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**The Awareness of Time in Virginia  
Woolf's Novels**

Bachelor's Diploma Thesis

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*I declare that I have worked on this thesis independently,  
using only the primary and secondary sources listed in the bibliography.*

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Author's signature

I would like to thank my supervisor, Stephen Paul Hardy, Ph.D.,  
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## Introduction

The aim of the thesis is to explore Virginia Woolf's distinctive perception of time which is reflected in her writing. Her specific construction of the plot and use of symbols which create the atmosphere of the real world in her novels by the inclusion of the natural awareness of time, as well as her attempt to describe as genuinely as possible the inner world of her characters with their individual private time will be elaborated first generally with the explanation of possible influencing theories of time, and then specifically in three of her novels which are known as Woolf's time experiments – *Mrs. Dalloway*, *To the Lighthouse*, and *Orlando*.

Chapter 1 is divided into two parts. The first one deals with the time theories which probably influenced writing styles of modernist novelists, and which significantly contributed to the challenge of the traditional theory of time as a chronological sequence and described the new concept of time as a continuous flux. Those significant time theories are Henri Bergson's theory of *durée* (inner time) and *l'étendu* (clock time), and Saint Augustine's "aporia of being and nonbeing". The second part then explains the reasons which led to the development of the new style of novel-writing and the shift in the focus of the plot from the social issues to the processes of the individual consciousness and the human experiencing.

Chapter 2 focuses on Virginia Woolf's perception of time, and elaborates possible influence of Henri Bergson and Marcel Proust on her writing style. It deals with various features of her writing, including the stream-of-

consciousness method and the various inner and outside interrelations by which she created her character.

Chapters 3, 4, and 5 could be seen as the practical part of the thesis, as they analyse Virginia Woolf's novels in the topic of time. In order to make it more focused, three of Woolf's novels were chosen – *Mrs. Dalloway*, *To the Lighthouse*, and *Orlando*. In all of them the reader experiences time experimenting and various symbols related to the flow of time (the striking of clocks, wrinkles and grey hair as signs of aging of humans, dilapidated things covered with moss, death) as well as Woolf's mastery of the description of the flow of thoughts.

The main sources which were used in this thesis are Gillies's *Henri Bergson and British Modernism*, elaborating Bergson's influence on modernist writers and his features in Woolf's novels, Kern's *The Culture of Time and Space, 1880 – 1918*, which deals with the modernist background and perception of time, Baróthy's *Boris Pasternak and Virginia Woolf: The Development of the Creative Consciousness*, describing features of Woolf's novels and her work with the stream-of-consciousness method, and Ricoeur's *Time and Narrative*, which explains Saint Augustine's aporia of being and nonbeing of time in Volume 1, and reveals temporal features of Woolf's *Mrs Dalloway* in Volume 2.

## **1. Modernism and its New Perception of Time**

The period of modernism affected by the horrors of World War I represented a big step in the development of novel-writing. Modernist writers, aware of the change in the perception of the world along with Freud's invention of psychoanalysis, started to create a new concept of writing, where the main focus was on the nature of human consciousness and experiencing, in contrast to social issues which were of primary concern in the previous centuries.

The goal of this chapter is to explore Saint Augustine's and Henri Bergson's theories of time which contributed to the modernist perception of time, and to describe features of the "new" novel.

### **1.1 Influencing Theories of Time**

"What, then, is time? If no one asks me, I know what it is. If I wish to explain it to him who asks me, I do not know." - Saint Augustine  
(Kern, *The Culture of Time and Space*, 1983, p. 33)

It is not really easy to explain what time is. It is generally perceived as an infinite and eternal essential of the world, however it is difficult to describe the way it works. Throughout the centuries, there were various attempts to do it, and mainly, the central debate was between those who saw time as a flux where the past, the present, and the future are not seen as separated units but they are closely connected to one another and can even mingle in human mind, and those who believed that time consists of separated moments running in a chronological order. Some concepts were rather controversial, for instance

Zeno's "proofs" that time is not passing at all because "motion or change is impossible" by using the example of a flying arrow. "Zeno concluded that if an arrow in flight passes through the various points on its trajectory, it must be at rest when at them and therefore can never move at all" (Kern 26).

Henri Bergson, a French philosopher who influenced a lot of writers of the modernist period, did not agree with Zeno's theory and he saw the mistake "in [Zeno's] assuming that the arrow can be at a point" (Kern 26), because he perceived time as a flux. That fact is supported by the following quote from his *Creative Evolution*:

"The present contains nothing more than the past, and what is found in the effect was already in the cause."<sup>1</sup>

His claim that "to live only in the present and respond only to immediate stimuli is suitable for the lower animals" (Kern 46) seems to be completely natural when one thinks about their own thoughts. The present is not cut off neither from the past nor from the future. The present situation is formed by the past experiences, memories, both good and bad, and according to those one then behaves, and thus creates the future. All those three phases of time are interconnected. One even does not have to remember the certain past moment that will later rise particular feelings according to the associations which are related to it in the individual's mind, because it is preserved deeply in their subconscious. This fact answers the question "how it was possible in a single moment to be aware of events that have occurred at different times" (Kern 43)

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<sup>1</sup> The quote is from *Creative Evolution* (1907), Chapter I, transl. Arthur Mitchell. New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1911, p. 14.  
<[http://en.wikiquote.org/wiki/Henri\\_Bergson](http://en.wikiquote.org/wiki/Henri_Bergson)>



which twentieth century philosophers, Henri Bergson among them, were concerned with.

Gillies in *Henri Bergson and British Modernism* states that in *Time and Free Will*, Bergson presented his idea of a *durée*:

Pure duration [*durée*] is the form which the succession of our conscious states assumes when our ego lets itself *live*, when it refrains from separating its present state from its former states. (11)

The *durée* is “the time of of active living” (Gillies 11). It is the internal time in which the present and the past mingle, as the present thought emerges memories somehow connected to it in the individual’s mind.

Furthermore, Gillies states an interesting fact that for Bergson, time is a quality, not a quantity (12), even though people made it measurable, as they measure life in years, years are divided into months, months into hours, hours into minutes, and so it became spatialized (Gillies 11). However, “real time is that in which people live” (Gillies 12) and they have to learn how to live it.

