

Chapter 7

Conclusion: Woolf travels “like a moth”

The accounts of the voyages of discovery contributed to this new sense of national identity by maximalising the difference between the British self and the alien other, thus throwing into high relief the uniqueness and superiority of Britishness or Englishness; the ‘Discovery of Britain’, on the other hand, contributed to it by minimalising the difference within, i.e. the difference between its parts, its centre and its margins, and projecting an image of Britain as richly varied, yet homogenous and unified.¹

Manfred Pfister

7. 1. “Self-understanding”: Woolf’s search for identity

Travel is a kind of experience different from other experiences, because it paves the way for the travellers to see themselves. Everything that is experienced, in a sense, is experienced by the traveller himself, and part of its meaning is that it belongs to the unity of this self and thus is in an obvious relation to the whole of the traveller’s life. The experience concerned here is Woolf’s experience gained through her travels at home and abroad, which is discussed in my questioning and understanding of her non-fictional travel accounts and fictions. Questioning opens up the possibilities of meaning; hence, what is meaningful can pass into one’s own thinking on the subject. It can help us to observe and to judge the experiences of a traveller that actually suspends his identity and allows himself to enjoy a new form of cultural or social understanding.

Every form of experience might have something of an adventure about it. An adventure, in turn, is something that interrupts the ordinary course of events, but is positively and significantly concerned with the context of life; therefore, it lets life be felt as a whole, in its breadth and in its strength. Such an adventure removes all the conditions and obligations of everyday life. Obviously, adventure is essential in the life of every traveller, because it is like a test or trial from which the traveller may emerge enriched and more mature.

Travel and adventure might necessarily motivate an eager imagination or consciousness (like Woolf's) to be more active and capable of constructing itself based on the factual experiences a traveller attains during his travels. As far as a traveller, tourist, adventurer or creative writer is under the influence of the sights and sites he visits, the traveller or tourist may prefer to travel at home and abroad considering his own interests. Home travelling is a negotiation of the “familiar spaces,” whereas travelling abroad is a negotiation of the “strange places.”² Travel gives every traveller the opportunity of encountering other people, cultures and places which provide motifs for constructing and reconstructing one's own identity. Moreover, home can be one source of constructing the identity as well as a powerful source of continuity in the sense of self.

Like an ethnographer, Woolf reads, deciphers and translates the ‘Other,’ but the ‘other’ which preoccupies her mind more than anything else is the ‘other’ that she finds at home by travelling in the London streets in *Mrs Dalloway*, *The Voyage Out* and *Orlando*, or by journeying in Cornwall in *To the Lighthouse* and *The Waves*. For Woolf, place (especially home) foregrounds identification, for this reason, there is, as David Morley and Kevin Robins comment, a “romantic utopianism”³ in her selection of settings and places where both she and her adventurers travel. One of Woolf's characteristics as a traveller is to look at the world and to understand it as a unique reality. This kind of knowledge gained through encountering the ‘Other’ can shape her mind and change her horizon of expectations and understanding.

The impact of travel on reconstructing and reshaping Woolf's identity is twofold. Firstly, during her own travels, she observes other cultures, compares and contrasts them with the English culture which is represented in her letters, diaries, essays or travel accounts that solidify her personal desires and expectations of Englishness and Londonness. Secondly, she portrays the impact of travel on the adventurers in her travel narratives, which results in transforming or changing the identity of some of her characters. This transformation is produced both by providing the external factors that may change the identity of the adventurers, and by stimulating the internal factors that may lead the adventurers to an internal journey. Like the adventurers in her travel narratives, Woolf was stimulated by her external and internal travels which define her self-knowledge. Hence her critical adventure narratives implicitly illustrate, in various

ways, her national identity as a loyal and rather snobbish English citizen. In spite of the stability of her national identity (her Britishness), her horizon of expectations is changed, or in some way, her world of understanding is expanded.

Such an expansion is represented in her various gazes during her life. Her gaze, focused on mass tourism and Barthesian tourism in *The Voyage Out*, is re-focused to concentrate on the social and political aspects of life through the eyes of an ethnographer-like traveller in *Mrs Dalloway*. Her concern with the perception of travel and the significance of place motivated her so much that she expresses her desire for travel in the form of an *adventure in adventure* or armchair tourism and literary tourism in *To the Lighthouse*. Moreover, her gaze in *Orlando* shows her concern with Orientalism and the improvement of her knowledge of the Orient. Ultimately, the core of her knowledge or self-understanding can be found in *The Waves* which is her aesthetic, metaphoric and ironic description of colonialism and imperialism.

In this chapter, I am first interested to show that such an expansion of knowledge is the result of the adventurers' confrontation with the 'Other' or, as Manfred Pfister writes, "the alien other." Every experience is influenced by such a continuity of adventurous life, and simultaneously it is related to the entire life of a traveller or adventurer. Therefore, in this particular sense, the 'other,' with the small 'o' designates the other who resembles the British people, whereas the 'Other' with the capital 'O' is "the alien other" in whose gaze the 'other' gains identity. For a traveller, the 'Other' can refer to the travelleses whose separation from the traveller locates them as the first focus of desire. Essentially, the 'Other' is crucial to the traveller because he encounters it or exists in its gaze. Therefore, the dependent 'other' is recognized through encountering and analyzing the independent 'Other,' which is, in Bill Ashcroft's words, the "absolute pole of address" or "the ideological framework"⁴ in which the traveller may come to understand the world. The experience of the 'Other' should not be falsified by being turned into a possession of experienced culture, for all encounter with the culture of the 'Other' is an encounter with an unfinished experience and is itself, so to speak, a part of this experience.

Woolf enters into a process of otherness between the English culture and the culture of the 'Other' during her travels and after her return. Just as every interlocutor is trying to reach an agreement on some subject with his partner, in much the same way the traveller,

the cultural analyst, the interpreter or translator of culture is attempting to understand what the culture is saying.

What is significant is the way through which understanding occurs whether in the case of reading and deciphering a text or assessing and translating a culture. Woolf's understanding is the result of her reading and translating the culture of the 'other' and the 'Other.' As mentioned in the foregoing chapters, she reads and translates the culture of English people as well as other European and Eastern peoples like an ethnographer who travels both inside and outside England, especially to European countries, and to some extent to the Eastern countries, Turkey for instance. However, the focus of my interest is to highlight the process by means of which Woolf finds her 'other' through travelling inside rather than outside England. She is like a 'moth,' that seldom travels far from the plant where it begins life. This moth-like form of travel gives her more pleasure and adventure than travelling far out to the remote lands; however, she owes her feeling to her experiences of travels abroad and observing the 'Other.' Such an observation of exotic 'Others' confirms to her, as Lloyd Davis points out, "the well-appointed home's amenities and the prudence of staying put."⁵ For Woolf, besides England, France may also play the role of home in her life. As she writes in a letter to Vanessa Bell in 1931: "[i]ts English country that's such a pin cushion after France: all these little fields and houses. I think one ought to live 6 months in London and 6 at Brantôme or Castillon" (*L* 4: 332).

Secondly, the focus of my argument is to show that even though Woolf, as Jan Morris states, "was proud of an aristocratic French ancestor many generations back, she really sprang from the English *haute bourgeoisie* at the apex of its development"; hence, she "was in most ways extremely English."⁶ For this reason, she emphasizes the authenticity of British or English culture or identities through portraying the English travellers and tourists, ambassadors, especially the genteel English women like Rachel Vinrace, Helen Ambrose, Mrs Dalloway, Mrs Ramsay, Lily Briscoe and Orlando (the woman). This means that all her typical explorers, voyagers, travellers, intellectual tourists, literary tourists and adventurers are English men and women. Through her writing, Woolf discovers what Manfred Pfister calls, her "homogeneous and unified"⁷ Englishness or Londonness by "exploring", "mapping", "constructing", "making" and "inventing" the

heterogeneous selves of her adventurers and travellers through their different confrontations with the 'others.' I want to suggest that Woolf paves the way for the anti-tourists who analyze and assess the trans-cultural identities. Woolf's Barthesian tourism or anti-tourism indicates, in Pfister's words, "travelling as a cultural experience" which transforms the people into "sensitive individuals."⁸

Thirdly, I focus my attention on the process of understanding through travel and adventure. Travel revivifies the travellers' feeling and sensation. This is the influence of travel on the soul. Everything Woolf sees is new, but it all strikes her with a familiar feeling, especially when she travels to Greece for the second time in 1932:

Greece then, so to return to Greece, is a land so ancient that it is like wandering in the fields of the moon. Life is receding [...]. Such solitude as they must know, under the sun, under the snow, such dependence on themselves to clothe & feed themselves through the splendid summer days is unthinkable in England. (*D* 4: 94)

Greece proffers Woolf a kind of "solitude" which is "unthinkable in England." Her mind and world of understanding are correspondingly refreshed through her travels; however, she experiences no actual, complete and profound change. Travel as a peculiar identity component creates the possibility of transformation. It may obviously provide continuity over the travellers' entire life. Travel creates an actual understanding that separates the present and the future self from the past self. It even makes possible a change that separates the present and past self from the future self. It means that the traveller must be aware not only of his relation to others but also of the influence of the past and the future on his world of understanding. As Frédéric Regard remarks, the traveller takes part in the "dialectic of the perceived, the conceived, and the experienced."⁹

More precisely, I am concerned with showing the expansion of Woolf's horizon of understanding throughout her *voyages out* and *voyages in* which is represented in her essays, diaries, letters and travel narratives. Throughout her *voyages*, she acquires a horizon, which means that she learns to look beyond the things in order to see them better, within a large whole and in truer proportion. It means that she trains her eyes to observe the details better, since, as she concludes, "these details [...] are important facts to an experienced eye" (*PA*: 306). A critical survey of Woolf's travel narratives shows that her experienced, professional eye/I moves from assessing the places and landscapes

to which she travels to reassessing the cultures, peoples, their customs, behaviours as well as the palimpsest layers of ideologies and discourses that govern the nations, their narrations and their identities. Such an enlargement or expansion of horizon is the result of a unification of various perceptions that might shape the unity of experience. A thorough reading of my preceding chapters opens up the labyrinthine layers of thoughts, motives and objectives behind Woolf's travels at home and abroad.

Woolf travels not just to see and seek pleasure like the mere tourist, nor to study a group of informants like the anthropologists or the specialists in ethnography, nor to explore a place like the explorers, nor to journey like the sea-voyagers, but to observe curiously in order to read the cultural signs of power and to translate the other cultures for her readers. She also attempts to study the histories of travels and travellers, to analyze the nations, races, their narrations, desires, ambivalences and hybrid identities like a Barthesian and a Foucauldian critic *avant la lettre*. During her life, she had many factual experiences accompanied by an insistence on retaining her sense of identity and the resistance against merging herself in the identity of 'others.' Woolf's self-understanding and understanding the 'other' and the 'Other' enhance her Englishness and Londonness, giving her a fixed national identity. She evaluates the other cultures, their people, their civilization as well as their identities to fix her own national identity or Englishness.

