Chapter Five

Conclusion

*A Room with a View* deals to a great extent with the same problems of human nature. And yet it is a very different book. Once more there is the same dichotomy between Italy and England. […] But now the categories have become less hard and rigid. National differences are no longer of the first importance. Italy here acts merely as a catalyst for George Emerson and for Lucy, giving them the simple opportunity of finding each other from the distant poles of their upbringing. […] *A Room with a View* is a springtime novel, describing the blossoming first touch of experience and of the transformation which it works. (Zwerdling 174-175).

Alex Zwerdling’s comments on *A Room with a View*, which acutely points out the crucial theme in this novel, resonates with the spatial becoming presented in my thesis. Yet, *A Room with a View* not only is concerned with the oppositional distinction between two countries, but also reveals how do the subject reacts and interacts with these experiences in their “spiritual adventure” (Scott-James 354). The focus of this thesis is to explore how she adjusts herself rather than what she has become. Instead of measuring the result with moral judgment, Lucy’s transformation in becoming-other should be viewed as her constant spiritual changing process.

As Forster delineates Florence as a magical city where unexpected events and experiences influentially rejuvenate the subject, Italy obviously is regarded as an emblem of freedom that sharply contrasts with conventional England. Even so, not everyone undergoes spiritual transformation in their journey. Some people are more inclined to accept different cultures and viewpoints whereas some do not. In *A Room
with a View, spatial influence either eliminates one’s boundary or reinforces one’s territory into a nomadic or sedentary traveler, depending on the subjects’ interaction and attitude.

Forster’s intention to depict a reconfigured self embodied on the protagonist, Lucy, indicates his intention in highlighting the spatial influence of Italy. A Room with a View is a work that presents the “most satisfactory transcendence of the muddle” and the interwoven relationships between space and subjects, which demonstrate that space inevitably carries entangling standpoints and perspectives (Langland 95). Chapter two adopts Deleuze and Guattari’s nomadology in that it endorses this interactive spatial relationship by proposing the oppositional force between State apparatus and the war machine. With its sedentary structure, state apparatus seeks to stabilize its sovereignty and territory by assimilation, whereas the nomads function as the war machine to resist the power reconsolidation. The state and the nomad hence respectively embody sedentary and nomadic space. The further one is composed of fixed points and regular routes, and the latter one is constructed by fluid vectors and changeable paths. By distinguishing the divergent characteristics between the state and the nomad, Deleuze and Guattari manifest two types of spatial attitudes and actions.

Islam further applies Deleuze and Guattari’s concept into travel in attempt to illustrate two kinds of travelers. By means of boundary-crossing, the nomadic travelers take lines of flight and encounter the other during the journey. While sedentary travelers reject the heterogeneous other, nomadic travelers adjust themselves and interact with the heterogeneous other. Nomadic travelers are more likely to be influenced by the other, and enter the phase of becoming-other accordingly. Deleuze and Guattari assert that this constant changing process of becoming in the mean time deviate the subject from the molar system into the minor
one. Consequently, as the nomadic travelers step into becoming-other, the irreversible change brings the subject into a new, integrated self. Unlike sedentary travelers, whose travel attitude resemble as tourists, nomadic travelers transgress the restrictions and negotiate in the between, establishing flexible intersubjectivity with the other.

In *A Room with a View*, Lucy embodies a nomadic traveler influenced and inspired by her Italy encounters and experiences. Travel offers her a temporary escape and relief from the rigid conventions so that she is able to explore the other style of life in a different country. This refreshing journey leads Lucy to recognize the limitation in her original life and the freedom she can possibly have in the other space, which gives rise to her transgression of conventions. Chapter three thus focus on her Italy experiences, particularly on her street-walking to demonstrate how Italy significantly works on her. Since walking the city is a forbidden action for Victorian ladies, Lucy’s experiences definitely shock her and bring her tremendous impact. As Parson analyzes, the city “is a place of numerous trajectories […] that provides a spatial manifestation of the journey,” and a psychological stimulation for “the mind or consciousness” (70). In Florence, her walk with a companion to her walk of independence is a gradual process to depart from the regulations. She learns to observe the city closely, to pay attention to insignificant corners and scenes, and to interpret the city with her own understanding. Her getting lost urges her to adapt herself to the pace of Italy, and the murder scene prompts her to realize the living life of the city. These discoveries, events and encounters all present different facets of Italy. As an interactive subject positioned in this multi-layered city, Lucy is attracted by the vivid city and her repressed desire for freedom is aroused, realizing that she yearns for a living life rather than an elegant, artful life.

Even though Italy experiences stimulate Lucy into her becoming-other during her nomadic travel, her experiences and actions, is not a cause and effect, but an
interconnected relation as the development of rhizome. Just as nomadic traveler ventures along transformative vectors in the journey, Lucy’s becoming-other is a changeable route as well. Since the process of becoming is involutionary rather than evolutionary, her becoming-other is neither an awakening self-searching, nor an issue of identity politics. Instead, her ceaseless becoming-traveler brings her to incessant changes.

Chapter four hence analyzes how Lucy’s nomadic changes are reflected on life in England when she returns from her journey. Throughout her Italy travel, Lucy is the only one who becomes a nomadic traveler and undergoes her becoming-other. Whereas her friends and family remain the same as sedentary travelers, Lucy’s nomadic changes ineluctably bring about conflicts between them. Zwerdling points out that Forster portrays aesthetic Cecil as “the winter side of the spring idyll,” for “he does not know how to love, nor will he learn” (175). The greatest problem between Cecil and Lucy is that his self-centered conventionality prevents him from encountering the other and becoming-other. Spatial changes only reinforce his persistence on fences. His reluctance to cross over the boundary and to understand the other obstructs himself the possibility to open up a view and establish close relationship with people. As her fiancé, Cecil assumes that he is entitled to interfere with Lucy’s decision rescues her out of this vulgar life. His protective intervention, however, only demonstrates his feudal attitude toward relationships. While Lucy directs toward her becoming-other, Cecil by contrast fortifies his territory and intends to dictate Lucy under his control. Accordingly, Lucy’s choice to leave Cecil and elope with George indicates her departure her from the confinement of conventions as a result of the development of her nomadic self.

Overall, in *A Room with a View*, Lucy’s journey to Italy is a commencement for her to acknowledge how English spatiality restricts her in a room and how Italian
spatiality leads her to a view. Since her nomadic changes as a becoming-traveler are inspired by her travel experiences, spatial influence undeniably is an essential and catalytic element in this novel. In Florence, Lucy gets to know the urban spatiality not as a passive receiver but an active walker, which interactively creates meaning and triggers her becoming-other. Accordingly, *A Room with a View* highlights her process of spatial becoming. Even though the story ends up with her elopement with George, her decision indicates her pursuit for freedom rather than her love for George. My thesis hence seeks to demonstrate her incessant mental transformation.

The employment of spatial perspective offers another aspect to explore Lucy’s nomadic changes. As most of Forster’s works deal with cross-culture issues and conflicts, spatial research and travel theory may be beneficial to investigate the transformation on account of spatial influences. Nevertheless, Lucy’s becoming-traveler at the expanse of her estrangement with her family and friends indicates that a genuine traveler lacks sense of belonging. In her nomadic travel, Lucy will not stay long in Italy but will move between different countries. As she encounters the other and becoming-other in her following journey, the unexpected development of her future reconfigured nomadic self is to be explored.