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With Inviolable Voice, We Melt into Each Other with Phrases: The Construction and
Deconstruction of Heteroglossia in T.S. Eliot's *The Waste Land* and Virginia Woolf's *The Waves*

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirement
for the degree of Bachelor of Arts in English from
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by

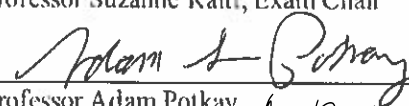
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Introduction

The early 20th century, a time of great upheaval of pre-established political, global, and cultural worldviews, marks a turning point for European literature. The First World War unsettled countless world structures that had been previously entrenched in literature, and it incurred a reshuffling of locations of literary importance. Just as “the great eastern and western European land and maritime empires” (Cleary 257) of England, France, Germany, and Russia had begun to be broken up during and after WWI, so too was “the modern literary world-system, centered for centuries at London and Paris...beginning to buckle under the enormous pressures of this continental crisis” (257). The social and cultural disruptions catalyzed by the war destabilized the world’s literary hubs, allowing different literary perspectives and techniques to come to the fore in the Modernist movement. Modernist authors reshaped and repurposed traditional literary structures in order to respond to the disruption induced by this worldwide shakeup, developing forms of writing that reflected authors’ dissatisfaction with the older styles and their desire to capture the world as they lived it. Authors of all genres were affected, be they poets and novelists like T.S. Eliot and Virginia Woolf, or literary critics like Mikhail Bakhtin; each grappled with the ways in which they saw the literary landscape altering.

In his essay, “Realism after Modernism and the Literary World-System,” Joe Cleary traces the effect of Modernist unsettlement on those critics and theorists who valued the tradition of 19th-century realist novels, focusing on Georg Lukács, Erich Auerbach, and Mikhail Bakhtin. Cleary interprets their work as direct responses to Modernism, as defenses of the traditional novel system used by realist authors. All three critics valued realism’s “receptivity to subaltern communities hitherto ignored or merely ridiculed in high literature; its capacity for capturing intensive totality; its openness to temporalities of becoming and to the dereifying laughter of the

folk” (Cleary 260). Applauding authors like Thomas Mann, Charles Dickens, and Honoré de Balzac for their ability to create realistic representations of human life, relationships, and language, these critics saw Modernism as the ruination of literature. Lukács wrote that Modernism “leads not only to the destruction of traditional literary forms, it leads to the destruction of literature as such” (Lukács, quoted in Cleary 256).

Although Cleary pays less attention to Bakhtin than Lukács and Auerbach, Bakhtin’s theories regarding the novel cannot be discarded; his work considers the importance of the types of voices that get to speak in novels, and the speech types they use to do so. He too extolled the values of 19th-century realism, pinpointing authors like Dickens and Pushkin as his paragons. Bakhtin sees the origins of the novel as a form in the polyglossic environments of Ancient Greece and Rome, during similar eras of global reconfiguration in which different languages and nationalities came into contact under the domain of the empire. This mixing of languages allowed authors and playwrights to engage in parody—the act of writing about an image from a more realistic or more playful angle than usually permitted by the image’s typical language. Parody is then a key characteristic of the novel; the novel portrays images, words, and events in ways that alter the typical perception of those things. Set in stark contrast to the temporally locked and narratively closed epic poem, the novel instead embodies the open-endedness, the unfinished-ness, and the unpolished-ness of real human speech and interaction. The novel quickly becomes the dominant literary form, and it revolutionizes all other genres around it, causing them to become “novelized” and to possess characteristics of the novel.

A crucial marker of a novel, in Bakhtin’s terminology, is *heteroglossia*. Bakhtin defines heteroglossia as “the social diversity of speech types” (“Discourse in the Novel” 263).¹ The word refers not to a multiplicity of explicit *languages*, as polyglossia does, but instead refers to a

multiplicity of *speech types*. Speech types and speech genres encapsulate those ways of speaking that are specific to certain socio-cultural groups (sociolects), individuals (idiolects), career fields (academic jargon, the language of journalism, etc.), and so on. These speech types exist in constant contact, allowing them to influence and inform each other in what Bakhtin calls a state of “dialogue.” Heteroglossia, Bakhtin posits, functions only within the balance of the centrifugal and centripetal forces of language. Centrifugal forces are ones of “decentralization and disunification” (“DN” 272) that “stratify” a language into different speech genres. These forces work in direct opposition to centripetal forces, which attempt to unify and centralize the norms of a given language in order to “guarantee a certain maximum of mutual understanding” (“DN” 271) between speakers and to organize speech types into social hierarchies. These forces are both constantly at work in a language, but only when they are in balance can heteroglossia persist in a feasible and generative way. Without balance, the centrifugal forces could cause a language to stratify perpetually, eventually causing there to be no shared language between any speakers. If the centripetal forces dominate, language will become so centralized that there would only be a single language existing without influence from other speech types. The novel, Bakhtin concludes, embodies this state of balance, allowing different speech types to inform the narrative world while being clearly organized and ordered by an authoritative figure, such as the author or a narrator.

Bakhtin’s theories of heteroglossia, the centrifugal, and the centripetal illuminate the workings of complex Modernist works, despite the fact that he wrote counter to them. Although Bakhtin did not become widely read until his publication in the 1970s, he wrote the essays compiled in *The Dialogic Imagination* contemporaneously with Modernists like Eliot and Woolf. Bakhtin wrote “Discourse in the Novel” in 1935, for example, thirteen years after Eliot published

The Waste Land in 1922 and four years after Woolf published *The Waves* in 1931. Bakhtin's essays express his response to the forms and techniques he saw in Modernism, his reaction to what he saw authors like Eliot and Woolf doing in literature. When considered through the lens of Bakhtinian theory, Eliot and Woolf's dramatic and radical experiments with poetic and novelistic forms can be seen to play with the foundations which Bakhtin valued in the novel; they both employed those traditions and flouted them in order to create distinctly Modernist works. Eliot's 433-line poem, *The Waste Land*, catalogues the physical, emotional, and spiritual rot of modern humanity with a structure that defies all notions of a poet's voice and a poet's subject, creating a modern, novelized poem. Woolf's late novel, *The Waves*, forgoes traditional notions of novel form by framing the text entirely around the monologues of six speaking characters, with a third-person "narrator" only speaking in spurts between sections.

Eliot and Woolf both construct elements of Bakhtin's novel within their own works, before dismantling those same elements through the formation of linguistic imbalance. Both texts contain heteroglossic environments, at least for a short amount of textual time and space, in which they incorporate numerous speech types that dialogize each other. *The Waste Land* acts a novelized poem by incorporating Bakhtin's three main characteristics of the novel—the relocation of the literary image from the past into a new context, semantic open-endedness, and the presence of heteroglossia. Eliot creates that heteroglossia by distinguishing speakers' voices from each other through tonal differences and idiolectic speech habits; by juxtaposing high and low sociolects in a hierarchy; and by using allusion as its own speech genre. In *The Waves*, Woolf cultivates the idiolects of her six characters to create heteroglossia, demarcating their voices not by acoustic or tonal means, but by endowing their language with idiosyncratic images and allusions. However, both works diverge from this heteroglossic starting point by flouting

Bakhtin's desire for balance. Eliot and Woolf forgo the use of meta-narrators who could order the speech types and balance the forces of language. *The Waste Land* and *The Waves* respectively embody the two possible outcomes of linguistic imbalance—centrifugal breakdown or centripetal subsumption. *The Waste Land*, tending toward fragmentation, allows the centrifugal forces to dissolve the once distinct relations between voices and speech types. Eliot upends typical sociolectic relations and creates a linguistic environment in which speech types are so separate as to be unable to inform each other. In contrast, *The Waves*, obsessed with vocal merging and annihilation, becomes overwhelmed by the centripetal forces. After the loss of the novel's only possible ordering force—Percival—the novel becomes dominated by the single, monologic voice of Bernard, who absorbs all other speech types into his own.

The Novel, Heteroglossia, and the Forces of Language

Throughout his career, Bakhtin worked to define the novel and to track its origins and development throughout Western history. In his essays, "Epic and Novel: Toward a Methodology for the Study of the Novel," and "From the Prehistory of Novelistic Discourse," he identifies three major characteristics of the novel as a form: its relocation of the "temporal coordinates" ("EN" 11) of the source of a literary image or subject; its "maximal contact with the present in all its openendedness" (1); and a "multi-linguaged consciousness" (11), or heteroglossia. He pinpoints these qualities by comparing the novel to the epic poem, the genre that Bakhtin feels to be the novel's opposite. The worlds encompassed within epics like *Beowulf* or the *Odyssey* is, Bakhtin argues, "an utterly finished thing" (17); it does not have the contact with the contemporary that the novel has. Rather, the epic genre is locked in the past. It grounds the narrative's setting in the "national epic past," draws from "national tradition" to inspire its narrative, and holds the narrative's subject at a great distance across which the audience cannot

reach (13). These aspects are described with a “language of tradition” (17), a language that carefully conveys the subject, setting, and image with veneration. The novel, in contrast, operates within the opposite parameters. Whereas the epic relies on “impersonal and sacrosanct tradition” (17) in creating and relating its story, the novel instead may choose everyday events, objects, or emotions as its “literary image” (2). The novel is not bound to relate the great events of the past, but is instead free to engage with the contemporary, the common, and the experience of the world. The language of the novel shifts from the epic tendency of sacralization by using a more ordinary, realistic language like those speakers use in their everyday lives.

The power of the novel, then, manifests itself in the the novel’s ability to parody and hybridize other genres in the process Bakhtin calls “novelization.” Bakhtin champions the novel as a “different breed” (“EN” 39) of genre, one that could not “interrelate” with other genres “in peaceful and harmonious co-existence” (39) because of its intense mutability and heteroglossia. Once the novel came into being, Bakhtin argues, all other genres were forced to reckon with the nature of the novel. The novel changes or “novelizes” the genres around it by parodying and questioning those generic forms within itself or by inspiring those genres to emulate it. Novelization liberates otherwise restricted genres; the language of those genres “renews itself by incorporating extraliterary heteroglossia and the ‘novelistic’ layers of literary language, they become dialogized, permeated with... a certain semantic openendedness, a living contact with unfinished, still-evolving contemporary reality” (7). The novel pulls other genres, such as poetry, into the liminal space of the present to create a zone of contact. The novel, the mutable present, and other generic forms become layered over each other so that the flux of the novel bleeds into the other genres. Within this zone, the novel creates a dialogue—a space of interaction—between

itself and other genres, allowing those genres to “reformulat[e] and re-accentuat[e]” (“EN” 5) their characteristics in accordance with the novel.

The liberated, unrestricted language permitted by the novel then allows authors to interrogate a subject, language, or genre that may be culturally or socially sacrosanct through the process of parody and hybrid utterance. Parody allows an author or speaker to engage with an image from different and even contradictory viewpoints. A subject or word becomes destabilized by the novels’ shifting temporal and semantic relations to contemporary reality; because the language of a novel is open to change and interpretation, so too is the image the language describes. As a result, parody “force[s] men to experience beneath these categories [of genres, languages, styles, and voices] a different and contradictory reality that is otherwise not captured in them” (“FPND” 59). While traditional epic language seals the image and the word off from re-interpretation or criticism, parodic language re-analyzes them in otherwise unattempted ways. Parody then involves two languages— “the language being parodied” and “the language that parodies” (75)—and these two languages interact with each other to form an “intentional dialogized hybrid” (76) in which both languages are perceptible.

A similar process occurs on a more idiolectic or sociolectic level in the formation of what Bakhtin calls a “hybrid construction”—“... an utterance that belongs, by its grammatical (syntactic) and compositional markers, to a single speaker, but that actually contains mixed within it two utterances, two speech manners, two styles, two ‘languages’...” (“DN” 304). In a hybrid construction, no boundary exists between the speech type of the speaker—whether that be the narrator or a character—and the speech types surrounding the speaker; two speech types are used simultaneously. The speech types then highlight and parody each other within a single utterance. Both voices are distinguishable, but their “boundaries are deliberately flexible and

ambiguous, often passing through a single syntactic whole” (308).² In this way, parody and hybrid utterances act as centrifugal forces that develop new speech types. The combination of the parodied language and the parodying language, of two idiolects, of two sociolects, creates “hybrid” utterances that do not fit within the categories of either involved speech type. The hybrid behaves as its own speech type, spoken by a voice fluent in both languages layered within the utterance.

When discussing the notions of hybrid utterances and parody, it will prove helpful to digress from Bakhtin’s works for a moment to consider how Eliot and Woolf will use allusion and quotation as participants in their linguistic hybrids; doing so will provide a framework with which to discuss these facets of the texts. Roland Barthes, in his essay “Myth Today,” posits that myth and allusions act as individual speech types, thereby suggesting that they are able to participate in parody and hybridization. His foremost assertion is that “myth is a type of speech” (Barthes 109). As will be seen in *The Waste Land* and *The Waves*, allusions act as myths by subconsciously retaining the original associations granted to them by their original contexts, and by then being filled with new meaning within the Modern text. These allusions then act as their own “types of speech” (109) in the linguistic webs of both works. Barthes uses the word “myth” to refer to an image, word, or phrase that signifies a certain concept to an entire culture or community and which holds a larger meaning than is literally encapsulated by its sign. The centripetal forces of language centralize that single concept under the mythical signifier, thereby leading to a mutual understanding within a community. The word “myth” may also be used to refer to any allusion or citation that engages in mythologization—the process of becoming a second-order signifier. Building upon Ferdinand de Saussure’s theories of semiology, Barthes argues that myth is a semiological system (111)—a system of communication composed of sign,

signifier, and signified—like any other language. He distinguishes between two kinds of semiological systems: first-order and second-order. A first-order system is a primary, initial language, a system that is used in everyday speech. The signified refers to the concept of an object, such as the idea of a tree; the signifier is the acoustic image or visible image associated with an object, such as the acoustic word ‘tree,’ phonetically represented as [tri] in IPA; the sign is the relation between the idea of the object and the representation of the object. The conjunction of the signified, the signifier, and the sign creates a semiological system of representation and understanding, the basis of human language.

Myth, then, is a second-order semiological system (114), one that builds upon the first-order system. Barthes says, “That which is a sign (namely the associative total of a concept and an image) in the first system, becomes a mere signifier in the second” (114). The first-order sign—the relation between an idea and its representation—becomes itself a representation of a new, different idea in a second-order system. The sign loses its correlation to its original concept and instead becomes a mere signifier,³ a process that is redolent of the new utterances created through parody or through hybridization. The image in Figure 1 visually captures the relation between first-order sign and second-order signified.

Figure 1. First and Second-Order Semiological Systems

$$\begin{array}{r}
 \mathbf{1} \text{ Signifier}^1 + \text{Signified}^1 = \left| \begin{array}{c} \text{Sign}^1 \\ \text{Signifier}^2 \end{array} \right| + \text{Signified}^2 = \text{Sign}^2
 \end{array}$$

Denoted by the superscript “1,” the first-order sign becomes and is the same as the second-order signifier in the second-order mythological system, denoted by the superscript “2.”

The second-order signifier then loses the associations it once carried as a sign; “it empties itself, it becomes impoverished” (117). Barthes denotes that the first-order sign “contained a whole system of values: a history, a geography, a morality, a zoology, a Literature,” while the second-order signifier then “put[s] all this richness at a distance; its newly acquired penury calls for a signification to fill it” (118). A signifier requires a signified, and its linguistic context causes it to be filled with an appropriate meaning. However, the original associations of the first-order sign are not entirely lost; rather, it is this original meaning that gives the second-order signifier its linguistic heft, “a tamed richness” (118) that may be perceived upon viewing it. The old and new associations exist in constant alternation, a “game of hide and seek” (118) in which both meanings are suppressed and manifested simultaneously or at different moments. By becoming filled by a new signified, the second-order signifier gains a new history of associations. This new meaning is “a formless, unstable, nebulous condensation” rather than “an abstract, purified essence” (119). Like those utterances formed by Bakhtin’s parody or hybridization in which the boundaries between two languages or speech types become permeable, so too is the distinction between old and new meaning made porous through mythologization. In the theories of both Bakhtin and Barthes, a sort of hybrid speech signal is formed—either by the layering of parodied/parodying languages, of two speech genres, or of sign and signifier. Eliot and Woolf play with allusions as myths, inserting them into their texts so that they maintain their original associations while gaining new meaning as a signifier in their new contexts. They also explore the effects of empty second-order signifiers—those quotations that are infixed within a new environment but do not become filled with a new signification, acting as mere sonic utterances.

The Waste Land as a Novelized Poem

Bakhtin demarcates the novel from poetry by locating heteroglossia solely within the novel. He asserts that the language of a poem is monoglossic; the language used in a poem is strictly the poet's language, which becomes ossified within the poem. A poem is written with "a unitary and singular language" and results in "a unitary, monologically sealed-off utterance" ("DN" 296). He describes the formation of poetic language in terms similar to Barthes's formation of myth: "Everything that enters the [poetic] work must immerse itself in Lethe, and forget its previous life in any other contexts..." (297). Because the poem is monoglossic, composed only by the language specific to the poet, the words contain none of the associations that heteroglossia lends them; they have only the meaning the poet assigns to them. The poetic word is closed off from the external influences of other languages and speech types that would dialogize the meaning of the word.

Eliot himself recognized the restriction inherent in poetic language, and he would have agreed with Bakhtin that a traditional poet is limited to his own language. In his preface to Edgar Ansel Mowrer's 1928 book, *This American World*, Eliot writes:

The European who belonged to no one country would be an abstract man—a blank face speaking every language with neither a native nor a foreign accent. And the poet is the least abstract of men, because he is the most bound by his own language: he cannot even afford to know another language equally well, because it is, for the poet, a lifetime's work to explore the resources of his own. (Eliot, quoted in Ricks 202-203)

Eliot expresses the poet's task of discovering the reach of their own language, without the many associations a language may take on from existing in a heteroglossic, dialogic environment. However, Eliot's recognition of the isolation of the poet's language marks the shift from

traditional Romantic poetry to a more Modernist outlook on the genre. Virginia Jackson, in her brief history of the genre of “lyric” poetry, writes that “Eliot goes on to define *lyric* in [John Stuart] Mill’s terms, as ‘the voice of the poet talking to himself,’ but his impatience with older definitions signals another shift in the mod[ern] sense of the term, from Mill’s impossible ideal of lyricism to the normal condition of each individual’s fractured private thoughts” (Jackson 833). Eliot views traditional lyric poetry—the poetry in which the poet presents his own thoughts, feelings, or morals to an individual reader—as the product of a monoglossic mind, one speaking to oneself in one’s own idiolect.

