grave, their confused inner thoughts and memories making it difficult to reconstruct their inner-selves.

¹⁶⁶ Sandra M Gilbert, and Susan Gubar *No Man's Land: The Place of the Woman Writer in the Twentieth Century, Volume 1,2* (1988), which shows how the war offered women exciting new opportunities and helped redefine gender. This arguably explains the ambivalence towards such opportunities demonstrated by someone like Mansfield, who lost a brother in the war.

Josephine then asks: ‘What possible excuse could they make?’ (271), as if the two daughters assume they have done something wrong – importantly the narration is strongly focalised towards their point of view – perhaps implying they harboured thoughts of the father’s destruction while alive. Even if such thoughts were only unconscious, part of their alternate selves representing subjectivities potentially engaged in rebellion, fighting for independence. Such multi-layered personalities indicate variously a putative feminist understanding as an alternative self, partially available if often not often acted on, whose legibility although hidden and submerged by the visible, public aspects of the character still exists; waiting to be released by a sense of the female characters inner thoughts, hopes and fears. The chapter will proceed to examine several stories in detail.

‘Prelude’ in (1918)

Mansfield examines different categories of time – qualitative and quantitative in Bergson’s terminology - particularly after 1918, in which revulsion at the war and the death of so many young men brought home the dreadful psychological and self-destructive experiences for many civilians as well as the combatants.¹⁶⁷ Her investigation is however often oblique—especially when compared to Woolf in *Mrs Dalloway*—and is perhaps most clearly shown by the absence of men and the incorporation of themes like violence and change. A contemporary critic Edward Wagenknecht recognised the formal innovation in Mansfield’s work, stating baldly: ‘there is so much technical originality in the work of Katherine Mansfield’ (274). Mansfield’s ‘Prelude’ alludes probably to both William Wordsworth’s *The Prelude* (she would have only known the 1850 version), and T.S. Eliot’s ‘Preludes’ composed between 1910 and 1911.¹⁶⁸ This episodic story, written in 1917, is structured into

¹⁶⁷ Trudi Tate, *Modernism, History and the First World War*(1998).

¹⁶⁸ Mansfield’s ‘Prelude’ could be influenced by Wordsworth’s *The Prelude* since as poetic *Bildungsroman* it recounts Wordsworth’s personal life from childhood to adulthood, a heroic account of ‘the growth of a poet’s mind’. This allusion would recall the romantic egoism which concentrates on the meaning of qualitative time (Bergson) to the poet at the expense of public, quantitative time (Bergson). The story conjures up a Romantic mood like Wordsworth in *The Prelude* of a childhood spent in nature, with two children, rather than one child growing up. New Zealand culture was determined by its rural nature; a place that could be considered as a kind of rural Eden. On the other hand, Mansfield’s ‘Prelude’ was possibly influenced by Eliot’s ‘Preludes’ since both poem and story are quite impressionistic and fragmented. Eliot’s rather Bergsonian poem recalls Chopin’s musical *Preludes* and explores the sordid and solitary in modern existence; in a fragmented and disjointed fashion which emphasises the importance of qualitative time and experience rather than quantitative.

twelve sections interlocking in a complex fashion concerned with cycles of time¹⁶⁹ which are reminiscent of the months, days and hours of the year. Mansfield's technically innovative story serves to dissolve conventional dramatic structure into her multiplicity and fluidity of narrative voices.

Joanne Trautmann Banks explores and explains its narrative style:

The method of 'Prelude' is in many ways its content. [...] The prelude as developed by Bach is a very free form, and with Chopin becomes highly suggestive and imaginative, almost appearing improvised. In Mansfield's hands the form is plotless. [...] there is no strictly linear cause and effect. Connecting the scene is a larger movement consisting of exactly pointed rhythms and balances. (68)

As with Eliot and Wordsworth's poems the emphasis on subjective experience is akin to Bergson's concept of qualitative time, where time follows a pattern determined by the idiosyncratic structure of duration for the individual. Dreams, day dreams and reveries all offer a privileged kind of entry into qualitative time because of their concentration on inner, subjective experience, and Linda's day dreams in 'Prelude' are significant in just this fashion, albeit they are to be read in gendered terms. Wordsworth's 'The Prelude' has the famous, cataclysmic 'dream of the Arab' in Book V (Wordsworth 549-553), as well as the section in Book II (Wordsworth 448-460), where the young Wordsworth has a vision or waking dream of being chased across the lake in his stolen boat by an 'elfin pinnacle'. Dream sequences in literature which followed dream logic became common after Sigmund Freud's *Interpretation of Dreams* (1913/ 1991). Such emphasise Bergsonian individual, qualitative time, which is true of the nocturnal musings of both T.S. Eliot's (1991, 13-15) 'Preludes' (You dozed, and watched the night revealing/The thousand sordid images/ Of which your soul was constituted') and his more famous poem (1991, 3-7) 'The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock'

¹⁶⁹ Perhaps because of her interest in Bergson's theory of conscious duration and memory, most of Mansfield's fictional stories including 'Prelude' are about childhood memories viewed through the cycle of time. Childhood in Romantic fashion shown by such figures as the younger Wordsworth, Blake and others carries with it the possibility for exploring a life of potential that has not yet become restricted by society; where individual freedom to grow and develop is still central. Hence Mansfield from a gendered perspective harps on innocent children being abused or treated badly, also young women and isolated older women remembering their girlhood, as in 'Bliss'. Among Mansfield's other short stories about childhood are 'At the Bay' (1922), 'Something Childish but Very Natural' (1914), and 'How Pearl Button was Kidnapped' (1912). Critical works on Mansfield's period where she concentrates on depicting childhood: Sylvia Berkman. *Katherine Mansfield: A Critical Study* (1951) and Saralyn R. Daly. *Katherine Mansfield* (1965).

(1916). The use of dream narrative in such source poems may partly explain why Mansfield draws upon them.

This story juxtaposes public quantitative time with private time and in doing so challenges the characters' public selves with their other, alternative selves. They retain a sense of individualism within the family unit, socially and culturally, including the two sisters. Linda dreams of escape from her husband to find freedom; while Beryl dreams of a fantasy husband (although she is Linda's sister, she is an opposite of her sister as she longs romantically in traditional terms for a wealthy and successful husband with whom to have children, a familial bond). Mansfield seems aware that for every woman like Linda seeking freedom and independence in her dreams, another will simply want to be a traditional wife and mother, achieving her power through her husband. It perhaps shows Mansfield's own ambivalence towards a more through-going radical feminism, and her awareness of the difficulty of stepping out of conventional societal boundaries; a factor also seen in Mansfield's stories about Bohemian women.

Mansfield's stories do not follow the classical form of exposition, rising action, climax, falling action, and finally reach a conclusion. Instead, her beginnings are characterized by the use of *in media res*, whereby her readers become involved in the story directly and immediately. She leads them into a situation without direct description or establishing a background of a specific time or place. 'Prelude' which opens with a day in which the characters are moving into a new house in the country:

THERE was not an inch of room for Lottie and Kezia in the buggy. When Pat swung them on top of the luggage they wobbled; the grandmother's lap was full and Linda Burnell could not possibly have held a lump of a child on hers for any distance. Isabel, very superior, was perched beside the new handy-man on the driver's seat. Hold-alls, bags and boxes were piled upon the floor. "These are absolute necessities that I will not let out of my sight for one instant," said Linda Burnell, her voice trembling with fatigue and excitement. (56)

Note the fluidity and refusal of a linear plot structure, as well as the use of multiple narrative voices which can be considered 'feminine' or female-centred. Mansfield's narrative strategies are parallel to Julia Kristeva exposition in 'Women's Time' (1995) whereby women live in a personal time distinguished by fluidity and non-linearity, which is opposed to the public,

chronological time of patriarchal society. In Bergsonian terms one might reflect that women live primarily in qualitative time rather than quantitative because they are largely excluded from the public, even truer in the early twentieth century. In the passage above, layering a series of perceptions and exchanges, Mansfield unfolds her characters' intuitive perception dramatically as one might in a play. While later the narrative engages the reader in permeating the consciousness of each major character successively.

The reader is asked to identify with each character's emotional feelings regarding their experiences of revealing their qualitative perception of events, thereby articulating their alternative/hidden selves. Linda's daughter, Isabel, has a sense of superiority that compares to Linda's almost neurotic stewardship of her family. The moment-to-moment movement of the characters' inner thoughts shows Mansfield's use of stream-of-consciousness technique integrated into her deployment of omniscient narration. The children seem not in control of themselves, since they were 'sat on top of the luggage' by Pat, the working-class handyman, suggesting perhaps a residual act of patriarchal control over the two younger female members, Kezia and Lottie. Mansfield creates her character's stream of consciousness via narrative focalisation – where an omniscient narrator takes on a character's point of view – situating the reader within each person by the use of colloquial, exaggerated phrases that evoke someone's subjective thoughts or comments, such as an 'inch of room', indicating the very limited space. Linda Burnell is the first implicit, vital and dominant character, the first principal focalizer as she regards her husband, daughters, unmarried sister and mother. The centre of consciousness shifts subtly between characters, for the reader does not experience fundamental narrative changes, although multiple viewpoints are conveyed.

Later, the stream-of-consciousness technique reveals and identifies Linda, as having two different personalities or selves, one traditional and the other, desiring independence and dismissive of her husband, Stanley, thereby arguably allowing the female reader to challenge the traditional attitudes of the period toward gender representation. According to Heather Murray, Linda is: 'a sensitive and imaginative woman with a second "self" beneath the self she presents to her family; all through "Prelude" the second self threatens to break out' (1990:51). That second self is the gendered bohemian self, seeking independence. When

Stanley, Linda's husband, lights a candle, after she asks him to, the narrative continues to focalise Linda's secretive antagonism and rancour towards him.

It had never been so plain to her as it was as this moment. There were all her feelings for him, sharp and defined, one as true as the other. And there was this other, this hatred, just as real as the rest. She could have done her feelings up in little packets and given them to Stanley. She longed to hand him that last one, for a surprise. She could see his eyes as he opened that... (88)

Linda's multiple selves define her personal insecurity over not being able to decide as a woman what she should do in this situation. Ibsen's (2008) Nora in the controversial play *A Doll's House* (1879) took London by storm, when it was first performed there in 1884 (although a censored adaptation) and again in 1889 (closer to the original).¹⁷⁰ Nora struggles for her own individuality, freedom and self-realisation, which finally require her to leave both husband and children. In many ways Nora was the archetype of a woman becoming the New Woman. Such was the importance of this play in Britain, as well as elsewhere, that widespread discussion about the baleful effects of patriarchy on women achieved common currency. However, unlike Nora, Linda does not leave her husband and family to begin a new life in order to discover herself. Instead she vacillates continuously as to which position to adopt towards her husband and her life. Finally, she decides to only dream of rebellion, staying within the social conventions and limitations of a patriarchal marriage.¹⁷¹

Mansfield's third person narrator adopts the first person point of view of varied characters in order to articulate a complex story, abjuring a traditional narrative style. Hers is a version of 'showing' rather than 'telling' in Wayne Booth's key terms outlined in *The Rhetoric of Fiction* (1961), despite the fact it occurs within narration. Consider the following scene where Mrs. Samuel Josephs, an elderly neighbour, looks at Lottie's weeping face, told in the third person but focalised towards Lottie:

¹⁷⁰ In Britain the play was initially forbidden, but Henry Arthur Jones and Henry Herman produced a parodic part adaptation called *Breaking a Butterfly*, at the Princess Theatre, 3rd March 1884. The first British production of *A Doll's House* translated by William Archer, opened on 7th June 1889 at the Novelty Theatre. See: Tornqvist (1995) 154-155.

¹⁷¹ As Ibsen remarked of Nora in 'Notes for the Modern Tragedy': 'a woman cannot be herself in modern society' since it is 'an exclusively male society, with laws made by men and with prosecutors and judges who assess feminine conduct from a masculine standpoint' (2000: 79). For a discussion of the impact of Ibsen's *A Doll House* in Britain see Viv Gardener and Susan Rutherford *The New Woman and Her Sisters: Feminism and Theatre 1850-1914* (1992); Richard Allen, 'New Women in the Theatre' (1996: 207-228), Kirsten Shepherd-Barr, *Ibsen and Early Modernist Theatre 1890-1900* (1997) and, Egil, Tornqvist *Ibsen: A Doll's House* (1995).

‘Hullo! You've been crying!’

‘Ooh! Your eyes have gone right in.’

‘Doesn't her nose look funny.’

‘You're all red-and-patchy.’

Lottie was quite a success. She felt it and swelled, smiling timidly. (58)

Ian A. Gordon explains Mansfield's innovative technique of narration: ‘Cutting away the nonsense; sloughing away the “he said, she said, he thought, she thought” clutter, getting right down to that immediacy of impact which is the hallmark of her best work’ (1955, 183). However, beyond the economy of effort, suggested by Gordon, Mansfield refuses an explicit narrative frame and allows characters' thought to simply emerge for aesthetic and political concerns. Her use of third person omniscient narration has an emphatic focalisation, and free indirect discourse is common, as if blending multiple streams of consciousness, showing her debts to Bergson and James. Such narrative immediacy renders her characters more active than could be achieved through continuous interior monologue, allowing the characters' conflicts as well as gender to be dramatized. Such a variation of stream of consciousness, in which the reader hears characters' thoughts and feelings, as well as spoken dialogue, minimalizes intercession by a narrative voice, although in formal terms these thoughts still qualify as omniscient narration. So introspective, lyrical language (in Bergsonian terms ‘aesthetic perception’) can be seen in Beryl's interior monologue (frequent hyphens show the hesitation and loose connections of her thoughts, while ellipsis towards the end of the quotation shows where the thought break off), as she admires herself by the fire in the dining-room:

“If I were outside the window and looked in and saw myself I really would be rather struck,” thought she. Still more softly she played the accompaniment - not singing now but listening.

...

“The first time that I ever saw you, little girl-oh, you had no idea that you were not alone - you were sitting with your little feet upon a hassock, playing the guitar. God, I can never forget ...” Beryl flung up her head and began to sing again: Even the moon is weary ... (77)

Both narrative style and structure in the examples above show that the story consists of multiple viewpoints, with the character's centre of consciousness changing from direct

monologue to indirect speech. Beryl can therefore see and imagine herself as if looked at by a (male) admirer in the window as an object of sexual desire, for she is unmarried and wishes to be married, like her sister Linda, thereby evoking a kind of double consciousness that might be termed a narcissist daydream or reverie. While 'Prelude' uses third person omniscient narration, its strengthened 'free indirect discourse' continually focalises on the character's point of view, meaning that the voices of characters are heard unusually powerfully. The reader comes to know the story through the voices of its characters rather than being told of events by an external narrator. Perhaps for this reason Mansfield seemed unsure about what her formal experimentation actually meant. In a letter to Dorothy Brett, Mansfield discusses the form of 'Prelude': "'What form is it?' you ask. Ah, Brett, It's so difficult to say. As far as I know, it's more or less my own invention. And 'How have I shaped it?' This is about as much as I can say about it.'" (Cited in Besnault Levita, [2008] 9n)

Murry suggested the original title for 'Prelude', 'The Aloe.' According to Alpers, the symbol means different things to different characters (and readers); arguably it might suggest a romantic, cathartic view of beauty's capacity to appear and disappear. (1980: 244) As William New argues, linguistic choice is always important for Mansfield (1996: 51-63). Andrew Gurr and Claire Hanson suggest the symbol is not intended to reproduce a memory of a particular plant but rather conveys 'the daunting fears and pains of a lifetime, lived for a brief moment of flowering' (205). Linda tells Kezia that the aloe flowers 'once every hundred years' (73), and then dies. As Vincent O'Sullivan notes, Mansfield wrote 'The Aloe' in March 1915, reworking it for a month. She rewrote the story again in February 1916 in memory of her brother, Leslie Beauchamp, killed in October 1915 in the war (O'Sullivan, 1985, vii-xii). Alpers states that *The Aloe* was changed to *Prelude* in 'response to Virginia Woolf's request in April 1917 for a story for the newly formed Hogarth Press' (1980: 244-282), which led to its eventual publication in July 1918. Perhaps Woolf wanted a story whose title suggested something more obviously modernist, female, and European, rather than the Lawrentian sounding 'the Aloe', with its connotations of beauty, death and phallic symbolism (since Mansfield refers to the 'long sharp thorns that edged', like a 'phallus') (87).

In a letter to Dorothy Brett¹⁷² on 11th of October 1917 Mansfield expresses explicitly Lawrentian views of the writer' capability:

When I write about ducks I swear that I am a white duck with a round eye, floating in a pond fringed with yellow blobs and taking an occasional dart at the other duck with the round eye [...]. In fact this whole process of becoming the duck (what Lawrence would, perhaps, call this "consummation with the duck or the apple") is so thrilling that I can hardly breathe, only to think about it [...] I don't see how art is going to make that divine *spring* into the bounding outlines of things if it hasn't passed through the process of trying to *become* these things before recreating them. (O'Sullivan and Scott, Vol. 1, 1984, 330)

Mansfield perceives a relation between the writer's conscious perspective and external objects which unites in representation the subject's consciousness aesthetically and intuitively with the lived object, where through the artist's vision characters achieve in Lawrentian fashion 'consummation' of the object, akin to Keats' 'negative capability.'¹⁷³ D.H. Lawrence in his 'Essay on Thomas Hardy' focuses on the way that man as a subject should try to apprehend woman, given every man and woman desires 'consummation' and unity, yearning for the 'perfect union of the two' which he describes as the 'law of the Holy Spirit, the law of Consummate Marriage'(127). For Lawrence such a consummation begins sexually, but quickly becomes spiritual: '[H]e must seek the moment, the consummation, the keystone, the pivot, in his own-flesh. For his own body is both male and female' (70). Mansfield recasts Lawrence's concept far more extensively and less concerned with masculine sexuality, a synthesis that occurs between the subject and any object (duck, apple and so forth). Consequently, this recalibration better suits a woman writer, given her aim of writing about the world more broadly and with less Lawrentian emphasis on uniting through erotic exchange, while simultaneously gendering her perspective on that world. In effect, Mansfield recuperates such subjectivity as both necessary and productive, not preventing a new type of objectivity.

¹⁷² Dorothy Eugenie Brett (1883 – 1977) was a British painter and an associate of the Bloomsbury Group who knew D. H. Lawrence and Virginia Woolf. She moved to New Mexico in 1924 and became an American citizen in 1938.

¹⁷³The Lawrentian concept is arguably similar to Keats' idea of *negative capability*, where the artist's receptiveness to the world and nature, is more important than any associated theories or knowledge.

Eileen Baldeshwiler suggests that Mansfield gestures towards a realism that does not collapse into pure subjectivity (426), despite using Bergson's idea of qualitative experience, which seems to emphasise the subjective (feminist writers value a gendered subjectivity, as the thesis has argued). Yet Mansfield believes, in ways analogous to Bergson in philosophy, that an emphasis on qualitative experience might allow a polyphony of voices and subjective points of view that would together offer a better overall objectivity. Bergson remarked in *The Creative Mind* (2012), a book which Mansfield may well have known, artists put subjectivity to the use of objectivity: 'when they look at a thing, they see it for itself, and not for themselves' (114). Alternatively, one might position one's sense of the object so that it bears all the hallmarks of a 'stream of consciousness', capable of elucidating the object as a character, akin to the autobiographical subject. Molly Bloom's soliloquy in *Ulysses*, after all, is the great female speech in modernist literature, but required Joyce to find a way to make his character, Molly, speak and dream. The *élan vital* propels the writer or artist to have greater sense of the being within the object, rather than simply taking for granted habitual, socially constructed assumptions. Modernists such as the imagists shared this preoccupation with giving life to objects: William Carlos Williams, for instance, coined the phrase 'No ideas but in things', in the poem *Paterson*, in the early 1927 version.

Mansfield describes the last moments of leaving their home through Kezia's eyes. She wanders through the empty, but colourful house, recognizing the intense life of objects such as a 'lump of gritty yellow soap' in one corner of the kitchen. A list of sometimes almost microscopic details (which reads almost like an imagist poem and perhaps shows her formal relationship to Sinclair and Richardson) continues with: 'a piece of flannel stained with a blue bag in another,' while 'a blue-bottle knocked against the ceiling,' and 'the carpet-tacks had little bits of red fluff' sticking to them. (58) All are examples of 'free indirect discourse' where the narrator sounds like Kezia and the character's point of view is focalised by that narrator. Through such these small descriptive details Mansfield evokes a whole character and the way their consciousness functions in the world. In terms of Bergson's *Matter and Memory*, one might identify Kezia's perception as 'pure memory' (this is to say her own memory unencumbered by extraneous social elements) which records and restores her intuitive conscious experiences of departing the house, rather than secondary memories of those social aspects of the past relating to other people. In one sense such details allow her to recover her past intensity in the house as an individual subject. Kezia's last check through the

house includes her father and mother's room, where in front of the window 'she stood there, the day flickered out and dark came. With the dark crept the wind snuffling and howling' (59). The image is reminiscent of a candle, a curious image for daylight, suggesting female domesticity, while indicating the shifting of time between past and present memories.

Deploying free indirect discourse to create an experimental form in the story, with its discontinuities and rhythms recalling music, recovers memories of childhood viewed through the various psychological perspectives of the female members of Burnell family. Such multiple viewpoints deny any one characters either narrative priority or perspectival ascendancy. The various stages of their lives are emphasized: the early childhood of Lottie and Kezia, the young motherhood of Linda and the old age of Mrs. Fairfield, as, more generally, through such parallel continuities and discontinuities of female experience Mansfield indicates both solidarity and its absences among women. All of the female characters have conflicted relationships in expressing their social roles, for example Kezia's emotional insecurity in childhood. When Beryl was playing with the rest of the children and her sister, Isabel, suggested playing 'ladies', Kezia hated it: "I hate playing ladies," said Kezia. "You always make us go to church hand in hand and come back home and go to bed" (80).

Fullbrook argues the contrasts between female gender roles in 'Prelude' show that Linda, who is victimised by Stanley, represses the knowledge that she hates her husband and, rather than improving her situation, retains the mask of her conventional gender role (83-84). However, while true up to a point, as shown previously, Linda harbours dreams of leaving her husband, oriented towards a more gendered female bohemianism. That she does not do so indicates not a weakening of Mansfield's feminist critique, but an awareness of the residual strengths of patriarchy. Published in July 1918, 'Prelude' reflects upon the immediate past and the present, both affected by World War One. Mansfield pictures the life of the Burnells before and after World War One through comparative recollections of childhood and adulthood. The relative absence of men (apart from Stanley) suggests the consequences of the war for women, conveying a sense of opportunities of life without men offset by a palpable sense of their absence. This is highlighted in Beryl's attempt to imagine how a man might desire her looking through the window.

According to Bergson in *Matter and Memory*, ‘in concrete perception memory intervenes, and the subjectivity of sensible qualities is due precisely to the fact that our consciousness, which begins by being only memory, prolongs a plurality of moments into each other, contacting them into a single intuition’ (2004, 292). In ‘Prelude’ Mansfield’s understanding of the relation between perception and memory seems very Bergsonian. As we have seen, Kezia’s perceptions demonstrate how memories cannot be isolated from the subject’s perceptions. Such a synthesis is analogous to the analysis in Freud’s (1957) ‘Mourning and Melancholia’, where the subject’s present perceptions are not just coloured, but controlled by events that happened in the past. Arguably, the most direct examples for contemporaries were cases of shell-shock, due to an inability to grieve completely. For Freud melancholia ends when the subject reattaches itself to a new object, largely ending the grief for the lost person, no longer trapped in the past. In attempting to leave the family home, Mansfield’s characters are in a similar fashion attempting to mourn. Patricia Rae in *Modernism and Mourning* (2007) has usefully discussed how widespread and important melancholia was to the modernists in terms of not only content but also the creation of form, having affinities with a Bergsonian aesthetics of perception.

