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Conceptual Blending and the Mapping of the Inner Recesses of the Mind in Virginia

Woolf's *The Waves*

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Résumé de synthèse

Cette étude offre une lecture de <u>The Waves</u> de Virginia Woolf en tant qu'une représentation fictive des "formes exactes de la pensée." Elle établit le lien entre le récit de <u>The Waves</u> et l'expérience personnelle de l'auteur avec "les voix" qui hantaient son esprit, en raison de sa maladie maniaco-dépressive. La présente étude propose également une analyse du roman inspirée par la théorie de la "fusion conceptuelle:" cette approche narrative a pour but de (1) souligner "la fusion" de l'imagination, des émotions, et de la perception qui constitue l'essence du récit de <u>The Waves</u>, (2) mettre l'accent sur les "configurations mentales" subtilement développées par/entre les voix du récit, en vue de diminuer le semblant de la désorganisation et de l'éparpillement des pensées généré par la représentation de la conscience, (3) permettre au lecteur d'accéder à la configuration subjective et identitaire des différentes voix du récit en traçant l'éventail de leurs pensées "fusionnées."

L'argument de cette dissertation est subdivisé en trois chapitres: le premier chapitre emploie la théorie de la fusion conceptuelle afin de souligner les processus mentaux menant à la création de "moments de vision." Il décrit la manière dont la fusion des pensées intérieures et de la perception dans les "moments de vision" pourrait servir de tremplin à la configuration subjective des voix du récit.

La deuxième section interprète l'ensemble des voix du roman en tant qu'une "société de soi-mêmes." À l'aide de la théorie de la fusion conceptuelle, elle met l'accent sur les formes de pensée entrelacées entre les différentes voix du récit, ce qui permet aux protagonistes de développer une identité interrelationnelle, placée au plein centre des différentes subjectivités.

Le troisième chapitre trace les processus mentaux permettant aux différentes voix du roman de développer une forme de subjectivité cohérente et intégrée. Dans ce chapitre, l'idée de la fusion des différents aspects de l'identité proposée par Fauconnier et Turner est employée pour décrire l'intégration des éléments de la subjectivité des protagonistes en une seule configuration identitaire. D'ailleurs, ce chapitre propose une interprétation du triste suicide de Rhoda qui met en relief son inaptitude à intégrer les fragments de sa subjectivité en une identité cohérente et "fusionnée."

MOTS-CLES : Virginia Woolf, fusion conceptuelle, processus mentaux, voix, pensée

Abstract

This dissertation starts with the premise that Virginia Woolf's The Waves is to be read as a "mind thinking" and as an expression of "the exact shapes" that the mind holds. It establishes the link between Woolf's experience of writing The Waves and her obsession with the "voices that fly ahead;" i.e. the very voices that used to prey on her mind as a result of her manic-depressive illness. It also offers a reading to the novel inspired by Conceptual Blending Theory: this framework helps (1) account for the "blend" of sensory impressions, feelings, and imaginative thoughts that constitute the essence of The Waves, (2) make up for the dispersed and seemingly fragmented nature of the narrative by emphasizing the various "mental patterns" weaved by/among the mind's different voices, and (3) enable the reader to pin down a sense of the protagonists' identities by carefully following their "blended" mental processes.

The argument of this dissertation is developed in three chapters: the first chapter uses blending theory to highlight the mental processes that lead to the crystallization of intense "moments of visions." It shows how a sense of the protagonists' subjectivities would emerge by virtue of the "patterned" insight gained in those peculiar moments of revelation.

The second chapter reads The Waves as a "society of selves." Using Blending Theory, it emphasizes the "patterned" mental connections weaved among the different voices, which allows them to gain a "situated" or inter-relational form of insight about their own subjectivities.

The third chapter follows the mental processes that enable The Waves' protagonists to construct a stable and coherent sense of identity through the mental integration of different

aspects of their subjectivities. In this chapter, Fauconnier and Turner's notion of "living in the blend" is used to show how, in the course of their subjective development, <u>The Waves</u>' voices would achieve an overall sense of psychological and identitary "wholeness." The chapter also accounts for Rhoda's unfortunate suicide in terms of her inability to continue to live in the very blend of her personal identity.

KEY-WORDS: Virginia Woolf, conceptual blending, mental processes, voice, mind

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For my mom

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Introduction: Towards a Poetics of the Mind

With "no plot, no comedy, no tragedy, no love interest or catastrophe in the accepted style," Virginia Woolf's <u>The Waves</u> severs all sorts of connections with a long-established literary tradition anchored in canonized narrative aesthetics (<u>The Common Reader</u> 154). For the most part, <u>The Waves</u> is a confused and confusing jumble of hallucinatory visions, unruly thoughts, and vivid representations of complex mental processes interspersed with short descriptive interludes, which portray a series of verisimilar natural settings at different time points of the day. Suffice it, at this stage of my analysis, to examine the very first verbalized thoughts of <u>The Waves</u>' narrative in order to get a fore-glimpse of what this unrestrained flood of imaginative ideas, peculiar mental imagery, and whimsical impressions may look like:

> '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.' (3)

From the very incipit, Woolf's readers are thus completely immersed into a world of protean thought processes, ravenous states of mind, and short-lived epiphanies, without the least indication as to how to marshal this whole sensational maelstrom into a significant and meaningful narrative. Warner observes that "<u>The Waves</u> absorbs its reader[s] and disorients the[ir] critical faculties" in the sense that it violently disrupts their generic expectations as to

how they should read or tackle the novel (59). Likewise, Muir recognizes the radical complexity of Woolf's narrative conventions: "Mrs. Woolf quite discards characterisation in the ordinary sense in The Waves [...] she seems no longer concerned with temporal attributes in this book [...] the six figures whose monologues make it up [...] have been blamed for being characters" (291). To put it in cognitive terminology, The Waves can be said to unsettle the reader's pre-existing "schemata" as to the usual components of the very activity of reading; i.e. reading while typically paying attention to the logically ordered or linear flow of events, contextualizing the narrative through a historical prism, keeping tabs on spatio-temporal shifts, examining the narrative's twists and turns, etc. Vacca explains that

> readers are in a better position to comprehend what they are reading whenever they use prior knowledge (schemata) to construct meaning. [...] Schema activation is the mechanism by which readers access what they know and match it to the information in the text. For comprehension to occur, the reader must activate [...] a schema that fits with information encountered in the text. (author's parentheses 191)

Woolf's readers, on the other hand, are constantly pushed into a form of schematic abeyance, so to speak. In her essay "Mr. Bennett and Mrs. Brown," Woolf proposes an elusive "catch-me-if-you-can" approach to reading her fiction, which refuses to "palm off" on the reader a certain cut-and-dried version of fictional reality that lends itself to worn-out or canonized frames of literary interpretation (Collected Essays I 319). In this essay, Woolf not only plunges her reader (as she does in The Waves) into what she calls "the myriads of irrelevant and incongruous ideas [that] crowd into [the] head" of her fictional characters, but also demands that the reader be more forcefully and actively engaged in a process of narrative sense-making (321). Woolf insists that her readers should be "of great fineness of perception" and "of great boldness of imagination" so that they could "open the[ir] mind[s] wide to the fast flocking of innumerable impressions" that incessantly crowd into the minds of her

fictional characters (quoted in Richter 236). Reading Woolf's fiction, in other words,

necessitates a "creative" and "cooperative" reader whose main task is to render the seemingly

abstruse narrative of inner mental and psychological life both significant and meaningful

(Richter 236).

It should be noted, though, that at least in "Mr. Bennett and Mrs. Brown" (as well as

throughout much of her fictional *oeuvre*), Woolf still maintains the notion of fictional

character as a viable critical construct. The Waves, on the other hand, further complicates the

reader's task by threatening to disrupt or deconstruct the idea of fictional character. In

response to one review of The Waves published by The Times Literary Supplement, Woolf

wrote: "odd, that they [i.e. her critics] should praise my characters when I meant to have

none" (Diary 170). Muir consorts with Woolf on this score as he thinks that The Waves' "six

figures are something new in literature, so new that a critic may legitimately refuse to try to

find a formula for it" (291).

One of the reasons why many of Woolf's readers would refuse to treat The Waves'

figures as distinct, differentiated, or self-contained characters is the mystical, almost

indescribable sense of oneness conveyed through their unanimous use of a single and

undifferentiated speech style. In her study Virginia Woolf's The Waves, for instance,

Rantavaara pins down a wide range of linguistic and stylistic devices used by the six

protagonists in order to convey the sense of the unity of their seemingly disparate

consciousnesses. The six figures' collective use of "complicated, elaborate, and far-fetched

analogies," of "parallelisms and heaping similes," of "images [representing] the links between

the outer and the inner worlds," and of a general "tone of [...] mental and emotional

intoxication" - among other textual and literary devices - contributes to the irresistible effect

of the oneness of their different consciousnesses (Rantavaara 48). Their recurrent use of such

intensifying figures as repetitions, parallelisms, accumulations, and amplifications[1]

throughout the whole of The Waves' narrative also adds to the general feeling that, although

the six figures seem to embody different forms of consciousness, they are somehow brought

together by a single, all-embracing mind or underlying subjectivity (Rantavaara 53-7). To put

it in Rantavaara's words, The Waves' figures fictionalize

> the reaction to life of six different minds. In fact, they form one human mind –
> that of Virginia Woolf, or any other sensitive, imaginative, creative human
> being. At different stages of its development, the mind reacts differently. The
> same sights, sounds, experiences will at later stages turn out to have new
> content, according to the mind's level of awareness and the growth of
> associations. (8-9)

Woolf validates this idea in her Diary. While she declares that The Waves is not to be

approached as "a story" in the traditional sense ("I am not trying to tell a story. [...] I can tell

stories. But that's not it" (140)), she believes that the description "a mind thinking" is more

befitting and more likely to capture the quintessence of the fictional work represented by her

novel (140). Woolf goes on to explain: "[by writing The Waves] I think I am to embody, at

last, the exact shapes my brain holds" (A Writer's Diary 172).

   Woolf's attempt to embody "the exact shapes" of her mind would result - curiously

enough - in her pinning down of multiple speakers or voices nevertheless thought of as

fictionalized representations of one and the same Virginia. These alter-egos or voices stand

for Woolf's fictionalized persona and character in the sense that they dramatize the

confluence of inner thought processes, feelings, and impressions that used to take hold of

Woolf's mind when she was writing The Waves. In one of her Letters, Woolf expounds on

the conundrum of The Waves' multiple yet somehow vaguely unified speakers, which

puzzled both her critics and readers alike:

> I did mean that in some way we are the same person, and not separate people. The six characters were supposed to be one. I'm getting old myself – I shall be fifty next year; and I come to feel more and more how difficult it is to collect oneself into one Virginia; even though the special Virginia in whose body I live for the moment is violently susceptible to all sorts of separate feelings. Therefore, I wanted to give the sense of continuity, instead of which most people say, no you've given the sense of flowing and passing away and nothing matters. (Letters IV 397)

Judging from the ample evidence found in the literature by/about Woolf, one can argue that the six speakers in The Waves are nothing but fictionalized representations of the very "voices" that used to prey on Woolf's mind, mainly during those repeated bouts of manic-depressive illness when she "spoke [...] about 'the voices that fly ahead,' and she followed them. […] When she was at her worst and her mind was completely breaking down again, the voices flew ahead of her thoughts" (L. Woolf 237). Woolf's husband Leonard testifies that when Virginia "wrote the last page of The Waves, she says that suddenly, as she was writing, the pen as it were took hold of her and her thoughts raced ahead of herself, and she followed her own thoughts" (L. Woolf 237). The moment she finished composing The Waves, Woolf would also admit:

> I wrote the words O' death fifteen minutes ago, having reeled across the last ten pages with some moments of such intensity and intoxication that I seemed only to stumble after my own voice [...] I was almost afraid, remembering the voices that used to fly ahead. (A Writer's Diary 165)

Obviously, Woolf's illness contributed to significantly heightening her consciousness to the unruly jumble of inner thought processes and overwhelming impressions that used to haunt and course through her sensitive mind, and which led her into recurrent and tormenting states of mental and emotional breakdowns. In The Flight of the Mind: Virginia Woolf's Art and Manic-Depressive Illness, Caramagno validates this opinion when he observes that Woolf was particularly "intrigued by the transparent line between her own voice and other voices she

could imagine," notably during those difficult bouts of manic-depressive illness in which she felt ravaged by uncontrollable onslaughts of her own thoughts (273).[2] "The voices were part of her," Caramagno explains, "even though [Woolf's] breakdowns gave them a seemingly separate authority" (273).

Indeed, one particularly interesting example in which we can clearly establish the link between Woolf's literary productivity and her obsession with "the voices that fly ahead" is her earlier experience with writing To The Lighthouse, which turns out to be a literary transposition of the inner voice of her deceased mother (represented in the novel through the figure of Mrs. Ramsay). Upon finishing To The Lighthouse, Woolf would avow: "I ceased to be obsessed by my mother. I no longer hear her voice, I do not see her" (quoted in Raitt 32). In a sense, Woolf's statement can be adduced as cogent evidence for the therapeutic value of her literary production, which might be viewed as a re-channelling of intense and gruelling mental energy into a vivid and emotionally-charged narrative account, with the purpose of sublimating and assuaging the mental pain inherent in those haunting and mentally burdensome "voices."

