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Discourse recognition and analysis of hate speech in Virginia Woolf's "Mrs Dalloway"

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Hate speech is a notion that many people see as intuitively easy to grasp, while many others deny it is even an understandable concept. The present article aims to identify and examine the hate speech situations manifested in Virginia Woolf's famous novel, "Mrs Dalloway". An alternative reading of the novel "Mrs Dalloway" by exploring the seemingly minor character, but with a substantial impact on the unfolding of the plotline, Miss Kilman, represents a secondary objective. Following the triangle, Clarissa Dalloway - her daughter, Elizabeth and Doris Kilman, the present essay tries to explain the situations in which hate speech occurs in "Mrs Dalloway".

Keywords: *"Mrs Dalloway", discourse analysis, hate speech, Clarissa Dalloway, Doris Kilman, Elizabeth Dalloway*

1. Introduction

By her original name in full Adeline Virginia Stephen, Virginia Woolf was an English writer whose novels, through their nonlinear approaches to narrative, influenced the genre. She is best known for her novels, especially "Mrs Dalloway" (1925) and "To the Lighthouse" (1927). Woolf also wrote pioneering essays on artistic theory, literary history, women's writing, and the politics of power. A fine stylist, she experimented with several forms of biographical writing, composed painterly short fiction, and sent a lifetime of brilliant letters to her friends and family (Reid 2022).

Virginia Woolf, who had an aversion to introducing herself, is not easy to introduce. The smooth fluidity of her prose and her often casual tone belie the very purposive approach of a self-conscious artist (Hartig 2004, 4).

"Mrs Dalloway" depicts a single day in London from the perspectives of several characters through a stream-of-consciousness narration. Clarissa Dalloway, the title character, contemplates her life as she moves through the city and

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prepares for a party. The novel drifts into the minds of several of Clarissa's acquaintances, as her friends defy social expectations and struggle to process the aftermath of World War I.

Remarked for its stylistic innovation and compassionate treatment of unconventional women, mental illness, and sexuality, the narrative situates profound revelations within the mundane activities of everyday life.

One of the minor characters, raising a considerable problem, Doris Kilman, is Elizabeth's history teacher, who has German ancestry. Miss Kilman has a history degree and was fired from a teaching job during the war because of society's anti-German prejudice. What we learn about Miss Kilman (Bell and Bell 2006, 132) is that she has struggled to educate and make something of herself, beginning in meagre immigrant circumstances in the lower classes; that she has been thwarted in this otherwise commendable ambition for a woman because of being German at the worst possible historical moment; that her brother has been killed in the war; that she resents her poverty and exclusion; that she has become a Christian because a sympathetic minister has taken pity upon her and enabled her to take comfort in identifying with the suffering of Christ; that she is passionately, recklessly and hopelessly in love with the beautiful young Elizabeth.

Following the triangle, Clarissa Dalloway - her daughter, Elizabeth, and Doris Kilman, the article tries to explain the situations in which hate speech takes place in "Mrs Dalloway".

2. Theoretical framework

Under international human rights law, there is no general definition of hate speech. The topic is still highly debated, particularly regarding freedom of expression, non-discrimination, and equality. To provide a unified framework for the United Nations to address the issue globally, the UN Strategy and Plan of Action on Hate Speech defines hate speech as it follows:

> Any kind of communication in speech, writing or behaviour, that attacks or uses pejorative or discriminatory language with reference to a person or a group on the basis of who they are, in other words, based on their religion, ethnicity, nationality, race, colour, descent, gender or other identity factor. (United Nations, December, 2021)

Hate speech can be expressed in any way, including photos, objects, gestures, and symbols. Hate speech is discriminatory (biased, bigoted, or intolerant of a person or group) or derogatory (prejudiced, scornful, or insulting). Hate speech highlights an

individual's or a group's actual or perceived identity factors, such as religion, ethnicity, nationality, race, colour, descent, and gender, but also characteristics such as language, economic or social origin, disability, health status, or sexual orientation, among many others.

Consider Figure 1, The Pyramid of Hate. The Pyramid illustrates biased behaviours that increase in complexity from bottom to top.

