Visual, Auditory and Sensory Vision in Virginia Woolf's Novels

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2022

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Introduction

Virginia Woolf (1882-1941) published her novels between World War I and II; her first novel, *The Voyage Out* was published in 1915 and the last, *Between the Acts* in 1941. This shows that she wrote her novels when Europe experienced a great transition. The conventional social structure collapsed, and a new structure was expected to replace it. I suppose that people had to change their way of thinking, attitude, and a set of values. In this turbulent age, changes also occurred in the field of art and the movements of Modernism bloomed. People tried to describe the situation and did create out of chaos. As one of the modernists in the U.K., Virginia Woolf contributed to the development of the movement in the field of literature. Although it is difficult for us to characterise the movement in simple words, Ai Tanji finds some common features in this wide range of movement in his book, *The Poetics of Modernism*[1], and emphasises the movement has "decreation" [2] —the concept which includes both the undoing the creation and recreation, and implies one of the processes of recreation not just annihilation.[3] Those who are

called Modernists in any genre tried not to improve the conventional way but to start afresh. To do so, they began with destruction.

So, how did Woolf try to achieve it? One of her distinctive techniques is that she tries to go beyond literature's limitation on time: it is essentially linear. David Lodge says, "Virginia Woolf's abandonment of a linear structure and her plunge into the stream of consciousness can be related readily enough to the avant-garde *Zeitgeist*" (Lodge 227). She does it to "render the complex multiplicity of a mental event" (Lodge 226). In a letter to Virginia Woolf, Jacques Raverat describes this complexity like this; "a pebble cast into a pond"[4]. Woolf replied and confessed that it was her aim to go beyond "the formal railway line of the sentence".[5] As she said, the way of her structure of description looks like that of a pebble casting into a pond. She gives up a clear single plot in a narrative. Besides, we can see Woolf's "modernism" also in the way of word choice; she tends to describe the characters' consciousness with poetic words. Lodge says, "whereas his[James Joyce's] writing aspired to the condition of myth, hers aspired to the condition of Lyrical

poetry"(Lodge 217). Her poetic words help readers have sensory and emotional experiences. In other words, readers cannot stay being just observers of the events but are led into characters' deeper inside and required to be involved in their comprehending processes.

There is another thing we cannot miss in Woolf as a Modernist. That is a mixture of forms of art.[6] One time she uses sounds, the other time she gives a motif of painting; she places artists such as a pianist, a painter, a novelist, and a playwriter in her narratives. It seems that she borrows their structures. This method can be thought of as another expression for decreation. It seems to me that she enjoys it when language encounters other forms of art. When it happens, the texts foreground the limitation of words, which means we see some breakdown of words. And then, Woolf tries to build them up again within the same texts. Sometimes she uses just concepts of each art and tries to make them stand facing each other. How Woolf does it and what happens in the texts are my interests in this thesis.

The reason why she was familiar with other forms of arts than literature and what led her there can be largely found in her

background. It is well-known that she was surrounded by a lot of artists and critics. It is impossible to raise all the names here, but I take some examples; her older sister, Vanessa Bell was a painter, who might have shown Virginia Woolf what a painter was like; Roger Fry might have lectured on the new movement such as (Post)Impressionism in the continent; her great-aunt, Julia Margaret Cameron was a photographer; there is Ethel Smyth, who was a female pioneer in musical composition. Other members of Bloomsbury must have affected her as well. She was easily accessible to a wide range of diverse opinions and could discuss them.

As for the previous critics, James Naremore provides one of the outstanding initial studies on Virginia Woolf. He says, "Everywhere Virginia Woolf's fiction implies her need for a union with what she sometimes called 'reality'" (4). It seems to me that he almost perfectly describes Woolf's novels. I see her longing for "union" or "wholeness" in every works as Naremore does. Perhaps this could be the result of "decreation". However, I would like to more focus on *how* she does it; the structure of the novel, or the relationship between the structure

and the theme of the work. I would like to say that this is "decreation" as it is called. These days, Emma Sutton, Elicia Clements, and Maggie Hum have provided us with suggestive analyses of musical and visual elements from new perspectives. For example, Maggie Hum sees not only photographic features but also something similar technique to cinematography in Woolf in the discourse on visual culture. The authors of *Virginia Woolf and Music* (Adriana Varga ed. 2014) also give me a lot of suggestions. Then, I try to offer my own interpretations of Woolf's major works focusing on her use of other forms of art, expecting to provide slight progress and a different perspective on the study of Virginia Woolf.

When we read Woolf, sometimes we can find both musical and visual elements in one work, but I focus on only one perspective—musical or visual if roughly speaking— to show my interpretation. My analysis is done with the five novels: three major novels— *Mrs. Dalloway* (1925), *To the Lighthouse*(1927), *The Waves* (1931)— and her first work, *The Voyage Out* (1915), and the last, *Between the Acts* (1941). My choice is based on my opinion that her intentions are shown in an obvious way in those

works. I begin with *The Voyage Out*, pointing out Woolf's use of the musical concept and that of written words. It develops into her vision as a novelist. Then, the second chapter deals with *To the Lighthouse*. I focus on Lily Briscoe's repeating phrase, "women can't paint, women can't write", and see the visual structure of the whole novel. The third chapter is about *The Waves*, which focuses on the absent hero, Percival, and the writer, Bernard to show visual images and the limitation of language. In the fourth chapter, I discuss auditory elements in *Between the Acts*. Then, *Mrs. Dalloway* comes as a finalist. In *Mrs. Dalloway*, compared with other works I mention here, no obvious motif of music or visual images is seen. In this sense, this novel is apparently different from other novels I analise in this thesis. However, Clarissa Dalloway creates party space, and her party is equivalent to artistic creations. Her trial is worth comparing with the painter, Lily Briscoe in *To the Lighthouse*. In other words, I think Clarissa's creative activity is linked to "life" most directly because I think that what Clarissa tries to recreate through her party is a society itself, or herself. I see Woolf's ideal life or vision as a human being here. That's why I

put my analysis on *Mrs. Dalloway* at the very last.

Chapter 1

Rachel Vinrace and Piano Playing in *The Voyage Out*

1. Previous criticism

Virginia Woolf's first novel, *The Voyage Out* has a relatively simple plot. The female character Rachel Vinrace, who is portrayed as an innocent and inexperienced young woman, sets off for her first voyage under the guardianship of her aunt, Lucy. During the trip, she interacts with people, and gradually, establishes herself. A young man called Terence Hewet, an aspiring novelist, helps her to build herself and they get engaged. Unfortunately, Rachel catches a severe fever and dies after having been sick in bed for several days. In spite of the simple plot, the novel has potential for multiple interpretations; James Hafley says "nearly every action, nearly every event in *The Voyage Out* is made to be symbolical" (15). Even its title, *The Voyage Out*, seems to have several meanings; Woolf's 'voyage out' as a novelist; that of women leaving home to go into society, etc. As for her style, James Naremore notes that the value of the novel is partly in the style itself though some criticise it for its

mixture of conventional and modern style: “her first novel not only presents her major themes but is also in some ways highly characteristic of her style-this despite the many so-called conventional techniques she utilized” (9). For example, Naremore points out that we can see Woolf’s idea of “reality” in Rachel’s words; “ Reality dwelling in what one saw and felt, but did not talk about, one could accept a system in which things went round and round quite satisfactorily to other people, without often troubling to think about it, except as something superficially strange” (*Voyage Out* 35). Rachel expresses a crucial point of view here, since "reality" for Woolf is not in exterior occurrences but in inner experience/events. Above all, Woolf’s first novel is as a basis for study of the later novels.

According to Naremore, to show the idea of reality, Woolf gets characters into “sleepy”, “dreamy” or “hypnotic” states and provides us with chains of ideas. He notes that when Woolf portrays inner events, she uses poetic expressions to show the rise of emotion. Moreover, “the more feminine impulse toward being” (Naremore 31) dominates this inner world, and this world is at the opposite to manners, politics, and reason, where

masculinity dominates. I do not deny Naremore's idea but when we focus on Rachel Vinrace, it seems that her "reality" is to do with her piano playing (There are many scenes of her playing the piano.) Naremore also compares Woolf with Joyce, saying that for Woolf "words seem superfluous, sometimes false to the experience of something that is non-verbal" (37) while Joyce's "meaning of experience is often related to encounters with words"(37). Nevertheless, Naremore does not relate Rachel's preference for non-verbal language to her piano playing which is a non-verbal art. I would like to connect them and to reread the novel focusing on Rachel as a female pianist.

Since Naremore, Emma Sutton, and one of her followers, Elicia Clements, for instance, have provided further research which focuses on Rachel Vinrace as an amateur pianist, and they are suggestive. Sutton addresses the way in which fiction is 'musicalized', finding elements, from topics to its composition of fiction, related to music—she refers to similarities to one particular opera in this case. Clements focuses more on an individual performer compared with a composer, whose status seems higher than that of those who play his music. Both critics

develop their discussions by taking into account Rachel's gender. Unlike Naremore, who says "the novel is not, therefore, simply about Rachel Vinrace" (55), this paper goes along with Sutton and Clements to highlight mainly Rachel. That is, I will address how Woolf tries to embody her vision through Rachel Vinrace, who expresses herself through piano playing.

2, Women and the Piano

It is not coincidental that Woolf gives Rachel skill at the piano. First, I would like to overview the historical facts about women and music, especially piano playing, from the Victorian era and the 20th century in the U.K. Girls at that time were given piano lessons as a matter of policy; they received lessons on piano for political matters. According to Phyllis Weliver, whose research is based on a wide range of publications such as newspapers and magazines, showing a daughter's piano playing skills in public proved that a family could afford to give her a musical education. Naturally, it could also prove useful in acquiring a suitable husband. Piano playing was a practical tool for giving women an advantage in the marriage market.

Therefore, once a young woman succeeded in getting a husband, she stopped playing, since she was required to concentrate on running a household. Most women played the piano to show how presentable they were in the marriage market; people did not expect them to become professionals.

In *The Voyage Out,* Terence Hewet, who has no musical background, says "My mother thought music wasn't manly for boys; she wanted me to kill rats and birds" (253). This shows that Terence is from a family sharing the gender politics of the ordinary middle class. The sentences such as "Rachel, being musical, was allowed to learn nothing but music" (32), or "Rachel stated that she had never been properly educated; played the piano" (159) show that education for Rachel has also been characteristic of times. Contrary to boys like Terence and St. John Hirst, who were at Cambridge University, girls were given a musical education.

Although Rachel—a middle-class girl— and piano are well matched in terms of gender politics, playing the piano has greater meaning to her. Her skill at the piano is described like this:

> Finding her teachers inadequate, she had practically taught herself. At the age of twenty-four she knew as much about music as most people do when they are thirty; and could play as well as nature allowed her to, which as became daily more obvious, was a really generous allowance. (32)

Her knowledge and skills are more than enough to prove her presentability to prospective bridegrooms. She prefers difficult music like Bach, Beethoven, and Mozart. She especially likes piano sonatas, but Beethoven's latter sonatas require a lot of skills of a player. In fact, Op.111 has a fugue-like feature. Sutton (*Virginia Woolf* 59-62) expresses Rachel's preference as "too much Beethoven" and notes that young women are not allowed to play Beethoven's later sonatas because they were regarded as masculine pieces of music;—which means powerful and strong. As Sutton suggests, Rachel's preference in repertory represents her unconscious rebelliousness towards society. Similarly, Clements thinks that Rachel's playing habits "often signify resistance to socially condoned modes of

behaviour" (Clements 158). She points out the scene when Rachel plays and feels that "up and up the steep spiral of a very late Beethoven sonata she climbed, like a person ascending a ruined staircase" (*VO* 339) as an echo of women's actual status in society.

Rachel does not completely follow current ideas about behaviour; she resists the "femininity" that society demands of women. Instead, she prefers to be herself.

> Absorbed by her music, she accepted her lot very complacently, blazing into indignation perhaps once a fortnight, and subsiding as she subsided now. Inextricably mixed in dreamy confusion, her mind seemed to enter into communion, to be delightfully expanded and combined with the spirit of the whitish boards on deck, with the spirit of the sea, with the spirit of Beethoven Op,112, even with the spirit of poor William Cowper there at Olney. (35)

When playing the piano, she loses in meditation. Her subconscious consideration flows without remaining on one topic.

It flows from Beethoven, the composer of the music she is playing, to William Cowper[1], a poet whom she reads. Later in 1920, Virginia Woolf tries to alter the number of Beethoven's sonata Op.112 to Op.111.[2] It seems that Woolf wants to be more accurate about Rachel's playing. Beethoven's Op. 112 is a cantata based on his interpretation of Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's "Calm at Sea" and " Prosperous Voyage". The image of voyage and sea corresponds with Rachel's voyage. On the other hand, Op.111 is Beethoven's last piano sonata. This alternation confuses me since it can be thought that the composer must have composed these two pieces in different states of mind. However, the fact is that we can receive power from both and they both express the composer's strong spirit. (He was completely deaf when he made these tunes.) As for William Cowper, he was a tragic figure. Lorna Sage notes that "his life was subject to bouts of suicidal madness"[3]. Rachel sympathises with these artists. It seems that she makes her spirit powerful by playing the piano and notably, though, the composer and the poet are both men.

In another scene, Rachel willingly stays by herself instead of joining her fellow passengers chatting. She "slammed the door of her room, and pulled out her music" (58):

> In three minutes she was deep in a very difficult, very classical fugue in A, and over her face came a queer remote impersonal expression of complete absorption and anxious satisfaction. (58)

Rachel concentrates on her music too much to hear a knock at the door when Mrs. Dalloway comes in. However, once she notices Mrs. Dalloway's existence beside her, "The shape of the Bach fugue crashed to the ground" (59) while Mrs. Dalloway says "'Don't let me interrupt'"(59) soon after her entering. Rachel's music is a personal experience, and she is very content with making her own music with piano. The performance is on her own. When Rachel is with Terence in the later scene, she says to Terence, "'I can't play a note because of you in the room interrupting me every other second'"(340) showing her irritation. Rachel plays the piano to shut herself up in her thoughts and is

reluctant to share her personal space with other people. As I have mentioned before, music and women are generally linked in the discourse of social roles given to women. Playing the piano is supposed to represent women's domesticity. However, in the case of Rachel, music is a tool she uses to approach her own interiority, not a tool for appealing to the outer world. Rachel tries to create a sanctuary, a private space, through playing the piano.

3, Language vs Music

As Terence and Rachel get closer, they often exchange ideas about art—especially music and the novel.

> 'You write novels?' she asked.
>
> For the moment he could not think about what he was saying. He was overcome with the desire to hold her in his arms.
>
> 'Oh yes,' he said. 'That is, I want to write them.'
>
> She would not take her large grey eyes off his face.

> ‘Novels,’ she repeated. ‘Why do you write novels? You ought to write music. Music, you see’— she shifted her eyes, and became less desirable as her brain began to work, inflicting a certain change upon her face— ‘music goes straight for things. It says all there is to say at once. With writing it seems to me there’s so much’—she paused for an expression, and rubbed her fingers in the earth – 'scratching on the match-box. Most of the time when I was reading Gibbon this afternoon I was horribly, oh infernally, damnably bored!’ (239) (Underlining mine)

Rachel talks about verbal expression versus non-verbal expression. For Rachel, music directly and instantly appeals to her heart while writing requires her to read a lot of words to grasp the ideas. That is why Rachel prefers music to language. In addition to her preference, her practical ability is too specific to music. Rachel is good at music, but not enough at language. Terence comments on her letter written to one of her friends, “correct, but not very vivid, are they?” (340). It seems that

her vocabulary is not as rich as Terence. Another example is shown when Terence reads Milton on a hot day.

> Many books had been tried and then let fall, and now Terence was reading Milton aloud, because he said the words of Milton had substance and shape, so that it was not necessary to understand what he was saying; one could merely listen to his words; one could almost handle them. (380) (Underlining mine)

Terence is reading Milton's *Comus* here. Whether his opinion is reasonable or not, Terence thinks that "the words of Milton had substance and shape", which means that Milton does not require people to examine carefully to catch the meaning. Unfortunately, Rachel's reaction is not what Terence expects.

> The words, despite what Terence had said, seemed to be laden with meaning, and perhaps it was for this reason that it was painful to listen to them; they sounded strange; they meant different things from what they usually meant.

> Rachel at any rate could not keep her attention fixed upon them,.... (380)

Rachel does not understand Milton in the same of Terence. She catches the sounds of words, not the meanings. Right after this scene, Rachel gets a terrible headache. We can see that preference and cognition systems are different for Rachel and Terence here, and it foregrounds a structure hidden in music and written words. Now let's see how music and written words are different. Here is Phyllis Weliver's chart (Weliver 101).

