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A Paradox of ‘A House of History’s Own’: in Virginia Woolf’s *Orlando* and *A Room of One’s Own*

Masami Usui

I. Introduction

In *Orlando* and *A Room of One’s Own*, Woolf attempts to reconstruct a paradox of ‘a house of history’s own’ in order to encode the neglected and unarticulated voices of women “in the pursuit of truth” (*AROO* 27) which was overwhelmed by all the male forces issued throughout centuries since the establishment of feudal England. In order to underline the textual and political discourse that ignored, trivialized, and marginalized women’s history, experience, and abilities, *Orlando* and *A Room of One’s Own* connote the paradox which is embedded in the ideological aspects represented by the architectural embodiments as men’s houses which were erected and established in the British Isles as men’s land.

The comparative studies on *Orlando* and *A Room of One’s Own* have received some attentions. In 1968, Herbert Marder first points out that *Orlando* and *A Room of One’s Own* “represent a summing up of Virginia Woolf’s feminist ideas as of the late twenties” (24) and considers those two as “companion volumes” (26). In 1980, Maria DiBattista regards *Orlando* as “a fanciful vindication of the rights of literary women,” and notes that it “remained for *A Room of One’s Own* to convert fantasy into dogmatic prescription” (147). J.J. Wilson, moreover, calls a set of these novels “these two soeurs junelles [twin sisters]” (183). Sandra Gilbert remarks that
Orlando is “a text complementary to A Room of One’s Own” (21). More recently, Kari Elise Lokke is convinced that Orlando “brilliantly embodies the seemingly contradictory political and aesthetic theories of A Room of One’s Own in a vision of the comic sublime” (236). Although these critics point out the parallelism between Orlando and A Room of One’s Own, regretfully enough, there have been no extensive and thorough critical comparative studies on those works. In analyzing Woolf’s revolt against the British Empire as a house of men’s own manipulated in those works, it is necessary to examine the shared controversial facets which motivate Woolf to pursue her search for a room of one’s own.

Orlando was published on October 11, 1928, “the day on which the novel’s last chapter takes place and Orlando arrives at the present time” (Lyons xlv); whereas A Room of One’s Own finalizes its statement on October 26, 1928. In completing these apparently different kinds of works at the same time, Woolf’s internal conflict reaches to the same point where “the androgynous mind” (AROO 97) is an inevitable factor, and a purely private space with financial independence becomes a key for a woman writer to establish herself and survive in the twentieth century. Tracing the reign of Elizabeth I to Woolf’s contemporary era, Orlando and A Room of One’s Own embody the multilayered and integrated paradox of self-search embedded within the male-created British history. The paradox also exists in a series of striking transitions of space-search; from an attic room of the great house in the seventeenth century, a drawing room of a London townhouse in the eighteenth century, a sitting room of a domestic house in the nineteenth century, to a locked room of one’s own in a house of everyone’s own in the twentieth century. These striking transitions can be observed and explored in the relationship between literature and
architecture. The representative architectures generate the power which contributes to creating the British history. Focusing on both Knole in *Orlando* and Oxbridge in *A Room of One’s Own*, it is significant to discover the paradox which Woolf places in a relationship between literature and architecture within a house of history’s own.

II. A Paradox in a Relationship between Literature and Architecture

It is important to locate the exploration in assuming that women writers were excluded from both spaces — the house of men’s own and the university of men’s own — which accommodated the male-dominated political, social, legal, and economical power throughout British history. A paradox exists in a relationship between literature and architecture in a highly diversified transition from Orlando in the great house, through Judith Shakespeare possessing neither a house nor a room, through Mary Beton and Mary Seton and their mothers without any right of inheritance and possession of property, to Mary Carmichael in a bed-sitting room. A set of parallels — between Orlando and Judith Shakespeare and between Orlando and Mary Carmichael — assign a crucial effect of sexual politics on the interrelation between women’s literature and men’s architecture. Both *Orlando* and *A Room of One’s Own* engrave the Tudor Age as the ground of the English monarchy and patriarchy where the male-centered power controlled literature and where the female creative power was entirely marginalized. The freedom and privilege of being involved in literature is founded upon the political and economical power of the British monarchy and its society that plays a role as the patron of literature and learning.