Another important fact of Bergson’s theory of time, which influenced modernist writings, is that he perceived all existence “as a continual free-flowing flux in which no states ever remain permanent and no states ever recur” (Gillies 12), and that he distinguished between the public time (*l’étendu*), the one which is the same for everybody and is represented by clocks, and the private time which is experienced individually and where the memories merge with the present (*durée*). Although the direct influence on Woolf stays unclear, similar features could be found in her novels, and their working in practice is elaborated in chapters 3, 4, and 5 of the thesis.

The original confusion of whether time is a flux or not might reside in the fact that although one cannot actually experience only the present as it is quickly becoming the past, or only the future because when it comes to the moment of experiencing it, it is already considered the present, one is capable of making past-, present-, and future-tense judgements about it, just as one does about other matters (Oaklander and Smith, *The New Theory of Time*, 1994, p. 302). Thus, the issue of time arises not only from within the philosophy of time but also from the philosophy of language (Oaklander and Smith 38), because as the passing of time cannot be actually seen, people become aware of it by talking about it, using different verb tenses and words like “now”, “before”, or “after”.

This fact was elaborated by another significant philosopher concerned with time, the one whose quote this chapter begins with – Saint Augustine. He was dealing with so-called “aporia of the being and non-being of time” (Ricoeur, “The Circle” 7). As he was struggling with the measurement of time, his view on it was rather skeptic, therefore it inclined toward the nonbeing, however, everyday experience of people’s ability of talking in different tenses proves, in some way, that time exists (Ricoeur, “The Circle” 7). As Augustine stated in his *Confession*: “We certainly understand what is meant by the word both when we use it ourselves and when we hear it used by others” (Ricoeur, “The Circle” 7).

Yet there is a certain paradox in it – even though people can talk about temporal periods, “[h]ow can time exist if the past is no longer, if the future is not yet, and if the present is not always” (Ricoeur, “The Circle” 7)? Then,

provided that time does not exist, "[h]ow can we measure that which does not exist" (Ricoeur, "The Circle" 8)? "The paradox of measurement is a direct result of the paradox of the being and nonbeing of time" (Ricoeur, "The Circle" 8), because in the same way that people can speak about time in general, they can speak of a long time and a short time and so measure its length, but Augustine added that it is only the past and the future that could be measured. As for the present, the memory and expectation appear as modalities of it (Ricoeur, "The Circle" 8), so the present alone might not exist, because it is mingled either in the past or in the future. Augustine further explained that "[i]n fact the only time that can be called present is an instant, if we can conceive of such, that cannot be divided even into the most minute fractions. [...] when it is present it has no duration" (Ricoeur, "The Circle" 8).

Augustine also stated an important fact about the time measurement that "it could only be measured while it lasted" (Ricoeur, "The Circle" 16). Thus, this fact along with the previous explanation of the ability of human language to express time might be considered as a proof of the being of time, because if time is passing, then it can be, in a way, measured; and if it can be measured, then it exists.

## **1.2 The Background of Modernism and Features of a Modernist Novel**

One of the significant changes in the novel writing during the modernist period was the shift in the main focus of the story. Whereas in the previous centuries, the main focus of a story was the social issues – for instance, the topic of a marriage in Jane Austen's novels, which represents the social status of women in the public world, in the period of Modernism novelists focused on the characters' inner world – their moods and processes taking place in their consciousness.

Authors such as Virginia Woolf or James Joyce, under either a conscious or unconscious influence of Henri Bergson's theory of time, experimented with time. They created "small worlds" in their novels by the limitation of the clock time to one day or a few hours, and also by the limitation of the number of characters, so they could fully focus on the central characters and relate others to them, which allowed them to create various associations and interconnections. They also tried to create the illusion of Bergsonian *durée* by connecting memories and expectations with the present moment.

Generally, novelists became interested more in characters' deep thoughts and consciousness than in their actions or dialogues (Chambers, *The novels of Virginia Woolf*, 1947, p. 25). In their writings, they tried to create the real world as they see it, and time was one of the component that made it real. They include various time symbols which helped to create the awareness of time – the striking of the clock, watching young or old people, hearing about

death or seeing dead bodies, seeing first grey hair and wrinkles in one's face, or dilapidated things covered with moss. These symbols represent the public time, however the inner time was even of the greater concern. By the stream-of-consciousness method novelists tried to link memories with the present moment and thus describe characters' mental processes as smoothly and vividly as possible.

At the end, it should be clarified that "the heroic age of experiment and expansion in the English novel was the product of what might be called a crisis in civilization, not the result of a wilful desire to 'make it new' and be original for the sake of being original" (Daiches, *The Novel and the Modern World*, 1960, p. 6). That crisis in civilization was caused by social, cultural and technological changes which were rising from the World Wars, and new technological innovations and scientific findings as were mentioned earlier in the chapter.

## 2. Virginia Woolf's Perception of Time

This chapter focuses on Woolf's time experimenting as a part of her writing style, which is closely related to the "stream-of-consciousness" technique she was using in order to express characters' feelings, moods, and thoughts as genuinely as possible.

Virginia Woolf was one of the modernist novelists who perceived the inevitable need of change in the focus of the plot as well as in the way of creating characters. She too tried to describe the reality of life, with the focus on the nature of temporal experience as she perceived it. The purpose of this thesis is not to put Virginia Woolf on pedestal, but to reveal her distinct vision, her perception of reality and time which occurs in her work.

Blackstone in the introduction of *Virginia Woolf: a commentary* claims that "there is nothing final and rounded-off about Virginia Woolf's vision of reality" (9). This could be seen as the reasonable point considering that every one of us perceives the reality differently depending on the individual experience or memories, and that there is a natural transformation of the human perception related to the ageing. That is the reason why "[Woolf's] characters, like her incidents and intuitions, are unfinished. [She] has left them with the power for growth, with potentiality which they have not completely realized in the limited world of the novel" (Blackstone 10). None of her characters could be seen as a definite personality as, following the plot of the story, they are formed by their own thoughts, and by the ways in which others perceive them. Thus, the reader reveals the character of Clarissa not only by

her own flow of thoughts, but also by the perception of her husband Richard, her daughter Elizabeth, or Elizabeth's teacher Miss Kilman.