Music	Written Word
Body	Mind/Name
Feminine	Masculine
Fluid/Mutable	Solid /Concrete
Unconscious	Conscious

I need to emphasise that this chart designed to show the nature of music and written words (and of course, some items overlap).

We should not use this chart to describe the nature of genders without great care. However, with a bit boldness, let's see how we can apply this chart to *The Voyage Out*. For example, "unconscious" applied to "music" is shown in Rachel being absorbed in thoughts when playing the piano. "Clarity" and "concrete" applied to "the written word" are shown in Terence's comment on her letter. In *The Voyage Out*, the characteristics of music are represented in the female character, Rachel, a pianist; and the characteristics of the written word are represented in the male, Terence, a novelist. How about "feminine" and "masculine"? Is it appropriate to describe Rachel as a feminine person? If we boldly define "feminine" as weak (definitely we cannot define it with this simple word), it is true that her environment makes Rachel "feminine" in some way. For instance, she is under the guardianship of her aunt, and she is inexperienced. However, I think the femininity of her music is doubtful. This is worth discussing.

Then, how do they express their own arts? Terence talks about his novel like this:

> ‘What I want to do in writing novels is very much what you want to do when you play the piano, I expect,’ he began, turning and speaking over his shoulder. ‘We want to find out what’s behind things, don’t we? –Look at the lights down there,’ he continued, ‘scattered about anyhow. Things I feel come to me like lights… I want to combine them… Have you ever seen fireworks that make figures? … I want to make figures…Is that what you want to do?’ (252-253)

He tries to describe hidden things in people in novels. He sees lights there and gathers them like the shape of fireworks. Woolf uses the word “figures” to describe Terence’s novel. On the other hand, after Rachel declares that “Much is different” (253) when she plays the piano, she explains her music using a stick. She draws “figures in the thin white dust to explain how Bach wrote his figures” (253). We see Woolf’s word-play here. Both arts –music and the novel—consist of figures, but while figures in a novel show some shapes, a musical figure means a short succession of notes. The musical figure includes

movements, a sequence, while fireworks are grasped as solid shapes even if they disappear instantly. Here, we can apply Weliver's chart again; music is fluid and the written word is solid. There is another illustrative scene;

> ‘Does it ever seem to you, Terence, that the world is composed entirely of vast blocks of matter, and that we're nothing but patches of light' she looked at the soft spots of sun waving over the carpet and up the wall—'like that?'
>
> 'No,' said Terence, 'I feel solid; immensely solid; the legs of my chair might be rooted in the bowels of the earth. (341)

Terence considers himself a solid substance. On the other hand, Rachel considers herself patches of light. This reminds us that Terence describes his novel as combined lights, fireworks. In short, we see the direct opposition in their understanding of themselves and their own art. Then, is Rachel's piano supposed to be the opposite of light? Here is a scene in which Rachel plays the piano;

> She slammed the door of her room and pulled out her music. It was all old music—Bach and Beethoven, Mozart, and Purcell—the pages yellow, the engraving rough to the finger. In three minutes she was deep in a very difficult, very classical figure in A, and over her face came a queer remote impersonal expression of complete absorption and anxious satisfaction. now she stumbled; now she faltered and had to play the same bar twice over; from which rose a shape, a building. She was so far absorbed in this work, for it was really difficult to find how all these sounds should stand together, and drew upon the whole of her faculties, that she never heard a knock at the door. (58)

When Rachel is alone and the music is being well played, the text tends to describe it as if something solid was being built; "[there] rose a shape, a building". Emphasis is laid on her representation of the powerful score (she plays Beethoven and Bach, for example) not on the flow of sound. As I have mentioned before, Rachel plays for herself, not for others, and

when she plays for others, her music is not “built”. In another scene, Rachel plays music for people dancing, but we do not read expressions of plasticity such as “build” or “shape” in the text. That music doesn’t count as art for Rachel. I don’t suppose Woolf cares what tunes Rachel plays here. But after the dancing finishes, when she is playing for herself again, “shape” returns:

> As they sat and listened, their nerves were quietened; the heat and soreness of their lips, the result of incessant talking and laughing, was smoothed away. They sat very still as if they saw a building with spaces and columns succeeding each other rising in the empty space. (187)

Here, the music has the image of a building. Woolf plants images of something solid and concrete in Rachel's music. In fact the vocabulary is not really tangible, but the image is clear and solid. In this sense, it seems to me that the concept of Rachel’s music has certainty – solidity. Music is often supposed to be temporal and fluid, but Rachel wants it to become solid since she considers her existence to be unstable, “patches

of light" (341). Rachel is able to touch something strong while playing the piano. This is why Woolf uses Beethoven. Terence does not need to gain solidness through his art because his existence as a man is already established. He asks, rather, for lights that easily fade. Even if Terrence's firework-like novel has a concrete shape, he is attracted by people's fleeting thoughts. So, although Woolf recognises the ordinary concepts of music and written words, she tries to mingle them so that she makes Rachel's lone art more powerful.

4. Silence and marriage

Rachel and Terence get engaged. However, they become aware of the gap between them, and finally Rachel says to Terence " Let's break it off".

> " Let's break it off"
>
> The words did more to unite them than any amount of argument. As if they stood on the edge of a precipice they clung together. They knew that they could not separate; painful and terrible it might be, but they were joined for

> ever. They lapsed into silence, and after a time crept together in silence. Merely to be so close soothed them, and sitting side by side the divisions disappeared, and it seemed as if the world were once more solid and entire, and as if in some strange way, they had grown larger and stronger. (353)

Paradoxically, the words “Let’s break it off” unite them more srtrongly. And after that, silence comes. The silence here has nothing negative in it. It implies a peaceful, calm, satisfied state of mind. This silence seems more important than other silent scenes because this is the moment Rachel understands love in the true sense. For example, in the picnic scene, the text says, “the words of the others seemed to curl up and vanish as the ashes of burnt paper, and left them sitting perfectly silent at the bottom of the world” (322), but at this time, Rachel and Terence had been caught in a fantastic and romantic mood. The silence after she says “Let’s break it off” is much more powerful and is based on a deep understanding.

There is one more paradox. Rachel gets to know that she has become independent when she feels a pleasing sense of unity with Terrence.

> ... although she was going to marry him and to live with him for thirty, or forty, or fifty years, and to quarrel, and to be so close to him, she was independent of him; she was independent of everything else. Nevertheless, as St John said, it was love that made her understand this, for she had never felt this independence, this calm, and this certainty until she fell in love with him, and perhaps this too was love. She wanted nothing else. (368)

She recognises that they are different but can understand each other. This experience helps her to understand that she does not need to depend on Terence. She is not subordinate to Terence, the male being. Before, she had been seeking independence, calmness, and certainty. She tries to get them through the piano. It seems to me that her choice of music and concentrated attitude proves she confronts other people. She also thinks she

can be independent only when she is playing for herself. In short, her musical art is aimed toward herself, not toward the outside world.

According to Weliver, music had also been providing women with an opportunity to go into society. She suggests that musicians and women in the patriarchal society are both placed in the marginal position, so that they were well matched. Bing a musician may provide a woman with cover when she comes out to more public occasions than a private party. The cover might turn men's eyes from the powerful will that women possess under the surface. Women could *use* gender politics. However, Rachel's method is different. Her use of music looks like a shield—a shield to protect herself and preserve her inner independence from society. However, after she knows true love, she does not need a shield anymore. After that, the narrative does not mention Rachel's playing any more, and finally, she dies. It can be said that her playing habit has been replaced by love. What will become of the way she expresses herself?

5. Conclusion

Emma Sutton suggests similarities between *The Voyage Out* and Wagner's opera, *Tristan und Isolde*.[4] In *Tristan und Isolde*, the couple tries to realize their love through death but only Tristan dies. Isolde gets shocked by his death and loses her mind. On the other hand, in *The Voyage Out*, Terence thinks that he is achieving their unity when Rachel becomes silent and dies. In both stories, the two couples do not manage to come together in life. Sutton thinks that an element of tragedy in both stories lays in the female characters, and also says that Woolf suggests that "sexual desire threatens the autonomy of the female characters, for whom it has potentially fatal consequences" (Sutton, *Virginia* 31). I cannot decide whether Sutton wants to imply that Woolf is being ironical here, but if not, the ending of *The Voyage Out* is rather conventional and too derivative. The only hope, Sutton mentions, is that in *The Voyage Out*, it is the female character who dies, which leads the male to yearn for, or rather admire the female. Nevertheless, Terence's survival might symbolize the superiority of language—a verbal art— to music—a non-verbal art even if Terence feels unity with Rachel after her death, and he understands the importance of

unexpressed and undermined truth in people. The death of Rachel as a musician is rather uncomfortable but is evidence of Woolf's clumsiness as a novice writer.

It was fifteen years after she published *The Voyage Out* that she wrote her essay, "Women and Fiction"(1929)[5]. There she says, "her[a woman writer's] attention is being directed away from the personal centre which engaged it exclusively in the past to the impersonal, and her novels naturally become more critical of society, and less analytical of individual lives"(GR 83). Since when women writers began to publish their writings, their main topic had been limited to things happening around the home. Woolf claims that in the earlier stages, women aimed at describing their lives from their perspective, which was different from that of their male counterparts. Women needed stories for women by women. Once this initial purpose had been achieved and they could place themselves in society as writers, then, they began to look outside of the house. Their topic shifted to bigger, more impersonal social matters, or human life.

The development of women writers, as seen by Woolf may be parallel to the experiences of Rachel Vinrace as a pianist

although she is not a professional. Rachel plays the piano for the sake of it. In her playing, the music is built up as if solid materials were being piled up into a building. At such moments, she unconsciously creates art on her own by bringing her spirit into harmony with that of the composers. After she gets together with Terence, she comes to recognise her existence in another person. Like the early women writers, Rachel finds her place in another person. I feel that Rachel should have gone forward to achieve what to her would have been a new form of art beyond herself as an individual. However, it seems that Woolf didn't know how to do this when she wrote *The Voyage Out*. She tried to find a way through music because she thought that music, especially the music of powerful composers, would help her to break away from traditional literature. However, unfortunately, she failed to give Rachel a new vision. Rachel's art remains within herself due to her death even if it gains a male sort of power. As a result, her art just allows her (or the readers) to discover and build herself through using musical concepts. Woolf buries Rachel's art in order to develop Woolf's art. It

would take several years for her to show us a clear vision as a female writer.

Chapter 2

Repetition in Virginia Woolf's *To the Lighthouse*

1. Her Intention to Create

Virginia Woolf got the inspiration for *To the Lighthouse* (1927) as her new novel in 1925 and wrote in her diary:

> "I have an idea that I will invent a new name for my books to supplant "novel". A new—by Virginia Woolf. But what? Elegy?" (Diary 34)

From this piece of the diary, we see her intention, and that she was looking for something new beyond the 'novel', though this work is still within the genre. She directly reveals her thoughts in her critique of Elizabeth Browning's *Aurora Leigh* (1856), for example.[1] In the critique, while giving the poem some praise, she argues that it is impossible, now, in the early 20th century, to describe reality in this format. I guess that Woolf thought that the society had become more complicated than in the previous era, which means it was difficult to show the life of

human beings through describing just the feelings of individuals like Romanticism. Woolf thought that the novel was the better form to describe life in her own time, but at the same time, she was exploring a new, alternative 'form' and 'structure' for the novel.

We can see, through her drafts of her work that her search for a new kind of work includes both excitement and anxiety. In her draft, Woolf drew a shape like a capital 'H'[2] and wrote the phrase -- "Two blocks joined by a corridor"-- beside the shape. (She drew two lines between the two squares.) This 'H' shape, which is now famous among critics, shows the structure of this novel. The horizontal lines, which represent the second chapter, "Time Passes", links the first chapter "The Window" and the third chapter "The Lighthouse", which are the main parts of the narrative. In short, Woolf 'visualizes' the structure of the narrative as 'H'.

With a technically visualized structure, the novel includes multiple themes such as an elegy for Woolf's mother and father, life and death, man and woman, and marriage. She noted her feeling in her diary on July 20th in 1925; "I think, though, that

when I begin it I shall enrich it in all sorts of ways; thicken it; give it branches & roots which I do not perceive now."(Diary 36). It seems that even to the author, the final vision did not occur easily due to its branched perspective. Jane Goldman, for instance, describes *To the Lighthouse* as "a printed, verbal 'mosaic of vision'" (36). The complicated narrative is, at last, consolidated in Lily Briscoe's monologue when she finishes her painting in a highly emotional climax.

> With a sudden intensity, as if she saw clear for a second, she drew a line there, in the centre. It was done; it was finished. Yes, she thought, laying down her brush in extreme fatigue, I have had my vision. (226)

Within the 'visualised' structure, a 'visual' artist paints her work, and the narrative is parallel to the author's creation of the novel. So, this novel shows how familiar Woolf was with the visual arts. (In fact her sister Vanessa Bell and other artists in Bloomsbury Group affected her directly.)

What I focus on in this chapter is the repetition of phrases

and its relationship with her visual sense. In *To the Lighthouse,* you can see various kinds repetitions. Of course, repetitions are not seen only in this novel of Woolf's. In her works, especially after *Jacob's Room*(1922), she uses repetition of words, phrases and scenes as a motif, and sometimes it works like déjà vu creating a stronger impression in readers. My focus here is the phrase, "Women can't write, women can't paint" repeated in Lily Briscoe's mind. J. Hillis Miller offered a tough new interpretation in *Fiction and Repetition* (1982), in which he claims that the important part of the whole narrative is based on repetition. Repetition, for him, includes mimicry/copying, likeness, and figure/metaphor, but my focus is just the simple phrase "Women can't write, women can't paint" and how the phrase builds the novel.

2. The meaning of "Women can't write, women can't paint"

"Women can't write, women can't paint" is what Mr. Tansley, who is portrayed as a dried-up intellectual, tells Lily at one point in *To the Lighthouse*. Mr. Tansley is selfish as well, but Lily thinks of him as a person whom she cannot reject completely.

On the other hand, Mrs. Ramsay thinks he is lonely and deserve her sympathy. The text does not describe the scene where Mr. Tansley applies that phrase to Lily, but Lily remembers it again and again in her mind.

What message does this phrase deliver? First, it represents the social attitude to women who has been shut in home as an so-called angel in the house. Some influential persons like Arthur Schopenhauer in the 18th century, or John Ruskin in the 19th also made some statements about 'women'. For example, Schopenhauer, who influenced the arts in the 19th and 20th centuries, stated in "On Women"; "Generally, women don't love any art nor understand it, and they have no special ability".[3] He also said "Women haven't accomplished anything unique" in the art field. In Mr. Tansley's words, we see this sort of conventional, discriminatory view of gender. As Gabrielle McIntire says, the phrase is "like a haunting version of the taunt that Woolf – and women all over the world—had heard through her life" (81), Woolf herself was haunted by the phrase. In fact, in a lecture Woolf mentions that she and most women are haunted by "the ghost of an angel in the house".[4] No matter whether the

phrase comes from men or women themselves, it was derived from gender politics and it claims to show that women's limitation in the art field. It is not an exaggeration to think that Virginia Woolf, who cared about her identity as both a woman and a writer, an artist, repeats the phrase in the narrative to react the situation. However, the phrase does not always have the same meaning; Woolf develops the meaning and inserts a new idea into each repetition. In short, it has multiple layered metaphorical meanings. The following is my analysis of the meanings of each repetition.

3-1. Chapter 1: Insecurity

The text first mentions the phrase "women can't paint, women can't write" when Mrs. Ramsay reads a nursery tale to her son, James, while Lily Briscoe is painting a picture of them. Lily is talking with Mr. Banks and starts to tidy up her painting tools. She thinks that she is done with the painting and looks at the outcome.

> She could have wept. It was bad, it was infinitely bad! She could have done it differently of course; the colour could have been thinned and faded; the shapes etherealized; that was how Paunceforte would have seen it. But then she did not see it like that. She saw the colour burning on a framework of steel; the light of a butterfly's wing lying upon the arches of a cathedral. Of all that only a few random marks scrawled upon the canvas remained. And it would never be hung even, and there was Mr. Tansley whispering in her ear, "Women can't paint, women can't write..." (54, underlining mine)

She realises that the outcome is not satisfactory and feels disappointed. Then, "Women can't paint, women can't write" comes to her mind linking a negative feeling as if her inability was absolute. Before I discuss the reason why she underestimates her work so much, I would like to see what kind of picture she is trying to paint. "She saw the colour burning on a framework of steel" shows that her picture has some features of (post)impressionism such as clear lines and burning colours

like those in Cézanne's paintings.[5] We, the readers, cannot see her painting directly in detail, but we know that there is a triangular purple shape which represents the mother and the son on the canvas. (*To the Lighthouse* 58-59) This way of drawing is the result of Lily's trying to capture her impressions of the mother and son. However, Lily is disappointed because she cannot express her impressions in the way she wants. The phrase, "Women can't paint, women can't write" reflects her despair and leads her to feel a sense of failure. Lily's failure or inability is strongly connected to her gender here and it seems to her that she will never succeed as she cannot escape from her own gender.