Van Gunsteren argues that Mansfield’s images serve mainly as ‘vehicles of psychological revelations’ (176). However, as Bergson suggests, perceptions and images are often intertwined from the point of view of qualitative time. Hence in Mansfield’s fiction many revelations and events link character and objects through the use of imagery.¹⁷⁴ As Lottie and Kezia had come from the city, ‘everything looked different - the painted wooden houses far smaller than they did by day, the gardens far bigger and wilder’ (60). The view at night is unfamiliar, transformed through their perspective, as rural New Zealand seems possessed by the sublime, the gardens less subject to control. Mansfield suggests comprehending qualitative time is facilitated by the rural setting, whereas civilisation and society represent public time intruding upon an individual’s qualitative experiences. Mansfield uses a natural image to portray the independence of Beryl as a woman painter:

¹⁷⁴ This is similar to the neo-Romantic concept of ‘Pathetic fallacy’, introduced by John Ruskin (2000) in the book *Modern Painters* (1843 – 1860), which matches the psychology of the observer and weather. But Mansfield does so in terms of the objects rather than weather to show psychology; these are often domestic objects within the home, elements of decoration or sometimes machines.

Above [the piano] hung an oil painting by Beryl of a large cluster of surprised looking clematis. Each flower was the size of a small saucer, with a centre like an astonished eye fringed in black. (86)

Capable of originating her own artistic material, she nevertheless rejects the bohemian world of artists. Hung in the drawing-room, her painting symbolizes the bourgeois aspirations of the family. And yet the saucer-shaped clematis are suggestively feminine symbols due to their openness (in opposition to the sharply pointed and phallic aloe), and Mansfield's emphasis upon the darkness at the centre increases the female symbolism. Such painting incorporates an intuitive recognition of Bergson's thoughts concerning when qualitative experience might be truthfully rendered. The clematis, in similar fashion to the 'open' blossoms of the silver pear tree in Mansfield's 'Bliss,' potentially evokes female desire.

Flowers and gardens, as noted elsewhere, have an important role in Modernist women's fiction and Mansfield throughout her fiction used painting and flowers to describe women's intuitive recognition of experience. The female artist in Bergson's terms uses such imagery to emphasise qualitative experience over that of the conventional. Bergson argues in *Laughter*: '[the artist] has no other object than to brush aside the utilitarian symbols, the conventional and socially acceptable generalities' (1914: 157) to enter into a close association with things and to the inner selves. Mansfield often names her female characters after flowers, associating them with fecundity rather than the tradition among patriarchal male writers to link women with the ephemerality of physical beauty and flowers. As a woman writer, Mansfield reclaims ownership of the relation between women and flowers – not because women are presupposed to be natural and beautiful like flowers – but because gardening and horticulture are traditional female pursuits and activities at which women excel. She is similar to Richardson and Woolf in this respect.

Gardens for Mansfield typically are female spaces, as in 'Bliss' or 'The Garden Party'. Mansfield also used flower imagery to denote women's aesthetic, organic, feminist approaches to life in opposition to the mechanical patriarchal world. Qualitative time and desire are more easily apprehended within nature, as in 'Bliss' when Bertha undergoes her epiphany and imagined non-heterosexual communion with Miss Fulton in the garden. Beverly Seaton, in *The Language of Flowers* (1995) explains that 'the language of flowers' was not a

specific and universally understood language; rather flowers as signs were used differently by men and women to communicate issues of love and romance.¹⁷⁵ Mansfield exploits various symbolic connotations of flowers to indicate women's concerns, suggesting their right to repurpose such traditions. Mansfield's feminist approach concentrates on female aspects of the public sphere and areas associated with a women's artistic work, as much as elements of the private and domestic sphere. Clearly, images are essential to Bergson's concept of image memory. In similar fashion Mansfield's images (as deployed above) gesture towards an intuitive female understanding of the world, with an inherent possibility of alternate ways of living, explored in imagist fashion through gendered locations and objects such as flowers, gardens and the domestic space of houses. As discussed elsewhere in this thesis, the autobiographical as a mode of feminist and female writing impacted upon the form of texts using stream of consciousness.¹⁷⁶ As Cixous argues: 'Woman must write herself: must write about women and bring women to writing' (275).¹⁷⁷

Although this story concerns itself with the life and interior struggles of the family, women's relationships with their husbands and family show patriarchy's constraints. Linda and Stanley Burnell appear to be a happy couple living with three children. Linda is a mother and a wife but she is not happy in her role. While she apparently loves and respects her husband, she is worried by the running of the house, feels trapped (like Nora in *A Doll's House*) by the task of bringing up her children and dreams of freedom and an independent single life. First of all the narrative voice focalizes Linda's view of carrying the inert children on her lap as an encumbrance, a discomforting and negative factor. It is not clear from the children or the reader's point of view whether Linda considers her belongings are more essential than her children when she says: 'There are absolute necessities that I will not let out of my sight for one instant' (56). The children understandably wonder about their value, heightening a sense of antagonism and being unloved. Appropriately to the underlying conflict, Mansfield uses military metaphors to describe the 'fray' into which the sailor-suited children must enter and the inevitable anxiety that the children experience.

¹⁷⁵ Nancy Sheley (2007).

¹⁷⁶ Linda Anderson. *Autobiography*. (2010), Sidonie Smith and Julia Watson, (eds.) *Women, Autobiography, Theory: A Reader* (1998).

¹⁷⁷ Susan Sellers. *Hélène Cixous: Authorship, Autobiography and Love: An Introduction* (1996).

Lottie and Kezia stood on the patch of lawn just inside the gate all ready for the fray in their coats with brass anchor buttons and little round caps with battleship ribbons. Hand in hand, they stared with round solemn eyes, first at the absolute necessities and then at their mother. (56)

Eventually Linda realizes the room available is insufficient. She expresses herself unclearly, heightening the children's anxiety: 'we shall simply have to leave them. That is all. We shall simply have to cast them off' (56). While this odd way of talking about the children is intended to be humorous, there remains an underlying edginess. The children are reduced to little more than furniture and objects to be relocated, despite the neighbour, Mrs. Samuel Josephs, resolving the problem so that the children might travel later. Clearly, Mansfield uses the scenario to examine an individual woman's personal experience where supposed 'natural' inclinations towards motherhood are under scrutiny.

If Linda appears at first sight selfish, her attitudes mirrors and addresses the issues faced by liberated, more feminist women around 1918, often accused by men of being egotistic, unlike conventional women who accepted the primary role of conventional motherhood. The scene may also deliberately allude to Nora's decision at the conclusion of Ibsen's *A Doll's House*. From a feminist perspective, any apparent selfishness and egotism could be seen to result from women such as Linda being forced into these oppressive roles, ones they really did not want, and, as in Linda's case, being at odds with their desire to lead an independent and single life. From her house, just like Nora in Ibsen's *A Doll's House*, Linda dreams of such an escape:

Her clothes lay across a chair-her outdoor things, a purple cape and a round hat with a plume in it. Looking at them she wished that she was going away from this house, too. And she saw herself driving away from them all in a little buggy, driving away from everybody and not even waving (66).

Rather than accept her domestic role of a nurturing mother, Linda expresses high levels of resentment and anger, trapped by the 'burden' of children. Such a reluctant wife and mother starkly contrast with the traditional Victorian notion of domestic motherhood eternally vigilant and responsive to the needs of a spouse. Linda is portrayed to some extent as narcissistic or perhaps like a hysterical, possibly depressed woman, using one of the common tropes to describe women who deviate from the norm. For example, when the children came

home Linda appears: '[...] [I]n a long cane chair, with her feet on a hassock and a plaid over her knees, lay before a crackling fire [...].' She does not welcome the children home, but simply says: 'Are those the children?' The narrative voice goes on to inflect the actions further: 'But Linda did not really care; she did not even open her eyes to see' (62).

Mansfield shows Linda's qualitative experience, the character's own self-perception in terms of Bergson's duration, is unhappily caught in the gap opened by this experience, caught between either behaving like a traditional wife and mother or a rebellious, alternative and more feminist self that wanted to escape her reality. The reader makes sense of Linda's predicament as at once personal and symptomatic of the problem for women in society. This is apprehended by the way in which we perceive Linda's fragmented inner life by means of stream of consciousness. However, there are other representations of women's self-consciousness in the story which contradict that of Linda.

Ironically, Linda's unmarried sister Beryl is to some extent her sibling's antithesis. Despite her talent in art and her independent existence, her only real wish is to find a husband. She focuses on her beauty and choice of clothes in order to find a lover and turn him into a husband. Her desires resemble the clichés of romantic fiction or a fairy tale like Cinderella. Constantly daydreaming of this imagined man, particularly when she is by herself, she thinks of marriage as liberation from her lonely life. When everyone in the Burnell family was sleeping, the 'old thought, the cruel thought - ah' (65) returns to Beryl. The frequent use of ellipsis shows the fragmentation of her thought within the interior monologue:

She was tired, but she pretended to be more tired than she really was—letting her clothes fall, pushing back with a languid gesture her warm, heavy hair.

“Oh, how tired I am—very tired.”... And then as she lay down, there came the old thought, the cruel thought—ah, if only she had money of her own ... A young man, immensely rich, has just arrived from England. He meets her quite by chance The new governor is unmarried There is a ball at the Government house Who is that exquisite creature in *eau de nil* satin? Beryl Fairfield' (64 - 65)

Unlike Linda, Beryl fears independence, seeking a conventional marriage to someone higher up the social scale, a wealthy Prince Charming, freshly arrived from the home country, less provincial, encountered first at the bastion of Britain's imperial authority in New Zealand, Government House. These impressions of Beryl's hidden self are conveyed through pauses of varying length, ellipses and stylistic deviance like using 'thought-ah' which are ways to

represent stream-of-consciousness within a more conventional narration. Mansfield conveys Beryl's current unhappiness and the incoherent nature of her dreams of an imaginary lover whom she wishes could be real.¹⁷⁸

Some critics, including Marvin Magalaner, have described Beryl as having a 'problem of identity,' regarding her as 'powerless to bring the two parts of her being, the girl and the mask, together' and further remarks that this theme of identity is part of a 'larger motif of illusion and reality in life which permeates *Prelude*' (34). Beryl's name comes from a precious stone whose colour varies between green and blue, similar to her self-divisions that she cannot merge. However, Beryl might be better seen as another example of a divided, conflicted self. In this case her qualitative experience as a subject points towards the authenticity of her desire for marriage in traditional terms, for her *élan vital* propels her toward this desire.

Mansfield wishes to portray a certain variety and complexity of female possibilities and experience rather than a simplistic engagement in feminist 'bad faith'. After writing a letter to her Aunt, Beryl observes 'it was her other self who had written that letter. It not only bored, it rather disgusted her real self' (89). The letter is not featured, but one reads: "Flippant and silly," said her real self. Yet she knew that she'd send it and she'd always write that kind of twaddle to Nan Pym. In fact, it was a very mild example of the kind of letter she generally wrote' (90). The narrative adds: 'The voice of the letter seemed to come up to her from the page. It was faint already, like a voice heard over the telephone, high, gushing, with something bitter in the sound. Oh, she detested it to-day' (90). Mansfield implies that once again women live with contested selves and while Beryl's alternate self may not point to any emancipatory possibility, rather the converse, yet it is still nonetheless evidence of the effect of the choices women are forced to make day to day in patriarchal society.

¹⁷⁸ Freud remarked in 'Creative Writers and Day-Dreaming' (1907) that the most common day-dreams of women that he had found in his traditional, patriarchal Viennese society were erotic ones concerning marriage. A day dream is fuelled by a wish that is partly hidden (1985: 131-141).

The maid in the house, Alice, is also obsessed with daydreaming, using books to interpret her dreams. She reads that dreaming about spiders symbolises money. When Beryl entered the kitchen, ‘Alice dropped the knife and slipped the *Dream Book* under the butter dish’ (83). Her world with regard to solid conscious experience is hidden under the ‘greasy edges’ of the established physical world (the butter dish). Her name probably alludes to the protagonist of *Alice in the Wonderland* who falls through a rabbit hole into a world of reverie that is nonetheless meaningful. *Dream Book* was also the nickname for Freud’s classic *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1913), which showed every dream was actually an unconscious wish. Although a variety of books interpreting dream imagery had traditionally been available, some critics have suggested Freud’s influence on Mansfield and perhaps Mansfield is making a cryptic allusion here.¹⁷⁹ Linda and Beryl are a dualistic pair of characters, failing to realise their dreams, but in both cases it is Bergson’s *élan vital* and the process of qualitative memory which leads them to the alternative selves which are at odds with their public personae. Day-dreaming and dreaming represent the fulfilment in fantasy of an unconscious wish. In ‘Prelude’ dreams are the way characters explore alternative life through private experience, since dreams, day-dreams and precise time share hidden, non-linear aspects in temporal terms, and diverge from public and conventional thinking (although in the case of Beryl they still result in highly conventional wishes). Mrs Fairfield, the traditional grandmother and family matriarch, and the store-man are unmoved by day dreaming or reverie. Instead they are self-reliant, concentrating on decisive actions in terms of family management and therefore represent quantitative experience and the straightforward acceptance of social norms.

Despite her husband not being mentioned, Mrs. Fairfield epitomizes traditional motherhood with her ‘grey foulard dress patterned with large purple pansies, a white linen apron and a high cap shaped like a jelly mould of white muslin’ (94). Mannerhovi argues that her clothes symbolised her ‘modesty, virtue and faithfulness in the Victorian language of flowers [...] she embodies the Angel in the house’ (44); and one might add that pansies symbolised thoughtfulness and a loved one being continually in a woman’s thoughts, qualities association with traditional feminine virtues. Significantly, as no grandfather (Mr Fairfield) is mentioned,

¹⁷⁹ Shelley Saguro claims that Mansfield stories show processes analogous to condensation and displacement, which Freud argues in the *Interpretation of Dreams* are the means by which dreams are constituted (2006: 33-35).

there is no competing patriarchal authority. Arguably Mrs Fairfield symbolizes what Beryl desires in dreams and what Linda hopes to escape, a figure whose power is dependent on fulfilling the needs of bourgeois patriarchy, conforming to its patterns, making jam and keeping the family together.

Mansfield names certain characters after plants and natural objects. 'Lottie' is the diminutive of Charlotte and emphasizes smallness and femininity, while 'Kezia' is originally Hebrew, one of Lot's daughters and it is derived from a plant. 'Kezia' or Cassia is a sweet-smelling spice plant and its English name is *Cinnamomum*. 'Linda' might be derived from the same root as the linden tree, from Germanic *lind* meaning 'soft, tender', ultimately from a Celtic root, the image of the tree used to indicate a gentle personality. Mansfield is then utilizing the existing association made between women and plants but in disruptive fashion. As Susan Mann notes, it became popular to name 'women after plants and plants after women' (33) in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Yet, interestingly while following such associations Mansfield also disrupts expectations: Linda is neither a gentle or kind tool of patriarchy.

The male characters represent patriarchal ownership and control of their wives. Stanley does so by what Hanson and Gurr describe as 'forcing Linda into unwanted childbearing' (53). Similarly, in Mansfield's duck scene the boys are leading the girls, controlling, as when 'Pat grabbed the duck by the legs, laid it flat across the stump, and almost at the same moment down came the little tomahawk and the duck's head flew off the stump. Up the blood spurted over the white feathers and over his hand' (81-82). Fullbrook contends that '[t]he children's excitement at their inclusion in an adult "rite" of death is important [...] they recognise power when they see it and respond with horrible glee' and that 'slaughter [...] is the core of masculine gender' (74-75). The violence of the male children parallels that of the war, Mansfield implicitly censorious of Pat for beheading the duck. When Linda compares Stanley with her 'Newfoundland dog' (87), she suggests a combination of loyalty and foolishness, partly because she has power over him. However, unlike Fullbrook, I do not consider this a straightforward feminist story, partly because the reader feels sympathy for Stanley when he is compared to a dog, since this breed is celebrated for saving drowning sailors, and in fact Stanley does little negative to Linda in the story. He is quite different from Torvald in A

Doll's House. Second, Mansfield undercuts oppositions between traditional concepts of 'active' men and 'passive women' because one does not actually see Stanley at work, whereas one encounters a great deal of female activity, a legacy of the war when women took over many traditional male roles including the running of farms.

Beryl despises her mother's passivity in accepting her fate in a small house in town: 'Of course mother simply loves the place, but then I suppose when I am mother's age I shall be content to sit in the sun and shell peas into a basin. But I'm not-not-not' (89). The strong repetition of denial that suggests the force of her unconscious loathing of the very fate she fears awaits her, which is at odds with her *élan vital*; her qualitative self-perception contradicts the quantitative perception of the fate for even the most successful aged wives. However, Beryl fears that her alternative self will be unrealised, remaining a small town spinster or married like her sister to a dull husband:

How despicable! Despicable! Her heart was cold with rage. "It's marvellous how you keep it up," said she to the false self. But then it was only because she was so miserable—so miserable. If she had been happy and leading her own life her false life would cease to be. She saw the real Beryl — a shadow... a shadow. Faint and unsubstantial she shone. What was there of her except the radiance? And for what tiny moments she was really she. Beryl could almost remember every one of them. At those times she had felt: "Life is rich and mysterious and good, and I am rich and mysterious and good, too." Shall I ever be that Beryl forever? Shall I? How can I? And was there ever a time when I did not have a false self? ... (91).

Mansfield uses stream-of-conscious technique to reveal women's hidden thoughts and secret dreams. This is similar to Molly Bloom's soliloquy in Joyce's *Ulysses*, published in 1922:

[...] and how he kissed me under the Moorish wall and I thought well as well him as another and then I asked him with my eyes to ask again yes and then he asked me would I yes to say yes my mountain flower and first I put my arms around him yes and drew him down to me so he could feel my breasts all perfume yes and his heart was going like mad and yes I said yes I will yes. (2010: 682)

Joyce's text shows a muddle of memories and thoughts, as Molly, while in bed, remembers first meeting her husband Leopold, and a stream-of-conscious thoughts go through her head while half-asleep, mirroring the daydreams and reveries of Mansfield character's, particularly Beryl. Mansfield demonstrates a gendered perspective, attentive to the dreams, hopes and fears of women and to the alternate selves which qualitative perception and memory yields.

In some cases, such as Linda, this alternative self allows women to challenge the patriarchal stereotypes in order to become more independent individuals, but in other cases, such as Beryl, the situation remains far more ambivalent and uncertain.

‘Bliss’ (1920)

‘Bliss’ was initially published in *The English Review*¹⁸⁰ in August 1918 and at stake is the seriousness of the inner life amidst what seems to be the superficiality of a modern, deeply affected and partly-Bohemian life. Suffering an accompanying confusion of the ‘self’ of an individual, its protagonist Bertha is as much affected by her inner life, as the alternative self that is created by her qualitative self-perceptions as any of Mansfield’s other female characters. Bertha is apparently content and satisfied as a dutiful mother to her child, and as a wealthy wife with a large social circle of friends. However, through Bertha’s stream of consciousness one encounters her inner life reflecting upper middle class women who dream of being more rebellious, adventurous and who are drawn to a non-traditional world, unlike a conventional model where the traditional woman is a mother at home aided by servants in maintaining a household.

The story opens dramatically, *in media res*, as her public, conventional life and awareness of conventional time, from the Bergsonian point of view, is interrupted: walking home Bertha is overwhelmed by a feeling of an uncontrollable, epiphanic experience of bliss that would be unusual in a woman on the cusp of what would be considered almost middle-age at this point in history. As David Trotter remarks with regard to Bertha’s moment, ‘[She] longs to echo rhythmically the life with which she feels supremely in touch’ (1993: 24). One might add that this alternative inner life uses the language and games of childhood to express itself as it is the rhythms of childhood prior to Bertha’s social formation as woman:

¹⁸⁰ *The English Review* was an English-language literary magazine published in London from 1908 – 1937, founded by Ford Madox Hueffer in 1908 and edited by him for just fifteen issues. The magazine published an interesting mixture of Victorian and Edwardian authors like Thomas Hardy, H. G. Wells, and Joseph Conrad, along with younger writers Ezra Pound, Wyndham Lewis, and D. H. Lawrence. Cliff Wulfman further notes that ‘*The English Review* is one of the most celebrated of the “little magazines,” though with its plain blue covers and generous girth it hardly resembled one, so much so that Hoffman, Allen, and Ulrich do not include it in either portion of their foundational *The Little Magazine: A History and a Bibliography*’ (2009, 26).

Although Bertha Young was thirty she still had moments like this when she wanted to run instead of walk, to take dancing steps on and off the pavement, to bowl a hoop, to throw something up in the air and catch it again, or to stand still and laugh at - nothing, nothing, simply. (141-142)

Her laughter is instructive as children will happily laugh at nothing, spontaneously, whereas adults require an object for such humour. This singularly more expressive return to childhood resembles Woolf's famous opening in *Mrs Dalloway* (and perhaps influenced Woolf) where Clarissa, feeling like a child in the new morning, remembers her earlier life. Bertha's bliss glitters; the text describes her 'dancing steps', walking as if she owns the external world. This is child-like and also in Bergsonian terms she is unselfconsciously almost overwhelmed by her inner sense of personal, qualitative time and its opportunities for spontaneity, as opposed to public time with chronological habit ('civilization'). Bertha wonders:

What can you do if you are thirty and, turning the corner of your own street, you are overcome, suddenly by a feeling of bliss—absolute bliss!—as though you'd suddenly swallowed a bright piece of that late afternoon sun and it burned in your bosom, sending out a little shower of sparks into every particle, into every finger and toe? . . .

Oh, is there no way you can express it without being “drunk and disorderly”? How idiotic civilization is! Why be given a body if you have to keep it shut up in a case like a rare, rare fiddle? (142)

The narrative voice's use of free indirect discourse to focalize Bertha is in one respect a characteristic modernist device, although one rendered by Mansfield entirely in a female, embodied fashion.¹⁸¹ Bertha's difficulties in describing her inner sublimity lead her to describe her state as being like a violin, in Bohemian parlance a 'fiddle', suggesting how words traditionally fail to describe music. There is also some sense in which her inner life is at odds with society and the Bergsonian notion of habit and public, quantitative memory.

No, that about the fiddle is not quite what I mean,' she thought, running up the steps and feeling in her bag for the key—she'd forgotten it, as usual—and rattling the letter-box. 'It's not what I mean, because—Thank you, Mary'— she went into the hall. 'Is nurse back? (142)

¹⁸¹ One finds a similar enigma articulated in T.S. Eliot's 'East Coker', although in far more impersonal a fashion:

Trying to learn to use words, and every attempt
Is a wholly new start, and a different kind of failure
Because one has only learnt to get the better of words
For the thing one no longer has to say, or the way in which
One is no longer disposed to say it. (182)

Bertha feels extremely satisfied with her home, her husband, her baby and her friend. She prepares herself for that night's dinner party, part of the same upper-middle class lifestyle and territory one associates with Clarissa in *Mrs Dalloway*. Bertha's love for her husband, however, is not without important qualifications:

For the first time in her life Bertha Young desired her husband. Oh, she'd loved him – she'd been in love with him, of course, in every other way, but just not in that way. And equally, of course, she'd understood that he was different. They'd discussed it so often. It had worried her dreadfully at first to find that she was so cold, but after a time it had not seemed to matter. They were so frank with each other - such good pals. That was the best of being modern. (150-151)

Coming at the end of their pseudo-Bohemian dinner party, the above passage suggests her relationship with her husband was limited, sexually speaking, and may border on a mutual physical aversion: they are 'pals' and not 'lovers'. In her interior monologue Bertha describes sexual frigidity as 'coldness' and while she evokes their friendship, she suggests a startling lack of intimacy in the relationship with a man with whom she has borne a child. Likewise her relationship with her immediate social circle lacks a sense of real emotional connection. To a degree Mansfield satirizes pseudo-Bohemianism among the modern upper-middle classes, which might even be associated with the Bloomsbury group (indeed the husband's diffidence towards her might indicate homosexual urges). However, this 'coldness' towards her husband may be due to sexual orientation. As earlier in the story, Bertha's suppressed lesbian impulses are initially hinted at, but emerge more clearly when she has a chance to meet Miss Pearl Fulton¹⁸²: 'They had met at the club and Bertha had fallen in love with her, as she always did fall in love with beautiful women who had something strange about them' (144).