The Waves constitutes no exception to this general rule. It actually marks a critical juncture in the author's life when she was even more severely ravaged by onslaughts of these haunting voices which she labelled "the words O' death." The Waves, as Hermione Lee points out, is nothing but a narrative "[refashioning of] the frightening, unintelligible language of mental illness - a language which was, as it were, all Greek to [Woolf] - into a meaningful ensemble" (196-7).

Woolf's conceptualization of her novel as "a mind thinking," together with her personal experience with "the voices that fly ahead" may serve to explain crucial aspects of

The Waves' narrative. For one, the six narrative voices clearly represent different aspects of Woolf's complex personality and character; one that is not only diverse and multifaceted, but also "violently susceptible to all sorts of separate feelings" (Letters IV 397). This idea is particularly highlighted by Woolf in her Diary. Woolf would point out, for instance: "this morning I could say what Rhoda said. This proves that the book [i.e. The Waves] itself is alive: because it has not crushed the thing I wanted to say, but allowed me to slip it in, without any compression or alteration" (153). Like Woolf, the six protagonists share an unquenchable thirst for and an immense interest in literature. Bernard is in love with story-telling and is constantly influenced by such literary figures as British poet Lord Byron: "Who am I thinking of? Byron of course. I am, in some ways, like Byron" (41). Neville captures Woolf's passion for poetics and philosophy: "that [is] a library, where I shall explore the exactitude of the Latin language, and step firmly upon the well-laid sentences, and pronounce the explicit, the sonorous hexameters of Virgil, of Lucretius" (15-6). Susan, on the other hand, not only stands for Woolf's impassioned love for nature, but also epitomizes the fervency and violence of Woolf's unruly emotions and psychological states. Jinny and Rhoda, likewise, exemplify (respectively) the "manic" and "depressive" extremes of Woolf's mental illness: Jinny's unbridled passion for life, combined with her persistently euphoric mood appear to be diametrically opposed to Rhoda's lifelong feelings of dejection, agony, and suicidal despair.[3]

Together, the six voices make up what Caramagno calls "'a mind thinking' [...] in all its plurality" and diversity, where "each [speaker] interprets differently, according to a predominant mood that colors both their inner and outer worlds" (273-4). Woolf's reader, however, need not emphasize the voices' autonomy and separateness for, as Bernard points out, The Waves' protagonists are figures "with blurred edges" (26). Even though The Waves'

speakers may at times maintain the semblance of individuality and separateness from other narrative voices, they, at other times, appear capable of seamlessly fusing into each other's minds and consciousnesses and of experiencing each other's emotions and affects, as though they were bound up by some invisible affective pathways or connections. Bernard would note, for instance:

> Here on my brow is the blow I got when Percival fell. Here on the nape of my neck is the kiss Jinny gave Louis. My eyes fill with Susan's tears. I see far away, quivering like a gold thread, the pillar Rhoda saw, and feel the rush of the wind of her flight when she leapt. (154)

Woolf's peculiar understanding of the mind - what Richter would call "multiplicity within unity" - therefore repudiates the traditional conceptualization of subjectivity as whole, cohesive, and unified and offers, instead, a more in-depth understanding of the self as protean, infinitesimally complex, and multifaceted (43). Brewster agrees with Richter on this score when she reads the novel's six voices as fictionalized expressions of "one many sided personality," or else as "aspects of a multiple personality" (126-8).

In this dissertation, I propose an analysis of The Waves that takes account of Woolf's curious conceptualization of her novel as "a mind thinking" and as an expression of the "exact shapes" that her mind holds. Determined to convey both the sense of emotional "intensity" and mental "intoxication" that she experienced (and largely suffered) especially during her bouts of mental illness, Woolf undertook in The Waves to fictionalize the unruly forms of a mind that is constantly submerged, seized, and overpowered by all sorts of complex psychological states and unfathomable, even maddening and insufferable emotions. Richter explains:

> The mind, for Virginia Woolf, was a 'queer conglomeration' of incongruous things. It was full of 'monstrous, hybrid, unmanageable emotions.' Yet this emotional world, 'tumultuous and contradictory,' must be ordered in a form which

would express it in its totality. [...] This form, or structure, is necessarily 'one of infinite complexity' because it is made up of many kinds of emotions. (6-7)

The Waves, a novel which Woolf at times compares to "arrant nonsense" (Diary 147), at others to "a lunatic's dream" (147), puzzles the reader with its hectic succession of vividly portrayed scenes, complex thoughts, and mental imagery that struggle to capture the exact feelings and psychological states experienced by the narrative's six voices at different time points of their lives. Caramagno observes, in this same vein, that Woolf "resisted tidying up too much [in The Waves] by running 'all the scenes together'" (274). Woolf did not care as much in The Waves about achieving a logical sense of narrative coherence as she did about narratively apprehending that complex "emotion which is the essence of [her] feeling" and which somehow "escapes description" (A Writer's Diary 151). The Waves, that is to say, is nothing but an attempt by Woolf at fictionalizing the "hybrid" emotions, "monstrous" impressions, and "unmanageable" thought processes that course through her sensitive, highly perceptive, and impressionable mind. These mental and psychological states are of infinitesimal complexity that Woolf saw it necessary to compartmentalize her fictional mind into at least six different selves or voices that entertain intricate mental, affective, and inter-relational bonds.

My reading of The Waves will thus focus on the "forms" or "patterns" of thought exemplified by Woolf's narrative, which capture a great deal of the complex and multifarious impressions, untamed emotions, and mystical mental imagery that Woolf sought to convey throughout her novel. For Woolf, writing is tantamount to fictionalizing that esoteric, largely subjective, and highly intuitive experience which she calls "living in the brain" (Diary 47). Woolf's interest in dramatizing the exact forms of her mind and in conveying the "queer conglomeration" of its internal thought processes is precisely what gives her narrative the

vague semblance of disorganization, discontinuity, and unfettered dispersion (an impression well-known to many of Woolf's readers). This irresistible impression generated by reading Woolf's fiction is the result of the narrative's portrayal of a series of infinitesimally small mental and psychological events that require a developed awareness as well as a heightened sensitivity on the part of the reader to the minute ebbs and flows of mental and psychological life. As Richter explains, The Waves necessitates a reader who must demonstrate "the ability to sort out the 'scrambled' and often seemingly random data [of the narrative] into a meaningful and patterned whole" (236). In other words, instead of focusing their attention on marking or significant narrative events (i.e. in a traditional sense),[4] Woolf's readers should develop an awareness to those very subtle, yet intricate and dynamic "patterns" of thought that manifest themselves – almost surreptitiously - amidst the jumble of sensations and perceptions that course through the mind represented by the novel. These highly suggested, yet somehow vaguely delineated patterns of thought not only condense a vast range of mental, affective, and psychological meanings, but also reveal a great deal about the different voices' identitary constitutions and subjective makeup.

As Lorraine Sim explains, "if Woolf rejects philosophical 'system' building [i.e. traditional narrative building] in literature, 'pattern making' may be a more apt phrase to describe the philosophical work that infuses so much of her writing" (The Patterns of Ordinary Experience 26). In this dissertation, I employ Gilles Fauconnier and Mark Turner's Conceptual Blending Theory (a reading framework inspired from cognitive linguistic theory and upon which I will expound shortly) in order to shed light on different dimensions of those "mental assemblages" or "patterns of thought" narratively weaved by/among The Waves' six voices. These highly intricate patterns of thought which, as Bernard observes, are "made and

remade continually" (70), not only reflect the infinite complexity of the protagonists' internal psychological constitutions, but also allow the reader to gain substantial insight into the very identity of the voices that make up Woolf's treasured "society" of inner selves.

In The Waves, Louis observes: "meeting and parting, we assemble different forms, make different patterns" (89). Although these "forms" or thought "patterns" have been intermittently (though vaguely) alluded to by a number of Woolf's critics, very little, if no attention, has been given to date as to the underlying mental and subjective dynamics responsible for the crystallization of those curious assemblages of conscious and unconscious thought, which may well provide an important window into the very identitary and psychological constitutions of the selves that populate The Waves' fictional mind. In her survey of the critical literature written about The Waves, Copland points out, in a similar vein, that "the mind's parts [represented by The Waves' narrative] are variously termed 'sensibilities,' 'aspects,' 'drives,' 'selves,' and 'strands,' and the mind's processes or operations remain woefully under-theorized" ("Conceptual Blending in *The Waves*" 258).

One of the reasons why many of Woolf's critics would content themselves with curtly sketching the outward appearance of those mental patterns is the difficulty inherent in describing very abstract underlying mental processes, and in explicating the ways in which various combinations of feelings, psychological states, perception, and imagination would ultimately coalesce into an integral whole that captures the depth and intricacy of the protagonists' inner mental and psychological lives.

My reading of The Waves will thus attempt to remedy this gap in the literature by shedding light on a wide range of cognitive and psychic operations with which The Waves' narrative seems to luxuriate, and of which I have found very little account in the critical

literature. By tracking the mental processes that lead to the development of complex patterns of thoughts, feelings, and mental imagery, I argue throughout this dissertation, Woolf's reader can come to a closer understanding of important aspects of the six voices' subjectivities. My analysis will particularly highlight the subtle links weaved between various aspects of the voices' inner mental lives (such as their perceptual processes, affective and psychological states) with the purpose of developing a more comprehensive picture of their identities at different time points of The Waves' narrative.

In order to account for the cognitive and psychological processes surreptitiously performed by The Waves' fictional mind, which lead to the surfacing of complex patterns of mental imagery, I will use of one of the recently developed theories in the burgeoning, yet rapidly expanding field of cognitive linguistics; namely Fauconnier and Turner's Conceptual Blending framework. In what follows, I outline the basic premises of Conceptual Blending Theory and demonstrate its usefulness with respect to studying the fictional mind represented by Woolf in The Waves.

Conceptual Blending Theory: A Brief Overview

"The way we think is not the way we think we think. Everyday [conscious] thought seems straightforward, but even our simplest thinking is astonishingly complex." (Fauconnier and Turner v)

Conceptual Blending (also known as Conceptual Integration) is a theory developed by cognitive linguists Gilles Fauconnier and Mark Turner, as part of their study of the possible links between language use and the processes triggered in the mind of the conceptualizer while verbalizing or trying to make sense of a stretch of discourse. It provides a vivid descriptive account of "the complex ways in which [linguistic] forms [would] prompt largely unconscious and unnoticed constructions of the imagination" which, in turn, may facilitate the ongoing process of sense-making (11).

As Fauconnier and Turner explain, a fragment of discourse is perceived and apprehended by the human mind *qua* a powerful and active trigger[5] of a wide range of mental representations or "mental spaces." "Mental spaces," they argue, "are small conceptual packets [unconsciously] constructed as we think and talk, for purposes of local understanding and [verbalized] [inter]action" (40). In other words, mental spaces are clusters of mental representations cognitively triggered as we verbalize, try to conceptualize, or attempt to make sense of a particular situation or state of affairs. A single mental space, Fauconnier and Turner point out, may indeed be cognitively prompted by a variety of statements or speech sequences:

> The mental space that includes you, Mount Rainier, the year 2001, and your climbing the mountain can be activated in many different ways and for many different purposes, 'You climbed Mount Rainier in 2001' sets up the mental

> space in order to report a past event. 'If you had climbed Mount Rainier in 2001' sets up the same mental space in order to examine a counterfactual situation and its consequences. 'Max believes that you climbed Mount Rainier in 2001' sets it up again for the purpose of stating what Max believes. (40)

The human mind, Fauconnier and Turner further explain, "can be thought of as a bubble chamber of mental spaces" where "new mental spaces are [being] formed all the time out of old ones" (321). This process whereby a novel mental space might emerge "out of old" configurations of previously set-up mental spaces is precisely what Fauconnier and Turner would refer to as "conceptual integration" or "conceptual blending."

To illustrate this notion, Fauconnier and Turner posit the following metaphor: "the surgeon is a butcher." Such a metaphorical expression is likely to prompt our unconscious imagination into constructing at least two mental spaces (also known as "input spaces"): the BUTCHERY mental space which subsumes our inner mental representation of the "butcher," "abattoir," "cleaver," "animal," "butchery" as a means for "severing flesh," etc, as well as the SURGERY mental space which incorporates such elements as the "surgeon," "patient," "operating room," "surgery" as a means for achieving "healing," etc. The elements included in both input spaces are mentally triggered in the mind of the conceptualizer in order to serve the immediate purposes of interpreting the utterance at hand. Hence, any elements which the interpreter's mind deems futile or inadequate for understanding the immediate utterance are either relegated to the background of the mind's awareness or perhaps not even cognitively triggered.