In her stories there are two temporal lines which her characters perceive. On one hand, there is the chronological "public" time which every human is naturally aware of, as they hear the ticking of the clock or see the sunset. This particular time is infinite and common to all human beings, the chronological hours are passing identically for everybody and cannot be stopped. On the other hand, there is the inner "private" time or the time of consciousness. Unlike the chronological time, the inner time is perceived by each character individually. Each one of them had their own memories and experiences from the past which emerge again from the depth of their mind in particular situations, and cause particular reactions which could be different for each individual. Thus the character stays somewhat captured in their own "stream of consciousness" for a while. The flow of thoughts called the "stream of consciousness"<sup>2</sup> takes place into the individual's "private" time including past memories coming from the particular present situation as well as the possible future action which is directly related to the previous ones. By the various techniques, such as describing seemingly unimportant details of the situation which were perceived by the character as the important ones, or revealing moods and various associations related to the personal memories, in just one day the reader gets almost the whole story of Clarissa's life in *Mrs. Dalloway*.

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<sup>2</sup> The term represents the continuous flow of ideas, thoughts, and feelings forming the content of an individual's consciousness, and it was originated by William James.  
<[http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/stream of consciousness](http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/stream%20of%20consciousness)>

Both temporal lines are important, although the inner time and the flow of thoughts seem to be the one of primary concern in Woolf's novels. However, the chronological time works as the skeleton of the story which helps the reader to orient and not lose themselves in the various flows of thoughts.

Moreover, the striking of the clock makes the story somewhat remarkably real, as if the reader is there not only with Clarissa, but also with other characters as they share time and sometimes even meet, and sees what they see, feels what they feel. Paul Ricoeur in the chapter *The Fictive Experience of Time* where he is commenting on *Mrs. Dalloway* claims that "[b]y giving a temporal depth to the narrative, the entanglement of the narrated present with the remembered past confers a psychological depth on the characters without, however, giving them a stable identity, so discordant are the glimpses the characters have of one another and of themselves. The reader is left holding the scattered pieces to a great game of character identification [...]" (Ricoeur, *Time and Narrative – Volume 2*, p. 104). His claim affirms again the statement about Woolf's indefinite characters.

However, the psychological depth which Woolf gave to her characters by connecting memories with the present moments makes them somehow complete but still with the possibility of mental growth. "Deliberately, she broke the barrier between writer and public, inviting the reader to become a co-worker" (Gordon, *Virginia Woolf: A Writer's Life*, 1984, p. 182). She thought that this co-operation between the common reader and the expert would help to destroy the gap between them (Gordon 182), which could cause the reader's distance from the depth of the story or from the author's vision.



Woolf's critics speculate about the fact whether she was influenced by Henri Bergson's time theory or not, because despite Leonard Woolf's claim that she had not read Bergson's work nor even secondary sources on him (Gillies, *Henri Bergson and British Modernism*, 1996, p. 107), their visions of time are similar. In the chapter 5 which focuses on Bergsonian features in Virginia Woolf's writing, Gillies explains their notion of memory:

Woolf's sense of how memory works is uncannily similar to Bergson's. For Bergson, memory allows the linking of current and past experiences in such a fashion that the two reflect upon each other: the present experience is rendered comprehensible by comparison with a previous experience, and the past is renewed and altered by its contact with the present. (114)

Woolf herself said that "if life has a base' it is a memory" (Gordon 3). The memory could be seen as "the foundation stone of life" which affects both the present and the future - it connects the past with the present and at the same time influences the future. Characters' memories thus influence their current behaviour or thoughts, and shape their expectations. This is what they are experiencing in the moments of being, the *time-filled* moments, when all the three phases of time are mingled and so allow the continuous flow of consciousness (Gillies 116). Thus, in *Mrs. Dalloway*, "Clarissa finds the solution to her present problems by coming to see how her past provides the answers" (Gillies 116), so while she is revealing a certain regret that she chose Richard over Peter, her memories of their quarrels emerge and she realizes again the reasons of her choice that she forgot for a moment, and so even though she is

still wondering *what if*, her memories assure her that Richard was the right choice.

Furthermore, Gillies states that "Woolf's major concern is 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). This claim brings us to her concept of "moments of being" and "moments of non-being" which are related to the perception of time:

According to Woolf, the latter constitute the vast majority of our life; she referred to living in this state as being like "cotton wool" ["A Sketch" 70)], something that muffles the senses and prevents a feeling of being alive. Moments of being are much rarer, said Woolf, and also much more valuable. During these brief moments one becomes alive: aware of one's immediate surroundings and also aware of one's place in history. (Gillies 109)

By this concept of different importance of moments Woolf answered her question why one remembers something for a whole life, even the smallest detail from childhood, and forgets something else so easily. In *A Sketch of the Past*, she explained that those "moments of being" are caused by a shock which could cause either satisfaction or despair, and thus makes them exceptional (Woolf 71). This is supported by her early childhood memory of colours which she saw on her mother's dress as she was lying on her lap during a journey. She did not remember where they were heading ("non-being" or "cotton

wool"), however, she remembered the bright colours and her mother's presence which made the moment exceptionally satisfying for her ("being").

Baróthy points out that in *A Sketch of the Past* Woolf explained how, according to her point of view, the past affects the present (75):

The past only comes back when the present runs so smoothly that it is like the sliding surface of a deep river. Then one sees through the surface to the depths. In those moments I find one of my greatest satisfactions, not that I am thinking of the past; but that it is then that I am living most fully in the present. For the present when backed by the past is a thousand times deeper [...]. ("A Sketch" 98)

Thus Woolf believed that one does not perceive the true importance of the moment of being when it is happening. They found it out after some time when they can still remember the exact moment in details as if it is happening now. This strong memory is the proof of its importance in one's life. Woolf explained that "the past is beautiful because one never realizes an emotion at the time. It expands later, & thus we don't have complete emotions about the present, only about the past" (Gordon 4). In the present, one could explain the memory and think about possible reasons why the situation was exceptional, and thus make the past moment with relating emotions complete or more understandable. However, that rational explanation, which falls rather into the world of adults, could make the pure childhood memory less strong. This might be the reason why Woolf perceived the past, those special memories, possibly more real than the present.