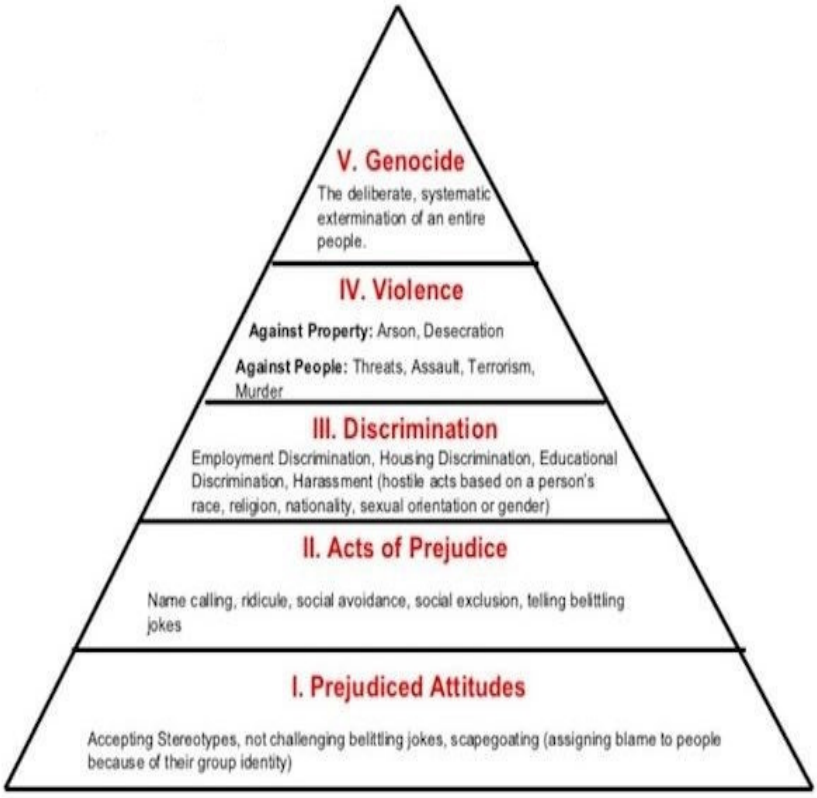

Figure 1. Pyramid of Hate (Anti-Defamation League, 2020)

Although the behaviours at each level have a detrimental influence on both individuals and groups, the behaviours become increasingly dangerous as one goes up the pyramid. The lower levels support the upper levels, much like a pyramid. When people or institutions perceive lower-level behaviours as acceptable, the behaviours at the following level become more accepted.

It is essential to understand that hate speech can only be addressed by individuals or groups. It excludes communication about countries and their institutions, symbols, or public authorities, as well as about religious leaders or doctrines of the faith.

3. Discourse analysis of Hate Speech in "Mrs Dalloway"

The following section shows an analysis model of the hate speech present in "Mrs Dalloway". This analysis was carried out on two levels: one from the perspective of Clarissa Dalloway and the other by observing the character Miss Kilman.

3.1. The Albanians – or was it the Armenians?

One of the most expressive situations of hate speech, more or less conscious, in "Mrs Dalloway", is represented by the Armenian question.

The fact Clarissa has preferred to marry Richard, who offers her status, protectiveness and respect, instead of the chattering Peter, whose love was too intense and invasive, has allowed her to remain isolated from the pressure of other people's lives, generally from the outer world. Clarissa has come to the point in her middle age when she barely seems conscious of the world outside Westminster and Mayfair. Her famous reflection upon the plight of the Armenians is criticising evidence of this:

> She cared much more for her roses than for the Armenians. Hunted out of existence, maimed, frozen the victims of cruelty and injustice (she had heard Richard say repeatedly)-no, she could feel nothing for the Albanians, or was it the Armenians? But she loved her roses (didn't that help the Armenians?)-the only flowers she could bear to see cut…
> An offering for the sake of offering, perhaps [her parties]. Anyhow it was her gift. Nothing else had she of the slightest importance; could not think, write, even play the piano. She muddled Armenians and Turks; loved success; hated discomfort; must be liked; talked oceans of nonsense; and to this day, ask her what the Equator was, she did not know.
>
> (Bell and Bell 2006, 99)

The Armenians were Christians in a Muslim area between Turkey and Russia who had been colonised and persecuted since the eleventh century. Albanians lived 1200 miles to the west with considerably different problems. The Treaty of San Stefano of 1878 proposed to put Armenians under Russian authority. However, Britain, concerned about its influence in the region, forced a revision to keep Armenians within the Ottoman Empire in exchange for pledging to protect them from Turkish abuse. Nevertheless, Britain failed to protect the Armenians; the abuse continued, culminating in massacres of up to a million in 1915, accompanied by crucifixion, mutilations and rapes. On the day of Woolf's novel in June 1923,

Richard was on his way to a committee meeting on the Lausanne Treaty, which was signed on 24 July 1923. It turned out to be another betrayal because with it, Britain ignored Armenian independence and established the state of Iraq to strengthen its influence in the region (Kern 2011, 86).