However, *The Waste Land* marks Eliot’s defiance of this monoglossic restriction on the poetic genre, acting as a Modern, novelized poem that resists the generic limits of traditional poetry. *The Waste Land* encapsulates the characteristics that Bakhtin attributes to the novel—the relocation of the temporal coordinates of the literary image, an open-endedness of meaning, and heteroglossia. For example, Eliot does not confine the images of *The Waste Land* to those of one epoch, culture, or history, but rather allows different times to act on and influence the present of the poem. In contrast to the epic’s temporal relationship to the past, which is closed-off and cannot be influenced by the re-telling of the story, the characters of *The Waste Land* speak with a sort of timelessness. They consistently shift their verb tenses, moving between a narrating present—“Son of man, / You cannot say, or guess, for you know only / A heap of broken images” (Eliot 20-22)—to a seemingly finished past—“Madame Sosostris, famous clairvoyante, / Had a bad cold” (43-44)—without indication or signal. It is impossible to know which moments constitute the true, occurring “present” or to calculate the temporal distance of lines spoken in the past tense from that occurring present. For example, when the speaker watches the dead yet undead crowd flowing over London Bridge, he notices Stetson and addresses him: “You who

were with me in the ships at Mylae! / That corpse you planted last year in your garden, / Has it begun to sprout? Will it bloom this year?" (70-72). The speaker asserts that he and Stetson were at the Battle of Mylae, a 206 B.C.E. battle of the First Punic War between Rome and Carthage (North 7n3). However, he is also currently located in contemporary London; he sees the city's eponymous bridge and names the city's streets and landmarks. Time is ostensibly running in some way— "Saint Mary Woolnoth kept the hours, / With a dead sound on the final stroke of nine" (Eliot 67-68)—yet the speaker and his comrade Stetson seem to have existed for an eternity, as they have seen the ships at Mylae, see London Bridge, and quote Charles Baudelaire's *Les Fleurs du Mal* (76). The temporal coordinates of the images of Mylae are relocated to modern London, while the images of modern London are altered and made more monumental by the reference to Mylae. The poem is not locked in the past nor focused solely on the present. Rather, Eliot dissolves the borders between epochs, allowing the past and the present to influence his audience's perception of both. Eliot displays the "presentness of the past" (Crews 17) by placing history in his contemporary present; he alters the reader's conceptions of both London and Mylae by combining them in one temporal scene.

Eliot also relocates the figure of Tiresias from his original context of Greek tragedy and makes him voyeur to a modern scene in a modern setting. Rather than watching two mating serpents as he does in his original tale (North 46), Tiresias now watches the mechanical, loveless copulation of a young typist and clerk.⁴ Eliot's language irrevocably links Tiresias to the modern environment: just as a taxi is "throbbing waiting" (Eliot 217) on the street, so too is Tiresias "throbbing between two lives" (218). Tiresias does not foresee the apartment and its occupants from the temporal and locational distance of ancient Greece. Rather, Tiresias's language suggests that he is wholly entrenched in the modern. He is acutely aware of the modernity surrounding

him: “Out of the window perilously spread / Her drying combinations touched by the sun’s last rays, / On the divan are piled (at night her bed) / Stockings, slippers, camisoles, and stays” (224-227). Eliot relocates the image of Tiresias into the modern environment of the typist’s apartment, replicating the novel’s technique of borrowing images from different time periods and placing them in contemporary contexts.

However, the temporal relocation of Tiresias does not cause him to forget his original context or his experiences within that context; he maintains an awareness of both his past and his present. In shifting Tiresias to the present, Eliot makes Tiresias a second-order signifier, a myth. While Tiresias originally signified the erotic and romantic experiences of both man and woman in a single sign, his removal from his original context empties this meaning from him. He instead becomes a second-order signifier—a meaningless sign that “calls for a signification to fill it” (Barthes 118). Then, when he appears in the modern waste land, the new environment fills him with a new signification, making Tiresias into a myth.⁵ As a first-order sign in Greek myth, Tiresias signified the erotic experiences of ancient Greek men and women. However, as a second-order sign, Tiresias’s new signification is shaped by its modern context. He amorously comes to signify numerous concepts simultaneously—the degraded romantic experiences of *modern* men and women, the inability of foresight to provide a capacity to act, androgyny and genderlessness, the presentness of the traditional Classics in a modern world.⁶ By relocating Tiresias and making him a second-order sign, Eliot causes Tiresias to become semantically open, able to signify more than he could in his original story. Given that Eliot, in his notes to *The Waste Land*, specifically emphasizes Tiresias’s gender, saying that “the two sexes meet in Tiresias” (Eliot 23n218), it is reasonable to assume that Tiresias’s primary function in the poem is to signify the erotic breakdown of modern man and woman as opposed to those of Greek

mythology. Eliot chooses Tiresias to narrate the scene between the typist and the clerk in order to fill the scene with a new significance, causing the reader to consider how narratives of the past influence conceptions of the present.

Tiresias behaves like a myth by remembering his original context even in a new temporal locus. Although Tiresias repeatedly informs the reader of his new signification, of being an “Old man with wrinkled female breasts” (Eliot 219) who is “throbbing between two lives” (218), his language continually showcases his remembrance of his contextual past. He compares the arrival of the typist to her apartment to that of “the sailor home from sea” (221), as if he were remembering the traveling Odysseus. He repeatedly pairs his name with his description: “I Tiresias, old man with wrinkled dugs” (228). However, Tiresias’s more explicit recollections of his own personal history are cut off from the rest of the text by parentheses, as he is repressing them. He interrupts his observation of the clerk advancing on the typist to muse, “(And I Tiresias have foresuffered all / Enacted on this same divan or bed; / I who have sat by Thebes below the wall / And walked among the lowest of the dead)” (243-246). By dictating his observation of the clerk and typist’s mechanical sexuality, Tiresias fills his new role of signifying the experiences of modern man and woman, yet his almost whispered remembrances of Thebes reveal his memory of the meaning he used to embody. This simultaneous awareness exemplifies the “hide and seek” (Barthes 118) that characterizes a myth—the constant alternation between the original meaning of the sign and the new meaning of the mythologized form. His past informs his understanding of the present, but his new signification prohibits him from dwelling only in the memories of his past; he must bear witness to the experience of modern man and woman. Eliot, in relocating Tiresias to the waste land’s temporal coordinates, creates a figure that, through

mythologization, takes on a new signification to symbolize what Eliot sees as the debased eroticism of the waste land characters.

The novelization inherent in *The Waste Land* manifests itself not only its temporal shifting of its images, but also in the open-endedness of its language. Just as Bakhtin states that the novel possesses “a certain semantic openedness, a living contact with unfinished, still-evolving contemporary reality” (“EN” 7), so too does *The Waste Land’s* semantics exist in flux. There are no voices in the poem that authoritatively define or choose the meanings of its words or images; Clare Kinney writes, “We are offered neither the poet as controlling *deus artifex*, nor any mediating ‘figure of the poet’ within the text” (Kinney 280). With this Modernist tendency to avoid moralizations or definitions, *The Waste Land* then inspires a panoply of interpretations, since neither Eliot nor his speakers make any definitive statements about the meanings of their words. The poem is “so limitlessly polysemous that the reader can and must quite literally create it for himself” (275). *The Waste Land’s* lack of definite meaning showcases the influence of the novel, which does not philosophize or moralize, but simply observes.

The language the speakers of the poem use to describe themselves or the world around them is often intensely ambiguous and open-ended. Their language does not clarify their states of being; rather, it often muddies the exact nature of the waste land and their existence in it. For example, the character “Phlebas the Phoenician, a fortnight dead” (Eliot 312) appears to be semantically suspended between life and death, between annihilation and resurrection. Presaged in “The Burial of the Dead” by Madame Sosostris’s Tarot cards— “Here, said she, / Is your card, the drowned Phoenician Sailor, / (Those are pearls that were his eyes. Look!)” (46-48)—Phlebas appears by name in Part IV: “Death by Water.” He is presumably the victim of the shipwreck

that haunts other sections of the poem in the form of allusions to Shakespeare's play *The Tempest*.⁷ He is depicted in a concise passage, only ten lines out of the 433-line poem:

Phlebas the Phoenician, a fortnight dead,
Forgot the cry of gulls, and the deep sea swell
And the profit and loss.

A current under sea
Picked his bones in whispers. As he rose and fell
He passed the stages of his age and youth
Entering the whirlpool.

Gentile or Jew
O you who turn the wheel and look to windward,
Consider Phlebas, who was once handsome and tall as you. (312-321).

Phlebas is physically suspended by the waves that move about him. He rises and falls with the motion, never sinking to the bottom of the sea, never floating to its surface. The passage itself looks like waves lapping a shore, with lines whose lengths advance and recede across the page. The lines' tones rise and fall from the start of each stanza to its final enjambment, thereby intensifying the sense of cyclical motion.

This sense of motion compounds the instability of any understanding of Phlebas. The extent to which Phlebas is truly dead is difficult to know. Although the speaker informs us that Phlebas is "a fortnight dead" (312), he seems to relive life in reverse—"He passed the stages of his age and youth / Entering the whirlpool" (317-318). The sense of timelessness confuses the validity of the statement that Phlebas is dead. If Phlebas's death occurs in service to a fertility ritual meant to cure the waste that has infected the modern world, the expectation that Phlebas will be restored to life hangs over the scene.⁸ The reality, however, suggests that he will not be resurrected. Like the rest of the waste land characters, then, Phlebas is "neither/ Living nor dead" (39-40). Neither Eliot nor the speaker give any indication that Phlebas will rise to cleanse the waste land. Rather, the speaker remains intensely ambivalent, suggesting that "the beneficent

death by water that transformed the father's bones into something rich and strange is here merely the drowning of Phlebas, without hope of transfiguration" (Rodgers 51).

Phlebas's significance to the speaker's audience is also unclear. The speaker merely tells other sailors and the reader to "consider" Phlebas. He could have been more unequivocal about how the reader should feel about Phlebas; he could have said to remember Phlebas, to fear his fate, or to pray for his resurrection. Instead, he uses the distant, empirical word "consider." This word choice ambiguates even the act of learning from Phlebas, as one may consider something without acting on it or learning from it. In addition, though the speaker claims that Phlebas has forgotten the aspects of working the sea, he is careful to make sure that the reader cannot forget these aspects. The speaker lists the things that Phlebas has forgotten, creating a state of simultaneous forgetfulness and remembrance. Although Phlebas "forgot the cry of gulls, and the deep sea swell / And the profit and loss" (Eliot 313-314), the speaker does not allow the reader to forget it; he deliberately lists them. What, then, are the waste land characters, or the reader, to do with the image of Phlebas? The concept that Phlebas is meant to signify has become obscured by the speech of the narrator; as a second-order signifier he remains devoid of new signification. Phlebas, then, epitomizes the open-endedness of *The Waste Land*—he is paralyzed in suspension between death and resurrection, between forgetting and memorializing. This open-endedness suffuses the entirety of the poem, indicating its novelized nature. The image of Phlebas is simply presented, and it is up to the viewer or listener to imbue Phlebas with meaning through "considering" him.

Heteroglossia in *The Waste Land*

Bakhtin's third standard for what makes a novel is the presence of heteroglossia. *The Waste Land* is indeed heteroglossic; the poem's most striking quality is the panoply of voices

and speech types that populate the stanzas. From the poem's first lines, different voices sound against each other: Bedient describes, "No poem before ever started so, with an 'overhear me,' then an 'overhear *me*'..." (Bedient 9). The words Bakhtin uses to describe everyday language and the language of the novel ring true for *The Waste Land*: its language "is heteroglot from top to bottom: it represents the co-existence of socio-ideological contradictions between the present and the past, between different socio-ideological groups in the present..." ("DN" 291). Eliot, in constructing *The Waste Land* with numerous different speaking voices, gestures toward the creation of a system of order in the face of the intellectual and spiritual waste land of modernity. By inundating the poem with different speech types, allusions, and sociolects, Eliot constructs an environment in which the centrifugally stratified speech types should enter into dialogue with each other and undergo centripetal ordering. It is crucial to note, then, that *The Waste Land* is not spoken by a single speaker merely parroting other voices and other speech types. Rather, novelization requires a social diversity of speech types and the "differing individual voices that flourish under such conditions" ("DN" 263). "Individual" voices must stem from individual speakers, as they surely do in *The Waste Land*; separate and distinct speakers make idiolectic utterances, interrupt each other, and influence each other.

A common interpretation of Eliot's poem establishes Tiresias as the poem's sole speaker, arguing that he witnesses and narrates each event and viewpoint in the poem through his foresight. This trend stems from the footnotes Eliot added to the poem after its publication, in which he states, "Tiresias, although a mere spectator and not indeed a 'character,' is yet the most important personage in the poem, uniting all the rest... What Tiresias *sees*, in fact, is the substance of the poem" (Eliot 23n218).⁹ However, the voices that speak in *The Waste Land* sound too sonically distinct to be the product of a single speaker. Scholars like Matthew Bolton

and Paul R. La Chance have recognized the inherently heteroglossic nature of the poem and have argued against the role of Tiresias as central speaker. Bolton argues that “Eliot’s attempt in his notes to identify a master narrator for *The Waste Land* may only underscore its absence in the poem. Nor does the poem have a unitary protagonist” (Bolton 26). La Chance argues that positing Tiresias as the sole speaker “without sensing the tension of between the voices, or the tensions each voice has within itself by virtue of overtones, levels of awareness, irony, modulations, echoes, or whatever, is to miss the rich texture of the poem woven by the interplay of voices” (La Chance 107). Each speaking voice in the poem carries distinctions that demarcate one from the other. Heteroglossia can only exist through the existence of discrete speaking individuals.

However, the voices in *The Waste Land* are not perfectly distinct or distinguishable. Confusion regarding the identity of a given speaker is compounded by the instability and suspension of the first-person pronoun “I.” “I” is an open-ended sign, requiring a pre-established referent in order to make sense. Eliot, however, usually refrains from clarifying the referent of any given “I” in the poem, beside the anomaly of “I Tiresias.” Holquist explains, “When a particular person utters that word, he or she fills ‘I’ with meaning by providing the central point needed to calibrate all further time and space discriminations” (Holquist 23). Without the knowledge of who is uttering the pronoun, one cannot determine the identity of a speaker; the axis upon which “I” turns is unknowable; the word itself is unstable without an established referent. In *The Waste Land*, the pronoun abounds. Oftentimes, the word “I” remains, but it carries an unmistakable sense that the speaker has shifted. The “I” that “read[s] much of the night, and go[es] south in the winter” (Eliot 17-18) cannot be uttered by the same “I” that “will show you fear in a handful of dust” (30), which in turn cannot be uttered by the same “I” that

speaks to Stetson (69). How, then, may one assign identity to these speakers in order to define “I,” to understand their individual roles in heteroglossia?

Characters’ identities, the foundation on which to base “I,” become more distinct through their idiolects, which manifest themselves through variations in tone, meter, and allusion. Even without a distinct narrator explicitly telling the reader who says what, Eliot uses idiolects to create the sense that we “overhear” (Bedient 9) the voice of a new personality talking, or we are again hearing a voice that spoke earlier. Paul La Chance identifies numerous speakers in the poem through an analysis of the meters and tones in each utterance, assigning certain attitudes and cadences to specific characters. This enterprise only goes so far, however, as a reading of *The Waste Land* will show that it is impossible to attribute every utterance to a specific speaker; the utterances and tones become too amorphous to account for every line. La Chance does, however, denote three distinct speakers that he presumes utter the majority of the poem: the “meditative, pensive” quester (La Chance 103), the “sinister” and “assertive” seer who insists on showing “you fear in a handful of dust” (Eliot 30), and the mocking and condescending Tiresias (La Chance 109-111).

La Chance’s analysis relies heavily on the personalities of the speakers of the poem. However, these characters may more adequately be distinguished through their idiolectic uses of the shifter “I,” to relate to the waste land and to the reader. The quester—who La Chance claims utters the first lines and many of the more somber descriptions of the waste land—often uses “I,” as opposed to speaking in distant, empirical observations. However, his singular pronouns often switch to the first-person plural pronouns (La Chance 109)—“*I think we are in rats’ alley / Where the dead men lost their bones*” (Eliot 115-116; emphasis added); “*My friend, blood shaking my heart... By this, and only this, we have existed*” (402, 405; emphasis added); “*I have*

heard the key... *We* think of the key..." (411, 413; emphasis added). This fluidity between the first person singular and plural pronouns idiolectically reveals the quester's willingness to associate with his audience, be they the waste land characters or the reader. The shifting "I," then, is slightly more stable when uttered by the quester, as the quester's "I" is often imbricated with the reader's "I," allowing the reader to maintain a consistent referent for the pronoun—themselves.

The seer's use of "I" then stands in sharp contrast to the quester's. While the quester "identifies himself with the suffering human condition" (La Chance 109) that he sees in the waste land, the seer idiolectically uses the first-person pronoun to maintain a separation from those he addresses, coupling it not with "we" but with "you." With a tone that is "welcoming and sinister," (Ricks 152), the seer's speech suggests that he feels himself superior to his addressee. He asks, "What are the roots that clutch, what branches grow / Out of this stony rubbish?" (Eliot 19-20), and he immediately answers, "Son of man, / *You* cannot say, or guess, for *you* know only/ A heap of broken images..." (20-22; emphasis added). The seer, in contrast, knows full well the current state of the land: "And *I* will show you something different from either / *Your* shadow at morning striding behind you... I will show you fear in a handful of dust" (27-28, 30; emphasis added). His alternations between "I" and "you" create a stark contrast between himself and the other waste land characters; Eliot creates a sense of the seer's perceived superiority and maliciousness by lending the seer a distinctive, idiolectic use of first and second person pronouns.