7. 2. Woolf's "other" and "Other": British culture versus other cultures

A traveller's attempt to translate the 'Other' is a two-dimensional process, which is concerned with analyzing, assessing and locating both the *Other's* and the traveller's identity. The relation between 'other' and 'Other' is the outcome of a discourse of difference between two nations or cultures, observer/observed or colonizer/colonized. According to Homi K. Bhabha, it is in the colonial margin that the Western culture reveals its *difference*.¹⁰ Such a cultural *difference* can be observed in Woolf's descriptions of the 'Other.' For instance, the Woolfian description of Ireland as a colonial society for the English shows her attitude towards nationality, something she explains on an emotional, human level. It is paradoxically recorded in her diary:

one can see, after Bowen's Court, how ramshackle & half squalid the Irish life is, how empty & poverty stricken [...] it was all as it should be—pompous and pretentious &

imitative & ruined—a great barrack of grey stone, 4 storeys & basements, like a town house, high empty rooms, & a scattering of Italian plasterwork [...]. All the furniture clumsy solid cut out of single wood—the wake sofa [...] tattered farm girls waiting [...] everywhere desolation & pretention cracked grand pianos, faked old portraits, stained walls [...]. (*D* 4: 210)

This picture of Ireland reflects, "a great loneliness; poverty and dreary villages", "a great melancholy in a deserted land, though the beauty remained untouched" (*D* 4: 210). She tries to indicate that the Irish are neither sensitive to nor aware of the beauties of nature. Elsewhere, in her diary, she records her "extremely interesting encounter at the windy hotel with Ireland—that is Mr & Mrs Rowlands [two members of the Irish gentry who believe in the British Empire]. [...] [O]f course everyone wants to be English. We [the Rowlands] think Englands [sic] talking of us" (*D* 4: 211-12). Woolf compares the Rowlands' life with animals that live in shells "laughing & talking & picnicking, & great poverty & some tradition of gentle birth, & all the sons going away to make their livings & the old people sitting there hating the Irish Free State & recalling Dublin & the Viceroy" (*D* 4: 212). Her description of the Irish people and their way of life shows her as an upper class English snob from a very orderly and civilized English society whose English life-style is different from the disorderly and uncivilized life in Ireland or Dublin.

In her confrontation with the 'Other' in Ireland during her summer holiday of 1934, she puts stress on the inferiority of the Irish language as well as the lack of facilities in that poor country:

I heard Irish for the first time [...]. An air of inferiority sleeps or simpers or sneers or rages everywhere. [...] At last I gather why, if I were Irish, I should wish to belong to the Empire: no luxury, no creation, no stir, only the dregs of London, rather wish-washy as if suburbanised. [...]

No, it wouldnt do living in Ireland, in spite of the rocks & the desolate bays. It would lower the pulse of the heart: & all one's mind wd. run out in talk. (*D* 4: 215-16)

For Woolf, as Davis believes, "encounters with others are invariably a kind of encounter with oneself."¹¹ Each description of other cultures, peoples and places implies, as Pfister has pointed out, "a self-description or self-definition—or, to put it more forcefully, it is a self-description, a self-definition."¹² The other cultures do "exist in their own right; only in their otherness are they constructions of external observers," because "they function as projection screens for their own anxieties and desires."¹³ And Pfister concludes, this "Other" helps both the traveller and the travelles "to establish and maintain identity by

serving as a screen onto which the self projects its unfulfilled longings, its repressed desires and its darker sides which [the traveller's self] wishes and sees itself constrained to exorcise."¹⁴

When Woolf travels to Wales in 1908, she sees the place was very deserted and lonely: "I walked through a little village [...] which seemed to me as deserted as any I had seen. There were cottages splashed with cream coloured wash, out of which came bent old women, of tremendous age; their faces were all white ridges, without any spirit left. Ah, the loneliness of these little distant places!" (*PA*: 380) Her description of the far out places are self-descriptions or self-definitions rather, because, like some travellers, she cannot simply cut off or separate herself from the communities around her. Many imaginative and substantive ties remain in a traveller and influence his views of the 'Other.'

Through her travels abroad, Woolf sustains the "cultural boundaries and boundedness"¹⁵ of the other nations, especially the Eastern cultural boundaries. In 1906, she travelled from Greece to Turkey to see Constantinople with her sister Vanessa, her brother Adrian and their friend Violet Dickinson. The journey gives her a new perception, particularly an intercultural perception of the East. Through meditating on the sceneries and based on her prior-knowledge of the place, she realizes that the Turkey, which is illustrated by other travellers such as Mary Wortley Montagu, is, as Pfister quotes William Wordsworth's "Tintern Abbey", "half-created"¹⁶ by them. She writes:

Innumerable pages have been turned in the history of Constantinople, but this, the last, was turned fresh for us. And yet, apart from the chafing of strange sights upon our senses, there was really nothing very memorable in our descent upon Stamboul. A view does not by any means promise beauty of detail; & the streets were insignificant, & the national dress—a fez & a frock coat—is a disappointing compromise. (*PA*: 349)

The Turkish people's dress, their behaviour, the atmosphere of the place and their religious customs all are strange and odd to Woolf. However, she states, "there was really nothing very memorable in [their] descent upon Stamboul." This shows Woolf's blindness as a "superficial" (*PA*: 355) traveller or tourist who has no familiarity with the Eastern culture in Constantinople or Istanbul. The fact is, to put it in Paul de Man's terms, "the vision is unable to report correctly what it has perceived in the course of its journey."¹⁷ Woolf gazes at St Sophia: "[h]ere was St. Sophia; & here was I, with one

brain 2 eyes, legs & arms in proportion, set down to appreciate it" (*PA*: 349). In spite of the attractive strangeness of the place, which is appreciated by her, Woolf satirizes it: "if it were your lot to spend your life here you might think your station one of some risk—as a resting place beneath a volcano" (*PA*: 357). This volcano reflects, if we allude to what Pfister writes about the West (Italy), the Turkey for which she "sets out is never a *tabula rasa* but always already inscribed with the traces of previous texts, i.e. pre-scribed"¹⁸ by the English culture and civilization. Unlike her presuppositions—"here my point of view was certainly eclipsed" (*PA*: 348)—, she finds the place much more interesting:

Constantinople is to begin with a very large town. Remembering Athens, you felt yourself in a metropolis; a place where life was being lived successfully. And that did seem strange, &—if I have time to say so—a little uncomfortable. For you also realised that life was not lived after the European pattern, that it was not even a debased copy of Paris or Berlin or London, & that, you thought was the ambition of towns which could not actually be Paris or any of those inner capitals. As the lights came out in clusters all over the land, & the water was busy with lamps, you knew yourself to be the spectator of a vigorous drama, acting itself out with no thought or need of certain great countries yonder to the west. (*PA*: 348)

She experiences the 'Other' or Constantinople and observes that it is "a very large town" or "a metropolis; a place where life was being lived successfully" in comparison with Athens. She also comments that the European pattern of life is different from that of the non-Europeans. It affirms that her perception of the 'Other,' as Pfister points up, is not merely "filtered through the home country as a perception foil [of an English traveller's 'prejudices, stereotypes, anticipations and preferences'] of comparison and contrast" but also "scripted through established routes and canonized sights."¹⁹ Her description of Turkey is constructed through such sets of perceptions and preferences. It is a journey from the centre to the margin, from the West to the East, from England to Turkey. She defines Turkey and Turkishness in contrast to Europe and Europeaness, or England and Englishness. Similarly travelling towards or through the 'Other' is an ambivalent form of travel, since it, as Pfister states, may "confirm and fortify the boundaries of the self, or it may open up the self, release the repressed desires and exorcise the anxieties in carnivalesque transgression, or it may do both at the same time or one after the other."²⁰ Woolf discovers Constantinople as a peculiar world: "you knew yourself to be the spectator of a vigorous drama, acting itself out with no thought or need of certain great

countries." Woolf's external journey to Constantinople paves the way for an internal journey or for an engagement between 'Other' and self.

In her accounts of travel to Turkey, Woolf describes her own understanding of the Eastern ideology as a kind of eccentric and rigid philosophy:

[N]o Christian, or even European, can hope to understand the Turkish point of view [...] you are born Christians or Mahommedans as surely as you are born black or white. The difference is in the blood that beats in the pulse. And that difference was stated explicitly when we took our seats this evening in the gallery of S. Sophia. We gazed as we might have gazed at creatures behind a cage; only the truth was that these creatures were neither our captives nor our inferiors; they suffered us to watch them, but they would not suffer us to pray with them. (*PA*: 355-6)

Woolf realizes that based on "the Turkish point of view," the people are born with religion "as surely as [they] are born black or white." Her understanding is that for the Turkish people religion is something which is transmitted from one generation to another, and they accept it without asking the whys and hows of its creation. Moreover, she gazes at them and reads their particularities: "the truth was that these creatures were neither our captives nor our inferiors." She tries to see into the life of things. However, she mocks the Turkish people's praying in St Sophia: "at certain moments all the long lines rose & fell simultaneously, kissed the floor, & stood upright again, the puppets of an unseen power" (*PA*: 356). She translates religion (here Islam) as a form of power that controls the believers as "an unseen power." As a European traveller, she illustrates the scene based on her Procrustean bed of judgement and understanding. She recognizes that there is something incomprehensibly 'other' in the scenery:

So we watched, a scene which we shall never understand; & heard the true gospels expounded in an unknown tongue.

The mystery of the sight, & the strangeness of the voice, made you feel yourself like one wrapped in a soft curtain; & the worshippers within are quite determined that you shall remain outside. (*PA*: 356)

The oddity of the scene, the "mystery of the sight", "the strangeness of the voice" all confirm that she is unfamiliar and will remain unfamiliar with the beliefs and customs of that country. Such unfamiliarity originates in the traveller's blindness. In fact, she dramatizes her own strangeness and ambivalence. After being involved in all the busy and happy life of Constantinople in the Grand Bazaar, she claims, "the English are a great

and generous race" (*PA*: 354). This claim might result from the fact that she considers the racial priority (being English) of the English people as a sign of their generosity and nobility. She observes the Turkish people and their culture from the viewpoint of her Englishness and centrality regarding them as a marginal race. In other words, she constructs them based on her own "self-description" or "self-definition."²¹ However, she tries to assess their position with a kind of disinterestedness:

The men save for their red caps & an occasional nose like a scimitar, might be citizens of London, save that the breezes of the Bosphorus [sic] have tanned their skins & expanded their chests. But their faces are reserved; & that is the real mark of a civilised people. They have something to think about, & you can pass the time without the help of speech. And more over they are courteous to strangers, & will offer you fragments of many different languages in order that you may choose your own. (*PA*: 352)

She believes that the Turkish men behave like the "citizens of London" and have "the real mark of a civilised people." Their courteousness to strangers, their familiarity with different languages when they "offer you fragments of many different languages," might be the signs of their familiarity with travellers and the tourist industry. Woolf has pointed out that while travelling she subsides into "a coma, like a spinning top and cease spinning" (*L* 5: 395); hence, she is "half dazed with travelling, so many cities [has she] seen, and smelt [...]" (*L* 5: 187). For this reason, she emphasizes that travel to the unknown, strange or far off places provides differentiation and variety in the life of a traveller that enhances his sensations: "you cant think what a difference it makes driving, or being driven. We stop or go on; and have our lunch under cypresses, with nightingales singing and frogs barking, and climb to the top of hills where no one has ever been before" (*L* 5: 184). This demonstrates that she despises the monotonous life of some English citizens. Similarly, she confesses in a letter to Roger Fry while in Spain that