Woolf perceived the period of childhood as the extraordinary “age of pure receptivity, primary sensations reaching the child-perceiver without the hindrance of expectations and prejudices, and are valuable by themselves” (Baróthy 89). Unlike most 19<sup>th</sup> century writers (e.g. Tolstoy) who viewed it as a period in characters’ development, Woolf as one of modernist writers, possibly influenced by Freud’s theory of personality development where he “emphasized the role of childhood experiences in shaping the adult personality” (Dr Bang, *Freud’s Theory of Personality Development*), saw childhood as an essential stage of life (Baróthy 89). In her writing, everything that is important in life already happens in childhood, and everything that will come is influenced by that past experience (Baróthy 89). It could be seen in *To the Lighthouse* where James’s thoughts in the last part of the book very often turn back to the childhood disappointment from not going to the lighthouse described in the first part. That moment of huge disappointment which he had experienced as a child thus became the exceptional “moment of being”.

Gillies in the passage about time in her *Henri Bergson and British Modernism* states that “Woolf’s moments of being are instances of pure duration, moments during which past and present time not only literally coexist, but during which one is aware of their coexistence. In a Bergsonian sense, these are moments of pure *durée*” (109). This term represents the durational or psychological time in which the thoughts of each individual flow. This flow of thoughts is intuitive rather than rational as the strong memories emerge naturally, intuitively, from the situation without great reasoning.

"While Woolf's moments might appear to contradict Bergson's insistence that life is vital only in its flux and not when it is static or spatialized, Bergson accepted that representation meant a spatialization of flux" (Gillies 109), because when the character is wondering in their inner or psychological world, the external life is static for a while because the "action" is taking place only in one's mind at that moment. In her writing, Woolf wanted to show that the moment of inner experience is "every bit as important as the more public events of the external world" (Gillies 110), and the solution was the stream-of-consciousness method.

Besides the possible influence by Henri Bergson's perception of time, Woolf was impressed by the work of Marcel Proust who was concerned with the mystery of time as well, influenced himself by Bergson's *durée*. Some critics claim that the similarity of their opinions is coincidental, but what is known is the fact that she read and liked his *À la recherche du temps perdu*<sup>3</sup>. His concerns as a novelist were close to her own, and so she tended to measure her writing against his (Shore, *Virginia Woolf, Proust, and Orlando*, 1979, p. 234). In her diary<sup>4</sup> she wrote:

I wonder if this time [in *Mrs. Dalloway*] I have achieved something? Well, nothing anyhow compared with Proust, in whom I am embedded now.  
(Shore 234)

Among Proust's qualities on which Woolf concentrated most were "sensibility, lyricism, and the impressionistic presentation of action and character through

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<sup>3</sup> *Remembrance of Things Past* (eng. translation)

<sup>4</sup> Virginia Woolf, *A Writer's Diary*, ed. Leonard Woolf (1953; rpt. London, 1969), p. 72

accumulated details" (Shore 235). She admired his "extraordinary 'expansion of sympathy' in the face of experience" (Shore 235), and because of his focus on human experience and human mind as it actually works according to him, she considered him as one of the novelists who are "psychologists" (Shore 235).

Like Woolf, Proust himself distinguished "inner time" and "chronometric time" (Lowen, *Doing Time with Marcel Proust*, 2004). He claimed that "'[t]ime past' is lost to us, but the sensations experienced are not [...]" (Lowel). The memories of the exceptional experiences are captured in one's mind, so they might take action again in the inner time even though they already passed in the sense of chronological time. Those memories, however, are involuntary, thus they contain "the original flavour of the scene" (Lowel). In contrast, the memory with the order to bring back a fragment of one's past ("voluntary memory") provides only the factual data or the skeleton of events (Lowel). Woolf shared the vision of "involuntary memory" as she believed that the memories of moments of being emerge intuitively and through them the character experiences the past and the present at the same time. Those moments when something happening in the present moment evokes and raises immediately a memory from the past are Proust's "moments privilégiés", and Woolf's "moments of vision" (Shore 232).

### 3. Time in *Mrs. Dalloway*

The aim of this chapter is to explore various temporal features which occur in *Mrs. Dalloway* and create there the awareness of time.

In chapter 4 of *Time and Narrative – Volume 2* which deals with the fictive experience of time, Ricoeur explains that “[a]ll fictional narratives are ‘tales of time’ inasmuch as the structural transformations that affect the situations and characters take time. However only a few are ‘tales about time’ inasmuch as in them it is the very experience of time that is at stake in these structural transformations” (101). One of such tales where the experience of time plays the important role is *Mrs. Dalloway* in which Woolf put aside the action of the main characters and revealed them by focusing on their temporal experience and flows of thoughts.

Similarly to Joyce’s *Ulysses*<sup>5</sup>, the time line of *Mrs. Dalloway* is limited to the single day in June 1923, however, its plot contains much more than the action of one day. By using the stream-of-consciousness style and playing with time, Woolf managed to embrace almost the whole life of its main character Clarissa, at least the moments which were important for revealing her nature, and partly the natures of others which occur around her (Peter Walsh, Richard Dalloway, Sally Seton, Elizabeth Dalloway, Miss Kilman) or are somehow connected to her (Septimus and his wife Rezia). The thoughts of others are used mainly to complete the consciousness of Clarissa and thus quite fully reveal her character.

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<sup>5</sup> Virginia read *Ulysses* but did not like it much. However, what she found interesting was Joyce’s experiment of replacing narrative with a stream of thoughts.  
([http://modernism.research.yale.edu/wiki/index.php/Woolf's\\_Reading\\_of\\_Joyce's\\_Ulysses,\\_1918-1920](http://modernism.research.yale.edu/wiki/index.php/Woolf's_Reading_of_Joyce's_Ulysses,_1918-1920))

One of the narrative techniques used in order to stress the passing of time is the occurrence of numerous small events as the day progresses toward its final point - Clarissa's party (Ricoeur 102). There are various meetings and incidents, comings and goings where the sameness of time for everybody, meaning the public time, is obvious. First, there is the moment when a royal figure is crossing the street in the car which is perceived as a very special moment, everybody is wondering whether it is the Queen or not. They stop and stare as if the clock stops for a while to pay honour to the significant moment, "perceiv[ing] instinctively that greatness [is] passing, and the pale light of immortal presence fell upon them [...]" (*Mrs. Dalloway* 15). The post of the Queen is perceived as something immortal because they pay honour to their monarch as they ancestors did and as their descendants will do. The very same moment is experienced by Clarissa who is walking in the streets in order to buy flowers for her party, and by Rezia and Septimus going to the park. All of them notice it and cannot help staring but at the same time each of them has their own flow of thoughts running in their heads experiencing it in their own inner time while the royal car is passing by.