Bertha adored her home; she was passionate about the interior decorations of the drawing-room, having rearranged the cushions by throwing them on the chairs and couches: 'as she

¹⁸² 'Pearl' which is the given name of Miss Fulton is a name derived from a lustrous gemstone. However, in this context the idea of a precious stone concealed within a fleshy mollusc, may have implicit sexual connotations, and the story places emphasis on objects with female gendering, such as the moon, and also the blossoms of the pear tree (where Mansfield emphasises the blossoms' openness and femaleness). Pearl Fulton is dressed, like the moon, all in silver. This might represent an underlying use of a feminist and lesbian counter-narrative within the ostensible patriarchal text. Pearl also sounds very like pear and the pear tree is important in the story.

was about to throw the last one she surprised herself by suddenly hugging it to her, passionately, passionately' (145). Arguably, Bertha's love of interior design reflects an acceptable pursuit for women within the domestic sphere, allowable even for such an enlightened and modern couple. While Bertha thinks she has moved beyond Victorian stereotypes of women in the domestic sphere to a more Bohemian and freer life, which she herself describes as 'modern', in reality she is still frustrated and limited by patriarchy. She frets at not having a closer relationship with her child, whom she refers to as a miniature version of herself 'little B', but she follows traditions of her social class by employing a nurse to take over child-care. She neither works, nor acts as mother. Her husband jokes in Bohemian fashion that he has no interest in their daughter until she takes 'a lover'. Bertha seems incapable of acknowledging her lack of sexual fulfillment within her marriage or conceding the strength of her physical attraction toward other women. Patriarchy limits her alternative and true self by denying her recognition of her own lesbian or possibly bisexual identity.

The superficiality¹⁸³ of her pseudo-Bohemian life reflects her ambivalence towards herself and her ambiguous social position, reflecting Mansfield's own status.¹⁸⁴ If the bohemianism of the characters is derided somewhat resentfully as being superficial when compared to what a serious artist like Mansfield would expect, nonetheless the narrative is conscious of the privilege of inherited capital, which allows an effortless Bloomsbury style life and the accompanying cultural capital. Consider when Bertha forgets her keys:

[...] running up the steps and feeling in her bag for the key—she'd forgotten it, as usual—and rattling the letter-box. 'It's not what I mean, because—Thank you, Mary'— she went into the hall. 'Is nurse back?' (142)

She recollects that, as with any member of her class, there will always be a servant to facilitate her lapses. So supported, one might effortlessly play at being poets, interior designers or even, as we shall see, found a theatre like Mr. Norman Knight.

¹⁸³ This is quite similar to T. S. Eliot's 'The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock' regarding the upper middle classes superficiality, 'in the room, the women come and go / talking of Michelangelo' where the triteness of the rhyme sums up the superficiality of the upper-middle classes attitude to culture (1991: 3).

¹⁸⁴ This is something she shared with another outsider to Bloomsbury and to London's literary world, T.S. Eliot.

Bertha feels the essentials of her life are primarily modern, like her relationship with her husband, and describes her dinner party guests as ‘modern and thrilling’ (145), although Bertha satirically refers in her inner thoughts to Mrs. Norman Knight as an ‘intelligent monkey’ (146). The guests are often artistic, always interesting, but none seems to require a paid occupation: Mr. and Mrs. Knight are artistic; Eddie Warren is a poet considering becoming a playwright and Pearl Fulton, Bertha’s newest friend, seems without occupation whatsoever. For Mansfield these characteristic Bohemians offer more style than substance, demonstrating a facile lifestyle maintained by independent means, about which the writer remains ambivalent (144).

Bertha thinks herself somewhat Bohemian, and has hours to plan her outfit, pretending in a studied way not to be deliberate but rather random: ‘A white dress, a string of jade beads, green shoes and stockings. It wasn’t ‘intentional’. She had thought of this scheme hours before she stood at the drawing-room window’ (145-146). Mrs. Norman Knight wears a coat of exotic design, created in Bohemian fashion to scandalize and provoke the bourgeois (*épater la bourgeoisie*) but naturally no one is half as scandalized as she had hoped. ‘[She] was taking off the most amusing orange coat with a procession of black monkeys round the hem and up the fronts [...] . . .’ (146) Mrs. Knight then goes on to explain:

Why! Why! Why is the middle-class so stodgy—so utterly without a sense of humour! My dear, it’s only by a fluke that I am here at all —Norman being the protective fluke. For my darling monkeys so upset the train that it rose to a man and simply ate me with its eyes. Didn’t laugh—wasn’t amused—that I should have loved. No, just stared—and bored me through and through. (146)

This satire of pseudo-Bohemians is maintained throughout the story, with Mr. Norman Knight with his ‘large tortoiseshell-rimmed monocle’ (146) being – despite plans for his theatre - bereft of any significant artistic direction or purpose. He admits: ‘What I want to do is to give the young men a show. I believe London is simply teeming with first-chop, unwritten plays. What I want to say to ‘em is: ‘Here’s the theatre. Fire a head’ (150). His wife is a parody of an apparently fashionable avant-garde interior designer, a would-be Dadaist (if she knew what that meant) but in this case she sounds parochial and English. “You know, my dear, I am going to decorate a room for the Jacob Nathans. Oh, I am so tempted to do a fried-fish scheme, with the backs of the chairs shaped like frying-pans and lovely chip potatoes embroidered all over the curtains” (150).

Perhaps Eddie demonstrates the greatest superficiality, which lies in his assertion of great poetry which Mansfield accentuates by her use of italics to suggest his pretentiousness, stressing certain words as if they are unfamiliar:

“I *wonder* if you have seen Bilks’ new poem called Table d’Hôte,” said Eddie softly. “It’s so wonderful. In the last Anthology. Have you got a copy? I’d so like to *show* it to you. It begins with an *incredibly* beautiful line: ‘Why Must it Always be Tomato Soup?’” [...] “Here it is,” said Eddie. “‘Why Must it Always be Tomato Soup?’ It’s so *deeply* true, don’t you feel? Tomato soup is so *dreadfully* eternal.” (151 – 152)

In the second half of the story, after Miss Pearl Fulton arrives for dinner, Bertha stares at the new arrival, the perspective making Pearl an exotic object of erotic desire as Bertha imagines their unspoken intimacies:

Miss Fulton did not look at her; but then she seldom did look at people directly. Her heavy eyelids lay upon her eyes and the strange half-smile came and went upon her lips as though she lived by listening rather than seeing. But Bertha knew, suddenly, as if the longest, most intimate look had passed between them—as if they had said to each other: “You too?”—that Pearl Fulton, stirring the beautiful red soup in the grey plate, was feeling just what she was feeling. (148)

Pearl’s unusual dress, somnambulant demeanor and heavy eyelids associate her with the moon and with Roman mythology surrounding Diana, who was the goddess of hunting, the moon and birthing, possessing the power to control wild animals. When Pearl asks about the garden, Bertha is able to take her out to look at the pear tree in a scene that hovers between a narrative of seduction and one in which Bertha’s inner life through qualitative experience comes to believe it has found a kindred spirit, suggesting a lesbian counter-narrative hidden within the story.¹⁸⁵

While the pear tree is clearly described as phallic in nature (‘grow taller and taller’) and symbolizes heterosexual sex (as it tries to ‘touch the rim of the ... moon’), the attention paid

¹⁸⁵ Lillian Faderman (1981) discusses the intimate relationships between Bertha and Pearl in *Surpassing the Love of Men*. In the book Faderman explains that in the nineteenth and early twentieth century the connection between women, such as Bertha and Pearl, were recorded as ‘the love of kindred spirits,’ or as ‘Boston marriage,’ or even as ‘sentimental friends’. However, from the early years of the twentieth-century associations between concepts of lesbianism and the effects of unorthodox sex became firmly fixed and discussions of lesbianism ‘usually show love between women as a disease’ (20). Vincent O’Sullivan suggests Mansfield’s own feeling was complex: ‘her lesbianism was submerged in all her involvements with men, and it is never really resolved’ (1996, 118-119). On lesbianism in ‘Bliss’ see Walter E. Anderson, (1982); Armine Kotin Mortimer (1994); and David Coad (2000).

to the spring-time flowers of the tree and its slenderness suggests feminization of sorts matched by the silvery image of the moon:

And the two women stood side by side looking at the slender, flowering tree. Although it was so still it seemed, like the flame of a candle, to stretch up, to point, to quiver in the bright air, to grow taller and taller as they gazed - almost to touch the rim of the round, silver moon. (149)

In the subsequent paragraph the emphasis shifts to the women, who are described as lunar, 'unearthly' creatures whose bosoms conceal hidden treasures:

How long did they stand there? Both, as it were, caught in that circle of unearthly light, understanding each other perfectly, creatures of another world, and wondering what they were to do in this one with all this blissful treasure that burned in their bosoms and dropped, in silver flowers, from their hair and hands? (149)

Pearl is described as dressed up with 'a silver fillet binding her pale blonde hair', therefore resembling the moon. If the pear tree represents the phallus since it has to 'stretch up' and 'point', characteristically creating the illusion that it stretches until it reaches the 'silver moon', then this is perhaps a way of masking repressed lesbian desire, of which Bertha is only partly conscious, despite her modernity (147). When Bertha feels replete with desire for Miss Fulton, she responds by transposing this into a sudden desire for Harry (even though she claimed previously that she had never sexually desired Harry before). Bertha's internal thoughts emphasize her ardour as Mansfield repeats the word 'ardent' or its cognate parts: 'But now—ardently! ardently! The word ached in her ardent body! Was this what that feeling of bliss had been leading up to?' (151). While Bertha remains confused about the cause of her bliss,¹⁸⁶ nonetheless she implicitly links this word with strong sexual connotations of sexual desire. In a sense Mansfield has taken a phallic image and re-contextualized it for a feminist purpose, for even though Bertha lacks the bravery or perhaps even the understanding to recognize lesbianism as part of her own qualitative self-perception and that of Miss Fulton, that desire persists.

Additionally, the pear tree symbolizes different people at different times in the story; first, Bertha's potential for a new alternative life which opens up her sexuality and the possibility

¹⁸⁶ The word 'Bliss' according to the Oxford English Dictionary means perfect delight and enjoyment.

of desire: 'And she seemed to see on her eyelids the lovely pear tree with its wide open blossoms as a symbol of her own life' (145). The emphasis on the openness of the flowers is non-phallic, but rather suggests female symbolism and can be associated with Pearl – what complicates the nature of the image is the complexity of lesbian desire. Both women are connected to each other through the tree as it unites them to sexual life, or at least this is how Bertha perceives the situation.

Later, Harry is rude to Pearl, and Bertha intimates her feelings in a stream of consciousness. She hopes to tell him more in 'the dark room – the warm bed...' (150) when they will be alone together. Her absolute bliss has also stimulated a sexual awakening towards her husband, although initiated in desire for Miss Fulton. However, soon Bertha senses her husband is having a love affair with Pearl:

[...] she turned her head towards the hall. And she saw... Harry with Miss Fulton's coat in his arms and Miss Fulton with her back turned to him and her head bent. He tossed the coat away, put his hands on her shoulders and turned her violently to him. His lips said: 'I adore you,' and Miss Fulton laid her moonbeam fingers on his cheeks and smiled her sleepy smile. Harry's nostril quivered; his lips curled back in a hideous grin while he whispered: 'To-morrow,' and with her eyelids Miss Fulton said: 'Yes.' (151)

This turning point in the narrative occurs, as all of Bertha's perceptions delivered through the dialogue and through the omniscient narration that now turns out to be more like limited third person narration¹⁸⁷ turn out to be wrong. Seemingly, Harry prefers Miss Fulton to Bertha. Her surprise emphasizes how little Bertha understands her world, her own inner sexual life or her relationship with her husband. The story ends with Bertha's confusion and pain as she hurries to the window to see the pear tree: 'Oh, what is going to happen now? She cried' (152). But the pear tree remains blank and 'lovely'; nature retains habitual indifference when compared to Bertha's inner turmoil. Her alternative self may point to a lesbian possibility, but remains unacted desire and deferred possibility. Mansfield's epiphanies are more typically representative of failure and negativity, despite providing self-realisation and self-knowledge

¹⁸⁷ According to Roger Fowler (1986: 137-138), the omniscient author 'provides an internal view of his characters, which is in some ways framed by authorial ideology.'

as in other modernists. From a Bergsonian point of view, there is no reason why secular epiphanies based on qualitative experience and understanding should not be negative.¹⁸⁸

For example, in Mansfield's the 'Life of Ma Parker' (1921), the title character, an impoverished, elderly working woman, prompted by her employer's questions about the funeral, recalls the pain of her young grandson's death and the sadness of her life: 'Wasn't there anywhere in the world where she could have her cry out – at last? Ma Parker stood, looking up and down. The icy wind blew out her apron into a balloon. And now it began to rain. There was nowhere' (297). Bergson remarked: 'our perception is internal and profound' but he didn't suggest it was necessarily positive (*Creative Evolution*, 1911: 1). In 'Bliss' the qualitative experience and subjective insights of only one character, Bertha, are allowed to create an alternative self in conflict with her public persona. Only Bertha accesses any interiority expressed through stream of consciousness, the other characters remain superficial at best, with little conflict between their public and inner selves, apart from that implied in the affair.

'The Garden Party' (1922)

First published by the *Saturday Westminster Gazette*¹⁸⁹ on 4th of February 1922, 'The Garden Party' later reappeared in the *Weekly Westminster Gazette* on 18th of February 1922. The story is predominantly autobiographical, based on Mansfield's childhood memories, and dominated by conflicts about the divisions of social class in New Zealand,¹⁹⁰ perhaps sharpened by her exile in England. Protagonist, Laura Sheridan's personal experiences are foregrounded, including her relationship with members of her family and her concern for gender and class. She is laughed at for being over-solicitous over a labourer's death. Her conscious, qualitative perceptions are questioned by her mother and elder sisters as being silly and childish:

¹⁸⁸ Hilde Lindemann Nelson, (1998, 160-164) and Wim Tigges (1999).

¹⁸⁹ The *Saturday Westminster Gazette* was the literary weekly of the *Westminster Gazette*, an influential liberal London newspaper, and included short stories and sketches by writers such as D.H. Lawrence and Katherine Mansfield. It was founded by E.T. Cook on 31 January 1893 and ceased publications on 31 January 1928. John Murry, Mansfield's husband, was an art critic for the *Westminster Gazette*. (Boddy 1988, 40).

¹⁹⁰ In a letter to her father, Sir Harold Beauchamp on 18th March 1922, the dying Mansfield advocates New Zealand over London: '[t]he longer I live the more I turn to New Zealand. I thank God I was born in New Zealand. A young country is a real heritage, though it takes one time to recognise it. But New Zealand is in my very bones. What wouldn't I give to have a look at it!' (Murry, *The Letters* Vol. 2, 456).

‘Jose, come here.’ Laura caught hold of her sister's sleeve and dragged her through the kitchen to the other side of the green baize door. There she paused and leaned against it. ‘Jose!’ she said, horrified, ‘however are we going to stop everything?’

‘Stop everything, Laura!’ cried Jose in astonishment. ‘What do you mean?’[...] ‘Mother, a man's been killed,’ began Laura [...] To Laura's astonishment her mother behaved just like Jose; it was harder to bear because she seemed amused. She refused to take Laura seriously. (407-409)

Set in rural New Zealand, the story shows Laura supposedly to help manage a garden party for her prominent and wealthy family. Nakano argues that the story does not need the New Zealand setting, since Laura's experience of the death of a person ‘could happen in any country’ (2002, 87). However, the mixture of upper middle class liberalism and class-consciousness of the gulf between gentry and workers, while distinctly British, is perhaps sharpened by the colonial background of inventing Britain overseas.¹⁹¹ The third person narrator focuses on the weather, focalized through Laura's consciousness, and the use of indirect free speech suggests Laura's voice:

And after all the weather was ideal. They could not have had a more perfect day for a garden party if they had ordered it. Windless, warm, the sky without a cloud. Only the blue sky was veiled with a haze of light gold, as it is sometimes in early summer. The gardener had been up since dawn, mowing the lawns and sweeping them [...] (401).

The language stresses that this wealthy upper-middle class family would habitually buy and order things (and control society), demanding an archetypal English summer day reminiscent of the pre-war Edwardian idyll of the country house, with its well-ordered garden, a paradisiacal setting, recreated in New Zealand. There is perhaps no more potent image of Englishness than the country house garden, especially in settler colonies, an image that is also associated with female creativity in the modernist period, such as in Vita Sackville West's famous Sissinghurst Garden.¹⁹²

¹⁹¹ Christine Darrohn (1998) connects the death to war-time death and grief.

¹⁹² Vita Sackville-West (1892-1962), aristocrat, writer and briefly Virginia Woolf's lover, created the famous garden at Sissinghurst. See Matthew Dennison (2015), Sarah Raven and Vita Sackville-West (2014). On country houses and modernist literature see Christine Berberich (2009). For colonial/post-colonial contexts to Mansfield's story see Emmanouil Aretoulakis (2013); Rama Kundu, (2007).

Laura is nominated the hostess because she was the ‘artistic’ one and (402) ‘loved having to arrange things; she always felt she could do it so much better than anybody else.’ Laura’s new experience of creating the party matches how Bergson believes the universe, like any artistic product continually grows and changes: ‘The universe *endures*. The more we study the nature of time, the more we shall comprehend that duration means invention, the creation of forms, the continual elaboration of the absolutely new’ (*Creative Evolution*, 1911: 11). From a gendered point of view the party is a female art form (as with Mrs. Dalloway’s party), where qualitative experience must be combined with quantitative experience. Laura’s stream of consciousness is initially shown focusing on her subjective intuition into how elements can combine to best effect for the visitors.

Laura is ambivalent about the workmen, as in one way she arguably desires them for their efficient masculinity and says they ‘impressive’ (a response similar to those toward the storeman in ‘Prelude’) and ‘how very nice workmen were!’ (402). Yet at the same time, she wants to demonstrate her superiority by acting and copying her mother’s voice. Her feelings towards the garden party are equated with an artist towards their canvas, such as when she considers where to place the marquee (on the lily-lawn or the tennis court) or the masses of pink-flowered canna lilies her mother had ordered from the florist. She admires one of workmen erecting the marquee for his artistic sensibilities as he ‘bent down, pinched a sprig of lavender, put his thumb and forefinger to his nose and snuffed up the smell’ (403). She then muses on her own stance toward ‘these absurd class distinctions. Well, for her part, she didn’t feel them. Not a bit, not an atom ...’ (403). The style conveys her naïveté, but also it echoes (critically) the Bohemian attitudes towards class distinction that Mansfield had encountered in England.

After everything is rearranged for the garden party, Laura hears from the servants that their working-class neighbor, Mr. Scott, has died after ‘his horse shied at a traction-engine,’ and ‘he was thrown out on the back of his head. Killed’ (407). After the death the story is principally concerned with Laura’s reactions as subjective, precise perceptions. In contrast to her family’s perception of her, their beliefs she over-reacts, following as they do the rhythms of public, quantifiable time which do not see the garden party connect to a working-man’s death. Laura is shocked and tries to empathize with Mrs. Scott’s predicament. She weighs

what might represent the most sympathetic course of action towards their neighbor's loss. Her intuitive feelings are that the garden party should be called off, although, neither Josie her sister, nor their mother agree. Public reality and numerical time repress any natural empathy, branding such subjective preference as hysterical, preferring instead to maintain established social conventions.

'But, dear child, use your common sense. It's only by accident we've heard of it. If someone had died there normally – and I can't understand how they keep alive in those poky little holes - we should still be having our party, shouldn't we?'

[...]

'Mother, isn't it terribly heartless of us?' she asked. (409)

Mrs. Sheridan reinforces the view of Laura's perceived childishness expressed in her 'excessive' emotional response to the death by treating her like a child and distracting her with a gift, a new hat. Laura's response seems incomprehensible to her mother and the latter implies these working class people are for her only partly human, mere servants. Her sister Jose's earlier reaction mirrors that of their mother, regarding her sister as a child, almost bordering on hysteria:

But Jose was still more amazed: 'Stop the garden-party? My dear Laura, don't be so absurd. Of course, we can't do anything of the kind. Nobody expects us to. Don't be so extravagant.' (407)

Despite her subjective perception and her pretensions not to care about social class, Laura is soon won over by the gift. Significantly the sharp image she had of distress become unclear as she reflects upon it in less private and more public terms, indicated by the reference to the mass media which represent public, quantifiable experience:

Just for a moment she had another glimpse of that poor woman and those little children, and the body being carried into the house. But it all seemed blurred, unreal, like a picture in the newspaper. I'll remember it again after the party is over (409).

Later Mrs. Sheridan decides it would be good to bring a basket full of 'scraps' to the Scott family (left-over food from the party, a well-meaning, but patronizing gesture), which Laura agrees to deliver, despite her fears her father will consider her behaviour childish and naive. Laura seems more worried now about her embarrassment than in empathizing the awful consequences of the husband's death for the widow. That Laura is unable to transcend her

own class consciousness permeates the very description of the worker's cottage, with its insect-like children. The focalization is that of Laura's family, reasserted as her own point of view.

They were the greatest possible eyesore, and they had no right to be in that neighbourhood at all. They were little mean dwellings painted a chocolate brown. In the garden patches there was nothing but cabbage stalks, sick hens and tomato cans. The very smoke coming out of their chimneys was poverty-stricken. [...] Children swarmed. (408)

Laura's qualitative life is usually filled with images that are light, fragrant and fresh, such the pink 'canna' lilies on crimson stems, which the mother has bought from the florist for their garden party. These huge-flowered, exotic bulbs from South Africa were popular in the sub-tropical world of colonies such as New Zealand, suggesting a link to the Empire which moved people, cultures and plants and animals around its vast territory. Laura's consciousness creates both a conservative, traditional life and an alternative, more individual life within the terms of Bergsonian ideas of memory – that is to say, a brief phase of independent female thought. Any such ideas, found in the image of the dead body, are quickly obscured by the public world. Mansfield satirizes gently Laura's inability to really fulfill the intimations of her desired alternative life, despite her liberal claims. Both the death and her subsequent visit to the cottage is intended as some kind of epiphany, but remains largely a negative, unfulfilled one, as in 'Bliss'. Kaplan argues Mansfield's purpose is to search 'for methods to convey the interconnectedness of individual's sense of reality as well as the pressures of the "moment," the sudden breakthroughs into deeper levels of consciousness' (1991: 167).

Kaplan limits herself to the failure of this attempted breakthrough into deeper levels of consciousness and greater social insight. Nevertheless, unlike her mother, Laura has a putative awareness of various aspects of the class divide, is dubious about giving the poor family leftovers from the party, perceiving an insult to which her mother is oblivious. She is horrified at their poverty, having to be rescued by her brother at the end. The distance to the Scots may be geographically short, but, when Laura makes the journey, she experiences a wide social gap between the classes:

The lane began, smoky and dark. Women in shawls and men's tweed caps hurried by. Men hung over the palings; the children played in the doorways. A low hum came from

the mean little cottages. In some of them there was a flicker of light, and a shadow, crab-like, moved across the window. (411)

Laura fears these crab-like people, disgusted by the poverty, a world of stark differences to her qualitative memory of the garden-party within her inner self: ‘kisses, voices, tinkling spoons, laughter, the smell of crushed grass’ (411). Her description of the poverty gestures forward to the same ambivalence found in Orwell’s description of the industrial north of Britain in *The Road to Wigan Pier*. Her positive liberal intentions fade and she fears the predicament in which she has landed herself. Mansfield conveys how entrenched the difficulties of social-class are. When she leaves the dead man’s house, as quickly as possible she ‘found her way out of the door, down the path, past all those dark people’ (413). Their darkness may well derive from dirt, or working outdoors, but still it expresses an innate fear of foreignness, even though they probably share a common white English descent. Laura’s two selves are in conflict and Mansfield shows that qualitative time can reinforce, just as much as it challenges, social conventions and in this case class hierarchies.