I am amazed that we should live in England and order dinner every morning [...] and catch trains when we might roll in bliss every moment of the day and sit and drink coffee on a balcony overlooking lemon trees and orange trees with mountains behind and every sort of colour and shade perpetually changing [...] then a delicious lunch off rice and bacon and olive oil and onions and figs and sugar mixed, then off to a place where cypresses and palm trees grow together. (*L* 3: 29)

Woolf's descriptions and assessments show her Englishness, since her judgements are constructed through her perceptions as a European traveller for whom civilization and

order are the essential aspects of a culture. Despite her xenophobia, her strong Englishness, Londonness, or even Bloomsburianness, she captivates the mind of every reader, as Jan Morris states and as my own analyses in the preceding chapters have shown, by means of the "pithiness of her judgements," the disinterestedness of her reassessments of the culture of the 'Other,' her "taste for fun" and her "affinity with pathos."²²

By constructing and representing a hierarchy of cultures, Woolf unwittingly uses an "ethnographic discourse," especially in her travel fiction *Orlando*, in order to critique, in Ashcroft's words, "the power of Western discourse [in constructing] its primitive others."²³ Both Woolf and Orlando (the woman) act like an ethnographer who participates in the gipsies' daily lives for an extended period of time, watching what happens, listening to what is said and asking questions. Like Mary Wortley Montagu, she behaves in some of her travels as an eager participant-observer who gains sufficient knowledge that lead to, as Ashcroft has pointed out, an "understanding of a particular social or cultural group."²⁴ However, neither are her observations "neutral," nor do they exist "beyond the assumptions and presentations of the discourse of the participant's own culture."²⁵ The cultural knowledge of a writer-ethnographer is, according to Ashcroft, "'constructed' rather than 'discovered' by ethnography."²⁶ In *Orlando*, Woolf locates, in Ashcroft's words, the "observed subjects" or gipsies in a particular way, "to interpellate them as Europe's others."²⁷ For this reason, if Constantinople is home for the Turkish people, it might be an 'exile' for Orlando. If *Heimat* is about "security and belonging," the foreign land evokes "feelings of isolation and alienation."²⁸ This shows that for travellers it is somehow difficult or impossible, as Davis has pointed out, to "be cut off from their original communities and characters they might have thought would be left behind."²⁹ In spite of the fact that Constantinople motivates Orlando's sentimental desires, for her, the foreign land is separation, hardship, privation, homesickness and the loss of a sense of belonging.

Orlando is in an in-between position, between two cultures, her own English culture and the experience of displacement and transition in the Oriental culture. Nonetheless, she decides to return, since her English identity is more powerful than this Oriental field, which is "a home away from home, a place of dwelling."³⁰ The outcome of her in-

betweenness is that when she returns, she finds "each sight and sound" fill "her heart with such a lust and balm of joy": "[y]et still for all her travels and adventures and profound thinkings and turnings this way and that, she was only in process of fabrication" (*O*: 100, 102). Orlando recognizes that "[c]hange was incessant, and change perhaps would never cease" (*O*: 102). Travel transforms Orlando's horizon of expectations and her world of understanding, because she knows that change, as the outcome of travel, is endless. This shows a changing process of understanding as well as the interaction of horizons.

As far as Orlando is in an in-between or uncertain state, she prefers her Englishness. Differences of class, civilization, ethical outlook impinge forcefully upon her experiences. She is searching for something new, a strong national identity, by maximizing the difference between the British self and the alien other. The questions of origin, belonging, nationality and identity are the prime notions in Woolf's mind. Orlando (the woman) is placed in a binary opposition between home/abroad ('second home'), London/Constantinople, self/Other which weaves its way all through her life after returning. Indeed, it indicates that the women travellers seek primarily to collect and possess themselves.

In *The Waves*, the first reaction of the adventurers to the fears and anxieties of the trans-cultural life is to change or pretend to change their identity. These individuals accept that they need a new civilized identity, by which to compensate for their lacks; hence, they learn to gaze at something they are looking for, that is to watch the others' behaviour. Generally, in her analysis of the colonized, the marginal and the Orientals, Woolf does not like to show that the blacks, the Jews or the Orientals are right and the Occidentals wrong or vice versa. Rather, she emphasizes the fact that every nation, as Edward Said remarks, lives in a "different but thoroughly organized world of [its] own, a world with its own national, cultural, and epistemological boundaries and principles of internal coherence."³¹ By portraying the cultural differences, she illustrates, in Bhabha's words, "the process of cultural judgement and interpretation"³² as well as the very possibility of cultural contestation and the ability to shift the ground of knowledge.

Bernard, who plays the role of the "inheritor," the "continuer" and the "person miraculously appointed to carry" the doctrines of imperialism, brings the nations and nationalities under his control (*W*: 553). Metaphorically speaking, imperialism constructs

and reconstructs the psyches and identities of the colonized. Despite his previous confession that he is fixed, Bernard cannot escape such a transformation, because "every change of the observed subject," as Paul de Man remarks, "requires a subsequent change in the observer, and the oscillating process seems to be endless"³³: "[t]here are many rooms—many Bernards. [...] What I was to myself was different; was none of these" but at last Bernard's "identity becomes robust" (*W*: 556-7). His identity is constructed of the combination of other people's identity: "I am not one person; I am many people; I do not altogether know who I am—Jinny, Susan, Neville, Rhoda, or Louis; or how to distinguish my life from theirs" (*W*: 564). Woolf portrays the role of the "central shadow" of imperialism which "has power to drive [Bernard] back, to pinion [him] down among all those other faces, to shut [him] in a hot room; to send [him] dashing like a moth from candle to candle" (*W*: 573).

In *Mrs Dalloway*, Clarissa, as an adventurer in her memories of the past, sees Peter but she cannot understand any change in his behaviour or thought hence finds him embedded in his own world: "[w]hat a waste! What a folly! All his life long Peter had been fooled like that [...]" (*MD*: 42). Unlike Clarissa, however, Peter Walsh is changed: "[a]ll India lay behind him; plains; mountains; epidemics of cholera; a district twice as big as Ireland [...]" (*MD*: 45). The only thing that motivates him to travel is Clarissa's refusal of love, which results in the change of his life, and the only thing that attaches Peter to India is the love of the wife of a Major. Peter's search for identity is a search for the 'other,' a lost self that he cannot find in London. Therefore, he travels to India to observe the 'Other' in order to find the 'other.'

The chains of comparison and contrasts that (pre)occupy Peter's mind are the result of travelling abroad and they give him a new insight in opposition to his previous blindness. Such a process creates a kind of testing through which Peter sees the British people better than before and compares them with the Indians. Peter's new gaze reveals the reciprocal interaction of the traveller's horizon with that of the 'Other.' This interaction helps Peter to make a kind of dialectical communication, which paves the way for a form of self-understanding, or self-discovery.

War might be considered as a way of settling differences between 'other' and 'Other.' War means loss and privation; for this reason, it profoundly influences Woolf's life and

identity. For Woolf, war means devastation of her lovely homes, London, the end of her personal independence, lack of public recognition (having no readers) and so forth:

England was invaded, and, the enemy [the Germans] landing on the Down at the back of our village [Asham in Sussex], we dug trenches to withstand him, much like those in use in Flanders now. You may see them with your own eyes. And this, somehow, is proof that if the Germans land they will land here, which, although terrifying, also gratifies our sense of our own importance.³⁴

Regarding the Germans, Jan Morris states, “*she did not like Germanness.*”³⁵ The quoted passage shows the result of war and, as Woolf claims, the invasion of England by the Germans. During her twenties, she writes of them: “you see in the German type but a lump of crude earth, as yet unchiselled by the finger of time” (*PA*: 325). Elsewhere, in a letter to Emma Vaughan in 1904 while staying in the Palace Hotel in Florence, she describes them in this way: “Germans are brutes:—and there is a strange race that haunts Hotels—gnome like women, who are like creatures that come out in the dark” (*L* 1: 139). At the back of her mind, there is always a nagging sense of destructiveness and hostility, because for her, the very presence of Germans is a constant premonition of brutality, war, destruction and death.

Her journey to Germany is an inner-European journey, a journey from centre to centre. It is a journey in Europe and Europeanness, in Germany and Germanness; hence, the ‘Other’ is an alien other who is simultaneously present within the traveller’s own European culture. In different circumstances, Woolf calls the German cities, and especially Berlin, “the ugliest of cities” (*L* 4: 21). This European ‘Other’ can neither captivate Woolf’s mind nor influence her Englishness or Londonness.

7. 3. “*Heimat* [...] is for every person the centre of the world”: England and London

Comparison and contrast are two essential aspects of understanding that help to shape one’s identity. During his travel, a traveller is confronted with a series of novel ideas, cultures, attitudes, customs, even persons; for this reason, the chance to explore various ideologies, behaviours or relationships is maximized. Comparison and contrast between the homeland and foreign land help the travellers, as David Morley and Kevin Robins point out, to construct “more meaningful” and “more complex” identities.³⁶ Homeland or *Heimat* has many significances. For instance, some critics consider it as a synonym for

the "race (blood) and territory (soil)," some others define it as nation, family, homeland and believe in "[o]ne people, one family, one homeland: belonging together, with common origins."³⁷ The word *Heimat* is, Morley and Robins argue, "rooted in that intolerance of difference, that fear of the 'other,' which is at the heart of racism and xenophobia."³⁸ As Rosemary Marangoly George claims, "[i]magine a home is as political an act as is imagine a nation. Establishing either is a display of hegemonic power [or] is an indication of the power wielded by class, community and race."³⁹ *Heimat* is the essential aspect of Woolf's travels, because through comparing and contrasting other places with home, she constructs and solidifies her own identity as well as her fictional characters' or adventurers' identities.

When a traveller encounters a culture, he is confronted with a kind of identity crisis, which results in a network of comparisons and contrasts. The mutual observation of other cultures creates a struggle with the basic values, preconceptions and perceptions that a traveller has in his mind. After such an encounter, the traveller tries to adapt himself to the values of the alien culture, which results in a form of compartmentalization of the advantages and disadvantages of other cultures. The traveller, Roy F. Baumeister argues, "confines the potentially conflicting components to separate spheres of [his] life so that they do not actually conflict."⁴⁰ In this way, the identity crisis is removed and the traveller discovers greater commitment to his own culture or vice versa. Compartmentalization is a strategy for preventing identity conflict through a series of comparisons and contrasts. It can soften or strengthen the traveller's commitment to a particular culture and gives him the power of reassessment of his potential. Therefore, the general values and priorities of a traveller undergo a re-evaluation and change. For instance, Woolf, in her diary of 5 May 1924, metaphorically sees London as a magic carpet:

London is enchanting. I step out upon a tawny coloured magic carpet, it seems, & get carried into beauty without raising a finger. The nights are amazing, with all the white porticoes & broad silent avenues. And people pop in & out, lightly, divertingly like rabbits; & I look down Southampton Row, wet as a seal's back or red & yellow with sunshine, & watch the omnibus going & coming, & hear the old crazy organs. One of these days I will write about London, & how it takes up the private life & carries it on, without any effort. Faces passing lift up my mind; prevent it from settling [...]. (*D* 2: 301)

Walking and rambling in the streets of London is an adventure which refreshes and revitalizes Woolf's life. She observes the suburbs of London and the people, and listens to the sound of nature, "I like the London suburbs in autumn and their immense poetry. And I like Hyde Park fading into night, [...]. I love overhearing scraps of talk by the Serpentine in the dusk [...] and wondering how far we live in other peoples [...]" (*L* 5: 338). These statements show Woolf's love of London, as R. M. George states, "the notion of belonging, of having a home, and a place of one's own"⁴¹ and the role of London as one of the main identity components in her life, because identities might often be defined in the societies and cultures in/to which an adventurer lives/travels. The search for identity is to find the proper relationship of the traveller to such cultures and societies.