A similar situation happens a moment later when people start staring at the aeroplane writing some letters with white smoke in the sky, Septimus with Rezia among them...

"Look, look, Septimus!" she [Rezia] 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. (*Mrs. Dalloway* 17)

... and Mrs. Dalloway as well:

"What are they looking at?" said Clarissa Dalloway to the maid who opened her door. (*Mrs. Dalloway* 23)

These direct speeches among others constitute the "outside-world action", in other words what is seen or heard from the outside by others, and thus makes the skeleton of the story. They are the reminder of the public world and they guide the reader throughout the story. It is not difficult in fact for the reader to lose oneself in the streams of consciousness that are filling the space between them. Actually, these moments of continuous wander in the inner time when the character is dealing with their own individual thoughts including memories, present thoughts and expectations as well, in Bergsonian sense the *durée*, are perceived as the essential ones. However, "[t]here is nothing new about this device of the flashback or the glimpse into the future: what is noteworthy is Mrs. Woolf's smooth manipulation of time so that the transitions seem effortless and inevitable [...]" (Karl and Magalaner 132). This manipulation of time is provided mainly by the stream-of-consciousness method along with her frequent confrontation of the outside "public time" with the inner "private time" explained previously in the chapter 3.

What is also achieved by Woolf's working with memories, is the creation of the characters in *Mrs. Dalloway*. Instead of presenting the characters on the scene first and then revealing their pasts progressively in order to understand their actions, the reader gets the picture of Sally Seton, Peter Walsh, or Richard

Dalloway even before they enter the scene in person through Clarissa's eyes. They are revealed in Clarissa's stream of consciousness, living in her memories. Thus "[the reader] become[s] aware of their pasts before [s/he] know[s] what they are in the present" (Blackstone 75). Moreover, they are described in relation to Clarissa and how they perceive her rather than as the separated individuals. Thus it could be said that while the reader is revealing the main character of Clarissa, s/he also partly reveals another character.

As for another reminders of the public world and time interrupting the inner flow of thoughts, maybe the more obvious ones, are the clocks. Their striking, most certainly those of Big Ben, as one of the dominant of London where the story takes place, is "heard" several times throughout the whole story:

As they looked [at the aeroplane] the whole world became perfectly silent, and a flight of gulls crossed the sky, first one gull leading, then another, and in this extraordinary silence and peace, in this pallor, in this purity, bells struck eleven times, the sound fading up there among the gulls. (*Mrs. Dalloway* 17)

Sometimes they interrupt the stream of consciousness or the stillness of the moment to remind everyone of the sameness, the infinity, and the unstopability of time which creates the desire to enjoy life as well as the fear of aging and death:

There! Out it boomed. First a warning, musical; then the hour, irrevocable. The leaden circles dissolved in the air. (*Mrs. Dalloway* 3)

This is how Clarissa perceives time at the beginning of the story. She is aware of the passing of time. She feels the freshness of each moment and hopes that her party will be perfect, but she is worried about meeting Peter again. "Thus passes internal time, pulled back by memory and thrust ahead by expectation" (Ricoeur 105).

The flow of thoughts which emerges with the striking proves Ricoeur's idea that besides the functioning as the reminder of the hour, the strokes of the clocks carry various relations that the protagonists establish with them (105). Thus whereas Clarissa hurries home to prepare everything for her party, Rezia asks Septimus what the time is because they have an appointment with Sir William Bradshaw, Septimus's doctor:

"The time, Septimus," Rezia repeated. "What is the time?"

He was talking, he was starting, this man must notice him. He was looking at them.

"I will tell you the time," said Septimus, very slowly, very drowsily, smiling mysteriously. As he sat smiling at the dead man in the grey suit the quarter struck – the quarter to twelve. (*Mrs. Dalloway* 58)

Clarissa knows that it is getting late and that she has to prepare a lot of things for the lunch and for the party, Rezia is aware of the fact that minutes are passing as well, but she is thinking about talking to Bradshaw about Septimus and found out how he could be treated. Thus the striking of the clocks contains the public awareness of time as well as the individual one.

Moreover, the sameness of the public time is highlighted by accidental meetings of the characters. This method allows the natural fluidity of the plot

as the narrator is able to move naturally from one stream of consciousness to another without jumping into completely different situation, and makes the orientation easier for the reader so s/he can imagine where the different characters are situated. Thus Rezia's stream of consciousness, in which she is thinking about Septimus's behaviour and her suffering with him, passes to Peter's stream of consciousness in which he is wondering what the young man (Septimus) told the poor women (Rezia) that she looks so desperate in that fine summer morning (*Mrs. Dalloway* 58).

As for the infinity of time, it is shown in the private moments of Septimus's suicide:

The clock was striking – one, two, three: how sensible the sound was; compared with all this thumping and whispering; like Septimus himself. She [Rezia] was falling asleep. But the clock went on striking, four, five, six [...]. (*Mrs. Dalloway* 123)

Rezia who has just experienced her husband's death subjectively perceives the sound of the striking as a sensible one reminding her of Septimus, other sounds are suddenly unimportant for her in that moment. Despite Septimus's death, the sad suicide, the striking of the clock goes on. No matter what happens, time is constantly passing.

The unexpected news about Septimus's suicide, the man who did not belong to the circle of Clarissa but was treated by Bradshaw who came to the party, "allows the plot to reach its culmination" (Ricoeur 102), and reveals the deep connection between his and Clarissa's fates. In a certain way, Septimus is Clarissa's "double" as is the old woman in the room across the street. "Clarissa

never actually meets either of her doubles [but] she is able to enter into their lives and learn from them something that allows her a greater degree of self-knowledge" (Gillies 116). Septimus's and Clarissa's voices join when she states:

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. (*Mrs. Dalloway* 151)

Despite the fact that Clarissa prepared the party and invited a lot of people there, she feels as alone as Septimus did. She feels unable to speak with Peter and Sally as she used to, she is not able to express her true feelings to her husband and daughter, and they are not able to do that either. In the similar way, Septimus felt the impossibility to communicate with the public world which perceived him as a madman and with doctors who wanted him to separate from his wife who as the only one wanted to understand him. He rather died after the happy moment with Rezia than to be treated as a madman till the end of his life. Thus through Septimus Woolf demonstrates "the most terrifying experience she herself knew, which is to lose communication with the world outside one's mind" (Gordon 56).