When Laura sees the body, she seems to experience a classic modernist epiphany, marked by her ‘loud childish sob’ after first registering the dead man’s appearance, although she reconciles herself by reflecting: ‘All is well, said that sleeping face’(413). However, her epiphany seems short-lived as on her return her attempt to speak verges on inarticulacy, her words rendering the experience almost unintelligible:

‘No,’ sobbed Laura. ‘It was simply marvellous. But Laurie—’ She stopped, she looked at her brother. ‘Isn’t life,’ she stammered, ‘isn’t life—’ But what life was she couldn’t explain. (413)

Laura is unable to clarify the epiphany (albeit one of a negative kind),¹⁹³ which indicates how difficult the perceptions of subjective time may be to express. It is not clear if Laura’s alternative self, which wished to be more independent and show solidarity with the working-class, has even coalesced beyond the most basic of insights. The reader questions whether she has changed her perspective. Even if she may have realized that life is not all about ‘canna

¹⁹³ Mansfield suggested to William Gerhardt (1895 –1977) on 13th March 1922 that the subject of Laura’s experience is: ‘The diversity of life and how we try to fit in everything, Death included. [...] Laura says, “But all these things must not happen at once.” And Life answers, “Why not? How are they divided from each other?” [...] And it seems to me there is beauty in that inevitability’ (Murry, *The Letters* Vol 2, 454).

lilies' and 'tinkling glasses,' she still seems to enjoy being patronized by her brother, who is astounded anyone can cry over the working-class, his reaction epitomizing the negativity of much upper-middle class experience. If Laura begins a transient period, moving away from her innocence toward the possibilities of an alternative life, her progress is limited in this story. Yet she has some insight that life is not fair, and beyond the immediate contingencies, experience can potentially offer the beginning of such maturity stemming from the insights of qualitative experience.

Mansfield had criticized Richardson for what she saw (unjustly) as the former's unstructured and incoherent literary impressionism: '[It is] composed of bits, fragments, flashing glimpses, half scenes and whole scenes, all of them quite distinct and separate, all of them of equal importance. [...] Things just "happen" one after another with incredible rapidity and at breakneck speed. [...]' (1990, 309). For Mansfield the problem with Richardson's method was the lack of a principle of structure to make the impressions of qualitative experience meaningful in any public terms. While Mansfield missed Richardson's overall feminist framework and the consequences of reading just part of a very lengthy feminist *Bildungsroman*, her criticism points to the importance of the structuring of qualitative experience in Mansfield's more realist technique. As with her related use of the epiphany, Mansfield deploys stream of consciousness and qualitative experience in an unusually focused way at the level of characters, framed to offer particular insights in just a few, short pages, and where there was no straightforward overall feminist framework: for Mansfield character was of over-riding importance.

Chapter Four

‘What she liked was simply life’: Private Memory, Qualitative Experience and Affirmation in Virginia Woolf’s Fiction

Virginia Woolf has been the sole female figure canonized as a modernist, certainly in contrast with Sinclair and Richardson; there is far far more written about her. In the context of this thesis’ argument for Woolf as part of an existing (if often ignored) tradition of female, stream-of-consciousness modernists - drawing upon, gendering and exploring the thought of William James and Henri Bergson - this chapter is more about Woolf’s evolution within the tradition than about treating her as a singular figure. In this respect it focuses selectively upon her early short stories, such as ‘Kew Gardens (1919), aspects of *To the Lighthouse* (1927) and *Mrs Dalloway* (1925), the text that has become almost synonymous with female stream-of-consciousness writing in order to chart this evolution within the tradition, while recognizing that an exhaustive coverage of Woolf’s work would be unfeasible. Her two early novels *The Voyage Out* (1915) and *Night and Day* (1919) are too realist, while *Jacob’s Room* (1922) her first experimental, stream-of-consciousness novel, has little connection to the autobiographical. Donna Ashcraft suggests Woolf engaged in ‘courageous self-exploration and innovations of language and form to reflect the new reality of modernism’ (1998: 311). However, rather than being a singular innovator, much of Woolf’s ‘self-exploration’ (via the autobiographical) in language and form derived from being part of a tradition of modernist writers who shared a gendered interest in the expansion of the autobiographical. As well as James and Bergson’s philosophy, there is with Woolf more a capstone rather than a foundation of the tradition.

The chapter is interested in how she draws upon the tradition, in particular what she learned and developed from Sinclair, Richardson and Mansfield. Her work certainly represents an imaginative, feminist writing practice, but it does not do this alone, rather is part of an informal network of female writers, exploring similar issues and practices. Woolf’s use of memory in Bergsonian terms is both distinctive and an integral contribution to the feminist reworking of Bergson, to investigate women’s concerns in aesthetic and figurative language,

but it resembles similar preoccupations in the other writers examined, particularly Richardson and Sinclair. James's idea of stream of consciousness provides Woolf and her female characters with the ability to present their exploration of their conscious moment-to-moment experiences (observations of everyday life) from a gendered perspective in formal, narrative terms. This chapter reviews what Woolf might have known of Bergson and James, but argues that direct influence may be unimportant because Woolf was part of a tradition of gendered understanding of Bergson and James that was also aware of the value of women's autobiography and which stems from Sinclair, Richardson and Mansfield.

Like other women writers, she adapts certain intellectual concepts and understandings featured in the works of Bergson and James to a gendered perspective of her own. In comparison with Mansfield, Woolf's gendered utilizations of Bergsonian concepts is a more thoroughly feminist one and tend on the whole to unequivocally endorse women seeking independence from men. This is in opposition with the positioning they are forced into by patriarchal society. For example, *Mrs Dalloway* is the story of a protagonist who is aware of the cost incurred by her sacrifice of independence for power within the patriarchal world. In that sense she is also more like Richardson, whose work is unarguably feminist, and *Mrs Dalloway* with its praise for London often recalls various aspects of Richardson's *Pilgrimage*, although *To the Lighthouse* with its battle for independence within the family is more reminiscent of Sinclair's *Mary Olivier*.

Woolf deploys the richness of memory and the possibility of thinking alternate lives, derived from the gendered reading of Bergson, as an important weapon in her feminist arsenal and in that sense she is similar to the other writers here who each use memory. Yet they also do so in somewhat different ways, in large part because of the nature of their own memories. However, Woolf's treatment of such subjects as flowers and natural scenes has a similar importance in a gendered way to Sinclair and Mansfield's work, though Woolf, like Sinclair, is more descriptive than Mansfield. While Mansfield and Woolf had a complex, rivalrous relationship (shown in their correspondence), a story like 'Kew Gardens' is close to Mansfield's use of garden imagery. One reason for the greater explicitness of Woolf about both female writing in society and modernist aesthetics is that Woolf, unlike Mansfield,

Richardson or Sinclair, is both an important critic and essayist¹⁹⁴ whose work clarified arguments regarding female/feminist writing, as well as the importance of modernist literature. Like the other writers examined in the thesis, there is an emphasis on both domesticity as a legitimate domain for artistic truth and epiphanies, and as a sphere where new, more liberated forms of female life should prevail.

In her landmark, polemical essay ‘Modern Fiction’ (written 1919/ published 1921) Woolf writes of consciousness via metaphors that suggest experience is complex, partly elusive and multi-faceted. Consciousness for Woolf is a series of images that emphasise translucency rather than straightforward transparency, the hard to define, rather than easily apprehended, a ‘luminous halo’ and a ‘semi-transparent envelope’:

Examine for a moment an ordinary mind on an ordinary day. The mind receives a myriad impressions - trivial, fantastic, evanescent, or engraved with the sharpness of steel. From all sides they come, an incessant shower or innumerable atoms. [...] Life is not a series of gig lamps symmetrically arranged; but a luminous halo, a semi-transparent envelope surrounding us from the beginning of consciousness to the end. (2009: 9)

In what is one of Woolf’s most Bergsonian sounding images about consciousness, she sees life as derived from an ‘incessant shower’ of experiences of the outside world. Life is not fixed, nor limited into something that can be simply, straightforward understood, but which must be processed through self-reflection. In Bergsonian terms she emphasises the primary value of intuitive experience and its subjective nature over anything quantitative and public. In representing the inner life of human beings, what is significant is neither measurable, nor observable from the outside, but like the genre of autobiography can only be shown in fiction as active self-reflection upon experience: to show each character’s inner life is like creating series of autobiographies. Perhaps, significantly, Woolf’s working sources for this essay included May Sinclair, ‘The Novels of Dorothy Richardson’, *The Egoist* 5 [April 1918]) with its account of Richardson’s new method.

¹⁹⁴ Randhir Pratap Singh claims: ‘[t]he reader and critic in Virginia Woolf contributed much towards the development of her as a novelist’ (2004: 1). In 1902, Woolf ‘was introduced to the editor of *The Speaker*, [...] she later met Bruce Richmond, editor of the *Times Literary Supplement* [...]’. The first of Virginia Woolf’s essays was accepted for publication in *The Guardian* on December 21st, 1904. See: Winifred Holtby (2007) *Virginia Woolf: A Critical Memoir* (2007); Hermione Lee, (2010); Rachel Bowlby, (1997).

Woolf's fictional characters imagine and experience the external world through William James' stream of consciousness and they make sense through such reflections. For example, in *Mrs Dalloway* Woolf expands and develops the setting of the party through both Clarissa Dalloway's subjective inner thoughts and feelings, expressing her intuitive self, as well as those which show other characters' inner selves. Clarissa worries about her party saying: 'oh dear, it was going to be a failure; a complete failure' (233). In contrast, Peter Walsh sees the English culture of social deference at its worst: 'the snobbery of the English! [...] How they loved dressing up in gold lace and doing homage! There!' (236). Clarissa and Peter's stream of thoughts describe their respective subjective consciousness as they reflect on their experiences of the party. As James explained in *The Principles of Psychology*: 'If we speak objectively, it is the real relations that appear revealed; if we speak subjectively, it is the stream of consciousness that matches each of them by an inward colouring of its own' (I, 245).

When Leonard¹⁹⁵ and Virginia Woolf founded The Hogarth Press (1917), its stated purpose, according to Malcolm Bradbury, was to develop 'important and experimental work over the next decade' (1993:138), which responded to contemporary culture. According To Sue Roe, Woolf as a publisher of modernism, as well as in her own novels, recognized the fragmentation of western culture and the greater subjectivisation of the human individual (in Bergsonian terms the subject's conscious duration is increasingly fragmented), as a result of 'contemporary and political changes' (17). Such changes included the impact of World War One on society, the fight for female emancipation, and the growth of working-class consciousness in Europe. For example, her psychological account in *Mrs Dalloway* of Clarissa's nervous breakdown is elaborated in relation to Septimus' trauma through shellshock in World War One. The inability to move forward from the repetition of a traumatic event is more usually connected to Freud's theory of the repetition compulsion, but it also mirrors in extreme form ideas propounded by Bergson where he states in *The Creative Mind* 'inner duration is the continuous life of a memory which prolongs the past into the

¹⁹⁵ Leonard Woolf (1880 – 1969) was an English political theorist in the colonial service, author, publisher and Virginia Woolf's husband. Victoria Glendinning. *Leonard Woolf*. (2006).

present, [...]’ (150).¹⁹⁶ This important essay was translated by the leading Imagists T.E. Hulme and F. S. Flint. (Carr 162) Later in her career, Woolf’s close association with the Bloomsbury Group¹⁹⁷ and her relationships with others like Vita Sackville-West encouraged her to write and create more fantastic novels, such as *Orlando* (1928), which explore the possibility of a different understanding of gender, and which made her financially successful and popular. The fantasy romance *Orlando* features a gender-changing protagonist based on Woolf’s love for the androgynous Vita. The story allows an exploration of what it is like to be both a man and a woman in society and therefore shows how society constructs and limits the female gender. Woolf’s desire for independence and an experimental bohemian way of life, as with Mansfield, can be interpreted in Bergsonian terms as fulfilling the concept of ‘free will’ that is part of the *élan vital*, and registers an idea of her own authenticity as an individual separate from the patriarchal world. Like Mansfield, Woolf explores her characters inner and alternative lives through stream-of-consciousness and ‘interior monologue’ techniques.

William James’s concept of an ‘Empirical Self’ is perhaps central to both Mansfield and Woolf, suggesting the possibility of shaping qualitative experience towards the particular focus and end that he describes in *Principles of Psychology*: ‘A man’s empirical thoughts depends on the things he has experienced, but what these shall be is to a large extent determined by his habits of attention’ (I, 286). A key difference between Mansfield and Woolf is that the latter finds her qualitative, subjective time in early adulthood, for example in Mrs Dalloway’s past when she was a young, eligible woman, whereas Mansfield often finds it in childhood, as, for example, in ‘Bliss’. Mansfield uses high levels of focalisation and free indirect discourse within ostensibly omniscient third person narration, as Woolf does in ‘Kew Gardens’. However, there are other texts where Woolf employs first-person

¹⁹⁶ Sigmund Freud (2011) argued that traumatic events can be repeated without being worked through successfully and defined this psychological phenomenon as ‘Repetition Compulsion’. ‘Beyond the Pleasure Principle’ [1920], edited by Todd Dufresne and translated by Gregory C. Richter.

¹⁹⁷ Bradbury (1994) suggests that Bloomsbury had become a gateway to a whole range of liberal aesthetic attitudes towards the modern world. Bradbury continues that it ‘stood for what was *avant-garde* and experimental, not just in writing and publishing, but in sexual relations, economics, painting, politics, philosophy, biography and interior design’ (1994: 170). ‘Bloomsbury’ was arguably the literary climax of Woolf’s life and she called it ‘the most beautiful, the most exciting, the most romantic place in the world,’ in which ‘everything was going to be new; everything was going to be different’ (Bradbury 1994: 171). Others wrote about it: see Stanford Patrick Rosenbaum, (1995), The British Library (2009), and Jonathan Atkin. (2002).

narration, such as *Orlando*, multiple first person-narrations and third-person narration such as in *To the Lighthouse*. Yet, consequently, Woolf more often foregrounds interior monologue/stream of consciousness. There were important literary journals in Kensington such as *The Egoist* magazine¹⁹⁸ (previously called *The New Freewoman*¹⁹⁹) which, according to Brooker (2007), helped to promote women's writing and independence.

In Woolf's case, most of her female characters are seen from the inside, as if she is writing their inner life as they negotiate, on the one hand, insights given by subjective experience and the possibilities of an independent life suggested by their *élan vital*, and, on the other, the external requirements of public, patriarchal time. In imagining and exploring the half-buried memories and thoughts (the life of the mind rather than external actions) she saw, much as Bergson and James did, that such memories and thoughts shape the human subject. Gillies suggests Woolf's narrative technique was concerned to 'capture not the external qualities of the series of moments that constitute a life, but to capture the invisible inner moments in which most important living occurs' (109). In her essay 'Modern Fiction' she argues against the conventions of literary form (compared to exclusive tailors) in favour of expressing the stream of an individual consciousness directly:

[I]f a writer were a free man not a slave, if he could write what he chose, not what he must, if he could base his work upon his own feeling and not upon convention, there would be no plot, no comedy, no tragedy, no love interest or catastrophic in the accepted style, and perhaps not a single button sewn on as the Bond Street tailors would have it. (9)

Ironically, this could be a description of Dorothy Richardson's *Pilgrimage*, which Woolf had dismissed in her review (1919). It also points to the staging of the debate between the radical potential of stream-of-consciousness fiction and a more traditional fictional shaping of experience which dominates Woolf's short stories such as 'The Mark on The Wall' (1917) and 'Kew Gardens' (1919). Woolf's essay emphasises that stream-of-consciousness fiction,

¹⁹⁸ *The Egoist* (James Joyce and T.S. Eliot also wrote for the journal) was a literary magazine in London published from 1914 – 1919. It was founded by Dora Marsden, an English feminist editor of avant-garde literary journals and women's suffrage's activist, the magazine being pro-suffrage. (*The Egoist* can be found at *The Modernist Journal Project*. Online: http://modjourn.org/render.php?view=mjp_object&id=EgoistCollection. Date accessed: 17th October 2012.

¹⁹⁹ *The New Freewoman* was a literary magazine in London, edited by Dora Marsden and owned by Harriet Shaw Weaver, a political activist, and which preceded the *Egoist*.

located as it is in the realm of qualitative experience, requires formal experimentation and a refusal to follow conservative, classical rules (derived from Aristotle) as regard genre, narration, plot dynamics and character interaction, though it is worth saying that *Mrs Dalloway* for all its apparently plotless plot is arguably very much like a traditional novel in many respects, such as character development through crisis and resolution. Like Flaubert's *Madame Bovary* there is certainly continuity of narrative and several strong dramatic scenes which advance the plot and which are connected above all else by their relationship to the main protagonist herself, such as the final culmination of Clarissa Dalloway's party. However, in elevating stream-of-consciousness technique she does foreground her character's subjective life within their consciousness of time. As in novels such as *Mrs. Dalloway*, *To the Lighthouse* or *Orlando* she shows consciousness is bound up in the relationship between an external world and personal reality. Meg Jensen further characterizes Woolf as an explorer of the relationship 'between internal and external, public and private experiences and identities.' (115).

Even though Leonard Woolf claimed that Virginia Woolf had not read Bergson and was not influenced by him (Glendinning, 2006: 424), this chapter agrees with those critics like Paul Douglas (2013: 107 – 127) and Mary Ann Gillies (1996) who argue that Woolf's work parallels Bergson's thinking. Paul Douglas asserts that whether by 'direct absorption or second hand infection,' Woolf is the 'literary incarnation of Bergson's *élan vital*' (116)²⁰⁰. Douglas concludes his argument with *The Waves* (1931), where the story ends with 'double-vision of surging energy and slumping decay, communicated simultaneously in the image of a surging wave' (2007: 116). *The Waves* concludes: 'And in me too the wave rises [...] I strike spurs into my horse. Against you I will fling myself, unvanquished and unyielding, O' Death! The waves broke on the shore' (779). As Douglass points out (2007: 116), this line seems a direct allusion to a passage in Bergson's *Creative Evolution*: 'the whole of humanity, in space and time, [...] one immense army galloping beside and before and behind each of us in an overwhelming charge able to beat down every resistance and clear the most formidable obstacles, perhaps even death' (1911: 271).

²⁰⁰ Frederick Burwick and Paul Douglass (eds.) (2013) *The Crisis in Modernism: Bergson and the Vitalist Controversy*, discusses vitalism and its relation to Bergsonism.

Gillies argues that there were three reasons that Woolf, like other modern writers, was influenced by Bergson, whether directly or indirectly: there was ‘widespread availability of English translations of Bergson’s central works’; his visits and successful lectures at Oxford, Birmingham and London in May 1911 had given him celebrity status; and, lastly, his philosophy dealt with issues such as consciousness, life and its relationship, the ‘nature of time’ which were extremely popular (29-30). Gillies chronicles many critics who claim that Woolf was influenced by Bergson (107). Floris Delattre (1932) was the first, followed by Woolf’s first biographer who met the novelist, Winifrid Holtby (1932/ 2007) as well as David Daiches (1942) and later mid-century critics such as John Graham (1949), James Hafley (2012) and Jean Guiguet (1966). However, according to Gillies, Shiv K. Kumar, *Bergson and the Stream of Conscious Novel* (1963) ‘became the first major study to examine Bergson’s impact on Woolf in an extended manner’ (1996: 107).

Karen Schneider (1989) suggests that as a committed feminist Woolf’s fictions condemn British Victorian patriarchal culture, as well support liberal and feminist values. The past haunted Woolf; on her return to Hyde Park Gate around May 1904 she found a house ‘so redolent with memories of the dead – her mother, her half-sister and now her father [...]’ (Webb 2000: 21). Such an extreme mental state, an alienation from reality caused by a connection to the past, can be seen in *Mrs Dalloway* with Clarissa’s nervous breakdown, as she contemplates Broughton and the life she might have lived. Such alienation is also seen in Septimus, whose past experiences in the war have created memories from which he cannot escape: like Woolf, he is haunted by ghosts, in this case from his life in the trenches. When Clarissa looks in Hatchard’s bookshop window she reads:

‘Fear no more the heat o’ the sun
Nor the furious winter’s rages.’ (133)

These famous lines from Shakespeare’s *Cymbeline* are a funeral dirge, intended as consolation for those who grieve after the loss of a loved one. Septimus alludes to them towards the end of the novel: ‘But he would wait till the very last moment. He did not want to die. Life was good. The sun hot’ (222). When Clarissa hears of Septimus’ suicide, she thinks of this unknown young man who has taken his own life: ‘Fear no more the heat of the sun’ (146). As Wyatt (1973) suggests this allusion structures Woolf’s novel, while, as Webb

(1994) points out, it shows the deep sadness of life in London after World War One, as well as the possibilities of affirmative redemption (in the end Clarissa does not choose to die).

Virginia Woolf, Interior Monologue, and Narrative Technique

Woolf did not begin writing third person narratives at the start of her career, but rather her work was often closer to that of Molly Bloom's soliloquy, demonstrating an acute, focused interest in what a female first person narrative could do to dramatize both the value of subjective experience and the feminist importance of such a textual and aesthetic manoeuvre. In this sense it is in some ways closer to the kind of non-traditional text she outlines in 'Modern Fiction'. As Dominic Head has remarked, the rise of the new short story was coincident with the aesthetics of modernism, and stream of consciousness was a crucial part of this progression. (1992:1) Woolf's ironic 'An Unwritten Novel' (first appearing in *The London Mercury*²⁰¹ in 1920) and later featured in *Monday or Tuesday: Eight Stories* (1921), is an example of interior monologue, involving stream of consciousness by an unnamed first-person narrator travelling on a train. (2000: 25 – 38) While reading *The Times*, a British newspaper of public record, the narrator notices a woman opposite with an unhappy expression on her face, and thinks that her character can be interpreted, especially from the look in her eyes. In this sense the short story elaborates (while finally undermining) the way in which the realist novel was constructed and the idea that a full, realist world can ever be more than fictionalised (since the narrator discovers at the end her speculation as to the unnamed woman's character are incorrect: rather than a lonely spinster she is a happy elderly lady meeting a relative). 'Well, my world's done for! What do I stand on? What do I know? That's not Minnie. There never was Moggridge. Who am I? Life's bare as bone' (34). The woman, whom the narrator has dubbed Minnie Marsh, becomes disturbed in the narrator's eyes, the narrator implying that there is a powerful distinction between private and public experience and reality at work behind this occurrence:

As if she heard me, she looked up, shifted slightly in her seat and sighed. She seemed to apologise and at the same time to say to me, "If only you knew!" Then she looked at life again. "But I do know," I answered silently, glancing at the *Times* for manners'

²⁰¹ *The London Mercury* (1919-1939) was an important modernist literary periodical. See Matthew Huculak (2009) 'The *London Mercury* (1919-1939) and Other Moderns'.

sake. "I know the whole business. 'Peace between Germany and the Allied Powers was yesterday officially ushered in at Paris—Signor Nitti, the Italian Prime Minister—a passenger train at Doncaster was in collision with a goods train...' We all know — the *Times* knows — but we pretend we don't."... Again I dipped into my great reservoir of life. "Take what you like," I continued, "births, death, marriages, Court Circular, the habits of birds, Leonardo da Vinci, the Sandhills murder, high wages and the cost of living—oh, take what you like," I repeated, "it's all in the *Times*!" Again with infinite weariness she moved her head from side to side until, like a top exhausted with spinning, it settled on her neck. (23)

The phrase 'Again I dipped into my great reservoir of life' is arguably ironic suggesting the gap epitomised by the difference between the sheer density of public information from the *Times* and the woman's own peculiar agitation. Such is her private but forceful experience of a life that is fundamentally unknowable for others, as much for the *Times*, as for the narrator themselves. If it is true, as this story claims, that life is inherently provisional, multiplicitous, inconsistent, the new fiction should recognise that fact, accepting the argument of Woolf's own essays that any form of narration is metafictional by nature.²⁰² It also connects this argument to the way in which objective, public time ignores the actuality of qualitative subjective experience and its values, which is of particular significance for a feminist.

'The Mark on the Wall' (published in *Two Stories* in 1917 and later in 1921) is first person narration and an example of literary impressionism, which arguably shows Woolf's debt to such writers, influenced by Bergson and James, as Sinclair and Richardson, as well as her anxiety about their method. The female narrator operates almost wholly in qualitative time, blurring past memories and present together in her fluid meditation on what the mark on the wall might mean:

Perhaps it was the middle of January in the present year that I first looked up and saw the mark on the wall. In order to fix a date it is necessary to remember what one saw. So now I think of the fire; the steady film of yellow light upon the page of my book; the three chrysanthemums in the round glass bowl on the mantelpiece. (51)

As the story progresses, the mark and her thoughts appear and disappear, as if they form a thread running in and out of the narrator's reminiscences, while the narrator's stream of consciousness ranges extensively over time and space, driven by the narrative uncertainty of ever being sure what the mark is and how it was made:

²⁰² D'hoker (2008); Peter Huhn and Markus Kempf (2009).