As part of the process of producing significance out of this utterance, Fauconnier and Turner argue that the human mind unconsciously (and very quickly) engages in a series of cognitive "cross-space mappings" or matching across input spaces, with the purpose of finding correspondences or similarities between the mentally prompted input

spaces. For instance, the "surgeon" in input space "SURGERY" may well correspond with the "butcher" in input space "BUTCHERY," the "animal" with the "patient," the "abattoir" with the "operating room," etc.[6] Presupposed in this cross-space mapping, Fauconnier and Turner further explain, is another hypothetical mapping between what they term a "generic space" (a third mental space)[7] and the aforementioned two input spaces. This generic space (a hypothetical space that highlights the relationship between the previous two input spaces) makes explicit the presupposed general principles for establishing similarity-based correspondences between two or more mental spaces. For instance, the mapping "butcher – surgeon" presupposes another mapping between the image of the "butcher," the "surgeon," and the generic function "actor" or "agent." Likewise, both "patient" and "animal" correspond to "undergoers," "abattoir" and "operating room" to "work space," etc.[8]

These aforementioned mental spaces (the two input spaces and the generic space), Fauconnier and Turner argue, interact in different ways in order to yield cognitive products (also called "emergent structures" or "emergent patterns") that encapsulate a wide range of meaning possibilities and that considerably facilitate the process of sense-making. One way in which these mental spaces would possibly interact, Fauconnier and Turner would point out, is through the projection of a "framing structure" from one input space onto another input space. For instance, the BUTCHERY space may provide a framing structure (say the "means-goal" relationship characteristic of the BUTCHERY space) to re-frame and conceptually re-organize the SURGERY input space. Taken in this example as a "focus input space,"[9] The SURGERY space is *re-configured* according to the organizing principle (i.e. the "means-goal" relationship) of the BUTCHERY space, in turn considered as a "framing input space."[10]

This conceptual re-configuration, though, is not without its problems. The BUTCHERY space projects a means-goal relationship that is not compatible with the "means-goal" relationship of the SURGERY space. In other words, while the means "surgery" in the SURGERY space is put to the service of a positive end which is "healing," the means "butchery" in the BUTCHERY space is put to the service of a characteristically negative end: "severing flesh."

To solve this conceptual clash or conflict, Fauconnier and Turner argue that we mentally construct a fourth space (a "blended space") in which a possible construal of such seemingly conflicting cross-space projections may well emerge. For instance, by integrating "butchery" as a means (from the BUTCHERY space) with "healing" as a goal (from the SURGERY space) into a single blended space, a sense of the surgeon's incompetence may come to the fore and a coherent interpretation of the metaphorical utterance may become clear within the blend.[11]

A blended space, Fauconnier and Turner explain, "can compose elements from the [different] input spaces to provide relations that do not exist in the separate inputs" (48). A blended space, it should be noted though, is far from being a stable or static mental construct. Not unlike the human imagination which is wild, dynamic, and unbridled, blending processes can performed *ad infinitum* both by the conscious and unconscious mind, with the purpose of generating a wide range of "emergent meanings" or "emergent patterns" of thought. Fauconnier and Turner observe: "part of the power of blending is that there are always many different lines of elaboration, and elaboration can go on indefinitely. We can run the blend as much and as long and in as many alternative directions as we choose" (48-9). For instance, by projecting the image of the "patient" from the SURGERY input space together with the image

of an "animal" (considered a "commodity") from the BUTCHERY space into the blended

space, a sense of the dehumanizing commodification of the patient may become visible.

Similarly, by juxtaposing the images of the "scalpel" and the "cleaver" within the same

blended space, a sense of the unfeeling brutishness of the surgeon may well be brought to our

conscious attention, etc.

With respect to the present study, the importance of Conceptual Blending as a

theoretical framework lies not in its detailed account of how metaphorical meaning is

produced from a cognitive linguistic perspective, but rather in its pinning down of a whole

range of cognitive operations (such as "cross-space mappings," the "projection of framing

structures," the "integration" of conceptual elements from disparate inputs, etc) that allow the

human mind to "blend" distinct mental spaces in thought-provoking and significant ways.

Knowledge of these processes, I argue throughout this dissertation, may well enable Woolf's

reader not only to develop a heightened sensitivity to the peculiar patterns of thought very

subtly weaved by/among The Waves' six narrative voices, but also to map out the "exact

shapes" of the mind represented by Woolf in her novel. Conceptual Blending theory, it is my

contention, can offer the reader a very useful analytical toolkit for probing the inner recesses

of The Waves' fictional mind, based on the verbalized thoughts and impressions suggested by

the six voices' soliloquies. Gilles Fauconnier further explains how verbal representations may

be used as a window into deeper underlying mental constructions and subjective dynamics:

> Language does not [by] itself do the cognitive building - it 'just' gives us
> minimal, but sufficient, clues for finding the domains and principles appropriate
> for [mentally] building in a given situation. Once these clues are combined with
> already existing configurations, available cognitive principles, and background
> framing, the appropriate construction can take place, and the result far exceeds
> any overt explicit information. (xviii)

Throughout this dissertation, I therefore use Fauconnier and Turner's Conceptual Blending framework in order to investigate three major facets of the fictional mind represented by The Waves' narrative.

A first chapter will be devoted to studying the blended mental processes responsible for the genesis of what Woolf would call "moments of reality" or "moments of vision." The peculiar "insight" captured by those moments, I argue, can be best accounted for in terms of a "blend" of imagination, complex feelings, and perceptual processes that give rise to highly esoteric "patterns" of mental imagery. In turn, these moments are likely to offer substantial insight into the very subjective and psychological constitutions of the different voices that populate Woolf's fictional mind.

A second chapter interprets The Waves as a miniature "society of mind" featuring multiple, yet interconnected selves that are deeply embedded in a complex web of mental, emotional, and dialogical ties. With the help of blending theory, I emphasize the patterns of inter-relational thought inferable from the voices' inner monologue as well as from their complex dialogical processes, which may well illuminate important aspects of their "situated" consciousnesses and psychologically inter-dependent identities.

A third chapter uses Fauconnier and Turner's notion of "living in the blend" in order to highlight the processes which lead to the integration of the "severed parts" of the voices' identities into a coherent blend or whole. In this chapter, I focus on the ways in which blending theory may help illuminate highly intuitive psychological processes, namely the integration of different aspects of the voices' subjectivities into a stable and coherent "identity blend."

In helping me think of Blending Theory as a reading framework that can illuminate important aspects of Woolf's novel, I shall mention my indebtedness to a study conducted by Sarah Copland, in which she uses Conceptual Blending theory to investigate a range of modernist texts that somehow "bear inscriptions or traces" of "cognition's fundamentally relational processes" (31). In her study Modelling the Mind: Conceptual Blending and Modernist Narratives, Copland argues that modernist texts require that the readers be "cognitive[ly] mob[ile]" (21). Readers of modernist texts, she observes, need to develop "greater flexibility or adaptability in [their] cognitive style—the way [they] [t]hink, processes information, and appl[y] this information to make sense of the text" (21). Copland even devotes a chapter to reading The Waves as a "mega-blend" made up of six "input spaces," where each "voice" stands for one colossal input space triggered by the fictional mind symbolized by the novel. Copland's prime objective, that is to say, is to demonstrate how The Waves' fictional mind can be viewed (structurally or symbolically) as some sort of fictionalized simulation or else as a mega-representation of the blending and relational processes that can be performed by the human mind.

Copland's reading, however, does not, in my view, do enough justice to the specific and complex subjectivities of the novel's six voices or protagonists, since each of them is construed in terms of one gigantic input space somehow integrated with the remaining others. Copland's reading is concerned, after all, with the blending operations performed on what she calls the structural or "macro-textual" level of The Waves' narrative: i.e. the blending processes that reflect an understanding of The Waves as a mind with six large "input spaces" (32). Although Copland's reading supports the claim that The Waves' narrative should be tackled as a fictionalized representation of a single "mind thinking" featuring six narrative

"voices" (a claim which I share with Copland and further develop throughout this dissertation), it does not, however, illuminate crucial dimensions of the six voices' particular psychological and subjective constitutions. Nor does it provide substantial insight into the specific mental processes that lead to the production of the complex "assemblages" of conscious and unconscious thought, feelings, and mental imagery that course through minds of The Waves' voices (in Copland's terminology, this yet uncharted area of the novel requires an analysis of the blending processes performed on the "micro-textual" level of the narrative: the level of "characters' or narrators' thoughts, narration, or dialogue" (32)).

Thus, rather than using Conceptual Blending theory in order to describe the overall symbolic or "macro-textual" structure of The Waves' fictional mind (as Copland does in her study), I employ Fauconnier and Turner's theory in order to delineate the precise mental processes represented by the voices' soliloquies, with the ultimate purpose of illuminating crucial aspects of their identities and "psychological landscapes." In doing so, my aim is to enrich the present literature written about The Waves, to deepen and significantly complement Copland's examination of the mental dynamics represented by The Waves' mind, and to gesture towards a "cognitive" direction in literary analysis by underlining the import of Conceptual Blending (as a theoretical framework) in explicating, probing, and analyzing the innermost mental and psychological recesses of fictional characters.

Notes

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1. For concrete examples and a more thorough analysis of the textual and linguistic devices used by the six protagonists to convey the sense of the oneness of their subjectivities, see Irma Rantavaara, Virginia Woolf's The Waves (New York: Associated Faculty Press, 1969).

2. Wagemaker observes that "in severe cases, manic-depressive patients actually become psychotic. They tend to hallucinate – hearing voices, seeing things, talking to dead people and the like. [...] Many manic-depressive patients also suffer from delusions" (67-8). Wagemaker's description of manic-depressive patients' profile may account not only for the general feeling of mental and emotional intoxication that permeates The Waves' narrative, but also for the ravenous and hallucinatory states of mind that occasionally take The Waves' voices by storm, and that contribute to occasionally heightening or even altering their sensory and perceptual processes.

3. One may argue that Rhoda's killing of herself by the end of the novel bespeaks Woolf's own intentions to actually commit suicide, on account of her psychologically gruelling and insufferable mental illness. In 1941 (i.e. ten years after The Waves was published), Woolf committed suicide by drowning herself in the Ouse River. In her suicide note, Woolf wrote (addressing her husband Leonard): "I feel certain that I am going mad again. I feel we can't go through another of those terrible times. And I shan't recover this time. I begin to hear voices, and I can't concentrate. So I am doing what seems the best thing to do" (quoted in Stone 153).

4. Even though The Waves' narrative would, at some point, feature some marking events such as the death of Rhoda and Percival, Woolf's interest remains nevertheless centered on depicting the very mental and psychological impact of those events on her protagonists' psyche and subjective constitutions. Woolf's readers should therefore focus their attention on the different expressions of the protagonists' inner subjective lives rather than on narrative events *per se*. The latter can be seen as nothing but a trigger of a whole range of complex thoughts, feelings, and psychological states that express themselves in diverse representational "patterns" or "forms."

5. The (unconscious) processes triggered in the human mind when uttering a speech sequence or trying to make sense of a particular statement "occur at lightning speed," Fauconnier and Turner explain, "presumably because they involve distributed spreading activation in the nervous system, and conscious attention to [them while they are at work] would [probably] interrupt [the] flow" of these cognitive processes (18).

6. See Appendix.

7. See Appendix.

8. Throughout this dissertation, the "generic space" will be assumed in discussing the basis of the conceptual resemblance between two or more input spaces.

9. A "focus input space" is an input space that undergoes conceptual re-framing or re-organization by another input space (i.e. by a framing input space).

10. A "framing input space" is an input space from which a framing structure is projected onto another input space (i.e. onto a focus input space).

11. See Appendix.

Chapter I: "Moments of Vision" and the Mapping of the Inner Landscapes of the Mind

"And then tiring of pursuit and flight, lovelily [the birds] came descending, delicately declining, dropped down and sat silent on the tree, on the wall, with their bright eyes glancing, and their heads turned this way, that way; aware, awake; intensely conscious of one thing, one object in particular."(The third interlude)

"My shattered mind is pieced together by some sudden perception. I take the trees, the clouds, to be witnesses of my complete integration." (Louis)

"The real novelist, the perfectly simple human being, could go on, indefinitely, imagining. He would not integrate, as I do."(Bernard)

I. I : Tracing reality's "patterns"

In <u>A Room of one's Own</u>, Woolf lays out her peculiar view of "reality," which she also equates with such notions as "life," "spirit," and "truth." She argues:

> What is meant by 'reality'? It would seem to be something very erratic, very undependable — now to be found in a dusty road, now in a scrap of newspaper in the street, now a daffodil in the sun. It lights up a group in a room and stamps some casual saying. It overwhelms one walking home beneath the stars and makes the silent world more real than the world of speech — and then there it is again in an omnibus in the uproar of Piccadilly. Sometimes, too, it seems to dwell in shapes too far away for us to discern what their nature is. But whatever it touches, it fixes and makes permanent. (191)

Though it is steeped in the structures of the empirical world and can sometimes be "found" in the least appealing of places (such as "a dusty road," "a scrap of newspaper in the street," or "an omnibus"), "reality" - in the sense suggested by Woolf – should in no way be taken as an expression of the mundane or overly familiar dimensions of the everyday physical environment. "Reality" removes the aura of predictability and ordinariness which precludes us from experiencing the world in its full dimensions and depth. It reveals to us the hidden