Orlando’s possession of a great house manifests this privilege of enjoying literature; while Judith Shakespeare’s lack of her house is foregrounded in
the women's structural and institutionalized poverty that deprives them of the freedom and priority of an access to literature. At the beginning of Orlando, Orlando at sixteen is deeply involved in his creative activities of writing poetry and drama in his attic room of the great house in the Elizabethan Era and becomes a patron of Nick Green during the reign of King James. On the other hand, Woolf's fictional figure, Judith Shakespear "before seventeen," in A Room of One's Own, has no way of presenting her talents which are equal with those of her brother William Shakespear; consequently, she is beaten by her father, leaves her father's house, migrates to London by herself, becomes a mistress of Nick Green and pregnant, and commits suicide without any literary work or even one word left. Orlando as a son of a noble man is shaped by the historically male-dominated policy-making and control of the policy processes. Judith Shakespeare as a daughter of the middle-class educated man, however, links accounts of battered women's experiences to constructions of battering and structural issues and concludes how women's political and institutionalized weakness results in sexual subordination and eternal silence.¹

The parallelism between Orlando and Judith Shakespeare, both of whom confront and contrast Nick Green, also symbolizes a tension between a well-situated yet distorted male view of literature and a dislocated yet well-oriented female view of literature. Women's potential is, however, entirely sacrificed for the male-controlled misjudgement upon literature. Nick Green is "an imaginary writer" who is "partly based on the Elizabethan hack writer, pamphleteer, poet and playwright, Robert Greene (1558-92), notorious for his envy of Shakespeare" (O 243). Judith Shakespeare's challenge to Nick Green is enormously more provocative than Orlando's challenge to Nick Green. The betrayal of Orlando and Judith Shakespeare
by Nick Green, therefore, embodies the overall destructive force inhering in literature which excluded the voices of unknown people and which approved the known male poets who were financially supported and evaluated by the men of power.

The intermediate procedure from the parallel between Orlando and Judith Shakespeare to that between Orlando and Mary Carmichael is followed by Woolf’s interrogation of gender and the legally institutionalized discourse that is questioned by Mary Seton. It is generally known that Orlando’s loss of the right of an heir to the great house caused by her sex change in the eighteenth century reflects Vita Sackville-West’s loss of Knole when the title and the house were “entailed to pass through the male line,” to her father’s younger brother Charles after her father’s death in 1928 and then to her cousin Eddy in 1962 (Robert Sackville-West 94). Woolf’s sympathy to Vita without Knole is also said to have motivated Woolf to write Orlando. Woolf’s compassion, moreover, centers on problematic women’s legal situations as well as the institutions that frame those situations.

Moreover, it is equally useless to ask what might have happened if Mrs. Seton and her mother and her mother before her had amassed great wealth and laid it under the foundations of college and library, because, in the first place, to earn money was impossible for them, and in the second, had it been possible, the law denied them the right to possess what money they earned. (AROO 24)

The women’s legal and economical oppressions are identical before 1882 when the husband is prohibited from disposing the wife’s property. The women’s legal oppression and poverty as its consequence deprives women of possessing all the houses ranging from a private house like Knole to a
house of education and learning like Oxbridge. Orlando as a woman in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries is a Mary Seton who represents the weaker vessel that suffers the unequal and subordinate position determined by the legal institution.