If Clarissa cared what the Equator was, she could look it up or ask Richard (Bell and Bell 2006, 99-100). She should not confuse the Armenians and the Turks- the victims with the victimisers- eight years into only the most recent phase of that evolving genocide, the first of the century. In 1945 terms, it is roughly the equivalent of confusing Nazis and the European Jews. The newest massacre begun in Turkey continued even into 1923 under the celebrated constitutional regime of Mustafa Kemal (Kemal Ataturk), whose will had prevailed against the allies eight years before Gallipoli[2] .

This international crisis is what Richard is returning to the House of Commons to help contend with after delivering roses. The Armenian Christian genocide was widely reported in the Western press. It was denounced in both Houses of Parliament and condemned by the Anglican Church, and its original perpetrators were condemned to death in absentia by a post-war tribunal.

Adolf Hitler knew more about this aspect of human nature than most people. “Who still remembers today the annihilation of the Armenians?” he is reported to have said to anxious aides when pressing forward with his Final Solution[3]. Historical memory should matter, mainly to the class of people who control history’s levers. The worst of it in Clarissa’s case is that she seems not to care. The idea that loving her roses helps the Armenians is either ridiculous or insane.

[2] The Gallipoli (Dardanelles) campaign was a military campaign in the First World War on the Gallipoli peninsula (Gelibolu in modern Turkey), from 17 Feb 1915 to 9 Jan 1916. The Entente powers, Britain, France and Russia, sought to weaken the Ottoman Empire, one of the Central Powers, by taking control of the Turkish straits. This would expose the Ottoman capital at Constantinople to bombardment by Allied battleships and cut it off from the Asian part of the empire. With Turkey defeated, the Suez Canal would be safe, and a year-round Allied supply route could be opened through the Black Sea to warm water ports in Russia. The attempt by the Allied fleet to force the Dardanelles in February 1915 failed and was followed by an amphibious landing on the Gallipoli peninsula in April 1915. In January 1916, after eight months of fighting, with approximately 250,000 casualties on each side, the land campaign was abandoned, and the invasion force was withdrawn. It was a costly campaign for the Entente powers and the Ottoman Empire, and the sponsors of the expedition, especially the First Lord of the Admiralty (1911–1915), Winston Churchill. The campaign was considered a great Ottoman victory. In Turkey, it is regarded as a defining moment in the state's history, a final surge in defence of the motherland as the Ottoman Empire retreated.

[3] The Final Solution or the “Final Solution to the Jewish Question’’ was a Nazi plan for the genocide of Jews during World War II. “The Final Solution to the Jewish Question’’ was the official code name for the murder of all Jews within reach, which was not restricted to the European continent.

3.2. The neglected character, Miss Kilman

Clarissa's most powerful critic is her archenemy, Doris Kilman. Miss Kilman is wholly unmoved by the prevailing social ethos, and her analysis of Clarissa has a sharper political edge. In the novel, she is Clarissa's true antitype: hideous, sullen, socially ungifted, unfashionable, poor, passionate, un-English, politically radical and religious. She detests and fears Clarissa not only for who she is, the competitor for Elizabeth's allegiance, but for her attitude toward the class she represents.

The character of Miss Kilman (see Jensen 2003, 132) can be read in many ways. She is shown throughout the book to be a counterpart to Clarissa Dalloway. Doris Kilman and Clarissa Dalloway both vie for the love of Elizabeth. While Miss Kilman is a religious activist, Clarissa herself often feels like a nun. Both characters are also depicted as loving other women. Clarissa considers that she could not resist sometimes yielding to the charm of a woman; she did undoubtedly then feel what men felt. Similarly, Miss Kilman loves Elizabeth without jealousy and fantasises about her as a fawn in the open moon glade.

The current study is far more intriguing to consider the tutor, Miss Kilman, than it is to look at Elizabeth Dalloway. People have mistreated Miss Kilman because of her poverty, her ugliness, and even her German name. She seeks revenge and wants to make Clarissa, who is pleasant and attractive, unhappy the way she is. A falling tree killed Clarissa's sister, and Miss Kilman would have liked to fall on Clarissa. With their extensive root systems, trees are like the soul, so this metaphor suggests that Miss Kilman is out to kill souls. Clarissa feels this murderous impulse masquerades as love and finds the deception horrifying, especially since she believes Elizabeth is vulnerable to it. Clarissa sees religious, scientific, and romantic beliefs as a false justification for people's characters' flaws and weaknesses. She does not feel that these beliefs can explain the mystery of human beings' isolation in a world of activity.