But for that mark, I'm not sure about it; I don't believe it was made by a nail after all; it's too big, too round, for that. I might get up, but if I got up and looked at it, ten to one I shouldn't be able to say for certain; because once a thing's done, no one ever knows how it happened. (52)

The female narrator recognises that her stream of consciousness or mental associations are in continual flow and movement, a set of abstract ramblings, where identifying the actuality of the mark on the wall in the end hardly matters:

'No, no nothing is proved, nothing is known'... And if I were to get up at this very moment and ascertain that the mark on the wall is really what shall we say? 'Where was I? What has it all been about? A tree? A river? The Downs? Whitaker's Almanack? The fields of asphodel? I can't remember a thing. Everything's moving, falling, slipping, vanishing...' (58)

Finally, a figure, most probably a man who is in the story, intervenes, after saying he will go to buy a newspaper (a sign of public experience and quantitative time) and explains the mark is actually a snail. Therefore he brings the dangerously interminable, possibly rambling story to a sudden end as patriarchal, quantitative time suddenly intrudes and restores public order. David Bradshaw comments: 'An experience which for the narrator has been cryptic, enthralling, and uplifting is terminated with the suddenness of a pistol shot' (2008: xv). Rebecca Walkowitz directly links the story playfulness and obsessive inconsequentiality to Woolf's desire to refuse the utility of wartime necessity and obsessive literality, which she believed was encouraging patriarchy and jingoism (Woolf was a conscientious objector) (119 – 144).

'The Mark on the Wall,' however, is also a wry, ambivalent staging about the relationship of the feminist need for a Bergsonian emphasis on qualitative experience and Jamesian emphasis on stream of consciousness. This is opposed to the problematic aspect of formlessness and shapelessness, which, as we saw in Woolf's review of Richardson, was something she acutely feared. It is a debate and a tension which is not fully resolved until much later in her career, but we see here how aware she is of the problem. It is the male force of patriarchy and public time which literally forces a conclusion, and a form and shape to what could have been an interminable stream of associations and qualitative experience.

‘Indirect Interior Monologue’ characterizes a continuous relation between the characters and narrator and the reader, so the narrator is a constant guide to the reader. This is typical where third-person narration, such as in Mansfield, becomes an extended, extreme version of focalisation and free-indirect discourse. Woolf’s use of such ‘indirect interior monologue’ within third person narration (a species of FIT) allows her to give voice to her fictional characters’ inner lives. For example, in *To the Lighthouse* (especially Parts 1 and 3) we can examine where and how Woolf shows the characters' interior thoughts and their experience of qualitative time (synthesizing in her approach a simultaneous use of third and second person narration):

For how would you like to be shut up for a whole month at a time, and possibly more in stormy weather, upon a rock the size of a tennis lawn? she would ask; and to have no letters or newspapers, and to see nobody; if you were married, not to see your wife, not to know how your children were,—if they were ill, if they had fallen down and broken their legs or arms; to see the same dreary waves breaking week after week, and then a dreadful storm coming, and the windows covered with spray, and birds dashed against the lamp, and the whole place rocking, and not be able to put your nose out of doors for fear of being swept into the sea? How would you like that? She asked, addressing herself particularly to her daughters. (9)

Mrs. Ramsay, as she describes the desolate, isolate and dull location of the summer house, is speaking to her daughters by way of herself, but it seems unlikely this is dialogue or actually spoken due to the absence of any speech indication. Woolf uses the narrator to represent each of the character’s inner consciousness in the phrase ‘she would ask’. Hyphens and semi-colons suggest the easy linkages of these images in Mrs. Ramsay’s mind. Yanxia Sang comments: ‘she uses the conjunction “for” as an indication of the beginning of this monologue and produces an easy and natural shift from objective description to the character’s interior monologue’ (174-175). Mrs. Ramsay’s qualitative experience recognizes the fragmentation of her conscious perceptions and the inner questions she address with herself and to her surroundings. Her constant negotiation between public and private spheres, demonstrates a specific understanding of the relationship between the external world, one’s inner subjectivity, and personal reality as a creation of her qualitative sense of experience. J. Hillis Miller praises Woolf’s use of indirect discourse to show a character’s inner life: ‘the consciousness of the narrator married to the consciousness of the character and speaking for it. [...] *To the Lighthouse* is a masterwork of the exploration of the consciousness of others with the tool of indirect discourse’ (171-173). Mrs. Ramsay’s insights are suggestive of

Bergson's concepts of subjective, qualitative experience through intuition, since the reader sees other characters and the outside world from Mrs. Ramsay's point of view. Woolf's highly lyrical language gives additional fluidity to demonstrate intuitive perception, using metaphors, images from nature and allusions to art. For example, in *The Waves* Woolf employs a poetic and symbolic imagining of the sea to transfer the reader's attention to the inner life of the character's consciousness:

'The sun had not yet risen.... the sea was slightly creased as if a cloth had wrinkles in it. Gradually as the sky whitened a dark line lay on the horizon dividing the sea from the sky and the grey cloth became barred with thick strokes moving, one after another, beneath the surface, following each other, pursuing each other, perpetually. As they neared the shore each bar rose, heaped itself, broke and swept a thin veil of white water across the sand. The wave paused, and then drew out again, sighing like a sleeper whose breath comes and goes unconsciously.' (3)

She emphasises the continuous rhythm of movement from one point to another, the tension between opposites and the cyclical energy of the ocean as similar to the subject's stream of consciousness (the wave is like a breathing 'sleeper'), the patterns and rhythms by which that subject makes sense of the flux of experience.

Woolf's depiction of the streets of London in *Mrs Dalloway* is an example of perceiving London through intuitive qualitative experience that simultaneously addresses gender issues, emphasising a sense of London as the potential scene of alienation rather than simply plenitude and freedom. In terms of London literature, such depictions of alienation are not uncommon, for example in T.S. Eliot's *The Waste Land*, and are in contrast to Richardson's generally positive and emancipatory descriptions of life in London already discussed. Woolf's conscious experiences in witnessing the secondhand horrors of WWI from the home front gets carried into her descriptions of the city, in phrases that, while mocking, have a shade of anxiety about them, like 'her bayonets'. Although we should note that, despite any phallic suggestions, both the battling, partying London and the withdrawing evening are female.

...the traffic thinned; motor cars, tinkling, darting, succeeded the lumber of vans; and here and there among the thick foliage of the squares an intense light hung. I resign, the evening seemed to say, as it paled and faded above the battlements and prominences, moulded, pointed, of hotel, flat, and block of shops, I fade, she was beginning, I disappear, but London would have none of it, and rushed her bayonets into the sky, pinioned her, constrained her to partnership in her revelry. (143)

The narrator's constant stream of thoughts about London, in an act of pseudo-personification, is another way of suggesting the hidden, profound nature of what is apprehended by the self. If London is a woman, then it is certainly a middle-class one for Woolf.

One might fancy that day, the London day, was just beginning. Like a woman who had slipped off her print dress and white apron to array herself in blue and pearls, the day changed, put off stuff, took gauze, changed to evening, and with the same sight of exhilaration that a woman breathes ... (142-143)

The omniscient third person narrator disappears and the viewpoint is shifted inside the characters' minds through flashbacks, memories, relations of ideas and transient qualitative moments.

Such a technique never allows the character's thoughts to flow without control; Woolf uses grammar and punctuation to provide the reader with the idea of instability or flux in the event, while simultaneously controlling the expression of the stream of consciousness. In 'Kew Gardens' description of setting, the poetic language and the fragmented conversation of the characters demonstrate the gradual accumulation of indirect interior monologues and the presentation of the characters' inner worlds:

'Come along, Trissie; it's time we had our tea.'
'Wherever *does* one have one's tea?' she asked with the oddest thrill of excitement in her voice, looking vaguely round and letting herself be drawn on down the grass path, trailing her parasol, turning her head this way and that way, forgetting her tea, wishing to go down there and then down there, remembering orchids and cranes among wild flowers, a Chinese pagoda and a crimson crested bird; but he bore her on. (16)

The passage shows Trissie's thoughts, after the young man courting her, suggest tea and guide the reader among her inner thoughts, adding 'she asked with', 'letting herself,' and using semicolons to associate her inner thoughts about the past of the elaborate gardens she has just been viewing in the present. Gerunds like 'looking,' 'letting,' 'turning,' 'wishing,' and 'remembering' strengthen the reader's vision of the continuous present of the situation and help present a flow or stream of unceasing sensory data. Gerunds are also used in *To the Lighthouse* when Mr Ramsay reflects on the mysterious quality of nature (personified as female):

Did Nature supplement what man advanced? Did she complete what he began? With equal complacency she saw his misery, his meanness, and his torture. That dream, of sharing, completing, of finding in solitude on the beach an answer, was then but a reflection in a mirror... (146)

By employing ‘sharing, completing,’ and ‘finding’, the narrator constructs a boundary between nature and culture where they reflect each other like a mirror’s reflection; each environment affects the subject, Mr Ramsay, who is grieving for his many lost loved ones, such as his wife. Mr Ramsay’s indirect interior monologue blurs into the narrative voice due to the use of free indirect speech (the narrator sounds like Mr Ramsay).

Anna Snaith suggests Woolf’s narrators are often anonymous, whether first or third person versions are present in the text, while relating the actions and thoughts of characters other than themselves. (1996: 134) Whether through first or third person narration, the predominance of free indirect discourse and focalisation become so strengthened that these lead Woolf’s style to develop into a mode by which the characters are represented by means of stream of consciousness and qualitative perception of the world and of themselves.

‘Kew Gardens’ (1919)

Woolf and Mansfield had a complex, ambivalent relationship, at once rivalrous and competitive (especially from Woolf’s point of view), but not without a sense of shared modernist aesthetics and feminist work ethic (Lee, 1997: 386-441). According to Goldman, Woolf’s snobbish view of the middle class, ‘colonial’ Mansfield, included some distaste for her Bohemian excess.²⁰³ The relationship between Mansfield’s ‘The Garden Party’ (1922) and Woolf’s ‘Kew Gardens’ (1919) perhaps dates back to their first meeting in February 1917 and to exchanged letters about their interest in Lady Ottoline Morrell’s garden at Garsington Manor, Morrell herself being a crucial nexus for English modernists²⁰⁴.

²⁰³ Goldman points out that Woolf had remarked of Mansfield she was: ‘like a civet cat that has taken to street walking’ (2006:16).

²⁰⁴ Garsington Manor, near Oxford in England, was the home of Lady Ottoline Morrell, an English aristocrat and bohemian social hostess. Mary Ellen Foley (2010) remarks: ‘Lady Ottoline Morrell turned Garsington Manor, her Jacobean country house near Oxford into a combined literary salon, pacifists’ refuge, and near-perpetual party for left-leaning members of the British intelligentsia. From 1915 to 1927, Garsington Manor hosted the likes of W. B. Yeats, Virginia Woolf, D. H. Lawrence, Katherine Mansfield, E. M. Forster, H. G. Wells, Lytton Strachey, and various Huxleys.’ See Seymour, Miranda (2009).

According to Saguaro, Virginia Woolf visited Mansfield's Sussex home in Asheham around August 1917. (2006: 22) Mansfield sent a letter of thanks to Woolf, expressing her observations on Woolf's story 'Flower Bed', which would later become 'Kew Gardens':

[I]t is really very curious and thrilling that we should both, quite apart from each other, be after so very nearly the same thing. [...] Yes, your Flower Bed is *very* good. There's a still, quivering, changing light over it all and a sense of couples dissolving in the bright air which fascinates me.... (Murry, 1929, 61-62)

However, as Saguaro continues, Mansfield sent another earlier letter in August, prior to meeting Woolf, to Lady Morell imagining a narrative set in Garsington Manor's garden, which sounds very like Woolf's 'Flower Bed' and 'Kew Gardens' (23-24):

Your glimpse of the garden, all flying green and gold, made me wonder again *who* is going to write about that flower garden. It might be so wonderful, do you know how I mean? There would be people walking in the garden – several *pairs* of people – their conversation – their slow pacing – their glances as they pass one another – the pauses as the flowers 'come in' as it were – as a bright dazzle, an exquisite haunting scent, a shape so formal and fine, so much a 'flower of the mind' that he who looks at it is really tempted for one bewildering moment to stoop and touch and make *sure*. (Murry, 1929, 60-61) [emphasis in original]

Kathryn Simpson, argues that Woolf's 'Kew Gardens' is 'significantly inspired' by her discussions with Mansfield about Garsington Manor's garden. (2012:176) Anthony Alpers is probably overstating the value of the presumed conversation when he claims: 'the evidence is very strong that Katherine Mansfield in some way helped Virginia Woolf to break out of the mould in which she had been working hitherto' (1980: 252). As the thesis has shown, gardens, as examples of cultivated, aestheticized nature, have a privileged place within the work of female modernists for a variety of reasons, so it is as much about gardens as tropes in such writing, as about any specific garden. Jeffrey Mather (2014) argues, sensibly, that changing aesthetics as regards contemporary Edwardian gardens, as opposed to their Victorian predecessors, informed Woolf's work in Kew Gardens (and presumably other modernist texts). However, while Mansfield's ideas may have helped crystallise Woolf's thoughts, Mansfield's eventual story 'The Garden Party' is really quite different, as it focuses Bergsonian *élan vital* and the female, middle class protagonist's qualitative experience towards the goal of considering social class in a settler colonial setting in New Zealand. Though, as we shall see, Empire is not too far away from Woolf's more metropolitan thoughts, her story does not share the same themes with Mansfield's 'The Garden Party'.

Kew Gardens has been seen by several critics as demonstrating Bergson's influence. In addition, the setting is determinedly as exotic in horticultural terms as an English garden can possibly be – the story mentions several famous landmarks and has a very strong sense of Kew as a place, such as the palm house, which was the horticultural engine room of Empire.²⁰⁵ Several of the characters remember their inner selves and pasts within places associated peripherally with the Empire – China, which included leased imperial footholds such as Shanghai and Hong Kong, and Uruguay often seen as the informal Empire – perhaps restorative memories after World War I's pain and also exotic within a western frame that reminds the reader of how far modernism depended on the non-Western.²⁰⁶ It also creates a post-impressionistic story like Paul Gauguin's exotic art with its experimental use of colours, experimental style and Tahitian setting. Gauguin in his paintings exemplified primitivist art, as well as being an influential producer of wood engraving and woodcuts. The cover of the first Hogarth Press edition of 'Kew Gardens', designed by Vanessa Bell, used a woodcut, perhaps suggesting that Bell was influenced by Gauguin's woodcuts (both shared a love of gardening)²⁰⁷.

The role of memory is central to 'Kew Gardens' (as each character in the story is shown reflecting on subjective memories from the past, and the theme builds through repetition and accumulation of this activity) and in that sense it is more explicitly about the subject of memory than any of Mansfield's stories, although it resembles them in style. The conscious experience of duration (in Bergsonian terms) is shown in 'Kew Gardens' through her fictional character's 'image-memory' which portrays natural scenes like the colourful flowers on a hot summer day in July. The insistent description of the snail's movement in a flower bed suggests a sense of the subjectivity of memory and its attention to almost trivial details

²⁰⁵ Kew was famous for the development of exotic plants, such as the water-lily, especially the giant Amazonian water lily and breadfruit. Such flowers show Woolf's interest in exoticism by mirroring her narrative strategies, which are also similar to the post-impressionistic painting. Desmond, Ray. *Kew: A History*. (1998); Tatiana Holway. *The Flower of Empire: An Amazonian Water Lily, the Quest to Make it Bloom, and the World it Created*. (2013) Shelley Saguaro argues: 'Kew Gardens represents, on the one hand, all that was integral to British Colonialism, particularly in its Victorian heyday, and equally, on the other, the Empire's probable dissolution, and certainly its severe modification' (2006: 11).

²⁰⁶ Peter Winn "British Informal Empire in Uruguay in the Nineteenth Century," *Past and Present* 73 (1976): 100-126.

²⁰⁷ Nuala Hancock *Charleston and Monk's House: The Intimate House Museums of Virginia Woolf and Vanessa Bell* (2012) and Caroline Zoob *Virginia Woolf's Garden: The Story of the Garden at Monk's House* (2013).

by way of subjective experience. It serves in a small part as a metaphor for the slowness of experienced time and the way it is naturally structured by memory. James Hafley argues that the 'snail is using his part of the vital impetus' and that 'Kew Gardens' 'is an attempt to show the "vital impetus" at work in vegetable, insect, and human life, fighting, with differing degrees of success, the battle against matter' (1954: 44).

The narrator describes the effect of the summer weather on the petals of the flowers (the halcyon summer's day described with its unusually good British weather is particularly evocative), the shapes of the leaves, as well as summer fauna, such as dragonflies and butterflies. The narrative follows different visitors to the gardens by showing the reader brief flashbacks of their lives as they pass by the same flowerbed. The people are divided into four couples: Eleanor and Simon with two of their children (Caroline and Hubert), an older man (unnamed) with William, a young man (unnamed) with a woman (Trissie), and two elderly women (unnamed and coming from a lower middleclass background). Jane Goldman, describes 'Kew Gardens' as a 'vivid celebration of colour. Colours here are almost the language of flowers, and are closely connected to the wafts of human conversation drifting past the flower beds, the story's main focus' (1998: 112). This partial reinvention of the 'language of flowers'²⁰⁸ represents Woolf's attempt to define her own, feminist artistic narrative expression against patriarchal conventions, while still recognising their subjective value to women.

'The petals were voluminous enough to be stirred by the summer breeze, and when they moved, the red, blue and yellow lights passed one over the other, staining an inch of the brown earth beneath with a spot of the most intricate colour' (44). 'Flowers' traditionally symbolise women's beauty and act as signifiers for particular meanings. However, like Mansfield, Woolf uses her images of flowers to do more serious work; in almost Proustian fashion they evoke past memories – Bergson's subjective time and memory - either through their odour or appearance.

Woolf's narrator, seemingly omniscient third person, depicts experiences which include feelings and thoughts within an aesthetic, lyrical narrative with strong pictorial values. The passage below begins with a description of the oval shaped flowerbed, in which the flowers are red, yellow, and blue, having heart or tongue shaped petals. As the petals fall to the

²⁰⁸ Like Mansfield, Woolf's use of the language of flowers is a feminist and oppositional one.

ground, they stain the earth momentarily with their colours, flashing in the air, while petals from the flowers rise through the sky in the summer breeze. In 'Kew Gardens' on this July day, men, women, and children walk through the gardens admiring the flowers²⁰⁹ and their movements resemble butterflies:

From the oval shaped flower-bed there rose perhaps a hundred stalks spreading into heart-shaped or tongue-shaped leaves half way up and unfurling at the tip red or blue or yellow petals marked with spots of colour raised upon the surface; and from the red, blue or yellow gloom of the throat emerged a straight bar, rough with gold dust and slightly clubbed at the end. The petals were voluminous enough to be stirred by the summer breeze, and when they moved, the red, blue and yellow lights passed one over the other, staining an inch of the brown earth beneath with a spot of the most intricate colour. The light fell either upon the smooth, grey back of a pebble, or, the shell of a snail with its brown circular veins... (44)

This emphatically visual and colourful description of the flowers conveys in great detail how they would appear to someone actually experiencing them. The shell of a snail is seen trying to make its way in the flower bed, perhaps an example of life's purposefulness but certainly an unusual way to divide a narrative. As the story progresses men and women are seen passing around the multi-colourful flowers, showing 'a curiously irregular movement, not unlike that of the white and blue butterflies who crossed the turf in zig-zag flights from bed to bed' (44).

The first situation shown is a family with a husband, wife and children, but as the man passes by the 'flower-bed' he thinks about his past. The flowers remind the man of his previous love, who was named after a flower, ('Lily') but who turned him down, and he is strolling ahead of his wife in order to have space to consider his private thoughts about this past love. The characters speak and think, and the story is essentially an indirect interior monologue delivered by the characters, although the dialogue is not actually spoken and addressed to anyone.

'Fifteen years ago I came here with Lily,' he thought. We sat somewhere over there by a lake and I begged her to marry me all through the hot afternoon. (45)

²⁰⁹ From the reader's perspective, the flowers could be a 'rose' (a woody perennial *Rosa*) in a bed of roses. Later, when Simon remembers, he recalls his lover, Lily, which suggests '*Lilium*', a highly fragrant flower.

The husband's 'moments of being' - in effect epiphanies of Bergsonian subjective time - are consciously experienced in the present but occurred fifteen years ago when he was emotionally attached to Lily²¹⁰ and to her affections for him.²¹¹ In parallel, the wife is also thinking about her past, when she was kissed by an old woman among other girls, while 'sitting before their easels twenty years ago, down by the side of a lake, painting the water-lilies, the first red water-lilies I'd ever seen' (Woolf, 'Kew Gardens' 45). In both cases they are not remembering prompted by a specific place where past events occurred as might be more typical for Romantic memory, but more generally due to associations prompted by being in public gardens. Woolf's definition of 'moments of being' is to experience one's social, cultural or psychological act with intense awareness; in Bergsonian terms each character is vividly demonstrating their intuitive perception and experience of the past.

The snail that passes under the leaves, its shell stained with different colours reflecting the petals of the flowers, serves as a dramatic, narrative device – it divides up the sequence of different characters in the story. The snail's progress is interrupted by two men who cross its path; a young man and an older one. The old man's 'shaky method of walking' represents his age and he has a conversation with himself:

He smiled to himself and again began to talk, as if the smile had been an answer. He was talking about spirits—the spirits of the dead, who, according to him, were even now telling hi all sorts of odd things about their experiences in Heaven. (46)

Such musing seems particularly evocative after the carnage of World War I, but perhaps there is also an allusion to spiritualism and the SPR here. William had to distract the older man from the public's intent look by pointing to a flower:

After looking at it for a moment in some confusion the old man bent his ear to it and seemed to answer a voice speaking from it, for he began talking about the forests of Uruguay which he had visited hundreds of years ago in company with the most beautiful young woman in Europe. He could be heard murmuring about forests of Uruguay blanketed with the wax petals of tropical roses, nightingales, sea beaches,

²¹⁰ According to the *Language of Flowers* (1884) the name 'Lily' has many connotations: Day-Lily means 'Coquetry' or 'flirtation', Imperial-Lily means 'Majesty', White-Lily mean s 'Purity' or 'Sweetness', Yellow-Lily means 'Falsehood' or 'Gaiety', and Lily of the Valley means 'Return of Happiness'. (Kate Greenaway 1884: 27)

²¹¹ Woolf firstly mentioned 'Moments of Being' in her autobiographical essay 'A Sketch of the Past' in 1939, but such 'moments of being' can still be recognized in her previous literary works. (Lee, 1997:16-21)

mermaids, and women drowned at sea, as he suffered himself to be moved on by William, upon whose face the look of stoical patience grew slowly deeper and deeper. (47)

The exoticism of the flowers in the garden reminds him of the forests of Uruguay, the ‘tropical roses, nightingales’ and mermaids there, when he visited with the ‘most beautiful young woman in Europe’, therefore acting as prompt to his flow of subjective memory. His memories flow like William’s idea of stream of consciousness: ‘[it] does not appear to itself chopped up in bits [...] It is nothing joined; it flows. A “river” or a “stream” are the metaphors by which it is most naturally described’ (*The Principles of Psychology*, I. 239). As Oakland suggests, the old man’s memories are perfectly at home in the exotic landscape of Kew Gardens with their fabulous, perhaps slightly delirious, but certainly subjective references to ‘mermaids, water rebirth symbolism, mystical myths, nightingales and death’ (1987: 270).

The last couple that passes the flowerbed consists of a young man and woman who seem to be lovers or at least in love – with some overt phallic symbolism deployed in terms of the parasol and the earth: ‘The couple stood still on the edge of the flower bed, and together pressed the end of her parasol deep down into the soft earth’ (49). The current time for them is one of sexual, spiritual anticipation: ‘the season before the smooth pink folds of the flower have burst their gummy case, when the wings of the butterfly, though fully grown, are motionless in the sun’ (49). They are probably not financially well off, as the young man finds it lucky it is not Friday, since the garden charges sixpence on that day.