Tiresias, earlier described as a second-order signifier whose remembrances of his original context are repressed by his relocation into the contemporary world, also uses "I" idiolectically. He never uses the pronoun without immediately following it with its definition, coupling it with

the subject noun “Tiresias” or a subject clause— “I *Tiresias*” (218, 243; emphasis added); “I *who* have sat by Thebes below the wall” (245; emphasis added). Tiresias persistently, almost anxiously, attempts to preserve a single definition for himself. Although he has become a second-order signifier with a multiplicity of significations, his idiolect marks an attempt to resist such a state of flux, a flux that is imposed by his “throbbing between two lives” (218) and by his relocation into a modern context.¹⁰ Tiresias also uses the most regulated rhyme scheme in the entire poem, beyond the sporadic couplets or quatrains uttered in other sections, and he involves his pronoun “I” in that rhyme scheme. Following a recurring ABAB rhyme scheme, he describes the sexual encounter between the typist and the clerk, but also describes himself: “(And I Tiresias have foresuffered all / Enacted on this same divan or bed; / I who have sat by Thebes below the wall / And walked among the lowest of the dead)” (243-246). Tiresias’s voice becomes recognizable not only through his persistent definitions of “I,” but also through his adherence to meter, which compounds the sense that Tiresias has seen the scene before. Just as a reader may predict his next rhyme, so too is Tiresias able to predict the outcome of the encounter. The idiolects of Tiresias and the other main speakers create the feeling of hearing the speech of different people; their idiosyncrasies suggest that they are individual speakers.

Heteroglossia also manifests itself through a social stratification of language. As centrifugal forces divide language into various speech types, centripetal forces reorder the speech types into social hierarchies in which certain speech types are elevated and valued above others. *The Waste Land* showcases a social diversity of speech types in the section “A Game of Chess,” which juxtaposes high and low speech and social standing. Eliot uses different methods of setting the linguistic scene in order to key the reader in to the social class of the speakers. For example, he first presents an intricate, heavily decorated room, which prepares the audience for a

conversation between two elites. Allusions to Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra* heavily suggest the trappings of royalty: "The Chair she sat in, like a burnished throne, / Glowed on the marble, where the glass... / Doubled the flames of sevenbranched candelabra" (Eliot 77-78, 82).¹¹ One's senses are almost overwhelmed by the surfeit of wealth; the speaker says, "From satin cases poured in rich profusion; / In vials of ivory and coloured glass / Unstoppered, lurked her strange synthetic perfumes, / Unguent, powdered, or liquid—troubled, confused / And drowned the sense in odours" (85-89). The language that the speaker uses to describe the location is dense and archaic. Long sentences span across lines, with little punctuation to demarcate adjunctive clauses from main clauses; the sense of excess and wealth bleeds through the lofty language.

The upper-class setting contrasts dramatically with the entirely verbal account that one can only assume is overheard within the setting of a public house.¹² No description of the scene is given; rather, the scene shifts directly into the voice of a woman who cannot possibly be in the same place as the section's previous speakers. The shift in speech type embodies a shift in sociolect—while the setting of wealth suggests a high, elevated sociolect, the sociolect of the women in the public house suggests a lower-class setting. Eliot captures the cadence and tone of a stereotypically lower-class English accent as a woman describes a conversation in which she bluntly warns Lil to make herself look prettier for her husband with a new set of teeth. She retells the conversation to her audience, saying, "But if Albert makes off, it won't be for lack of telling. / You ought to be ashamed, I said, to look so antique. / (And her only thirty-one.) / I can't help it, she said, pulling a long face, / It's them pills I took, to bring it off, she said" (153-159). The text becomes almost audible; the speaker's sociolect is so distinct that she is easily located in a public house despite the fact that the location is never specified. Her subject matter further defines her

sociolect; she discusses in plain detail the issues that plague her and others of her same social class, such as unwanted pregnancies, the pressure to please one's husband, the side effects of abortion pills. Her language literally fills the space; while the upper-class setting requires another speaker to act as a narrating voice and describe the scene, the public house is conjured through the woman's speech alone.¹³

While the sociolects of the women in the pub act to construct the setting, the sociolects of the upper-class speakers jar with the dense description of the room in which they speak. The room, replete with objects of affluence and allusions to Shakespearian wealth, keys the reader to expect a sociolect that sounds in accordance with such a setting. However, Eliot suggests that the upper-class sociolect, uttered in a space of excess, is in fact a speech type of sparseness.

Emptiness and ennui permeate their language and their worries. The woman, often nicknamed the Belladonna¹⁴, obsesses over the state of her nerves and with what she shall occupy herself: "What shall I do now? What shall I do? / 'I shall rush out as I am, and walk the street / 'With my hair down, so. What shall we do tomorrow? / 'What shall we ever do?'" (131-134). The audible sharpness of her voice and her short, clipped sentences contrast with the opaque and lengthy lines of the section's introduction, as well as with the content-filled, circuitous language of the woman in the pub. Despite being surrounded by stimulation, she finds nothing to give her peace or occupation. This vacuity further infiltrates the Belladonna and her lover's language, as their exchanges consist primarily of meaningless repetitions. The word "nothing" is repeated six times in quick succession, suggesting that their sociolect is grounded in nothingness as opposed to wealthy excess:

"What is that noise now? What is the wind doing?"

Nothing again nothing.

"Do

"You know nothing? Do you see nothing? Do you remember

“Nothing?”

I remember

Those are pearls that were his eyes.

“Are you alive, or not? Is there nothing in your head?” (119-126)

Nothing in nature moves around them; no thoughts persist in their minds; no memory, experience, or knowledge inform their language. Eliot insists, however, that this language of emptiness is still the upper-class sociolect; he refuses to allow any extrication of their speech from their upper-class locale. The speakers are surrounded by so many “somethings,” and yet their language is founded upon “nothing.” In entangling their sociolect with their opulent environment, and by juxtaposing the upper-class language with the language of the pub scene, Eliot captures the stratifying effects of heteroglossia—the various speech types generated within heteroglossia become ordered hierarchically by centripetal forces, and certain speech types are elevated over others.

However, in the same way that Eliot unsettles expectations of how the upper-class sociolect should sound, so too does he subvert the effects of allusion in both sociolectic spheres. “A Game of Chess” is made symmetrical by its allusions to Shakespeare; it begins with the allusion to Cleopatra’s barge and ends with a quotation of the mad Ophelia. As the patrons leave the pub at the end of the section, the barman says, “Good night, ladies, good night, sweet ladies, good night, good / night” (172-173), quoting Ophelia’s farewell to the king’s court in the scene prior to her death. He appears to switch from the practical speech he uses to run the pub—the loud, unpunctuated “HURRY UP PLEASE ITS TIME”—to the softer, lilting tones created by the rhythmic commas in the quotation. Shakespeare also appears near the border between the high and low settings: the addressee of the Belladonna says, almost to himself, “O O O O that Shakespeherian Rag— / It’s so elegant / So intelligent” (128-130), referencing a 1912 ragtime song (North 9n4). The presence of Shakespeare in both high and low spheres displays the

mixing of language that occurs in heteroglossia, the influence of one speech type on another. Heteroglossia causes the allusion to resonate beyond speech boundaries, as if Shakespeare's words have become mythologized. A chiasmus forms between the injection of low, commodified Shakespearian ragtime into the upper-class strata and the sincere, almost elegiac quotation of Ophelia to describe the ailing, toothless, unbeautiful women in the pub. The application of Shakespeare to the upper-class scene, rather than creating an image of an intellectual and thoughtful class of elites, instead parodies the upper-class viewpoint, making the emptiness of their sociolect even more pronounced. The upper-class is separated from a true knowledge of Shakespeare and its literary past; its collective head is instead filled with a popular music—the "Shakespearian Rag," with an added syllable to imitate a posh accent. While the bastardization of Shakespeare drags the upper-class sociolect further away from high speech, Shakespearian allusion elevates the lower-class scene and the women within it. Ophelia speaks the line to the members of the king and queen's court; the barman says it to Lou and May, and, by extension, to Lil and the other women like her. It is unclear whether or not the barman knows he is quoting Shakespeare, or if the line has become a mere second-order sign in his own ears, but the line remembers its original context; it cannot be extricated from Ophelia and her tragedy. The women in the pub may endure tragedy, as Ophelia does, but the citation of Shakespeare lends their scene a sense of dignity, of elegy, of respect. The presence of Shakespeare simultaneously declasses the high speech and elevates the low speech, pulling both into a middle ground of dialogization. Separated on the page by only a single white space, the speech spheres influence each other. The low speech injects popular music into high speech; high speech lends low speech a deferential quotation of Ophelia. Heteroglossia allows the speech types to interact and inform each other.

The interaction of allusions in the first half of *The Waste Land* also reveals the nature of heteroglossia. In the final stanza of the section “The Burial of the Dead,” the array of allusions represent the poem’s novelistic ability to parody or “re-interpret” (“FPND” 72) other languages in order to create a new, second language out of that first language.¹⁵ Through parody, allusions become mythologized, and as Barthes states, “myth is a type of speech” (Barthes 109). Within the final stanza of the first section, Eliot draws lines and images from numerous literary sources:

Unreal City,
 Under the brown fog of a winter dawn,
 A crowd flowed over London Bridge, so many,
 I had not thought death had undone so many.
 Sighs, short and infrequent, were exhaled,
 And each man fixed his eyes before his feet.
 Flowed up the hill and down King William Street,
 To where Saint Mary Woolnoth kept the hours,
 With a dead sound on the final stroke of nine.
 There I saw one I knew, and stopped him, crying, “Stetson!
 “You who were with me in the ships at Mylae!
 “That corpse you planted last year in your garden,
 “Has it begun to sprout? Will it bloom this year?
 “Or has the sudden frost disturbed its bed?
 “Oh keep the Dog far hence, that’s friend to men,
 “Or with his nails he’ll dig it up again!
 “You! hypocrite lecteur!—mon semblable,—mon frère!” (Eliot 60-76)

The range of allusion is quite expansive: the stanza is bookended by French poet Charles Baudelaire; the speaker’s melancholic “I had not thought death had undone so many” (63) echoes lines from Dante’s *Inferno*; in his warning to “keep the Dog far hence” from the corpse Stetson has buried, the speaker alludes to John Webster’s *The White Devil* (North 7n4). By incorporating these allusions into this stanza, Eliot engages in the novelistic act of parody, creating a new language out of the original language of the literary sources. Take, for example, Webster’s *The White Devil*. Webster’s original line reads “*But keepe the wolfe far thence that’s foe to men, / For with his nails hee’l dig them up agen*” (Webster 9-10, qtd. in North 45).¹⁶ Eliot,

however, amends the lines, changing “wolf” to “dog” and “foe” to “friend.” In doing so, Eliot hybridizes his own words—or the words of his speaker—with those of Webster, creating a “stylistic hybrid” (“FPND” 76) of the two languages. The allusion, remembering its original context, generates a sense of “familiar strangeness” (Ellmann 102) in its new locale. The parody then revitalizes what could have been an “inert” (“FPND 69) quotation of Webster; the hybridization of the parodied language and the parodying language creates new meaning. By changing the words of Webster’s line, Eliot literally takes the teeth off of the lines, making exhumation seem less threatening and more domestic. Though the issue is the same in both languages—the unearthing of something that was intentionally buried—Eliot suggests that this threat can come from seemingly innocent sources in the waste land. He hybridizes old language with new language in order to create a quotation that fits within the waste land context.¹⁷

Allusions in *The Waste Land* not only generate heteroglossia by taking part in parody, but they also undergo mythologization. For example, Eliot preserves the integrity of the citation from “Au Lecteur,” by leaving it untranslated: “You! hypocrite lecteur—mon semblable,—mon frère!” (Eliot 76). The quotation does not hybridize with any element of the speaker’s language. However, by transplanting the line into *The Waste Land*, Eliot causes it to be mythologized; its original signification changes, making the whole utterance a second-order signifier. Its new signification is less important than the fact that the speaker cites it in the first place. In doing so, and in leaving the line in its original form, the speaker includes all of the line’s original associations, such as the threat of ennui and the multitude of vices that rot the human psyche. Though the literal form of the line is frozen, “has stopped moving” (Barthes 125), Baudelaire’s line still maintains “an instantaneous reserve of history” (118) which the line remembers in its new context. The addressing of Stetson or the reader of *The Waste Land* with Baudelaire’s line

resonates with Baudelaire's evocation of Ennui, that "fastidious monster" (Baudelaire 39, qtd. in North 43) as the undead perpetually flow over London Bridge. Eliot's preservation of Baudelaire's line does not create a hybrid utterance, but a myth that remembers its original context. The myth, then, generates new layers of meaning in the text—the doubling of Stetson and the speaker, the doubling of past and present, and the imbrication of the reader—the "hypocrite lecteur"—within the waste land environment.

The Manifestation of Speech Types in *The Waves*

A description of the structure of Woolf's novel, *The Waves*, will prove useful before analyzing how the novel constructs heteroglossia. Taking a radically different form than that of *The Waste Land*, *The Waves* is framed by the tonally similar monologues of six separate speaking characters—Bernard, Neville, Louis, Jinny, Rhoda, and Susan—and each section of the novel is demarcated by an "interlude" in which an italicized third-person omniscient speaker describes the rising and setting of the sun over the sea. This third-person voice only intrudes on the characters' sections—which Woolf referred to as "episodes" (Stewart 25)—in dialogue tags used to indicate who is speaking—such as "Bernard said," "Rhoda said," etc. The novel begins with the characters' shared childhood in boarding school, and it tracks their journey through young adult life to middle age. As the characters go their separate ways yet maintain their friendship, the sun rises, reaches its zenith, and begins to set in the interludes.

Because the novel is composed almost entirely of characters' speech, it "may be read as the heteroglossic novel *extraordinaire*" (McIntire 31). The majority of the novel's content consists of the characters' words and speech types; in lieu of narrating the occurrence of any plot, Woolf conveys their interactions and perceptions through their speech. The languages of the characters interact with each other in moments of heteroglossic balance, in which their speech

becomes shaped by the speech of each other. However, it must be acknowledged that, on the surface, *The Waves* does not appear to be extremely heteroglossic, especially when compared to the distinct voices in *The Waste Land* with their own tones, social influences, and literal languages. The characters in *The Waves* sound almost tonally identical, as if the same voice utters all of the monologues; Maureen Chun refers to their utterances as “stylistically homogenized soliloquies” which do “not imitate naturalist speech” and “remain stylistically undifferentiated” (Chun 54). For example, the novel opens thus:

“I see a ring,” said Bernard, “hanging above me. It quivers and hangs in a loop of light.”
 “I see a slab of pale yellow,” said Susan, “spreading away until it meets a purple stripe.”
 “I hear a sound,” said Rhoda, “cheep, chirp; cheep, chirp; going up and down.”
 “I see a globe,” said Neville, “hanging down in a drop against the enormous flanks of some hill.”
 “I see a crimson tassel,” said Jinny, “twisted with gold threads.”
 “I hear something stamping,” said Louis. “A great beast’s foot is chained. It stamps, and stamps, and stamps.” (Woolf 5)

The stylistic similarities are evident: a reliance on physical sensations in interpreting the world, the insistent use of the present tense which “bestow[s] on *all* the activities narrated in *The Waves*, whether internal or external, the aura of a meditating mind” (Graham 196), the abstract categories into which the characters organize their perceptions.¹⁸ Though these lines are spoken when they are children, a similar tone is maintained throughout the novel.

However, this abstract language of perception is, in effect, a speech type of its own in a heteroglossic word. The characters all share this “unspeakable” language in which words become “non-semantic” and “purely perceptual” (Chun 55, 56); their words are not intended to convey the literal details of the world around them, but rather to capture the nebulous sensations of subconscious perception. The children base their observations on what they see and hear, and these sensations may also be imaginary—Louis imagines the “stamping” of a “great beast;” Susan breaks the world down into its base colors; Bernard and Neville focus on shapes,

foregrounds, and backgrounds. Woolf's characters "perceive words as sensuous, synesthetically evocative phenomena or things rather than basic units of verbal representation" (Chun 55); they use signs to convey feelings and sensations rather than what they literally signify. This "secret language" (Chun 56) acts as a single speech type in the heteroglossic environment of *The Waves*. As the characters' lives progress with the novel, the idiosyncrasies of their speech emerge out of their shared speech genre, and the characters' developing idiolects contribute to the novel's heteroglossia. Their idiolects reveal that the characters do not exist in monoglossia with only this "secret language" at their disposal; rather, they speak and think within a heteroglossic environment.