3—2. Struggling for self-establishment

The phrase comes back into Lily's mind again when the guests gather at the dinner table at the Ramsays. The participants inwardly judge each other's personalities or behaviour towards one another. Lily Briscoe observes Mrs. Ramsay, the hostess, Mr. Banks, and Mr. Tansley, while Mr. Tansley looks at women.

> He[Tansley] was really, Lily Briscoe thought, in spite of his eyes, the most uncharming human being she had ever met. Then why did she mind what he said? Women can't write, women can't paint – what did that matter coming from him, since clearly it was not true to him but for some reason helpful to him, and that was why he said it? Why did her whole being bow, like corn under a wind, and erect itself again from this abasement only with a great and rather painful effort? (94)

Lily tries to convince herself not to care about that phrase too much. In her theory, Tansley is so unattractive that there is no worrying about the phrase. Besides, she also thinks that he does not mean it. Because of this she tries to distract herself from the negative message. And then,

> She must make it once more. There's the sprig on the table-cloth: there's my painting: I must move the tree to the middle; that matters – nothing else. Could she not hold fast to that, she asked herself, and not lose her temper,

and not argue; and if she wanted a little revenge take it by laughing at him? (94)

With some struggles, she tries to bring back her focus to her painting. In contrast to the previous despairing part, her thought is likely to focus more on the painting itself, not the feeling. She thinks of a practical solution to the work; thinking of moving the tree to the middle. The succession of her thoughts here means that Tansley's "women can't paint, women can't write" helps her to ignore other people's opinion and to focus on herself.

3-3. Resistance

The phrase comes again in the first chapter.

> But, she thought, screwing up her Chinese eyes, and remembering how he sneered at women, 'can't paint, can't write', why should I help him to relieve himself? (99)

Here, her resistant reaction does not go toward herself, but

toward all the men. Before this scene, Lily was observing people at the table, especially Tansley. He wants to join the conversation about fishermen. Although Lily notices what he wants, she doesn't assist him to join the conversation. It is because she is still feeling resentful about his utterance, "women can't paint, women can't write". Here, Lily sees Tansley as an enemy-like man who doesn't respect women. The phrase connects to Tansley's personality and identity, leading Lily to have an opinion—a resistant feeling— towards men and the patriarchal society.

Now, a gap between genders is being engraved on her mind because of the phrase; "women can't paint, women can't write". And in fact, the binary opposition is also shown in Lily's painting. As I noted before, Mrs. Ramsay and her son are the models for Lily's painting. They are made into a shape, the purple triangle on the canvas. When she remembers the painting at the dinner table with the other guests, a new idea suddenly arises; "In a flash she saw her picture, and thought, Yes, I shall put the tree further in the middle then I shall avoid that awkward space" (92). She thinks that the problem is "that awkward space"

and picks up the salt cellar and puts it on the floral-patterned tablecloth. We, the readers have no idea exactly where the tree is placed on the canvas, why she makes the models into purple shape. However, the space she points out implies that two things are opposed, with the space between them. In the narrative, we can also see the binary opposition in Mrs. Ramsay and Mr. Ramsay. It seems that there is some relationship between the couple and the drawing. Can we see them parallel? I analyse the portrait of Mr. and Mrs. Ramsay as following.

Mrs. Ramsay is the person who dominates the first chapter in the narrative, and is the focal point there. Mrs. Ramsay embodies an ideal woman, a mother of the kind that Victorian society required in women. She reads books to her little son James, sews socks for a lighthouse keeper, doesn't allow anything to go wrong at the table. She tries to meet her husband's requirements, believing any women can become happy with marriage, and she even meddles in young people's marriages (sometimes they are not young). Her behaviour and personality are the reason why Mr. Banks admires Mrs. Ramsay. Mr. Banks can be thought of as a representative of ordinary men. Lily,

who has resistant feelings about men, loves Mrs. Ramsay as if she were her real mother. On the other hand, Mr. Ramsay is the opposite to Mrs. Ramsay. He tends to destroy things. One day, he says to his own son, who is looking forward to going to the lighthouse, “it won’t be fine” (8) and makes the son disappointed. The other older children have also less relationship with their father than with their mother. Lily can’t paint in front of Mr. Ramsay because his existence itself has some negative pressure on her. Her problems in the painting and in reality are parallel, which means there is a binary opposition and some space exists between two things in both. At this moment, she thinks the composition of the painting can solve her problem.

4-1. In the third chapter: Anxiety

After the second chapter, “Time Passes”, which plays a role as a bridge, the phrase returns in the third chapter. The third chapter focuses on half a day, ten years later than the first chapter. We know from the second chapter that three of the Ramsays; Mrs. Ramsay, her son Andrew and daughter Prue are

already dead. Lily is invited to the Ramsays' summer house and remembers her unfinished painting. Then she thinks of finishing it this time. The family is out on a mission which they had not finished ten years earlier to go to the lighthouse.

Now let's see Lily's painting progress here. After some hesitation, she finally draws some brown lines with her brush on the completely empty canvas. However, she is happy with a space made by two brown lines. Staring at the space, she falls into deep thought, thinking about the act of painting itself.

> Here she was again, she thought, stepping back to look at it, drawn out of gossip, out of living, out of community with people into the presence of this formidable ancient enemy of hers – this other thing, this truth, this reality, which suddenly laid hands on her, emerged stark at the back of appearances and commanded her attention. she was half unwilling, half reluctant....; but this form, were it only the shape of a white lamp-shade looming on wicker table, roused one to perpetual combat, challenged one to a fight in which one was bound to be worsted. (172-173)

Here, her problem is that she cannot deal with the difference between painting and real life; “Always (it was in her nature, or in her sex, she did not know which) before exchanged the fluidity of life for the concentration of painting she had a few moments of nakedness when she seemed like an unborn soul” (173). To her, life is fluid compared with her concentration in painting. Why does she think of painting as concentrated? It is because her “reality” exists in painting, which means she looks inside through painting, or in other words, she considers things deeply while painting. Sometimes, “reality” seems different from what people see in the visible world. At the same time, for her, to see the “reality” and express it is a kind of fighting, in which she knows she will fail after a struggle. The problem on the space on the canvas representing the gap between genders is also replaced with the space between life and art. We can see her struggling with both of them here.

In this inner situation, then, her thoughts go deeper inside, requesting an answer to the question why she is stuck in this suffering of creation. This is happening with the phrase;

> [...], and she heard some voice saying she couldn't paint, saying she couldn't create, as if she were caught up in one of those habitual currents which after a certain time experience forms in the mind, so that one repeats words without being aware any longer who originally spoke them. (173)

Before, "women can't paint, women can't write" is closely connected to one person, Tansley, or to men in general. However, the phrase no longer suggests any one specific, but it comes to be generalised and work just as a symbol. "Can't paint, can't create" foregrounds her anxiety by repeating time and again and terrifies her position as an artist.

4-2. Beyond Anxiety

Right after the fourth repetition, the fifth appears;

> "Can't paint, can't write, she murmured monotonously, anxiously considering what her plan of attack should be."

(173)

It is her way of saying the phrase that I want to note first; “She *murmured monotonously*”. What does murmuring negative wards again and again do to one’s mind? At the previous part, the phrase went toward herself and it suffered her. And now, she tries to spew out the phrase from inside to get through her strong anxiety. That is, she tries to change its direction from inside to outside and deny her inability to paint. Moreover, by murmuring the phrase, the original negative meaning which is a kind of insult to women seems to lose its force. She tries to change the negative phrase into energy which will move her paint brush. The “plan of attack” represents her next brushstroke on the canvas. However, indirectly, her next brushstroke should be also a real “attack” on an invisible enemy, men. She needs to prove that she “can” make it. It is interesting that Lily never argues with Tansley over the phrase. Instead, her counterattack is made through the act of painting. Her act of painting will prove that women “can” paint and denies that women “can’t paint”.

4-3. Dissolution

Finally, unconsciously, she suddenly grasps the sense of life and painting at the same time and this is implied in her brushstrokes, even though it remains too ambiguous to put into clear language.

> Then, as if some juice necessary for the lubrication of her faculties were spontaneously squirted, she began precariously dipping among the blues and ambers, moving her brush hither and thither, but it was now heavier and went slower, as if it had fallen in with some rhythm which was dictated to her(she kept looking at the hedge, at the canvas) by what she saw, so that while her hand quivered with life, this rhythm was strong enough to bear along with it on its current. (173 -174)

Her hand shakes with the sense of the strength of her own life and the brush in her hand seems to be moving of its own will. Before, the world was divided into two, “the fluidity of life” and

“the concentration of painting”, but now, she is feeling her life through the brushstrokes. This is the moment the two worlds are dissolved into one. Through her picture on the canvas, she captures life and art simultaneously, and surprisingly, they are going forward together, she understands. Her life is no longer just fluid stuff, it is now concentrated at the same time. It is because if she can continue making strokes, it will be a rhythm fit to the rhythm of life. If the life flows with some kind of rhythm, and if it is comfortable, no one rejects the flow of such rhythm. Now Lily experiences such a comfortable rhythm, though only in her mind. All the impression of the outer world disappears; “Certainly, she was losing consciousness of outer things, and her name and her personality and her appearance”(174), meaning the boundary between the physical and nonphysical world is gone. She just sees the whole of life as one. Next, individuality comes up again, but it is just conceptual or idealistic, not solid stuff; “her mind kept throwing up from its depth, scenes, and names, and sayings, and memories and ideas, like a fountain”(174). Her focus is not placed on the physical stuffs but on impressions, just like her style of

painting; She “modelled it with greens and blues”(174) like a (post)impressionist painting.

Interestingly, her stream of consciousness can be said to flow with her feeling toward the phrase by Tansley: “women can’t paint, women can’t write”. As I mentioned in section 4-1, that phrase shows her anxiety and works like a symbol without reminding her of Tansley. Then in section 4-2, the negative meaning is fading. In section 4-3, here:

> Charles Tansley used to say that, she remembered, <u>women can’t paint, can’t write</u>. Coming up behind her he had stood close beside her, a thing she hated, as she painted here on this very spot. (174)

Again, the phrase gets her go back to Tansley but in another way. With that phrase, she remembers the moments she spent with others, including Tansley, on the beach. What I want to emphasise here is how she refers to Tansley. Before, Lily (or the text) describes Chales Tansley as just Tansley or Chales Tansley, but after the above quotation, the way he is referred to

suddenly changes. Lily comes to call him just “Charles”, his first name. Although she still has a a feeing of disgust about Tansley’s whispering by her ear, it seems that she feels closer toward Tansley and softens her attitude. This change shows that she has resolved her aggressive attitude. In short, she can proceed to the next phase.

It is to Mrs. Ramsay that Lily owes her new attitude. In fact, in Lily’s memory of the beach scene, Mrs. Ramsay was there and played an important part. Lily remembers;

> But what a power was in the human soul! she thought. That woman sitting there, writing under the rock resolved everything into simplicity; made these angers, irritations fall off like old rags; she brought together this and that and then this, and so made out that miserable silliness and spite (she and Charles squabbling, sparring, had been silly and spiteful) something—this scene on the beach for example, this moment of friendship and liking .... (175)

And then;

> This, that, and the other; herself and Charles Tansley and the breaking wave; Mrs. Ramsay bringing them together.(176)

Her changing attitude occurs because she understands the problem will be solved when she brings things together as Mrs. Ramsay had done. In other words, Lily recognises that she wants an integrative vision. Through the conflict between the anxiety of painting and the ecstasy of painting, Lily gradually understands what her problem is. Moreover, she also understands how to solve it with Mrs. Ramsay's assistance (only in her mind, though). Dissolving her aggressive reaction works as a first step toward the vision.

The repetitions in the third chapter occur within a very short period, which emphases Lily's fluid thoughts and raised feelings. With her intensification of her feelings, almost ecstasy, she approaches a dissolution or reconciliation of conflicts. Its suddenness is more like inspiration, a revelation in other words. On the surface, Lily changes her attitudes toward Tansley, and

subconsciously, Lily succeeds in dealing with the phrase “women can’t paint, women can’t write”.

4−4. Balance

Yet, her painting is not finished:

> The disproportion there seemed to upset some harmony in her own mind. ... For whatever reason she could not achieve that razor edge of balance between two opposite forces; Mr. Ramsay and the picture; which was necessary. (209)

Lily thinks “disproportion” prevents her picture from completion. For Lily, the imbalance in the composition in the drawing is the cause of her anxiety. Lily sees imbalance even in the scenery that she is looking at—a ship in the ocean. Alice van Burden Kelly mentions that Lily shares this strong sense of balance with Roger Fry, who discusses balance as the “design” in *Vision and Design* (1920).[6] Fry thinks that balance, or composition in other words, is the most valuable element of a drawing. Woolf

has put this idea into Lily, and Lily always cares about balance. In fact, she moves the salt cellar thinking about the composition in her drawing in the first part. The salt cellar represented the trees on the canvas. Now, in this part, she looks for the razor edge of balance in the drawing again, but she does not find the right balance this time. What Woolf imposes on Lily here is to catch a balance in the real life as well as the balance on which Roger Fry has insisted in an artwork. Then Lily comes to notice that the cause of imbalance lies in the relationship between Mr. Ramsay and herself. Mr. Ramsay is a philosopher, and "he kept ...a vigilance which spared no phantom and luxuriated in no vision" (50). In fact he thinks "the arts are merely a decoration imposed on the top of human life; they do not express it" (49). This is the reason why Lily feels some resistance toward Mr. Ramsay, and she needs to make a balance with the "reality" Mr. Ramsay embodies. Her problem is with reality and art after all. Otherwise, she is not able to complete her painting. Then the phrase appears again; its last repetition.

And all she felt was how could he love his kind who did

> not know one picture from another, who had stood behind her smoking shag (‘fivepence an ounce, Miss Briscoe’) and making it his business to tell her women can’t write, women can’t paint, not so much that he believed it, as that for some odd reason he wished it? (213)

In the previous part, Lily could apparently unite her attitudes toward painting and reality through the movements of the brush. And then, here, after she has coloured the canvas, her focus shifts to the painting. It seems that her hand holding the brush stops now for a while. Meanwhile, she notices the imbalance on the canvas, and then the problem returns her to her real world once again. Thus, the problematic phrase has a different quality, and it includes some hints to solve the imbalance in her real life. The underlined part of the quotation above; “not so much that he believed it, as that for some odd reason he wished it?” is a paraphrase of the sentence right after the second time the phrase appears in the first chapter; “since clearly it was not true to him but for some reason helpful to him, and that was why he said it?” (94), which shows that Lily thinks Tansley didn’t mean it.

Although the phrase represented her defiance in the first chapter, the final repetition emphasises her cool-headed observation about Tansley himself since she had by then vanquished her negative, aggressive, dismissive emotions. The phrase does not evoke aggressive or defensive feelings, nor miserable, disgraceful feelings any more. Instead, the phrase evokes the other side of the personality of individuals, firstly Tansley, then Mr. Ramsay. She is getting to know the truth of the physical world; "One wanted fifty pairs of eyes to see with" (214). She recognises that she had only seen the outside and one side of the person before.

Nearly at the end of the narrative, Lily senses that Mr. Ramsay and his children have arrived at the lighthouse.

> 'He must have reached it,' said Lily Briscoe aloud, feeling suddenly completely tired out. For the Lighthouse had become almost invisible, had melted away into a blue haze, and the effort of looking at it and the effort of thinking of his landing there, which both seemed to be one and the same effort, had stretched her body and mind to the utmost.

Ah, but she was relieved. (225)

She feels some sympathy toward the family, and then, the family's travel to the lighthouse becomes parallel to her achieving something; 'He has landed,' she said aloud. 'It is finished" (225). However, before she reached this point, we, the readers had been shown her memories of ten years ago coming up in her mind. It can be said that the process is her attempt to have a neutral position between Mrs. Ramsay and Mr. Ramsay. She felt an affinity with Mrs. Ramsay as though with her mother and felt opposition toward Mr. Ramsay. However, after thinking of Mrs. Ramsay, and the relationship between the couple closely, Lily comes to accept Mr. Ramsay. We can see her change of feeling in the text; she shouted "'Mrs. Ramsey! Mrs. Ramsay!'" (219) but then; "Where was that boat now? Mr. Ramsey? She wanted him" (219). Soon after that, everything seems to be solved.