The parallel between Orlando and Mary Carmichael adds further dimensions and complexities in the course of establishing women's literature. Orlando's privilege of having an attic room where he writes a pile of poems is, next, situated against Mary Carmichael's lack of "desirable things, time, money, and idleness" (AROO 93) in a bed-sitting room where she, as an unknown woman, is writing her first novel in the twentieth century. This tension is ironically resolved in Lady Orlando's reencounter with Nick Green, now Sir Nicholas, as "the most influential critic of the Victorian age" (O 193), at the beginning of the twentieth century. "The Oak Tree" which was first written in 1586 is transformed into a new version after three hundred years' revisions. Woolf criticizes the fact that the fate of 300-year-old "The Oak Tree" has to depend upon the fame and power of Sir Nicholas and of the publishing company as another men's house. Orlando as an unknown young woman writer in the seventeenth century is a Judith Shakespear without a house, a room, and all the other kinds of privileges. Orlando in the twentieth century is a Mary Carmichael with a small space which allows her to concentrate on writing her first book, Life's Adventure. Both Judith Shakespeare and Mary Carmichael portray the women whose talents, abilities, and even the real selves were suppressed under the enormous power of all the houses such as the British monarchy, the father's house, and the husband's house, and the publishing house. The title of Orlando's work, "The Oak Tree," has lost its original meaning and the manuscript consists of Orlando's 300-year life of
adventure, that is, formerly unrecorded, untold, and unknown stories in the history of literature. The lost part of literature is discovered, revived, and articulated in voices sprung from small rooms whose walls “are permeated by their [women’s] creative force” (AROO 87) by the twentieth century. The parallel between Orlando and Mary Carmichael illustrates another feminist discourse in the contextual analysis of the architectural and literary embodiments as the capsulated history.

Knole and Oxbridge that lock out women are located against “A Room of One’s Own,” as a refugee which liberates women from all the restrictions, conventions, and powers. A new space is reborn with Orlando’s “The Oak Tree” and Mary Carmichael’s Life’s Adventure as well as with Vita without Knole and Jane Ellen Harrison of Newnham College outside of Cambridge. Both Knole as a house of men’s own and Oxbridge as a university of men’s own are engraved as the foreground of the women’s neglected life and lost self. The women’s self-search which is questioned, examined, and ultimately accomplished both in Orlando and A Room of One’s Own crucially originates in challenging the foundation and establishment of male space which reflects that of architecture itself. The architecture that houses the ideology as the political, social, economical, and legal disclosure is illustrated within a frame of literature. The paradox in a relationship between literature and architecture is what Woolf intends to mold in her own self-search that launched in her revolt against her father’s house, library, and room, and that continued as women’s objection against the British society as a house of history’s own.

III. A House of Men’s Own in Orlando

As an heir of the great house, Orlando possesses all the privileges to
occupy a man’s own space ranging from the banqueting-hall to the attic room. The banqueting hall is a public place where Orlando welcomes Queen Elizabeth and her party; on the contrary, the attic room is a purely private space where Orlando is indulged into writing poetry and drama. Orlando’s prolificness proven by “no more perhaps than twenty tragedies and a dozen histories and a score of sonnets” (O 18) embodies Orlando’s intermixed public and private luxuries. The luxuries both in public and in private are primarily grounded upon Orlando’s social and financial status as a nobleman with a great house which is based on Knole.

Orlando’s possession of the great house represents the establishment of the British monarchy of the Tudor Age. In Orlando, Elizabeth I in her late years “made over formally, putting her hand and seal finally to the parchment, the gift of the great monastic house that had been the Archbishop’s and then the King’s to Orlando’s father” (O 17). Though there is no official record, it is generally believed that Elizabeth I gave Knole to her cousin and councillor, Thomas Sackville. Vita remarks in Knole that in June 1566 “Queen Elizabeth had presented him [Thomas Sackville] with Knole, but the house was then both let and sub-let, it was not until 1603 that he was able to take possession” (50). These remarks and beliefs are, however, constructed by more subtle and complicated incidents that had influence on the shifts of the political power. The historical background and changed owners of Knole is complex and intriguing enough to retell the structural and interactional elements of the British monarchy as the most dominant institution.