Though we only hear the characters speak in their shared language or in their idiolects, they often reference other sociolects that exist in the world around them. Because they are all able to exist in their specific social spheres, the characters must also be fluent in these sociolects. For example, their shared speech type, given that they all come from relatively the same privileged social status, is inflected by sociolect. Tamar Katz asserts:

It [the novel] insists, that is, that its characters are not simply abstract entities whose multiplicity or singularity must be debated, but *subjects shaped by middle- and upper-class British culture*. The novel's speakers find their way through proper schools to careers and identities as businessman, mother, academic, or socialite, and recognizable social conventions shape their ideas about identity... (Katz 184; emphasis added)

Bakhtin posits that each of these spheres of life has its own speech genre, each with idiosyncrasies of vocabulary, syntax, or other linguistic features. For the characters to become active members of these spheres—as Woolf shows that they are—they must be fluent and aware of these speech types, even if we only ever hear them speak in their abstract, perceptual speech. However, that abstract speech in fact carries its own social and cultural connotations. The language's emphasis on sensual perception and subconscious impressions encourages one to see

it as a universal language. This urge to be universal obscures the language's social inflections, similarly to how the Bloomsbury group of which Woolf was part attempted to appear classless. Raymond Williams argues that Bloomsbury, replete with its own sociolects of “candour” and “clarity” (Williams 233), sought to denounce the cruelty of the upper class by ignoring their own roles in that class: “They [Bloomsbury] were a true *fraction* of the existing English upper class. They were at once against its dominant ideas and values and still willingly, in all immediate ways, part of it” (236).¹⁹ Although members of Bloomsbury, including Leonard Woolf, would insist that their aesthetic and scholarly endeavors “had nothing to do with any group” (233)—social or political—Williams contends that their shared class and experiences at Cambridge inexorably colored all of their pursuits. In their elevation of the “civilized *individual*” (244), Bloomsbury insisted that their endeavors were unaffected by class, even though one's class determines the extent to which someone can engage into “civilized” activities. However, they cannot escape the effects of their sociolects upon their language. Likewise, by sharing a tonally identical, abstract language, the characters in *The Waves* preserve their shared sociolect of privilege yet disguise their mutual class under the guise of “universal” perception.

The characters take note of other sociolects that exist outside of their shared speech, and these sociolects often mark the speakers' degrees of social standing or Westernness. Louis, in particular, is acutely aware of the counterpoint between his socio-idiolect and the shared, perceptually “classless” abstract language of the other speakers. He worries repeatedly: “My father is a banker in Brisbane and I speak with an Australian accent” (Woolf 13). He feels he must imitate the accents of others, such as Bernard, because “He [Bernard] is English” (13). Because Louis uses the abstract speech in his textually-recorded monologues, his Australian is accent is not audible to the reader, yet his fear of being “place[d]” as coming from “Canada or

Australia” (70) dominates his idiolect. From early on in his childhood, Louis learns that he must be fluent in the language of the culture in which he finds himself, whether that be acoustically through the accent of his speaking voice, or through the use of appropriate speech types, such as the “boasting” language in which the English boys engage at school (22). As he pursues his career, he becomes careful to imitate the accents of those around him, to assure himself “I am an average Englishman; I am an average clerk” (69).²⁰ Louis understands the effect of different speech genres in signaling his social standing; he must work within the hierarchical ordering that heteroglossia imposes upon the world in order to advance his career and his esteem among his colleagues. His persistent desire to mask his natural speech in order to appear more high class and more English suggest that he is able to speak both his original sociolect (as much as he may want to forget it) and the sociolects of his career and of upper-class English.

Louis is not the only character to observe the role of other sociolects; the others seem to comment most on those sociolects that mark class and Westernness. For example, the characters often boast of the poets and authors that they are able to quote or imitate, as this indicates their education and Englishness. Neville says that he “know[s] already how to rhyme, how to imitate Pope, Dryden, even Shakespeare” (35) when comparing himself to the other boys at school. Bernard, wanting to write an energetic letter to a woman he is courting, imitates Byron’s language, hoping to elevate her impression of him (58). Louis asserts that he is “the companion of Plato, of Virgil” (70) in response to the threat of true Englishmen around him discovering his accent. The allusions act in some way like Barthes’s second-order signifiers—they indicate the learnedness and class of the speaker rather than their literal significations. The use of such allusions marks one’s participation in the social group, that group being the upper-middle class of English society.²¹ The elevated status given to Western speech types in the characters’ minds

manifests itself most starkly when the characters imagine their friend Percival's exploits as a soldier in India. Bernard muses, "By applying the standards of the West, by using the violent language that is natural to him [Percival], the bullock-cart is righted in less than five minutes. The Oriental problem is solved" (102). The use of "violent language" to right an overturned cart suggests Bernard's belief that Percival's speech type—one of Englishness, of the empire—is highest in the social stratification imposed by heteroglossia. The injection of Percival's English sociolect enacts a "violence" upon the speech types around him, as heteroglossia forces the speech types around him to be re-ordered with Percival's at the top, which is almost mirrored in the righting of the cart.²² The power of Percival's speech reflects the power that higher ranked sociolects possess in the characters' lives; because they exist in a heteroglossic environment replete with other speech types, the characters must speak and understand other languages than their abstract speech in order to navigate the world.

Idiolect as a Marker of Heteroglossia

Characters' voices are distinguished by their idiolects, which are conveyed through the idiosyncratic imagery and allusion rather than phonetic tonality or accent. The dominant sociolects around them often influence the characters' idiolects, causing them to internalize certain linguistic habits. These idiolects contribute to the formation of heteroglossia in the novel; because they are specific speech types produced through the stratifying of language, Bakhtin includes "a character's discourse" ("DN" 333) in his definition of heteroglossia. The speakers employ specific images to organize the world and construct their identities; Garret Stewart writes that "...*The Waves* is about the self's finding language so as to find a self in that language" (Stewart 435). Susan thinks in terms of the natural world, her own fertility, and her role as a mother. Bernard, the novelist, collects phrases for later use in his desire to "sum up" all human

life in one story; he associates himself with Byron and other prolific authors. Jinny's language mirrors her movement; aware of the allure of her body and excited by the prospect of youth and courtship, she "dances" and "ripples" throughout the narrative. There are numerous examples of the workings of the characters' idiolects, but Rhoda's speech habits are the most obvious, given that she often describes the reasons why she feels her speech does not function in the world around her.

Rhoda relies on the image of petals floating in a basin of water, which she imagines as ships, to construct her identity and her relation to the world. The association of herself with these petals as a "ship" that "sails alone" (Woolf 12) reflects her idiosyncratic problem—her inability to find balance between the individuation that her idiolect forces upon her and the need to partake in a shared language with those around her. The image of floating petals becomes associated with Rhoda early in the novel, when she is a child. At school, she literally rocks petals in a basin; Susan corroborates this fact: "Here is Rhoda on the path rocking petals to and fro in her brown basin" (12). Rhoda generalizes the image of the petals to the image of ships, and relates both objects to her own self:

"All my ships are white," said Rhoda. "I do not want red petals of hollyhocks or geranium. I want white petals that float when I tip the basin up. I have a fleet now swimming from shore to shore. I will drop a twig in as a raft for a drowning sailor. I will drop a stone in and see bubbles rise from the depths of the sea... And I will now rock the brown basin from side to side so that my ships may ride the waves. Some will founder. Some will dash themselves against the cliffs. One sails alone. That is my ship." (12).

She asserts with conviction that she is a lone ship, the only ship of the fleet that will survive the motion she imposes upon the basin. Her idiolect allows her to create and maintain a specific image of herself as an individual; her language separates herself from the others, both linguistically as she utters in a different speech type, and in essence, as she imagines herself as differentiated. However, as Rhoda ages, she finds herself unable to maintain this sense of

individual identity. Just as Rhoda bases her self-perception on a fragile flower petal, a vulnerable ship, so too is the integrity of her self endangered. Another marker of her idiolect is the refrain “I have no face” (23, 31, 91, 98, 171); catalyzed by her experiences at her all-girls’ school. She feels the need to imitate the manners and behaviors of others in order to function in a social world; she perpetually requires the presence of others to define herself. She says, “They [Susan and Jinny] know what to say if spoken to. They laugh really; they get angry really; while I have to look first and do what other people do when they have done it” (31). Rhoda cannot bridge the divide between herself as an individual and herself as a member of a community, as someone perceived by others. She imitates others in an attempt to mask the destabilization that individuation incurs; her idiolect no longer sounds with the shared language of the other characters, and she cannot diminish her idiolect to re-enter into that shared language. Throughout the novel, in moments of existential duress, Rhoda struggles with the tension to be individual and to partake in a common sociolect. For example, at a party with Jinny, surrounded by other selves, Rhoda again speaks her idiolect: “Alone I rock my basins; I am mistress of my fleet of ships. But here, twisting the tassels of this brocaded curtain in my hostess’s window, I am broken into separate pieces; I am no longer one” (79). The need to speak a common language destroys the stability of her idiolect.²³ Unlike Jinny, who is able to speak her own idiolect yet enter into a shared language with other party-goers— “O come, I [Jinny] say to this one, rippling gold from head to heels. ‘Come’, and he comes towards me” (78)—Rhoda cannot find her way back to a shared speech; she cannot balance her individuation and her identity as a social being.

However, Rhoda’s idiolect is also shaped by the upper-class sociolect of the other speaking characters; her idiosyncratic uses of allusions to Percy Shelley mirror her desire to re-enter into a shared language with the others. Just as Neville, Louis, and Bernard allude to

foundational Western authors and poets to signal their sociolect, so too does Rhoda use allusion to attempt to rejoin her idiolect to their shared speech. As in *The Waste Land*, allusions in *The Waves* often manifest themselves in the characters' utterances without demarcation; Jane de Gay notes that "quotations are absorbed very deeply into the fabric of the novel, with very few being offset or placed in quotation marks... and well-known literary moments are replayed in part as the characters' experiences" (de Gay 160). Rhoda often describes her own experiences by alluding to Percy Shelly, speaking in hybrid utterances in which both her voice and Shelley's voice sound simultaneously. For example, when attempting to find something in which to ground her self after a daydream about being a Russian empress shatters (41), Rhoda reaches for a book to find definition. She then begins reading Shelley's poem "The Question." De Gay quotes a segment of Rhoda's response to the poem, using italicized lines to represent those taken directly from Shelley's poem:

Here is a poem about a hedge. I will wander down it and pick flowers, *green cowbind* and the *moonlight-coloured May*, *wild roses* and *ivy serpentine*...I will sit by the river's *trembling edge* and look at the *water-lilies*, *broad and bright*, which lit the oak that *overhung the hedge with moonlight beams of their own watery light*. (de Gay 164-165, emphasis hers)²⁴

Rhoda flows between Shelley's words and her own perceptions; she is reading the poem, but it seems as if the words spring from her thoughts naturally and without prompting. She then continues to quote "The Question" with even less indication that she is reading from a poem. She says, "I will pick flowers; I will bind flowers in one garland and clasp them and present them— Oh! to whom?" (Woolf 41).²⁵ The allusions act as second-order signifiers; we cannot forget that they are originally Shelley's words, but they are given a new signification when spoken by Rhoda. The allusive inflections of Rhoda's idiolect stem from the characters' collective sociolect, which they develop in their childhood and share throughout their lives. The qualities of

their sociolect bleed into their idiolects; Rhoda's affinity for Shelley originates in her educated, upper-class upbringing.

These allusions to Shelley reveal not only the rooting of Rhoda's idiolect in the characters' collective sociolect, but also Rhoda's desire to return to a state of balanced, unindividuated language. Rhoda continues to be haunted by the Shelleyan question of "to whom" she will give her flowers, or "all that now flows through me, from my warm, my porous body" (42). The answer to her question appears to be Percival—the characters' schoolyard friend around whom they often find the deepest and most fulfilling sense of unity.²⁶ She knows that Percival is the answer— "On the bare ground I will pick violets and bind them together and offer them to Percival, something given him by me" (120)—yet after his death in India she is only left once again with the question— "Who then comes with me? Flowers only, the cowbind and the moonlight-coloured May. Gathering them loosely in a sheaf I made of them a garland and gave them—Oh, to whom?" (158). She feels that she can find definition and stability in Percival, the figure who provides the most order to their communication. By quoting Shelley, she indicates her relationship to the other characters' sociolect while simultaneously expressing a desire to re-engage with the shared nature of their collective speech. Linking herself to Percival would allow her to reconstruct her self upon something that all characters share—their "love of Percival" (95). However, his death leaves Rhoda with no avenues through which to re-enter that shared language; her idiolect individuates her too much, and she cannot be reabsorbed into unity with the others.

Rhoda's idiolect, marked by the image of the petal-ships and allusions to Shelley, then acts as a generative speech type that constitutes part of the novel's heteroglossic web. Before feeling herself "broken into separate pieces" (Woolf 79) at the party with Jinny, Rhoda

imbricates these two characteristics of her speech type into a single utterance, forming a hybrid utterance with herself. She says, “But here the door opens and people come; they come towards me. Throwing faint smiles to mask their cruelty, their indifference, they seize me. The swallow dips her wings; the moon rides through blue seas alone” (78). Rhoda’s observation of the moon as a solitary entity sailing alone links the image back to herself—the lone sailor braving the tossing sea. It also subtly evokes Shelley’s “To the Moon,” in which the poet addresses the moon: “Art thou pale for weariness / Of climbing heaven and gazing on the earth / Wandering companionless” (“To the Moon”). Shelley’s moon is also an isolate, perpetually in motion, similar to Rhoda’s description of it. Just as she must constantly change her face to mimic the behaviors of those around her, so too is she like Shelley’s moon: “ever changing, like a joyless eye / That finds no object worth its constancy” (“To the Moon”). Rhoda hybridizes two markers of her idiolect into a single utterance; she cites herself in an attempt to resist recognition and perception by others. In doing so, she both affirms her individuality and fears it; she must be buffeted by the clash of other identities against her own. Unable to synchronize her idiolect with the speech types around her, Rhoda perpetually uses her speech to steel herself against the world, even though she longs to engage with it.

Rhoda’s idiolect, then, is its own speech type. If a character in *The Waves* wanted to “speak Rhoda,” per se, they would refer to petal-ships, lone sailors, and quotations of Shelley. Rhoda’s speech genre and the speech genres specific to the other five speaking characters all augment the heteroglossic nature of the novel. Because they capture the individual perspectives of their speakers, each characters’ idiolect acts as its own language in the novel, which other characters may recognize and reference.²⁷

The Imbalance of the Centrifugal and Centripetal Forces

Despite the fact that both Eliot and Woolf use qualities of the idiolect to construct heteroglossic environments, these heteroglossic environments break down by the end of their respective works. This breakdown is facilitated by each work's lack of an ordering, authoritative voice to bring the speech types of heteroglossia into a meaningful, dialogic order. Though Eliot and Woolf create narrative structures that could gesture toward an organization of the characters' utterances, they heavily restrict the scope of these structures. In *The Waste Land*, Tiresias, the voice of the Thunder, and the allusions to the *Upanishads* are limited to their own sections of the poem, and their unresolved unintelligibility keeps them from exerting any organizing power over the text. In *The Waves*, even though the third person narrator may present a sort of controlling metaphor that shapes the narrative, the form of the novel confines this ordering to the interludes. Percival, the character who more actively orders language in the first half of the novel, is killed at the novel's center. None of these figures can provide lasting order to the text, nor can they balance the forces of language that pull at the characters' speech. In *The Waste Land*, the absence of a controlling narrative voice allows the centrifugal forces of language to exacerbate the fragmentation of the poem's voices; stratification becomes so extensive that parody, hybridization, and mythologization become unfeasible. *The Waves*, in contrast, allows the centripetal forces of language to overwhelm its heteroglossia—the six speaking voices, along with the third person omniscient voice of the interludes, coalesce into the single voice of Bernard.

***The Waste Land's* Centrifugal Fragmentation**

In *The Waste Land*, numerous voices have the potential to act as a “master narrator” (Bolton 26). If given enough narrative authority, these voices could order the allusions and

disparate speech genres into direct hierarchies, thereby acting as mediators between the centrifugal tendency toward stratification and the centripetal urge to unify language. The poem's novelization causes readers to reach for a master narrator even more, as novels include authoritative voices who hierarchize the speech types present in the text. Tiresias is an example of a latent meta-narrator, whose role in the narrative was discussed earlier. Though he voices his disapproval of the typist and the clerk's mechanical sexual encounter, he does not impose any order or interfere. He is doomed to merely observe. His idiolect—marked by his constant definition of "I" and his regular rhyme scheme—fails to influence both the couple and the other speaking voices of the poem. Once the clerk "gropes" (Eliot 248) his way to bed and the typist "puts a record on the gramophone" (256) to mark the end of the scene, Tiresias's voice goes silent. His rhyme scheme does not persist beyond his scene; rather, the sporadic rhyme in the following stanza reflects the evaporation of his idiolect, as if it is only heard echoing along the streets.²⁸ His prophetic foresight of the scene does nothing to change the scene; his voice imposes no order on the qualities of the waste land.

The most authoritative voice in the poem would appear to be that of the thunder in the final section, "What the Thunder Said," yet even this voice is unable to bring order or bring restoration to the waste land. Eliot uses the voice of the thunder to present the same syllable to the waste land characters: "The jungle crouched, humped in silence. / Then spoke the thunder / DA" (398-400).²⁹ The syllable's capital letters, as well as the dramatic introduction "Then spoke the thunder" (399), key the thunder's voice as authoritative, as significant. The thunder's words, if heeded, could instruct the waste land characters in how to attain salvation and regeneration; the thunder itself could "bring rain" (394) to heal the waste land. Therefore, the thunder's meaning lies at the crux of the poem; restoration can only be generated if the characters understand the

thunder, allowing it to provide an overarching narrative into which they may fit their fragmented speech genres.

However, as Christopher Ricks states, “What the Thunder said is massively clear: DA. What the Thunder meant is massively unclear... DA is heard differently by each group” (Ricks 193).³⁰ These different interpretations impede the thunder’s potential to act as an authoritative, organizing voice, as the other fragmented voices renegotiate the thunder’s intended meaning. Following the precedent set by the *Upanishads*, the speaker of the poem interprets the syllable to make three different Sanskrit words— *datta* “give,” *dayadhvam* “compassion,” and *damyata* “self-control” (North 18n3). These varying interpretations obscure the thunder’s true meaning, so much so that the characters do not seem to act on any of the thunder’s perceived instructions. The first interpretation of *datta* “give,” is immediately followed by a question and a painful, almost involuntary response: “Datta: what have we given? / My friend, blood shaking my heart / The awful daring of a moment’s surrender / Which an age of prudence can never retract” (Eliot 401-404). The speaker does not indicate any benefit to the moment of surrender; rather, the act of surrendering brings great strain, and causes the speaker only to “have existed” (405) in “empty rooms” (409). The interpretation “have compassion” is followed by musings on isolation, isolation that is only alleviated by “aethereal rumours” (415) and ephemeral words that can have no permanent effect; they “revive *for a moment* a broken Coriolanus” (416, emphasis added). When considering the interpretation of “control,” the speaker juxtaposes the definite obedience of the boat that “responded / Gaily, to the hand expert with sail and oar” (418) with the conditionally tensed obedience of the addressee— “...your heart would have responded / Gaily, when invited, beating obedient / To controlling hands” (420-422). This difference in tense, despite the same sentence and line structure, suggests that the waste land characters *could* obey a

controlling force, but they do not elect to do so. The fact that the characters engage with the thunder's voice at all—whereas many of the other voices speak in isolation—suggests that they understand the thunder's potential to act as an organizing, authoritative voice. However, their own interpretations of “DA” carry out the work of the centrifugal forces; the thunder's single word becomes fragmented into different meanings and implications. The characters' interruptions of the thunder imply that they do not give the thunder the chance to finish speaking, nor do they heed even their own interpretations. As a result, the thunder's ordering voice is overwhelmed by the other voices that clamor to be heard, and it therefore cannot impose hierarchy onto the poem.