"truth" that lies dormant beneath banal or otherwise unnoteworthy everyday sceneries, promises new outlooks on life, and opens uncharted dimensions of perceptual and sensory awareness. For Woolf, "reality" does so by enabling the individual to conjure up surreptitious "shapes," "pattern[s]," or "scenes" that collapse "the cotton wool"[1] of ordinary life ("A Sketch of the Past" 282). Woolf explains: "we are sealed vessels afloat on what is convenient to call reality; and at some moments, the sealing matter cracks; in floods reality; *that is, these scenes* – for why do they survive undamaged year after year unless they are made of something comparatively permanent?" (my emphasis, "A Sketch of the Past" 282). By "sealing matter," Woolf refers to that state of psychological and emotional aloofness, apathy, or detachment with which we engage in everyday monotonous activities, and through which we tend to react to the mechanical, taken-for-granted dimensions of everyday existence. The relative numbing of the senses by customary or routine processes results in a state of mind which Woolf compares to a "sealed vessel:"[2] our responsiveness to outer stimuli is significantly diminished and we often fail to appreciate potential sources of sensory and perceptual insight. Occasionally, though, the "sealing matter cracks," giving rise to an esoteric experience of "reality" whose full impact remains engraved in the individual's memory. As Woolf points out, "reality" has that "overwhelm[ing]" capacity to "perform a curious couching operation on the senses; one sees more intensely afterwards; the world seems bared of its [ordinary] covering and given an intenser life" (A Room of one's Own 192). As in a "couching operation," "reality" inscribes indelible "patterns" or "scenes" upon the mind and leaves the person with astounding insight and lucidity of vision. These patterns, which "come together in a combination of inexplicable significance," will find expression in what Woolf would call "moments of vision," or elsewhere, "moments of being"[3] (Collected Essays I 250-

1). At times, these moments are likened to a "sudden violent shock" or to "a blow from an enemy hidden behind the cotton wool of daily life" ("A Sketch of the Past" 283). At others, they are seen by Woolf as "a revelation of some order," an epiphany, or "a token of some real thing" (283). The common denominator of these "moments of vision," though, Sim explains, is that they often "lead to an increased awareness of things in the empirical world" and to augmented "pleasure in ordinary things" ("Tracing Patterns through Plato's Forms" 42-3). Another shared quality is that "they persist for years" without ever receding into a state of oblivion (Collected Essays I 251). They constitute what Clarissa would reckon in Mrs Dalloway as one's "secret deposit of exquisite moments;" a treasure trove of cherished memory-impressions that give texture and flavour to a person's psychological biography (25).

To illustrate this notion, Woolf recollects the following scene: "I walked over Mount Misery and along the river; and save that the tide was out, the country, which I notice very closely always, was coloured and shaded as I like—there were the willows, I remember, all plumy and soft green and purple against the blue" ("A Sketch of the Past" 282). It is precisely this "shad[ing]" of the scene in a riveting variegation of colours - this pleasure and insight procured by the mental saturation of the scene in hues of "green," "blue," and "purple" - that Woolf calls her most cherished "moment of vision." The chromatic "patterns" described in Woolf's epiphany highlight her renewed awareness of the country "which [she] notice[s] very closely always" through the lens of a curious, yet mostly dispassionate observer. In fact, Woolf's kaleidoscopic "patterns" are not so much an expression of a logical, commonsensical, or functional insight into an empirical reality as a reflection of a mystical connection between an internal (or subjective) and external world. Moments of vision, Woolf explains, are "of an unaccountable nature" because they are, in part, the work of the

individual's unconscious imagination (<u>Collected Essays I</u> 251). As Woolf notes in her <u>Diary</u>, "if I pass a lame girl I can, *without knowing I do it*, instantly make up a scene" (my emphasis 114). Likewise, in "Three Pictures," Woolf remarks that upon seeing a portrait by the name of "The Sailor's Homecoming," she felt that her "imagination supplied other pictures springing from that first one," giving her the impression that "most things appear much brighter, warmer, and simpler than usual; and making some things appear foolish; and some things wrong and some things right, and more full of meaning than before" (<u>Collected Essays IV</u>151-2). The peculiar blending of imagination and perception therefore acts as a trigger for those *"*little daily miracles" that spring up like "matches struck unexpectedly in the dark" (<u>To the Lighthouse</u> 48). In "moments of vision," the mind becomes the locus of a dynamic interplay between perceptual information and the individual's feelings, mental states, and imagination, both at the conscious and unconscious level.

Commenting on Woolf's "moments of vision," Richter argues that they are the very "centre or meeting place for experience [...] in which perceptions and feelings converged and formed for an instant something round and whole" (27). The centrality of the motif of "the moment" as a form of "reality" *per se* is unambiguously expressed by Woolf as she writes: "these are […] instances of exceptional moments […] I always feel instantly that they are particularly valuable" ("A Sketch of the Past" 283). The "moments," which Leonard Woolf dubs instances of "leaving the ground,"[4] are Woolf's foremost source of inspiration: "she would weave […] something entirely different. It was often extraordinarily amusing, but in a very peculiar way – almost like fantasy, and sometimes it was extremely beautiful" (<u>The Bloomsbury Group</u> 237). In <u>A Room of one's Own</u>, Woolf explicitly makes the point that "it is [the writer's] business to find it (i.e. "reality") and collect it and communicate it to the rest

of us," since writers are "the enviable people who live at enmity with unreality" (my parentheses 194). This is why Woolf insists on "record[ing] the atoms (i.e. perceptual data) as they fall upon the mind in the order in which they fall" and on "trac[ing] the pattern, however disconnected and incoherent in appearance, which each sight or incident scores upon the consciousness" (Collected Essays II 107). To a great extent, Woolf's writings are thus to be understood in terms of a testimonial inscription of "reality," or else as an attempt at capturing the intensity of the mental and emotional engagement with the surrounding world, mainly at those peculiar "moments" of heightened awareness.

In this chapter, I undertake to explore Woolf's concept of "reality" as experienced by The Waves' voices and as manifested through their transitory, yet gripping moments of heightened perception. As Woolf points out, The Waves offers "great freedom for [the expression of] 'reality,'" even though "the unreal world" as symbolized by "the phantom waves" of the interludes is "round all this" (A Writer's Diary 141).[5] By framing "reality" (i.e. the moments of vision in the voices' soliloquies) within the larger structure of "unreality" (i.e. the interludes which stand for a certain free-floating, wave-like form of consciousness), Woolf seeks to reproduce her view of human awareness, which weaves together both states of "being" and "non-being." Woolf particularly emphasizes that The Waves is replete with "odd irrelevant noises" and other perceptual and sensory stimuli that "need not be insisted on," as they stand for much of the "cotton wool" of daily existence (A Writer's Diary 141). Her foremost concern, though, is with those transient moments of revelation that highlight a "quickened perception of the relations existing between men and plants, or houses and their inhabitants, or any of those innumerable alliances which somehow or other we spin between ourselves and objects in our passage" (Collected Essays I 296). In The Waves, likewise, the

voices seem to build up different mental bonds or "alliances" with different facets of the material world (such as trees, natural landscapes, inanimate objects, etc) whenever they experience those startling moments of vision. These mentally constructed "alliances" would then leave *permanent* markings on each voice's memory, psychic constitution, and outlook on life. As Apter points out, "the most common objects" not only "lose their simplicity and solidity" in those peculiar moments of insight, but also, and most importantly, "become part of one's psychological history" (111). In The Waves, particularly, "the world becomes a psychological map" onto which the voices' feelings, impressions, and self-images are transcribed and projected (Apter 113). This mapping of personal or subjective content onto the world's material surfaces enables The Waves' voices to uncover the mental "pattern" which will become the regulatory principle of their emotional and psychological lives. Bernard observes for instance: "let me sit here for ever with bare things, this coffee cup, this knife, this fork, things in themselves, myself being myself" (157). No longer is this battery of utensils understood as ordinary kitchen equipments whose value is determined by their expedient manipulation within the narrow context of food-catering. For a "moment," these instruments would take off their "veil" of commonplaceness and become a source of fresh, uncharted insight into Bernard's view of himself. Bernard's encounter with these objects brings to light one peculiar dimension which we often fail to appreciate within the context of our daily manoeuvrings of kitchen utensils; namely that these objects are "bare things" or "things in themselves."**6** Bernard would then extrapolate this "pattern" to a view of himself as someone lacking an authentic sense of self: "myself being myself." Having always been conscious of the other voices' perceptions, attitudes, and judgements, Bernard ends up losing touch with his innermost self – i.e. his actual needs, desires, etc - and feeling somehow self-

alienated or "unmoored […] from a private being" (97). The "coffee cup," the "knife," and the "fork" as such allow him to frame his persistent need to break free from the shackles of self-consciousness and to reconnect with his inmost part: "I would willingly give all my money that you should not disturb me but will let me sit on and on, silent, alone" (157).

The aforementioned example illustrates the case I would like to argue throughout this chapter: in "moments of vision," the material world becomes not only an imaginative expression of the voices' internal mental processes, but also a powerful generator of compelling self-images and an unfailing source of insight into the voices' self-views and self-identities. No longer is the surrounding world understood as a source of visual "stimuli" in the behaviourist sense: the mind's reaction to perceptual information is in no way reflexive, predictable, or mechanistic in those idiosyncratic "moments" of illumination. On the contrary, the voices' encounter with the most commonplace objects turns out to be capable of bringing "a whole series of […] buried thoughts, sensations, and memories to the surface," and of unveiling the innermost recesses of the voices' psychological "reality" (Apter 111). It is this instant interaction or "alliance" between the voices' subjective resources and the surrounding world's material resources which results in the construction of a mental "pattern" that emblematizes "the link between outer and inner" (Richter 181). The "pattern" captures a certain form of correspondence between the content of the voices' emotions and the perceived properties of the material surrounding. This correspondence ultimately produces a "reality" where the material objects of perception become "an extension of the self" (Richter 67). In other words, because the "patterns" surmised from the physical world (such as the lack of self-consciousness characteristic of kitchen utensils) are almost hypnotically internalized or "absorb[ed]" by the voices' subjectivities, they eventually develop into an integral part of the

voices' self-understanding and self-perception (Freedman 19). They become blueprints for self-realization and a constant frame of reference out of which the voices' feelings and self-views are extracted. The persistence of these "patterns" in the voices' memories not only confirms Woolf's notion that "moments of vision" are "made of something comparatively permanent," but also testifies to the tremendous influence of these initially constructed "visions" on the voices' continuing process of individuation.

In this chapter, I argue that the "alliance" manifested in The Waves' "moments of vision" between the voices' subjectivities and the world's material objects can be best accounted for in the terms suggested by Fauconnier and Turner's "Conceptual Blending Theory." The latter provides a useful analytical framework for exploring the ways in which the physical environment is creatively understood and, most importantly, "absorb[ed]" or appropriated by The Waves' voices for the purpose of self-understanding, self-reflection, and self-realization. It helps not only explain the effect of certain "illuminat[ing]" aspects of the material world on the voices' cognitive and perceptual faculties, but also shed light on the range of cognitive operations that enable the voices' sense of self to emerge out of an interplay between "outer and inner" resources. The "patterns" yielded by the voices' "moments of vision," I henceforth suggest, are the end product of a complex "conceptual integration network" involving a series of "cross-space mappings" between an *internal* and *external* mental space. By "internal mental space," I refer to the cognitive makeup – i.e. the sum of conscious and unconscious states of mind - that shapes the voices' perception not only of their surrounding world, but also of themselves at a particular point in time. An "external mental space," on the other hand, refers to voices' mental representation of the physical entity in the real world that triggers the "moments of vision." Mapping across these two mental

spaces will result in the construction of a mental "pattern" (a blended space) that has the potential to reveal invaluable insight into the voices' psychological constitutions. The new blended space, I argue, will help the voices not only phrase out their innermost feelings, self-views, wishes, and desires, but also sketch out a "psychological landscape"[7] for their own in light of their interactive encounters with their material surroundings.

I.II : Patterns of conceptual integration in the voices' "moments of vision"

In The Waves, Woolf's "intense sensibility to the material world [and] [her] desire to fathom the full meaning of the trivia of experience" can be understood from the novel's very first pages (Beja 124). Susan remarks, for instance, that "the leaves are gathered round the window like pointed ears" (4). Louis points out that "the shadow falls on the path […] like an elbow bent," and Rhoda pictures "islands of light […] swimming on the grass […] they have fallen through the trees" (4). Through recourse to both similes (e.g. like pointed ears) and metaphors (e.g. islands of light), Woolf implies that The Waves' voices are somehow *already* in a state of "being:" even though no spectacular revelation occurs at this point, the world appears to be "given an *intenser* life" by virtue of its very symbolic and metaphorical representation (my emphasis, A Room of One's Own 152). In "A Sketch of the Past," Woolf pointedly observes that, since certain days "happened [to be] *above average* in 'being,'" the states of "being" and "non-being" are not so much to be understood in terms of rigid or inflexible binaries as they are in terms of a gradable continuum measuring the subject's awareness of and responsiveness to environmental stimuli (my emphasis 282). By the same token, the voices' metaphorical depiction of their surroundings can be viewed as indicative of a certain degree of "being" because the natural objects of perception are somehow invested with a great deal of personal or subjective significance. The voices' deployment of both

metaphors and similes to convey their idiosyncratic visions of their surroundings can be said to capture an embryonic form of "alliance" between their own repertoire of mental imagery and the surrounding world's perceived structures or forms. The blending of sensory or perceptual input with the voices' imagination ultimately generates a renewed awareness of the depicted environmental surroundings. It also gives the reader the impression of perceiving the world through very peculiar, uncommon, and creative lenses.