After hearing the news of Septimus's suicide, the striking of the clock reminds again the continuous flow and eternity of time, and the fact that although one life ended the others continue:

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. There! The old lady put out her light!

The whole house was dark now with this going on, she repeated, and the words came to her, Fear no more the heat of the sun<sup>6</sup>. (*Mrs. Dalloway* 152)

By seeing the old woman going quietly to bed who by looking at Clarissa sent her a "sign", and by thinking about death, Clarissa realizes her own mortality and her love for life. "It pushes her back into life, but she re-enters her world wiser and more self-aware" (Gillies 117). The death of the young man makes her feel fond of living and enjoying the moment: "He made her feel the beauty; made her feel the fun" (*Mrs. Dalloway* 153). She realizes that she is not alone, she has friends who are waiting for her and her beloved London.

The novel ends with the emphasis on identity: "For there she was" (*Mrs. Dalloway* 159). Clarissa is in the final scene described again as other character, Peter in this case, perceives her and it is the moment of excitement for him as he feels her regained self-awareness. But one could feel that this is not the moment of a solution or a resolution because the life of Clarissa continues even though the novel ends, the reader could imagine how the relationships continue, the streams of consciousness flow, and the personalities develop in the never-ending flux of time (Daiches 212).

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<sup>6</sup> The line is from Shakespeare's *Cymbeline* and it is seen during the day by Clarissa as well as Septimus.

#### 4. Time in *To the Lighthouse*

This chapter focuses on *To the Lighthouse* in particular, and compares its temporal features with those used in *Mrs. Dalloway*.

Although Woolf used completely different surrounding this time, she moved from the busy society world of London depicted in *Mrs. Dalloway* to the remote corner of the Hebrides (Blackstone 99), she used the similar methods in this novel, such as the stream-of-consciousness style which creates the illusion that the plot of the first and the last part takes place in the time span of a few years rather than of hours by containing characters' memories and thoughts with various associations, and the feminine figure represents again the "centre" to which other characters are linked.

"The time extension of the first part of *To the Lighthouse* is even less than that of *Mrs. Dalloway*: there, [one] had a single day; here [one] ha[s] a single evening, the space between six o'clock and the dinner to which the action leads up" (Blackstone 102). Unlike *Mrs. Dalloway* where there are no exact chapters or other division, *To the Lighthouse* is clearly divided into three parts where the first one, "The Window", and the last one, "The Lighthouse", consist of a few hours in duration and focus on the human protagonists, whereas the middle one, "Time Passes", containing the events of ten years in squared brackets, creates a connecting bridge between the two other parts and focuses on the power of nature and the infinite passing of time independent of the human element. Each part is subdivided into chapters, some of them containing only a few sentences as if they were short shots of memories or thoughts. Unlike in *Mrs. Dalloway* where Septimus represents the mental victim

of the horrors of the past Great War, the plot of *To the Lighthouse* embraces the whole atmosphere of Ramsay's family and their summer house beginning in the pre-war and ending in the post-war period.

In *To the Lighthouse* Woolf, after the time experimenting in *Mrs. Dalloway*, continued to improve her skills in the manipulation of time. In "The Window", Mrs. Ramsay wills to stop the passing of time. "She wills it, in the first place, emotionally: because she wants the world of her children and her family never to pass away" (Blackstone 110):

Oh, but she [Mrs. Ramsay] never wanted James to grow a day older! or Cam either. These two she would have liked to keep for ever just as they were, demons of wickedness, angels of delight, never to see them grow up into long-legged monsters. (*To the Lighthouse* 56)

Mrs. Ramsay, as the author herself did, feels the purity and the uniqueness of children's perception. She sees adults as "long-legged monsters", human beings who lost their pure perception by rational overthinking – by adding prejudices, fears, and restraint into their personal view of the world. Thus according to her one cannot be happier than s/he was in the childhood: "[...] why should they grow up and lose all that? [...] They were happier now than they would ever be again" (*To the Lighthouse* 56).

"Then, again, she wills it mystically: that time shall stand still; for we are made aware that her own real existence is [...] in that silence and that darkness into which she sinks when she is alone. The moment becomes eternity. When she has sunk into her 'proper dark' she does not wish to be brought to the surface again by the insistence of time" (Blackstone 101):



She could be herself, by herself. [...]. All the being and the doing, expansive, glittering, vocal, evaporated; and one shrunk, with a sense of solemnity, to being oneself, a wedge-shaped core of darkness, something invisible to others. [...]; and this self having shed its attachments was free for the strangest adventures. [...]. Beneath it is all dark, it is all spreading, it is unfathomably deep; but now and again we rise to the surface and that is what you see us by. (*To the Lighthouse* 60)

Here, Mrs. Ramsay describes her inner world where nothing is impossible, she could be anything she wants, and it brings her stability. In this world her “true self” is situated, there are no worries about anything else, there she is not influenced by anyone or anything. In these moments time seems to stop because there she wanders in her private time which passes according to her wishes, and her perception of things seems very sensitive. By watching the strokes of the lighthouse in this mood, she attaches herself to it, feeling remote from the everydayness, peaceful (*To the Lighthouse* 61).

In this novel Woolf used various symbols signaling the passing of the chronological time as well. Here, the reader could perceive the aging of human beings as well as of inanimate things. As for human beings, it is Mrs. Ramsay who is most aware of inevitable aging:

When she looked in the glass and saw her hair grey, her cheek sunk, at fifty, she thought, possibly she might have managed things better – her husband; money; his books. (*To the Lighthouse* 6)

Here, her image in the glass reminds her of her aging, and similarly to Clarissa she wonders *what if*, as her life is coming closer and closer to the end.

The aging of inanimate things is most visible on Ramsay's summer house throughout the passing of the seasons in "Time Passes" where the power of nature to absorb everything that stands in its way as the time passes is here put in the contrast with the transience and the fragility of a human life:

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. (*To the Lighthouse* 118)

The house dilapidates and seems so empty and desolate without the human presence which made it a home. The beast's skull that seemed so scary to Ramsay's children is mouldy, and as their perception after ten years is now different, it does not look scary anymore. No one is living there anymore, darkness and wind are "wandering" in the rooms, and the three of them are never coming back. The awareness of death is passing throughout the whole part as the reader finds out that the war took place and because of that lots of lives were lost. The darkness might symbolize the destruction of war and the sadness of survivors, and so the stroke of the lighthouse which flashes in it could represent hope for better moments and remind the reader of Mrs. Ramsay watching the strokes of the lighthouse while sitting alone in the darkness, and wandering in her inner world.