With a sudden intensity, as if she saw clear for a second, she drew a line there, in the centre. It was done; it was

finished. Yes, she thought, laying down her brush in extreme fatigue, I have had my vision.（226）

A line drawn in the centre leads the painting to its completion because this last stroke solves the composition(design) problem. At the same time, the line also dissolves the gap between men and women, and it helps to keep harmony between them. Besides, it has also solved the problem between life and art. As Alice van Buren Kelly says, “Life and art, vision and design: throughout the writing of both Fry and Woolf we find the introduction of pairs of qualities, sometimes apparently opposite, that need to be brought into balance before unity can be achieved (69), Lily, eventually, resolves the unbalanced space between life and art because she can feel sympathy and accept Mr. Ramsay.

As I said in the inroductory part, this novel has an H-like structure, which means two parts are linked with two horizontal lines. Even though it may be irresponsible to interpret the two horizontal lines which represents the second part as bringing a balance between the first part and the latter part, I would like to say that Woolf considers the whole structure of the novel visually

and tries to create a balance – a design.

5. The Vision was Completed

Above all, the phrase "women can't paint, women can't write" plays an important role for Lily in getting a vision of her own as it helps her to develop her thoughts. Apart from its literal meaning, the phrase brings her other figurative meanings at each repetition and gives her new ideas. Thus, the repetition works as part of her completion of the painting with a vision. First, she loses her confidence. Next, she struggles to build her identity, and she reacts to the critical quality of the phrase sharply, feeling anxiety, then she overcomes her anxiety, dissolves and finally finds a balance between life and art. The relationship between Lily and the phrase shows how she reaches the vision. Apparently, the phrase has a negative effect, but it is an important function or a step, like a brushstroke in a painting.

Lily is a painter, and she embodies the idea that Woolf, the author, creates the work. If Woolf were a painter, her tool would be a brush and she would repeat her brushstrokes until she

was satisfied. The repetition of "women can't paint, women can't write" overlaps the painter's brushstrokes, and in a way it can be said that *To the Lighthouse* is created through the repetition of the phrase. If we focus on the rhythm which is created by the physical action of brush strokes, the repetition can be said to help the novel to have rhythm. Meanwhile, if we focus on the effects of the repeated phrase on Lily's mind, it can be said that the repetition works to strengthen Lily's will to paint and to determine what kind of painting she is going to make. Thus, combining these two aspects, Woolf creates the novel visually with language in the way that painters colour the canvas.

After she finished *To the Lighthouse,* Woolf published her essay *A Room of One's Own*（1929）, in which reveals her feelings about being a female writer. If we look at *To the Lighthouse* from this biographical point of view, it seems that Woolf may be trying to create a balance between life and art and to get a clear vision just like the one that Lily in the narrative can achieve through painting. Virginia R. Hyman discusses;

Woolf concludes by urging the same kind of intellectual

> freedom for women as had been granted to men (and passed on to her by her father). Women should be free to write what they want to write. ..., Woolf urges the young women to face reality alone, and to write about "things in themselves" (115). (Hyman, 152)

Woolf had claimed that women have a right to write as they like. However, in fact there were still a lot of obstacles at that time in society and even in Woolf herself. The repetitive phrase includes her wish and her problem as well and it seems that Woolf tries to overcome the problem by vanquishing the idea "women can't paint, women can't write". What Woolf got is, perhaps, like Lily, a balance at the end of the narrative, her own identity as a *female writer* who can co-exist with men and men's society, not one who rejects or stands against them. In her essay "Women and Fiction", first published in *The Forum* in 1929, Woolf wrote, "It is probable, however, that both in life and in art the values of women are not the values of a man. Thus, when a woman comes to write a novel, she will find that she is perpetually wishing to alter the established values—to make

serious what appears insignificant to a man, and trivial what is to him important. And for that, of course, she will be criticized"(81). She definitely recognises the differences between men and women. However, anger or rejection was not her attitude to the situation. She also writes:

> The great change that has crept into women's writing is, it would seem, a change of attitude. The woman writer is no longer bitter. She is no longer angry. She is no longer pleading and protesting as she writes. We are approaching, if we have not yet reached, the time when her writing will have little or no foreign influence to disturb it. She will be able to concentrate upon her vision without distraction from outside. ("Women and Fiction" 80)

Woolf sensed that the situation in society was changing and she herself was coming to recognize her position. This appears as "balance" in the narrative.

Thus this novel embodies the author's process of gaining her style and confidence. The repeated phrase "women can't paint,

women can't write" overlaps her process of establishing the idea and strengthening it as if they were brushstrokes when painting. Roger Fry says when he talks about Cézanne that Cézanne puts colours on the colour when he finds something new, which makes the painter more confident.[7] It may be that Woolf creates her work in the same way as Cézanne. She succeeds through repetition, it seems.

Chapter 3

The Design in *The Waves*

--Absent Hero, Percival, and Bernard, Storyteller

1. Introduction

In Virginia Woolf's *The Waves* (1931), I see three technical features. The first is the style of the description in the nine interludes. Each section describes the ocean at certain times between dawn and sunset. It also describes the objects inside the room being brightened, coloured, or shaded due to the movement of the sunlight. There is no human activity or voice; just sounds, or the voices of birds. Second, the way in which the main characters, Bernard, Neville, Louis, Jinny, Rhoda, and Susan soliloquize in the narrative. They rarely have real conversations. Woolf reveals her intentions in her diary --"I can set my people against time & the sea" (*Diary* 264), or "The interludes are very difficult, yet I think essential; so as to bridge & also give a background—the sea; insensitive nature—I don't know" (*Diary* 285). We can see that she wanted to write about human lives against the background of the universal time cycle.

Finally, and most importantly, there is Percival. He has no voice in the narrative but appears in it and in the comments of the main six characters. Thus, he is an "absent" character. Although "absence" seems a frequent motif in Woolf's works, in Percival it has some unique features compared to absences in Woolf's other works. For example, in *Jacob's Room* (1922), the main character, Jacob, is always veiled, and the text often describes his empty room. This is all to imply Jacob's death—complete absence. Many noted that the theme of *Jacob's Room* is "absence" and Woolf represents elegy in the form of "absence". In *To the Lighthouse* (1927), Mrs. Ramsay, who seems to dominate the first part of the narrative, enters a state of absence because of her death. After her death, Lily, a painter, is plunged deep into thought remembering Mrs. Ramsay, which means that readers see someone "becoming absent" vividly here too. However, Percival in *The Waves* has no voice from the beginning of the novel to the end. Besides, as John F. Hulcoop mentions, the theme is not "absence"; "the theme of effort, which is also the theme of personality and defiance, does dominate *The Waves*" (Hulcoop, 470). Is it possible to see another role for

Percival in terms of the construction of the novel? In short, the "absent" Percival has another, figurative, role in the overall narrative space. Here I will consider the structure of *The Waves,* starting with Percival.

In the late 20th century, critics often discussed visual aspects of Woolf's works, especially contrasting them with drawings or paintings,[1] but few focus mainly on Percival, though some do mention him. After major critiques shifted to other topics like philosophy or feminism, or sociology, research in cultural contexts such as film or photography is now being undertaken (cf. Maggie Humm[2]). Reading Woolf's works in the context of film or photography has brought new perspectives to visual analysis. In this paper, I will reread the text to try and see its visual structure, but I will not attempt to establish which genres —painting, cinematography, photography— we can see in it. I will try to reveal the way in which Percival plays a crucial role and contributes to shaping *The Waves*. Some critics, like Hulcoop, who discuss mainly not the meaning of absence or structure but Percival as a hero facing "life",[3] seem to be interested in Percival's role in the narrative (not in the structural

way, I mean), but I hope to make a very minor change in perspective to critical views of one of Woolf's works.

2. Percival—the Hero at the Centre

Percival is created as a hero. That is, what the six main characters say about Percival creates a heroic image. He has been outstanding and special among these companions from the time when they were all children; "He[Percival] is remote" (25) from other school children and even if other children try to mock his actions, "they do not succeed" (25). He plays sports but doesn't understand poetry. Moreover, "He[Percival] despises me[Neville] for being too weak to play" shows that Percival is confident in "kinesthesis" more than in inner activities such as writing or creating. So his charismatic personality partly depends on his physical abilities. Nevertheless, "everybody follows Percival" because he is "heavy" and more like a "medieval commander" (28). Besides, he inspires poetry like a Muse[4], which means he is a magnificent object in some way. Even when they are grown up and Percival is to move to India, his heroic image does not change; "He is conventional; he is a

hero" (92). Above all, as Hulcoop discusses, Percival is clearly a hero because we can see how he "rides his body in pursuit of living at a gallop across life" (Hulcoop 472). His behaviour is considered courageous and admirable even though it is conventional.

Percival also plays a role as a psychological centre to the other six characters. When the characters think or soliloquize, they refer to Percival as a benchmark. At the end of a soliloquy, when Neville talks about other characters, for example, about Louis, Neville says "I am comparing him with Percival"(89). Another example is shown in Bernard's voice: "Percival, Tony, Archie, or another, will go to India. .... But I want to linger; to lean from the window; to listen" (67). Here, Percival helps Bernard become aware of his own situation. After Percival is dead, Bernard compares his death with the birth of his own child, and is led to look inside of himself. Chantal Lacourarie explains this structure as "converging/diverging rays" (Lacourarie 89). As Lacourarie says "He is a six-sided mirror that reflects the other characters, the signifying process resting on the converging/diverging rays", the six characters face the

centred Percival, and he affects each of them. The structure is also described by Bernard; "But without Percival there is no solidity" (89). This is how all the characters including Percival are placed in the narrative space.

Although this structure, in which one specific person is placed at the heart and the other characters are placed around him/her, is seen in other novels like *Mrs. Dalloway* or *To the Lighthouse*, I want to emphasise again that Percival has no voice in *The Waves*. Mrs. Dalloway and Mrs. Ramsay, who are at the centre like queens, have their own voices and other characters' lives take place/continue around them. In this sense, in *Mrs. Dalloway* and *To the Lighthouse*, the "centred" person has a subjective view as well as being an object. In other words, in the structure of these two novels, it can be said that the centred character creates the structure by herself. By contrast, in *The Waves*, the always-absent Percival is never given a subjective view, which allows readers to see six persons equally and helps to see them from the distance as in a bird's eye view. The readers are not given a focal point, a protagonist. Moreover, the six characters struggle to build their identities, looking

inside themselves again and again. They are always on the move and have unstable personalities. They really need firm, steady, "solid"[5] objects in order not to melt away. Percival is that "solid" object. At this level, Percival is similar to the mark in "The Mark on the Wall"(1917) or the lighthouse in *To the Lighthouse*.

3. Creating a Space

When Percival leaves for India and the six friends get together for a send-off party, he contributes to creating an interesting "space", which is visualised in the narrative. This is another visual structure, which I want to explain here. It is the scene where the six friends one by one arrive at a restaurant in which they are going to dine and now they are waiting for Percival. "Is it Percival? No; it is not Percival" (88) is Neville's thought, which shows how keenly he is waiting for Percival. And then, when Percival arrives eventually, the six characters show their pleasure one after another; "here he is" or "Here is Percival" (92). Thanks to Percival being here, "All impediment is removed. The reign of chaos is over. He has

imposed order" (92) and "Our isolation, our preparation, is over. The furtive days of secrecy and hiding, the revelations on staircases, moments of terror and ecstasy" (93). The text shows *how* Percival is special, too; illuminating others, as if he were the light brightening the dark here. Then, an image, a "wall" is introduced.

> 'Percival is going,' said Neville. 'We sit here, surrounded, lit up, many coloured; all things--hands, curtains, knives and forks, other people dining--run into each other. We are walled in here. But India lies outside.' (101) (underlinings mine).

This wall divides the six characters from the outside. They exist inside the wall. Of course, India is outside. Everything other than the six characters (even if Percival is included) is outside. What I want to emphasise here is that we can draw not only two different spaces—inside and outside— in our mind but also the image that the "walls are made of Percival" as Jinny says (101). Rhoda describes these spaces more clearly:

> ‘Percival, by his death, has made me this present, has revealed this terror, has left me to undergo this humiliation--faces and faces, served out like soup-plates by scullions; coarse, greedy, casual; looking in at shop-windows with pendent parcels; ogling, brushing, destroying everything, leaving even our love impure, touched now by their dirty fingers. (121)

This is from the scene after Percival has died. Rhoda uncovers her terror of the outside, of society. The walls protect her from the real world or other people, and now his “present” for her at his death is the revelation of “an unveiled reality”. That is, Percival himself provides his friends with a stable, warm, safe place, and that space is described by mentioning “walls”, a very visual shaping.

4. The Imagery of Shared Feeling

In the previous section, I have discussed the space created when the six characters get together. Now I focus on the

feelings they have and how they are shaped into a visual image.

The scene I want to look at is the one when they leave after the send-off party. They recognise that their feelings are somehow elevated:

> 'Now once more,' said Louis, 'as we are about to part, having paid our bill, the circle in our blood, broken so often, so sharply, for we are so different, closes in a ring. Something is made. Yes, as we rise and fidget, a little nervously, we pray, holding in our hands this common feeling, 'Do not move, do not let the swing door cut to pieces the thing that we have made, that globes itself here, among these lights, these peelings, this litter of bread crumbs and people passing. (109) (underlinings mine)

Louis recognises "Something is made" when he feels they have a "common feeling" which is described as "communion"(95) by Bernard. After that, he describes they "globes" it, which means he thinks that they can have a communion feeling and it is shaping itself like a globe. This process in the text can be

defined as a crucial act of "shaping", giving a shape to a formless stuff.

This shaping act implies the importance of their meeting. Since Percival's existence itself is special for the friends, as I have already noted, the fact that all the friends have gathered at a certain place, with Percival at the centre, is definitely special. Compared to the place in which they live their ordinary lives, this place where they are meeting, comes to take on another quality. That is, the quality does not belong to the actual place (the restaurant), but depends on the coming together of the seven characters. Louis expresses it like this: "'We changed, we became unrecognizable,' said Louis...'I was this, Neville that, Rhoda different again, and Bernard too'" (94). The six or seven friends now have different lives in which the gap between them is large. For instance, Susan lives in the country in the middle of nature, where she has a decent life but where she feels jealous of Jinny, who seems to enjoy city life. As for Rhoda, who is extremely sensitive, she easily loses herself and slips into anonymity. Louis is in a very important position in a company. Bernard writes as a professional. Leaving their ordinary lives

behind, “here and now we are together” (95), in Bernard’s words. They not only wanted some safety surrounded by the walls, Percival, but also have an intense emotion because they “gather” “now” and “here”[6].

Then, the imagery of communion represented as a“globe” develops into another image, that of a “red carnation”;

> There is a red carnation in that vase. A single flower as we sat here waiting, but now a seven-sided flower, many-petalled, red, puce, purple-shaded, stiff with silver-tinted leaves—a whole flower to which every eye brings its own contribution. (95)

Each person is metaphorized as a petal, which shapes one flower when they gather altogether. This metaphor shows that their sense of communion is collective.

Next, I will take this collective feeling of communion forward to another phase where the moment is emphasised. While the strong feeling that they are all gathering here is just an atmosphere, the sphere of the *space* in other words, the notion

of the moment belongs to the sphere of *time*. In Bernard's words, that they are gathering "at a particular time" also becomes an important key for the six friends to notice that the very "moment" is "not enduring" (95). They try to hold the moment as long as possible. Louis says, "Hold it for ever" (109), followed by Jinny "Let us hold it for one moment.... we shall perhaps never make this moment out of one man again" (109). They mention "it" which indicates the "globe" that symbolizes their feeling of communion when they are at a certain place. The "globe" expands its meaning, and comes to contain a sense of the present time, intending to "hold" the very moment as if we were able to grab the moment by making it into a shape. The idea of "moment" is of course an important concept or sense to Woolf. From her own experience, Woolf is sensitive to certain moments. For instance, when she saw a petal in the garden, she suddenly understood the wholeness of living things—you might say it is like a revelation. For her, the sense of the very moment is prior to consciousness of the contents. Such a moment is an exception to other moments and she remembers these moments as "the moments of being". The moments of being become

expanded moments compared to real "clock time" since they exist in our mind. There is no doubt that Woolf gives similar experiences to her characters in the novels. For example, in *The Waves*, Bernard talks of a "swelling and splendid moment created by us from Percival" (109). The moment is splendid and different from external time. Unfortunately, the moment is still just a moment. The statement "Let us again pretend that life is a solid substance, shaped like a globe, which we turn about in our fingers" (193) is an effort to grab the very moment, not allowing it to be carried away by the flow of time.

It is not just in *The Waves* that Virginia Woolf introduces the imagery of the moment; she does it throughout her works. The analysis by Yoshida Yasuo is very helpful as he picks up images which symbolize "the moment" and categorise them in a systematic way. As he says in his analysis, the "drop" is one of the symbols representing the moment and in *The Waves,* which I am trying to interpret here, Bernard links "globe" to "drop"; "That is the last drop and the brightest" (109). It seems that "drop" represents or contains psychological aspects of the sense of time more than "globe" does, since "drop" implies falling or

being absorbed into much bigger “stuff” like oceans or waves. If we want to hold on to time longer, even though it is difficult, making it into a shape could help us grab it. Thus, the image of a drop represents the struggle to hold a shape. This gives us a very good understanding of Woolf’s consciousness of the present moment.