Like Bernard who perceives "*finger-shaped* shadows of leaves beneath the windows," the rest of the voices also endeavour to creatively "shape" the texture of their surroundings through the use of metaphorical images supplied by their unchecked imagination (my emphasis 4). The projection of subjective meaning (i.e. the figurative "shapes" and mental images) onto the world's "objective" or material structures illustrates the voices' early attempts at fathoming that unknown or mysterious significance they see as inherent in their immediate environment. As Overton explains, perception necessarily involves a certain degree of "projection of person-centred meanings, thus transforming the 'objective' environmental world […] into an 'actual' world […] the *actual* world is the world of meanings constructed by the person: the known world" (author's emphasis 9).

In The Waves, the projection of subjective or "person-centred meanings" onto the environment allows the voices to transform vague optical impressions into an experience that is both intelligible and meaningful. For instance, upon "[s]eeing leaves moving in a hole in the hedge," Jinny "thought. 'That is a bird on its nest'" (10). To account for the leaves' motion, Jinny conjures up an *imagined* conceptual space that subsumes not only her mental image of "a bird on its nest," but also her related understanding of this animal species (i.e. her knowledge of the bird's chirpiness, energy, spiritedness, etc). Jinny's mental projection of the

bird's lively dynamism onto the leaves' unexplained source of motion betrays her conviction

that only an animate or conscious agent such as a bird could set a leafy hedge (i.e. an

inanimate entity) in motion. To validate this assumption, Jinny "parted [the leaves]" in search

for an "actual" bird (10). As she "looked," however, Jinny discovered that "there was no bird

on a nest" (10). This startling discovery comes to undermine the very assumptions pre-

supposed by Jinny's imaginative projection of the birds' motion onto the real or "objective"

world. Distraught by her discovery, Jinny begins questioning the very foundations of her

understanding of the visualized scene:

> The leaves went on moving. I was frightened. I ran past Susan, past Rhoda, and
> Neville and Bernard in the tool-house talking. I cried as I ran, faster and faster.
> What moved the leaves? What moves my heart, my legs? […] I thought, and
> kissed you [i.e. Louis], with my heart jumping under my pink frock like the
> leaves, which go on moving, though there is nothing to move them. Now I smell
> geraniums; I smell earth mould. I dance. I ripple. I am thrown over you like a net
> of light. I lie quivering flung over you. (10)

With tremendous shock and bewilderment, Jinny realizes that even though "there was no bird

on a nest," "the leaves went on moving." The resultant state of frenzied apprehension into

which Jinny has fallen recalls Woolf's description of "moments of vision" in terms of "a

sudden violent shock […] these exceptional moments brought with them a peculiar horror and

physical collapse; they seemed dominant; myself passive" ("A Sketch of the Past" 283).

Jinny's revelation is received with great horror because not only does it collapse her "actual"

or "known" world (i.e. the deep-seated assumption that a foliage would move only because an

animal, presumably a bird, is nested inside the hedge), but it also brings her attention to an

even more central conundrum: "what moves my heart, my legs"?[8] Her realization that leaves

"go on moving, *though there is nothing to move them*" opens her eyes to the possibility that

even inanimate or insentient entities such as leafy hedges may well be endowed with some

form dynamism, physical vibrancy, and inherent agency of their own (whence the leaves' unexplained motion).

Jinny's acquirement of this new environmental understanding prompts her construction of a new mental space governed by brand-new regulatory principles. In keeping with this novel input space, insentient or non-conscious entities are *also* capable of a dynamic life or agency of their own, even in the absence of a conscious awareness that is likely to account for their physical or agentive power. Jinny's staggering discovery ushers in a seizing and mind-boggling "moment of vision," not because it compels her to construe differently of some unusual environmental forces or processes, but because the governing laws and principles of this newly constructed environmental input space are almost instantly "absorbed," appropriated,[9] and integrated into her awareness of her corporeal self: "what moves my heart, my legs"? Such an appropriation entails the mental projection of Jinny's brand-new understanding of environmental dynamics (an external input space[10]) onto her own experience of the driving force of her bodily motility, vitality, and verve (an internal input space).

The projection of "external" insight onto Jinny's "internal" self-awareness allows her to better observe the similarity between the "leaves, which go on moving, though there is nothing to move them," and her "heart jumping under [her] pink frock." Both the "leaves" and Jinny's "heart" are insentient entities devoid of any form of conscious agency. The absence of such consciousness, however, does not prevent the leaves from manifesting inherent physical vitality and dynamism, nor does it preclude Jinny's heart from rhythmically throbbing and pulsating: "the pulse drums so in my forehead, behind my eyes, that everything dances" (23). This perceived similarity between the leaves' and the human heart's motion makes Jinny

realize that her whole body's unchecked dynamism may as well be the result of some unexplained elemental impulse – i.e. the same mysterious impulse that happens to set the leaves in physical motion. Jinny's new revelation raises her awareness to the fact that "[her] body lives a life *of its own*" independently of any cognitive or conscious awareness, superimposed volition, or will power (my emphasis 32). Like "the leaf [which] danced in the hedge without anyone to blow it," Jinny's "body […] *of its own accord* puts forth a frill" (my emphasis 65-32). It is seen not only as a self-sufficient and self-propelling entity, but also as an inexhaustible source of effervescent liveliness and dynamism. Jinny points out: "I do not want to be fixed, to be pinioned. I tremble; I quiver, like the leaf in the hedge" (28). By bringing her idiosyncratic understanding of environmental dynamics together with her bodily "imagination"**[11]** into one blended space, Jinny comes to the conclusion that "there is nothing staid, nothing settled, in this universe. All is rippling, all is dancing; all is quickness and triumph" (23).

Jinny's ultimate realization brings to light the mental "pattern" at the core of her "moment of vision:" no longer is the surrounding world conceptualized in terms of inanimate or stationary and animate or dynamic opposites; instead, her whole world (i.e. her "actual" or "known" world) becomes a fluid choreography of vibrant impulses and fluttering bodily sensations:

> Look, when I move my head I ripple all down my narrow body; even my thin legs ripple like a stalk in the wind. I flicker between the set face of Susan and Rhoda's vagueness; I leap like one of those flames that run between the cracks of the earth; I move, I dance; I never cease to move and to dance. I move like the leaf that moved in the hedge as a child and frightened me. (21)

Throughout The Waves, Jinny's childhood memory of "the leaf that moved in the hedge" becomes a recurring leitmotif and a springboard for understanding her "psychological

landscape." The latter can be seen as a blended network wherein Jinny's environmental awareness is deployed *qua* the framing principle of her bodily (and universal) awareness. In this integration network, Jinny's perception of her body becomes a "focus input space" subjected to and reconfigured by incoming environmental input. The perceived similarity between the leaves' motion and Jinny's physical motion triggers a transfer of insight from the conceptual space of environmental dynamics into the space of bodily dynamics. This may explain Woolf's remark that moments of vision "seemed dominant, *myself passive*" and that "[the moment] is so instinctive that it seems given to me, not made by me" (my emphasis, "A Sketch of the Past" 283-4).

The reason why moments of vision are "given" to the cognizing subject and not "made" by them is that conceptual input (in this case Jinny's environmental insight) is suddenly projected from an "external" environmental source into the subject's "internal" self-awareness. "External" input therefore contributes to "re-mapping" the cognitive structures or outlook of the perceiving subject and to producing a new form of "reality" wrought in accordance with this new environmental consciousness. This is why Woolf understands "moments of vision" in terms of "a couching operation" performed "on the senses:" the voices' fictional environment does not simply stand as a passive recipient of "person-centred meanings;" it also plays a crucial role in moulding their worldviews, self understandings, and self-perceptions.

Jinny's re-conceptualization of her bodily awareness in light of incoming environmental insight illustrates what Clark and Chalmers would call "the active role of the environment in driving cognitive processes" (27). The close observation of external environmental dynamics seems to have provided Jinny with enough conceptual input to cause

her to alter her whole perception of her inner bodily processes. In fact, since the very

"perception of [one's] environment" entails, to varying degrees, a simultaneous act of

"perceiv[ing] [one]self situated in that environment," the self becomes somehow *co*-defined

or "*co*-perceived as the environment is perceived" (Tudge et al 83). The very nature of

subjectivity makes it indeed impossible for the cognizing subject to perceive his/her

immediate environment without having to project some measure of "person-centred

meanings" onto the world, thereby *co*-defining the position of the subject in relation to its

surrounding world.

In "moments of vision," particularly, the mechanics of perceptual co-definition or "co-

perception" are brought into sharper relief because an instant psychological "alliance" is

somehow created between The Waves' voices and their environmental surroundings. This

"alliance" enables the novel's protagonists to mentally visualize their complex psychic

recesses by giving them "external" substance and form. For instance, by "co-perceiving"

himself in relation to the surrounding "vegetation" space, Louis is capable not only of

picturing his innermost psychic vulnerabilities, but also of inventing new cognitive and

psychological defences inspired by the structuring principles of this botanical (input) space.

The following passage follows the genesis of Louis's "psychological landscape" by gesturing

to his developing awareness of the blend's "co-perceptual" processes:

> I am alone [...] I am left standing by the wall among the flowers [...] Flower after
> flower is specked on the depths of green. The petals are harlequins. Stalks rise
> from the black hollows beneath. The flowers swim like fish made of light upon
> the dark, green waters. I hold a stalk in my hand. I am the stalk. My roots go
> down to the depths of the world, through earth dry with brick, and damp earth,
> through veins of lead and silver. I am all fibre. All tremors shake me, and the
> weight of the earth is pressed to my ribs. Up here my eyes are green leaves,
> unseeing. Down there 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. I hear tramplings, tremblings, stirrings round me. (5)

In this passage, Louis clearly maps out the "vegetation" input space. He provides a minute description of this conceptual realm by pointing to the constellation of elements it subsumes such as "stalks," "flowers," "leaves," "petals," "roots," "earth," etc.

On the other side of the equation lies Louis's psychic constitution and overall sense of self; his feeling of vulnerability, his awareness of inferiority, and crippling consciousness of his "other" position (he who "speak[s] with an Australian accent" (9)). Though Louis does not outline the highly abstract realm of his psychic makeup in an equally abstract language, he nevertheless gives the readers a wide range of textual cues with respect to his psychic configuration. For instance, his social retraction and sense of being rejected on account of his difference are conveyed very clearly through the passive construction "I am left standing by the wall among the flowers." Also, his avoidant personality and sense of not wanting to get noticed are unequivocally revealed as he stands "on the other side of the hedge" and says "Oh Lord, let them pass [...] But let me be unseen" (5).

To further highlight his precarious position as a cultural foreigner, Louis appeals to such exotic images of "women passing with red pitchers," of "camels swaying and men in turbans," which function as some sort of correlative to his haunting awareness of his exotic lineage, his cultural maladjustment, and resultant feelings of social ineptness. Though Louis, in a forlorn attempt to cultivate a sense of socio-cultural acceptability and belongingness, desperately insists "I am an average Englishman; I am an average clerk," he nevertheless believes that his Australian origins are at the heart of much of his social stigmatization: "I am not included. If I speak, imitating their accent, they prick their ears, waiting for me to speak again, in order that they may place me—if I come from Canada or Australia, I, who desire

above all things to be taken to the arms with love, am alien, external" (48-9). Louis's

unnerving lack of a strong and stable sense of belongingness results in the crippling

realization of being "alien," "external." Hopeless and dispirited, Louis cannot help but

imagine a "stigma burnt on [his] quivering flesh by [some] cowled man with a red hot iron"

(50). This image not only translates Louis's poignant awareness of his cultural exoticism, but

also highlights the magnitude of the psychological damage inflicted by this awareness on his

developing ego and overall self-perception.

      Convinced that he is unjustly branded as "alien" by a hostile surrounding culture,

Louis ends up feeling disgraced, exposed, and almost completely shorn of his inner fortitude:

"you are all protected. I am naked" (50). The feelings of shame, humiliation, and

embarrassment generated by Louis's awareness of his cultural difference illustrate his

"internalized perception of being devalued," his "fears of being treated differently or of being

labelled by others" as alien and external; i.e. his experience of the insufferably "felt stigma"[12]

of being regarded a cultural foreigner (Stuenkel and Wong 53). Afflicted by the thought of

being stigmatized and constantly derided on account of his exotic cultural origins, Louis

avows that he has to suffer the toll of what he understands as "[his] distasteful and uninviting

aspect" (i.e. his cultural foreignness and unendurable social awkwardness); an aspect to which

he "turn[s] [his] face with hatred and bitterness" (50).

