

Britishness and Otherness in Virginia Woolf's *Orlando*

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ABSTRACT: This paper demonstrates the influences of British national tendency and empire on culture, race, history, literature and identity which are essential for making a perfect form of Britishness. *Orlando: A Biography* (1928) by Virginia Woolf (1882-1941) is examined based on the theories of Ian Baucom (1967), Edward Said (1935-2003) and Homi K. Bhabha (1949) regarding Britishness and Otherness. By using ethno-methodological, post-colonial and cultural theories, this paper analyzes the ideals of Britishness, the traces of Otherness, centrality of British people and marginality of 'Others.' Clarifying Orientalism and ethnography, the paper shows how Woolf visualizes the distinctions between Occidental and Oriental lifestyle, habits and customs and how she locates the main character, Orlando in different layers of various ethnic groups to flaunt the distinctions which lead to the projection of main character regarding the superiority of Occidental culture and civilization and inferiority of Oriental. It shows the way of looking of the European toward non-Europeans as inferior, deformed, barbaric and less intelligent. The paper reveals how Woolf compares British space with foreign and exotic spaces to map or remap her homeland, Britain as an ideal one. Subsequently, it focuses on Woolf's critical view toward the East and exotic culture, and describes how Woolf as a British novelist portrays the superiority of English people in comparison to inferiority and weakness of non-English one.

Keywords: Ethnography, Britishness, National Tendency, Otherness, Orientalism.

INTRODUCTION

This paper attempts to demonstrate the traces of Britishness and Otherness through ethno-methodological, post-colonial and cultural studies. Britishness is attached to the British nation and empire and it creates the sense of love and pride for being British. In this process, the challenge for English identity becomes the dual challenge of defining the national past and of preserving this invented past from the contaminations of empire. Therefore, history, gender, race and empire may be considered as the integral part of the construction of the Britishness. Britain as a Western country claims its own centrality and supremacy versus marginality and inferiority of the 'Others'; thus, they construct the term Otherness. This Otherness can be based on race, nationality, religion and gender which are associated with marginalized people. Hence, the 'Other' is considered inferior and lower.

Various subjects, like Britishness, Otherness and ethnography, can be found in Virginia Woolf's literary works. Woolf's father, Sir Leslie Stephen, was the editor of *The Dictionary of National Biography* (1885); he influenced Virginia's perspective of the history of English literature. Moreover, Woolf's husband Leonard Woolf (1880-1969) was a British agent in the colonial lands. These are reasons why many signs of British nationalism and imperialism can be found in her novels. After the death of her father, Woolf and her family traveled to Turkey in 1906; through this travel, she encounters different cultures and people. Her encounter with 'Other' shapes her idea towards their culture. The purpose of this paper is to represent Woolf as a British nationalist who indicates England as an imagined community through comparing the cultural distinction between West and East.

Orlando: A Biography (1928, O) indicates noble Orlando who lives over three centuries, falls in love with Russian princess, Sasha, leaves England for Turkey as an ambassador, transforms from a male to a female in an Oriental land, lives among gypsies' groups and finally returns home. This paper clarifies how Woolf depicts the ideal of Britishness through historical narration. Her representations of Britishness constantly involve in nation's past. Hence, this paper aims to show how Woolf glorifies the ideals of Britishness and England and mortifies the other nations and non-Western countries as uncivilized and inferior.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

In this paper Britishness and Otherness in Virginia Woolf's Orlando is discussed from ethno-methodological, post-colonial and cultural viewpoint. It focuses on Britishness, national culture, race and literature as a means of superiority over the 'Others' and also dishonoring other countries as uncivilized and inferior. Demonstrating the relation between Britishness and Otherness as well as clarifying ethno-methodological, post-colonial and cultural studies are important aspects of this paper. According to Edward W. Said in his book, *Culture and Imperialism* (1993), culture refers to "[t]hose practices, like the arts of description, communication, and representation that have relative autonomy from the economic, social and political realm" (xii). It includes "[t]he popular stock of lore about distant parts of the world and specialized knowledge available in such learned disciplines as ethnography, historiography, philology and literary history" (ibid). Therefore it can be stated that ethnography is closely associated to culture.