Because no controlling, authoritative voice imposes hierarchy upon the poem's speech types, centrifugal forces disintegrate social and vocal relations. While Bakhtin argues that the realist novel creates a defined, concrete hierarchy through a perfect balance of the centripetal and the centrifugal, as in Dickens, Eliot breaks down the hierarchical boundaries between speech types throughout the poem, before forgoing them altogether in the final stanza. *The Waste Land's* tendency toward fragmentation indicates the poem's imbalance in favor of the centrifugal forces of language. This centrifugal excess further explains the incongruousness of the speech types in “A Game of Chess.” The upper-class sociolect of the Belladonna contains fragments of low, popular speech, and the barkeep's sociolect makes use of elevating Shakespearian allusions because there is no authority to keep these speech genres separate. An ordering force would ensure that these speech types sound in harmony with their environments; definite boundaries would ensure that the speech types remain hierarchized. However, there is no controlling voice; order has been upended in the waste land. The high and low speech types each become stratified into new sociolects, each containing aspects of the other. The “Shakespearian Rag” (128) jars

with the allusions to *Antony and Cleopatra*, and Ophelia's "Good night, sweet ladies" (172) is incongruous with the barkeep's "HURRY UP PLEASE ITS TIME" (168-169); yet the characters utter them anyway. The centrifugal saturation of the poem causes the speech types to spin apart into more divergent speech types. Rather than becoming hierarchized by the centrifugal forces and then being held there by centripetal forces, the voices in *The Waste Land* continue to be stratified by the overwhelming centrifugal forces. While balanced heteroglossia would solidify the boundaries between speech types, those borders are broken apart by the continual stratification of speech genres.

By the final stanza of the poem, the centrifugal has overpowered any order that might have organized the speech types; the hierarchy has broken apart like the "falling towers" (373) the speaker envisions. The crowd of allusions, rather than being filled with new meaning to create a second language, is instead juxtaposed without organization. The stanza reads:

I sat upon the shore
 Fishing, with the arid plain behind me
 Shall I at least set my lands in order?
 London Bridge is falling down falling down falling down
Poi s'ascose nel foco che gli affina
Quando fiam uti chelidon—O swallow swallow
Le Prince d'Aquitaine à la tour abolie
 These fragments I have shored against my ruins
 Why then Ile fit you. Hieronymo's mad againe.
 Datta. Dayadhvam. Damyata.

Shantih shantih shantih (423-433)

This stanza appears to mirror the form of the final stanza of "The Burial of the Dead"—both are replete with allusion, both end with an untranslated citation that becomes visually split apart, be it by dashes and commas or by empty space.³¹ In that earlier stanza, the allusions interact with each other to form hybrid utterances. Lines that are quoted in their original form act as second-order myths, which simultaneously remember their original contexts and lend new meaning to

their current context. Citations that Eliot alters slightly, such as the quotation from Webster's *The White Devil*, become a new language, generated by the parodying of the original lines. In "The Burial of the Dead," allusions act within heteroglossia to become dialogized with Eliot's words and with the waste land context. However, by the end of the poem, any semblance of heteroglossic parody, mythologization, or hierarchy is lost. Centrifugal forces create such distance between the speech types that they no longer dialogize each other; the allusions are neither parodied nor mythologized. The stanza's form visually reflects this fragmentation. The repetition of "falling down" compounds the sense that London Bridge has collapsed into its composite pieces. Languages are jammed together and interrupt each other: Dante's Italian leads into Latin, which then veers into English along the path of the dash ("—O swallow swallow" (428)), then into Nerval's French. A wide, empty expanse lies between each utterance of "shantih" (433). Kinney defines this patchwork stanza as "a polyglot heaping together of references to urban collapse, uncompleted purgation, metamorphosis, rape and madness—a shorthand compendium of the themes the poem has so compulsively reiterated, appropriated from other texts and other tongues" (Kinney 282-283). Rather than employing allusion to create a second, parodied language, this stanza instead recursively reiterates themes that have been addressed, as if the text were placed in a centrifuge and allowed to break into its component parts. The allusions act as empty second-order signifiers, drawn from a meaning-filled original context but remaining unfilled within the waste land. Parody can only exist in a state of heteroglossia, and heteroglossia only functions when the centrifugal and centripetal forces are in balance. However, there is no authoritative voice that can catalyze parody, that can order or re-order the speech types into hierarchy. Therefore, the dominance of the centrifugal forces

prohibits any dialogue between the speech types or allusions; the allusions merely act as a cacophony of voices in a noisy, unordered scene.

Though many would read the speaker's assertion "These fragments I have shored against my ruins" (430) as redemptive, the line only highlights the lack of an ordering voice and the imbalance toward the centrifugal. The speaker insists that they have presented the fragmented allusions of the final stanza in some semblance of order, in order to protect themselves from the mental and spiritual rot of the waste land.³² This implies that the speaker carefully chooses each allusion, that each signifies something worth preserving that could restore the waste land. However, though the speaker insists that they will "set their lands in order" (425) with the following allusions, each allusion captures a sense of uncompleted transformation. London Bridge seems to be perpetually "falling down," as indicated by the three repetitions of the progressive tense. The Latin allusion asks "When shall I be like the swallow?" (North 19n3), implying that the change has not yet occurred and expressing a longing for a language possessing only a single signifier—"Jug jug" (Eliot 103). Nerval's tower is ruined; Hieronymo's use of the future tense—"Why then Ile fit you" (431)—implies that his trap has not yet been sprung. Though many would argue that these allusions safeguard the speaker against the decay of the waste land, their content in fact only compounds the sense of breakdown that has dominated the waste land. Even the most completed allusion—Dante's "Then he hid himself in the fire that refines them" (North 19n2)—suggests the transformation has not been completed; the speaker is merely "hiding" in the fire without evidence that they have been "refined" by it. Though the speaker insists that they have "shored" the fragments against their ruins, this shoring only perpetuates the centrifugal stratification into more and more speech types. Maud Ellman concludes: "But ironically, the effort to defeat [the poem's] own 'concatenated words' has only

made the text more polyglot, stammering its orisons in Babel. It is as if the speaking subject has been ‘ruined’ by the very fragments he had shored” (Ellmann 107). Rather than cementing the pieces of their literary history into a unified language on which to base their salvation, the speaker only participates in the centrifugal stratification of their language into more and more speech types.

The speaker appears to come to rest on words from Eastern philosophy, repeating the three interpretations of “DA” and culminating in the mantra of “shantih shantih shantih.” While many scholars read the final two lines as a peaceful acknowledgement of a personally-attained salvation, these allusions to the *Upanishads* instead magnify the linguistic instability incurred by the centrifugal forces.³³ The speaker repeats the three interpretations of the thunder’s words; his lack of italics for the Sanskrit words implies that they have been “normalized into English” (Vendler 88). However, despite appearing to have entered the lexicon, the words “Datta. Dayadhvam. Damyata” (Eliot 432) are merely empty second-order signifiers. The thunder’s intended meaning in “DA” has been replaced by subjective interpretations of the word. While the italic font, coupled with the speakers’ personal definitions of each word, loaned the interpretations a sense of linguistic significance, the words have lost those italics to become wholly sonic and without meaning. The true meaning can never be ascertained; these sonic words act almost like “shifters” whose meaning is determined entirely by a subjective perspective. The thunder’s “external referent” is “always deferred” (Rodríguez 65) in favor of linguistic stratification.

The centrifugal forces also destabilize the meaning of “shantih.” Both Clare Kinney and Eliot himself question the strength of shantih’s signification: “It [shantih] is distanced linguistically from the reader by the barrier of a foreign tongue, by Eliot’s informing us that his

translation of it as ‘the Peace that passeth understanding’ is but a ‘feeble equivalent’ of the original Sanskrit, and by the fact that the notion in question defies comprehension” (Kinney 283).³⁴ Leaving the word in its original language creates distance between its visual representation on the page and its meaning in the mind of the speaker, similar to how *datta*, *dayadhvam*, and *damyata* have been “normalized” into English with unsettled meanings. The Sanskrit becomes centrifugally stratified from the rest of the languages; it is literally another language that must be learned in order to obtain understanding. However, the meaning embodied by “*shantih*” is untranslatable; Eliot calls his definition a “feeble equivalent” to the meaning it holds in its original linguistic context.³⁵ No controlling voice informs the reader of the meaning of the words within the text of the poem itself; the speaker does not provide any further comment on the words but instead falls silent. The poem has lost the organization created by the balance of heteroglossia, and the allusions to the *Upanishads* jar with the allusions to destruction. Because of the imbalance of the poem’s linguistic forces, the concluding ability of the repeated *shantihs* is weakened. There is too much space between them; they are not ordered by punctuation; there is no concluding stop to mark the end of the poem. The *shantihs* show how centrifugal forces have overwhelmed the poem, compounding the lack of closure and ordering.

Authoritative Voices in *The Waves*

Similarly to *The Waste Land*, *The Waves* also plays with several narrative structures that could gesture toward the existence of an organizing, ordering force. The first voice that has the potential to be an authoritative narrative voice is that of the third person narrator in the interludes. Marked by italics, this narrator tracks the rising and setting of the sun over a house by the seashore. They speak in abstract images and impressions of the landscape:

The sea was indistinguishable from the sky, except that the sea was slightly creased as if

a cloth had wrinkles in it. Gradually as the sky whitened a dark line lay on the horizon dividing the sea from the sky and the grey cloth became barred with thick strokes moving, one after another, beneath the surface, following each other, pursuing each other, perpetually. (Woolf 3)

The language evokes a painting; words like “strokes” and “dark lines,” lend an artistic, abstract feeling to the scene, as if Woolf is painting the image with strokes of her pen before the reader’s eyes. These artistic cues indicate the third-person narrator’s idiolect. Such abstract depictions of the sun, the sea, the house on the shore, the birds, and other natural elements either directly signal the third-person narrator’s voice, or they elicit remembrances of their utterances.

The voice of the interludes could be read to impose an overarching metaphor through which to understand the events of the characters’ lives. Katz writes that the interludes “offer the cyclical structure of an implicitly recurring day as a governing metaphor” and “claim the power of metaphor to unify characters and encompass a character’s life” (Katz 194). The time of day, the weather, and the mood of the sea seem to directly reflect the characters’ mental states or their stages of life. The sun rises throughout the characters’ youth and adolescence and begins to set as they grow older. In the interlude that precedes the announcement of Percival’s death, the third-person narrator says, “*One after another they [the waves] massed themselves and fell; the spray tossed itself back with the energy of their fall. The waves were steeped deep-blue save for a pattern of diamond-pointed light on their backs which rippled as the backs of great horses ripple with muscles as they move*” (Woolf 112-113). The references to motions of tossing and falling, as well as to horses, act as premonitions of the language used in the following episode to describe Percival’s death, after he is thrown from his horse in India—Neville says, “He [Percival] is dead... He fell. His horse tripped. He was thrown” (114). The interludes appear to provide an organizing structure for the narrative, allowing for the reading that aging and death are as inevitable as the rising and setting of the sun or the waves crashing on the seashore.

However, when the interlude voice is the only possible ordering force existing in the text, moments of centripetal mixing occur, thereby suggesting that the forces of language are imbalanced and that the interlude voice cannot effectively organize the speech types. Woolf's characters repeatedly express their anxieties about becoming mixed into an amalgamation of voices or selves. Neville "hate[s] wandering and mixing things together" (13); Rhoda fears that she is "to be cast up and down among these men and women, with their twitching faces, with their lying tongues, like a cork on a rough sea" (80). Bernard directly notes the power of language to generate such linguistic and existential mergers, saying "...we melt into each other with phrases. We are edged with mist. We make an unsubstantial territory" (10). The characters are caught in the tension between "a heteroglossic mode of speech, narration, and subjectivity" and "an alluring but evidently dangerous monologic register" (McIntire 33). They fear losing their voices by merging with others, yet they think about it often; the centripetal forces of language insist on intruding into their idiolects and communications. Moments into which the centripetal intrudes are marked by characters feeling translucent or ephemeral—when they feel the boundaries of their minds, bodies, or identities becoming permeable. In these moments, their voices often meld with the idiolects of other characters, and their own identities become imbricated with theirs in a single voice.

Centripetal merger occurs even between the most opposite and idiolectically disparate characters, such as Rhoda and Jinny.³⁶ Jinny is "sensuality incarnate" (Harper 235)—her language is doused by her awareness of the fluidity of her body and its ability to attract others to her—while Rhoda fears interaction and contact with others. While Jinny says, "I am arch, gay, languid, melancholy by turns. I am rooted, but I flow" (Woolf 76), able to name herself in numerous ways, Rhoda must forcibly remind herself of her body: "But there is no single scent,

no single body for me to follow... I am whirled down caverns, and flap like paper against endless corridors, and must press my hand against the wall to draw myself back” (98). Jinny is naturally rooted in her body; Rhoda must cling to her physicality like a life preserver or risk the dissolution of her self to the stronger identities around her. This difference is further marked by their self-described actions. For example, when Jinny and Rhoda are playing a game at school, Rhoda says she dreams while Jinny insists she does not dream, setting them as diametric opposites. Jinny asserts, “I do not... lie, like Rhoda, crumpled among the ferns, staining my pink cotton green, while I dream of plants that flower under the sea, and rocks through which the fish swim slowly. I do not dream” (30). Rhoda, however, in a typical state of instability, says “Month by month things are losing their hardness; even now my body lets the light through; my spine is soft like wax near the flame of the candle. I dream; I dream” (33). Jinny grounds herself in reality, focusing on the physical state of her body and her dress, while Rhoda feels porous and lost in dreams.

However, despite the insistence of their fundamental differences, the centripetal forces still cause their idiolects to merge, if only for brief moments. For example, after Rhoda expresses a sense of translucence—her “body lets the light through” (33)—Jinny too expresses an uncharacteristic feeling of unsettledness. She says, “Everything in my body seems thinned out with running, with triumph... There is nothing staid, nothing settled, in this universe. All is rippling, all is dancing; all is quickness and triumph” (33). Jinny’s idiolect is marked by frequent references to “I” and to the nature of her body; she rarely speaks in terms broader than that of herself or those immediately around her. Her general statement about the universe marks a moment of impermanence, or permeability. After she utters those lines, she then uses an image from Rhoda’s idiolect:

Now the tide sinks. Now the trees come to earth; the brisk waves that slap my ribs rock more gently, and my heart rides at anchor, like a sailing-boat whose sails slide slowly down on to the white deck. The game is over. We must go to tea now. (33)

Jinny's images here are redolent of Rhoda's ships which are white (12) and which are dashed by the waves. Jinny also picks up Rhoda's more internal use of the ships as a symbol for her heart and her self. While Jinny usually describes herself as a root or a stalk that is grounded in the earth, their moment of shared permeability causes Jinny to take on Rhoda's idiolect of water and instability. The passage above, though uttered by Jinny, acts like an utterance by Rhoda; Jinny's idiolect merges with Rhoda's in a moment of centripetal intrusion. Their idiolects have merged into one single idiolect that blurs the lines between Jinny's viewpoint and Rhoda's viewpoint. In these instances, the novel's heteroglossia diminishes, because two speech types have merged into one.

Moments of centripetal merger, like that between Jinny and Rhoda, disappear in the presence of Percival—the true ordering force in the novel. For the section of the novel in which he is alive, Percival emblemizes the balance and tension between the centripetal and centrifugal forces. He often acts as a centripetal force, inspiring unity and meaningful communication between the speaking characters, but he does so in a way that preserves heteroglossia as opposed to erasing or diminishing it. For example, Percival limits Louis's ability to describe the world in a monologic voice. Louis imagines “fix[ing] the moment” (28) in which he and the other schoolboys are “bound by the tremendous power of some inner compulsion” (28) to sit together. He wants to define the moment solely in his own language, but Percival's presence stops him: “This I see for a second, and shall try to-night to fix in words, to forge in a ring of steel, though Percival destroys it as he blunders off, crushing the grasses, with the small fry trotting subservient after him” (28). Percival fragments Louis's assertion of the dominance of his own

language, and instead forces the ring to break; Louis observes, “The boasting boys... have gone now in a vast team to play cricket” (33). This fragmentation forces Louis to interact with the heteroglossia around him, to recognize the language of “boasting” that the other boys begin to speak, even though he himself does not share this speech type. Percival orders the languages around him into a hierarchy. Signaled by proper names such as “...Archie and Hugh; Parker and Dalton; Larpent and Smith—the names repeat themselves; the names are always the same” (34) and references to activities such as “volunteering” or “cricketing,” the boasting speech type places higher in the language hierarchy than Louis’s monologic voice. Percival centrifugally distinguishes the speech types around him, while simultaneously introducing order and unity to their speech; Louis laments, “Yet it is Percival I need; for it is Percival who inspires poetry” (28). Percival’s inspiration of poetry, which Bakhtin demarcates as the monoglossic opposite of the heteroglossic novel, also exhibits his role as a centripetal force. The boys who speak the language of “boasting” appear united, the speech type is simultaneously stratifying and centralized: “They have driven off in their great brake, singing in chorus. All their heads turn simultaneously at the corner by the laurel bushes... How majestic is their order, how beautiful is their obedience!” (34). The speech types order themselves in Percival’s presence; he introduces centrifugal interruption into Louis’s attempt to organize speech according to his own monologic voice, while also centripetally organizing the other boys around a hierarchically higher speech type.³⁷

At the novel’s climax—a dinner scene in which all the characters sit at a single table with Percival the night before he leaves for India—Percival’s role as balance between the centripetal and the centrifugal expands to encompass and organize the speech of all six speaking characters. Prior to his arrival, the characters bemoan their separateness; they have no sense of unity or

meaningful communication with each other. Neville laments that “without Percival there is no solidity. We are silhouettes, hollow phantoms moving mistily without a background” (91). Rather than conversing with each other, the characters merely observe each other, perceiving the content of their thoughts but not responding to them in any direct way. For example, while Neville anxiously repeats “No, it is not Percival,” (88) when another patron enters the restaurant, Rhoda observes him “and his misery” (91) but does not address him: “Every time the door opens he looks fixedly at the table—he dare not raise his eyes—then looks for one second and says, ‘He has not come’” (92). The characters see each other and acknowledge the things they seem to say, but they do not exchange conversation with each other. They are too entangled in the separateness of their idiolects and idiosyncrasies to engage with each other.