      Louis's understanding that his public self features a "distasteful and uninviting aspect"

attests to the detrimental effects of his deeply "felt stigma" on both his ideal self-image and

overall sense of his self-identity. This problematic self-understanding results in Louis's

development of a "spoiled [sense of] identity;" "the idea that somehow one is imperfect in

regard to the standards of the society in which one lives" (Appleby and Anastas 23). In

Stigma: Notes on the Management of Spoiled Identity, Goffman explains that a sense of one's "spoiled identity" arises from the individual's bitter recognition of socially "undesirable attributes" in him/herself (13). These attributes happen to be "incongruous with our [social] stereotype of what a given type of individual should be," hence the stigmatized subject's perception of his/her peculiar features as being both embarrassing and "deeply discrediting" (13). In a like manner, Louis's self-conscious awareness of his "alien" or "external" origins seems to have resulted in his distorted perception of his Australian accent (an important identity marker) as a deeply discrediting social attribute. This is why he would meekly and self-effacingly wait for others to speak in order to copy their socially acceptable speech style and to consequently develop a sense of social admissibility and belongingness: "I will not conjugate the verb, said Louis, until Bernard has said it [...] I will now try to imitate Bernard softly lisping accent" (9-10). As an input space,[13] therefore, Louis's psychic configuration seems to emphasize not only his deep feelings of isolation, rejection, and self-inadequacy, but also his vulnerability, his extreme diffidence, and lack of a sense of social and cultural belongingness.

Having outlined a "vegetation" input space on the one hand and a "psychic" space on the other, Louis sets out to trace the mental processes that will allow him to develop a sense of his psychological landscape through blending with various elements from the "vegetation" input space. He starts by pointing to the course of the projection: "I am the stalk," suggesting that his psyche as input space will be re-framed, re-conceptualized, and re-structured by the organizing principles of the vegetation space. Besides, since projecting input from one space onto another presupposes the location of similarities, Louis undertakes to explain to the reader how both the "stalk" (at this point the most important element of the vegetation space) and his

embodied sense of self may have a number of features in common, even though both conceptual domains seem very much distanced at first glance. For one, the image of the stalk enveloped by a massive volume of leaves seems to remind Louis of the uppermost part of his body (mainly his head) being covered with a thick layer of hair: "my hair is made of leaves." This cross-space correspondence is greatly subtended by Louis's perception of another similarity between the stem of the stalk and his bodily trunk or torso: "my body is a stalk."[14]

Louis's recognition of an intriguing resemblance between human and floral properties or anatomy warrants his performance of another series of cross-space projections between the "vegetation" space and his embodied sense of self. He notes: "I am all fibre. All tremors shake me." The word "fibre" is used polysemously by Louis to refer either to the fine-spun, thread-like, and filamentous quality of the stalk's corporeal makeup, or else to the (biologically) fibrous texture of Louis's own physical body. Understood in both senses, the word "fibre" is meant to emphasize the flimsiness, delicacy, and weakness of both the stalk's material constitution and of Louis's embodied sense of self, rendered significantly vulnerable by his haunting awareness of his tenuous position as a cultural foreigner. The word "fibre" is also meant to highlight the stalk's and Louis's susceptibility to "tremors," which again can be understood as a reference to the tremors of the earth, or else to Louis's state of psychic agitation and nervousness in hostile, culturally parochial social environments: "I am conscious of flux, of disorder; of annihilation and despair" (49).

Louis's peculiar understanding of his own self in terms of a delicate stalk that is highly susceptible to the earth's "tremors" bears witness to what Freud would call the process of "[t]ransposing the structural conditions of [one's] own mind into the external world;" this "reveals in the clearest and most unmistakable way an intention to impose the laws governing

[one's] mental life upon real things" (quoted in Bartlett 78). Bartlett further explains that this sort of mental "transpos[ition]" of internal mental processes onto the external environment allows individuals to "[a]scribe [...] external [form or] existence to phenomena that are inherently [psychic or] internal;" this projective mechanism may be best understood as "a reification of subjective life" (78). Likewise, Louis's conceptualization of his own body in terms of a helpless stalk enables him to throw into relief that internal vulnerability, hopeless powerlessness, and exposed "nakedness" characteristic of both the stalk's fragile anatomy and his defenceless, intolerably diffident sense of self. The sense of being defeated, overpowered, and crashed down by the unspeakably "felt stigma" of his cultural foreignness is brought into even sharper focus by Louis through an imagined blended structure in which "the weight of the earth" is pictured as being "pressed to [Louis's] ribs" (my emphasis 5). By mentally blending the image of "the weight of earth" from the "vegetation" space (with its connotations of massiveness and burdensomeness) with Louis' imaginary self-representation as an effete, anthropomorphized stalk, the reader may get a feeling of the enormity of the emotional exertion borne out by Louis on account of his insecure position as a cultural foreigner. The image also tendentiously points to the magnitude of the psychic pressure exerted by Louis's socio-cultural surroundings on his vulnerable sense of self, and to the gradual "spoil[ing]" of his identity as a result of his emotionally burdening self-perception *qua* exotic and "alien" outsider.

Louis's surreptitious "transplanting" of his inmost vulnerabilities onto the physically helpless stalk reveals, as Freud would argue, how a process of mental projection may cause the individual to "[m]eet his internal mental processes again outside himself" (quoted in Bartlett 77). The imagined likeness or correspondence between Louis's internal psychological

processes (i.e. his distorted self-perception and fragile sense of self) and the external "vegetation space" (emblematized by the image of the defenceless stalk) motivates a psychic projection onto the outside world, allowing Louis to mentally "reif[y]" his felt anxieties and insecurities.

In a sense, this projective mechanism contributes to the production of what Weigert calls "a landscape that derives from [one's] mindscape" (182). In <u>Self, Interaction, and Natural Environment: Refocusing Our Eyesight</u>, Weigert argues that the sum of one's private emotional, cognitive, and psychic processes – what makes up "an individual's or ego's point of view" - has the power to turn or "[t]ranslate eye-sight into I-sight: my eye sees what I see" (182). The subject's internal mental processes, Weigert seems to suggest, allow a re-shaping of "objective" or external reality. Perceived reality becomes somehow altered, re-wrought, and transformed by a dynamic range of "internal" mental spaces such as the subject's innermost self-perceptions, needs, desires, and longings.

Similarly, Louis' mentally constructed "alliance" with the "vegetation space" seems to have inspired him with a very peculiar hiding strategy, through which he can fancifully satisfy his pressing need for self-invisibilization and self-concealment. In many of his childhood memories, Louis would not only take monastic retreat from his comrades, but also wishfully mutter: "Oh Lord, let them pass. Lord, let them lay their butterflies on a pocket-handkerchief on the gravel. Let them count out their tortoise-shells, their red admirals and cabbage whites. *But let me be unseen*" (my emphasis 5). This need for self-concealment and social withdrawal is further explained by Goffman in his <u>Stigma: Notes on the Management of Spoiled Identity</u>. He argues that those "who admit possession of a stigma [...] may nonetheless make a great effort to keep the stigma from looming large. The individual's object is to reduce tension, that

is, to make it easier for himself and the others to withdraw covert attention from the stigma"
(124). Goffman also stresses the fact that, more often than not, individual strategies of hiding
or concealing the stigma are meant "to restrict the way in which a known-about [stigmatizing]
attribute obtrudes itself into the centre of attention, for obtrusiveness increases the difficulty of
maintaining easeful inattention regarding the stigma" (126). This is why Louis, in his attempt to
circumvent the culturally biased gaze of his comrades, would wishfully imagine himself blended
with the "green" texture of the vegetation space. He notes: "let me be unseen. I am green as a
yew tree in the shade of the hedge" (5).

By imagining himself fused with the "green" foliage of the yew trees, Louis creates a
very peculiar conceptual integration network with the "vegetation space" that allows him to
wishfully fulfill the need to divert others' attention away from his vulnerable sense of self: "I
hope to distract you from my shivering, my tender, and infinitely young and unprotected soul.
For I am always the youngest; the most naïvely surprised; the one who runs in advance in
apprehension and sympathy with discomfort or ridicule" (116). Louis explains: "up here my
eyes are green leaves, unseeing" (5). The reason why "up here," Louis's eyes are imagined to
be petrified or "unseeing" (i.e. uncommunicative, unresponsive, and socially un-engaging) is
that he is made to feel extremely uneasy and out-of-place by the other voices as a result of his
stigmatizing cultural difference. "Down there" (i.e. interred like the "roots" of a plant beneath
the soil), *however*, Louis's sensory and perceptual faculties are thought to be (paradoxically)
amplified or heightened:

> My roots go down through veins of lead and silver, through damp,
> marshy places that exhale odours, to a knot made of oak roots bound together in
> the centre. Sealed [...] with earth stopping my ears, *I have yet heard* rumours of
> wars; and the nightingale; *have felt* the hurrying of many troops of men flocking
> hither and thither in quest of civilization like flocks of birds migrating seeking

the summer; *I have seen* women carrying red pitchers to the banks of the Nile. (my emphasis 50)

Now that he can mentally visualize himself "down there" being entirely sequestered from the invasive and stigmatizing gaze of his social milieu, Louis is able not only to mentally recover his perceptual powers ("I have yet heard," "have felt," "I have seen"), but also to perceive "[his] roots go[ing] down through veins of lead and silver [...] to a knot made of oak roots bound together in the centre."

"Down there," the mental image of the submerged roots of plants and floral entities sets Louis thinking about his own personal roots; i.e. about what he has come to perceive as his foreign and exotic origins. The downward course taken by the roots of planted organisms deep into the inner mausoleums of the earth parallels Louis's conceptualization of himself digging through the buried archaeologies of human history, in his diligent attempt to uncover a safe cultural or civilizational harbor away from the mortifying gaze of his cultural environment. Images of historical artefacts dating back to ancient civilizations (such as "a stone figure in the desert of the Nile") and of earth's olden populations (such as "women carrying red pitchers to the banks of the Nile") are triggered along with Louis's mentally simulated descent through the buried archives of the earth. Interestingly, the depository of archival, cultural, and civilizational images with which the earth's barrows silently abounds seems to offer Louis a propitious, self-fulfilling ground for crystallizing a more apt self-definition as a descendant of a culturally exotic, spatially and temporally remote civilization:

Every day I dig up - I unbury. I find relics of myself in the sand that women made thousands of years ago, when I heard songs by the Nile and the chained beast stamping. *What you see beside you, this man, this Louis, is only the cinders and refuse of something once splendid.* I was an Arab prince; behold my free gestures. I was a great poet in the time of Elizabeth. I was a Duke at the court of Louis the Fourteenth. *I am very vain, very confident* […] but while I admire Susan and

Percival, I hate the others, because it is for them that I do these antics, smoothing my hair, concealing my accent. (my emphasis 67)

The thought of himself being hidden, shielded, or quarantined "down there" from his hostile cultural environment enables Louis to discard the debilitating stigma of "alienness" fobbed off upon him by his cultural surroundings: "I was an Arab prince; behold my free gestures. I was a great poet in the time of Elizabeth. I was a Duke at the court of Louis the Fourteenth." "Down there," Louis is able to envisage himself as gloriously "splendid" and to positively re-signify upon the sentimental import of his culturally remote origins, mainly because the image of the concealed vaults of the earth offers him a secure, protected, and inviolable space or haven for embedding his culturally thwarted self-perception. Louis's fanciful blending with the buried historical and civilizational archives of the earth operates as a wish-fulfilling space allowing him to safely retreat into a covert, understandably bias-free fantasized setting, where the "stigma" of his cultural alienness does not "[o]btrude itself to the centre of [public] attention."

When in the church, though, a "fat woman said, 'this little boy (i.e. Louis) has no present,'" Louis could not help but "[c]ry with fury—to be remembered with pity" (17). The woman's derogatory statement brings to the surface the "felt stigma" of Louis's social and cultural alienness, whence the feelings of mortification, humiliation, and self-deprecation which instantly took him by storm. To offset the invasive sense of insecurity fomented by the woman's pejorative comment, Louis immediately conjures the previous blended network with the buried structures of the earth, which helps him "recover" a sense of psychological "continuity:" "and I feel come over me the sense of the earth under me, and my roots going down and down till they wrap themselves round some hardness at the centre. I recover my continuity" (17).

Louis's expedient (mental) retrieval of the blended network in order to help him pull himself together attests to some underlying mechanism that renders blending processes an important regulator of psychological and emotional life. The mental re-enactment of the blend enables Louis not only to envision a certain reassuring "hardness at the centre" of the earth, but also to re-experience the *feelings* of security, protection, and "splendid" immunity associated with the mental image of himself being "unseen" or hidden from the disgraceful gaze of the "fat woman." As Cánovas argues, "blending is, more often than not, about feeling something as much as about conceptualizing something" (16). Cánovas goes on to explain that since blending processes "[a]rise from the coordinated interaction of multiple cognitive and sensory inputs," "emotion and cognition, feelings and conceptual integration [become] inextricably intertwined" (22).

Similarly, Louis's mental reconstruction of the blended network seems to be motivated by the need to protect his ego from the "*felt* stigma" of being branded as a socio-cultural outsider, as well as by his latent desire to re-invoke a more positive affective state in consonance with his ideal self-understanding as a "vain" and "splendid" descendent of geographically and culturally remote civilizations. Louis's fanciful recruitment of a snippet of his initial "moment of vision" in order to effectively deal with inner emotional conflicts adds to the argument that moments of reality become, in the long run, absorbed and internalized as an integral "part of one's psychological history" (Apter 111). Moments of vision, Woolf argues, are "engraved [in the mind] with the sharpness of steel;" they become not only a generative matrix wherefrom the voices' self-images are shaped and derived, but also a powerful modulator of their inner emotional states and a defence mechanism against unbidden social input that threatens to destabilize their ego-integrity (Collected Essays II 106).