Bill Ashcroft (1946) and others define ethnography as "[t]hat field of anthropological research based on direct observation of and representing on a people's way of life" (79). Ethnography is concerned mainly with recording the life and habits of people from communities and not those observers from far away locals that are geographically or culturally separated from the west. In this regard, James Clifford (1945) believes that four parts governing the reading ethnography, "language, rhetoric, power and history" (qtd. in Ashcroft et al, 81). He defines ethnography like any discourse which functions with its own set of rules, conventions and assumptions. John D. Brewer (1951-), in his book *Ethnography* (2000), defines it as the reading and interpreting of people "[i]n naturally occurring settings or fields by means of methods which capture their social meaning and ordinary activities" (10). Therefore ethnographic discourse, as a form of postcolonial subject, has often been criticized as the examples of power of western discourses to structure its preliminary others.

Ashcroft and others explain that the term post-colonialism is used broadly to reveal "the political, linguistic and cultural experience of societies that were former European colonies" (185). Said, in his book *Orientalism* (1978), explains that the Europeans used Orientalism to define themselves as the superior race compared to Orientals. Thus it is their duty to civilize the uncivilized world. Regarding power, hegemony and domination, Said writes, "[t]here are westerners and there are Orientals, the former dominate; the latter must be dominated" (1978: 36). Said notes that Orientalism has also been used to refer to the representation of imaginary aspects of Eastern cultures by Western people. Additionally, Orientalism has made it possible for the west to dominate, colonize and reconstruct the east. Furthermore, Said declares the fact that Orient plays a significant role in the construction of the Occidental culture as the powerful 'Other,' the western image of the Orient is different from the real Orient. The Occident has created dichotomy between the reality of the east and the notion of the "Orient." Thus non-Western societies are described as barbaric and incapable of social and technological modernization.

The critical view of the Occident or the West toward the Orient or the East reveals itself in the form of strong national tendency and Britishness as well as humiliating the other people and countries in Orlando. In this regard Ian Baucom, in his book *Out of Place: Englishness, Empire, and the Locations of Identity* (1999), defines Britishness announced itself as "born of the soil" (10). Britishness in this term means the identity of those people who reside in Britain. Then Britishness demonstrates the superiority of British culture, race, literature and history and the marginality and inferiority of Oriental ones.

Along with such critics, Woolf, as a British nationalist author, indicates the superiority of her own culture over the 'Others' in Orlando. She indicates the British people and culture as a perfect and an ideal archetype in contrast to non-English people. The paper discusses how Woolf, through her tendency to Britishness, discriminates the Occident and British people from the Orient.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Britishness and national tendency in Woolf's main character and in herself construct and recover English culture and civilization as ideal ones. She shows how main character's personality reflects a contemporary English identity in each century although his/her English identity remains constant. Woolf places the main character in

different layers of various ethnic groups to indicate the diversities between oriental and occidental culture. This overwhelming cultural perspective leads Woolf as an English woman to be proud of her nationality, blood and race.

She is proud of the aristocratic culture of Britain and signifies the British people as ordered and structured in comparison to the other people and countries. Woolf expresses the national history of England as the construction of Britishness. She depicts how British culture and history shape the main character's identity and performance. In this manner Woolf explains the history of Britain and her ancestors and also her love to Britain by showing its splendid past.

Woolf indicates the relation between history and identity and stresses the attempts of the main character to maintain his/her own British identity in exotic spaces. In the process of searching the identity, Woolf shows the main character as a British male/female traveler who preserves British national identity in every situation through centuries. Moreover, she puts emphasis on the distinctions and differences between the East and the West by explaining Turkey in terms of aspects it does not share with England. Eastern culture is defined in contrast with its English counterpart. She locates the main character in a land, totally unlike his/her motherland, in Turkey where east meets west. This paper shows how Woolf uses the main character's travel to exotic space as a means of perceiving the 'Others.' She criticizes 'Others' to describe the superiority of her British culture.