The foundation of Knole — the park, the gatehouse, the tower, even an interior of Knole — connotes the early history as the house for the people of power especially during the transitional period from 1456 to 1566. This
100-year period witnesses the most remarkable changes of Knole in respect of the political power struggle. The enclosure of the park is the first foundation of Knole’s position and meaning in the British history. The earliest record of Knole is set in 1456 when Thomas Bourchier, Archbishop of Canterbury bought the manor of Knole from Sir William Feinnes, Lord Say and Sele and expanded as a domestic place till his death in 1486. It was thus in 1456 when the park was first enclosed by Bourchier “to indulge a passion, popular among the nobility, for hunting” (46).

The park in Orlando embodies the timeless and transcendental space which embraces Orlando’s self after his/her 360-year life that began with a solitary moment of a young noble man.

   And it was at this moment, when she had ceased to call ‘Orlando’ and was deep in thoughts of something else, that the Orlando whom she had called came of its own accord; as was proved by the change that now came over her (she had passed through the lodge gates and was entering the park).

   The whole of her darkened and settled, as when some foil whose addition makes the round and solidity of surface is added to it, and the shallow becomes deep and the near distant; and all is contained as water is contained by the sides of a well. So she was now darkened, stilled, and become, with the addition of this Orlando, that is called, rightly or wrongly, a single self, a real self. (O 216)

The park is located as the essential ground to produce the self because it contains the soil to produce the nature such as trees and plants, and the nature to breed the living creatures such as deer. These basic elements of the park that represents the medieval game forest and landscape remains for centuries in Knole because Knole, with a few exceptions, did not undergo
the improvement of the park to create the picturesque landscape in the eighteenth century. Consequently, Knole is characterized by “the timelessness” of the park where in the twentieth century Orlando can enjoy the fluidity of the natural landscape; “All this, the trees, deer, and turf, she observed with the greatest satisfaction as if her mind had become a fluid that flowed round things and enclosed them completely” (O 216-17). When Orlando visits the great house, it is no more possessed by Orlando. In 1947, Knole was taken over by the National Trust though the Sackvilles’ home was allowed to remain there.² Knole as a private property finalizes its status when it faces the financial difficulty due to the rising taxes (Robert Sackville-West 93).³ The park which is enclosed in the foundation of Knole marks the fundamental element of the space that transcends the chronological time and remains as the spiritual locale beyond the boundary between the public and the private.

The conflicting yet striking element of Knole in its foundation is registered in its political and social transformation of the house due to the change of its owners. Along with the change of the owners, Knole is reborn with new additional buildings whose roles affect and alter the meaning of Knole. After Knole has three successors of Archbishop, John Morton (1487-1500), William Warham (1504-1532), and Thomas Cranmer (1532-), it was “voluntarily” given to Henry VIII (Robert Sackville-West 53-54). In 1534, Henry VIII succeeded in breaking with Roman Catholic and became the supreme head of the English Church; as a result, the abbeys and cathedrals were converted into the great houses, “not to the glory of God, but for the glorification of the men who lived in them” (Chambers 49). Knole was one of sixty royal residences that Henry VIII had acquired by his death. Henry VIII’s strong intention to build and enlarge the great houses
results from his desire to present his political power over his subjects. It is recorded that Henry VIII spent a large amount of money on new buildings, such as the central gatehouse (now the main entrance), the Green Court and the buildings around it, the King’s Towner, and the west front (Robert Sackville West 54). Knole with the new additional buildings and an extended structure as a royal residence controlled by Henry VIII internalizes the political backbone of the British monarchy whose anatomy is firmed as the keystone of the British Empire.