The second section, "Time Passes", differs from the other two, as it is considered as the representative of *durée*, "in that much happens yet little is seen by the reader" (Gillies 120). As Gillies further explains "[i]n this way Woolf's second section is similar to the flow of life that goes on beneath the events of daily life; that is, although constant change and growth occur in *durée*, they are not necessarily visible until they affect some action in the everyday world" (121). The deaths of three members of Ramsay family, including Mrs. Ramsay, which are quite shocking with the first reading, is announced only very briefly in the square brackets and so those moments suddenly seem so tiny, almost unimportant, in the eternity of time. Similar to the situation after Septimus's suicide when the clock continued striking, lives of the other members of the family go on. The whole story of the possible journey to the lighthouse which started with Mrs. Ramsay in the first part of the novel continues in the last one without her, but one cannot say that she is not there. She is not present there in person, but she is present in the memories of the others.

In the last part, "The Lighthouse", Lily, a painter, re-creates the picture of Mrs Ramsay by memories of her:

Mrs Ramsay sat silent. She was glad, Lily thought, to rest in silence, uncommunicative; to rest in extreme obscurity of human relationships.

Who knows what we are, what we feel? (*To the Lighthouse* 163)

Lily suggests that it might not be possible for others to perceive the individual's true self. By saying what one feels in actual words could spoil the intensity of the feelings: "Aren't things spoilt then [...] by saying them? Aren't we more

expressive thus" (*To the Lighthouse* 163)? Thus it seems that Mrs Ramsay might be perceived more fully in her typical silent moments when she was captured in her inner world than in the moments. It could be said that in that silent way she expresses more of her character than when she was actually speaking.

Besides the memories of the others, the moment of someone's life could be captured in the art: "[...] nothing stays; all changes; but not words, not paint" (*To the Lighthouse* 169). However, Lily is aware of the fact that the picture is, unlike the memory, impersonal: "Yet it would be hung in the attics, she thought; it would be rolled up and flung under a sofa; [...]" (*To the Lighthouse* 169). Even though the art is able to capture one's life or a history in a particular moment, it could be lost in the attics, whereas the memory, especially of the moment of being, could stay in the human mind till the end of lives of those who experienced it.

According to Blackstone, time in the last section of the novel "proceeds in contrary motion" (101). "[While] Mr Ramsay sails with Cam and James into the future, to the lighthouse, [...] Lily Briscoe, sitting on the lawn in front of the house, allows her thoughts to wander back into the past until the figure of Mrs Ramsay is re-created" (Blackstone 101). Thus the story ends with the image of the central character with whom it began, however, the situation is not the same, even though it is captured in Lily's memory as well as in her painting, even James's desire to go to the lighthouse is not as strong as it used to be in his childhood, in fact when it eventually comes to the moment of coming there,

it is rather Mr Ramsay's desire to make his children go than James's own desire to visit it, because time passes and things are changing with it.

## 5. Time in *Orlando*

This chapter reveals temporal features of *Orlando*, and contrasts them with the ones used in the previous two novels.

In *Virginia Woolf: a commentary* Blackstone nicely summarized the plot of *Orlando*:

Throughout the metamorphoses of a single individual the changing spirit of English history and the English way of life is re-created. Orlando is masculine and violent in the dashing Elizabethan age, pensive and morbid in the early seventeenth century, presides at literary tea-parties in the Augustan period, and blushes and swoons in crinolines in the sentimental age of Victoria. (131)

Woolf's idea of the individual of multiple selves is very Bergsonian (Gillies 124). "Bergson believed that each individual consists of multiple selves, with a superficial surface self that presents itself to the world while others, existing below the surface, constantly mesh and change and have an impact in which superficial self is displayed at any one moment" (Gillies 124). Such multiple selves could be seen previously in the characters of Mrs. Dalloway and Mrs. Ramsay as they both had their secret inner self, revealing to the reader by the stream-of-consciousness method, as well as the public self, always visible to the others from the outside. However, in this case the "multiplicity" might be seen as the more specific one as Orlando not only experiences three centuries but also changes his sex from male to female.

*Orlando* metaphorically shows how the private time differs from the public time. Whereas the public "clock" time is passing through three and a half

centuries in the novel, Orlando is not ageing at all which represents the individual passing of the private inner time. This fact is explained directly in the text by the biographer who narrates the story:

An hour, once it lodges in the queer element of the human spirit, may be stretched to fifty or a hundred times its clock length; on the other hand, an hour may be accurately represented on the timepiece of the mind by one second. This extraordinary discrepancy between time on the clock and time in the mind is less known than it should be and deserves fuller investigation. (*Orlando* 55)

In this paragraph the narrator/biographer explains the way how the inner time works. She (as one could suppose that the biographer is Woolf herself) points out the fact that the length of a moment, which takes place in the inner time, may be several times longer than was its actual duration in the "clock" time, because during one's life s/he is linking various other moments to it. So when s/he is experiencing a similar moment again, the various associations related to it emerges with it as well.

In *Orlando* Proust's "moments privilégiés", which were mentioned in the chapter 3, figure importantly (Shore 239). "Like *À la recherche du temps perdu*, *Orlando* is preoccupied with the problem of time, and how the memory can retrieve fragments of the past and reawaken them in the present" (Shore 239). By the end of the novel Orlando herself experiences those "moments privilégiés":

'Time has passed over me,' she thought, trying to collect herself; 'this is the oncome of middle age. How strange it is! Nothing is any longer one

thing. I take up a handbag and I think of an old bumboat woman frozen in the ice. Someone lights a pink candle and I see a girl in Russian trousers. When I step out of doors – as I do now,’ here she stepped on to the pavement of Oxford Street, ‘what is it that I taste? Little herbs. I hear goat bells. I see mountains. Turkey? India? Persia?’ Her eyes filled with tears. (Orlando 177)

In this paragraph the author covered most of events that the character experienced throughout the novel – the Great Frost, falling in love with the Russian princess, becoming the Queen’s Ambassador and visiting various countries, and travelling with gypsies – and drew again the reader’s attention to the topic of time and memory and their power which Orlando considers almost scary.