Ethnography: Britishness and Otherness

Ethnography can be defined as an effort to understand culture and civilization of different societies in an accurate and systematic approach. James Buzard writes that ethnographic fieldwork is concerned with showing "a cluster disciplinary practices through which cultural worlds are represented" (qtd. in Baradaran Jamili, 2006). The purpose of ethnography is to interpret the learned patterns of behaviors, beliefs and language of the other cultural group. Arnold Krupat (1941), in his book *Ethnocriticism, Ethnography, History, Literature* (1992), believes, "[t]he two cultures which met and dealt with each other at the various frontiers noted by Western history were almost never two cultures of equivalent material power" (2). Then the differences between two cultures separate them from each other and invite the dominant culture to rule and govern the 'Other.'

In this way, Said focuses on Orientalism, and demonstrates the cultural distinctions between East and West. He states, it is "[a]s a kind of form of thought for dealing with the foreign has typically shown altogether regrettable tendency of any knowledge based on such hard-and-fast distinctions as 'east' and 'west' to channel thought into a west or an east compartment" (1978: 46). Therefore he explains that the world is divided into two parts, Orient and Occident. Said continues to write that Orient and Occident are completely relative to the place of the observer. He describes West's claim that Oriental is "irrational, depraved (fallen), childlike, different" while Occidental is "rational, virtuous, mature and normal" (ibid 40).

Clifford, in *Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography* (1986), believes in almost any ethnography, "dull-looking figures called 'mere travelers' or 'casual observer'" (27). In this sense, Leila Baradaran Jamili (1965-), regarding travel writing, argues that in ethnography, "[a] 'native' is a cultural figure and a traveler is the intercultural figure who encounters other cultures as the focus of his observation" (2006). For the Occident or the west, outside is to be a place of vagueness and strangeness and Occident must control and trade in free manner. Travel produces a definite understanding of the present and future identity from the past identity; hence, through travel ethnographer culturally investigates "defined others, defined as primitive or tribal, or non-western" (Clifford, 23).

Moreover, ethnography culturally separates people from one another based on different characteristics including history, language, class, habit and custom. It represents some definite traits of a specific group. Some of such ethnic groups are classified by classes and races and some others by geographical features. Thus ethnic signs are dynamic and easily transported across ethnic cultures which are inseparable from setting. Differences in settings indicate differences in culture, thus each place has a distinct culture defined by the identities of people who live there.

These ethnic cultures are concerned with the subject of nationalities particularly the British nationality. This sense of Britishness was a response to the growth of British Empire although the description of these two different terms, Britishness and Englishness, is not so simple as they are consistently conflated. They are both attached to the identity of the British nation and empire. Britishness may be considered as a synonym for Englishness which expands English culture over the Welsh, Scottish and the Irish people. In this regard, Britishness can be referred to the efforts of administrators of the Empire fought to protect English identity. Britishness distinguishes the British people, race, identity and culture from the other nations, and is defined as living in a country named Great Britain, or more limited, as belonging to British race. According to Frederic William Maitland (1850-1906) and Fredrich Pollack (1894-1970), "[t]he place of birth is all important" (qtd. in Baucom, 8).

Britishness can be defined in relation to nationalism. Anthony Eastrope, in his book, *Englishness and English Culture* (1999), believes that nationalism refers to "the love of nation" (49). It is defined as an unusual intensity

which portrays the national desire. Nation is composed of class, region, gender, ethnicity and culture. Eastrope quotes Anthony D. Smith (1926) who states that nationalism refers to “an ideology of a nation” (44). The concept of nation can be defined in terms of culture. Culture helps to produce identities, each culture has its own laws, traditions and institutions, and these institutions and traditions regulate national policies and social relations. In this regard Raymond Williams (1921-1988) comments on nation as a term which is fundamentally associated with “native” (qtd. in Eastrope, 9).

The concept of Britishness related to imperialism. Imperialism and Britishness are closely entwined in many definitions. Said defines that imperialism refers to “practice, the theory and the attitudes of demarcating metropolitan center ruling a distant theory” (1993). Quoting from J. A. Hobson (1858-1940), Said explains imperialism as “the expansion of nationality” (ibid 88). The idea of a national state or national unity is a hegemonic issue produced by the ruling group in order to mask its own power and dominion. The imperialist cultures must claim that they are following what they have to do under the name of universal ideas but a limited national desire cannot become the power of imperialism. Therefore a nation must lose parts of its national particularity and individuality. Then such nations focus on those dividing lines which make a distinction between one imperial territory from another one. These dividing lines exist not simply as general boundaries but as lines forming special prevention, protective policing, and spatial identification which describe that English space was interpreted “as homogenous, interchangeable everywhere alike,” and besides it remained “unique, local, [and] differentiated” (ibid 10). Accordingly, Britishness is the product of the forms of reproduction regarding itself and other nations are considered as others.