It is apparent that Knole is equivalent to the other magnificent palaces and houses that Henry VIII built during his reign and Orlando delineates those landmark architectures connected with Henry VIII. The equivalence and similarity is proven in the style and tastes of the architecture. The Green Court of Knole which was erected to lodge Henry VIII’s attendants is, for example, similar to a courtyard at Hampton Court and the quadrangle of an Oxford college which were built during the same period (Robert Sackville-West 54). Along with the great houses, the establishment and demolition of the palaces emerged as vital to the process of ordering and reordering the English monarchy in the Tudor Age. Orlando’s appointment is informed at Whitehall which was formerly Archbishop York’s residence, taken from Cardinal Wolsey by Henry VIII, and reformed as a royal palace. Cardinal Wolsey was the son of a grazier and innkeeper who was elevated to Henry VIII’s Lord Chancellor. When Wolsey was made Archbishop of York, he resided at Hampton Court and finished building lodgings for Henry VIII in 1525. Since Wolsey fell from favour, he was forced to relinquish his ownership to Henry VIII, who added a third courtyard to Hampton Court (Hampton Court Palace 6-7; Chambers 54). Henry VIII also built such palaces as Bridewell and St. James Palace in addition to
those in Greenwich and Richmond that Henry VII had established. Orlando visits Elizabeth I at Richmond before her death, and experiences King James I’s coronation at Greenwich in 1603. The British monarchy’s feudal power is confirmed both in the palaces which Henry VII and Henry VIII built and the great houses which Henry VIII encouraged to enlarge and improve.

Knole which was reborn with additional buildings in a new expanded form constitutes the strengthened power of the British monarchy. The transformation from the religious dwelling to the royal residence outlines the overall consequence of the Reformation that determines the solid ground of the British monarchy and its rulers.

The second transformation of Knole within the British monarchy’s power strife delineates the struggling yet expanding power of the British monarchy and its subjects during its transitional era. After Henry VIII’s death in 1547, Knole was passed to his son, Edward VI at ten, from Edward to his guardian, John Dudley, Duke of Northumberland, and to Queen Mary, from Mary to Cardinal Pole, Cranmer’s successor as Archbishop of Canterbury in 1553. Knole’s short role as a religious dwelling caused by Queen Mary’s Catholic revival is engraved as the conflicting dilemma between the striving Catholicism and the empowering Anglican Church. After Mary’s death, Queen Elizabeth throned in 1558 granted Knole to Northumberland’s son and her favourite, Robert Dudley, later Earl of Leicester, in 1561, yet Leicester returned Knole to Elizabeth in 1566. The intermediate stage of Knole evidences the most crucial stage of establishing the monarchy until Elizabeth I is enthroned and England is ruled under the most influential authority.4

The final landing of Knole into Elizabeth I’s hands after a series of owner
changes due to the shifts of the political authorized power transfigures Knole into one of the vast mansions in Britain because of Elizabeth’s political strategies and the Sackvilles’ devotion to the monarchy. Elizabeth I’s visit to Orlando’s great house is described as an inevitable ritual and obligation for Orlando to undergo. The sudden alarm with a trumpet which “came from the heart of his own great house” (O 15) makes Orlando acknowledge the importance of entertaining Elizabeth I. Orlando’s long way from the park through “the vast congeries of rooms and staircases to the banqueting-hall” which contains a five-acre distance recalls a model of the expanded and remodelled great house subordinated by the Tudor monarchy. Unlike Henry VIII who founded the great buildings, Elizabeth I was “no builder; but she was a great inspirer of building in others” (S7-58). The reason why Elizabeth I encouraged noblemen and gentlemen to build their great houses and she would frequently visit those houses is that the her intention to control the upper class by replacing “the rule of force by the rule of law” (Girouard 84) and her frequent visits made the house owners spend money so that she could diminish their overpowered situations. As Elizabeth I’s visit was usually accompanied by 150 officials and attendants (Chambers 58), the great house owners had to extend their houses into the ones which could accommodate and entertain them. By this Elizabeth I’s strategy, the Tudor political power was more strictly established and the foundation of the English monarchy was affirmed. At the same time, the vast mansions were superbly built, repeatedly reformed, and virtually enlarged so as to entertain and satisfy Elizabeth I.