Woolf’s ‘Kew Gardens’ ends, drawing attention to the narrator’s use of poetic language in his/her description of the gardens, concentrating on the way ‘wordless voices’ convey emotions of various kinds:

...their voices went wavering from them as if they were flames lolling from the thick waxen bodies of candles. Voices. Yes, voices. Wordless voices, breaking the silence suddenly with such depth of contentment, such passion of desire... (50)

This final reflection on the garden sees peoples’ experiences, plants, flowers melt into a cloudy atmosphere with voices that echo images: the snail, butterflies, water-drops, flowers, buses, an aeroplane. John Oakland suggests: ‘The cumulative theme-voice of *Kew Gardens* is composed of descriptions, fragmented conversations and interior monologues which all generalise character in a dramatically creative way that eventually leads to the universality of the voices in the final paragraph’ (1987: 267). We might add that this universality of voice gestures more than a little towards the pantheism or panpsychism in the conclusion of May

Sinclair's *Mary Olivier*, while gesturing forward to the figure of Septimus in *Mrs Dalloway*. In the conclusion of 'Kew Gardens' the entire universe becomes figured as alive with meaning, purpose and spirit, which as well as of thematic importance, becomes in part a technical solution to what Woolf saw in her review as the dangers of chaos and disorder implicit in Richardson's method. This is partly by embedding subjectivism in the lives of multiple characters (like Mansfield) and partly by reaching towards a conclusion where any subjectivism is dissolved into a far grander, universalist affirmation of life: 'simply life'.

Mrs Dalloway (1925)

Clarissa Dalloway, the protagonist, is one of the most memorable fictional characters in early twentieth century literature, (she first appeared as a minor character in Woolf's *The Voyage Out*). Clarissa, in effect, undertakes a gendered Bergsonian and Jamesian exploration of womanhood in the 1920s, describing a single day in London by means of subjective, qualitative memories and her intense duration. The main characters are aware of the coexistence of past and present moments of being in their lives. Harvena Richter argues: 'the most dramatic way of entering the character's consciousness is by the modes of time – those modes are intimately connected with the moment of being and the way the character apprehends it emotionally' (1970: 149). Woolf also deploys a Jamesian stream of consciousness to explore the fragmentary selves of several characters, including Dalloway herself, demonstrating vividly their thoughts, feelings, recollections and what they imagine. The thoughts and memories of the characters move backwards and forward through time, though shell-shocked Septimus is more a victim of a continuous past that he cannot escape and which overwhelms him.

Woolf's gendered Bergsonian and Jamesian narrative strategies, concentrate much more on 'show' rather than 'tell', offering both an immediacy and vivacity to the novel. Deploying Bergson's concept of conscious duration, Woolf emphasizes the experience of qualitative time as opposed to the externality of public time. Time is quicker or faster depending on the memories and sensations that fill it. William James argues in *The Principles of Psychology* Volume I: '*In general a time filled with varied and interesting experiences seems short in passing, but long as we look back. On the other hand, a tract of time empty of experiences seems long in passing, but in retrospect short*' (624). Clarissa is an upper-class hostess of late

middle-age and travels around central London, preparing for a party she is to host that evening:

Mrs. Dalloway said she would buy the flowers herself. For Lucy had her work cut out for her. The doors would be taken off their hinges; Rumpelmayer's men were coming. And then, thought Clarissa Dalloway, what a morning - fresh as if issued to children on a beach.

What a lark! What a plunge! For so it had always seemed to her, when with a little squeak of the hinges, which she could hear now, she had burst open the French windows and plunged at Bourton into the open air. How fresh, how calm, stiller than this of course, the air was in the early morning; like the flap of a wave; the kiss of a wave; chill and sharp and yet (for a girl of eighteen as she then was) solemn [...] (129)

From the beginning of the novel, which begins peremptorily in the middle of the action, much as Mansfield's short stories do, Woolf shows two sides of the main protagonist. First, Mrs. Dalloway mirrors the women of the class of Woolf's mother being married with household servants, delegating to servants many of the complexities of such preparations. While Lucy deals with the workmen, Clarissa will buy flowers – although she would normally send someone. Second, Woolf also reveals Clarissa's inner life, resembling that of a much younger woman, capable of childlike pleasure and living with a past that is continuously present (remembering her early adult years at Bourton during a long, summer's day), especially regarding her partial regrets about lost possibilities. In a sense Woolf could have been a woman much like Mrs. Dalloway, if she had married a successful man with a career in public service ahead of him and settled down to be the traditional 'Angel in the House', complete with children and charity work. Rather indecisive, Clarissa perceives time qualitatively, reconfiguring the external world differently, largely rejecting public or official perceptions of time. She resembles Bertha in Mansfield's 'Bliss', who feels like skipping when she is outside.

The impressions of this summer's day in London create a set of associative memories rendered in stream of consciousness. Thinking of the past, she recollects Peter Walsh vividly, pondering what he might have said, her impression of the intensity of which contrasts with the recent dullness of his letters (see below). In this stream of consciousness Clarissa impressionistically responds to living in Westminster in a manner suggestive of Richardson's work:

For having lived in Westminster - how many years now? over twenty - one feels even in the midst of the traffic, or waking at night, Clarissa was positive, a particular hush, or

solemnity; an indescribable pause; a suspense (but that might be her heart, affected, they said, by influenza) before Big Ben strikes. There! Out it boomed. First a warning, musical; then the hour, irrevocable. The leaden circles dissolved in the air. Such fools we are, she thought, crossing Victoria Street. (129)

Julia Briggs says Clarissa lives at the 'heart of the English establishment – at Westminster, the seat of government' (2005:133), where ironically society prohibits her full participation and free expression. This is not coincidental and Clarissa inhabits that dilemma between her private and public time. Her qualitative past memory is interrupted by the symbolic chiming and striking of Big Ben as public time and the measurement of patriarchy and empire. The clock facilitates the curious fusion of divergent consciousness, including later Clarissa being aware of Septimus: 'The clock began striking. The young man had killed himself; but she did not pity him; with the clock striking the hour, one, two, three, she did not pity him, with all this going on' (245). Thus, while Big Ben is public time, it can also echo internalized realities, even random thoughts about Septimus. As she returns to the party, she forces herself to dismiss such intimate connection, created by the city, with a stranger for her guests; Septimus remains an unnamed, forgotten young man, whose story briefly interrupts their party.

By comparing the morning air to the 'flap of a wave; the kiss of a wave' (129) Clarissa recollects sensations, evokes impressions which invoke the past. As in 'Kew Gardens', this leads to contemplation of trees and flowers in Bourton's garden during her youth. Woolf's narrative surprises the reader by its radical combination of elements of the present in the past. Only when Clarissa recalls Peter Walsh speaking does the reader fully understand the integration of memory within present consciousness, which technique mirrors Bergsonian subjective time, as well as James's concept of 'image-memory':

[L]ooking at the flowers, at the trees with the smoke winding off them and the rooks rising, falling; standing and looking until Peter Walsh said, 'Musing among the vegetables?' - was that it? - 'I prefer men to cauliflowers' - was that it? He must have said it at breakfast one morning when she had gone out on to the terrace - Peter Walsh.

He would be back from India one of these days, June or July, she forgot which, for his letters were awfully dull; it was his sayings one remembered; his eyes, his pocket-knife, his smile, his grumpiness and, when millions of things had utterly vanished - how strange it was! - a few sayings like this about cabbages. (129)

If Clarissa's past and present are perceived together, then they also contrast since in the past one senses her genuine desire for Peter, when much younger. Ironically, her refusal of his offer of marriage is motivated by a desire for a more dependable match financially and socially. Like Mansfield, Woolf is capable of using an idealised past to point to the limitations and waste of the present, an aspect less seen in Richardson and Sinclair, whose use of the past is not straightforwardly critical of the present. One senses in desire for Peter a shadow of her lesbian, largely unspoken desire for her friend Sally. Woolf presents a set of images in a Jamesian stream-of-consciousness where metonyms for Peter - his 'pocket-knife,' 'his smile' and so forth—are each like an 'image-memory' in action, encapsulating the whole person, thereby rendering Peter peripheral.

By combining past and present, Woolf uses her 'tunnelling method' – Woolf's own phrase - to link living, subjective immediacies of experience mainly through stream-of-consciousness into indirect interior monologue. Externality intrudes, disturbing the intensity of Clarissa's point of view, such interruptions as her neighbour's thoughts: 'A charming woman, Scrope Purvis thought her (knowing her as one does know people who live next door to one in Westminster); [...]' (129). Such 'tunnelling' establishes multiple or fuller perceptions in practice, so, as Kime Scott notes: 'the tunnel metaphor and its application are spatial, temporal, aesthetic, interpersonal and culturally aware' (1996, Vol II: 16). Tierney notes Woolf alluded to such 'tunnelling' processes in her 'diary when she gave temporal dimension to characters depicted in the immediacy of their present existence by providing them with a rich consciousness of their own past' (1999: 1011). Virginia Woolf wrote on Monday, 15th of October 1923:

It took me a year's groping to discover what I call my tunnelling process, by which I tell the past by instalments, as I have need of it. This is my prime discovery so far; and the fact that I've been so long finding it proves [...] (Leonard Woolf, 1953: 60)

Such 'tunnelling' processes enabled Woolf to intercalate time sequences impressionistically, replacing traditional techniques of conscious recollection by invoking inner emotional responses in the past, such feelings more important than a linear account of events. One sees this in the emergent relationship between Clarissa and Sally Seton, intensifying their intimacy in the exchange of a kiss at Bourton.

Consider Mrs. Dalloway's intuitive perception of passers-by moving from Bond Street to Oxford Street. The narrative follows the passage of their internal thoughts –moving from an indirect interior monologue of one to the internal thoughts of the next, making Mrs Dalloway's journey typical of the *flâneuse*²¹². For the female *flâneur* such a process of strolling and observing makes the city streets as exciting as the characters that inhabit them. When Mrs. Dalloway goes to the window to find out the 'violent explosion' opposite Mulberry's shop, she reflects on people's reaction to the mysterious car (later revealed to be the Queen travelling with drawn blinds):

Yet rumours were at once in circulation from the middle of Bond Street to Oxford Street on one side, to Atkinson's scent shop on the other, passing invisibly, inaudibly, like a cloud, swift, veil-like upon hills, falling indeed with something of a cloud's sudden sobriety and stillness upon faces which a second before had been utterly disorderly. But now mystery had brushed them with her wing; they heard the voice of authority; the spirit of religion was abroad with her eyes bandaged tight and her lips gaping wide. (136)

The narrator portrays the animation of the crowded streets, the potential awe of the people, the transformative possibilities of shifting perception. The passage also encapsulates the contrast of modern and Edwardian sensibilities. The confrontation between the reaction of the passers-by and the narrative voice that layers the possibilities conveys the uncertainties of lived experience, emphasized by the repetition in the narrator's speculation: 'But nobody knew whose face had been seen. Was it the Prince of Wales's, the Queen's, the Prime Minister's? Whose face was it? Nobody knew' (136). Such intense use of indirect interior monologue within a third person narration allows a fluidity and movement in the scene. According to Bergsonian thinking, Mrs. Dalloway's interior monologue creates her own image-memory from the external perspectives, making of the public event a subjective time and view functioning within an inseparable stream of consciousness. In London Clarissa

²¹² A French word that means 'stroller' used to describe people who enjoy walking around a city with no purpose than to observe and see its sights. Charles, Baudelaire, 'The Painter of Modern Life.' (1972). Priscilla Parkhurst Ferguson, 'The *Flâneur* on and off the Streets of Paris' (1994); Bruce Mazlish, 'The *Flâneur*: From Spectator to Representation,' (1994) and Rob, Shields, 'Fancy Footwork: Walter Benjamin's Notes on *Flânerie*.' (1994).

Woolf's interest in the *flâneur* concept dates back to 1920. In her review, of 'The Letters of Henry James' Woolf was interested in Henry James's thoughts on London as he argued: 'I am attracted to London in spite of the long list of reasons why I should not be; I think it, on the whole, the best point of view in the world'. James further continues: 'If London is primarily a point of view, if the whole field of human activity is only a prospect and a pageant, then [...] the store of impressions heaps itself up, what is the aim of the spectator, what is the purpose of his hoard?' (2003, n.p)

encounters a fluidity of experience and sensation caused by the vertiginous speed of modernity, effectively indicated by the aeroplane writing signs in the sky, which people interpret variously.²¹³

Although they are briefly proximate, Septimus and Dalloway never meet, but both represent significant perspectives among many. Septimus's voice and characterisation is uncanny, spectral, disturbed. If Clarissa recalls the past vividly, nonetheless it does not traumatize her in the present as it does the ex-soldier, offering her more a source for an alternate inner life. In contrast, Septimus' consciousness seems stuck in between past and present, exerting little control, at times lost in the horrors of World War I. Experiencing psychological and social disorders, he exhibits clear signs of shellshock, or PTSD (post-traumatic shock syndrome).²¹⁴ While shellshock is usually associated with soldiers on the front line, there is evidence that civilians sometimes suffered the equivalent of shell-shock, due to war news.²¹⁵ These are equally 'moments of being,' to use Woolf's phrase, and Septimus's stream of thoughts are

²¹³ Nick Hubble (2009) "'The Freedom of the City': Mansfield and Woolf" (2009) discusses the difference between Woolf and Mansfield's attitudes to gender and freedom, while proposing the indirect influence of both William James and Henri Bergson. Hubble argues that Mansfield gave Woolf 'the freedom of the city' demonstrated especially in *Mrs Dalloway*, where Clarissa's jaunt around the city denotes Bergson's concept of 'Free Will' within the subject's experience of qualitative time since, as Bergson argues in *Time and Free Will*, 'freedom is the relation of the concrete self to the act which it performs. This relation is indefinable just because we are free' (1910: 219).

²¹⁴ Shellshock is a term that describes the reaction of the soldiers in World War One, mainly, to the traumas of the battle and the intensity of the bombardment with signs like panic, sleep-walking or talking incessantly. (Adam Hochschild, *To End all Wars: A Story of Loyalty and Rebellion, 1914 - 1918* (2011) For example, both poets Siegfried Sassoon (1886-1967) and Wilfred Owen (1893-1918) were soldiers who fought at the front. Sassoon 'was wounded twice, and Owen returned to the front after having been injured, only to be killed a week before the Armistice of November 1918. They were friends and both thoroughly convinced of the incompetence of those in charge, whom they saw as being responsible for the senseless waste of young lives.' Before Owen's death, he wrote to Sassoon about his 'excellent little servant Jones' who describes the horror that dehumanized the male body on an extraordinary scale: '[...] the boy on my side, shot through the head, lay on top of me, soaking my shoulder, for half an hour. Catalogue? Photograph? Can you photograph the crimson-hot iron as it cools from the smelting? This is what Jones's Blood looked like, and felt like. My senses are charred' (Mackean 2005, 239-245). Peter Leese, *Shell Shock* 2002.

²¹⁵ Trudi Tate (1998) has argued that *The Lancet*, a weekly medical journal founded in 1823 by Thomas Wakley, did not report any sign of civilians suffering from neurosis or shell shock around September 1915. Tate suggests: 'it was arguing that no one, whether soldier or civilian, would suffer any long-term mental problems as a result of the conflict' (11). Tate suggests that civilian neuroses were largely caused by boredom, but a woman was admitted into Leicester Mental Hospital as a direct result of war news; five of her seven sons at the front had been wounded'. An example of shell shock is clearly observed in T.S. Eliot's *The Waste Land* (1922), in which the confusing, chaotic and fragmented poem parallels the sense of devastation and defines the signs of shell shock as the sense of paranoia.

presented as indirect interior monologue, conveying his bewilderment, past and present fuse as if one entity:

The world wavered and quivered and threatened to burst into flames. It is I who am blocking the way, he thought. Was he not being looked at and pointed at; was he not weighted there, rooted to the pavement, for a purpose? But for what purpose? (136)

The first sentence clearly recalls the incendiary world of the trenches. First, he is concerned that he might be impeding the public on the pavement, but this also reflects his sense of alienation, typifying his lost generation of young men, their plight ignored by the public. He cannot imagine for what unknown purpose onlookers look at him, his trauma largely operating at an unconscious level, meaning he cannot fully grasp its profundity.

Septimus walks to the Broad Walk in Regent's Park with his Italian wife, Rezia, where they see the aeroplane that 'rushed out of the clouds' skywriting a message, which people try to interpret:

'Look, look, Septimus!' she cried. For Dr. Holmes had told her to make her husband (who had nothing whatever seriously the matter with him but was a little out of sorts) take an interest in things outside himself. So, thought Septimus, looking up, they are signalling to me. Not indeed in actual words; that is, he could not read the language yet; but it was plain enough, this beauty, this exquisite beauty, and tears filled his eyes as he looked at the smoke words languishing and melting in the sky and bestowing upon him in their inexhaustible charity and laughing goodness one shape after another of unimaginable beauty and signalling their intention to provide him, for nothing, forever, for looking merely, with beauty, more beauty! Tears ran down his cheeks. (140 - 141)

Rezia seems completely isolated from her husband, concerning whose treatment the doctor, representing the medical establishment, is uncertain. Interestingly Septimus reacts in paranoiac fashion – paranoia is an over-reading of signs where in fact meaning does not exist – believing he is singled out by the plane for communication of an inscrutable message, demonstrating the seriousness of his condition. Even though he does not understand the supposed message, its beauty makes him cry. Rezia feels that Septimus has turned into a shadow of himself, their marriage virtually destroyed. She feels isolated and immensely angry with her husband.

For she could stand it no longer. Dr. Holmes might say there was nothing the matter. Far rather would she that he were dead! She could not sit beside him when he stared so

and did not see her and made everything terrible; sky and tree, children playing, dragging carts, blowing whistles, falling down; all were terrible. And he would not kill himself; and she could tell no one. (141)

They attend Sir William Bradshaw, an eminent psychiatrist, to address Septimus's frequent inexplicable hallucinations, mostly concerning his friend, Evans, who was killed in the war. Septimus cannot socialise with other human beings, even his wife, unable to make sense of events as others do. He has lost the power to sustain a unified public identity and his entire self has become a kind of subjective, wholly private, if fragmented, self. As victim of a capitalist, patriarchal war his whole world is inverted, finding a curious pantheistic or panpsychic meaning in what he witnesses:

But they beckoned; leaves were alive; trees were alive. And the leaves being connected by millions of fibres with his own body, there on the seat, fanned it up and down; when the branch stretched he, too, made that statement. [...] A child cried. Rightly far away a horn sounded. All taken together meant the birth of a new religion - 'Septimus!' said Rezia. He started violently. People must notice. (141)

The plane appears to be advertising 'toffee', but Septimus experiences a curious baffling epiphany, while observing the sky-writing. In a romantic pantheist sense it seems liberating, but it also threatens to dissolve his inner consciousness and personality, not the positive epiphany one more often encounters in modernist writing, but more like Joyce's conclusion to the short story 'The Dead'.

Woolf's use of indirect interior monologue allows her female characters to negotiate a space between their intuitive voices of private time and their external ones determined by public time. In Septimus's condition public time is maintained by his wife, responsive to the world, while private time is represented by his conscious perception, where the smoke seems concentrated into a symbol that unites him spiritually with the world of nature and not the city, with the park functioning somewhat like the spaces represented in 'Kew Gardens.' In a sense Septimus is, as critics Lisa L. Diesrich have argued, a man emasculated or feminised by the effects of shell-shock and the war, who resists the medical profession's attempt to turn him into a 'whole man' again. (1998:162-165).

Woolf's narrative techniques, particularly her use of indirect interior monologue, allows the narrative to shift rapidly from one character's voice to another, contrasting a public narrator and private consciousness with accompanying thoughts. When Richard Dalloway is having lunch with Hugh Whitbread, from the British Royal household, and Lady Bruton, Clarissa's interior monologue echoes a quotation from Shakespeare she had read earlier in Hatchard's window:

'Fear no more,' said Clarissa.' Fear no more the heat o' the sun; for the shock of Lady Bruton asking Richard to lunch without her made the moment in which she had stood shiver, as a plant on the river-bed feels the shock of a passing oar and shivers: so she rocked: so she shivered. (146)

Clarissa's shock rendered metaphorically in a vision of a summer in the countryside, derived from past memories, mirrors her visceral reaction to not being included. Her inner voice adopts a gendered perspective drawing on her subjective memories.

Woolf also explores stream of consciousness with Elizabeth, Clarissa's daughter, at odds with her mother over the question of her future. Clarissa is annoyed at discovering her offspring going shopping with her history teacher, Miss. Kilman, exhibiting her annoyance, conveyed in stages:

'You are taking Elizabeth to the Stores?' Mrs. Dalloway said. Miss Kilman said she was. They stood there [...]

So they were going to the Stores. Odd it was [...]

Off they went together, Miss Kilman and Elizabeth, downstairs.

With a sudden impulse, with a violent anguish, for this woman was taking her daughter from her [...].

Love and religion! thought Clarissa, going back into the drawing-room, tingling all over. How detestable, how detestable they are! (207 - 208)

The two women's dislike of each other is evident, each believing the other oppressive, a controlling force in Elizabeth's life. Like Mansfield, Woolf's feminism embraces conflict between women or complex mother-daughter relationships. The pair simultaneously impedes Elizabeth's inner life force/*élan vital* and her efforts to discover her own qualitative self. Clarissa says of Miss Kilman's that '[...] the religious ecstasy made people callous (so did

causes); dulled their feelings [...]’ (134). She regards Miss Kilman as overpowering Elizabeth with a religious world view, exploiting Elizabeth’s vulnerability in a manner which reduces her emotional empathy. For Clarissa ‘feelings’ are an essential part of her gendered view of the *élan vital* and a constituent of female psychology. Richard, Mrs. Dalloway’s husband, thinks Miss Kilman ‘was very able, had a really historical mind’ (134), yet this does not dissuade Clarissa from her antipathy. Leaving Miss Kilman alone at the store, Elizabeth abjures the outside world and freely returns to her mother’s party. She exhibits her own will and perceptions:

And Elizabeth waited in Victoria Street for an omnibus. It was so nice to be out of doors [...] It was so nice to be out in the air [...] People were beginning to compare her to poplar trees, [...] for she so much preferred being left alone to do what she liked in the country, but they would compare her to lilies, and she had to go to parties [...].

She was delighted to be free. The fresh air was so delicious. It had been so stuffy in the Army and Navy Stores [...] Calmly and competently, Elizabeth Dalloway mounted the Westminster omnibus. (212 - 215)

In effect she reconnects with her own qualitative life, enjoying her freedom, strolling among the London streets like her mother earlier, hinting at a familial affinity. Structurally, this echoes Septimus’ feeling he must preserve his own qualitative experience and consequent inner life, despite being publically considered ill. He struggles to exercise his free will. For Woolf the value of the Bergsonian subjective qualitative experience is paramount, as is shown by Septimus’ subsequent behaviour, which Woolf’s endorses, especially through Mrs Dalloway’s final comments discussed below. Septimus does not want to give his soul to Sir William Bradshaw, the psychiatrist, enjoying his final moments of happiness with Lucrezia instead before the nurses (the authoritative representatives of patriarchy) remove him, bound for the country. Bradshaw considers Septimus to be suffering a nervous breakdown, asking him if he served with distinction in the war. Septimus describes the conflict as a ‘little shindy of schoolboys with gunpowder’ (189). Septimus fears being controlled by the likes of Bradshaw, becoming a nightmarish figure:

Once you fall, Septimus repeated to himself, human nature is on you. Holmes and Bradshaw are on you. They scour the desert. They fly screaming into the wilderness. The rack and the thumbscrew are applied. Human nature is remorseless. (190)

Septimus finally leaps from the window to a violent death; impaled on the railings below (an image familiar from soldiers dying amid the barbed wire of the war, the phallic imagery of

railings perhaps also suggests that Septimus has homosexual feelings for Evans.). He refuses public authority, distrusting doctors, having been failed by them as a soldier. He believes they will negate his own qualitative, subjective life:

There remained only the window, the large Bloomsbury-lodging house window, the tiresome, the troublesome and rather melodramatic business of opening the window and throwing himself out. It was their idea of tragedy, not his or Rezia's (for she was with him). Holmes and Bradshaw like that sort of thing. (He sat on the sill.) But he would wait till the very last moment. He did not want to die. Life was good. The sun hot. Only human beings - what did they want? Coming down the staircase opposite an old man stopped and stared at him. Holmes was at the door. 'I'll give it you!' he cried, and flung himself vigorously, violently down on to Mrs. Filmer's area railings. (222)

The window offers apparent freedom, rejecting the cruelties of rationalist detectives such as Holmes and Bradshaw, the omnipotence of the public, quantifiable time, thereby freeing his soul. Perhaps as Bergson writes in *Time and Free Will* '[...] everything which his past experience has taught him about the cause of his sensations and coming face to face with the sensations themselves' (1910: 47). His stream of conscious signifies Septimus's inner thought is split chronologically: A current newspaper placards remind him of his past, seeing burned injured and buried soldiers. Septimus remains torn between his private self and his required public social identity, drawn particularly to intuitive memories understood in qualitative time. Yet when subjected to the norms of quantitative time they become horrifying and overwhelming, as in a nightmare.