When Mrs Dalloway went out to buy flowers in the morning, she thought of death — and tried not to fear it; it promised that fearing had reached an end. Far more than death, the reader may realise that Mrs Dalloway fears Doris Kilman when the scene ends. She considers the tutor as a tyrant, like a blood-sucking, nocturnal spectre. A monster, she calls her, with "hooves" that threaten "that leaf-encumbered forest, the soul." She is like a heathen invader, and it is suggestive of that when we first meet Miss Kilman on the landing, outside Clarissa Dalloway's door. She is outside the Dalloways' social class — and fiercely jealous of their easy manners, money, and position. She is a bulky, mackintoshed bundle of hate and self-deception (Carey, July 15th, 2021).

Doris Kilman's self-deception vacillates between two poles — the profane and the sacred: regarding the former; she was employed to teach history to Elizabeth, theoretically a topic for objectivity, but Miss Kilman lacks all sense of impartiality. She is convinced she has a right to all that the Dalloways possess. Why would she do that? There is one explanation: because she is poor. Her reasoning is that Mrs Dalloway does not deserve riches or social position because her life has been full of vanity and duplicity. However, if this were true, Miss Kilman could not logically claim the Dalloway prize either because she is fiercely vain. She is a reverse snob. She wears her old, smelly mackintosh as a proud insignia — to show that she is poor and not trying to look as though she belongs to another, higher social class. The impression is fraudulent. Miss Kilman's second pole of self-deception, her sacred dimension, is her primary source of strength — and hate. She has shifted to religion for solace and peace but does not realise that she is waging a small-scale holy war against Clarissa Dalloway. She offers herself ridiculous grandeur by comparing her suffering in life with Jesus Christ's agony. Similarly to the church, she is dogmatic, and like all invaders who wage holy wars, she is self-righteous. She is after Clarissa's soul, the church's goal, and the most sacred, individual possession of Mrs Dalloway. Ironically, Clarissa feared males, rebelling against their tradition-conferred domination. She idealised the natural, easy comradeship of "women together". However, Doris Kilman is a monster far more terrifying than any man in Clarissa's life. Yet, though we see that Clarissa can face Miss Kilman in the flesh, it is the idea of Miss Kilman that terrifies her — the vulgar, envious, destructive force that, like a serpent, has slipped into the Dalloway house and threatens to poison and destroy Clarissa (Carey 2021).

The sweaty, mackintoshed tutor, Miss Kilman, looks like a nobody; no one would imagine the degree of frustrating possessiveness seething in her: if only she can win Elizabeth, she will have achieved, as a first phase, in conquering Clarissa Dalloway. Her appearance successfully hides her goal. However, Virginia Woolf reveals Doris Kilman's real nature. One example is when Miss Kilman is eating in the restaurant with Elizabeth. Readers can see her eating "with intensity" — greedily gobbling down the pink sugared cakes and gulping the chocolate eclairs. Ugly and plain, Miss Kilman tries to devour Clarissa Dalloway and Elizabeth. She is hungry for Clarissa's attractiveness, Elizabeth's youth, money, peace, and class — the cakes and pastries will never sate her. As she crowds the delicacies into her mouth, readers notice her hands. They open and close, the fingers curling inward. It reminds us of the fierce, spreading claws of a cat intent on its prey.

Virginia Woolf does not leave the readers with complete hatred for Doris Kilman; however, she pulls us back to a remote from which to pity this frustrated creature. As she calls after Elizabeth, her last comments are “Don't quite forget me”. They are very much like Clarissa’s words after Elizabeth as she left the house, “Remember the party”. Clarissa and Doris are both frightened of loneliness. Clarissa’s parties are her therapy, but Miss Kilman has no such consolation, not even in the church. She supposes that Clarissa has won and that she has lost. Her love for Elizabeth and her hate for Clarissa have torn her apart.

4. Conclusions

Looking upon Miss Kilman in “Mrs Dalloway”, we observe a hopeless and resentful woman with nowhere else to go. Spitefulness and bitterness are all that Miss Kilman has left within her exhausted, worn-out body because she will never succeed and never move forward in her career due to lack of money and her reputation. We can notice a woman who is exhausted, furious, and fed up, yet she cannot change anything. Miss Kilman is ideally stuck in limbo with nowhere else to come back to. She only relies on those of the upper class as a crutch to fulfil her basic needs of survival; to live. In this case, like many other lower-class people during those times, Miss Kilman was simply trying to remain alive. She turns to religion, bitterness and even encounters hope in Elizabeth, but the old woman is simply looking for something to live for. She was searching for something, one thing, to make her terrifying “cheated” life a little more endurable. Mrs Kilman attempted to discover a meaning in life, merely as a distraction for her fight to survive.

If Clarissa and Miss Kilman show differences in cultural status and religious belief, their sexual preferences also suggest an underlying empathy between the two characters. Clarissa believes that she would have loved Miss Kilman at another time.

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