5.Death of Percival

The six characters gather again after they have heard that Percival has died after falling from a horse in India. Their gathering is to mourn for their hero, Percival. How does the text describe this situation? Is this parallel to the first gathering which Percival attended when he was alive?

Each character comes to the restaurant expecting to be able to feel a kind of safety. The “carnation”, which stands for their sense of communion is used again by Bernard, trying to reproduce the same atmosphere or feelings.

> ‘The flower,’ said Bernard, ‘the red carnation that stood in the vase on the table of the restaurant when we

dined together with Percival, is become a six-sided flower; made of six lives.'

'A mysterious illumination,' said Louis, visible against those yew trees.'

'Built up with much pain, many strokes,' said Jinny.

'Marriage, death, travel, friendship,' said Bernard; 'town and country; children and all that; a many-sided substance cut out of this dark; a many-faceted flower. Let us stop for a moment; let us behold what we have made. Let it blaze against the yew trees. (175-176)

Bernard seems to some extent to succeed in reproducing the feeling because each petal is again mentioned as a metaphor for a sense of communion. Moreover, he tries to hold the moment; "Let us stop for a moment; let us behold"(109) as Louis said in the previous part. Describing this situation, Ota Motoko says that they are gathering in Hampton Court to reconstruct the "party space".[7] However, as Percival's death affects them like a dark shadow, they don't succeed in regaining the previous triumphant moment. In spite of Bernard's efforts, the "globe"

does not appear here. Although no shape is produced, instead, a dissolving formation occurs in the narrative space: “We have destroyed something by our presence, said Bernard, ‘a world perhaps’”(178) ; “Yet we scarcely breathe, ….We are in that passive and exhausted frame of mind when we only wish to rejoin the body of our mother from whom we have been severed”(178-179). There is nothing solid, like petals, here: “Our separate drops are dissolved; we are extinct, lost in the abysses of time, in the darkness”(173); “‘Oppose ourselves to this illimitable chaos,’ said Neville, ‘this formless imbecility’”(173). “Dissolve”, “extinct” or “formless” are the dominant words. Solid formation has disappeared, and a new fluid form is introduced. Then the imagery develops further: “We are scarcely to be distinguished from the river” (179); “One cigarette end is the only point of emphasis among us” (179). After this, Bernard says, “we were extinguished for a moment, went out like sparks in burnt paper and the blackness roared” (213). The six characters recognize themselves as “we” and other existences are separated from them. Outside is a “huge blackness” and that is what they are not.[8] That is, at the

beginning of the meeting, their identities remain within the image of flower with six petals, which means their communion feeling is collective. However, as the formless images come to dominate the text, the collectiveness comes to "blaze"(176). Each individual existence gradually loses its own being and rather merges into one. Thus, the feeling of communion is seized as something far stronger than before.

As for the moment, we have seen it before: "we six, out of how many millions, for one moment out of what measureless abundance of past time and time to come, burnt there triumphant. The moment was all; the moment was enough" (213-214). The strong recognition about the moment remains as well, though the moment doesn't spread any further. From "'After our fire,' said Jinny, 'there is nothing left to put in lockets' "(179), we can see that solid things are burned up and extinct.

In both spheres, *time* and *space*, the form changes because of Percival's death. That is, the idea that a life is limited has flowed so strongly into the characters that they realise they cannot hold anything for ever. Percival was the solid centre among the characters before. However, now his real absence

empties the world of its centre which the characters depend on in order to be able to stand steadily. Life is limited. Death means losing in the game of life. Woolf represents this by giving the heroic Percival a death which acts as a symbol.[9]

6. Bernard's Solitary Speech

Even after Percival is gone, the narrative continues. Unlike the previous part in which the absent Percival plays the major role, at the end of the novel the focal point suddenly shifts to Bernard alone. Until then, most of the forms created in the text are to do with Percival. The text shows that a heightened moment is being created with a sense of union preserving each being at the first reunion. Then a formless image dominates the text after Percival's death. By contrast, however, the last part is dominated by Bernard, a writer, which means he handles language. Of course, *The Waves* is a novel in which the whole shape is built of language. However, the former part of the novel includes multiple voices and Bernard's is just one of them. It is collective voices, harmonic feelings which are the focal point. However, in the latter part, Bernard tries to sum up the

whole story in his own language as a narrator (if you can call it a story). "Woolf doesn't allow a narrator to organise, interpret, comment about the narrative", wrote Kawamoto Shizuko in her commentary on *The Waves* in the Japanese Version. (Comment--*The Waves*, 282) I do not deny the truth of her comment, but if that is the case, it seems to me that we need an explanation of why Bernard as a narrator tries to sum up here.

Bernard, to repeat, is a writer. Since he was a child he has been happy to make things into stories to please his friends. In the last part of the novel, "How tired I am of stories" or "none of them are true" (183) he says, but "I must tell you a story—and there are so many, and so many..."(183). He talks, but he does not approve of what he is talking about, or even the very act of talking. Eventually, he claims, "my book, stuffed with phrases, has dropped to the floor. ... I have done with phrases" (226-227) confessing that he is going to say goodbye to the "phrases" which he had been making before. It is not only Bernard himself but also Neville who doubts Bernard's stories. Neville as a child was hesitant about Bernard's phrase-making: "He sees everyone with blurred edges. Hence I cannot talk to

him of Percival. I cannot expose my absurd and violent passion to his sympathetic understanding. It too would make a 'story'" (37). Louis shares this view of Neville's: "Its eye, that would see through me, shuts-- if I sleep now, through slovenliness, or cowardice, burying myself in the past, in the dark; or acquiesce, as Barnard acquiesces, telling stories" (48). It is possible to say that "making a story" or "making phrases" equals defining. It defines a life, a self, a thing; and other possibilities will be gone after the act of definition as well as in the process of defining. It means choosing and separation. Bernard gives up defining the whole matter by denying that he is making stories any more. Meanwhile, in his narration, Bernard says he has lost his identity several times; "now that he is dead, the man I called 'Bernard', the man who kept a book in his pocket in which he made notes—phrases for the moon, notes of features" (224). His phrase-making habit corresponds to building his personality, which means when he gives up his phrase making, he is no longer Bernard, the individual, the defined person. It is a disguised death. Nothing solid is left. Therefore, what he indicates by his solitary speech may be that it is impossible to fix a

perspective and to define things. Everything flows, every formation changes.

"I begin to long for some little language such as lovers use, broken words, inarticulate words, like the shuffling of feet on the pavement" (183), Bernard says. He tries to grab the world with minimum elements, rejecting a grand, linear, coherent narrative. Even though he does not yet bring to mind the idea of Cubism, which destroys everything and rebuilds it in another perspective, he now refuses to pile up words to make things firm and solid. To sum up, at first Bernard apparently tries to reproduce the image derived from Percival or to replace himself with Percival by making stories. However, he notices that if he attempts to reproduce the past completely and accurately, words and phrases will dissolve. The forms made in the former part of the narrative space correspond to a "story" in Bernard's account. By contrast, to show an image of formlessness, Bernard ends up giving up creating stories. In short, Bernard's solution to the problem of the reproduction of formless images does not depend on the contents but on the very action of making phrases, or stories.

There is one way in which Bernard's role is superior to that of Percival. He *develops* formless imagery. After Percival's death, the text introduces formless, unsolid, fluid images to show that perhaps nothing can be identified or fixed in the world. In Bernard's version, his abandonment of phrase-making is linked to his abandonment of his own identity; and ultimately, he can reach eternal life by ceasing to focus on his own life, and getting the idea that each living being makes up part of one universal being. He lets stories, phrases, even meanings go. He is free from his own life. That is, if there were no definitions, the idea that a single life is to end someday would not apply, and life would be triumphant over death. For Bernard, who used to grab life with phrases, giving up phrases is equivalent to stopping fighting death. He ends his speech like this: "Against you I will fling myself, unvanquished and unyielding, O Death!" (228).

7. The Design of the Novel

As above, Woolf makes individuals and their relationships and human time into "shapes", placing Percival, who symbolises the silent bright sun, at the heart. With six perspectives, the

text can take on this formation. If there had been just one voice throughout the text, it would not be able to do so. This can be achieved only when the shapes do not belong to only one unique character's feeling but belong to the "space" – I mean atmosphere, time, place—in the narrative. Furthermore, it is the absent Percival who makes it possible. The shape changes from definite form to formlessness due to Percival's death. Then, at the end of the novel, Bernard tries to be replaced with Percival, but his role is to do with language and he embodies it in his phrase-making. He shows formlessness through language, meaning he tells a "story-less" story. This is obviously the design of the text.

There is no doubt that the environment in which Virginia Woolf lived, surrounded by artists and critics, including her sister Vanessa, could easily influence Virginia's style of writing. In fact, she writes in her "Walter Sickert", "painting and writing have much to tell each other: they have much in common. The novelist after all wants to make us see" (241). She continues "All great writers are great colourist" putting into practice in her works the claim that writing resembles painting.[10] In

Moments of Being (1985), she also claims "If I were a painter...." (66), revealing her affinities with painting. The draft for *To the Lighthouse* shows that her creative processes were also visual.[11] In *The Waves*, her perspective, which is similar to that of a painter, is strongly connected to the theme of the novel, which helps the novel to be seen visually. That is, not only is there much visual imagery but the narrative space itself is designed visually. The narrative represents efforts to resist "death" with some struggle to live. Furthermore, such efforts are written in a rather abstract way. The text never tells us this directly. Instead, the formation created within the narrative implies it, so we, the readers, need to find the virtual images hidden within the design, as if the whole text were a canvas -- or were a building you might say. With Percival, who never has a viewpoint but is at the heart of the novel, the text can tell us about the relationship between certain characters through the way in which they share a common point. This common point is the symbol of life, and to resist the flow of life, people want to hold the moment by making a shape. And once the common point is lost, life is in danger in an instant, and formlessness followed.

Our human life is a continuous process of shaping and un-shaping. However, the text implies that formlessness is more powerful than resistance. The consciousness of formlessness is the ultimate form with which to fight against death. Virginia Woolf is a novelist. She describes the world by handling words. She puts this work into Bernard's hands, and he lets the stories, phrases, and meanings go towards representing fluidity. This is the sort of effort I see Woolf making in the design of *The Waves*.

Chapter 4

'Music' and 'Sound' in *Between the Acts*

—A Study of Illusion and Reality

1. Introduction

Between the Acts was a posthumous work of Virginia Woolf published in 1941 by her husband, Leonard. Virginia killed herself before the completion of proofreading of the work, but she had been satisfied with her work. She wrote in her diary on November 23rd 1940; "I am a little triumphant about the book. I think its an interesting attempt in a new method. I think its more quintessential than the others."(*Diary* 340) "A new method" probably means, as Ota Motoko says, its way of avoiding the narrator looking into characters' minds, whereas the masterpieces written during her maturity —*Mrs. Dalloway*(1925), *To the Lighthouse*(1927), *The Waves*(1931)—deal a lot with the characters' inner consciousness[1]. In other words, she focuses more on the crowd, the exterior world which consists of individuals than on the inner minds of individuals. And to do so, it seems that the author utilizes sounds—something you hear

with the ears—rather than something derived from the inner mind. In this part, I explore the final vision of Woolf's oeuvre, investigating auditory expressions such as music and sounds, which can be regarded as her new method.

Between the Acts is set in the grounds of Pointz Hall, which is "too homely"(7) to be introduced in a guidebook and is owned by the Olivers. People have gathered there for a pageant which is an annual summer event. La Trobe is a female playwright and the director of the pageant this year. The readers read about both La Trobe's pageant and about the behaviour of the audience, so *Between the Acts* is a plays-within-plays in a way. As Avrom Flieshman refers to its unique technique and says the novel includes a"juggling of illusion and reality"(247), we see a mixture of the pageant proceeding, actors/actresses moving their bodies, and the audience's behaviour. Besides, there is a variation of sounds when the readers "listen" to the text; music coming from the gramophone; machinery sounds like "chuff" or "tick"; songs by the actors; primitive sounds like the cries of animals or the sound of rain; artificial sounds like automobiles, planes; the bell in the church. I try to categorise these sounds

into “sound” and “music” try to see the author’s new intention. And I also provide two kinds of points of view for my analysis; one is to focus upon the events in the novel and consider them from inside the narrative. The other is to consider the structure of the novel from the point of view of the author. This is because the work contains two artists—La Trobe and Virginia Woolf, which means the work has their respective perspectives, and their respective visions can be seen in “sound” and “music”. In short, the meanings of "sound" and "music" for La Trobe differ from those for Woolf.

2. The pageant by La Trobe and “music”

First, I discuss “music” which is essential for La Trobe’s pageant. La Trobe employs “music” as parts of her playscript and sometimes depends on it. This shows that the nature or feature of her pageant is to do with "music" she is employing. I define La Trobe’s “music” as in the following.

2-1 The gramophone and the songs

The pageant begins like this;“‘What luck!’ Mrs. Carter was

saying. ‘Last year…’ Then the play began. Was it, or was it not, the play? Chuff, chuff, chuff sounded from the bushes. It was the noise a machine makes when something has gone wrong. Some sat down hastily; others stopped talking guiltily. All looked at the bushes. For the stage was empty.” (47-48) The audience is not ready for the pageant and is a little confused, and then a small girl comes on the stage and begins the prologue; “*Gentles and simples, I address you all…*”(48). However, the undefined narrator says “So it was the play then. Or was it the prologue?” (48) and some of the audience are still chatting. Then, La Trobe shouts “Music!” from behind the stage. Her instruction is obeyed and the gramophone finally comes out with some music. Thanks to this music, one of the audience, Mrs. Manresa begins to hum a song yielding to the tune, which means she is ready for listening. Sometime after that, Isabella Oliver reacts in the same way to a dance tune, followed by people applauding an actress. Another example is shown after a little break when “The music was summoning them” (72) for the second act. These examples show that “music” plays the role of a signal which lets the audience into the play. The second act does not

begin at once. There is some delay because of the slow progress backstage. The audience cannot stay still; they are distracted. In this situation, what La Trobe does is to signal "'music!'" (74) to prevent the audience from slipping the noose and splitting up into scraps and fragments.[2] The same thing happens after the second interlude; La Trobe shows her impatience by saying "'Hurry up! The tune! Then next tune! Number ten!'" (92). She expects this kind of music including the one from the gramophone to draw people into her art.

Her use of "music" is strategic since it seems that she recognises that "music" helps people to continue some feelings;

> 'All that fuss about nothing!' a voice exclaimed. People laughed. The voice stopped. But the voice had seen; the voice had heard. For a moment Miss La Trobe behind her tree glowed with glory. The next, turning to the villagers who were passing in and out between the treed, she barked:
>
> 'Louder! Louder!'
>
> For the stage was empty; the emotion must be continued; the only thing to continue the emotion was

the song, and the words were inaudible.

'Louder! Louder!' She threatened them with her clenched fists.

Digging and delving (they sang), *hedging and ditching, we pass… Summer and winter, autumn and spring return… All passes but we, all changes… but we remain forever the same…* (the breeze blew gaps between their words.)

'Louder, louder!' Miss La Trobe vociferated.

Places tumble down (they resumed), *Babylon, Nineveh, Troy … And Caesar's great house… all fallen they lie…(…).*

The words died away. (84)

La Trobe requires a chorus by the actors instead of recorded music from the gramophone here. The reason why she needs some "music" is clearly explained above: "the emotion must be continued; the only thing to continue the emotion was the song; and the words were inaudible". She knows well about the nature of music itself. Now let's look at the first part of the

quotation to examine La Trobe's way of taking care of people's emotions. "'All that fuss about nothing!'" is a critical comment by an audience on the performance of the actors. However, La Trobe feels some glory because her purpose in the play is not to convey the meaning. She is satisfied as the audience grabs ambiguity in the plot and events in the pageant. This reminds me of Isabella, who thought that the plot La Trobe was presenting in the pageant was just to create some feelings. Isabella concluded by saying "Don't bother about the plot: the plot's nothing" (56). Isabella has already told us there is no meaning in the plot in this pageant. For La Trobe, the thing more important is the feeling of the audience, and she is afraid that their feelings may move away from the stage. That is why she really needs "music", which attracts people there. The chorus is disturbed by the wind and is broken off in the middle of sentences. The meaning of the words in the text of the pageant is not conveyed to the audience. However, according to La Trobe, "It didn't matter what the words were: or who sang what. Round and round they whirled, intoxicated by the music" (58). In other words, without the sounds of "music", she cannot retain

the feelings of the audience, and without them, people will wake up from the excitement.