Woolf compares all beautiful and attractive places with London. For instance, she loves France and the French people which refers to her French ancestors. Unlike her xenophobia towards the Germans, she has, Jan Morris concludes, "*spasms of Francophilia*"⁴² that in later years results in frequent motor tours to different parts of France. For example, at Brantôme, she writes to Vita Sackville-West: "I cant get back into that squirrel cage again. Here, in spite of packing, motoring, sight-seeing, I've actually read two or three books in peace; from start to finish—a thing incredible in London" (*L* 4: 318). Elsewhere, she asks Vanessa Bell, "[w]hy we dont live in France I cant conceive" (*L* 4: 319) or Quentin Bell, "[w]hy don't we live here [Brantôme]—far lovelier, lovelier far, than Cassis" (*L* 4: 320). At Dieppe, she encounters a continental European civilization and compares it with London:

You, who cross the Channel yearly, probably no longer see the house at Dieppe, no longer feel [the beauties of the place], as the train moves slowly down the street [...]. Try to recall the look of London streets seen very early, perhaps very young, from a cab window on the way to Victoria. Everywhere there is the same intensity, as if the moment, instead of moving, lay suddenly still, became suddenly solemn, fixed the passers-by in their most transient aspects eternally.⁴³

The streets of France give Woolf as much joy and pleasure as the streets of London. At the same time, she recognizes that French society is, like English, an "ideal society" where every adventurer walks without any fear or hesitation and "reveals the depths of his soul."⁴⁴ In her visit to Greece, to the island of Evvoia (Euboea) to see the daughter of

the Noel Family, Irene, a friend of hers, who owned the estate called Achmetaga, Woolf compares and contrasts Greece with England:

Here was England in the 14th Century; it was dark & probably smelly: tins & plates gleamed in corners. [...]. Here people lived, not merely stayed. And this impression remains; indeed for the first time Greece becomes an articulate human place, homely & familiar, instead of a splendid surface. We walked out down a lane that might have been in England—for it had a hedge, & was muddy, to see an encampment of Wallachian shepherds. (*PA*: 335)⁴⁵

She sees Greece like “England in the 14th Century” in which the people do not just stay but live. The place is more than a place because it gives her an “impression” that is “homely & familiar, instead of a splendid surface,” hence it remains in her heart and is fixed in the chambers of her mind. Through such a comparison, Woolf changes England from a mere place to a sentimental space.

Similarly, Peter Walsh becomes very responsive through sauntering in the London streets. After his travels to India, Peter understands the significance and authority of his English culture and life, because travel has changed his horizon of expectations. For this reason, the traveller becomes aware of the otherness and the indissoluble individuality of the other peoples or nations by putting himself imaginatively in their position. This understanding of otherness does not mean to subordinate the travelleses to the travellers’ own standards; rather, it can help the traveller to overcome not only his own particularity but also that of the alien other. This confirms that travel gives a traveller a depth of vision and horizon that helps him to look beyond what is close at hand in order to see, comprehend and analyze it better.

After London, Cornwall is “the loveliest” (*D* 2: 105) and the most interesting home for Woolf. She writes of Cornwall: “driving off across the moors to Zennor—Why am I so incredibly & incurably romantic about Cornwall?” (*D* 2: 103) Her love of Cornwall recalls her childhood memories, the beautiful memories of youth and past time when her family were gathered there to pass their summer holidays. At her last visit to Cornwall, in a letter to Vita Sackville-West on 14 May 1936, she wonders: “[w]hat a country! [...] We dribble from bay to bay, and have discovered an entirely lonely virgin country—not a bungalow—only gulls foot prints on sand” (*L* 6: 40).

When Woolf travels to Wales, she compares it to Cornwall: "[w]e have come to the right place [...] I havent [sic] seen such splendid wild country since St. Ives [Cornwall]—indeed one thinks of St. Ives in many ways" (*L* 1: 130). Elsewhere, while she travels to Ireland on a holiday with Leonard in summer 1934, she compares it to Cornwall and other countries that she loves: "[a] mixture of Greece, Italy & Cornwall; great loneliness; poverty & dreary villages like squares cut out of West Kensington [...] the original land that Cornwall & much of England was in Elizabethan times" (*D* 4: 209). In her first journey to Greece, she sees Epidauros strange and beautiful: "there are incessant hills, but inland they are covered with little green bushes, & the high folds among which we drove today reminded us again of Cornwall. Oddly enough the narrow streets of Athens reminded us of St Ives" (*PA*: 330). These familiar places proffer her a sense of *déjà vu*.

The knowledge she gains through her travels gives her a kind of self-knowledge. In other words, she stands in a situation of understanding the importance of her English culture and that of the alien other. Moreover, for acquiring a total knowledge and control of her own identity, she requires a total knowledge of the others; hence, self-knowledge requires knowledge of the others. Woolf believes, according to Morley and Robins, in a "defensive identity" or "a fortress identity" which is created "against the threat of other cultures and identities."⁴⁶ Through confronting and observing the 'Other' (the other cultures), she tries to stabilize her European cultural identity and to strengthen her 'other,' i.e. her Englishness or Londonness to enhance her self-knowledge and self-control.

For Woolf, London is the incarnation of her defensive identity. London, Cornwall and Sussex, the county of her lovely houses, Charleston and Monk's house, attract Woolf's attention more than any other place in the world. Her sister, Vanessa Bell, and Duncan Grant lived at Charleston until their deaths and Monk's House was Virginia's country house in Sussex for the rest of her life, where in its garden she wrote *Mrs Dalloway*, *To the Lighthouse*, *Orlando*, *The Waves* and *The Years*, and Leonard's country house until he died in 1969. Woolf loved Sussex and its landscapes and compares its nature with the East in order to make it so gorgeous and mysterious in the travellers' eyes: "this land is I think the fairest far in all Arabia" (*L* 5: 105).

Woolf travels like a moth that seldom travels far from the plant where it begins life. In 1914, in a letter to Katherine Cox, she claims, "in fact the Bloomsbury group was stunted in the chrysalis compared with them [the Bloomsbury Group]" (*L* 2: 51).⁴⁷ This funny statement and strange comparison reveals a harsh reality about the Bloomsbury group and their cocoon-like life, and Virginia is included in such a comparison, as she confesses to her sister: "how little use I am in the world! Selfish, vain, egotistical, and incompetent. Will you think out a training to make me less selfish?" (*L* 1: 411) Near the end of *Orlando*, Woolf shows this moth-like life. Both Orlando (the woman) and Woolf are afraid of being folded and shrouded "like a mummy, like a moth" (*O*: 168). In *Mrs Dalloway*, Clarissa loves moths, especially "the grey white moths spinning in and out, over the cheery pie, over the evening primroses" (*MD*: 14) which reflects her love of home. In spite of the fact that she has the desire for adventure and travel, she, like a moth, does not like to be very far from home. This metaphor suggests a process of self-realization, a self-recognition through which both Clarissa and Orlando discover their "single self, a real self" (*O*: 178).

By portraying her experiences, Woolf is recording the future on the one hand and recalling the past on the other. As a traveller, she also experiences a sense that this present moment is part of the future to which the present is nothing more than an orientation. It seems that identity, this question of past, of present and future, is "a question of memory," especially the "memories of 'home'."⁴⁸ As Morley and Robins remark, *Heimat* is "a place no one has yet attained, but for which everyone yearns."⁴⁹ The German film director Edgar Reitz states, "Heimat, the place where you were born, is for every person the centre of the world."⁵⁰ Home, for Woolf, is the centre of all her desires, because it is, as Morley and Robins argue, "drenched in the longing for wholeness, unity, [and] integrity."⁵¹ It is a place of communication, shared desires, memories, romantic and strong feelings, as Jan Morris has pointed out: "Virginia was profoundly attached to places, especially to those she had known since childhood, and although she and her husband frequently toyed with the idea of buying houses abroad, *she was really unbreakably loyal to England* [my emphasis]."⁵² She loved home and England more than any other place in the world. In 1906, when Woolf was travelling through Greece, she wrote that "the simple word Devon is better than a poem; it will make pictures better than

any in Greece out of a wet London street" (*PA*: 345). In 1930, while staying in Cornwall, in a letter to Ethel Smyth, she confesses, "Lord what a lovely country this is—England, I mean" (*L* 4: 163). Elsewhere, in a letter to Lady Robert Cecil in 1909, she writes "Italy was really beyond words [...] [but] I find England far more mysterious" (*L* 1: 399). For Woolf, Britain (especially London) is the world, *Heimat*, everything else is, in Iain Chambers's words, merely "'foreign' and 'strange'."⁵³

In the twentieth century, there were many groups of tourists and adventurers, especially in Britain before and after the Second World War, who were enthusiastic about home travelling. This form of journey might be considered for some of them as a media of searching for and understanding one's own identity. For this reason, home travelling might help the travellers to reveal their understanding of themselves. For example, Woolf's sense of Londonness is obvious in her portraying London as a central *leitmotif* in most of her travel narratives. London and Woolf are united; she identifies herself with London in such a way that she sees herself and finds her identity in each part and minute detail of this city. She mythologizes and eternalizes London in *Mrs Dalloway* and lives in its mythical world. Her life depends so much on this city that when London was bombed she could not tolerate the situation:

Further, the war [...] has taken away the outer wall of security. No echo comes back. I have no surroundings. I have so little sense of a public that I forget about Roger [Fry] coming or not coming out. Those familiar circumvolutions—those standards—which have for so many years given back an echo & so thickened my identity are all wide & wild as the desert now. (*D* 5: 299)

For Woolf, war meant the climax of disasters; having no readers, hence being no writer; having no personal independence, hence lack of adventure; missing the public echo, hence no reputation; being far from London, hence no walking, no surrounding, no reminiscence, no life. In addition to the impacts of war, there are many other reasons, such as the recurrent depression and insanity in her life which made her so depressed that she finally committed suicide. She wrote of London during the war, while, in Morris's words, "*looking back upon her happy solitary walks there.*"⁵⁴ Every form of war does portend doom for many citizens and there is an objectively valid reason for this kind of feeling. Indeed, such a feeling derives from the necessity of betraying part of one's identity by taking sides in war, as Woolf claims, "I should feel—well, what the patriots

feel” (*D* 5: 263). Shortly before her death, she admires London in a letter to Ethel Smyth on 25 September 1940:

London looked merry and hopeful, wearing her wounds like stars; why do I dramatize London perpetually? When I see a great smash like a crushed match box where an old house stood I wave my hand to London. What I’m finding odd and agreeable and unwonted is the admiration this war creates—for every sort of person [...]. (*L* 6: 434)

The perpetual dramatization of London confirms Woolf’s love of homeland. Nigel Nicolson writes, “[t]he bombers slowly gnawed at central London, which she quite often visited, and both her houses there were destroyed or rendered uninhabitable”: “[t]wo houses destroyed. Ours has no glass or ceilings” (*L* 6: 428, 437). In the Woolfs’ absence, their two London houses, 37 Mecklenburg Square in September and 52 Tavistock Square in October 1940, took a direct hit: “all our windows are broken, ceilings down, & most of our china smashed at Meck.[lenburg] Sq.[uare],” (*D* 5: 322) “[t]oday [17 October 1940] we hear that Tavistock is gone” (*L* 6: 441).⁵⁵ Therefore, Virginia was forced to live away from London in Monk’s House at Rodmell. According to Peter F. Alexander, she finds herself, “thinking of it [London] with increasing love.”⁵⁶ It was early in November that a German bomb burst the banks of the Ouse and the marshland was flooded almost as far as Monk’s House: “[t]he haystack in the floods is of such incredible beauty ... When I look up I see all the marsh water. In the sun deep blue, gulls caraway seeds: snowberries: atlantic [sic] flier: yellow islands: leafless trees: red cottage roofs. Oh may the flood last for ever [...].” (*D* 5: 336). The war shows its destructive aspect by destroying her lovely house, at 52 Tavistock Square. These external wars create an internal war in her mind; as a result, she drowned herself in the waters of the Ouse. “If places,” as Erica Carter and others claim, “are no longer the clear supporters of our identity,” they play a potentially significant role in “the symbolic and psychical dimension of our identifications.”⁵⁷

7. 4. Britishness “thrust upon” Woolf: her Londonness

Travel and adventure shape and reshape Woolf’s observation and gaze as well as her thought and stabilize her identity, they construct her perception of herself and her world. In fact, her vision of reality is refashioned by and through travel so much so that she channels through experience of travel the various facets of her life and her identity. Like

the god Hermes, or like a translator, the traveller mediates between one culture and another. This mediation influences the traveller’s horizon; accordingly, the traveller is involved in a dialogue between his own culture and the culture of the ‘Other.’ The result of this dialogue is gaining a kind of experience that moves in two directions: first, to understand the travellers, second, to understand himself—a self-recognition. To observe and understand the ‘Others,’ Paul de Man points out, “is always also a means of leading to the observation of self.”⁵⁸ When the traveller returns, it seems, his mind is (pre)occupied with or haunted by travel.

In constructing a sense of Britishness or Englishness, Woolf takes part, as Iain Chambers argues, in a chain of “ethnic implications of inclusion and exclusion.”⁵⁹ For her, the sense of Englishness, and especially Londonness, depends on the cultural identity, which is a particular kind of Britishness, of being one of ‘us,’ different from being one of ‘them.’ For instance, in *The Waves* and *Mrs Dalloway*, she portrays this kind of Britishness. If Rhoda, Louis and Lucrezia dress, talk, eat and act as native-born or upper-middle class English they wish to be considered as genteel inhabitants, if not, they will be separated from English society. In contrast, Bernard and Clarissa Dalloway are mirrors of the Briton, proud of their tradition, history, culture, race, ethnicity and as a whole their Britishness. Woolf shows the logic of exclusion/production which recalls an ambivalence between the English society and the ‘Others.’ This highlights Bernard’s and Clarissa’s social life and identity.

In August 1909, when Woolf travelled with her brother Adrian and Saxon Sydney-Turner to Bayreuth for the Wagner Festival, she compares it to an English market town: “[w]e wandered about Bayreuth after we arrived. It is like an English market town—with a great many ironmongers, and a broad street with a fountain in the middle, and an 18th Century mayors [sic] house” (*L* 1: 403). In spite of her hatred of the German life, she sees the European pattern of life there. Woolf compares the French with the English, because she wants “to know how the French think. After the English, they seem so natural, so much akin to all one likes” (*L* 3: 23):

The French are methodical; but life is simple; the French are prosaic; the French have roads. Yes, they have roads which strike from that lean poplar there to Vienna, to Moscow; pass Tolstoy’s house, climb mountains, then march, all shop decorated, down the middle of famous cities. But in England the road runs out on to a cliff; wavers into sand at the edge of

the sea. It begins to seem dangerous to live in England. Here actually one could build a house and have no neighbours; go for a walk along this eternal white road for two, three, four miles, and meet only one black dog and one old woman who, depressed perhaps by the immensity of the landscape and the futility of locomotion, has sat herself down on a bank, attached her cow to her by a rope, and there sits, unmoved, incurious, monumental.⁶⁰

The passage shows her understanding of the French as a group of people who are very “methodical” and their life very “simple.” Life in France is desirable for Woolf since it gives her solitude to “go for a walk along this eternal white road for” miles without meeting any one or anything. During her visit to the castle at Chinon,⁶¹ “where Joan of Arc first met King Charles VII of France,”⁶² she compares the place and its beauties with the Cassis⁶³: “O to live here, we said. So much subtler, gentler, lovelier than Cassis. The land is flat & green as a lawn; with elongated quivering poplars just fledged; then the spade pressed hills I love; & the river, by which we walked—the river so deep, so romantic [...]” (*D* 4: 22). Elsewhere, during her visit to La Rochelle, she writes in a letter to Ethel Smyth on 20 April 1931, “[the hotel] looks like Bologna,—arches I mean: roofs made of red flower pots; a lilac in full flower; roman remains in the garden below the window” (*L* 4: 315). All these references affirm the process of comparison of the ‘Other’ with England which is the result of her travels.

In much the same way, she loves Italy: “Italy was really beyond words [...] too brilliant to be quite natural” (*L* 1: 399). She confesses in a letter to Vanessa Bell, “I am rapidly falling in love with Italy. I think it is much more congenial than France [...]” (*L* 3: 362). This indicates how Italy absorbs her desires and arouses her consciousness. Further, it might signify her blindness as a romantic adventurer or lover of nature who just focuses her gaze on the natural beauties, and ignores the other aspects of life in the society to/in which she travels. In her travels to Rome in 1927, she points up that “I am sure Rome is the city where I shall come to die—a few months before death however, for obviously the country round it is far the loveliest in the world [...]. There I shall come to die” (*L* 3: 361). In the early summer of 1933, Virginia and Leonard Woolf travelled through France and down the Italian Riviera to Tuscany. In a letter to her sister, she writes, “[u]ndoubtedly Tuscany beyond Siena is the most beautiful of all lands anywhere—it is, at the moment [17th May], every inch of it laden with flowers: then there are nightingales: but it is the hills,—no, I will not describe for your annoyance” (*L* 5: 185).

The "flowers", "nightingales", "hills" and nature attract Woolf's attention so much that she observes as an adventurer drowned in the beauties of nature; however, in her non-fictional travel records, she is blind to other aspects of life.

Elsewhere, she states that "[t]he modern town of Athens is like most foreign towns, so a British traveller may summarily conclude, for the roofs are of fluted brown tiles, the walls are white, & there are shutters to the windows" (*PA*: 325). She concludes that Mycenae, as a memorable site, where, in Morris's words, "*a historical Agamemnon was buried within the Lion Gate*"⁶⁴, "travels through all the chambers of the brain, wakes odd memories & imaginations; forecasts a remote future; retells a remote past. And all the while it is [...] but a great congeries of ruined houses, on a hill side" (*PA*: 331). All these travel records and descriptions show the impact of place on a particular sensibility.

All forms of fiction, especially travel fictions which are about the Empire, illustrate the cultural attitudes that pervade tourism, travel and adventure. Most European, and especially English, travel narratives portray Europe and England as a hospitable host country not merely for the Europeans' taste but also for other nationalities'. For instance, as Mike Robinson has pointed out, the great literary writers "whose lives and works are well employed for commercial purposes in tourism, are also lingeringly used in defining, presenting, projecting, and protecting national identities."⁶⁵ In this sense, Woolf's works are full of the images of cultural differences and national identities. Her travel narratives, to some extent, indicate the perceptions of the typical British tourists, travellers and adventurers with regard to the 'Other,' be that India, Africa, Egypt, Constantinople, Persia or the Southern European countries. Although her Eastern travel to Constantinople has influenced her mind and changed her view of the East—as Nicolson states, "Virginia was impressed by the Turks" because "[r]eligion was a natural part of their daily life: they could turn to their devotions as easily as to their ledgers"⁶⁶—she remains in a sense an English adventurer. Her construction of Englishness as an identity, according to Erica Carter and others, is involved in "a celebration of the geographical integrity of the nation-state" and "an assertion of its opposition to other communities and identities, through narrative of empire and exotic others."⁶⁷

Every traveller searches for his own self, and tries to reflect this quest in his travel narratives, similar to what Pfister argues regarding the crisis of travelling and of travel

writing, "as media of understanding oneself and the other."⁶⁸ Metaphorically, Woolf sees herself in the mirror of her works that reflect the sense and feeling of shame, sorrow and sadness in her life. There is a recurrent insanity in her life which hastens her death. She suffers from acute depression and insanity (push ups triggered caused by sexual abuse by her half-brothers during her childhood), which results in her sexual timidity and her periodic fits of insanity. Various things also contribute to her depression such as the difficulties of travel, her fear of failure as a writer (decline in her creative energy), the wars, the destruction of her two London houses and so on. Thus, she decides to remove this shame and anxiety by finding herself, her identity, her Englishness, or Londonness through travelling and observing the 'Other.'