The interrelationship between Elizabeth I and the Sackvilles as for the lease and the ownership of Knole is connected with the power structure between the Queen of England and her subjects entirely controlled by
Elizabeth. In *Orlando*, the parallel between the "old," "worn," and "bent" Queen and the young nobleman "with finest legs" is inscribed in that in age, sex, and rank in the last period of the Elizabeth I's reign. Orlando's devotion to his grandmother-like Elizabeth I and her affection to him enable him to gain an emerald ring as a symbol of her triumph over him, a highest office of Treasurer and Steward as an embodiment of the closest relationship with Queen, and the Garter as the highest order of English knighthood in the English feudalism.

The Sackvilles' involvement in the royal court alters Knole's destiny which ends with possessing 356 rooms. In 1566 when Dudley returned Knole to Elizabeth I, Thomas Sackville inherited a large fortune and a country house at Buckhurst from his father, Richard. Because of Richard's remarkable success in the timber and iron business, the Sackvilles had already acquired great estates in Sussex and Kent. Thomas Sackville, trained as a lawyer like Richard and a poet himself, gained more estates and titles from Elizabeth. In 1567, he was made Baron Buckhurst, one of only two completely new peerages created by Elizabeth (Robert Sackville-West 56). Thomas Sackville, however, faced financial difficulties after he served as ambassador to France in 1571-72. As he needed to rebuild his fortunes, he manipulated his position and gained profits by assigning the lease of Knole to a local landowner, John Lennard, in 1574-1604. During this period, Thomas Sackville's political power dramatically increased as he was rewarded as a Privy Counsellor in 1586, a Knight of the Garter in 1589, Cancellor of the University of Oxford in 1591, and Earl of Dorset in 1604. Like Orlando, Thomas Sackville was appointed to the most significant position, Lord Treasurer by Elizabeth in 1599. As Lord Treasurer, Thomas Sackville was responsible for the sale of Crown lands so that he could
negotiate the sale of the freehold of Knole directly to himself and bought back the lease on Knole in 1604. At this time, Thomas Sackville became the freehold owner of Knole. Because of his position as Lord Treasurer, moreover, Thomas Sackville initiated reforming and remaking Knole in order to transform it into a great house in 1604 when he was 69 years old, one year after Elizabeth I’s reign was over. The Sackvilles’ ownership of Knole which is confirmed after Thomas Sackville’s thirty-seven-year service to Elizabeth I manifests the surviving power of the Queen’s subject during the most crucial period of the British monarchy.

During the early history of Knole, the dramatic changes of the politics which alter its owners and consequently the house itself embody a house of history’s own. Orlando outlines the establishment of a house of history’s own in the British monarchy. The early history of the house, however, turns only a phantom for Orlando in the twentieth century; “There stood the great house with all its windows robed in silver. Of wall or substance there was none. All was phantom. All was still. All was lit as for the coming of a dead Queen” (O 227). The British history that was registered and engraved in the great house symbolized by Knole plays a role to juxtapose the foundation and establishment of the political power of the British monarchy.

IV. A University of Men’s Own in A Room of One’s Own

In A Room of One’s Own, Woolf states Oxbridge and the British Museum embody other houses of the men’s power. The establishment and improvement of both architectures represent how the male-centered political power has contributed to the powers of education and academics. Since both Oxford and Cambridge were founded by the thirteenth century,
they have played roles as centers of learning. The early history of Oxbridge from the Medieval Age to the Tudor Period manifests a series of conflicts manipulated by political powers.