Like the two previous novels, Orlando too contains the topic of aging and death. Even though Orlando himself is neither ageing nor dying in the story, to say that s/he does not experience it at all would be inappropriate. He experiences the Great Frost which kills all which is not strong enough to survive, and sees people around him getting older:

Then suddenly, Orlando would fall into one of his moods of melancholy; the sight of the old woman hobbling over the ice might be the cause of it, or nothing; and would fling himself face downwards on the ice and look into the frozen waters and think of death. [...]. ‘All ends in death,’ Orlando would say, sitting upright, his face clouded with gloom. (Orlando 24)



The frost conserves its victims in the ice, so one could still see them in the moment of their death. Orlando watches the old lady skating on the ice and dead bodies frozen under her, and he thinks that "all ends in death", because despite the fact that he himself is not getting older at all, he is aware of the fact that the old lady as well as all the people will die one day as he sees it around.

Furthermore, the passing of the chronological time is in some passages of *Orlando* reminded directly by the narrator's/biographer's statement: "Time went by, and Orlando, wrapped in his own dreams, thought only of the pleasures of life; [...]". So the reader knows that even though Orlando makes the moment stop in a sense that while s/he is wandering in his/her consciousness, he forgets about the clock time which continues passing.

Besides the direct narrator's reminders, here again Woolf used the striking of the clock. Similarly, it interrupts Orlando's flow of thoughts and throws her back into the present moment. The striking of Big Ben is substituted by St Paul's bells here:

Suddenly, with an awful and ominous voice, a voice full of horror and alarm which raised every hair of anguish in Orlando's soul, St Paul's struck the first stroke of midnight. Four times more it struck remorselessly. (Orlando 33)

Whereas Mrs. Dalloway perceived Big Ben's striking as a rather musical reminder of time, for Orlando St Paul's striking sounds like a tragic alarm. This difference is caused naturally by the situation or mood in which the character occurs. Whereas Mrs. Dalloway is excited about the preparation of her evening party, Orlando occurs in the tragic situation waiting for his Russian princess

who is not coming, and with the passing of time represented by the strokes he has to accept the fact that she is not going to come.

## Conclusion

The topic of time was widely discussed throughout the centuries, and there were various theories which tried to explain the nature of time and the way it works. Saint Augustine's paradox of existence and measurement of time, so-called "aporia of being and nonbeing of time", raised a lot of questions and supported the fact that the unified concept of time cannot exist because of the very nature of time. In the period of Modernism, the idea that time is a continuous flux, propagated mainly by Henri Bergson, outweighed the traditional theory of time as a chronological sequence of separated moments.

The direct influence of Henri Bergson's time theory was not completely proved, however a lot of features in Virginia Woolf's novels seem to be Bergsonian. Their perceptions of time certainly matched as both of them perceived it as a continuous flux, where the present, the past, and the future mingle. Moreover, a certain form of Bergson's theory of *durée*, an individual private time, and *l'étendu*, a shared public time, appears to be used in her novels as well.

Bergsonian *durée* is closely related to the "stream-of-consciousness" method as one of the main features of Woolf's writing. It helped Woolf to describe smoothly character's states of mind by connecting memories with present moments. A possible source of the concept of involuntary memory which emerges naturally based on sensory stimuli in the present situation is Marcel Proust who was extensively read and admired by a lot of modernist writers.

World War I changed people's perception of the world and raised the topic of the meaning of life and death. Thus, there is no wonder that the sensitive *avant garde* responded to the changes of the modernist period, and created a new concept of novel-writing which suited its atmosphere.

By the inclusion of temporal features in her novels, Virginia Woolf managed to create the illusion of the real world. The natural awareness of time is present throughout the whole plot of *Mrs. Dalloway*, *To the Lighthouse*, and *Orlando*, and raises there topics related to time such as aging and death. Besides the obvious symbols of time such as the strokes of the clock, Big Ben's in *Mrs. Dalloway* and St. Paul's in *Orlando*, or wrinkles and grey hair of the characters, she also used a specific construction of the plot where paragraphs filled with the revelation of flows of thoughts and moods of major as well as of some minor characters predominate paragraphs of action. By this structure of the plot Woolf presented the fact that inner time of an individual is as important and powerful as the public "clock" time, and furthermore represented the style of modernist novel-writing where the "stream of consciousness" was of primary concern, and thus overshadowed the characters' action.

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## Resumé (English)

This thesis elaborates the issue of the awareness of time which is included in Virginia Woolf's novels, especially in *Mrs. Dalloway*, *To the Lighthouse*, and *Orlando*, which are considered to be her experiments with time. The first, more theoretical, part of the thesis focuses on significant theories of time – Saint Augustine's "aporia of being and nonbeing of time", which played an important role in the development of the topic of time, and Henri Bergson's theory of *durée* and *l'étendu*, which revealed the difference between individual private time and shared public time. Bergson's theory of time together with Marcel Proust's theory of involuntary memory are considered to be probable sources for Woolf's perception of time and the inclusion of a stream-of-consciousness method, apparently adopted from Joyce's *Ulysses*, which were then reflected in her writings. The aim of the second part of the thesis is to explore temporal features in those three novels, including various symbols of time as well as a specific construction of the plot.



## Resumé (Czech)

Tato práce se zabývá tématem povědomí o čase, které je obsaženo v románech Virginie Woolfové, zejména pak v *Paní Dallowayové*, *K majáku* a *Orlandovi*, které jsou považovány za její časové experimenty. První, teoretičtější část práce se zaměřuje na významné teorie času – “aporie bytí a nebytí času” svatého Augustina, která hrála důležitou roli ve vývoji tématu času, a teorie Henriho Bergsona o *durée* a *l'éternité*, která odkryla rozdíl mezi soukromým, vnitřním časem jednotlivce a sdíleným veřejným časem. Bergsonova teorie času je spolu s teorií Marcela Prousta o neúmyslné vzpomínce považována za pravděpodobný zdroj vnímání času Virginie Woolfové a důvod pro zařazení metody proudu vědomí, zřejmě převzatou z Joyceova díla *Odysseus*, které se odrážejí v jejích dílech. Cílem druhé části práce je prozkoumat prvky času ve zmíněných třech románech zahrnující různé časové symboly a také specifickou strukturu děje.