Septimus is so emotionally alienated; his crying wife seems distant, yet is still distinct: 'She cried for the first time since they were married. Far away he heard her sobbing; he heard it accurately, he noticed it distinctly; he compared it to a piston thumping. But he felt nothing' (185). Distant from present time, his conscious heterogeneous duration is through the after effects of his past, and, according to Bergson, duration is a feeling, quite apart from mathematical time. The trauma of Septimus' past experiences overwhelms his qualitative, subjective life, preventing an effective demarcation between past and present. According to Bergson's concept of time, Septimus's past and present are embodied in his constant traumatic illusion of his lost friend, Evans, in the war, associated with guilt and anxiety, which fills his present time with dishonour and helplessness. Hence in Regent's Park Septimus moves from past thoughts to present, thinking he sees Evan, until interrupted by Rezia:

He sang. Evans answered from behind the tree. The dead were in Thessaly, Evans sang, among the orchids. There they waited till the War was over, and now the dead, now Evans himself —

‘For God’s sake don’t come!’ Septimus cried out. For he could not look upon the dead. But the branches parted. A man in grey was actually walking towards them. It was Evans! But no mud was on him; no wounds; he was not changed. I must tell the whole world, Septimus cried, raising his hand (as the dead man in the grey suit came nearer), raising his hand like some colossal figure who has lamented the fate of man for ages in the desert alone with his hands pressed to his forehead, furrows of despair on his cheeks, and now sees light on the desert’s edge which broadens and strikes the iron-black figure (and Septimus half rose from his chair), and with legions of men prostrate behind him he, the giant mourner, receives for one moment on his face the whole — (173)

This stream of consciousness combining past and present image-perception conveys his profound psychosis, his isolation from the public social life consigning him to a mental state where he cannot either recognize or recover any free will, except, it seems, through suicide.

The novel ends with Clarissa’s successful party where most of the novel’s characters gather. Clarissa meets the people of whom she has thought in the narrative, including Peter and Sally. Clarissa ponders various miscellaneous thoughts about unfulfilled dreams, memories and desires, such as Peter’s love for her, equivocal about this and the party itself.

Oh dear, it was going to be a failure; a complete failure, Clarissa felt it in her bones... She could see Peter out of the tail of her eye, criticising her, there, in that corner. Why, after all, did she do these things? Why seek pinnacles and stand drenched in fire? [...] It was extraordinary how Peter put her into these states just by coming and standing in a corner. He made her see herself; exaggerate. It was idiotic. But why did he come, then, merely to criticise? Why always take, never give? Why not risk one's one little point of view? There he was wandering off, and she must speak to him. But she would not get the chance Life was that – humiliation, renunciation. (233)

Such inner and outer thoughts control Clarissa’s attention, wondering about the boredom of and lack of freedom in her life. She meets Sally who has become very conventional, unlike her younger self, a heterosexual mother with ‘five enormous boys’ (236):

‘Clarissa!’ That voice! It was Sally Seton! Sally Seton! after all these years! She loomed through a mist. For she hadn’t looked like *that*, Sally Seton, when Clarissa grasped the hot water can, to think of her under this roof, under this roof! Not like that! [...]

She had the simplest egotism, the most open desire to be thought first always, and Clarissa loved her for being still like that. 'I can't believe it!' she cried, kindling all over with pleasure at the thought of the past. (236)

Later, Clarissa admires Septimus for his courage in resisting Sir William Bradshaw's medicalization of his condition, the attempt to get rid of Septimus' subjective life. Clarissa senses Sir William makes life 'intolerable,' (244) dominating people's free will. Clarissa says of Septimus's fate:

Death was defiance. Death was an attempt to communicate; people feeling the impossibility of reaching the centre which, mystically, evaded, them; closeness drew apart; rapture faded; one was alone. There was an embrace in death. (244)

But Clarissa chooses to go on, choosing life, as Woolf ends her novel with an affirmation: 'What she liked was simply life'.

***To the Lighthouse* (1927)**

Virginia Woolf's *To the Lighthouse*²¹⁶ is perhaps Woolf's most autobiographical novel in that it utilizes her own childhood memories. The narrative equally explores the value of Bergsonian qualitative time and what that can mean for characters searching to understand themselves, besides their understanding of the relationship between the past and the present. While postdating *Mrs Dalloway* it shows a strong connection and the way in which the autobiographical feminist mode helped lead to stream-of-consciousness fiction. It is in certain ways is much more like both Richardson's *Pilgrimage* and Sinclair's *Mary Olivier* than is *Mrs Dalloway*. Where it signally differs from those texts, however, is in the use of multiple first person narrators and a third person narrator, sometimes omniscient, sometimes limited; it is primarily each individual narrator's stream of consciousness which views the events of the plot. It is also a powerful exploration of the effects of loss and melancholia, the death of a major character, as well as the battle for the female artist to overcome the fate of being constrained by the values of Victorian patriarchy.

²¹⁶ The novel was published in May 1927 but the central part 'Time Passes' had already appeared in France in the previous December, translated by Charles Mauron.

If Bourton is paradisiacal for Clarissa Dalloway, the series of family summer holidays on the Isle of Skye chart the prelapsarian and less innocent qualities of childhood directly. Woolf drew on family's summer holidays spent in Cornwall from 1882 to 1894 at Talland House²¹⁷, located above the bay of St. Ives and described by Webb as a 'pocket paradise' (2000: 12). However, Jane Goldman notes: 'Woolf chose to set *To the Lighthouse* in Scotland, which she did not visit until many years after it was written. There are obvious autobiographical references to her childhood holidays in Cornwall in that novel, but it would obliterate its imaginative power to insist that the Hebrides should be ignored and read merely as a 'thin cipher for Cornwall' (2006: 39). The Ramsay family holiday takes place on the Isle of Skye, surrounded by guests and friends, in a setting imbued with the intensity of their durational time as a family, as well as individuals.²¹⁸ In 'A Sketch of the Past' in 'Moments of Being' Woolf further focuses on the process of 'scene making' as her 'natural way of marking the past', and 'the origin of my writing impulse' since always 'a scene has arranged itself: representative, enduring' (2002: 122). Such marking shows how essentially important an elaboration of memories of childhood and autobiography are for her writing practice. The book is divided into three parts: 'The Window,' 'Time Passes,' and 'The Lighthouse'; each is linked by a Bergsonian perception of internal and external worlds, the disparity of the sexes interrelating, and an emphasis on qualitative and aesthetic perceptions.

To Vanessa Bell, Woolf's sister, *To the Lighthouse* seemed to reanimate their parents, very substantially recreating their subjective memories of childhood. Vanessa played a major artistic role in Woolf's writing, producing the covers of *To the Lighthouse* and other novels. In *To the Lighthouse* she created a simple design of the book with a suggestive 'dust-jacket' that she herself claimed portrayed a 'lighthouse, plump centre, thrusting out of the waves and spurting light' (Dunn, 2001: 154). Bell's description is very explicitly phallic – and probably phallogocentric – insofar as the lighthouse literally spurts light into the darkness and shows technology and inventiveness overcoming the dangers of the unpredictable sea – often

²¹⁷ The name of the house in Cornwall is reused by Woolf when she sets the novel in Skye.

²¹⁸ Both Skye and Cornwall share the feature of being exotic, somewhat marginalised Celtic remainders within British culture. In addition both have a strong relationship with the sea whose fluidity suggests *écriture féminine*. Skye means misty isle in Gaelic and both are far away from the dominant modern England of patriarchy and industry. Hamish Haswell-Smith, (1996) and F. E. Halliday (1959).

figured traditionally as ‘female’ and by implication the restless, ‘semi-civilized’ margins of Britain’s own internal Empire. The narrative insistently explores female characters, most especially Mrs. Ramsay and Lily Briscoe and their subjective, conscious experience of time framed within the passage of public time.

Woolf’s ‘scene making’ technique makes the novel more difficult to read for the reader since it is harder to follow such a narrative, given it has limited dialogue and almost no action, jumping between extensive indirect interior monologues, showing Woolf’s commitment to extending this feature of modernist fiction. Although Woolf highlights emotional, philosophical and metaphorical feminine writing, arguably the story suggests two broad interpretations, which coexist. On the one hand, Woolf reveals the complexities of the Ramsay family and their relationships before and after World War One, unfolding the women’s inner stream-of-intuitive thoughts set against the men’s propensity for rational and conscious thought; on the other hand, the childhood memories serve to create a poetic and lyrical account of being in the physical world. In *Moments of Being* Woolf states in ‘A Sketch of the Past’²¹⁹ concerning her own childhood memories:

[...] hearing the waves breaking, one, two, one, two, and sending a splash of water over the beach; and then breaking, one, two, one, two, behind a yellow blind. It is of hearing the blind draw its little acorn across the flower as the wind blew the blind out. It is of lying and hearing this splash and seeing this light, and feeling, it is almost impossible that I should be here; of feeling the purest ecstasy I can conceive. (2002: 78)

Similarly, in *To the Lighthouse* such a sense of autobiographical memories is repeated when Mrs. Ramsay interrogates herself about the solitude of the summer house: ‘For how would you like to be shut up for a whole month at a time, [...] and see the same dreary waves breaking week after week, and then a dreadful storm coming, [...]’ (260). The image-memories of colour and light – Cornwall was sufficiently famous for its light to have attracted a whole school of artists to St Ives – the persistent breaking of the waves, and both sight and sound are great intensities of conscious feeling that produce a pure ‘ecstasy’ for Woolf, and also serve a similar function within the novel. The novel is regarded as a turning

²¹⁹ ‘A Sketch of the Past’ is an autobiographical essay published in 1939 as part of *Moments of Being* (1976), a collection of Woolf’s autobiographical writings. This essay is structured in the style of a diary or journal, and with each entry Woolf uses the present as a springboard from which to explore the past. This entry was composed on 18 April 1939 (Black, Conolly, Flint, et al. 279).

point by Woolf in discussing her relationship with both parents, but in particular her father. She wrote in her diary on 28 November 1928, two years after *To the Lighthouse*:

Father's birthday. He would have been 96, 96, yes, today; & could have been 96, like other people one has known; but mercifully was not. His life would have entirely ended mine. What would have happened? No writing, no books; - inconceivable. I used to think of him & mother daily; but written *The Lighthouse*, laid them in my mind. And now he comes back sometimes, but differently. (I believe this to be true – that I was obsessed by them both, unhealthily; & writing of them was a necessary act.) He comes back now more as a contemporary. I must read him some day. I wonder if I can feel again, I hear his voice, I know this by heart? (*A Writer's Diary* 135)

Daniel Mark Fogel suggests one might read *To the Lighthouse* 'as a process by which Woolf overcame parental influences and took control of her own writing' (1990: 61). However, Woolf describes a rather more complex situation in *To the Lighthouse*, for the novel represents a successful mourning, or exorcism of her father's ghost, allowing her to write more successfully. For Woolf her father's death created a space for independent creativity, resolving a certain ambivalence psychologically speaking. Women after World War One were familiar with such ambivalence in terms of the public possibilities opening for them during and after World War One because of the numbers who died. Mr. and Mrs. Ramsay allow Woolf to inscribe the conscious qualitative past she had experienced, but by exploring a gendered appreciation of Bergson's ideas she can obtain greater distance and make the qualitative part of a larger story.

This narrative serves as Woolf's response to the stereotypical statement found in the novel that 'women can't paint, women can't write' (383), a residue of male, patriarchal Victorian values, reflecting a period which did not expect, nor allow women to demonstrate either professional abilities or express themselves artistically. Lily Briscoe, the unmarried painter, needs to achieve freedom by dealing with her own insecurities and neuroses, accepting the death of Mrs. Ramsay. As in Woolf's essay of the same name, Lily Briscoe has had to kill 'The Angel in the House,' as she had to transcend her emotional relationship with her mother Julia Stephens. Briscoe becomes a successful and committed artist only after Mrs. Ramsay's death. As Daniela Munca says 'Briscoe must 'connect with Mr. Ramsay and prove to herself that women can, indeed, paint' (2009: 276). Lily Briscoe achieves the status of a modern female artist by freeing herself, her genuine independence as person and artist achieved by

imagining her *élan vital*, visualizing in gendered terms the external world, reduced to abstract concepts rather than details. During Mrs. Ramsay's life Briscoe is more tentative about artistic culture, as if such outdated stereotypes retained sufficient power to prevent her developing her inner life, much as Woolf described in her own essay. To Mrs. Ramsay, Lily appears a Bohemian woman, devoted to Art, worryingly unable to succeed in making a successful and suitable marriage. Her somewhat patronizing description stresses Lily's curiously un-English appearance and dismisses her artistic commitment:

[S]he was supposed to be keeping her head as much in the same position as possible for Lily's picture. Lily's picture! Mrs. Ramsay smiled. With her little Chinese eyes and her puckered-up face, she would never marry; one could not take her painting very seriously; but she was an independent little creature, and Mrs. Ramsay liked her for it; so, remembering her promise, she bent her head. (267)

Jane Goldman argues that Lily Briscoe 'appears to be a disciple of this aesthetic formalism, if not a fictional portrait of Vanessa Bell herself, when she represents the classical figures of mother and child as a purple triangle' (2006: 15). While Lily tries to create a unity between her art and the outside world (outside her consciousness), William Bankes wonders about this abstraction:

Taking out a penknife, Mr. Bankes tapped the canvas with the bone handle. What did she wish to indicate by the triangular purple shape, 'just there'? he asked.

It was Mrs. Ramsay reading to James, she said. She knew his objection—

That no one could tell it for a human shape. (289 – 290)

Three family members will die in the course of the novel, including Mrs. Ramsay, whose end is sudden, unexpected, and parenthetical. Initially, the house is represented through the consciousness of minor characters, some not encountered in the first section, with the Ramsay children seemingly having matured in the interim:

'Well, we must wait for the future to show,' said Mr. Bankes, coming in from the terrace.

'It's almost too dark to see,' said Andrew, coming up from the beach.

'One can hardly tell which is the sea and which is the land,' said Prue.

'Do we leave that light burning?' said Lily as they took their coats off indoors. (337)

In 'The Window' section Woolf imagines time consciously through the character's inner moments by means of focalization and indirect interior monologue. She uses time as a matter of intuitive perception rather than chronology; in Bergsonian terms, time or duration is primarily internal rather than external or material. However, in the middle section Woolf's use of time is more conventional, shifting the narrative focus onto rediscovering the house after a long time, considering especially the effects of time on objects, the house and its contents decaying, moving away radically from human development and emotion. The omniscient narrator describes the house in this way as if night falling were a kind of apocalypse²²⁰:

So with the lamps all put out, the moon sunk, and a thin rain drumming on the roof a down pouring of immense darkness began. Nothing, it seemed, could survive the flood, the profusion of darkness which, creeping in at keyholes and crevices, stole round window blinds, came into bedrooms, swallowed up here a jug and basin, there a bowl of red and yellow dahlias, there the sharp edges and firm bulk of a chest of drawers. Not only was furniture confounded; there was scarcely anything left of body or mind by which one could say, 'This is he' or 'This is she.' Sometimes a hand was raised as if to clutch something or ward off something, or somebody groaned, or somebody laughed aloud as if sharing a joke with nothingness. (337-338)

Mrs. Ramsay's death symbolizes that of the traditional woman with the domesticated realm apparently dismantled. While Woolf wanted to destroy this oppressive stereotype, she nonetheless celebrates Mrs. Ramsay, just as she does Clarissa Dalloway. For the first time in the novel the scientific and logical Mr. Ramsay, who, as one has seen, acts like the patriarch of the family, feels alone when Mrs. Ramsay dies.

[Mr. Ramsay, stumbling along a passage one dark morning, stretched his arms out, but Mrs. Ramsay having died rather suddenly the night before, his arms, though stretched out, remained empty.] (339)

His reaching for her seems both poignant and belated (especially as the passage is parenthetical in the original text). With the deaths of Prue and Andrew, the father's best

²²⁰ Here Woolf is probably thinking of the same *Darkness* by Lord Byron (July 1816) as it deals with apocalyptic connotations.

hopes seem dashed. Prue's sudden death in childbirth represents another tragedy of the Ramsay family and, like the others, is also placed in square brackets²²¹:

[Prue Ramsay died that summer in some illness connected with childbirth, which was indeed a tragedy, people said. They said nobody deserved happiness more.] (341)

While Andrew's death highlights the impact of World War One and its consequences for young men, as seen with Katherine Mansfield, contemporary masculinity was in part overthrown by the aftermath of that conflict:

[A shell exploded. Twenty or thirty young men were blown up in France, among them Andrew Ramsay, whose death, mercifully, was instantaneous.] (342)

The deaths reflect the bereavement in Woolf's life: her mother died in 1895, her half-sister, Stella, in 1897, and her brother, Thoby, in 1906. Later, as the traumatized Ramsays return to their summer home, they represent the postwar generation. In this middle section, the omniscient narrator seems strangely limited in their awareness or knowledge of events, as if a third-party observer without all the facts. The impression of Prue Ramsay's demise is vague, connected with childbirth, which, although 'tragic,' seems as if limited by patriarchal censoriousness. The narrator is limited, unable to demarcate between qualitative and quantitative time, particularly with regard to the details of these deaths.

The last section concludes with the visit to the lighthouse by Mr. Ramsay and his two children, Cam and James, accomplished finally after a decade. The section opens with Lily: 'Now she was awake, at her old place at the breakfast table, but alone. It was very early too, not yet eight' (351). With the strangeness of the return, Lily feels alone and somewhat alienated from the past: 'For really, what did she feel, come back after all these years and Mrs Ramsay dead? Nothing, nothing – nothing that she could express at all' (351). Through fragmented memories, she also indirectly references the trauma caused by war, whereby recollection of better times are seemingly irretrievable, blocked by trauma.

²²¹ Most probably, for the narrator the parentheses help the reader to grasp the difficulty of talking about Mrs Ramsay's death by drawing attention to it. The other square brackets which refer to the deaths of Prue and Andrew may also emphasize the traumatic unexpectedness and yet an ultimate lack of impact of the events on the wider world beyond the family and their circle.

Mr. Ramsay seems in decline, no longer imposing to Lily and other female characters. Rather awkward, he turns to Lily, having been denied his supportive, dutiful wife. Yet the logical man seems unable to communicate with Lily:

She seemed to have shriveled slightly, he thought. She looked a little skimpy, wispy; but not unattractive. He liked her. There had been some talk of her marrying William Bankes once, but nothing had come of it. [...] an enormous need urged him, without being conscious what it was, to approach any woman, to force them, he did not care how, his need was so great, to give him what he wanted: sympathy. (354)

After a bitter silence it becomes evident Lily remains unwilling to show any such sympathy, reminding him of the lighthouse, hostile to massaging any distressed male egos. Lily seeks a new life as an independent artist, interconnected with a feminist perspective, creativity engendering self-creation as a feminist goal. For feminists, autobiography is about analysis and narration of the possibilities life has had to offer. For female artists, in particular, Virginia Woolf appears to argue they need to choose to be artists.

Écriture féminine

Woolf's experimentation and demonstration of *écriture féminine* is arguably much stronger, more insistent than other modernist women writers,, with the exception of Richardson. In Woolf key identifying elements of *écriture féminine* include her modernist form of writing (style, content, self-conscious, self-referential emphases) which foreground fluid and non-linear styles of writing (what Julia Kristeva refers to as the semiotic rather than the symbolic). Such an approach places emphasis on the subjective experience of being a woman and the activities that women traditionally undertake (rather than the objective world that simply reflects patriarchy), importance being attached to the bodily qualities of women and their relationship to nature, while stressing poetic qualities in the text over those of traditional realist prose.

Although Woolf also employs third person omniscient narration, her use of indirect interior monologue to create the voices of characters is extensive and her writing in terms of omniscient narration is generally, as has been shown, lyrical and poetic. In addition, the relationship between past memory and the present is fluid. Woolf is an assertive and explicit feminist, concerned, in particular, with what it means to be a woman in this period and the different possibilities for life that might be chosen.

Woolf attaches considerable emphasis to domestic spaces associated with women, albeit upper middle class ones. Mrs. Dalloway's dinner party allows Woolf to transform London through a depiction of areas for feminist exploration and discussion; modernist spaces are in essence feminized. In *To the Lighthouse*, in contrast, Lily struggles to recognize her alternative life as a female artist, pursuing ineffectively feminist possibilities opened up by glimpses of alternative lives. Gardens are also areas of privileged female activity, with Mrs. Dalloway's memories of her youth at Bourton, but the natural world is also used to emphasize female aspects, such as the importance of the sea and the waves in *To the Lighthouse*²²²: 'the winds and waves disported themselves like the amorphous bulks of leviathans whose brows are pierced by no light of reason, and plunged in the darkness or the daylight (for night and day, month and year ran shapelessly together' (343). Such qualitative emphasis refuses a quantitative patriarchal ordering, its power suggestively in excess of the human domain.

In Bergsonian terms, the intuitive self explores and uncovers the non-phallic form of feminine writing, which anticipates *écriture féminine* as a new technique of one's inner expression in an aesthetic style. Woolf's argument for feminine writing can be recognized to some extent in non-fiction, such as *A Room of One's Own* (1929) – although, like most essays, this is a traditional, linear, well-made argument – where it contends that writing must be unique as is the subject's experience. This uniqueness favours the qualitative experience of Bergson (as opposed to the quantitative form) but also favours autobiography as a feminist mode, which explores the individual woman as a site of struggle against patriarchal

²²² French feminists have often drawn attention to images of the sea and its waves as distinctively representative of female culture. Luce Irigaray, *Marine Lover of Friedrich Nietzsche* (1994).

conventions. A similar point arguing in favour of the subjective is made in ‘Modern Fiction,’ as we have seen. *Mrs Dalloway* and *To the Lighthouse* show it through the use of stream-of-consciousness technique from a gendered point of view. Phrases like ‘What a lark! What a plunge!’ in *Mrs Dalloway* indicate Clarissa’s inner perception of the fresh air of Bourton as she further describes it with minute pauses through semi-colons and commas.

Such a style anticipates Kristeva’s notion in *Revolution in Poetic Language* of the so called “natural” language [which] allows different modes of articulation of the semiotic and the symbolic’ (1984: 24). The semiotic is sensory feeling, as Mrs. Dalloway struggles to find words and metaphors to describe the feeling of fresh countryside air – noticeably she links the air explicitly to the sea, which is a traditionally female image – as opposed to the symbolic which is the public meaning of being on a country estate. It occurs within the female sphere of leisure and gardens – as Clarissa Dalloway has no experience of the patriarchal organised world of work and, like most upper-class women of her generation, is making something of a virtue out of a limitation as regards what she can think about. This is moved through a set of connotations rather than denotations in this poetic piece to try to render the experience of getting up in the morning and going outside to greet it.

In Kristeva’s terms, Clarissa’s romance with Peter establishes a kind of interruption within the symbolic. He recognizes at Bourton that Clarissa’s marriage to Richard Dalloway lacks any intimacy; Sally further explains their relations:

They had been very, very intimate, she and Peter Walsh, when he was in love with Clarissa, and there was that dreadful, ridiculous scene over Richard Dalloway at lunch. (246)

So Clarissa as a woman has chosen a very traditional, establishment man for her marriage, and a provider with a successful career in civil service, who will give her social legitimacy – had she married Peter she might have ended up leading a more exotic, but very different life in India. In a sense she failed as a young woman in recognising the need to live an authentic life that is also creative, although Peter retrospectively seems an unlikely catalyst or facilitator.