Like Knole, Oxford and Cambridge whose origins were traced back to the medieval age were improved especially during the Tudor Period and continued to exclude women in Woolf’s contemporary era. As Woolf makes Mary Seton remark in *A Room of One’s Own*, Emily Davies was confronted with enormous budget difficulties in establishing women’s college formerly in Hitchin in 1869 and in moving it at Girton in Cambridge, in 1873 (21-22). Anne Jemima Glough, who attended the first meeting of Davies’s Schoolmistresses’ Association, founded Newham College to house the women in 1874 (Hussey 182). Though Girton was founded when “it was only after a long struggle and with the utmost difficulty that they got thirty thousand pounds together” (*AROO* 22), the facilities were minimum and poor. The women throughout the history were deprived of possessing, inheriting, and controlling the money; on the other hand, their fathers and husbands monopolized the property and even possessed the freedom and authority to use it “to found a scholarship or to endow a fellowship in Balliol or Kings” (*AROO* 24). In order to illustrate the women’s poverty and its influence upon women’s potential and life, Woolf exhibits an etching of Oxbridge from its foundation to its establishment.

Woolf resents that Oxbridge, which was improved with the solid financial support of the kings and queens of the monarchy especially in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, was extended with another financial source of the newly-established “tithes” at the age of faith, and was expanded with endowment to “more chairs, more lectureships, more fellowships” (*AROO*
11) and “the libraries and laboratories; the observatories” (AROO 12). Since its establishment in the Medieval Age, Oxbridge has been the privileged sanctuary to nourish male-centered power, especially in religion, education, politics, economics, and law.

The early history and establishment of Oxford and Cambridge, therefore, embodies another story of establishing a house of man’s own in respects of religion and monarchy in British history. Neither of the universities were founded as academic institutions from the very beginning. Along with the enthusiastic pursuit for learning in Europe, England had several schools for pupils of Catholic theology and Oxford was developed from a small community of several schools to a larger body in 1221. This rapid change was largely caused by two incidents. As the University of Paris, the center for education in Europe, banned foreign students in 1167, English students needed their own university in England. The English priests, moreover, lost contact with Europe because of Henry II’s strife with Becket of Canterbury. Both the students and the priests needed to found their own school. The early Oxford schools became the first central place for learning and the tithe barn at Holywell was already an important source of income for the college by 1300 (Catto Fig. IV). The ground of Oxford as the center of Catholic masters and pupils connotes the Englishmen’s first pursuit of ‘a university of their own’ under the strong influence of Catholicism.

The establishment of both Oxford and Cambridge possesses the male-centered violence as a hidden agenda within the seemingly high society of education and scholarship. It is important to notice that the reason why Cambridge developed from a small community of pupils related to nearby wealthy abbey is that a large number of pupils called “gowns” emigrated from Oxford to Cambridge. This emigration was caused by a series of
conflicts between the gowns and the townspeople in Oxford. Its initial incident is that one pupil killed his mistress and escaped early in December 1209, and town people hanged the other two students who lived in the same house (Southern 26). Between 1210 and 1214, Oxford was deserted by the masters and pupils, and some masters moved with their pupils to Cambridge. After this crisis, ironically, Oxford was transformed into a well-organized university with “privileges to guard, revenues to administer and special rights to maintain” (Southern 26). In order to accommodate a number of pupils gathered at Cambridge, Hugh de Balsham founded Peterhouse by contributing St. Peter’s Church. Located in marsh, as Woolf says (AROO 11), Cambridge, thus, became a second body of scholars, priests, and gowns in 1226. Both Oxford and Cambridge were directly connected with and well supported by religion in its foundation and both universities retained the functions of a seminary until 1850 (Searby 1). The historical fact that Cambridge was founded as the result of the man’s supreme dominance and violence upon the woman within the male sanctuary narrates the truth that an unknown woman’s voice is entirely erased and her life was sacrificed for protecting and legalizing the authorized position of Oxbridge.

Oxbridge’s second stage of improvement and expansion represents the interconnected male-centered power of religion and monarchy. As Woolf states, both universities expanded with the establishment of new colleges “in the age of faith,” and their curriculums and systems were reformed during “the age of reason” (AROO 11). Their financial source was mostly endowments from priests during the pre-Reformation era, kings and queens such as Henry VIII and Elizabeth I during the Reformation, and wealthy merchants and professionals since the beginning of the seventeenth century.
Consequently, the connection between the universities and the embodiments of the political, economical, and social forces became strong so that the universities became part of the British monarchy and the Anglican Church.