There is another musical effect that La Trobe uses for the pageant. Caddy-Kean says; "For Woolf, music has a greater unifying power than discursive prose, since music is capable of containing and sustaining personal associations while still being something the listeners share" (281). Woolf uses the "great unifying power" of the music through La Trobe. For instance, the opening scene of the 20th century in her pageant is like this;

> The machine ticked. There was no music. The horns of cars on the high road were heard. And the swish of trees. They were neither one thing nor the other; neither Victorians nor themselves. They were suspended, without being, in limbo. Tick, tick, tick, went the machine. (106)

In her playscript, there is nothing on the stage at the beginning of the "20th century" setting. There is no music, no words, nothing happens for 10 minutes. The audience loses a sense of belonging and their minds wander. Their state of mind

paradoxically proves that music can bring people's minds together into collective awareness. Caddie-Keane considers such a state of collectiveness as a kind of art, and calls it "the communal art"(281) or "the art of the whole community".[3] She also notes its resemblance to ancient religious dances or festivals where the purpose is to share emotions and create oneness of minds, not to share an ideology nor to bind people together with it. Another example of collective awareness is shown after the first act of the pageant. People begin moving away, humming the song "Dispersed are we";

> Now Miss La Trobe stepped from her hiding. Flowing, and streaming, on the grass, on the gravel, still for one moment she held them together—the dispersing company. ... She saw Giles Oliver with his back to the audience. Also Cobbet of Cobbs Corner. She hadn't made them see. It was a failure, another damned failure! As usual. Her vision escaped her. (*BA* 60)

Despite the title of the song, even after the end of the act, people

are heading together for the barn to get some tea because of the "music" or the aftermath of it. However, Giles and Cobbet alone are hesitant to follow the people. When La Trobe reads their minds, she feels sad since her vision has not reached these men. That is, she has failed to achieve her intention of getting to get Giles and Cobbet into the community.

2-2 Illusion and natural "music"

While the art of La Trobe aims at uniting people together, her art includes a fragile element. When she feels that the pageant is not going well against her will, she laments, "Illusion had failed. 'This is death', she murmured, 'death'" (84) or "This is death, death, death, she noted in the margin of her mind; when illusion fails" (107). Her creation is a kind of illusion, and it confronts reality. In other words, her art which is partly formed by music is likely to be broken by reality. "Reality too strong"(107). This is what La Trobe says right after the beginning of the final act representing the 20th century (I have already mentioned this scene). Her playscript includes "nothing" at the beginning, which means there is no performance for 10

minutes on the stage. There is no music either. There is just nature surrounding the temporary stage. As a result, the audience who have expected something dynamic, feel uneasy. La Trobe's words, "Reality too strong" imply her art is the opposite of reality. However, unexpectedly, it starts raining and this comes to affect people just like the actors' songs or "music". The sound of rain is described as "Tears, tears, tears" (107), which contain emotions like a kind of poetry. This sound of nature can also be defined as "music". Another example is shown in the scene of Queen Anne, in which for a short time the stage is empty for a scene change because the director has had to skip some scenes to shorten the play at the client's request. Whenever the stage is empty and without "music", people tend to be distracted, and La Trobe becomes anxious. However, at the time of Queen Anne, a mother cow which lost a calf starts bellowing and then, its companions react and start bellowing too. La Trobe thinks that it "filled the emptiness and continued the emotion"(85). The rhythm of nature works as "music" for La Trobe's art after all. This "music" acts on the emotions and when people's emotions rise with it, they are enabled to have

some distance from their daily life, reality. That is, the emotion raised here belongs to somewhere outside of external reality and La Trobe's art consists in creating this thing, which is called illusion. However, it is notable that La Trobe not only seeks illusion, but also fixes her eyes on reality. She employs mirrors on the stage in the final act, with which she attempts to draw reality into the play again since the mirrors reflect the audience as they are. Her attempt does not satisfy the audience, and they come to feel rather dissatisfied and anxious. She groans "A failure" (*BA* 124) after the pageant, sensing the audience's huge dissatisfaction and anxiety. Did she really fail? Whether this is her failure or not might divide opinions. In my opinion, she fails because she does not think she has been fully accepted, and people's difficulty in digesting the contents after the play causes her a defeated feeling. People's reactions are different from what she expected, and she leaves the place to drink by herself as if she was hiding from them;

> She raised her glass to her lips. And drank. And listened. Words of one syllable sank down into the mud. She

> drowsed; she nodded. The mud became fertile. Words rose above the intolerably laden dumb oxen plodding through the mud. Words without meaning—wonderful words. (125)

Here is a summary of her art. Her art consists of words without meanings and always going with “music”—illusion.

3, About “sound”

Next, I discuss “sound” which is something we can “hear” in the text and which is something I distinguish from “music”. That is, these sounds have the opposite quality to “music”. For example, “chuff, chuff, chuff”, the sounds coming from a machine when it has something wrong are in this category. The nature of this machinery sound is accurate and insistent; “Chuff, chuff, chuff went the machine in the bushes, accurately, insistently” (90). These sounds are gradually equated with the sound of a clock because of these qualities;“Chuff, chuff, chuff went the machine. Time was passing” (91). The scene above is at the end of a break between acts. These sounds also play a

role as a countdown clock for waking up from La Trobe's illusion here; "How long would time hold them together?" (91). In fact, right after this part, the sound changes to "tick, tick, tick" (*BA* 92), which shows that the machinery has come to sound exactly the same as the sound of a clock. The effects of La Trobe's art are fading, and "Chuff" or "tick" represents the situation where the audience cannot hold their emotions any longer. Instead of moments of illusion. real clock time is returning. La Trobe cannot bear this state and finally cries "The tune!" to get them back to her musical illusion again. The mechanical sounds are completely different from La Trobe's artwork and have the opposite effect to the effect of "music". I define this kind of sound as "sound".

From the point of view of the audience, "sound" effects them like this:

> They were all caught and caged; prisoners; watching a spectacle. Nothing happened. The tick tick of the machine was maddening (105)

The audience is waiting for the final act to open. The machine still sounds "tick" or "chuff" and there is no music. They are talking to each other about the previous act representing the Victorian era. However, they feel that "sound" is making them uneasy and crazy. This means that "sound" affects people and holds them in a negative way compared to "music", which can create an emotional union. People feel easy when they bathe in "music" like when Mrs. Manresa and Isa hum, but "sound" cannot provide them with such space. People feel that they are "caught and caged" when "sound" dominates the space. Finally, their feeling gets worse and the sounds come to strain their nerves.

> All their nerves were on edge. They sat exposed. The machine ticked. They were no music. The horns of cars on the high road were heard. And the swish of trees. They were neither one thing nor the other; neither Victorians nor themselves. They were suspended, without being, in limbo. Tick, tick, tick, went the machine. (*BA* 106)

They have been caught and caged once, but now they are rather "suspended" and "in limbo". They are "neither Victorians nor themselves" which means that they do not relate to the previous act of the pageant nor to real life either. They lost their sense of belonging. This can be thought of as an ultimate effect of "sound". It distracts people from the play and breaks the illusion, the emotional union which gives some comfort.

In addition to mechanical sounds and the sounds of clocks, the sound of planes is also counted as "sound". The sound of 12 planes flying in line cuts off the words of Streatfield, a clergyman when he gives his opinion on the pageant after the closing. While speaking he thought he heard some music, but he found "*That* was the music" (115). Ironically, the text describes the buzzing sound as music, but we know this sound can never replace real "music". Even if we take into account that the sound of planes implies the war (WWII) and it might be thought of as another music—a false music in other words— at the time of war. It is clearly an "interruption" (119) for the other listeners than Streatfield as the other listeners thought. Anyway, what I want to emphasise here is that the planes' sound

is a kind of “sound” and it represents a defeat of the play. In short, Woolf employs music which belongs to emotions and it keeps La Trobe’s illusion going—I define it as “music”— while she puts the sounds in the real life—“sound”— as opposed to “music”. “Music” includes songs and choruses with tunes, and natural sounds such as animal cries and rain as well. “Sound” includes man-made, mechanical sounds which divide time regularly, ignoring emotions. “Sound” sometimes has rhythm, but I consider that rhythm is different from the tunes in “music” here.

4, “Music” and “sound” for Woolf

On the novel, Elicia Clements comments: “the novel records the live events of the afternoon, as if a movie camera has been set up to record the pageant but also the audience watching it and the natural environment well beyond the limits of the makeshift stage” (180). As Clement suggests, Woolf tries to show us something like an archive of a live performance. That is, reading the novel means a reproduction of a live performance. Primarily, the conventional written novels are in a sense of

archive, but what Woolf tries through her final novel is to reconstruct the scenes and she wants it performative. The form of a live performance is her choice for this, which means that the text needs simultaneity even if it is a written work. The readers need to receive the events on the stage and the environment of the stage which appear to be uncontrolled by the narrator. Actually, the whole text is narrated, but the author tries to show all the environment as simultaneously as possible. Imagine you are sitting in a theatre and are watching a live performance. You see and listen to everything happening there, from the voices on the stage to other people's chatting or the noises around you. As Clements(180-181) points out, Woolf writes three different things at the same time during the scenes of the pageant to achieve this simultaneity. The first consists of the lines of the actors. The second is the activity of the audience recorded following dashes. Thirdly, the actions of the actors and the environment off the stage such as "a cow mooed", "a bird twittered", these given in parentheses. This method works as an element to make *Between the Acts* like a recording of a performance and makes you feel as if you were actually there.

Woolf intends to "show" the work not "tell" the narrative. Clements discusses this further and points out that language itself "performs", which means the language becomes non-discursive. For example, in expressions like "Words this afternoon ceased to lie flat in the sentence" (38), and "Words raised themselves and became symbolical" (45), the language lets the meaning go and it becomes dynamic as if it were performing in spite of its nature as a written text. Her suggestion is very interesting and important in demonstrating the potentiality of language in novels as a genre. She focuses on how the novel "shows" in a visual way, but I would like to focus on the way it does this in an auditory way. In other words, I emphasise that "sound" is used as a device in order to "show" the novel and make the novel resemble a live performance.

Utilizing actual sounds is also integral as an effect that lends realism to a novel. When the text says, "there is music", it does not always show the actual performance. This form of expression works like a musical score. A score does not convey any sense until players play music with it and the tune is delivered to a listener. When the text says "waltz" or "jazz",

the readers can experientially imagine or recognise what kind of tune should be played although they don't catch the actual sounds. On the other hand, "sound" which has no tune, and is thought of as an interruption to the pageant comes to have a great meaning. "Chuff" and "tick" are sounds that we hear as, and they sound within the novel as well. Readers can experience the space of the novel. Here is an example Woolf uses:

> 'Were they like that?' Isa asked abruptly. She looked at Mrs. Swithin as if she had been a dinosaur or a very diminutive mammoth. Extinct she must be, since she had lived in the reign of Queen Victoria.
>
> Tick, tick, tick, went the machine in the bushes.
>
> 'The Victorians,' Mrs. Swithin mused. 'I don't believe,' she said with her odd little smile, 'that there ever were such people. Only you and me and William dressed differently.'
>
> ...
>
> ... Well, if the thought gave her comfort, William and Isa smiled across her, let her think it.

Tick, tick, tick, the machine reiterated.

'Do you get her meaning?' said Mrs. Swithin alighting suddenly. 'Miss La Trobe's?' (104)

Thanks to the use of direct sounds instead of narrated the sounds, we can hear the conversations and the surrounding sounds at the same time in the same way as the characters. Let's look at the airplane scene again for another example.

'But there is still a deficit' (he consulted his paper) 'of one hundred and seventy-five pounds odd. So that each of us who has enjoyed this pageant has still an opp...' The word was cut in two. A zoom severed it. Twelve aeroplanes in perfect formation like a flight of wild duck came overheard. *That* was the music. The audience gaped; the audience gazed. Then zoom became drone. The planes had passed.

'... opportunity,' Mr. Streatfield continued, 'to make a contribution.' He signalled. Instantly collecting boxes were in operation. (114-115)

What I want to emphasise here is the way that the actual sound of the airplanes, the "zoom", divides Mr. Streatfield's sentence. Those who read this part cannot help hearing the sound and experiencing its interruption together with the characters in the novel. In another scene, “Ding dong”(118,119) has a similar effect. In *Mrs. Dalloway*, the bells of Big Ben and other churches have a greater meaning to the character,[4] but in *Between the Acts*, the fact that the actual sounds are provided to readers has a meaning.

In addition to the effect of “sound”, the quality of it is to do with Woolf’s intention as well. As I mentioned before, all the songs and melodies in the novel—“music”— belong to La Trobe’s artwork. (La Trobe’s artwork is a part of Woolf’s artwork though). The art of La Trobe, in which "music" influences people's emotions and unites without support from the meanings of language, is an illusion and is fragile in the face of the reality that "sound" represents. On the contrary, in Woolf’s sense, her art is everything including the pageant and actual life the characters are living in. That is, “sound” is rather necessary

for Woolf's art. What she really wants to show is something nearer to daily life,[5] or between illusion and reality. In her essay "A Sketch of the Past", she writes, "the whole world is a work of art;... we are parts of the work of art" (72). When she was a child, suddenly she understood the "wholeness" and that everything is a part of the whole world and for the rest of her life this remained a part of her philosophy. When it comes to her last novel, Woolf tries to show this through "sound" and "music" as it intertwines illusion with reality on the contrary to the previous novels which deal with traveling between the inner thoughts of certain characters and the outer world.

5. Conclusion

The British pageant movement in the early 20th century is a result of people's reactions to a modernized society. The ordinary people wanted to share their own history and perform it partly because of a desire to look back at their history.[6] This helped people to create a kind of sense of community since performers were usually not professional actors/actress. This phenomenon reflects on La Trobe's pageant to some extent.

However, I think that the main event in *Between the Acts* is the process itself rather than the historical contents of the pageant. In short, the novel is about an experience of an art. La Trobe's art seems successful to some extent before the pageant comes to the final act, the present age. Her struggle with the final act represents her trial to give a new experience. The pageant is about to develop into a new thing—beyond the illusion. Before, La Trobe manages to control her pageant—she directs the stage, shouting and giving signs. However, as long as her art is an illusion, it is vulnerable. Meanwhile, La Trobe cares too much about her audience, and she describes herself as a slave being under pressure. Her contradictory states of mind show that her art is vulnerable. And once or twice, in an area beyond her control, when nature takes control, the mooing of cows or the sounds of rain helps her art to survive. This means that her "control" is not always necessary. Furthermore, her illusion implies that the experienced history, or the authorized control is not continuous—it may be "illusion"—and suffocating. In the last act of the pageant, La Trobe gives up controlling the pageant by introducing mirrors. They cannot help playing themselves

for experiencing their own "history". Unfortunately, the power shift has not yet been accepted in *Between the Acts*. The audience is just confused, and La Trobe is pessimistic about her success. La Trobe's new art is too radical to be accepted. She does not appear in front of the audience after the performance ; she just leaves. One of the audience, Bartholomew, says, "'Thank the actors, not the author,' he said. 'Or ourselves, the audience'" (120). He seems to notice that the play is their own story, but he does not accept the message from La Trobe. La Trobe as a marginal existence--a woman, a lesbian, and a foreigner mean that she has little power to change people.

In conclusion, I would like to consider La Trobe's "authorship" referring to the passage from "A Sketch of the Past" as a hint.

> "Hamlet or a Beethoven quartet is the truth about this vast mass that we call the world. But there is no Shakespeare, there is no Beethoven; certainly and emphatically there is no God; we are the words; we are the music; we are the thing itself." ("A Sketch of the Past" 72)

La Trobe is almost anonymous in the sense that she is not Shakespeare, nor Beethoven. Her position is somewhere far from the place where a so called “grand narrative” creator should be, even though she is called a “boss”. She appears to be in control, but in reality, she demonstrates with her own performance that the audience plays a major part. Every single existence is *“orts, scraps and fragments”* as repeated in the pageant, but at the same time, every part is subjective and is integrated into the whole world, what we call “life”. Thus, every part of Life can become Art just as illusion and reality are frequently mixed in the novel *Between the Acts* through “music” and “sounds”. Furthermore, history and the present are intertwined, and a time axis seems to be broken. Only ourselves, who are "experiencing" the novel are certain. The narrative ends in “Then the curtain rose. They spoke” (130), but where is the border of the stage now? It is not easy for us to see the margin of the stage anymore. Where are we and whose story is here? Answering this question might be Woolf’s vision itself.

Chapter 5

Clarissa Dalloway's Party, Her "Art" of Life

1. Introduction

Mrs. Dalloway deals with one day in June. The story begins with Clarissa Dalloway going into Bond Street to get some flowers for her party, and then, it describes some hours spent preparing at home followed by the party itself. However, what Clarissa is preparing is rather her mind than concrete things for the party. There are no substantial obstacles to her holding a party. However, she feels a little uneasy about it. It is a little tricky for her to focus on the present while the ex-boyfriend, Peter Walsh, leads her thoughts back to the past. Other people such as her husband and a tutor of her daughter also intervene. So, what we should illuminate is how Clarissa makes her thoughts focus on her party and becomes confident about organizing it. In other words, the novel describes Clarissa's answer to Peter's unspoken question, "What's the sense of your parties?"(133).