Through travel, a traveler encounters a new culture and tries to interpret and decipher it; in fact, he attempts to understand what the other culture is expressing. Based on Baradaran Jamili’s idea, “[t]he ‘Other’ can refer to the travellers whose separation from the traveller [sic] locates them as the first focus of desire” (2006). Then for the traveler, the other is to be crucial since he is involved in his gaze. This otherness is the result of a discursive process by which the dominant group creates the dominated group which is called ‘them’ or ‘Other.’ The creation of otherness provides a rule that permits individuals to be divided into two groups: ‘us’ and ‘them.’ One that signifies the regular, the standard and whose identity is valued, and another that is characterized by its weaknesses and faults and is subject to discrimination. Thus westerners create certain standards “[t]o control, manipulate, even to incorporate what is manifestly different (or alternative and novel)” (Said, 1978). The Orient or the ‘Other’ refers to “Asia or the east, geographically, morally, [and] culturally” (ibid 31). East is constructed as the location of otherness; and the Orient or the East is described as ‘Other.’ Therefore the ‘Other’ is an integral part of European material civilization and culture.

The vocabulary of west regarding the east and the ‘Other’ is plentiful with words and concepts like “inferior” or “subject races,” “subordinate peoples,” “depending expansion” and “authority” (Said, 1993). Therefore ‘Others’ are subjects who are incapable of distinguishing what is good for them. Said argues Occidentals believe in the images of ‘Others’ as “[i]ethargic and suspicious,’ and in everything oppose the clarity, directness, and nobility of the Anglo-Saxon race” (1978). He adds that Occidentals define themselves as superior race. The point is that the ‘Other’ is controlled and represented by dominating structures. In this sense, Bhabha asserts, “[t]he other loses its power to signify, to negate to initiated its historic desire, to establish its own institutional and oppositional discourse” (31). Said states, western perspective towards the non-western culture and world is so rooted as to blind them to other histories and cultures. Westerners believe that nothing in Orient or ‘Others’ can resist against the occidental power, thus such a relationship between West and East results in the West’s cultural strength and its power over the Orient.

Different Cultural Habits in Orient and Occident in Woolf’s Orlando:

Cultural habits can be regarded as demonstration of different habits of people in Orient and Occident based on their cultural principles. Baradaran Jamili believes, “[i]t is based on direct observation of and reporting on a people’s way of life in societies,” which is “ethnographically or culturally far from the observer’s own country” (2006: 23). In Orlando, Woolf portrays different habits of people in Orient and Occident in a way that the novel signifies not only crossing of geographical boundaries but also transgression of social and cultural regulations. In this sense, she fictionalizes the recording of life, civilization and habits of Oriental societies so much so that they become obviously divergent from those of the Occidental world.

In the novel, for instance, Sasha’s manly behavior can be considered as a kind of Oriental habit in comparison to British and Occidental habits: “[a] boy it must be no woman skate with such speed and vigour [sic] swept almost tiptoes past him” (O, 22). Sasha’s Russian behavior makes her mysterious, and Orlando is obsessed by Sasha’s Oriental mystery. Orlando’s unified and structured Occidental world is intruded by Sasha’s: “Orlando, catching her eyes across the boars’ heads and stuffed peacocks, laughed too. He laughed, but the laugh on his lips froze in wonder. Whom had he loved, what had he loved, he asked himself in a tumult of emotion, until now?” (O, 23). His

strong Occidental beliefs are shaken with his encounter with an Oriental. Based on Said's words, by encountering Orient and Occident, they "fulfill their destinies and confirm their identities in the encounter" (1978: 137). Occidental Orlando is not able to interpret and decipher Sasha's Oriental habits and behaviors completely, since Sasha comes from a complete different culture. Based on Orlando's understanding, she is from an inferior race and country where its people have got strange and uncivilized habits:

He suspected at first that her rank was not as high as she would like; or that she was ashamed of the savage ways of her people, for he had heard that the women in Muscovy wear beards and the men are covered with fur from the waist down; that both sexes are smeared with tallow to keep the cold out, tear meat with their fingers and live in huts where an English noble would scruple to keep this cattle. (O, 28)

Orlando generally reads Sasha's Oriental habit and values and tries to adopt himself with her habits but all his attempts fail. Orlando views Occidental habits as civilized/ordered and Orientals as uncivilized/disordered. He makes prejudices about the Oriental habits, practices and rituals:

That reminded Orlando of a scene some nights since, when he had come upon her in secret gnawing a candle end in a corner, which she had picked from the king's table; but it was tallow, and she gnawed it, was there not he thought handing her onto the ice, something rank in her, something coarse flavoured, something peasant-born. (O, 30).

Orlando distances himself from the Russians; however, he does not have complete information regarding Oriental culture and habits and his desire is to generalize the Orientals. Sasha also, as an Oriental traveler, observes and compares the Occidental men and women's way of eating and behavior with the people in her homeland, Russia. When Orlando and Sasha talk, she begins to ask: "What was the nauseating mixture they had poured on her plate? Did the dogs eat at the same table with the men in England? [...], And did the king always slobber like that?" (O, 23). Sasha's questions are the outcome of being a traveler, or an 'Other' in a foreign country. She criticizes the various habits in Occident and glorifies the habits in her own motherland, Russia.

Through Orlando's travel to Turkey, he/she has the opportunity of confronting Turkish people and observing gypsies' habits which produce an image of the superiority of his/her own nation in Orlando's mind. According to Said, "Orient has helped to define Europe (or the west) and its contrasting image, idea, personality and experience" (1978:1-2). Woolf locates Orlando among gypsies, who do not believe in any cultural boundaries, in order to represent that the gypsy's qualities, such as being nomadic and outside of history, are exactly on the opposite side of the British habits. Orlando's love of nature can be regarded as an occidental and British habit. Her love of nature signifies the love of her home, Britain: "the English disease, a love of nature, was inborn in her" (O, 85). Baradaran Jamili notes, "Orlando's relationship with nature is, however, different from the gypsies' [sic], because Orlando loves nature while the gypsies live in nature"; indeed, "[n]ature awakens the English disease" (2006). In this way, the Orient confers its natural beauties to the Occidental traveler. Orlando's contact and interaction with nature inspires her creativity and her occidental tendencies "like the intercourse of lovers" (O, 193).

Woolf identifies the differences between east/west and Orient/Occident by drawing the picture of nature. According to Said, "[c]ulture can even be a battleground on which causes expose themselves to the light of day and contend with one another" (1993: xiii). Therefore this cultural interaction changes Orlando's perspective for expressing himself and the 'Others.' Certainly when Orlando perceives and observes Oriental habits in comparison to her knowledge, her whole understanding is changed. Consequently Orlando is not led to embrace the traditions and habits of Orientals. Woolf situates Orlando among different ethnic groups with distinct habits and cultures to stress the cultural comparisons between east and west. In other words, Woolf defines gypsies' culture and habits against its British counterpart.

Britishness in Woolf's Orlando

The sense of Britishness is related to "the cultural identity," which is considered as "being one of us" (Baradaran Jamili, 2006: 310). Woolf frequently illustrates British traditions, culture, race and identity as ideal ones to glorify Britain. She focuses on the nobility and purity of British blood and race. Through loving Britain, she reconstructs the history of her homeland as an ideal one.

Orlando's house can be considered as a figure of Britishness, which is associated closely with "English soil of the sceptered isle" (Baucom, 12). The history of this house is the embodiment of her homeland, Britain, as Woolf writes, it "was one of the most ancient in Britain" (O, 27). Hence, house plays a significant role in the nineteenth century literature and imagination. According to Emily Blair (1955), in her book, *Virginia Woolf and the Nineteenth-Century Domestic Novel* (2007), "[t]he house serves as an analog for the novel, but it also serves as an analog for the mind and the body, for social status and for the nation" (11). Furthermore, Woolf demonstrates the story of Vita Sackville West's home, Knole, the ancient estate of Sackville West's family. In this regard Ann Ronchetti, in her book, *The Artist, Society and Sexuality in Virginia Woolf's Novels* (2004), believes that Orlando can be

demonstrated, “[a]s an informal social history of England from the Renaissance to 1928 that portrays and satirizes the nation’s changing values, mores, gender roles, and tastes over centuries” (81). Therefore, house is the embodiment of Orlando’s family history. Orlando’s ancestors lie in the family crypts, placed “deep beneath the foundations of the house” (O, 42). History of Orlando’s family is Britain’s history: “[t]he house, at the top of which he lived was so vast that there seemed trapped in it the wind itself” (O, 8).