Percival’s arrival supplies the order that the characters lacked, and he orders their voices into meaningful relations to each other. Neville keys the reader in to the importance of Percival’s arrival, stating “All oppression is relieved. All impediment is removed. The reign of chaos is over. He has imposed order” (92). Percival constructs the moment; Jinny calls it “this globe whose walls are made of Percival” (109). In this dinner scene, the characters seem to engage in what appears most like back-and-forth dialogue in the entire novel by directly responding to each other’s utterances. For example, Neville, while reflecting on the disconnect between the “swiftness” of his mind and the finite limits of his body, says, “...I rise from my worst disasters, I turn, I change. Pebbles bounce off the mail of my muscular, my extended body. In this pursuit I shall grow old” (97). Typically, the next character to speak would not acknowledge the previous characters’ monologue; however, in this instance, Rhoda carries the thread that Neville began and reuses much of his language: “If I could believe,” said Rhoda, “that *I should grow old in pursuit and change*, I should be rid of my fear...” (97, emphasis added). As if she heard his

speech, Rhoda too considers the connection of her self to her body, and how she can overcome her own “fear” of interaction. During the dinner, the presence of Percival catalyzes a meaningful interplay of voices, one in which characters hear, learn from, and respond to each other. They have entered a meaningful zone of contact in which their utterances alter and dialogize the utterances of the others.

Percival arranges the voices not into a hierarchy, but into a single level across which the characters may communicate. Anchored by their shared “love of Percival” (95) and by their shared abstract speech, the characters’ speech types are brought into contact with each other through the centripetal pull, yet they retain their idiolects and the heteroglossia of the scene. Percival creates a unified separateness, as epitomized by Bernard’s observation: “There is a red carnation in that vase. A single flower as we sat here waiting, but now a seven-sided flower... a whole flower to which every eye brings its own contribution” (95). The characters’ voices and identities have come together as a single thing—the red carnation—yet their separate “eyes,” like individual petals, reflect their preserved individualism. Percival, then, “allows the others to realize that there is a coherent wholeness” (Katz 189) that binds them—be it their love of Percival, their shared language, or their shared upbringing.

However, this perfect unity created by linguistic equilibrium does not hold forever; Percival’s subsequent death after the dinner scene throws the forces of language into complete imbalance. Percival’s death throws the forces of language in the novel completely out of balance. Neville announces, “He is dead...He fell. His horse tripped. He was thrown” (Woolf 114), describing the event in clipped, bare sentences. Bernard recognizes the emptiness of the center that Percival occupied, the sudden lack of a linguistic fulcrum: “About him [Percival] my feeling was; he sat there in the centre. Now I go to that spot no longer. The place is empty” (116).

Because Percival is no longer present to balance the centrifugal and centripetal forces of language, the characters' previously unified language re-fragments into a language of separateness. Bernard knowingly asks, "...if I shall never see you again and fix my eyes on that solidity, what form will our communication take?" (117), thereby questioning the ability of the group as a whole to ever communicate meaningfully again with each other. Without Percival to construct a mutual understanding, a shared basis for their language, the characters become locked within their fragmented and isolated selves. After his death, the characters' anxiety about centripetal and idiolectic merger intensifies. Neville insists, "Why talk and eat and make up other combinations with other people? From this moment I am solitary. No one will know me now" (114). The loss of Percival exacerbates Rhoda's fear of contact with other, more stable selves: she says, "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" (121). Not only can the characters no longer communicate with each other, whom they have known almost their whole lives, but they can no longer interact with the outside world in any generative, dialogic way. Percival's death traumatizes their linguistic approaches to other speech types, and they cannot learn how to integrate their idiolectic selves into a heteroglossic world without Percival's balance of the opposing forces of language.

Percival's death also destroys the stability of the characters' shared cultural languages; without his organizing presence, speech types cannot unify into centripetal, universal speech types. Bernard says, "We have no ceremonies, only private dirges and no conclusions, only violent sensations, each separate. Nothing that has been said meets our case. We sit in the Italian room at the National Gallery picking up fragments" (118). Societal speech genres like ceremonial rites or funereal dirges, the existence of which indicates both heteroglossia and

centripetal unification, have been lost. There are no grounded linguistic norms with which the characters can define or make sense of their loss; they are left to mourn Percival within the confines of their own isolated idiolects. Bernard feels that “nothing has been said” to encompass their grief because words and speech genres themselves have been shifted out of alignment. The removal of Percival from the texts permits the centrifugal forces to stratify the characters’ idiolects into intense separateness; the centripetal forces fail to unify or organize them into any communicative understanding.

The Centripetal Collapse of *The Waves*

For language to be used in any meaningful way again in the novel, the center which Percival occupied must become filled once again. It is fitting that Bernard—the character most versed in the workings of phrases, most obsessed with finding the “perfect phrase” (51) to “sum up” (183) himself and the world—becomes the figure who attempts to seize Percival’s linguistic control. After Percival’s death, Bernard claims that control by manipulating the centrifugal and centripetal forces of language. For example, he attempts to negate the memory of Percival’s power by washing him in heteroglossia, exerting a centrifugal influence. He parodies Percival, saying, “Further, this is important, that I should be able to place him [Percival] in trifling and ridiculous situations, so that he may not feel himself absurd, perched on a great horse. I must be able to say, ‘Percival, a ridiculous name’ (116). While Percival is only ever spoken of with words of reverence or love, Bernard resolves to speak of Percival flippantly, parodying the name the characters used to utter with respect and making it “ridiculous.” By using his language to destabilize Percival’s cemented power over their speech, Bernard “liberate[s] the object from the power of language in which it had become entangled as if in a net” and “destroy[s] the homogenizing power of myth over language” (“FPND” 60). Bernard creates a new meaning for

the word “Percival,” exposing his mythologized image, which had come to symbolize linguistic balance, to the altering effects of heteroglossia, thereby mitigating the impacts of his death. If Percival is, in fact, ridiculous, then he cannot have possibly been so critical to their communication, whereas Bernard possesses the true linguistic power to assert this. The one who parodies decides a language’s use and position in hierarchy, and Bernard flexes his linguistic power in order to fill the role previously held by Percival—the power to organize speech types into meaningful relations with each other.

Just as Bernard manipulates centrifugal forces to reify Percival, so too does he direct centripetal forces in an attempt to inspire order, particularly when the characters reunite in a second dinner scene at Hampton Court, years after Percival’s death. Given Percival’s absence, the degrees of separateness and coalescence that the characters feel are intensified; because Percival is not there to balance the centrifugal and centripetal forces, the characters undergo extremes of centrifugal isolation and centripetal annihilation. Their initial separateness is violent: Susan says, “(We battle together like beasts fighting in a field, like stags making their horns clash)” (162), which inspires Neville to note, “There is always somebody, when we come together... who refuses to be submerged; whose identity therefore one wishes to make crouch beneath one’s own” (163). This isolation then veers into a centripetal inundation that presents a much greater existential threat than the centripetal intrusions scattered throughout the earlier parts of the novel. Sitting at the dinner table, Bernard feels “I am dissolved utterly and become featureless and scarcely to be distinguished from another” (172); Louis says, “Our separate drops are dissolved; we are extinct, lost in the abysses of time, in the darkness” (173). The characters’ speech and identities do not dialogize like they do in Percival’s presence. Rather than allowing the characters to understand and respond to each other’s selves and idiolects, the unbalanced

centripetal forces threaten to overwhelm and erase their idiolects completely. Bernard and Louis's references to dissolution, extinction, and darkness showcase the threat that the overwhelming centripetal forces pose to their integrity; Rhoda feels "we had no more [life] to live" (173). Unlike the dinner with Percival in which character's idiolects merge in dialogue, at Hampton Court the centripetal forces approach total domination of the voices, nearly conquering the idiolects and pulling them into a single monologic voice.

This moment of existential danger breaks, however, when Bernard controls the centripetal forces to institute a semblance of unity. As centripetalism threatens to overwhelm them, Bernard reminds himself of his idiolect and his separateness, thereby breaking the centripetal spell over him. He says, "It is the memory of my nose that recalls me. I rise; 'Fight,' I cry, 'fight!' remembering the shape of my own nose, and strike with this spoon upon this table pugnaciously" (173). His active remembrance of his physicality, coupled with his direct exertion of force over another object by banging the spoon on the table, gives him the means by which to disentangle himself from the oppressive centripetal spiral. He then is able to impose order. He finds a common thread between them—"Our English past—one inch of light" (174)—which acts as a linguistic basis for a sort of pseudo-unity, which Rhoda describes as "this momentary alleviation... when the walls of the mind become transparent" (175).³⁸ Bernard also re-uses language from the dinner with Percival in an attempt to compound the sense of unification at Hampton Court: "That 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" (175). By employing a speech type with which the characters are all familiar—be it their shared English sociolect or the image of the carnation—Bernard attempts to signify the

existence of ordered communication, insisting that he has created it.³⁹ For a brief instant, the characters appear to have achieved the unity they experienced with Percival.

However, the semblance of unity that the characters appear to achieve at Hampton Court is in fact a harmful imitation of Percival's unity, a thin veneer for the perpetuated fragmentation of the six characters. Immediately after Bernard considers the unity that "we have made" (176), the characters split apart into pairs: "Now they vanish," said Louis. "Susan with Bernard. Neville with Jinny. You and I, Rhoda..." (176). Rhoda and Louis remain completely separate from the other four; for the next few pages only their voices record the scene in a sort of pseudo-dialogue.⁴⁰ They forgo group communication; McIntire observes that they "resist" the unity created by Bernard and "affirm their essential separateness" (McIntire 38). Bernard's attempts to force them to transcend their separateness is not only unsuccessful, but it is also destructive. Louis's observations of their interactions reflect the dangerous undercurrents of their attempted unification. Just as Bernard borrows language from their dinner with Percival, so too does Louis reuse colorful descriptions of their interactions. When under Percival's influence, Louis feels that "all separate sounds... are churned into one sound, steel blue, circular" (Woolf 101). At Hampton Court, he again speaks of hearing all sounds and again references the color blue: "All seems alive," said Louis. "I cannot hear death anywhere to-night... All the crudity, odds and ends, this and that, have been crushed like glass splinters into the blue, the red-fringed tide, which, drawing into the shore, fertile with innumerable fish, breaks at our feet" (177). While Percival's unity is "steel-blue"—solid, clear, clean—Bernard's artificial unity is a "red-fringed tide." The act of forcing the characters and their separateness into an unnatural, inorganic unity has "crushed" them together "like glass splinters." The merger appears to have bloodied the characters, cutting their psyches and tinging what was once "steel blue" with a "red-fringe."

Their separateness has been physically ground down to shards; they have been jammed together against their will by Bernard's usurped influence. Bernard too suggests the state of artificial unity has more ruinous than regenerative effects: as they impose upon Louis and Rhoda's pseudo-dialogue, he notes, "We have destroyed something by our presence... a world perhaps" (178). By forcing Louis and Rhoda back into interaction with the group, Bernard destroys their worlds as isolated individuals, roping them back into his centripetal control. The unity's inherent harm suggests that Bernard cannot institute communication or order in any meaningful, generative way.

Not only is Bernard's unity created at Hampton Court actively destructive, but it is also unsustainable. Whereas Percival's presence inspires the characters with a sense of fulfilment and strength, Bernard's imposed dominance tires the characters. Leaving Hampton Court, and appearing to address Percival, Neville says, "And sadness tinges our content, that we should have left you, torn the fabric; yielded to the desire to press out, alone, some bitterer, some blacker juice, which was sweet too. But now we are worn out" (179). By allowing themselves to be swayed by Bernard's manipulation of language and balance, the characters have "left" Percival behind; they have attempted to "press out" and order their voices on their own. Neville's lament reveals the simultaneous desire and failure to fill the center that Percival had occupied as the fulcrum of the centripetal and the centrifugal forces of their language. Bernard attempts to play Percival and balance these forces without the experience, language, or prerogative to do so, leaving the characters "worn out" and damaged.⁴¹

Bernard's presumption to assume control over the balance of linguistic forces changes the fundamental makeup of the text—the alternating monologues of six characters are replaced by a single utterance in Bernard's voice. Bernard's soliloquy emblemizes the complete collapse of

the novel's pre-established heteroglossia into a state of total centripetal and monologic dominance. As McIntire writes, "Bernard's section thus occupies a finally unresolved ground between the breakdown of subjectivities and the appeal of a monologism that stems from a single 'I,' and operates under the 'order' of one" (McIntire 35). By having only one speaker, one stable "I," the novel may appear to become perfectly ordered, but Bernard's leveling voice has destroyed heteroglossia. In his monologic dominance, he absorbs the other characters' idiolects in an attempt to emulate heteroglossia. His linguistic control over the narrative allows him to reshape the story as he sees fit, and even to control how the audience—the unseen and unspeaking "you" he addresses throughout—perceives the narrative. Bernard usurps the role of ordering voice, but when only he is speaking, there is nothing for him to order.⁴² In doing so, his voice becomes more authoritarian than ordering.

Throughout his final monologue, Bernard both directly quotes characters' words or speaks in their idiolects, showing that the centripetal forces have caused his speech to absorb the speech of the others. Bernard's monologic conquest of the novel fully realizes the threat of merging idiolects that plagues the characters for much of the novel. For example, while remembering Louis, he directly quotes him, saying, "With his [Louis's] Australian accent ('My father, a banker at Brisbane') he would come..." (Woolf 216).⁴³ Bernard brings Louis's voice back into the narrative, yet he limits its mobility through the use of explicit quotation marks, tools which Bakhtin argues preserve the "otherness" ("DN" 339) of another's speech. He merely parrots Louis's idiolect in an attempt to remember him. However, Bernard also organically speaks in the idiolects of both Louis and the other characters, without quotation marks, showing that he has absorbed their idiolects completely into his own. Bernard first extols a sudden clarity

he feels, a sudden sense of space, before slipping into the idiolects of the others in rapid succession:

For one day as I leant over a gate that led into a field, the rhythm stopped: the rhymes and the hummings, the nonsense and the poetry. A space was cleared in my mind... Leaning over the gate I regretted so much litter, so much unaccomplishment and separation, for one cannot cross London to see a friend, life being so full of engagements... It had been impossible for me, taking snuff as I do from any bagman met in a train, to keep coherency—that sense of the generations, *of women carrying red pitchers to the Nile, of the nightingale who sings among conquests and migrations*. It had been too vast an undertaking, I said, and how can I go on *lifting my foot perpetually to climb the stair?* (217-218, emphasis added).

The sense of space, of silence that Bernard perceives represents the clearing away of heteroglossia, the diminishment of the “nonsense and poetry” and other speech types. He then fills the space with his own speech, replacing heteroglossia with his monoglossic voice. Because he has absorbed the other characters’ voices, he does not need to cross London to hear them; he simply speaks their idiolects to invoke their presence. By referencing the women with red pitchers at the Nile, he speaks in Louis’s idiolect; the reference to the nightingale employs Jinny’s idiolect; an inability to lift a foot to climb a stair characterizes Neville’s idiolect.⁴⁴ Although he speaks the characters’ languages, Bernard does not allow the characters to speak for themselves; there is no room in Bernard’s monologic world for their viewpoints or perspectives. While his references to their idiolects appear to occur organically, the idiolectic characteristics of the other characters appear to have become mere second-order signifiers in Bernard’s new monologic language.⁴⁵ He does not parody their idiolects, nor do they form hybrid utterances with his own speech. They are merely echoes of a heteroglossia that used to be.

Bernard also appears to absorb the voice of the third-person narrator, despite the fact that this voice otherwise seemed to exist on a different textual plane than the characters’ monologues. Although this voice seems beyond his hearing, Bernard almost directly quotes the interlude

narrator by comparing the rising sun to a girl raising her arm. Nearing the end of his monologue, he says, “Day rises; the girl lifts the watery fire-hearted jewels to her brow; the sun levels his beams straight at the sleeping house; the waves deepen their bars...” (224). Compare this utterance to those of the third-person narrator, particularly: “*The sun rose. Bars of yellow and green fell on the shore... The girl who had shaken her head and made all the jewels, the topaz, the aquamarine, the water-coloured jewels with sparks of fire in them, dance, now bared her brows...*” (54). Bernard employs the exact same images that the omniscient narrator does—the girl, the fiery yet water-colored jewels, bars of color. However, his absorption of this idiolect does not change his own understanding of the world; rather, it reveals the limits of Bernard’s monologic understanding. At the end of the utterance in which he seems to channel the interlude narrator, he says, “Light floods the room and drives shadow beyond shadow to where they hang in folds inscrutable. What does the central shadow hold? Something? Nothing? I do not know” (224). Despite the fact that he *appears* to have formed a hybrid utterance with the viewpoint of the interlude narrator, Bernard merely parrots and echoes the language. While the omniscient narrator may have been able to see what lies beneath the “central shadow,” the monoglossia of Bernard’s voice prohibits any sharing of insight. Because only Bernard’s voice exists, there can be no dialogue between the two perspectives; therefore there can be no exchange of understanding. His voice has usurped the novel, and, as a result, he is forced to see the world only through his limited, subjective view.