"They're an offering"(133) is the answer that Clarissa gives to herself. It seems that these words have not been discussed

among critics because they are apparently obvious. However, as Clarissa says, it "sounded horribly vague" (133) and is rather tricky for me to catch the meaning of. Besides, the process by which her party really succeeds in being an "offering" is not so simple. Why does Clarissa describe her party like this? Motoko Ota notes that "space" in Woolf's parties(gatherings) includes the concept of time and that of space, and creates unity for a limited short time. That concept, of course, can be seen in Clarissa's party. However, Ota's concept does not answer my question. What I want to see is the relationship between this party and Clarissa and her psychological process through the organization of a party. In *Mrs. Dalloway*, there is another gathering we can recognize as a kind of party—Mrs. Bruton's luncheon—, but Mrs. Bruton's one is certainly not what Clarissa calls an "offering". For Clarissa, holding her own party is linked more directly to life. Clarissa, in reaction to other persons—especially men— who think her party snobbish, thinks "What she liked was simply life"(133). Thus, we can explain "life" through her act of holding a party, but "how" is the problem. I think that it must be linked to the idea of "offering".

Clarissa tries to describe her own performance,

> An offering for the sake of offering, perhaps. Anyhow, it was her gift. Nothing else had she of the slightest importance; could not think, write, even play the piano. (134)

Here, we can see that the performance is the purpose, and organizing parties is a gift and corresponds to writing or playing music. For Clarissa, holding parties is life itself, and at the same time, it is a creative activity. Clarissa tries to answer the question of "What's the sense of your parties?", and we see that her answer in her party itself; she shows the answer in the way she experiences the party.

2. An unstable state of mind

Clarissa has some difficulties in affirming her present state at the beginning. The state is described, for example, like this; "Oh if she could have had her life over again!"(11). This shows that Clarissa does not like her current situation. She is

longing to be like someone, like a woman named Lady Bexborough:

> But often now this body she wore (she stopped to look at a Dutch picture), this body, with all its capacities, seemed nothing—nothing at all. She had the oddest sense of being herself invisible; unseen; unknown; there being no more marrying, no more having of children now, but only this astonishing and rather solemn progress with the rest of them, up Bond Street, this being Mrs. Dalloway; not even Clarissa any more; this being Mrs. Richard Dalloway. (11)

She has a feeling of meaningless because she is just catching up with the society represented by the "splash" or "glitter" of Bond Street. In society, she is recognised as Mrs. Dalloway, but she feels that Mrs. Richard Dalloway does not truly show Clarissa, her real being. Mrs. Richard Dalloway is like a mask she wears.

The image other people have of her is summarized in the words of Mrs. Bruton; "It might have been better if Richard had married a woman with less charm, who would have helped him

more in his work" (197). Mrs. Bruton thinks Clarissa is too "charm" to support the husband. In other words, Clarissa is less attached to Richard Dalloway and her identity is beyond the one as Mrs. Dalloway. This disadvantages her in a society. In fact, Clarissa has been given her own bedroom since her illness, which can be seen as emphasizing her inadequacy as a wife. As a mother, she is not perfect. Her daughter Elizabeth is strongly affected by her tutor Kilman, and the tutor despises Clarissa. For example, Clarissa senses some scorn in the glance Kilman gives her when she is excited with her party. Clarissa cannot have an ideal relationship with her daughter; Peter thinks that "Probably she doesn't get on with Clarissa"(61). Her relationship with other people reflects her instability.

Peter Welsh is one of the reasons for this instability in Clarissa. His sudden appearance reminds her of their youth. Clarissa hears his present situation and sees how he has preserved the passionate life of his youth. He even keeps his habit of touching his pocket-knife. She thinks" thank Haven she had refused to marry him!"(50), but meantime, she also thinks " If I had married him, this gaiety would have been mine all

day!”（51）. For Clarissa, who is not fully satisfied with her identity as Mrs. Richard Dalloway, it is natural to imagine an unchosen life as better. However, her complicated thoughts conclude like this:

> Take me with you, Clarissa thought impulsively, as if he[Peter] were starting directly upon some great voyage; and then, next moment, it was as if the five acts of a play that had been very exciting and moving were now over and she had lived a lifetime in them and had run away, had lived with Peter, and it was now over. (51)

She overcomes her regret for Peter and comes back to the present. However, instead, Peter leaves his criticism of her parties behind, which means Clarissa feels uneasy, thinking “Both of them [Richard and Peter] criticised her very unfairly, laughed at her very unjustly, for her parties” (132). Clarissa senses that Peter thinks “The obvious thing to say of her was that she was worldly; cared too much for rank and society and getting on in the world” (83) even if he does not say this aloud. Clarissa needs to defend

herself against this unspoken criticism. That is, she needs not only to affirm her identity but to justify her party.

3. Out-of-the-ordinary and oneself

Clarissa tries to justify her party by showing that her performance is not for herself nor for specific persons but is aimed at creating a space where people get together. She monologues,

> ... what did it mean to her, this thing she called life? Oh, it was very queer. Here was So-and-so in South Kensington; some one up in Bayswater; and somebody else, say, in Mayfair. And she felt quite continuously a sense of their existence; and she felt what a waste; and she felt what a pity; and she felt if only they could be brought together (134).

She expects that something harmonious will happens when she gathers people in one place. This is a part of the meanings of "an offering for the sake of offering". The purpose of the party

is autonomous. In this sense, her parties are different from Mrs. Bruton's luncheon, where the hostess and the guests are bound by practical interests. Mrs. Bruton invites Richard Dalloway and Hugh Whitbread to her luncheon. Her intention is very clear and she asks for some help with having her article published in *The Times*. On the other hand, for Clarissa, the purpose of her parties is simply to "gather" people at one place. When the party begins, Clarissa feels worried that it will fail; "Oh dear, it was going to be a failure; a complete failure"(183-184) ; " it was all going wrong, all falling flat"(184) when she sees "people wandering aimlessly, standing in a bunch at a corner like Ellie Henderson"(184). What she cannot bear is to see such a situation because it proves that people do not have a sense of belonging at the party. The party space is not completed yet. Metaphorically, it is presented through a description of yellow curtains which sway into the wind from the open window. Or we can see it in Ellie Anderson, who is distracted by a draft. The situation changes when one of the guests, Ralph Lyon, pushes back the curtain when he talks with other guests. In this moment, Clarissa thinks " it wasn't a failure after all! It was

going to be all right now-her party. It had begun. It had started" (186). This is the moment when the party changes to something from nothing. That is, she recognises that she really has gathered or combined each existence in one place. At this point, she appears to have got back her confidence. Peter Walsh observes Clarissa "having that gift still; to be; to exist; to sum it all up in the moment as she passed" (190, underlining mine). This state of hers is the opposite of that in the scene at the beginning when she sees herself as "nothing". Now she is shining from inside. This means that she can reach this state only when she is free from the social role, manners, and social status by which meaning and value are given. Contrarily, just being there has meaning at her party. As Littleton suggests, Clarissa's party is subversive and non-judicial[1] because it expresses deviation from patriarchal society. Clarissa thinks of her party in this way;

> Every time she gave a party she had this feeling of being something not herself, and that everyone was unreal in one way; much more real in another. (187)

Her current state of being is not the self she has in her daily life as Mrs. Richard Dalloway. This is described as an "unreal" status, and she recognizes "unreal" elements also in her guests, partly because they are wearing party clothes, are cut off from their daily lives, and are unsettled in a good way. However, Clarissa thinks there is a reality in it. Clarissa sees the reality in people when they are outside the social system, as if they had taken off old clothes; in the space where all the people are required is to "gather", to have a sense of belonging, so that they are self-sufficient.

Nevertheless, in this phase, some snobbish quality remains in her party. For example, Peter Welsh describes those who care about the Prime Minister too much, and foregrounds their snobbish interests. Clarissa also feels a narcissistic satisfaction when she guides the Prime Minister into the room and introduces him to people. But we should not miss the fact that Clarissa notes that her triumphant satisfaction depends on the external phenomenon and contains a kind of hollowness. She seeks her value outside herself; the value is not autonomous.

This means that she has not given a perfect answer to Peter's question -- "What's the sense of your parties?"—nor been positive about herself yet.

4. The news of a dead person

During the party, Clarissa receives the news that a young man has killed himself. This news causes her to withdraw into a small room from the main hall of the party. The young man called Septimus Smith does not appear in Woolf's original idea for the novel. Septimus takes over some of Clarissa's roles (Woolf confesses that Septimus is a double for Clarissa). As for Septimus's structural role in the novel, James Naremore says, "Smith...has a partially redemptive-death, in that he gives to Mrs. Dalloway, quite unawares, an acute sense of her unity with life. He is also in a way the 'scapegoat' he considers himself, since Mrs. Dalloway experiences his death vicariously and gains a consolation from it" (106-107). Her "Sense of her unity with life" in Naremore's words shows Clarissa trying to resolve the conflict between her real self and the self which is expected to play a role in society. Let's see how Clarissa resolves this

conflict through the news of another person's death.

Clarissa has to face "death" through this piece of news for the first time since she started to prepare for the party. Until now, she has focused on the dynamic side of life—the party. Right after she hears the news, she blames Mrs. Bradshaw for delivering the news to her, because death could depress the mood of a lively party. In her mind, life and death lie at opposite extremes. We can see this binary opposition in her inner thoughts which describe it as on the one hand "The party's splendour" (201) and on the other the "suffocation of blackness" of death (202). However, in a way she is touched by death and longs for it. It is because her life does not seem perfect. As I mentioned in the previous part, her triumphant feeling partly depends on the fact that she satisfies herself through merely snobbish means. She notices that this feeling has a hollowness within it and she starts to be interested in death instead. She experiences Septimus's life and death vicariously. Finally, she comes to feel "There was an embrace in death" (202). Her thoughts continue:

> ...if this young man had gone to him[Sir Willian], and Sir William had impressed him, like that, with his power, might he not then have said (indeed she felt it now), Life is made intolerable; they make life intolerable, men like that? (202)

Here, Clarissa changes her idea on death and at this point, position at the opposite extreme to life changes when she is positive about death through Septimus's death.

Clarissa feels "The leaden circles dissolved in the air"(204) after she experiences pseudo-death through Septimus; She notices "She must assemble" (204), then she gets back to the party. What she really "assembles" is the guests at her party, and at the same time she integrates her divided spirits into one as well. Her action of going back to the party means she chooses to live, but it is more like coming back to life after her experience of a pseudo-death. Her experience allows her to accept the existence of death; she allows its hollow darkness to be there, but she does not stay there. Death does not stand at the opposite extreme from life anymore. Septimus's death has

melted into her life and turned into confidence in life. The process is like this: Clarissa thinks that Septimus's death is defiance and a defense against other people, so it is a way of preserving one's spirit. In other words, Septimus contains a self which needs to confront others. His self is incoherent because it is divided in two; a self which other people require him to be and an interior self which he thinks of as being the real self. When one does not feel that one shows oneself well enough, friction arises, and the self tries to preserve itself mentally. Every thought and action heads inside in order to keep the self safer. In a sense, people can be selfish in this state. The death of Septimus leads Clarissa to let such an egoistic self go and she appreciates her current situation. Then, she can accept herself and others. The text signals it by letting her thoughts come to her husband, Richard;

> Even now, quite often if Richard had not been there reading the *Times*, so that she could crouch like a bird and gradually revive, send roaring up that immeasurable delight, rubbing stick to stick, one thing with another, she

must have perished. (203)

What is important here is not whether Richard recognises what Clarissa notices or not but the fact that Clarissa gets to affirm herself. She improves as her thoughts move from Septimus to Richard, death to life.

Katherine Mansfield's *The Garden Party* also includes the news of someone's death, right before a tea party. It is another version of death and a party. *The Garden Party* helps us to see Clarissa's life in *Mrs. Dalloway* more clearly. In *The Garden Party*, Laura, one of the daughters of the host, suggests that they should cancel the tea party when she hears the news of a fatal accident occurring to a neighbor in front of the gate; "But we can't possibly have a garden-party with a man dead just outside the front gate" (*The Collected Stories* 204). Unlike in *Mrs. Dalloway*, the man is killed in an accident. However, the news shocks Laura greatly as news of the other death does Clarissa. Although Laura asks her mother for advice, the mother just answers, " 'But, my dear child, use your common sense. It's only by accident we've heard of it. If someone had died there

normally....we should still be having our party, shouldn't we?'" (*The Collected Stories* 205). Here, the death of the other person and the party are completely separated. The host holds the party and it goes well, without the death having any effects. And then, after the party, Laura is asked to visit the family of the deceased, and she faces the dead man firsthand.

> He was given up to his dream. What did garden-parties and baskets and lace frocks matter to him? He was far from all those things. He was wonderful, beautiful. While they were laughing and while the band was playing, this marvel had come to the lane. Happy ... happy ... All is well, said that sleeping face. This is just as it should be. I am content. (*The Collected Stories* 209-210)

Laura is overwhelmed by the beauty of death. In this sense, Laura accepts death as Clarissa does. However, unlike Woolf, Mansfield gives only "simply marvellous" (*The Collected Stories* 210) to death, which means we can see just an admirable impression to death in *The Garden Party*. At first, the news of

a dead man seems to Laura to be depressing or piteous. But after she faces the dead body firsthand, it turns to be sublime in the comparison with life. As a result, Mansfield shows the snobbish or philistine features of parties. Laura explains about death to her brother who comes for his little sister; " 'It isn't life,' she stammered, 'isn't life –' But what life was she couldn't explain"(*The Collected Stories* 205). Death is still at the other end of life, and it is death through which one considers what life is. Both Clarissa and Laura have this idea in common. Nevertheless, Laura, who is too overwhelmed by death, does not reach the idea that she goes back to life; she cannot really capture her life. Life is still a mystery for her. Thus, although death contributes to Laura's development, it does not affect the course of the party. It does not occur to young Laura to "assemble" like Clarissa. Above all, the two parties have different features. Clarissa's party is more like a ritual. Clarissa assembles people in the party through a scapegoat, the sacrifice of Septimus, and thanks to him, the party approaches to the state of an "offering".

5. An "Offering" in the true sense

After Clarissa goes through Septimus's death, her awareness comes back to life, and at the same time, she develops from a narcissistic or defensive self to a pure and selfless one. We can see this through the observations and feelings of the guests. After her return to the main hall, she is just observed by other people and the point of view of the text leaves Clarissa (and never goes back to her). She is observed mainly by Peter, Sally, and Ellie Henderson. Clarissa literally becomes "selfless" on the surface of the text. This technique is helpful in allowing us to see the element of offering in her party. First, let's look at it from the point of view of her cousin, Ellie. She is not a welcome guest because of her lack of a sense of fashion. She looks shabby and in fact, she is far from being a sociable person. As Clarissa expects, Ellie comes to the party in an old shabby black dress and a shawl. Ellie senses that she might not be a favourite of Clarissa's and that she is not welcome. However, she has no complaint about the party when she leaves it. The text describes it, " Even Ellie Henderson was going, nearly last of all, though no one had spoken to her, but she had wanted to

see everything, to tell Edith"(213). Observing the other guests is a form of communication for her. She feels that she belongs to the party and values herself for being there.

Sally Seton, who has no invitation to the party says, "when I heard Clarissa was giving a party, I felt I couldn't not come—must see her again" (209). Sally's marriage with a man from a working-class background has kept Clarissa away and Sally feels disappointed with Clarissa's behaviour. When she talks about Clarissa, Sally says "Clarissa was at heart a snob" (208), but she has "that enthusiasm which Peter used to love her for"(210). Sally has conflicting feelings about Clarissa. However, she is definitely attracted by something in Clarissa and her party. While Peter and Sally are talking, they recognise that they "did not lose the power of feeling" (212) even though they have lost their youth. This is what they can find at her party. In a sense, they come to the party to reconfirm their pure being—feeling— through Clarissa's existence. They seem self-sufficient in the end.