To raise the question of what it means to be 'British' for Woolf it means to see herself in the mirror of her travel narratives in which she metaphorically immunizes her English adventurers against the threat of the alien tastes, cultures and habits by using the English models of adventure. In spite of undertaking different forms of journeys and experiencing the advantages and disadvantages of being abroad, she has, in Iain Chambers's words, no sense of "national decline."⁶⁹ There is no decline in her Britishness; rather, she preserves her Anglo-centric "conservative", "backward-looking" Englishness, which is, in Chambers's words, "increasingly located in a frozen and largely stereotyped idea of the national culture."⁷⁰ She was proud of England: "[what a] self respecting decorous place England must have been then! [...] [F]ew English people, I think, could endure such a dose [of antiquity] as Blo' Norton Hall is prepared to give them, without being drowned in it" (*PA*: 310).⁷¹ Despite the cosmopolitanism expressed in her famous statements: "in fact, as a woman, I have no country. As a woman I want no country. As a woman my country is the whole world," (*TG*: 99) she has a great respect for her homogenous and unified sense of national identity. This "homogeneous 'unity'" is fundamentally fixed in her nature and in the mere fact of being British. Such feeling is portrayed ironically in her first travel narrative, *The Voyage Out*, when she illustrates Mrs Dalloway's snobbish feeling as a superior Englishwoman

"Being on this ship seems to make it so much more vivid—what it really means to be English. One thinks of all we've done, and our navies, and the people in India and Africa, and how we've gone on century after century, sending out boys from little country villages—and of men like you, Dick [Mr Dalloway], and it makes one feel as if one

couldn't bear *not* to be English! Think of the light burning over the House, Dick! When I stood on deck just now I seemed to see it. It's what one means by London." (*VO*: 44)

Mrs Dalloway's emphasis on "what it really means to be English" confirms that Englishness is something that the British people are proud of it and they "couldn't bear *not* to be English." In *Mrs Dalloway*, Millicent Bruton has "the thought of Empire always at hand, and [has] acquired from her association with that armoured goddess her ramrod bearing, her robustness of demeanour [...]. To be not English even among the dead—no, no! Impossible!" (*MD*: 160) These statements highlight Millicent Bruton's national chauvinism. Orlando's life in the East breaks the boundaries of his or her Englishness and for the first time she understands, as James Donald argues, the "fragmentation of experience and identity"⁷²; this view of the "Otherness of culture and identity recalls the arguments about the production of identity in the attempt to demarcate boundaries."⁷³ Orlando is depressed when she is among the gypsies, because she finds that the East and the West cannot be intermingled. The gypsies act as the foreign uncivilized inhabitants, whereas Orlando has her own civilized behaviour.

Through orientalizing Orlando and representing his metamorphosis, Woolf identifies her own Englishness by portraying an English woman in the Oriental setting in order to enable her to recognize her own identity as an English or British traveller. Orlando's physical change from a male ambassador to a female ambadress is not a transformation which might happen to every traveller, but it is a metamorphosis which paves the way for her to experience different forms of adventure wherever he or she likes. After having experienced Oriental culture, Orlando stands between a situation of home and "second home [or a dwelling place]."⁷⁴ By comparing and contrasting the rootless (in Orlando's sense), homeless, and free gypsies to herself, Orlando finds her rooted, bounded, whole and national identity in her homeland. Therefore, she is changed to see herself as a better Englishwoman or an authentic personality who is the inheritor of the traditional English culture or Englishness. Orlando feels sometimes to be a part of and sometimes apart from the gypsies' culture; thus, she is estranged both from the society and culture to which they belong and from her own culture.

Like many travel writers who travel to exotic lands to see the 'Others' or 'them' in order to discover or reconstruct themselves or to be metamorphised, Woolf through her

travels finds herself like a moth in her own home or London: "[n]o moth could have come as far as this" (*E* 3: 152). Indeed, she sees the 'Others' or immigrants in London, and in contrast to their hybrid identity she fixes her national identity. By portraying a heterogeneous London, especially in *Mrs Dalloway*, Woolf redefines and rediscovers, as Peter Ackroyd states, "the notion or nature of Englishness"⁷⁵ or Londonness. Hence her beloved London, according to Ackroyd, acts "as a paradigm and forerunner in the great race of life."⁷⁶

Metaphorically, identity is like an onion with different layers in which every layer covers the previous one while it is covered by the next layer; in other words, the existence of one layer depends on the existence of the other. These encircling layers are like Woolf's or Rhoda's "wider and wider circles of understanding [identity] that may at last [...] embrace the entire world" (*W*: 537). Woolf's mirror-like travel narratives reflect her own onion-like as well as moth-like image or identity. She finds London and Londoners as the central identities and the 'Others' such as the Italians, Irish, Greek, Turkish and Indians as more or less marginal identities.

From one perspective, it seems that Woolf focuses her gaze on analyzing and somehow criticizing, as Martin Green has pointed out, "the pride of Englishness," especially with the many references to England's "overseas possessions."⁷⁷ Nevertheless, she gratifies the English people's pride by means of innumerable forms of expressions and statements quoted without any quotation marks from history, politics, cultural relations, tourist industry, modern technologies and so forth. She is more concerned with Englishness and Londonness, since for her the key term is gentility, which is an important concept in England. Green illustrates that the English people's or Londoners' "curious English snobbery" motivates their feeling of being "genteel."⁷⁸ In spite of the fact that gradually this concept becomes "embarrassing," the English people's "appetite persisted."⁷⁹ Such "genteel adornments"⁸⁰ are generated from a stabilized identity.

Wittingly-unwittingly, Woolf belongs, in Green's words, to a group of "empire-oriented" writers whose narratives rebel against the "male ethos"⁸¹ and imperial desires. As R. M. George argues, "the tales and tasks of homemaking (understood to be gendered female) are not very different from the tales and tasks of housekeeping on the national or imperial scale (usually gendered masculine)."⁸² By 'homemaking,' Woolf herself creates

a new feminist-imperialist house or a room of her own in her works. Green believes that "imperialism has penetrated the fabric of our culture"⁸³ and simultaneously affects us so deeply and paradoxically that we cannot recognize its existence. The consequence of such an influence can be seen in the adventure narratives that are analyzed in this study. In spite of all her insights, she is blind to the Euro-centric forces within her own time and life that have a lasting effect on shaping the British people's identity. Being proud of the English people's traditional hierarchy and their genteelness, she replaces the English imperialism with her own individual imperialism in a room of her own in the London streets. This paradoxical situation shows, in Green's words, her "political energy"⁸⁴ as one member of English imperialist society who is affected by the power of English adventure to some degree.

Woolf ironically portrays London and Londoners as the central identities and the 'Others' (French, German, Irish, Turkish, Russian and so on) as marginal identities. She expresses her Londonness in three different ways: firstly, she likens her own self to a city and travels in it; secondly, she suggests that London, her mind and soul consist of different layers changing temporarily and spatially; thirdly, London is the symbol of reconstructing, refashioning or in a way rewriting her identity and her place in the world.

Indeed, throughout her life, Woolf has remained a xenophobe. In a letter to Emma Vaughan, she claims: "[e]verything English sounds clean and beautiful [...] Thank God, I say, I was born an Englishwoman" (*L* 1: 139). For this reason, she does not think "well of the Italians of whose language she could not speak a word."⁸⁵ One can trace the sense of xenophobia during her European travel. For instance in 1909, when she travels to Germany, Bayreuth and Dresden, she writes to her sister:

We sat and watched the people in the park for an hour. My God, they are hideous! The women have a strap round their waists, a green hunting cap, with a feather, and short skirts. They are never fashionable. I dont [sic] cause any horror. We dined at the foreigners restaurant, and even there they are incredibly stout and garish. Every young woman, too, brings an old housekeeper [...] to look after her. They eat enormously, off great joints, covered with fat. (*L* 1: 403)

The foreigners' restaurant reflects her sense of xenophobia. Her reaction towards the foreigners was hostile, "they are hideous." Reviewing her travel accounts and her diaries indicates that she considers, in Peter F. Alexander's words, the Italians "degenerates" and

the Germans "fat brutes" and her reactions towards the "Indians or Negroes" are "racist."⁸⁶ Virginia believes that the black people, as Alexander quotes, are by "their nature degraded" and "bestial" and they were barely "worthy of attention."⁸⁷ For instance, in 1925, she mocks "a nigger gentleman" in London: "perfectly fitted out in swallow tail & bowler & gold headed cane; & what were his thoughts? Of the degradation stamped on him, every time he raised his hand & saw it black as a monkeys outside, tinged with flesh colour within?" (*D* 3: 23)

Her dislike of foreign men and women is originated in a racist Britishness. Alexander argues that racism was common among Bloomsburian, and he refers to Lytton Strachey's criticism of Leonard's *The Village in the Jungle*: "the more black they are the more I dislike them, and yours seem to be remarkably so. Oh Lord! how horrible it all is!—Fortunately there are other things in the world ... Whites! Whites! Whites!"⁸⁸ This chauvinistic desire can be traced in one of Woolf's typical adventurers, Helen Ambrose, in *The Voyage Out*, when she explains:

"And the future?" she [Helen Ambrose] reflected, vaguely envisaging a race of men becoming more and more like Hirst, and a race of women becoming more and more like Rachel. [...] Of farm labourers; no—not of the English at all, but of Russians and Chinese." This train of thought did not satisfy her [...]. (*VO*: 190-1)

Helen Ambrose who, like Woolf, foreshadows the problems of transculturation and the presence of cultural differences is an example of the Bloomsburian's racism. Even though racism is not basically, as Ashcroft argues, "an invention of imperialism, it quickly became one of imperialism's most supportive ideas."⁸⁹

Another case of racism is her distaste for the Jews, which can be observed when Virginia and Adrian travelled to Portugal in 1905. She writes to Violet Dickinson, "[t]here are a great many Portuguese Jews on board [...] but we keep clear of them" (*L* 1: 184-5). Elsewhere, in 1930, she confesses to Ethel Smyth "[h]ow I hated marrying a Jew [Leonard]—how I hated their nasal voices, [...]—what a snob I was [...]" (*L* 4: 195). When Virginia writes a letter to Leonard, she considers the Jews as being foreigners: "[p]ossibly, your being a Jew comes in also at this point. You seem so foreign. And then I am fearfully unstable" (*L* 1: 496). According to Alexander, although "English anti-Semitism was exactly mild compared to the Continental variety," it has been the

"strongest among sections of the middle class," since "it was linked with notions of class and with the almost unconscious superiority with which many Englishmen regarded foreigners."⁹⁰ Moreover, Alexander adds, those Jews "whose families had lived in England for generations were not considered to be English, and were made to feel alien in many small hurtful ways."⁹¹ Indeed, Virginia then portrays Leonard, in *The Waves*, as Louis who is both Jew and foreigner in England.⁹²

Woolf portrays the social marginality of the Jews in *The Waves*. After the post-war period, certain French theorists take up, as Elizabeth Grosz points out, the "notion of the Jew as outsider, the alien, and emblem of self-chosen exclusion"⁹³ from the others. For this reason, the concept of Jew is, in Grosz's terms, the metaphor of "alienation and estrangement."⁹⁴ Woolf analyzes the displacement of the Jews and the Indians or the Africans and the influence of in-betweenness on their identity. She constructed her model of a Jew on the basis of her familiarity with Semitism, especially after her marriage with Leonard.⁹⁵ In spite of all her personal reactions towards the Jews, there is no doubt that Woolf criticizes racism and anti-Semitism.

In much the same way, in *The Voyage Out*, St John Hirst expresses his hatred towards the foreigners and believes that "you couldn't trust these foreigners" (*VO*: 292). Hirst's lack of trust in the foreigners might result from his egotism, his xenophobia, his fear of trans-cultural reciprocity and so forth. Before the Second World War, England was full of refugees. The presence of refugees creates an ambivalent and unstable cultural relationship between the English and non-English. Particularly during that time Virginia was increasingly depressed for many reasons, as mentioned above. Therefore, the Woolfs left London and went to Monk's House at Rodmell, since Virginia hated to see London being bombarded by the German bombers which destroyed her houses, memories and all her mental, internal and external belongings. She wrote in her diary on 2 February 1940, "that is my England; I mean, if a bomb destroyed one of those little alleys with the brass bound curtains & the river smell & the old woman reading I should feel—well, what the patriots feel" (*D* 5: 263). She believed that they were destroying her home, her imagination, her *Heimat*, her ideal country, her world and her identity.