By submerging the narrative completely in the centripetal forces of languages and eliminating the heteroglossia of the other characters’ voices, Bernard assumes complete control over the narrative and the language used to tell it. He institutes a sort of hyper-ordering that subsumes all voices into his own and fills language with only his meaning. He enacts what

McIntire calls “the violence of monologism”— “forcing truth-value of a single discursive and rhetorical understanding onto an uncontainable diversity of voices, ideas, and idioms” (McIntire 31). In the now monologic environment of the text, Bernard ossifies his language and cuts it off from heteroglossia’s ability to change the meaning of a word. Earlier in the novel he senses his inability to freeze words to give them invariable meanings; he says that the best phrases “require some final refrigeration which I cannot give them, dabbling always in warm soluble words” (Woolf 50). However, in his monologic soliloquy it is clear that he has now solidified the once permeable boundaries of meaning. He has “refrigerated” his language into something solid, completed: “Now to sum up... The illusion is upon me that something adheres for a moment, has roundness, weight, depth, is completed. This, for the moment, seems to be my life” (183).

Whereas Bernard used to be unable to stop words from being “soluble” and having subjective meanings and associations within heteroglossia, monologism closes the borders of words. The erasure of other perspectives forestalls their ability to alter his meaning through dialogue. His language becomes a completely closed environment in which no other voice can hold sway, and this allows him to concretely define his “life” for his audience without influence from others.⁴⁶

Bernard ensures that his language remains calcified by strictly controlling the ability of his audience—the aforementioned “you”—to use language. For example, he appears to teach his monologic language to his audience, as if the audience member is learning language for the first time. Bernard prefaces his story by saying, “But meanwhile, while we eat, let us turn over these scenes as children turn over the pages of a picture-book and the nurse says, pointing ‘That’s a cow. That’s a boat.’ Let us turn over the pages, and I will add, for your amusement, a comment in the margin” (184). Acting like the adult nurse who teaches a child the meanings of images, Bernard guides his hearer through the process of associating a concept, like a cow or boat, with

its word signifier. In this way, Bernard controls the meaning of words; he defines how his audience understands signifiers. By adding “a comment in the margin,” Bernard uses his authoritative voice to reconstruct the world in his own language-image, training the audience to be fluent in his monologic speech.

Controlling the language of the story allows Bernard to limit and control his audience’s perceptions, guaranteeing that they will not introduce their own idiolect to his monologic environment. Bernard directly states what his audience does and does not see: “But unfortunately, what I see (this globe, full of figures) you do not see. You see me, sitting at a table opposite you, a rather heavy, elderly man, great at the temples. You see me take my napkin and unfold it” (183). Bernard’s voice describes what his audience perceives; the silent “you” has no recorded speech in the narrative, no language to corroborate or refute Bernard’s statements. Although the presence of the unspeaking “you” influences Bernard’s train of thought—for example, the unnamed “you” forces Bernard to remember that he is not “so vast, a temple, a church, a whole universe” (224) but rather the corporeal “elderly man, rather heavy, grey above the ears” (225)—Bernard does not share the power of language with them.⁴⁷ He retains the sole power to define meaning and to utter language; he forces his audience to see the world through his language. In doing so, he embodies Bakhtin’s definition of monologism: “It is not a free appropriation and assimilation of the word itself that authoritative discourse seeks to elicit from us; rather, it demands our unconditional allegiance. Therefore authoritative discourse permits no play with the context framing it, no play with its borders...” (“DN” 343). Bernard’s language remains semantically static because the listener is not allowed to interject their own interpretations. The centripetal forces of the text have completely overwhelmed the centrifugal

forces; Bernard's monologic voice prohibits the stratification of his language into other speech types.

In his monologic conquest of the final section of *The Waves*, Bernard the novelist creates an uttered text that is antithetical to Bakhtin's definition of the novel. Bernard, having attempted to act as an authorial voice that balances the forces of language in the wake of Percival's death, instead drives heteroglossia to collapse. Rather than fostering dialogue, allowing other speech types to manifest themselves, or forming speech hierarchy, he annihilates any other voice that would threaten the integrity of his own. McIntire writes that Bernard's monologism represents his attempt to "approximate the function of the author herself: in his desire to deliver a well-rounded story to his interlocutor, and in the ways he controls the closure of the novel, he actually pushes at the confines of the text to offer a version of the author writing" (McIntire 34).

However, his attempt to "sum up" the others within his own language instead terminates those others, leaving only his voice to sound in the space of the final episode. As Neville notes very early on in the novel, "He [Bernard] tells our story with extraordinary understanding, except what we most feel. For he does not need us. He is never at our mercy" (Woolf 51). Bernard, despite being able to control the forces of language, despite collecting phrases in his journal, cannot do the work of heteroglossia in a monologic voice; he cannot cut to the heart of others' identities with his language alone. He does not realize this until the end of the novel, when only his monologic voice remains.

Conclusion

T.S. Eliot and Virginia Woolf, in writing *The Waste Land* and *The Waves*, renounce the traditional aspects of genre which Bakhtin championed in *The Dialogic Imagination*. While Bakhtin reaches backward into past literature to "salvage from a collapsing European order

something that might help redeem or humanize the strange new world already coming hazily into view” (Cleary 258), Eliot and Woolf seek new linguistic avenues by which to capture the state of the world around them. Bakhtin argues that the novel form requires linguistic balance and organization in order to maintain a heteroglossia that flourishes within the text. A single authoritative narrative voice—be that the author or a narrator—could impose centripetal order on centrifugal stratification to foster active dialogue between speech types. Eliot and Woolf, however, abandon these old constraints, thereby reflecting the fragmentation and disorder that dominated the new “literary world-system” (257). Their gestures toward authoritative voices—such as Percival or the Thunder—only magnify the absence of order and exacerbate the effects of losing such voices. They reveal the inability of such structures to function in a Modern text. Heteroglossia, though it exists for brief moments in both texts, collapses—*The Waste Land* into cacophony, *The Waves* into truly isolated monologue.

This upending of traditional linguistic form leads to the same result in both texts: the speakers lose their sense of self and identity. The lack of an authoritative or authorial voice allows the language of the text to become unbalanced by the overwhelming centrifugal and centripetal forces. Centrifugal forces destabilize the signifiers in *The Waste Land* to the extent that the speech types cannot provide any basis for identity. The panoply of undefinable “I”s throughout the poem and particularly within the last stanza compound the loss of the idiolect in the tidal wave of allusion, of undialogized speech types. The allusions, rather than becoming filled with new meaning that can provide understanding of the waste land context, remain empty; they do not relate to each other in any meaningful way as they would in a centripetally-imposed hierarchy. Though the speaker attempts to define the self within the waste land throughout the poem, the self has only become more lost. Any linguistic stability upon which identity could be

based is instead adrift in the spaces between the shantihs, kept at a distance by meaningless signifiers.

Bernard's monologic takeover of *The Waves*, permitted by the overwhelming centripetal forces, also results in the loss of his selfhood. His centripetalized language—a monologic language containing all other speech types—becomes inadequate to describe the isolated and individual experiences of a subjective self. While Bernard often uses his idiolect to “summon” or recall his self throughout the novel,⁴⁸ he loses his grip on his self in his final monologue. He calls, but “This self now as I leant over the gate looking down over fields rolling in waves of colour beneath me made no answer. He threw up no opposition. He attempted no phrase. His fist did not form. I waited. I listened. Nothing came, nothing. I cried then with a sudden conviction of complete desertion. Now there is nothing” (Woolf 218). The self has fallen silent and has become intangible, possessing no connection to Bernard's speech or his physical body. A language through which Bernard can align his body with his individual self no longer exists. He painfully realizes this, asking “But how describe the world seen without a self? There are no words... How to describe or say anything in articulate words again?” (221). His language, which has become calcified by the centripetal forces' imposition of monologism, cannot describe his subjective experience meaningfully; just as he has lost the self, so too has he lost a subjective language. His words fail to convey the truth of his individual experience. Bernard then dies in a seeming attempt to recall the self in a brief revival of the idiolect, but the novel's final line represents Bernard's complete and utter capitulation to the centripetal forces. Bernard speaks his last words— “Against you I will fling myself... O Death!” (228)—before a brief blank space on the page, followed by what appears to be the interlude narrator's italicized language— “*The waves broke on the shore*” (228). No longer separated by the textual boundary of the interludes,

the omniscient narrative voice invades the narrative, mere lines away from Bernard's voice. The jarring proximity between the two voices suggests that the final line is in fact uttered by Bernard, whose language has become the fully monologic voice of a narrator. The centripetal forces unify his voice and the voice of the interludes; Bernard becomes a third person omniscient narrative voice without a character or a self beyond the images it describes. His identity, his whole character, becomes washed away by the centripetal waves that inundate the text.

Eliot and Woolf's erasures of the self through imposed narrative and linguistic imbalance convey the fact that they were not attempting to "redeem" the literary world around them as Bakhtin imagines it. They do not ground their identities—or the identities of their speakers—on any reliable source or typical structure; they do not find solace in works of the past. Rather, they capture the sense of instability that dominated their milieu, allowing that instability to be reflected and refracted within the language of their writing. *The Waste Land* and *The Waves*, despite their inherent imbalances, behave as Bakhtin's novel does in the sense that they exist in dialogue with their time. In the formation of these texts, Eliot and Woolf do not resist the influences of the Modern era on their language or on the language of their characters. Rather than attempting to act as authoritative voices to impose order or definition upon the instability of the era, they allow themselves and their work to be influenced and altered by it. The dialogue, then, is a two-way street; the era itself becomes changed by the texts. The zone of contact between the works, the era, and the Modernist movement encapsulates the dialogue which Bakhtin longed for in the novel, elevating it all above the text so that it may dialogize one's reading, interpretation, and understanding of *The Waste Land* and *The Waves*.

Notes

¹ I will be citing several of Bakhtin's essays, all within Emerson and Holquist's 1981 edition of *The Dialogic Imagination*. To avoid confusion about which essay of Bakhtin's is being cited for any given reference, I will be using the following abbreviations in place of Bakhtin's last name for the rest of the thesis:

“Epic and Novel” — “EN”

“From the Prehistory of Novelistic Discourse” — “FPND”

“Discourse in the Novel” — “DN”

² Bakhtin provides several extended examples from the work of Charles Dickens, whose works he says are “everywhere dotted with quotation marks that serve to separate out little islands of scattered direct speech and purely authorial speech, washed by heteroglot waves from all sides” (“DN” 307). His examples from *Little Dorrit* showcase Dickens's fluid transitions from an authorial narrative voice into the sociolects of the character he describes (303-304).

³ Barthes defines a second-order signifier with the word “form” (Barthes 117) in order to distinguish it from a first-order signifier throughout the rest of his essay. The “form” then signifies a “concept” (signified), and he terms the correlation (sign) between the two “signification.” However, given that I will use the more universal definitions of “form” and “concept” throughout the thesis, I will apply the terminology of first-order semiotics (sign, signifier, signified) to second-order semiotics. I will specify whether I am talking about a first-order sign or a second-order sign whenever necessary.

⁴ Tiresias was transformed into a woman as punishment for striking two mating serpents he had found in the forest. He spent seven years as a woman before he found the serpents again, struck them, and was transformed back into a man (North 46). As a result, Tiresias possessed knowledge of “both sides of love” (Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, qtd. in North 46), and he was asked to settle a dispute between Juno and Jove over whether man or woman had more pleasure from intercourse.

⁵ The phrase “the waste land,” when used in lower case and plain text, is a general term used to refer to the environment depicted in the poem, *The Waste Land*.

⁶ Cyrena N. Pondrom, in her article, “T.S. Eliot: The Performativity of Gender in *The Waste Land*,” relates Judith Butler's analysis of gender as performative to the androgyny of Tiresias. Tiresias's identity has already been destabilized by his shifts between genders: Pondrom notes, “...as Butler points out, ‘the fear of losing one's place in gender...constitutes a certain crisis in ontology experienced at the level of both sexuality and language’” (Pondrom 430). Tiresias's relocation to a modern context, then, destabilizes him further. His insistence on the liminal gender space he embodies reveals his own awareness of himself as an unstable sign; his only true definition is his name—“I Tiresias” (Eliot 218). His original context intrudes upon his modern present, and he exists in semantic flux in the waste land setting.

⁷ The speaker's interruption into Madame Sosostris's Tarot reading—“(Those are pearls that were his eyes. Look!)” (48)—alludes to Ariel's song, in which he informs Prince Ferdinand of his father's death by shipwreck: “Full fathom five thy father lies; / Of his bones are coral made; / Those are pearls that were his eyes” (Shakespeare 1.2.397-399). Eliot also alludes to *The Tempest* in Part III. “The Fire Sermon”: the speaker sits “Musing upon the king my brother's wreck” (Eliot 191). Phlebas is imbricated with shipwreck and *The Tempest* throughout the poem, so his appearance in Part IV of the poem is not surprising.

⁸ Eliot's claim that he was greatly influenced by Jessie L. Weston's book, *From Ritual to Romance*, and by James G. Frazier's *The Golden Bough: A Study in Magic and Religion*, when writing *The Waste Land*, has steered a significant amount of scholarship to read the entirety of the poem through the lens of vegetation and resurrection rituals. Frazier hypothesizes the extent to which ancient pagan fertility rituals influenced contemporary English celebrations such as Whitsunday and Easter Sunday. One such ritual was “the killing of the divine king” (Frazier, qtd. in North 31). The ancient people believed that their kings were “incarnations of the divinity” (qtd. in North 32) or bore the spirit of god, which ensured the prosperity of the people and the fruitfulness of their land. When the king began to grow old or sick, he would be killed so that the divine soul would be “transferred to a vigorous successor before it has been

seriously impaired by the threatened decay” (qtd. in North 32), ensuring the continued fertility of the land. He also describes “the killing of the divine king” (qtd. in North 31), which guaranteed that the godly spirit that granted fertility to the land and that inhabited a people’s king would remain with the people, rather than leaving its host. Weston, in *From Ritual to Romance*, posits that similar pagan rituals and religions shaped the Romantic Grail myth. She describes the Fisher King, a ruler whose injury or impotence causes infertility in the land, who must be restored by the Grail quester. Phlebas seems to act like a combination of Frazier’s divine king and Weston’s Fisher King, as he is killed in an attempt to bring fertility and awaits resurrection and restoration like the Fisher King. For the ritual to have succeeded, Phlebas should rise again, and that resurrection should restore fertility and growth to the waste land.

⁹ Though the prevalence of this Tiresias-centered reading has decreased over time—as Eliot later called his footnotes “bogus scholarship” that was “designed to bulk out a poem that was too short to fill a volume by itself” (North 21n1)—the need to find a unitary speaker persists. Scholars like Calvin Bedient and Robert Langbaum attempt to look beyond Tiresias to find a different singular protagonist, whether he be “a nameless stand-in for Eliot himself” (Bedient ix) or a consciousness that assumes different personas throughout the poem (Langbaum). However, forcing the words to come from a single self would diminish the heteroglossia of a poem that is so apparently novelized. No matter how good of a “ventriloquist” (Bedient) the speaker is when mimicking other speech types, a singular speaker would cause the poem to be monologic. There would be no meaningful interaction between the different speech types; the speech types would not illuminate the nuances of the others. The implications of having a singular narrator will become evident in my analysis of the ending of Woolf’s *The Waves*.

¹⁰ Tiresias’s persistent need to define “I”—either for himself or for his audience—suggests a feeling of anxiety that La Chance glosses over through his assertion that Tiresias mocks the clerk and the typist. Though Tiresias notes that the “young man carbuncular” (231) is “One of the low on whom assurance sits” (233) poorly, Tiresias also states that he himself has been one of the low: “I who... walked among the lowest of the dead” (245-246). Disdain certainly underlies Tiresias’s section, but it seems more muted than would be signaled by a superiority complex that La Chance equates to the snobbery of a Pharisee (La Chance 110). Tiresias finds the scene perverted, and his disgust bleeds through his language, but his anxiety stems from the fact that he, as a fellow “one of the low” and as representative of both man and woman, is an accessory to the sexual perversion of the waste land.

¹¹ Though much of the stanza draws images from 2.2 of *Antony and Cleopatra*, such as the Cupids and the scent of perfume—the first line of the stanza alludes directly to Enobarbus’s description, “The barge she sat in, like a burnished throne, / Burned on the water: the poop was beaten gold...” (2.2.190-191).

¹² It is of note that the lower-class woman does not begin speaking until after the conversation between the upper-class man and woman. The very structure of “A Game of Chess” reflects the hierarchy that heteroglossia imposes upon its speech types, as the wealthy setting and speech occurs “above” the speech of the women in the pub. The dense language of the first half of the section becomes increasingly straightforward as it reaches the section’s turning point— “And we shall play a game of chess, / Pressing lidless eyes and waiting for a knock upon the door” (136-137)—until finally shifting into the sociolect of the pub— “When Lil’s husband got demobbed, I said—” (139). Eliot mirrors the hierarchy of language by physically placing the higher language above the lower language.

¹³ The woman’s monologue is interrupted with increasing frequency by the words of the publican, who announces the closing of the bar in large capital letters: “HURRY UP PLEASE ITS TIME” (141). The presence of his idiolect also helps the reader understand the public house setting. The contraction “it’s” is unpunctuated, perhaps suggesting that the barkeep’s speech type is one of practicality rather than correctness. His warnings are jarring, interrupting the text both visually and aurally. Heteroglossia exists even within single levels of social hierarchy—both the customer and the publican are versed in different speech types.