Especially after abbeys diminished, universities became the object of endowments. The amount of endowments which was spent for education, especially to grammar schools and Oxbridge, occupied 27 percent in total of endowments between 1480 and 1660. Those endowments were used for three purposes: the first one was to establish scholarships at grammar school for those who would go to Oxbridge; the second one was to increase the amounts of fellowships and establish new fellowships; and the third one was to found new colleges (Green 20-21). King’s College which was founded by Henry VI in 1441 added King’s Chapel which was completed by Henry VIII in 1515. The tradition of King’s College whose admissions were only for Eton graduates continued till 1861. As the result of the Reformation, Henry VIII transformed the former abbeys to colleges as well as to great houses; Christ Church at the site of Cardinal College at Oxford and Trinity College at the former site of King’s Hall and Michaelhouse at Cambridge in 1546. Trinity College, which had sixty fellows in those days, has been the greatest college both in quality and quantity at Cambridge till now. Elizabeth I also contributed to Jesus College at Oxford and founded the university rules of Cambridge in 1570, which were not changed for the following 300 years. After two new colleges were founded at the end of the sixteenth century, the new colleges were not founded until the nineteenth century at Cambridge. As a number of large colleges increased, Oxbridge formed Gothic styles with the “courts” (at Cambridge) or the “quadrangle” (at Oxford) which Woolf tries to pass through at the beginning of A Room of
One's Own.

Woolf's visit to Oxbridge in A Room of One's Own is a journey to the origin of both universities, especially of how they were founded as the learning center of male-dominant theology and improved as the house of the academics by the two enormous forces, the British monarchy and the Anglican Church.

V. Conclusion

Woolf's creating a paradox of a house of history's own both in Orlando and A Room of One's Own signifies her strong intention to cast a light on the issue of women's inarticulate voices and their unrecognized selves. As fraternal twin sisters, Orlando and A Room of One's Own share their biological father who imprisons his daughters within a house of his own erected by the political force of the British monarchy; while they inherit the genetic code from their biological mother who is oppressed and neglected under the power of the house. The genetic code that Orlando and A Room of One's Own transmit from Judith Shakespeare is passed on through Woolf to an Orlando and a Mary Carmichael as a single true self.

Notes

The abridged form of this paper was presented for the Panel, "Woolf and History" (Chair, Masami Usui) on June 9 (Fri.) 8:30-10:00 at the 10th Annual Conference on Virginia Woolf: "Virginia Woolf Out of Bounds" which was held from June 8 through June 11, 2000 at the University of Maryland at Baltimore County, Maryland, U.S.A.

1 Abel points out that Judith Shakespear's "vulnerability resides in her body, not (in contrast to Three Guineas) in her sexuality" (101).

2 Vita's sorrow was enormous when she sighed a document to give Knole away to the
National Trust (cited from Spectator, Knole 215).

3 According to Robert Sackville-West, Vita's uncle, the 4th Lord Sackville and Major-General Sir Charles worried about the future difficulty to maintain Knole after paying the death duties and entered into discussion with the National Trust in 1935 (95).

4 Abbott remarks that Woolf "empowers herself as a female artist, and, as a female artist manipulating the image of a powerful historical figure" that Woolf imposes on Elizabeth I (77-78).

5 Green remarks that the reason of a migration to Cambridge was "a quarrel between the students and the townfolk, the first of many such, caused, so it was alleged, by the execution of a scholar in revenge for the murder of a townswoman by another student" (14).

Works Cites


Lokke, Kari Elise. “Orlando and Incandescence: Virginia Woolf’s Comic Sublime.”
Southern, R. W. “From Schools to University.” Catto 1-36.
Wilson, J.J. “Why is Orlando Difficult?” Marcus, New Feminist 170-84.