In The Waves, the close interconnection between the voices' mental performance of

complex conceptual integration networks (as manifested through their "moments of vision") and

their inner emotional and psychological reality is brought into even sharper focus by Rhoda, to

whom "all reality seems hostile and invasive" (Caramagno 278). Throughout the novel, Rhoda

appears to be conquered and completely overcome by persistent and implacable onslaughts of

"pervasive nihilism" that gradually drive her into a maddening state of "severe powerlessness

and hopelessness" (Caramagno 278). For Rhoda, life is an insufferable, awfully excruciating

experience; a tormenting gauntlet that she feels compelled into running with absolutely no

promise of salvation:

> I hate all details of the individual life. But I am fixed here to listen. An immense
> pressure is on me. I cannot move without dislodging the weight of centuries. A
> million arrows pierce me. Scorn and ridicule pierce me. I, who could beat my
> breast against the storm and let the hail choke me joyfully, am pinned down
> here; am exposed. The tiger leaps. Tongues with their whips are upon me.
> Mobile, incessant, they flicker over me. I must prevaricate and fence them off
> with lies. What amulet is there against this disaster? (55).

Abashed and terrorized by an oppressively monstrous world, Rhoda ends up feeling both

paranoid and extremely loath to any form of social exchange or interaction. When "the door

opens," Rhoda points out, "terror rushes in; terror upon terror, pursuing me. But here the door

opens and people come; they come towards me, throwing faint smiles to mask their cruelty,

their indifference; they seize me" (55).

Throughout The Waves, Rhoda becomes the ultimate emblem of the utterly helpless,

socially un-individuated self. Feeling constantly threatened, scrutinized, and disparaged by the

disruptive gaze of society, she fails to develop any effective means or mechanisms of

asserting her subjectivity, of defending her ego, and of withstanding the emotional brutality of

the social experience: "what amulet is there against this disaster?" In fact, not only does she

always seem consumed by insidious and conflicting feelings of self-doubt ("I must take his hand; I must answer. But what answer shall I give?"; "what I say is perpetually contradicted" (55-6)), but she often comes out as a fragmented and pulverized protagonist for whom life is tantamount with continuous suffering and unbearable anguish: "I am broken into separate pieces; I am no longer one" (56).

Through the figure of Rhoda, Woolf captures that angst-provoking "sense of a world continuing without [oneself];" an experience which leads Rhoda into assuming that "the world is entire, and I am outside of it, crying" (64-10). Rhoda's poignant awareness of the dreadful nature of the experience of being alive is nothing but a manifestation of a deeper, even more deleterious "anguish of being;" i.e. that menacing and anxiety-provoking "feeling we get when we realize that nothingness is just as possible as being" (Wyk 231). Rhoda avows: "I often fall down into nothingness. I must push my foot stealthily lest I should fall off the edge of the world into nothingness [...] We are nothing, I said" (22-33). It is that sense of being constantly threatened by a nihilistic upsurge of all-consuming nothingness which has led Rhoda's sense of self to crumble "into separate pieces," and which has rendered her life both appallingly dreadful and intolerable.

Frustrated and unable to deal with an unbearable world, Rhoda would frequently retreat into her only safe sanctuary, namely solitude: "I am alone in a hostile world" (84). Rhoda's "moment of vision" highlights not only the intensity of her inner emotional turmoil, especially when beset by a threatening, hauntingly oppressive world, but also the sense of self-command, aplomb, and self-assurance which she experiences in solitude:

> '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 have a short time alone [...] I have a short space of freedom. I have picked all the fallen petals and made them swim. I

have put raindrops in some. I will plant a lighthouse here, a head of Sweet Alice. 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. It sails into icy caverns where the sea-bear barks and stalactites swing green chains. The waves rise; their crests curl; look at the lights on the mastheads. They have scattered, they have foundered, all except my ship, which mounts the wave and sweeps before the gale and reaches the islands where the parrots chatter and the creepers…' (9).

In this passage, Woolf charts out the very mental processes that enable a sense of Rhoda's solitary mindscape to emerge out of an aesthetically complex interaction between inner psychological dispositions, creative perception, and lush or unrestrained imagination. Rhoda's careful examination of a basin on the surface of which various types of petals float prompts her imagination into forming an analogous input space that captures her mental representation of a "fleet" of ships swimming on the surface of waters. Rhoda's imaginary staging of the mental representation of a "fleet" of ships at the sight of the basin is facilitated by the conceptual resemblance between certain components of the "fleet" mental space (namely seas, ships floating on the surface of water, a "lighthouse" for directional guidance, "shore[s]" on each side, etc) and the visual representation of the basin (likewise filled with water, with "white petals that float" on the surface of it, with "the head" of a flower that represents a lighthouse, and with the basin's edges that stand for seashores). One may even suggest that the reason for which Rhoda prefers "white petals" to "red" ones is that the color "white" is somehow more in consonance with her *inner* mental representation of a ship's sail as a white sail.

Rhoda's recognition of very peculiar cross-space correspondences between the "fleet of ships" mental space and the "basin" *qua* visual or perceptual space motivates her into creatively constructing a novel "petals-as-fleet" blended space, to which she projects her own idea of herself in solitude: "One [ship] sails alone. That is my ship." The projection bespeaks

Rhoda's creative formation of a close psychological "alliance" with the already blended

"petals-as-fleet" perceptual space. This "alliance" is ensured by virtue of an intriguing

resemblance between Rhoda's self-representation as a socially reclusive or solitary

protagonist and what she views as a vagabond, errant, or drifting ship tending to sail "alone."

The projection allows Rhoda to mentally visualize herself swimming and (literally) navigating

her way through the waters of solitude: "I have a short time alone [...] I have a short space of

freedom."

Interestingly, the imagined blending of Rhoda's solitary sense of self with the visually

dramatized (or already blended) scene of the "fleet of swimming petals" will induce an

outpouring of other images such as those of "icy caverns," hanging "stalactites," and a

barking "sea-bear," which highlight the emotional horrors witnessed by Rhoda as she makes

her way through a frightening and constantly menacing life experience.[15] These besieging

horrors notwithstanding, it is exactly that appeasing sense of "freedom" granted to Rhoda by

virtue of her withdrawal into solitude which ultimately empowers and saves her ship from

totally succumbing to the raging "gale" (symbolizing her emotionally turbulent life), and

which enables it (i.e. her ship) to rise above the waves and to safely reach the shore of an

island: "I can think of my Armadas sailing on the high waves. I am relieved of hard contacts

and collisions. I sail on alone under the white cliffs" (14). This "emergent [meaning]

structure," as Fauconnier and Turner would call it, is the product of Rhoda's blending of the

sense of relief and appeasement she experiences in loneliness (an important framing principle

projected from her solitary sense of self) with what she views as her own solitary ship. The

new blended seascape, highly imaginative as it may seem, may help the reader come to a

clearer understanding of the sense of solace Rhoda finds in hermetic solitude.

In solitude, Rhoda feels considerably empowered. She is able to regain her self-composure: her ship calmly "sails into icy caverns," resolutely "mounts the wave," and slowly "reaches the islands." Rhoda further subtends the blend's emergent structure by claiming that "alone [...] I am the mistress of my fleet of ships;" a statement which clearly gestures to the feeling of self-command and empowerment experienced by Rhoda in solitude (56). Conversely, in public or social contexts requiring her to emotionally "[c]ollide" with others and to actively assert her subjectivity, Rhoda completely fails to maintain a coherent, well-articulated, and stable sense of self: "I am not composed enough, standing on tiptoe on the verge of fire, still scorched by the hot breath, afraid of the door opening and the leap of the tiger, to make even one sentence" (56). Rhoda's shattering loss of her presence of mind, of her self-mastery, and will-power when confronted with others is highlighted via a different blended vignette or "emergent structure" capturing the scale of her emotional mayhem in insufferable and agonizingly painful social situations:

> Oh, but I sink, I fall! [...] Travelling through darkness I see the stretched flower-beds, and Mrs Constable runs from behind the corner of the pampas-grass to say my aunt has come to fetch me in a carriage. I mount; I escape; I rise on spring-heeled boots over the tree-tops. But I am now fallen into the carriage at the hall door, where she sits nodding yellow plumes with eyes hard like glazed marbles. [...] Let me pull myself out of these waters. But they heap themselves on me; they sweep me between their great shoulders; I am turned; I am tumbled; I am stretched, among these long lights, these long waves, these endless paths, with people pursuing, pursuing. (14)

Persecuted by the haunting image of a hostile society, Rhoda ends up feeling overwhelmed and submerged by the image of the waves in her basin: "but I sink [...] Let me pull myself out of these waters. But they heap themselves on me; they sweep me between their great shoulders." By imagining herself wrestling with the waves' "great shoulders," the reader may get a sense of Rhoda's precarious and unenviable position as someone sailing through unsure

waters that constantly threaten to consume and devour her. Rhoda's emphatic use of the passive construction "I am turned; I am tumbled; I am stretched, among [...] these long waves" not only testifies to the insuperable brutality of the waves (conceived in terms of "people pursuing, pursuing"), but also highlights Rhoda as a passive object or undergoer of a violent cross-space projection.

Indeed, contrary to her state of masterful command in solitude ("alone, I rock my basins"), Rhoda's innermost feeling when surrounded by others is one of complete passivity and submission: "I choke. I am rocked from side to side by the violence of my emotion" (56-22). The shift from the active ("I rock") to the passive ("I am rocked") voice echoes a parallel shift in the *course* of the mental projection within the blended network. In other words, whereas the sense of enablement felt by Rhoda in solitude derives from a self-asserting cognitive mapping onto her representation of the "basin" scene (thereby giving her mental control over her solitary ship), the feeling of being "rocked from side to side" when put in a social context comes from her inability to sustain the same degree of mental control over the network's input, hence the prevailing sense of being subjected to the violence of the waves *qua* overriding or predominant mental frame.

Rhoda's feelings of "chok[ing]" and incapacitation can be said to originate from a certain lack in her overall sense of control over her cognitive processes (i.e. over the course of the mental projections) in discomforting social situations, rendering her an easy thrall to a mental flood of intrusive or persecutory images deriving from the initial blended scene. In a sense, Rhoda's "[c]ollision" with society shatters the very cognitive comfort zone (granted to her in solitude) that would enable her to mentally gain control over both her solitary ship and the overall sum of her psychic and emotional dynamics: "alone, I rock my basins; I am the

mistress of my fleet of ships." The lack of cognitive structures that would permit Rhoda to effectively manage her inner thoughts in confrontational social contexts may explain why, for her, life is tantamount to a continuing series of "shocks" that "[l]eap upon" her like haunting mental frames or images frantically leaping from one input space onto another without any controlling cognitive agency: "I am afraid of the shock of sensation that leaps upon me, *because I cannot deal with it as you do*. I cannot make one moment merge in the next. To me they are all violent, all separate; and if I fall under the shock of the leap of the moment you will be on me, tearing me to pieces" (my emphasis 68). The crippling loss (in social environments) of the ability to coherently structure and "merge" one mental event into the next not only contributes to the inner feeling of helplessness that seizes Rhoda's mind, but also deprives her of any cognitive "amulet" against the "disaster" of shocking sensations which occasionally takes her by storm and which causes her to become a victim of her chaotic and unruly mind.

Rhoda's inner grappling with mental images (or snippets of the blended network) that derive from her initial moment of vision reveals how the "[mental] exploitation of external configurations of signs" (such as the image of the waves in the basin) may cause "external structures" to be "ultimately [...] meshed into our cognitive niches" (Bardone 64). In The Waves, "external configurations" of land/seascapes seem inextricably twined with the voices' innermost feelings, self-representations, and psychic constitutions, so much so that it becomes nearly impossible to extricate the one from the other. In a way, the voices' internal or subjective makeup amounts to nothing but a convoluted blended network of visual images, of feeling states shaped in line with these perceived images (such as Rhoda's feeling of suffocation which is caused by the mental violence of the waves in her basin), and of

internalized psychic landscapes that keep generating unending self-representations. The

"queer conglomeration"[16] of perception, imagination, feelings, and mental representations

(which makes up the "mind" that Woolf is trying to capture in The Waves) is very likely to

give the reader the impression of "swimming" inside an enlarged or "extended mind." As

Clark and Chalmers argue, "the mind extends into the world" in the sense that any set of

assumptions or "beliefs (including beliefs about the self) can be partly constituted by features

of the environment, when those features play the right sort of role in driving cognitive

processes" (my parentheses 33).