Woolf produces the biography of an English aristocrat by telling the magnificent history of Britain and his/her ancestors. Gabrielle McIntire, in *Modernism, Memory and Desire: T.S. Eliot and Virginia Woolf* (2008), states that in Orlando, “Woolf forces her characters to pick up the burden of understanding themselves in relation to the continuum that we know as English history” (135). Thereupon Orlando represents a cyclical and irregular vision of history; it is based on the comparisons between the parts of the past and present. At the end of the novel, Orlando’s ancestral house becomes a museum which indicates the British past, the house “was no longer hers entirely, she sighed. It belonged to time now; to history; was past the touch and central of the living” (O, 188). Orlando’s house becomes a national monument to the British past. In the same way, Orlando metaphorically becomes a monument to national British past. Subsequently Orlando becomes a part of the land of Britain. In this way, Woolf shows that the modern British culture consists of splendid and brilliant national past.

Woolf emphasizes the sense of national identity to recover her Britishness. In *Three Guineas*, she states, “[a]s a woman I have no country. As a woman I want no country. As a woman my country is the whole world” (qtd. in Baradaran Jamili, 2006). According to Baradaran Jamili, “[d]espite the cosmopolitanism expressed in her famous statements,” Woolf “has a great respect for her homogenous and unified sense of national identity” in her novels (2006). She is proud of her nationality, the supremacy of her race, nation and history. In this manner, she shows her tendency to Britishness by portraying a British woman traveler in the Oriental setting in order to enable her to realize her own identity as a British woman traveler.

Home can be considered as “[a] place of desire, a place of becoming, a place of return, [...] a place of life and belonging” (Baradaran Jamili, 2013:16). It creates a sense of security and protection for self and is considered as the sense of national identity originated from the interaction between people and their nation. Baradaran Jamili explains, home can be identified as “[o]ne source of constructing man’s identity as well as an influential source of continuity in the sense of self” (ibid 8). It can also be regarded as national identity which shows how the inhabitants have emotional sense of attachment and tendency to possess their own motherland. In this regard, Eastrope writes, “nation is a soul, a spiritual principle” (35). In the novel, Orlando is the embodiment of different identities; however, he/she simultaneously preserves his/her British national identity in every situation. Baradaran Jamili argues that despite “[t]he stability of her national identity (her Britishness),” Woolf’s horizon of expectations is changed (2006). Woolf points out that the individual subjects must play specific roles within national community in order to possess their own national identity.

Orlando’s desire for literature and writing can be regarded as another aspect of his/her tendency to Britishness. Woolf identifies that national British culture can be defined in terms of the national literature. For Woolf, the British space was mixed up with English literature, so much so that she constructs the history of development of British literature and its modes of production during three centuries. Therefore Helen Gardner believes, literature, which confers, “the sense of national identity” (qtd. in Eastrope 117), can be regarded as a source of national pride. Orlando’s love of literature is described as a common disease which is like his/her love of nature, and signifies Orlando’s love of home, Britain. Literature remains a favorite hobby for Orlando throughout his/her years of adulthood. Hoping to be an important part of the British rituals and traditions, Orlando vows that “[h]e would be first poet of his race and bring immortal luster upon his nature” (O, 78). Orlando as boy by seeing William Shakespeare (1564-1616) has the desire to be a poet, as Briggs writes, “Orlando, like Vita or Shakespeare, was a poet” (18). Woolf portrays Shakespeare’s position in Britain’s national culture and literature; furthermore, British literature cannot exist without Shakespeare. Thus Woolf shows the role of Shakespeare in Britain’s dominant history and literature and represents him as a gifted poet. Before metamorphosis, Orlando invites the poet Nick Greene to talk about “the sacred subject of poetry” (O, 51). Woolf writes, Greene “belonged to sacred race rather than to the noble” (O, 45). Although Greene gives Orlando suggestions regarding literary creation but he mocks Orlando’s private life in his writing. In eighteenth century Orlando’s contact with some great poets and writers such as Alexander Pope (1688-1744), Joseph Addison (1672-1719) and Jonathan Swift (1667-1745) is another aspect of her growth as a poet.