Woolf's English adventurers cling to the familiar polarities and are afraid of differences. Their phobias about alien cultures and people, alien ideologies, enemies

within and without are the signs of their xenophobia which show that without the known boundaries, everything will collapse into undifferentiated, miasmatic chaos; i.e., identity will be disintegrated and their 'I' or Englishness will be suffocated or swamped. For this reason, they energize their identity or otherness with whatever is known and familiar, the culture where one is supposed to feel at home. What is at stake regarding identity and otherness is the establishment of boundaries as a condition of knowledge; accordingly, the English culture gains in strength and identity by setting itself off against the other Europeans as well as against the Orient as a sort of underdeveloped selves. Even though "London has been more successful" in its proclaimed "heterogeneous identity," Woolf, in Robert J. C. Young's words, suggests that "Englishness is itself also uncertainly British"; i.e., the two words "British" and "English" are used to differentiate 'us' from 'them.'⁹⁶ 'British' is a word or a name imposed by the English on the non-English in order to differentiate 'us,' the British people from 'them,' the others who speak English. In other words, Britishness itself conveys a kind of discrimination or indicates purity of the race, personality and gentility of the British people, or those who are born British, whereas the other races who are born in Britain are not considered as British. Such Britishness and greatness was "thrust upon" Woolf.⁹⁷

In spite of travelling to and experiencing the other cultures, in her splendid isolation, Woolf, like many British, behaves as though Britain or London was the centre of the world and everything else simply foreign, strange and marginal. After Virginia's death, T. S. Eliot remarked that Virginia was "the centre of the literary life of London" and added that with her death "a whole pattern of culture is broken."⁹⁸ This shows the significance of Virginia Woolf as an intellectual cult figure, analyst, interpreter and reformer in England of that time. She reads, deciphers, writes and translates the English culture and Britishness in her splendid travel records and travel fictions.

7. 5. "The human soul [...] orientates itself afresh": Woolf's self-understanding

An identity is, according to Baumeister, "a definition, an interpretation of the self."⁹⁹ The question of identity arises because of an identity crisis which is, in Baumeister's words, one of the traveller's "cognitive capacities sophisticated enough to engage [in complex] self-questioning and consideration of alternatives."¹⁰⁰ Places to which a traveller travels

and sometimes the sites and sights he observes can be considered as the catalysts for changes in the self and therefore help to define identity. For a traveller, it is not normally possible to comply with the customs, practices, styles, and norms of two different cultures at one and the same time. Cultural interactions leave the traveller more and more latitude for defining himself. Indeed, when a traveller sees, observes or learns something new, the totality of his knowledge is changed hence the self becomes different. As Baumeister defines, "[s]elf-awareness is a superimposed awareness."¹⁰¹ However, the sense of identity is not just based on "the physical self but depends on meaning" since the "meaning occurs only within a contextual network of relationships."¹⁰² This meaning is the result of the traveller's self-analysis; i.e., the traveller's self interacts with two or three cultures at the same time. Such interactions give the traveller a particular experience that expands his horizon of expectations and transforms his pre-knowledge or pre-scribed identity.

If the self is derived from and shaped by experience, then involvement in the ongoing experiences furnishes a basis for the temporality of understanding across time. That is, we understand the present only in the horizon of the past and future. This understanding is a prominent component in the construction as well as in the continuity of our identity. If the components that produce identity fail to provide continuity and differentiation, then the traveller lacks a stable identity. The search for identity is the search for one's potential experience that can help man to begin progress towards fulfilment. To seek this kind of fulfilment, the traveller needs to know what his potential is that can be fulfilled. Hence, by comparing and contrasting the 'other' and the 'Other' as well as by recording their differentiations, the traveller can reach fulfilment and satisfaction.

Every culture has something to say to the traveller which he does not already know, and which exists independent of his act of understanding. Thus, it influences the traveller's understanding and gives him a new understanding. As far as every culture has its own unity, the traveller understands the meaning of one particular behaviour or custom by seeing it in reference to the whole of that culture, reciprocally the meaning of a culture as a whole depends on the meaning of that particular behaviour or custom.

Moreover, the experiences gained by a traveller can help to improve his horizon of expectations or understanding. A person who has no horizon cannot see far enough,

observe, and understand what is nearest to him. In contrast, a traveller tries to gain a horizon that means being able to see beyond his pre-knowledge and experiences; hence, a traveller who expands his horizon knows the relative significance of everything within this horizon. The horizon is changed for a traveller who is moving, travelling or taking part in various forms of adventure. The expansion of horizon means the expansion of vision that a traveller who is trying to understand must have. Thus, a true adventurer acquires an insight to see everything better. The horizon of a traveller is never fixed in the present because it is continually in the process of being formed; as a result, understanding a culture is the product of interaction of the traveller's and the travelles' horizons. The traveller's horizon of expectations is expanded which in turn can be changed or metamorphosed. Through the metamorphosis of self, a traveller is actually changed; in this way, he gains a new knowledge in the negotiations with his pre-knowledge.

The traveller's understanding and horizon cannot be dissociated from the signs and objects he encounters in the places to which he travels. James Buzard argues that the "images of self and setting reciprocally [reinforce] one another."¹⁰³ Therefore, like the anti-tourists, Woolf visits the places which are perceived as the "parts of a market-place of cultural goods."¹⁰⁴ She is, in Buzard's terms, in quest of "a journey fraught with paradox, assertion, risk, frustration,"¹⁰⁵ and tries to find the relationship between culture and society and makes an effort at understanding or self-realization because travel, in Buzard's words, "encourages the fashioning of special identities" not only "good for the duration of the journey" but also "afterwards."¹⁰⁶ Indeed, Woolf rediscovers herself in other cultures or societies; hence, her external journeys become inward or internal voyages in search for her 'self.' Through her external travels, she confirms that travel is a common literary metaphor for seeking out one's identity or self-discovery.

Woolf's experiences of travel reflect her understanding. As she asks in a letter to Ethel Smyth: "[a]m I the only person who has eyes in my head? I solemnly inform you, Ethel, that Greece is the most beautiful country in the whole world; May is the most beautiful season in the whole year; Greece and May together—!" (*L* 5: 58-9) By writing these statements, she introduces herself to the readers as an intellectual snob ("the only

person”) as well as an observer who likes to satisfy her own desires by dramatizing everything. Elsewhere, while travelling in Greece, she writes in a letter to Vanessa Bell:

I cant think why we dont [sic] live in Greece. Its very cheap. The exchange is now in our favour. There has been a financial crisis and we get I dont know how many shillings for our pound. The people are far the most sympathetic I’ve ever seen. Nobody jeers, or sneers. Everybody smiles. There are no beggars, particularly. The peasants all come up across the fields and talk. (*L* 5: 58)

The passage shows that her horizon is changed, but she is not necessarily changed to evaluate the world around her critically. Now she can see, assess and judge better than before travelling to such places. In a way, she changes her gaze from a romantic observer of nature to see like a tourist promoter who is concerned with the “financial crisis,” the economic situation of the place, the “exchange” rate, “shillings” and so forth. This beautiful country or ‘Other’ gives her a new knowledge of the world as well as the people other than the English. She points up that “I’m not sure if I’m in Greece or London: but think it more likely I’m in Greece, happy, easy, friendly with everything swimming easily forward [...] I could love Greece, as an old woman, so I think, as I once loved Cornwall, as a child” (*D* 4: 97):

I can assure you Greece is more beautiful than 20 dozen Cambridges all in May week. It blazes with heat too, and there are no bugs, no inconveniences—the peasants are far nicer than the company we keep in London—its true we can’t understand a word they say. In short I’m setting on foot a plan to remove the Hogarth Press to Crete. (*L* 5: 62)

The beauties that attract her attention in other countries during her last journeys are not simply their natural beauties but also the simple peasants or the people. The passage also shows that she is concerned with the economic situation of the area. Woolf finds Greece more beautiful than Cambridge since there everything is cheap, available and convenient; for this reason, she prefers to set “a plan to remove the Hogarth Press to Crete.” This statement is a witty and playful exaggeration, which might indicate the impact of place, or a home far from home, on a particular sensibility on the one hand, and her aristocratic gaze as a businesswoman who is in quest of saving money on the other.

There is a great difference between Woolf as an adventurer and her fictional adventurers or travellers. Woolf portrays and fictionalizes her own experience similar to the anti-tourists, as Buzard points up, who try to “seek saving inner qualities in

themselves, as well as recognized means by which to display them."¹⁰⁷ For instance, in *The Voyage Out*, she illustrates that her Barthesian tourists, like Buzard's anti-tourists, do "not travel [just] for adventures, nor for company but to see with [their own] eyes and to measure with [their own] hearts."¹⁰⁸ Like Lord Byron, Woolf makes "travel into an opportunity for self-staging."¹⁰⁹ Travel and its many experiences of life influence Woolf's horizon of understanding as a Barthesian tourist *avant la lettre*.

Rachel compares herself with a ship, *Euphrosyne*, in the beginning of the travel narrative, and Hewet compares himself with the boat in the darkness. These two comparisons represent their quests for self-recognition. The simultaneous *voyage out* and *voyage in* confirms the necessity of both of them in the mind of Woolf's adventurers. Rachel's *voyage out* of the limited world of an English young woman and finding herself among the people whom she has seen leads to a *voyage in* of self-recognition. Her inward journey is shown when Woolf objectifies Rachel's thoughts and metamorphosis in the form of a butterfly:

For some time she observed a great yellow butterfly, which was opening and closing its wings very slowly on a little flat stone. [...] Hypnotised by the wings of the butterfly, and awed by the discovery of a terrible possibility in life, she sat for some time longer. When the butterfly flew away, she rose, and with her two books beneath her arm returned home again, much as a soldier prepared for battle. (*VO*: 163)

Woolf uses the chrysalis imagery to represent Rachel's concern for being metamorphised into a butterfly as an internal journey and change of identity. This is the beginning of self-analysis, since every adventurer needs to expand his pre-knowledge in order to gain self-knowledge. Rachel understands herself and this play of understanding is shown once more in the form of a butterfly's metamorphosis in the travel narrative when Rachel and Hewet have lost their way in the jungle:

They began to walk back down the mossy path again. The sighing and creaking continued far overhead, and the jarring cries of animals. The butterflies were circling still in the patches of yellow sunlight. At first Terence was certain of his way, but as they walked he became doubtful. [...] Rachel followed him, stopping where he stopped, turning where he turned, ignorant of the way, ignorant why he stopped or why he turned. (*VO*: 258-9)

The presence of butterflies "circling still in the patches of yellow sunlight" suggests Rachel's and Hewet's desire for change and completeness. The way they search for their round-trip is not just a way to the river; rather, it is a way to understand themselves.

Understanding never comes to an end; it is a constant oscillation through which the traveller experiences and re-experiences the world. In fact, understanding is a medium by which the world and culture of the other countries come to stand before a traveller. This medium helps the traveller to change his mind and insight in order to be someone else.