¹⁴ This name comes from Madame Sosostri’s Tarot reading— “Here is Belladonna, the Lady of the Rocks” (48). Clare R. Kinney, in “Fragmentary Excess, Copious Dearth: *The Waste Land* as Anti-Narrative,” uses this name to refer to her in her analysis.

¹⁵ The act of citation and quotation is another novelistic quality inherent in *The Waste Land*; Holquist states, “Novels are overwhelmingly intertextual, constantly referring, within themselves, to other works outside of them. Novels, in other words, obsessively quote other specific works in one form or another” (Holquist 88). As seen throughout, *The Waste Land* is “obsessively” intertextual.

¹⁶ These lines from Webster are spoken by Cornelia, as a funeral dirge while burying her son (North 45n1). Stetson’s intentions, however, seem to align with the burial rites Frazier and Weston associated with fertility rituals. The speaker in *The Waste Land* utters these lines not out of sorrow that the body is buried, as Cornelia does, but rather out of a sarcastically expressed desire to keep the body in the ground.

¹⁷ While the allusions in final stanza of “The Burial of the Dead” undergo parody and mythologization, the same cannot be said for the final stanza of the whole poem. While the forces of language exist in balance early on in the poem, the centrifugal forces dominate the poem by its end, causing the allusions of the final stanza to be presented without any new meaning or ordering.

¹⁸ J.W. Graham analyzes the progress of the narrative form of *The Waves* throughout Woolf’s process of writing the novel and argues that the finished form of the novel maintains “vestiges” (Graham 196) of a controlling third-person narrator and a “containing consciousness” (206). He writes that the stylistic similarities between the characters’ monologues are “like listening to a running verbatim translation of speeches by six different speakers” (196) in which “the words we actually *hear*” belong to a single voice. This is similar to the argument made by scholars like Bedient, who believe *The Waste Land* has a single speaker, and Graham’s analysis would explain the tonal similarities between the monologues in *The Waves*. However, the idiolects of the characters and their idiosyncratic speech types show that the novel is in fact heteroglossic and spoken by separate speakers, as I will argue in the following pages.

¹⁹ Woolf struggled with the influence of her own sociolect upon her writing. Liesl M. Olson notes, “In *The Waves* (1931), Woolf wanted to represent the “life of anybody,” but realized that she could replicate only the upper-class voices with which she was familiar. In her drafts, she included the voices of the working class, but omitted them in the published text for fear of being condescending” (Olson 58n62). The abstract sociolects of the characters, then, likely reflect Woolf’s own upper-class language tendencies.

²⁰ Woolf seemed to draw on the character of T.S. Eliot when creating Louis. Doris L. Elder traces the many similarities between the two men in her article “Louis Unmasked: T.S. Eliot in *The Waves*.” Louis’s assertion that he is an “average Englishman” (Woolf 69) echoes Eliot’s drive to appear truly English; Eliot was “constantly aware of his status as an outsider in English society” (Elder 20).

²¹ Williams notes the same tendency in the Bloomsbury group, which originated “in the professional and highly educated sector of the English upper class” (Williams 241). Though the members of Bloomsbury attempted to mask their participation in this group, their attitudes and ideas could not be extricated from their positions of social privilege.

²² Gabrielle McIntire, in her article “Heteroglossia, Monologism, and Fascism: Bernard Reads *The Waves*,” compares Percival’s speech—as well as the speech of other domineering characters such as Bernard—to the language of fascism, in which a single, monologic language exerts complete control over other speech types. This idea of linguistic conquest, as well as McIntire’s article, will be revisited later in the thesis.

²³ Garrett Stewart notes this disconnect between Rhoda and shared languages in her aversion to written signs and symbols, saying: “Here is the otherness of language stressed as the language of others, an accession to the symbolic whose rite of passage, whose writing, Rhoda alone among her peers cannot achieve” (Stewart 434). Rhoda cannot reconcile linguistic individuation with the restrictions that shared language places on the individual idiolect.

²⁴ Jane de Gay tracks the influence of Shelley and William Wordsworth within *The Waves* itself and on Woolf’s development of the novel. She does not deeply explicate, however, the extent to which Rhoda’s allusions are recognized by other characters, nor does she explore the effects of Rhoda’s quotation on our perception of Rhoda’s character. Rather, she relates the presence of Shelley and Wordsworth’s texts more to Woolf’s own relationship with the Romantics, allusion, and the writing process.

²⁵ This utterance paraphrases Shelley's lines: "I made a nosegay, bound in such a way...and then, elate and gay, / I hastened to the spot whence I had come, / That I might there present it!—Oh! to whom?" ("The Question").

²⁶ Percival's influence upon the characters' speech and communication will be discussed in greater detail later.

²⁷ For example, Louis and Bernard both reference Rhoda's idiolect. Louis perceives the association between Rhoda's petals and her selfhood: "She must have made a torturous course, so as to put off as long as possible the shock of recognition, so as to be secure for one more moment to rock her petals in her basin" (90). He recognizes that Rhoda uses her idiolect as a shield against the "shock" of being perceived and defined by others. Bernard notes her association of the petals with ships: Rhoda has rocked her ships to shore. Whether they have foundered, whether they have anchored, she cares no longer" (172). The image of the ships in the basin only refers to Rhoda, and Rhoda is the only character to use those images to describe herself. Other characters may invoke the image, but it is always in reference to Rhoda.

²⁸ The rhymes in the stanza following the end of the typist/clerk scene is irregular, including identical rhymes of "street" with itself, a couplet in the middle of the stanza, and a final couplet:

"This music crept by me upon the waters'
And along the Strand, up Queen Victoria Street.
O City, City, I can sometimes hear
Beside a public bar in Lower Thames Street,
The pleasant whining of a mandoline
And a clatter and a chatter from within
Where fishmen lounge at noon: where the walls
Of Magnus Martyr hold
Inexplicable splendour of Ionian white and gold. (Eliot 257-265).

Only the vestiges of Tiresias's strict ABAB rhyme scheme remain, and they will fade completely after this stanza, suggesting that his voice has had little impact on the other voices.

²⁹ "DA" alludes to a segment of the *Upanishads* in which "God presents three sets of disciples with the enigmatic syllable DA, challenging each group to understand it" (North 18n3). Those disciples interpret the syllable to have three different meanings, the same meanings which Eliot carries through the rest of the poem.

³⁰ The inability to know the thunder's true meaning further reveals the novelized quality of the poem. The syllable "DA" is semantically open-ended; the acoustic sound can only be given meaning through the subjective interpretation of the listener. Novels allow words to be redefined, and the meaning of those words is subject to the influence of those perpetual redefinitions. This proves a grave problem for the waste land speakers, who cannot ascertain the thunder's meaning. The signifier DA has no predetermined signified; it is merely sonic, a syllable of possible words. Though the characters attempt to make the syllable signify an answer to the wasted state of their environment, their responses are merely individual interpretations.

³¹ Compare the empty spaces between the "shantihs" to the separation incurred by the dashes and commas in "The Burial of the Dead": "You! hypocrite lecteur!—mon semblable,—mon frère!" (76).

³² Scholars like Brian Crews and Calvin Bedient trust the speaker's insistence that the fragments were intentionally organized. Crews champions the final stanza as "an act of remembering" (Crews 25) as Eliot writes with "all of our literary tradition in our bones," leading "to a heightened [*sic*] understanding of human nature" (25). Bedient goes a step further, claiming the speaker knew what he was doing the whole poem: "Eliot's protagonist all but confesses that he has constructed an elaborate trap for those inimical to his purpose, a sticky-paper poem of confusion... and that he has done this so as to be in a safe and cunning position of mastery, the better to protect what to him is inviolable..." (Bedient 215). However, there is no indication that the speakers truly remember the sources of their sonic allusions, nor does the final stanza's speaker appear to impose order anywhere else in the poem. The allusions seem mostly sonic, vestiges of the literary past that persist only in echoed phrases and fragments.

³³ Audrey T. Rogers argues that the shantihs “testif[y] to that reconciliation” (Rodgers 55) between art and reality; she views the final words as emblematic of Eliot’s desire to use art to “impose a credible order upon ordinary reality... to bring us to a condition of serenity, stillness, and reconciliation” (55). Bedient extends his reading of the final lines to apply to language and consciousness as their own entities, saying that the “ultimate spiritual touchstone” of the shantihs makes the speaker’s “final line seem cessative not only for the poem but for language and consciousness themselves: a self-transcendence attained by both a self-forgetting hero and a self-forgetting art” (Bedient 221). However, both of these scholars fail to reconcile their redemptive readings with the destruction and threats that dominate the speaker’s allusions. On the surface, the allusions to the *Upanishads* signal salvation, but they are purely sonic signifiers without indication that the speaker has truly internalized their ideals, or that the waste land has been restored.

³⁴ Kinney notes that the word “feeble” appears in the 1922 edition of *The Waste Land*, but that this “qualification was suppressed in later versions of the Notes” (Kinney 285n27). Though this word does not appear in recent editions of Eliot’s poem, Eliot’s use of this word to describe his translation of “shantih” suggests that he thought it was “feeble” when he wrote it. The implications of this word resonate even after its deletion from the text.

³⁵ Christopher Ricks, in his book, *T.S. Eliot and Prejudice*, analyzes the implications of presenting “shantih” in its original language in the poem, saying, “The poem’s pain is in the acknowledgement that it is only outside our own traditional terms that we can now even conceive of the peace which passeth understanding, while at the same time the fact that this is outside our own culture means that we can do no more than conceive of it, cannot enter into and possess it” (Ricks 195). The linguistic difference between English and Sanskrit hereby emphasizes the distance between what Eliot views as a healing, restorative Eastern philosophy and the inability of Western society to penetrate that understanding.

³⁶ Howard Harper, in *Between Language and Silence: The Novels of Virginia Woolf*, points out “adjacent personalities” (Harper 235) in *The Waves*, those voices that seem to have an affinity for each other throughout the novel. For example, Louis and Rhoda “are the most obviously close” (236) characters in the novel due to their shared insecurities about themselves—be it Louis’s insecurity about his Australian accent or Rhoda’s insecurity regarding her selfhood—as well as their shared sense of being vulnerable and weak, the “youngest” (71, 79) of the group. Centripetal merger occurs between Louis and Rhoda often. However, the fact that Rhoda also undergoes merger with Jinny, her opposite, suggests the power the centripetal forces bear over the text that can cause these two characters to share speech.

³⁷ It is of note that Percival also cuts off Bernard’s attempt to tell a story to fill a silence. Neville says:

He [Percival] feels bored; I too feel bored. Bernard at once perceives that we are bored. I detect a certain effort, an extravagance in his phrase, as if he said ‘Look!’ but Percival says ‘No’. For he is always the first to detect insincerity; and is brutal in the extreme. The sentence tails off feebly.

Yes, the appalling moment has come when Bernard’s power fails him and there is no longer any sequence and he sags and twiddles a bit of string and falls silent, gaping as if about to burst into tears. (27-28)

Bernard, the phrase-making writer figure who wants to use his compendium of stored phrases to “sum-up” all of humanity, finds his attempted monologic control of the narrative wrested from him by Percival. However, at the end of the novel, after Percival has died, Bernard becomes the controlling voice that is unable to balance the centripetal and the centrifugal, yielding completely to a monologic register. Percival must be eliminated from the text before Bernard can assume monologic control of the narrative’s language.

³⁸ Bernard’s insistence of their shared cultural history recalls the shared social and cultural characteristics of the Bloomsbury Group. Though they often attempted to erase such sociolectic definition, the Bloomsbury Group was defined by their shared experiences at the University of Cambridge (Williams 230), an environment that critically formed their sociolects and worldviews. Bernard’s attempt to recall their English history also recalls the characters’ upper-class speech type, allowing them to enter into a state of unity, if only for a brief moment.

³⁹ At Hampton Court, Bernard also institutes a sort of Biblical creation language; after defining the moment with the red carnation, he says, “Let us stop for a moment; let us behold what we have made. Let it blaze against the yew trees” (176), which is redolent of the words spoken by the Trinity during the creation of the world. This is yet another attempt by Bernard to suggest that he has constructed a unity as strong as Percival’s. Though Bernard’s use of “us” may be referring to the six characters’ joint creation of their unity, it is also likely that Bernard may be using “us” in the “royal we” sense, elevating himself to the level of creator, originator, and orderer.

⁴⁰ Louis and Rhoda appear to be cut off from the other four, perhaps because of their shared inability to participate in Bernard’s unity. Louis feels little true connection to an English past; his Australian accent perpetually reminds him that he is a cultural Other. Rhoda’s idiolect emblemizes her inability to speak and interact with others. In their “pseudo-dialogue,” both characters observe the wanderings of the others, and they consider their separateness.

⁴¹ Walking alone after leaving Hampton Court, Bernard appears to lose control of the forces he attempted to manipulate over dinner. He loses his ability to participate in heteroglossia; he hears “the chorus the song of the boasting boys” (180), a speech type Louis recognized as a marker of heteroglossia, but he cannot engage with those voices, saying “...I wished to be with them” (180). The centripetal forces do not bring him into a shared language. He also loses control over his idiolect, noting, “What with the chorus, and the spinning water and the just perceptible murmur of the breeze we are slipping away. Little bits of ourselves are crumbling. There! Something very important fell then. I cannot keep myself together” (180). Appearing to sit at the center of the speech types that spin around him, as Percival once did, the tension of the forces of language pull away parts of Bernard’s idiolect—the “very important” thing that falls is Bernard’s idiolect to define himself. His use of plural pronouns such as “we” and “our” to describe his experience suggests that he has centripetally absorbed the other characters’ speech, but he cannot maintain his grasp on their voices and his own. The artificial unity he creates at Hampton Court damages him as well; the forces he attempts to control then inflict their effects upon him.

⁴² The language in the following section about Bernard’s control over the narrative often suggests violence, dominance, and conquest. This stems from McIntire’s article, “Heteroglossia, Monologism, and Fascism: Bernard Reads *The Waves*,” in which she compares the language of Bernard’s final monologue to the language of Fascist leaders, arguing that Fascist rhetoric is largely monologic. She argues that Bernard becomes a “narrative dictator” (McIntire 38) who displaces other voices in favor of his own, thereby erasing their viewpoints and their participation in heteroglossia.

⁴³ The use of parentheses to separate Bernard’s direct citation of Louis from his own speech is redolent of Eliot’s use of parentheses to demarcate Tiresias’s remembered past from his current reality—“(And I Tiresias have foresuffered all... / I who have sat by Thebes below the wall / And walked among the lowest of the dead)” (Eliot 243, 245-246). Just as Eliot’s parentheses indicate the second-order nature of Tiresias’s linguistic signals, so too does Woolf’s parentheses here suggest that Louis’s catchphrases have become merely sonic signifiers of Louis’s personhood. Bernard does not quote Louis in any meaningful, dialogic sort of way, but rather quotes him in a purely phonetic sense.

⁴⁴ Louis often grounds himself in the history of the world by envisioning Ancient Egyptian women along the Nile: “...my eyes are the lidless eyes of a stone figure in a desert by the Nile. I see women passing with red pitchers to the river; I see camels swaying and men in turbans” (7). Jinny often compares the allure of her body to the song of the nightingale, capturing the bird’s song in the same way T.S. Eliot does in *The Waste Land*: “Jug, jug, jug, I sing like the nightingale whose melody is crowded in the too narrow passage of her throat” (Woolf 135). In a formative moment of hearing about a man found with his throat cut, Neville is transfixed in horror and “unable to lift my foot up the stair” (17), and this image recurs when Neville finds himself unable to step into confrontation with others.

⁴⁵ Bernard compares given societal speech types to “Roman roads” that provide order, saying:

After all, one cannot find fault with the biographic style if one begins letters ‘Dear sir’, ends them ‘yours

faithfully’; one cannot despise these phrases laid like Roman roads across the tumult of our lives, since they compel us to walk in step like civilized people with the slow and measured tread of

policemen though one may be humming any nonsense under one's breath at the same time...
(199)

He recognizes the power of centripetalized, unified tokens of language that promote understanding between two speakers—the speech type employed in signing and addressing letters, for example, keys the participants into the genre of the text. In this way, these signifiers are merely sonic and second-order; they indicate the type of speech more than they convey their literal significations. He notes that “one has to say” (200) those phrases in order to exist in their linguistic environment. Bernard’s understanding of the role of speech types may be extended to his use of his friends’ idiolects. Their speech types have become “Roman roads” that frame Bernard’s speech, but, because the novel has become monologic, they are unable to influence his viewpoint. He does not enter into dialogue with those phrases.

⁴⁶ It is interesting to note that the field of linguistics considers any language that is no longer changing a dead language. Bakhtin describes such a language as immobile; a “single and unitary language” that “does not acknowledge other languages alongside itself” (“DN” 336) has “no space around it to play in, no contradictory emotions—it is not surrounded by an agitated and cacophonous dialogic life” (344). For a speech type or language to be living and generative, it must engage in heteroglossia and dialogue.

⁴⁷ In his book, *Dialogism: Bakhtin and his World*, Michael Holquist discusses Bakhtin’s philosophical theory that one’s construction of one’s self is also a process of dialogue. The self needs an other against which to define itself. Holquist writes, “For in order to see our selves, we must appropriate the vision of others... it is only the other’s categories that will let me be an object for my own perception. I see my self as I conceive others might see it. In order to forge a self, I must do so from *outside*” (Holquist 28). A similar process occurs between Bernard and the unnamed “you”—the presence of an other forces Bernard to recall the way the other perceives him, and he must incorporate that perception into his construction of his self. However, the “other” in this scene is mute, limiting the dialogue that is possible between him and Bernard. The presence of “you” still does not dialogize Bernard’s language—his speech remains semantically closed.

⁴⁸ For example, Bernard successfully and easily grasps the concept of his own self in college: “But *you* understand, *you*, my self who always comes at a call...” (Woolf 57).

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