After travelling home, Orlando’s literary ability is recreated, as Woolf writes, Orlando “by birth was a writer (O, 51). It depicts Orlando’s tendency and love for writing, Orlando’s desire for writing and literature is a way to record her everyday life in exotic space. For Orlando, literature is a way to record her Britishness. After homecoming Orlando finishes her poem “The Oak Tree,” which records the “boyish dream” (O, 57) of Orlando, as well as demonstrating his/her travel, life history and British traditions in different time and spaces. It expresses Orlando’s

travelling experiences, observations and gazes at exotic spaces. Woolf's "The Oak Tree" is an imitation of Sackville West's poem *The Land* which considers her travel experiences to Turkey; Baradaran Jamili writes, "The Oak Tree" or *The Land*, reshapes "the myth of Orientalism" (2006).

Otherness in Woolf's Orlando

Through travel, a traveler observes and explores the other countries' culture and people, as Baradaran Jamili mentions, "'Other' is an ambivalent form of travel" (ibid 295). This traveler starts to compare his own values and that of 'Other.' Then 'Other' is the result of "[a] discourse of difference between two nations, or cultures, observer/observed or colonizer/colonized" (ibid 293). The process of otherness constructs the sense of supremacy of traveler's culture over the 'Others.' She portrays the sense of superiority by humiliating the other countries and culture.

From the beginning of the novel, when Orlando meets Sasha, her gender is blurred with her clothes and Orlando seeks to reveal Sasha's identity. Orlando describes this foreign visitor as "[a] figure, which, whether boy's or woman's, for the loose tunic and trousers of the Russian fashion served to disguise the sex, filled him with the highest curiosity. The person, whatever the name or sex, was about middle height, very slenderly fashioned" (O, 21). Woolf gives this information that Sasha is an androgyny and also an 'Other.' Moreover, Sasha's otherness and foreignness are formed with the explanation of her seductive androgyny. She highlights the portrait of an androgyny as not one of "us" but an outsider. Woolf refers to it:

Orlando was ready to tear his hair with vexation that the person was of his own sex, and thus all embraces were out of the question. But the skater came closer. Legs, hands, carriage, were a boy's but no boy had these eyes which looked as if they had been finished from the bottom of the sea [...] she was not a handsbreadth off. She was a woman. (O, 22)

Sasha attracts Orlando with her mysterious gaze. By describing Sasha, the Russian princess, Woolf proposes Oriental mystery. Therefore Orlando observes Sasha exactly as what Said generalizes as western's view regarding Orient, "exotic, mysterious, the profound, the seminal" (1978). Sasha's name is also strange and different, "Princess Marousha Stanilovska Dagmar Natasha Liliana Romanovitch" (O, 22). Moreover, Woolf demonstrates Sasha as an intriguing character, she portrays Sasha and 'Others' as "fulsome flattery," "cunning" [...] and "inveterate liars" (Said, 1978: 38-39). Sasha's image is also represented as unfaithful and degenerate: After stumbling among chests and barrels in the darkness, was made aware by a faint glimmer in a corner they were seated there. For one second, he had a vision of them; saw Sasha seated on the sailor's knee, saw her bend towards him; saw them embrace before the light was blotted out in a red cloud by his rage [...] so he yielded; believed her. (O, 29-30)

It seems there are always something hidden behind Sasha that Orlando cannot understand it. She is always silent. Sasha is described as unconventional and unpredictable. Baradaran Jamili argues, "[t]he comparison between the Muscovite and English temperament, as an English projection rather than reality shows not only the primitive and barbaric manners of the Russian country to the civilized and ordered system of the English life, but also the marginality of the Orient and the centrality of the Occident" (2006). The marginal position of a traveler is also shown in Sasha's character. Therefore, otherness and marginality give Sasha the power to resist the confinements and limitations in the British community because British society cannot tolerate the presence of otherness. Moreover, as a foreign traveler in a marginal position, Sasha is always unusual and strange.