In *Revolution in Poetic Language* Kristeva suggests a link between madness, femininity, love and art that will eventually crystallize into the practice of *écriture féminine* – linking together types of so-called irrationality and excessiveness against the public, rational world of patriarchal discourse. Therefore, Septimus, a sufferer from shell-shock is continually associated with the emasculated and the feminine – such as not being a successful provider or husband for his wife – and his madness is likewise associated with his comprehensive, pantheist, spiritual view of the world. Hence Woolf uses Septimus to anticipate Kristeva’s formulation of connections between ‘irrational’ practices. The message Septimus receives in *Mrs Dalloway* seems to follow Kristeva’s idea of the semiotic, whose polyvalence and emphasis on connotation over denotation disturbs the patriarchal. Clearly, the message was the following when Septimus was suddenly thinking about his heroic deeds and how he ‘won crosses’:

Here he opened Shakespeare once more. That boy’s business of the intoxication of language – *Antony and Cleopatra* – had shrivelled utterly. How Shakespeare loathed humanity – the putting on of clothes, the getting of children, the sordidity of the mouth and the belly! This was now revealed to Septimus; the message hidden in the beauty of words. The secret signal which one generation passes, under disguise, to the next is loathing, hatred, despair. (184)

In relation to Septimus’s mental disorder, we can see his illness as defined by Kristeva’s semiotic rather than the semantic (Matson, 1996: 176-178).

Septimus fails as a husband, according to wife, and does so because he is emasculated and therefore in a sense represents a feminine subject, having been so traumatised and passive concerning the external social world. He has been damaged by a patriarchal war, which overturns traditional ideas of masculinity, the sheer terror having an effect of feeling at times as if disembodied in a certain fashion, haunted. Kristeva indicates a similar semiotic can be found in the discourse of children and psychotics (Septimus’ shell-shock has made him into a psychically disordered subject who cannot connect signifiers and signified in a normal and conventional manner), who are also alienated from and marginalised by patriarchy in the same way as women.

In *Mrs Dalloway* the ‘thick ruffled bar of white smoke’ (140) of the letters in the sky, like the ‘bar’ between the signified and signifier, ‘melts,’ and the symbols lose their conventional

meaning. Through Septimus's stream of consciousness one perceives the 'distinctive mark, trace, index' in the sky as an 'indeterminate articulation' that challenges symbolic meaning. His understanding of such meaning is imagined intuitively and psychotically, but, like a poet, his imagination seems visionary. Therefore, Septimus is the representative of the semiotic, in which he confronts the social order, the accepted beliefs and significations.

Even though, Clarissa finds it difficult to represent her inner self within existing public patriarchal social relations and language (Woolf implies a relationship between Mrs. Dalloway and Septimus when Mrs. Dalloway learns about his death). Her stream of consciousness offers an alternative self, and like *écriture féminine* the images she uses to describe her life are caught between past and present. This sensuous style, like those avowed by later feminist critics, refuses patriarchal and public privileging of chronological, factual time; hence Kristeva's association of the semiotic is with children and psychotics. Mrs Dalloway's confusion of her social identity – feeling caught between girlhood in the past and being a married woman in the present – anticipate Luce Irigaray's retelling of *Alice in Wonderland* when Irigaray's Alice notes: '[...] either I don't have any "self," or else I have a multitude of "selves" appropriated by them, for them, according to their needs or desires [...] I've always been lost, but I didn't feel it before [...] But I was more than half absent. I was on the other side [...]' (1985: 17). In Mrs Dalloway's case she thinks of the past and what would have happened to her, according to whom she married or had a relationship with.

The centrality of rhythm, as opposed to denotative linguistic meaning, in *écriture féminine* is perhaps more noticeable in *To the Lighthouse* than *Mrs Dalloway* – partly because the former is a more thorough-going modernist work, in terms of form and language, and partly because Woolf uses the imagers of the sea and seascape to much stronger effect here. For example, as Mrs. Ramsay sits with her children, she remembers her past when she was in her cradle, while her mother or nurse used to comfort her through singing as a form of 'guarding' and 'supporting' her. Through the natural fall of the ocean waves and the musical 'old cradle song' Mrs. Ramsay's qualitative memories, 'ephemeral as a rainbow', travelled from her inner consciousness to her emotional senses within a durational period. As Bergson argues in *Time and Free Will*: 'If musical sounds affect us more powerfully than the sounds of nature,

the reason is that nature confines itself to *expressing* feelings, whereas music *suggest* them to us' (1910: 15).

To the Lighthouse, then, is partly realized as *écriture féminine* in terms of its style – fluid like the sea and travelling via metaphors and tropes rather than linear arguments. It is also realized in terms of the choices facing the two main characters, Mrs. Ramsay and Lily: Mrs. Ramsay, despite her vibrant inner life rendered through gendered writing, is essentially happy to exit within patriarchal constraints, and her husband Mr. Ramsay's dominance, while Lily ends up transforming herself, as has been seen, into an artist, whose non-figurative work emphasizes the rhythms of colour and objects, and forms a visual equivalent to *écriture féminine*. It is hard for the reader to picture the painting of Mrs. Ramsay and what it looks like, as it is not about artistic verisimilitude, but about the multiple perspectives by which Mrs. Ramsay was seen when she was alive. This suggests the kind of evolving aesthetic practice (from 'Kew Gardens' to *To the Lighthouse*) which Woolf wants to achieve in her fiction and in which she seeks precisely a style that is radically gendered both in its expression and world-view.

Conclusion

As has been shown, Woolf uses the representation of qualitative experience to set up the possibilities of an alternate life, which is more feminist and independent. Unlike Mansfield where characters' alternative lives are seldom acted on or acknowledged, Woolf has a stronger and more explicit feminist agenda, just as there is a more deliberate use of *écriture féminine* in terms of experimental style, although it is worth saying that Mansfield died young and Woolf's work in the 1920s gained from other developments in modernist experimentation that Mansfield was not alive to see. Both Woolf and Mansfield in their own ways wanted fiction that would be more shaped and coherent than what they incorrectly perceived as the sprawling, incoherent, pseudo-autobiographical subjectivity of Dorothy Richardson as a kind of stream-of-consciousness of qualitative experience without structure. Like Mansfield, Woolf believed in the importance of the professional life of the woman writer, and drew on autobiography recognizing that this was an important feminist activity, prompted by the idea of the *élan vital* that for female artists' life writing from their own experiences is powerful and significant. While Mrs. Dalloway has chosen to live a rather

conventional life, the whole novel is about her memories of her years as a child and young woman and the different kind of life she perhaps wished she have lived.

Subsequently in a later novel, such as *To the Lighthouse*, Lily goes to live the life of a bohemian experimental artist, so genuinely chooses to live her alternative life. While many female writers are concerned about the patriarchal limitations created by the idea of 'The Angel in the House', Woolf is different from most because she really wants to kill the figure, as she states in her essay and as she puts into practice in *To the Lighthouse*. Generally speaking, Woolf seems to be more aware of the problems of patriarchy or at least more prepared to acknowledge these and make them part of her fictional world.

What Mansfield and Woolf share is the way the idea of the *élan vital* and the valuation of subjective experience is borrowed by feminists in a gendered reading of Bergson's work. They also share aspects such as the redeployment of the language of flowers and the value of gardens – Bourton's birthplace is absolutely crucial to Mrs. Dalloway's ability to experience an alternative self. While Kew is the consciously-chosen setting for the experimental story 'Kew Gardens'. Woolf too uses childhood to create an alternative set of possibilities compared to adulthood, lived within the confines of patriarchy. It is because of this that both Mansfield and Woolf seem to deploy a rather Romantic view of childhood and its relationship to nature (albeit in a gendered way) because of the Romantic tradition that uses childhood to critique adulthood, as in Wordsworth and William Blake.

It is partly, perhaps, because Woolf writes novels and also lives through the twenties that her use of stream-of-consciousness technique leads to far more extensive and lengthy activities in interior monologue by her characters, especially the women. Nonetheless, her basic technique, like Mansfield's, is third person omniscient narration and character's inner thoughts often rendered through focalisation by that narrator, but Woolf takes this technique almost to the point at which characters become like *dramatis personae* in a play – everyone seems to display thought and feelings about subjects. If James provides the building blocks for Woolf's feminist use of stream of consciousness, then Bergson provides a similar intellectual framework for a gendered, feminist exploration of women identity and behaviour.

Woolf was clearly as concerned as Mansfield about the impact of WWI as she deals with this more directly through the figure of Septimus, a man suffering from shell-shock. However, this character also allows her to consider the impact of WWI in creating an emasculated, 'feminised' man, and also about the way in which madness turns people into quasi-visionaries. Woolf uses her poetical, lyrical and fluid, non-linear style to good effect when representing Septimus or other characters, and, as has been discussed, this is central to her feminist practice of *écriture féminine*. *To the Lighthouse* was not the end of Woolf's career as she went to be an even more experimental writer in later texts. However, her practice shows a great deal of continuity with the approaches and themes of women writers like Katherine Mansfield and very similar intellectual, gendered use of Bergsonian and Jamesian principle.

Chapter Five

Conclusion

Mansfield to Sylvia Payne (24 April 1904): ‘Would you not like to try all sorts of lives – one is so very small – but that is the satisfaction of writing – one can impersonate so many people’ (Boddy 1988, 305).

This research project aimed to investigate and explore the connections between a selection of female modernist writers, Sinclair, Richardson, Mansfield and Woolf, who experimented variously with stream-of-consciousness techniques, and the impact of the philosophy and thought of William James and Henri Bergson upon these women writers’ work. However, it wished to fundamentally revise existing understandings of such connections by considering the feminist context of such work: ‘putting gender on the agenda’ in reading the relationship, establishing a feminist perspective as key elements of their aesthetic and recognising the value of the feminist slogan ‘the personal is political’; in reading the vital influence of female autobiography, combined with Bergson and James, on female modernist writers’ output.²²³

One of the central arguments concerned the value of autobiography as a feminist practice that had developed previously and which was synergetic with the ‘turn to the subjective,’ demonstrated in by the work of Bergson and James. Bergson and James were important for women writers; they sharpened and expanded the frontiers of feminist writing that wished to explore different possibilities for women in the face of patriarchal society. Simultaneously, the specific development of formal experiment in stream-of-consciousness modernist fiction by women could be seen as being equally indebted to the work of Bergson and James as they helped endorse the value and practice of moving the autobiographical mode into the domain of fiction and third person itself, without simply making use of pseudo-autobiography and first person narrative. In this respect, Bergson and William James offered double value to

²²³ Carol Hanisch, a member of New York Radical Women and Redstockings, originally published the paper ‘The Personal Is Political’ in the pamphlet Meredith Tax *et al*, *Notes from the Second Year: Women’s Liberation Major Writings of the Radical Feminists* (1970). Available online with new introduction (Hanisch 2006).

feminist writers, while in turn it was feminists who helped authorize and promote the philosophical views of Bergson and James.

In building upon and extending the contention of Sydney Janet Kaplan in *Feminine Consciousness in the Modern British Novel* (1975), it proves that there is much to gain by viewing stream-of-conscious fiction by women as a distinctive, specific tradition connected with feminist concern. The female modernists, included in this account, represent the celebrated Virginia Woolf and Katherine Mansfield, together with writers now largely and unjustly forgotten, Dorothy Richardson and May Sinclair. However, the thesis has demonstrated that female modernist writers need to be seen as part of an informal network, from which they gained much, almost creating a tradition in which they learnt, borrowed and reacted to each other, while fundamentally (either consciously or unconsciously, explicitly or implicitly) reassessing various concepts drawn from of James and Bergson as a fundamental and radical influence upon female modernist fiction. Woolf is well recognized as a headline figure for feminist critics, often represented as the chief or only female modernist in Britain (even in the popular imagination beyond those concerned with either literature or feminism)), but in fact her preoccupations and her sense of tradition owe a great deal to Richardson, Mansfield and Sinclair, and the importance of the latter three writers is reaffirmed in this conclusion. When all four of these female writers are looked at individually as isolated figures, or seen in terms of wider modernist debates alongside male modernists such as Joyce, it becomes far too easy to miss the reality that all were in their own way engaged in a gendered approach to Bergson and James, which can itself now be positioned as part of a distinctive tradition within female modernist writing. Leveraging positive, current feminist accounts and reclamations of Bergson, such as Elizabeth Grosz in *The Nick of Time: Politics, Evolution, and the Untimely* (2004), the thesis extends such arguments into the way early twentieth century female writers read and used Bergson and James with their implicit connections to feminism.

In fact, the research leads one to conclude that rather than accepting a traditional history of ideas approach to how the two male thinkers either influenced or did not influence women writers, one would be much better to see a continuing inter-related connection between Bergson and James on the one hand, and existing feminist preoccupations with the

autobiographical as an important mode of feminist writing and the challenge to and critique of patriarchy as a self-defining 'objective' truth, on the other. This is not to argue that Bergson or James are modern feminists, of course, but to claim that Bergson and James' impact on women writers was so distinctive and powerful because it seemed to speak directly to their contemporary feminist concerns and to represent a powerful new way of thinking about society and culture. This is echoed and had parallels with existing feminist attempts at the revision of patriarchal society and creating new spaces for female independence politically, socially and creatively. That both James and Bergson seemed to be prominent male thinkers who were friendly to feminist concerns and collegial to women's interests (for example, working in the hereafter generally referred to as SPR, alongside May Sinclair), suggests that to some extent they saw themselves as progressive thinkers, whose work, if not directly supportive of feminism and the suffragette movement, shared certain many of its emancipatory aspirations. Or, to put it another way, women intellectuals found James and Bergson so interesting because their preoccupations with the value of the subjective (qualitative) as both principal and legitimate means of expression were part of the day to day concerns of feminist intellectuals.

Autobiography as an important and successful mode of feminist expression and politics existed before the development of stream of consciousness by these female modernists and for the selected writers as women in a patriarchal society; it is a resource upon which they draw. Autobiography animates as their texts multiply, even if they do not express themselves in direct traditional autobiography – Virginia Woolf's essays, for instance, draw on autobiographical insights and her subjective experience. As Shari Benstock argues, women's interest in the autobiographical does not so much serve as an affirmation of the genre *per se*, but as a deconstruction and undermining of boundaries between different genres that limit the depiction of female experience (1988: 10-33); Sinclair, Richardson, Woolf and Mansfield are after all not writing straightforward, generically pure autobiography, although, as we saw, Elizabeth von Anrim produced rather fictionalized autobiography suggesting how female autobiography in its proto-modernist form was blurring boundaries between straightforward reportage, subjective rethinking of the supposedly objective, and fiction itself. Rather than simply offering a straightforward personal account, such writing represents an engagement in a specific tradition of a feminist cultural practice, one that explores questions and problems of identity and subjectivity in a given society. One might add that stream of consciousness too,

as a way of writing the inner and hidden self, is not just a narrow formal feature of literary texts, but offers women a continuing, vital and creative exploration of its possibilities as fictional, feminist practice. The relationship of autobiography, fiction and feminism is both intimate and political, and for female modernists the stream-of-consciousness technique allowed a direct emphasis and valuation of the autobiographical thinking, even if the forms stream of consciousness takes are various and multiple.

May Sinclair is a sadly neglected figure in literary studies, but her contribution represents that of a gendered modernism where she serves as a foundational figure for stream-of-consciousness fiction. She is one of the first female philosophers to take the work of both William James and Henri Bergson seriously, while writing from a critical position that was deeply concerned with gender and, if obliquely, the struggle of the suffragettes for the vote. She played a key role in developing the female modernist stream-of-consciousness tradition through a feminist-oriented linkage of pantheism, nature, interior subjectivity, alternate lives and the autobiographical as a mode. Her stylistic influence on the next generation of female writers was just as important and included ellipsis and fragmentation to represent the inner thoughts and consciousness of her protagonist in *Mary Olivier*, her use of second person narration and her fluid and shifting narrative perspectives. Many of these experiments, informed by the work of James, Bergson and her own idealist philosophy, helped to create the dominance of the modernist stream-of-consciousness novel as a favoured means of exploration for women writers. Her fiction may be based on autobiographical experience, which was why *Mary Olivier* was selected, but it is not written as such; rather it was generic fiction which calls for the development of the method of stream of consciousness, a formal innovation which was followed closely (if seldom given suitable plaudits) by the next generation of modernist writers: Richardson, Mansfield and Woolf.

As has been argued, it was Richardson who codified the stream-of-consciousness novel as a form and who had the most significant influence on Woolf (and not just in terms of using London as a backdrop for the wandering, drifting *flâneuse*). Richardson can be argued to be a formative figure in the reworking of Bergson and James for early modernist feminist fiction. Richardson uses the representation of qualitative time experiences to set up the possibilities of an alternative life as a 'new woman,' exploring her feminist possibilities and those of other women against the sublime setting of London. An unusually autonomous female and feminist

protagonist, Miriam glories in her apparently dead-end job because of the subjectively/qualitatively perceived pleasures of London, but nonetheless she finds time to be an artist and explore the life-affirming values of London's Bohemians. As she indicates in 'Data,' it was her discovery that the 'material that moved me to write would not fit the framework of any novel I had experienced' (Richardson, 1989: 39), which led her to radicalize the novel, along lines suggested by her friend May Sinclair's own experiments; the pseudo-autobiographical character of Miriam is positioned as absolutely central within the limited third person narrative, through Richardson's use of interior monologue and 'stream of consciousness'. As with James' 'pure experience' or Bergson's sense of duration, Miriam's private confrontations with the external world show that she can think independently by discovering her hidden 'self' of possibilities, which also allows a critique of existing patriarchal society.

Richardson's style moved beyond the key literary strategy of the feminist loosely autobiographical in her own pseudo-autobiography *Pilgrimage* to making use of a style that anticipates *écriture féminine* as it is fluid, non-linear and subjectively-orientated (in Bergson's terms it is durational). Richardson's use of what Woolf called the 'psychological sentence of the feminine gender' (thesis 146) is as much as anything recognition of how close her style is to *écriture féminine* (arguably the closest of any of the four writers discussed here). Her wandering in the city and emotional relationships with work, her room, her friends and her past allowed her to develop a writing using her intuitive 'pure experiences' that were as solid and grounded as in any realist novel. Richardson continued installments from *Pilgrimage* into the 1930s, in the form of *Dawn's Left Hand* (1931) and *Clear Horizon* (1935), as well as the posthumously published *March Moonlight* (1967), but while her aesthetic preoccupations remained the same she garnered less and less critical and commercial success and died in obscurity.

Mansfield as a short story writer is seldom included within modernist stream-of-consciousness fiction by women critics, more concerned with the novel form. However, this thesis contends that she should be regarded, at least, as a major interconnected influence. Her stories are often highly impressionistic in terms of their style, much like Woolf's, and seldom have definite conclusions, perhaps recognizing the well-constructed, realist story leaves out

too much of what counts in female experience. Mansfield lays far more emphasis on what it means to be a woman in the period, when compared with male writers, and particularly her stories exemplify the different possibilities for life, a concentration on women's actual experience of living through this pivotal period, as much as what women might think about as the new possibilities life offers. As the thesis has suggested, for Mansfield the modernist epiphany is characteristically negative and the insights it yields are seldom acted upon by her female protagonists. On occasion, Mansfield's fluid writing resembles *écriture féminine* because of its emphasis on the fluid and non-linear and the significance of subjective experience of being a woman and the activities that women traditionally undertake rather than the objective world that simply reflects patriarchy. Mansfield explores the domestic spaces associated with women, stories centre on moving house or giving a party for friends and neighbours, although in such cases Mansfield transforms these into areas for feminist exploration and discussion, asking the reader to consider how far these characters can follow the feminist possibilities opened up by their glimpsed alternative lives. In the end Mansfield's work is a surprising exploration of the possibilities and actuality of female lives, building on the work of a previous female tradition, while embracing the possibilities offered by a gendered reading of James' and Bergson's work. It is all the stronger for its insistence on engaging with both the qualitative, subjective nature of reality, as well as the external, quantitative aspects of women's complex lives within the patriarchal order.

Woolf seems to be more aware of the problems of patriarchy or at least more prepared to acknowledge these and make them part of her fictional world than the other writers. However, we should not ignore how much she learned and absorbed from Sinclair, Mansfield and Richardson. Significantly, Woolf is also a feminist essayist of note and not just a fiction writer which helps to explain the explicitness of her feminist practice. What Woolf shares with the other writers discussed is the way the idea of the *élan vital* and the valuation of subjective, qualitative experience is borrowed by feminists in a gendered reading of Bergson's and James' work. Woolf uses childhood to create an alternative set of possibilities, compared to adulthood lived within the confines of patriarchy, and it is because of this that all of the writers examined seem to deploy a rather Romantic view of childhood, and its relationship to nature (albeit in a very gendered way) because of the Romantic tradition that uses childhood to critique adulthood, as in Wordsworth and William Blake. Sinclair is most obviously pantheist or panpsychic as she challenges tradition; Richardson draws on Romantic

traditions of representing London; while Mansfield and Woolf are more mainstream in viewing childhood as a memory of potential unrealised female possibilities. Only Woolf finds a place in Alexandra Harris's²²⁴ sharp formulation of 'Romantic Moderns'; however, Sinclair, Richardson and Mansfield could all be said to draw upon a similar imaginative resource as Woolf. This is also consistent with the high value of the subjective apprehension of the past that Bergson argues for (itself recalling Romantic thinking), in which it is a motor for possible change and evolution.

It is partly, perhaps, because Woolf writes novels and essays, as well as the fact she lives through the twenties, that her use stream-of-consciousness technique leads to far more extensive and lengthy activities in interior monologue by her characters, especially the women. The fact she becomes associated with these techniques is because of her commercial and critical popularity, as she evolves into a significantly successful literary figure in Britain and America²²⁵. Nonetheless her basic technique, like Mansfield and Richardson's, is third person omniscient narration and characters' inner thoughts often rendered through focalisation by that narrator. Yet Woolf takes this technique almost to the point in which characters become like *dramatis personae* in a play – everyone seems to display thought and feeling about subjects. James provides the building blocks for Woolf's feminist use of stream of consciousness, but Bergson provides a similar intellectual framework for a gendered, feminist exploration of women's identity and behaviour. *To the Lighthouse* was not the end of Woolf's career, as she went to be an even more experimental writer in later texts, such as *The Waves* (1931) and *The Years* (1937). However, her practice shows a great deal of continuity with the approaches and themes of the other women writers we have discussed in this thesis. Mansfield was dead by 1923 and Sinclair ceased writing in the late 1920s due to the consequences of Parkinson's disease, while Richardson continued to write into the 1930s, ploughing her unique, increasingly neglected furrow in the field of modernist women's fiction. However, it was Woolf who made the gendered reading and usage of James and

²²⁴ Alexandra Harris, *Romantic Moderns: English Writers, Artists and the Imagination from Virginia Woolf to John Piper* (2015).

²²⁵ As Hermione Lee details, by 1928 Woolf recognises herself in her own words as 'extremely rich' and understands, if she does not welcome the fact, that she has become a famous celebrity (1997: 561, 556-567). Lise Jaillant explains that *Mrs Dalloway* became a considerable critical and commercial success after the publication of *Orlando* (1928) and her American publishers marketed it as both a bestseller and a classic (2015: 85-90).

Bergson, as represented in the experiments of the female, modernist, stream-of-consciousness novel, at once a mainstream pursuit for fiction and a lasting, powerful legacy for the future.

Appendix 1: Major Literary Texts Referred to in the Thesis (In Chronological Order by Publication)

May Sinclair *A Journal of Impressions in Belgium* (1915)

Dorothy Richardson *Pointed Roofs* (1915)

Dorothy Richardson *Backwater* (1916)

Dorothy Richardson *Honeycomb* (1917)

May Sinclair *A Defense of Idealism: Some Questions and Conclusions* (1917).

Katherine Mansfield 'Prelude' (1918)

Katherine Mansfield 'Bliss' (1918)

Dorothy Richardson *The Tunnel* (1919)

Virginia Woolf 'Kew Gardens' (1919)

May Sinclair *Mary Olivier: A Life* (1919).

Dorothy Richardson *Interim* (1920)

Virginia Woolf 'An Unwritten Novel' (1921)

May Sinclair *The New Idealism* (1922).

May Sinclair *The Life and Death of Harriet Freen* (1922)

Katherine Mansfield 'The Garden Party' (1922)

Virginia Woolf *Mrs Dalloway* (1925)

Dorothy Richardson *The Trap* (1925)

Virginia Woolf *To the Lighthouse* (1927)

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