Rachel's horizon of expectations is changed so much so that she attains a kind of recognition, a new insight. Woolf emphasizes the desire for unity through Rachel's self-dissolution. During her illness, Rachel retreats from her personality as well as from the particular facts of individual existence; hence, her illness becomes a crucial point for her self-analysis. She continues her attempt subconsciously to conceptualize life and its meaning and compartmentalize them in her mind. Nevertheless, she reaches subconsciously an irreducible polarity that cannot stop her improvement towards self-recognition; even her confrontation with death is like an adventurer's confrontation with the unknown. Rachel rediscovers and reconstructs herself in Hewet; Hewet recognizes himself in Rachel. Similarly, in *Mrs Dalloway*, Peter's self-realization begins when he leaves Clarissa and enters the streets of London:

the earth, after the voyage, still seemed an island to him [...]. What is it? where am I? and why, after all, does one do it? [...] And down his mind went flat as a marsh, and three great emotions bowled over him; understanding; a vast philanthropy; and finally, as if the result of the others, an irrepressible, exquisite delight; as if inside his brain, by another hand, strings were pulled, shutters moved, and he, having nothing to do with, yet stood at the opening of endless avenues down which if he chose he might wander. He had not felt so young for years. (*MD*: 47-8)

The passage shows, as Nicholas Marsh argues, Peter's sudden "mental change."¹¹⁰ This moment of mental change is the beginning of his understanding and metamorphosis. Such a transformation is the consequence of travelling to India and being far from home as well as experiencing in-betweenness. As Peter encounters the unity and selfhood of the others (other cultures), he fulfils his own self-understanding.

Simultaneously, Clarissa's horizon of expectations is changed and now she understands better than before. She loves life and every moment of being and movement in London. Clarissa's horizon of expectations is changed since she understands that Peter "had changed. He was rather shrivelled-looking, but kinder, she felt, and she had a real affection for him, for he was connected with her youth [...]" (*MD*: 166). The statement connotes that she is in quest of her lost self that is connected to her youth or values of the

past. Because Peter is changed, Sally is changed while with "the two of them [...] she shared her past" (*MD*: 161). Moreover, the English society is changed, and especially her beloved London is changed. Therefore, the presence of her friends sets Clarissa to re-evaluate her life. She recalls her past to understand whether she has made the right decisions in her life or not. Now she needs "the privacy of the soul" like the old woman in the opposite window who looks out of "the window, quite unconscious that she was being watched" (*MD*: 113). Indeed, Clarissa believes that "one must seek out the people who completed them [the souls]; even the places" (*MD*: 135).

Peter Walsh's understanding of life is different from Clarissa's. Peter's realization depends on his experiences: as a young man, he was in quest of knowing people and was more under the influence of emotion, whereas as a mature person he likes to understand and be more rational than sentimental. His bitterness is gone and now he is able to understand and accept Clarissa. This process of understanding is a "long, long voyage" in the "interminable life" (*MD*: 144). Peter recognizes the enriched past because he is about to have an experience and to acquire "the power which the young lack, of cutting short, doing what one likes, not caring a rap what people say and coming and going without any great expectations [...]" (*MD*: 144). With his new insight, Peter who "always take [s], never give [s]" puts Clarissa into a particular situation and makes "her see herself" (*MD*: 149). Woolf's adventurers discover that the streets of London give them ample material for moments of understanding and insight. For example, Peter experiences such an insight: "the truth about our soul, he thought, our self, who fish-like inhabits deep seas" (*MD*: 143). He discovers the mystery of the soul, or the self which is drowning in the deep sea of understanding. He realizes the same point that Woolf states in her essay, "The Russian Point of View": "[i]t is the soul that matters, its passion, its tumult, its astonishing medley of beauty and vileness" (*E* 4: 186). Woolf believes that when "the elements of the soul are seen" then "a new panorama of the human mind is revealed," i.e. understanding (*E* 4: 186).

In *Mrs Dalloway*, Woolf indicates the reciprocal interaction between the observer and the observed and assesses how the identity of one affects the other while walking in the streets of London. Both Clarissa's and Peter's wandering and strolling in the London streets seem to be not just for place and urban landscape, but for self or identity. Thus,

their street haunting can be interpreted, according to Deborah L. Parsons, as "an attempt to identify and place the self in the uncertain environment of modernity."¹¹¹ Like Woolf herself, the adventurers' haunting is, in Parsons's words, "an attempt to return to something that is lost"; it is "an ethereal" activity in which "the spectre floats above the ground and is detached and immune from the dangers of the city scape."¹¹²

In *To the Lighthouse*, Mr Ramsay is changed in "The Lighthouse" when he meets Lily again: "[y]ou find us much changed" (TL: 221). This change refers to the change of understanding. Mr Ramsay's behaviour shows that his horizon of expectation is changed which in turn influences the other adventurers' perception: "[h]e changed everything. She could not see the colour; she could not see the lines; even with his back turned to her, she could only think, But he'll be down on me in a moment, demanding—something she felt she could not give him" (TL: 223). Mr Ramsay's transformation and self-knowledge change the other's view of life. Self-understanding is a process that always occurs through understanding someone or something other than the self. The self-analyst is in quest of the layers of self which results in discovering a kind of completeness:

It was some such *feeling of completeness* perhaps which, ten years ago, standing almost where she stood now, had made her say that she must be *in love with the place*. Love had a thousand shapes. There might be lovers whose gift it was to choose out the elements of things and place them together and so, giving them *a wholeness* not theirs in life, make of some scene, or meeting of people [...] one of those globed compacted things over which thought lingers, and love plays. [...] [T]he sky *changed* slightly and the sea *changed* slightly and the boats *altered* their positions, the view, which a moment before had seemed miraculously fixed, was *now unsatisfactory*. (TL: 286, my emphasis)

The passage shows the process of understanding through which Lily discovers that her vision is changed. Lily recognizes and finds her completeness in her painting which conveys her understanding. She has a new experience, a kind of expansion of the self. It is *de facto* only by being pictured that a landscape becomes picturesque, in much the same way it is by painting that an experience might become understanding.

An artist has the power to transform her experience of being into an image or a form; hence, like every artist, Woolf creates a metamorphosis for her characters in her travel narratives by changing their understanding. Simultaneously, her horizon of expectation is influenced by her own travels, which in turn expands her soul. In her short essay on the soul, "The Russian Point of View," she remarks that, "[t]he soul is not restrained by

barriers. It overflows, it floods, it mingles with the souls of others” (*E* 4: 187). In a letter to her friend, Gerald Brenan, she explains:

The human soul, it seems to me, orientates itself afresh every now and then. It is doing so now. No one can see it whole, therefore. The best of us catch a glimpse of a nose, a shoulder, something turning away, always in movement. Still, it seems better to me to catch this glimpse, than to sit down with Hugh Walpole, Wells etc etc [sic], and make large oil paintings of fabulous fleshy monsters complete from top to toe.¹¹³

The passage echoes the sense of movement and change of the soul, which becomes “afresh every now and then.” Such a never-ending oscillation of the soul shows the constant change of understanding. In much the same way, Woolf expresses her idea in *Orlando*: “every secret of a writer’s soul, every experience of his life, every quality of his mind is written large in his works” (*O*: 120). Her works convey what is beyond her soul. They portray the soul of a traveller who returns while experiencing new horizons; however, the horizons of her fictional adventurers are different from hers. For Woolf, home, especially London, was the extension of her personality; hence, she projects everything onto London. Moreover, she is proud of her nationality and the authenticity of her race, nation and history. In her essay “The Russian Background,” she points up that the soul is affected by travel:

Yet, as the travellers move slowly over the immense space, now stopping at an inn, now overtaking some shepherd or wagon, it seems to be the journey of the Russian soul, and the empty space, so sad and so passionate, becomes the background of his thought. [...] [T]he English reader may have had something of the same experience when isolated on board ship on a sea voyage. (*E* 3: 85)

Through an external journey, the traveller is invited to an internal journey of the soul. The crucial point in Woolf’s life and texts is a contradictory self-recognition and metamorphosis shown by representing the death of her main adventurers. She is an observer, a traveller who is always searching for her lost identity of childhood, motherhood or lost sexual identity. It is true that travelling can change the identity of such creative observers and enable them to compartmentalize their identity in such a constant interaction with cultures, settings, sights, sites, places, environments, beliefs, lives and even different people. The consequence of such a compartmentalization is, to some extent, due to Woolf’s imperial eye—hidden beyond her anti-imperialist and anti-colonialist beliefs—her Englishness, Londonness or Bloomsburianness.¹¹⁴ She

experiences in-betweenness or otherness, but in a different way. As Young states, the "fixity of identity is only sought in situations of instability and disruption, of conflict and change."¹¹⁵

Woolf does not like to fold or shroud herself like a mummy, like a moth in her Englishness, even though wittingly-unwittingly she does so. Like Rachel who has "a beautiful idea, an idea like a butterfly" (*VO*: 216) in her mind, Orlando has the desire of being a "butterfly" (*O*: 14) which illustrates the desire for change:

how very little she had changed all these years. [...] *Yet through all these changes she had remained, she reflected, fundamentally the same. She had the same brooding meditative temper, the same love of animals and nature, the same passion for the country and the seasons.* (*O*: 134, my emphasis)

Orlando experiences a physical change, a moth-like change, a change of status and a metamorphosis, but not an internal and actual change. Very implicitly, it indicates Woolf's life in which although there are some changes in her world of understanding, she remains fundamentally the same. It means that her Englishness or national identity is, in Pfister's words, "homogenous", "unified"¹¹⁶ and the same. The desire for describing and writing the life of a butterfly accentuate the desire for change in Orlando: "if a butterfly had fluttered the window and settled on her chair, one could write about that" (*O*: 152). Travel gives Orlando a great variety of selves:

I'm sick to death of this particular self. I want another. Hence, the astonishing changes we see in our friends. [...] (being out in the country and needing another self presumably) Orlando? still the Orlando she needs may not come; these selves of which we are built up, one on top of another, as plates are piled on a waiter's hand, have attachments elsewhere, sympathies, little constitutions and rights of their own, call them what you will [...] for everybody can multiply from his own experience the different terms which his different selves have made with him [...].

[...] For she had a great variety of selves to call upon, far more than we have been able to find room for, since a biography is considered complete if it merely accounts for six or seven selves, whereas a person may well have as many thousand. (*O*: 175)

The recognition of selves is the outcome of her confrontation with the 'Other.' The foremost attraction of travel is, according to Buzard, the "change from the onerous duties and compromises that cage" the traveller in his usual lives, while "the particular sights to be seen" and the significant "'adventures' to be experienced 'as it were', seem of secondary importance."¹¹⁷ Woolf withholds her British identity and commits herself to

identification with England. When Woolf encounters the other cultures, she finds the horizons of her own world, her way of seeing her world; indeed, her self-understanding is broadened. She sees in a new light, sometimes as for the first time, but always in a more experienced way. Therefore, through encountering other cultures, Woolf becomes more fully present to herself and she understands the other cultures and fuses their world to her own English culture in order to stabilize her identity.