Another figure, who is also linked to the concept of 'Other', is Harry/Harriet's character: "[t]his hare, moreover was six feet high and wore headdress into the bargain of some antiquated kind which made her look still taller [...] she was the Archduchess Harriet Griselda of Finster-Aarhorn nad Scandop-Boom in the Roumanian territory" (O, 67-8). Harriet is also a foreigner and her name is also strange, unconventional and absurd. This idea that Harriet is a lady is rejected by her physical size. Harry/Harriet's figure as a foreigner comes to mind as that is a mixture of a male and female. Woolf shows Harry/Harriet and Sasha as androgynies, and both of them as foreigners and 'Others.' Harry/Harriet, as a traditional male character, is deceived by female Orlando at the game. Consequently, Woolf portrays Harry/Harriet's character as strange, crude and less intelligent figure.

Gender is regarded as another aspect of otherness. Thus, the 'Other' of man is woman. In Victorian era, British women were restricted due to gender division. In this way, Woolf highlights how British national culture often marginalizes British women as 'Other.' In *Orlando* Woolf describes the arrival of the nineteenth century as "a huge blackness sprawled over the British Isles" (O, 38). Orlando decides to return to England, although she is aware of the fact that she will be limited by her female gender role and will be omitted from the public affairs. For instance, when Orlando invites the famous male writers to her home; she is forced to play her serving role and not to participate in their literary debates. Orlando's literary creation is limited by "the spirit of the age" (O, 139). Then the female Orlando experiences the inequality between men and women:

Orlando poured out tea for them all; and sometimes when the weather was fine, she carried them down to the country with her, and feasted them royally in the Round Parlour, which she had hung with their pictures all in a circle, so that Mr. Pope could not say that Mr. Addison came before him, or the other way about. They were very witty, too. (O, 125)

She feels that her intellect is degraded, since women are supposed to be intellectually inferior to men. Woolf reveals the other side of British traditions; the British tradition of literature which excludes women writer's contribution. After returning to England, Orlando abdicated from her own properties:

She was made aware of a succession of Bow Street runners and other grave emissaries from the Law Courts that she was a party to three major suits which had been preferred against her during her absence, as well as innumerable minor litigations, some arising out of, others depending on them. the chief charges against her were (1) that she was dead and therefore could not hold any property whatsoever; (2) that she was a woman which amounts to much the something. (O, 100)

Orlando as a woman remains weak to claim her position and properties in her homeland. Therefore, as a woman and an 'Other,' she is abdicated from her own properties, she challenges the stereotypes of female by requesting her properties but British society observes her as a marginalized figure.

CONCLUSION

The paper, through ethnography, depicts how Woolf flaunts the cultural differences which lead to the process of Otherness. It discusses the way through which she portrays main character's contact with oriental culture which leads to his/her defense of Occidental culture and the way she uses the Oriental culture to define Occidental habits and traditions. Moreover, this paper indicates the relation between Occidental and Oriental cultures which paves the way for understanding the distinctions between "us" and "them." It explains that the Occident and Occidental cultures are associated with civilization whereas the Orient and Oriental cultures are related to savagery.

The paper clarifies that the British history and identity are related to each other and that Woolf through a biography recovers the British national history. It demonstrates the process of Woolf's focus on British blood and race which constitute Britishness of the main character. Indeed, Woolf glorifies British values and traditions and love of Britain in her main character and shows the way he/she is proud of being British, especially a noble British citizen. She indicates that understanding of an Occidental citizen may change, but his/her British identity and love remain constant.

It shows the processes through which the non-Europeans are known as 'Others' and outsiders and they are viewed racially inferior. This paper also illustrates that the British women are viewed as 'Others' by British patriarchal society. It indicates the occidental projections against the Orient and 'Others.' Woolf presents that the natives consider the main character as an 'Other' and different phenomenon. Eventually, Woolf signifies the Orient and 'Others' as uncivilized, deformed, crude and untrustworthy.

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