As for Peter, he has a big reason to come to Clarissa: he had been in love with her. He still likes Clarissa, but at the same

time, he criticizes her. He is trying to deal with his feelings, and the novel ends with Peter's inner thoughts when he hesitates to go with Sally to say goodbye to Richard,

> "What is this terror? what is this ecstasy? he thought to himself. What is it that fills me with extraordinary excitement? It is Clarissa, he said. For there she was." (213)

Where is Clarissa at the moment above? Actually, while Clarissa is in a small room alone and after that, Peter asks himself "'...where is Clarissa'"(204) ; "'Where's Clarissa?'"(204). Now, he has found the answer; "there she was". This final statement of Peter's seems a satisfactory feeling caused by his recognition of her existence standing by herself. That is, eventually, he feels satisfied with being here, in the space which Clarissa has created. At Clarissa's party, her life itself affects the guests while she experiences her own consciousness expands. At Mrs. Bruton's luncheon, guests are required to be helpful to her and they might receive benefits for

their careers. There must be some tension in such a space. On the other hand, as I have said before, Clarissa's party has no other motivation than itself. The experience of the moments there is the purpose. The guests do not have to do anything except be there with a sense of belonging. Like Ellie, Sally, and Peter, the other guests must feel satisfied as well, having "extraordinary excitement" to some extent. Even if Peter's attachment to Clarissa is a reason for his satisfaction, he knows that their ways will not cross anymore. Most readers do not disagree that he really understands this. So we can generalise that Clarissa's party gives the guests a sense of the value of "just being". The value is autonomous, not dependent on other purposes or roles. In this sense, Peter's excitement can be an answer to the question, "What's the sense of your parties?". Her party values Clarissa for being there.

Handling one's own party as a hostess may be equivalent to ruling one's kingdom as a queen. Clarissa can brighten herself at her own party without a lot of effort. However, we cannot miss the principle of her party since it is something to do with the meaning of "offering" in her sense. Her kingdom—her party

space—is subversive of existing society and more importantly, it is non-judicial.[2] This means that her guests are all able to shine as they are. So, the whole atmosphere is warm at the end. In addition to the guests, the father and the daughter, Richard Dalloway and Elizabeth, discover a new relationship.

> And Richard and Elizabeth were rather glad it was over, but Richard was proud of his daughter. And he had not meant to tell her, but he could not help telling her. He had looked at her, he said, and he had wondered, who is that lovely girl? and it was his daughter! That did make her happy. (213)

Here, her father expresses Elizabeth's beauty impartially. Elizabeth is not with her tutor, Kilman, nor with her mother, Clarissa. She is alone. Her value is not affected by other people. She is another example shining by herself in the space of the party. Above all, Clarissa recognises her own self wanting to be pure self, but the self tends to go along with egoistic, narcissistic satisfaction. Then, through her ritualistic

experience of Septimus's death, she comes to be a giver. She does not rule, but she shines herself and her light helps others to remember that they can also shine. I think this process is what she means by "offering".

Offering in Clarissa's sense does not mean just "giving" in a self-sacrificing spirit. In this sense, she is different from Mrs. Ramsay in *To the Lighthouse*. Mrs. Ramsay is rarely called by her first name but is recognized as "Mrs. Ramsay". The painter, Lily Briscoe portrays her bitterly; "Mrs. Ramsay had given. Giving, giving, giving, she had died—and left all this. Really, she was angry with Mrs. Ramsay"(*To the Lighthouse* 163). "Offer" and "give" appear to be similar, but in Mrs. Ramsay's "giving", the spirit of self-sacrifice is superior to Clarissa's. Mrs. Ramsay, who is always supportive to her family and people around her has a strong image of a mother at home. This is different from Clarissa, who is portrayed as a person whose behaviour is more like a girl's than a mother's. Mrs. Ramsay always stands between people and tries to soften the tension between them, as in the case of Mr. Ramsay and his son. When she sees an unmarried man and a woman, she tries to match them.

When people are at the table, what she thinks about is how she can manage the moment without failure. Although she always thinks about other people's "unity", she has little time for herself. That is, Mrs. Ramsay plays her role in society very well as if she serves other people. Sometimes she becomes conscious of this state of mind with dissatisfaction, but in the narrative, she does not openly express her inner conflict. On the other hand, Clarissa, who has a bigger inner conflict— a conflict between her own self as an individual and a self that has a social role—tries to resolve it, and hold a party. It is because in her party, she can hold both selves—her pure self and her self as a giver. During the time of the party, she "gives" a comfortable space but nothing is "taken" from her. She can and does give very naturally. However, to reach this state, she needs to develop. She cannot really reach it by just satisfying her pride. Through Septimus's death, she realizes and understands her inner peace, and gets ready for giving in the true sense. This is the real meaning of her offering. It is a giving activity without any sacrifice or selfish egoism, but with pure self, pure pleasure. In this sense, in terms of *To the Lighthouse*,

Clarissa's two states of mind divide into the minds of Mrs. Ramsay and Lily Briscoe.[3]

6. Conclusion: Woolf's point of view

How does Woolf see the skill of holding parties as equal to other artistic skills like writing or playing music? She uses "party" as a motif to utilize its feature of the out-of-the-ordinary. She makes Clarissa's creation be seen like fiction, in a way. As my analysis in the previous chapters shows, in each of her works, Woolf applies various ways of expression like music, sounds, painting, and visual images to the form of language to show her vision in the genre of the novel. This is all because what she tries to show is not events happening in the outer world but inner events. She does not try to represent the events. She just tries to show what is happening in people's minds since she thinks what constitutes true experience. For her, utilizing other forms in a novel seems a better way. This method also helps to defamiliarize language. As for Clarissa's party, it can be seen as a defamiliarizing masculine society, which is determined by manners and power. Her party shows another possible role in a

special space—outside daily life. This is Clarissa's creativity.

If we see the existing society as "reality", Clarissa's party can be thought of as fiction. Deborah Guth says, "Woolf has created the prototype of imaginative self-evasion" (41). Guth seems to think Clarissa is escaping from reality. However, where is "reality" for an individual being? In my opinion, we cannot criticize Clarissa for escaping from reality. When there is a conflict between oneself and society, trying to oppose it is not necessarily the only way of solving it. Creating another space with other rules seems smarter. Clarissa's performance is a creative activity making a fiction-like space, where an individual wrapped up in her/his role in society recovers her/his pure existence. In fact, the text refers Clarissa seeing people's reality during her party. In this sense, she creates a new reality. In other words, she shows us a new perspective of world through her party. Thus, Clarissa can be thought as a smart creator and her party is clearly a kind of arts which shows us a "reality".

Moreover, a party is very lively. The space is completed by resonance of the participants. It is a subjective, sensory art like music or the visual arts. It seems that Woolf offers an art

to show where “reality” is through performative art, the party here. Living itself is an art but it requires certain skills. Clarissa reaches a state of self-realisation in the process of organizing a party. She may continue to hold parties to stay alive and maintain a pure self. This is her art of life.

Conclusion

As I have discussed, each of Virginia Woolf's novels is full of visual images, sounds, and music. Each of her works has a different texture probably because she makes experiments with different methods for the better. In *The Voyage Out*, I discussed that she used a lot of images of music to describe the heroine's powerful inner mind for creating. Woolf did not insert the actual sounds or tunes. Instead, she described the composers' powerfulness and tried to put the impression into words. The heroine, Rachel Vinrace was building her strong identity through such a strong piece of music as if she built a concrete and solid construction. Rachel's fiancé, Terence allegorically represented written words, and through the conversation between Rachel and Terence, differences between the two forms of art were presented. With Rachel's uniqueness as a young female pianist, Woolf mingled the concepts of music and written words, but her trial for settlement of her style of art failed because of Rachel's death, who appears to be burdened with a role as a female artist, a new generation, a rookie.

In *To the Lighthouse*, I saw a parallel between the act of painting and that of writing. One of the characters, Lily Briscoe struggled for existence as a female painter. She gradually gained her confidence while confronting the negative but repetitive phrase, "women can't paint, women can't write". This repetitive phrase was inscribed in the text like strokes of a painting brush. So, the whole narrative could be compared to a canvas. In this sense, Woolf utilised painting acts to show how she create the novel. The text gave us an image that a painting brush moves with rhythms and put colours as Lily's thoughts developed. This meant the narrative emphasised that it is not linear, but has multiple layers.

In *The Waves*, I showed the visual structure of the narrative focusing on the absent hero. Percival, who wasn't given a voice to soliloquise helped the narrative to have the core. He bound up the narrative which consisted of six soliloquies so that *The Waves* maintained both the individual existence and wholeness or oneness at the same time. Each one of the characters showed one's struggling with grasping the moment, or recognising their lives with plenty of visual images. Their struggle was derived

from the desire for having an anchor in the flowing time of life like waves, and their challenge to hold the moment was represented through the act of making the triumphant moment into shapes. The existence of Percival helped them to do this. However, after the death of Percival, the six characters no longer succeeded to capture things(time/place) as distinct shapes. This was Woolf's perspective on human life—nothing stayed forever. Death broke Life's trial of "shaping". Then, in the latter part of the narrative, Bernard as a storyteller replaced Percival's position and tried to describe life by giving up telling stories, which meant he got a way to deform Life to fight with Death, a broker. Bernard foregrounded one of the features of language or a story—defining and fixing. I suggested that instead of defining things with words, Woolf inserted plenty of forms or shapes into the text and dissolve them. It was as if she deflected Life from being fixed in a simple plot.

The fourth chapter discussed *Between the Acts*. This novel most directly showed us actual sounds. I pointed out that Woolf used sounds differently and her use was categorised into "sound" and "music". "Sound" included actual sounds which had no

melodies or were artificial while “music” had melodies such as songs and natural sounds. With interweaving these two categorised sounds, the text displayed illusion art and real life. This difference was identified through the playwriter, La Trobe. Woolf's last novel, different from other earlier novels, avoided leading the readers into the character's inner thoughts deeply but showed them the outer world auditorily. Woolf found a new method to represent her “reality” here and it seemed to me that she departed from the illusion art. Her creative work stood nearby daily lives, moreover, her inner being and the outer world came to unite or mingle together in her artwork.

I discussed *Mrs. Dalloway* in the fifth chapter. This analysis tended to be rather on the theme than on its form. In this novel, in which there apparently was neither artist nor motif of art, I insisted there was: it was Clarissa Dalloway. Her skill of holding parties was equivalent to other artistic skills such as playing the piano. The narrative could be regarded as the process of Clarissa’s creating her own party though it was psychological; the psychological process in which she got back her real identity as *Clarissa* not *Mrs. Dalloway*. I started my

discussion with her words when she explained her party, "They're an offering" (*MD* 133) and "An offering for the sake of offering" (*MD* 134). My focus was on her ritual-like psychological process of attainment of the state in which she "offer" her party in the true sense. Thanks to this process, when the party ended, Clarissa felt self-sufficient, and her guests also felt in the same way. She overcame her narcissistic ego going through the other's death, a pseudo-death. It was the moment her purpose of holding parties was proved as self-evidential one—it was "offering". Like the other works, the main character, Clarissa Dalloway came to recognise her identity and feel confident about herself through her creation, but the text ended in defamiliarising the existing society. It is because her party was another space separate from society, but the space in which there is the *reality* of people as pure beings.

As above, this thesis showed that the five novels had unique use of the forms of art. I pointed out that their use ranged from just a motif to the concepts of each form of art. What these novels had in common can be said that each work demonstrated a process— a process of unity, recognition of life—of recreaion.

In other words, Woolf's art consists of "process". However, we, the readers are not informed where to go (she did not even show us Lily Briscoe's finished work in *To the Lighthouse*). Instead, we are informed and seen binary opposition in ones' minds being dissolved; coexisting of women and men, life and art, outer world and inner world. This is the focal point for Woolf. She emphasises one's inner events in a certain moment more than the surfaced physical outcomes. She tries to show us something happened in mind but has not been shaped into words yet, or something disappears for instance before we catch the full picture of it. She thinks it is the *reality*. Moreover, her narratives tend not to have authorised narrators. Instead of placing authorised narrators, with applying other forms of art to her texts, she encourages readers to produce their own interpretation or experience itself. The readers are not given comments by a narrator, but through the plenty of images representing impressions of something—sometimes with sounds—it is readers who reproduce impressions or emotions. This is the effect that other forms of art have than literature has. Moreover, without authorised narrators, the narratives look like

they are not controlled. This technique also helps the readers to evoke direct experience because we, the readers think we are reading/seeing/hearing everything from every direction.

As I have mentioned before, although the five novels appeared to have different tastes, Life and Death are always there. We can see how human beings live with some struggling among other people. It seems to me that what Woolf wanted in her real life is shown in *Mrs. Dalloway*, but as La Trobe says in *Between the Acts*: "reality too strong", the outer world was much more powerful than Woolf's sensitive and rich inner world in the time of Men. Even though, I insist she achieved "decreation" in her professional life.

Notes

Introduction

1. 『モダニズムの詩学―解体と創造』
2. OED defines “decreation” as “the undoing of creation; depriving existence; annihilation”.
3. See 『モダニズムの詩学』, pp.6-10.
4. See Quentin Bell op, cit.p.106.
5. Ibid.p.107.
6. For example, Joyce uses sounds without contexts to break the meanings.

Chapter 1

1. In later scene, Rachel was reading William Cowper.
2. According to the note in the Penguin Version(Penguin, 1992), Virginia Woolf wrote to Saxson Sydney-Turner on 30 January in 1920: “I'm altering Op.112, to 111”(Letters, II, pp.419). Oxford version (published in 2001) applies Op.112. A version published in America accepted VW’s alternation, but it seems that some other publishers did not follow.
3. See note in *The Voyage Out*, OUP, 2001.
4. Rachel reads the translation of *Tristan* (*Voyage Out* 33), and

also has a score of Wagner's *Tristan* (*Voyage Out* 46).

5.In *Granite and Rainbow*.

Chapter 2

1. See "Aurora Leigh" in *The Common Reader Vol.2*.

2. See Woolf Online: Gallery – To The Lighthouse - Berg Materials - Notes For Writing Item5

3. See *Parerga und Paralipomena* (1851).

4. See the paper which Woolf delivered to The Women's Service League.

5. See Roger Fry's *Cézanne: A Study of His Development*.

6. Alice van Burden Kelly, *To the Lighthouse: The Marriage of Life and Art*. "Like Fry's pure art, the novel is composed of a balance of forms that evoke an appropriate response in the viewer" (69).

7. See Roger Fry's *Cézanne: A Study of His Development*.

Chapter 3

1. See Jane Goldman, *The Feminist Aesthetics of Virginia Woolf: Modernism, Post-Impressionism and the Politics of the Visual*.

See also Sue Roe, “The Impact of Post-impressionism”.

2. See Maggie Humm, “Virginia Woolf and Visual Culture” or *Modernist Women and Visual Cultures: Virginia Woolf, Vanessa Bell, Photography and Cinema.*, for example.

3. Hulcoop thinks Percival “rides his body in pursuit of living at a gallop across life”. (Hulcoop 472)

4. *The Waves*, (28) “it is Percival I need; for it is Percival who inspires poetry”.

5. See Sue Row. “We think, we remember, we associate, through solid objects, as the painters know...And yet, this practice of looking may, ... coexist with something that makes us ‘sink deeper and deeper, away from the surface, with its hard separate facts’” (175) .

6. “But here and now we are together We have come together, at a particular time, to this particular spot. We are drawn into this communion by some deep, some common emotion. ”(95)

7. See『ヴァージニア・ウルフの「パーティ空間」』 (105). Ota notes that a party has the role of socializing. She says that in a party, people connect and free themselves from clock time although a party is temporary and fragile. Ota calls such time,

including Percival's party, "party space", which includes conceptually both time and space. The "globe" I am discussing here is a similar concept to Ota's "party space".

8. See *The Waves* (213), "we felt enlarge itself round us the huge blackness of what is outside us, of what we are not".
9. To consider another view of the symbolic nature of Percival, see P&M Havard-Williams("Perceptive Contemplation in the Work of Virginia Woolf"). They note that the sun or light plays crucial roles throughout Woolf's works, interpreting her novels as a creative process. In their analysis, P&M Havard-Wiiliams suggest that the sun/light can be a symbol of "reality-of-beauty", "hypnotic agent in a psychological level", and "chief personage" like in (Post)Impressionist paintings.
10. See the interludes in *The Waves*, for example.
11. See my chapter 3.

Chapter 4

1. See Ota Motoko. pp.195-196.
2. See *Between the Acts* (74), "Every moment the audience slipped the noose; split up into scraps and fragments."

3. Caddy-Keane thinks the pageant is a revival of communal art, which has been lost for a long time, creating collective emotions.
4. In *Mrs. Dalloway* (53-54), the bells of Big Ben and St. Margaret announcing half past eleven influence the character's thoughts.
5. See P&M Havard-Williams (108). "For surely artistic pleasure is greatest when dream is not too far removed from reality, and when the connection between fact and phantasy is sufficiently evident for comprehension?"
6. See "Restaging the Past".

Chapter 5

1. See Littleton, p37, 52-53.
2. See Littleton. I referred him on page 127.
3. Lily Briscoe in *To the Lighthouse*, tries to build her own self through painting. Naremore says,"Clarissa is as much an artist as Lily Briscoe. She creates, or at any rate discloses to herself if to no one else, a sense of unity out of apparent separateness or chaos" (Naremore 105).

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