In a like manner, the voices' internalization of features of their surrounding

environment in order to build up and design their "psychological landscapes," to give a

certain fathomable shape to their feelings, and to ultimately yield an overall sense of

subjectivity attests to instrumental role of the voices' surroundings in forming their sense of

self. In The Waves, this is particularly shown through the figure of Susan who develops a

very peculiar subjectivity through an effusive and wholehearted blending with her natural

surroundings:

> I think I am the field, I am the barn, I am the trees; mine are the flocks of birds,
> and this young hare who leaps, at the last moment when I step almost on him.
> Mine is the heron that stretches its vast wings lazily; and the cow that creaks as
> it pushes one foot before another munching; and the wild, swooping swallow;
> and the faint red in the sky, and the green when the red fades; the silence and the
> bell; the call of the man fetching cart-horses from the fields—all are mine. I
> cannot be divided, or kept apart. (51)

Susan's direct identification with natural elements in her father's farm testifies to her

development of a strong "bio-philic" bond with nature. As Kellert points out, "bio-philia is

the inherent human inclination to affiliate with natural systems and processes, especially life

and life-like features of the non-human (such as animal or floral) environment" (my

parentheses 1). Likewise, for Susan, blending with natural elements does not simply develop out of a subconscious need to pin down and describe the internal configuration of her psychic and emotional landscape. Rather, her "alliance" with nature seems to lie at the core of her whole subjective and identitary makeup. "The field," "the trees," "the flock of birds," "the heron," the "swooping swallow," etc, are indeed constitutive of the very immaculate spirit which Susan seems to embody throughout The Waves. Somehow, all of these natural elements magically coalesce into the voice of Susan and become one indissoluble whole: "all are mine. I cannot be divided, or kept apart."

Through the voice of Susan, Woolf articulates her dissatisfaction with aspects of the modern era which seem to have despoiled the human soul of its innate naturalness and pure-heartedness. Susan points out: "from one attic there was a blue view, a distant view of a field unstained by the corruption of this regimented, unreal existence" (66). For Susan, modernity has contributed to impoverishing and degrading human existence by foiling that inborn, largely self-fluffing proclivity of individuals to "bio-philically" bond with nature. Susan's dreary description of London's modern cityscape is, to this effect, fraught with condemnatory undertones:

> I will not send my children to school nor spend a night all my life in London. Here in this vast station everything echoes and booms hollowly [...] People here shoot through the streets silently. They look at nothing but shop-windows. Their heads bob up and down all at about the same height. The streets are laced together with telegraph wires. The houses are all glass, all festoons and glitter; now all front doors and lace curtains, all pillars and white steps. But now I pass on, out of London again; the fields begin again; and the houses, and women hanging washing, and trees and fields. London is now veiled, now vanished, now crumbled, now fallen (32).

Susan's use of phrases suggesting an overall sense of desolation, emptiness, and humdrum insipidity such as "hollowly," "silently," "about the same height," "all glass, all festoons [...],

all front doors," etc, bespeaks not only her innermost aversion to modern cityscapes, but also her indisposition to seamlessly blend with the "regimented," artificial, and "unreal" (i.e. unnatural) quality of the modern way of life. This antipathy to the modern world has to do with the fact that the internal structures of Susan's mindscape are fundamentally wrought or textured in line with natural elements: "I pile my mind with damp grass, with wet fields, with the sound of rain on the roof and the gusts of wind that batter at the house in winter" (63).

Hence, one may argue that the lack of cross-space correspondences between modern cityscapes and natural landscapes is precisely what motivates Susan to drift away from the city of London and to head towards her father's farm, in the hope of re-experiencing a self-fulfilling osmosis with nature. Her journey back to her father's farm can in turn be understood as representing the natural course of the final blend; a blend that is formative of Susan's very subjectivity and self-identity: "but who am I[...]? I think sometimes (I am not twenty yet) I am not a woman, but the light that falls on this gate, on this ground. I am the seasons, I think sometimes, January, May, November; the mud, the mist, the dawn" (51). For Susan, blending with nature seems to take on a whole new dimension: it becomes not only an expression of complex conceptual, cognitive, and psychological processes, but the very condition for the salutary development of her whole subjectivity and sense of self.

In The Waves, the voices' heightened sensitivity to their environmental or "objective" surroundings seems therefore to offer an invaluable inlet into the very makeup of their internal mindscapes. By tracking the mental processes that would lead to the crystallization of intuitive moments of "reality," I hope to have demonstrated how a sense of the voices' subjectivities can be pinned down through a careful examination of the blended "patterns" yielded by their esoteric moments of revelation. The "patterned" integration of the rush of

mental and visual images that course through the voices' minds may help the reader not only

come to a clearer understanding of the voices' hidden or subconscious mental processes, but

also articulate a sense of the voices' subjectivities out of a seemingly random flow of sensory

and perceptual information muddied by a rampant and unbridled imagination.

Notes

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¹. The "cotton wool" of daily life is used by Woolf to describe the state of "non-being" which characterizes much of everyday existence. She writes: "every day includes much more non-being than being [...] I have already forgotten what Leonard and I talked about at lunch; and at tea; although it was a good day the goodness was embedded in a kind of nondescript cotton wool. This is always so. A great part of every day is not lived consciously" ("A Sketch of the Past" 281). Contrary to those moments of "being" which leave an indelible mark on the individual's mind (due to their mind-boggling potential), "non-being" is easily forgotten because it "is not lived consciously." In other words, "non-being" construes everyday life as a low-keyed experience with little leeway for mental, affective, or psychological engagement with the surrounding environment. Routine activities which we perform almost mechanically on an everyday basis such as walking and eating exemplify Woolf's notion of "non-being," since little emotional or intellectual engagement with the world is required to perform these tasks.

². The expression "sealed vessel" is nothing but another term used by Woolf to describe the state of "non-being."

³. See "A Sketch of the Past."

⁴. Leonard Woolf interprets his wife's "moments of vision" as instances of "leaving the ground" because they condense what he believes as Virginia Woolf's *unordinary* genius: "she had a perfectly ordinary way of thinking and talking and looking at things and living; but she also at moments had a sight of things which does not seem to me to be exactly the ordinary way in which ordinary people think and let their minds go" (The Bloomsbury Group 237).

⁵. The profusion of such comparators such as "like" and "as if" throughout the interludes alludes to some form of conscious awareness that keeps "record[ing] the atoms as they fall upon the mind" of a hypothetical speaker (Collected Essays II 107). Beyond those comparisons, however, the reader is not allowed to get any insight into [the hypothetical speaker's] subjectivity, cognitive makeup, and idiosyncratic worldview. This is why this form of consciousness is viewed by Banfield as "impersonal;" i.e. not having an actual subjective presence in the The Waves' storyworld (quoted in Masako 164). Woolf's understanding of the interludes in terms of "unreality" is therefore attributed to the lack of a "personal" consciousness that actively partakes in the genesis of the moment of vision.

⁶. Bernard's quotation recalls Sartre's category of the "being-in-itself;" i.e. the being of the material object which simply exists without any awareness of itself. According to Sartre, the "in-itself" exists "before consciousness; consciousness cannot reach it, and it cannot enter into consciousness; and as the perceived being is cut off from consciousness, it exists cut off from its own existence" (ix). It is precisely this lack of self-awareness characteristic of material objects which encourages Bernard to imagine himself as being freed from the constraints of self-consciousness.

⁷. I am using the expression "psychological landscape" both literally and metaphorically to refer not only to the voices' psychological constitutions (the metaphorical level of the

expression), but also to the way the voices' psychic makeup is mapped out, shaped, or configured by *actual* landscapes (literally speaking).

[8]. The transition from the first question (i.e. "what moved the leaves"?) on to the next ("what moves my heart? my legs"?) can be accounted for in terms of stream-of-consciousness' dynamics, or to be exact, in terms of the principle of "free association." According to this principle, the flow of ideas, images, impressions, and memories in free interior monologue is dependent on the associative links unconsciously triggered in the subjects' mind between one mental event and the next. The law of free association may help explain the perceived similarity between the leaves' unexplained motion and Jinny's awareness of her physical motion. Yet, it remains insufficient to account for the way in which new "worlds of meaning" and new (self) understandings are mentally generated through associative principles, hence my use of conceptual blending theory.

[9]. Fischer explains that "from a psychological point of view, appropriation is a mechanism that includes all of the forms and all of the types of activities that make possible an understanding or a taking possession of something" (38). In the context of this chapter, I use the term "appropriation" to refer to the cognitive mechanisms through which The Waves' voices incorporate specific environmental features into their "world of meanings" and transform them into cognitive tools for self-understanding and self-insight.

[10]. The expression "external input space" is not to be taken as a synonym for "objective input space" since, as David D. Franks rightly explains, "what we call the objective properties of objects do not exist by themselves unattached to human capacities [i.e. awareness] and sensitivities" (88). In this chapter, the word "external" is rather used to suggest that new environmental input (such as Jinny's discovery that leaves "go on moving, though there is nothing to move them") is somehow foreign or unfamiliar to the perceiver's existing knowledge and to his/her axiomatized (or previously held) assumptions.

[11]. Jinny avows: "my imagination is the bodies. I can imagine nothing beyond the circle cast by my body" (67).

[12]. Initially, the concept of "felt stigma" was put forward by medical sociologist Graham Scambler. In "Perceiving and Coping with Stigmatizing Illness," Scambler makes the subtle and indeed invaluable distinction between "felt" and "enacted" stigma: while "enacted stigma refers to [actual] episodes of discrimination against people [...] on the sole grounds of social unacceptability or inferiority," felt stigma evokes the feeling of "shame associated with being [a stigmatized individual]" or else the haunting and "oppressive fear of enacted stigma" (215). "Felt stigma" can as such be understood as a reference to the psychological damage brought about by the individual's perception of a stigmatizing attribute in him/herself. It refers, in a strict sense, to the emotional impact of a perceived stigma on the affected individual, regardless of whether this stigma is real (i.e. validated by discriminatory acts or behaviors from the social environment) or imagined (i.e. perceived and understood only by the individual who, out of sheer apprehension of "enacted stigma," emotionally experiences a "felt stigma"). "Felt stigma" may therefore best characterize the entangled emotions of shame, embarrassment, and humiliation experienced by Louis because it highlights the purely

psychological repercussions of his bitter recognition of his cultural exoticism and consequent social alienness.

13. In order to account for (and do justice to) Woolf's ingenious manipulation of imagery and to allow for more ample room for textual meaning, I shall consider Louis's internal psychic constitution or overall sense of self as an already blended input space into which is condensed a symbolically rich corpus of highly suggestive images and meaning potentialities. This input space fuses together both culturally-wrought artefacts or elements (such as "a stone figure in a desert by the Nile," "camels swaying and men in turbans," which evoke Louis's awareness of his exoticism and foreignness) and bodily images (vaguely hinted at via Louis's awareness of his physical nakedness) into a single, yet symbolically fertile conceptual realm (the significance of bodily or corporeal imagery will be explained in greater detail in the next paragraph and will be further highlighted in the next footnote; the psychological implications of Louis's use of cultural imagery will also be dwelled on at a later stage of this analysis). These images serve not only to make up for the abstract nature of Louis's feelings and states of mind, but also to render more conceptually and schematically vivid the internal structures of his psychic recesses. Both cultural and corporeal images can be said to add a certain metaphorical form or texture to Louis's mindscape, and to condense much of his tremulous emotions, his vulnerable psychic dispositions, and deeply embarrassed self-awareness.

14. These cross-space analogies may well invite the reader to creatively establish several other correspondences between the two aforementioned input spaces. For instance, the roots of the stalk may be considered as akin to human feet or (broadly speaking) to the lower section of the human body. The stalk's bifurcating branches may as well be understood as resembling human arms and/or hands, etc. These cross-space projections may help the reader not only visualize a number of striking correspondences between the vegetation space and Louis's embodied sense of self, but also understand the motivational basis for the subsequent blending operations undertaken between both input spaces.

15. As in Woolf's essay "Three Pictures," the flow of images pouring from Rhoda's mind attests to the role of "imagination" in those intense moments of vision in "suppl[ying] other pictures springing from that first one" (Collected Essays IV151-2).

16. I am reiterating Richter's statement included in the introduction part of this dissertation, that "the mind, for Virginia Woolf, was 'queer conglomeration of incongruous things.' It was full of 'monstrous, hybrid, unmanageable emotions'" (6).

Chapter II: *The Waves* as a Miniature Society of Mind

*"A man has as many social selves as there are individuals who recognize him." (*William James, The Principles of Psychology*)*

*"A person has no internal sovereign territory, he is wholly and always on the boundary; looking inside himself, he looks into the eyes of another or with the eyes of another." (*Mikhail Bakhtin, Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics*)*

*"I am not what I think I am and I am not what you think I am; I am what I think that you think I am." (*Charles Horton Cooley, *Human Nature and the Social Order*)*

II. I : Woolf's society of selves

In her essay "Evening over Sussex: Reflections in a Motor Car,"[1] Woolf describes her peculiar experience of early evening twilight in Sussex, when "it was still too early for lamps; and too early for stars" (Selected Essays 204). For a short time, the sublimely portrayed, quasi-bucolic view of Sussex is immersed in a hazy mist of auroral light, giving the whole vista some sort of phantasmagorical, ineffable, or ethereal quality. Woolf observes: "one looks up, one is overcome by beauty extravagantly greater than one could expect – there are now pink clouds over Battle; the fields are mottled, marbled – one's perceptions blow out rapidly like air balls expanded by some rush of air" (204). The very temporal framing of the scene (i.e. evening twilight), with its connotations of fluid transitioning, sublime liminality, and mindboggling visual ambiguity, unsettles the perceptual faculties of Woolf's narrator and causes them to "blow out rapidly." Woolf explains that the inexpressible beauty of the Sussex scenery is so overwhelming that her narrator fails to either comprehend or control the rush of sensations triggered in the back of her mind as a result of such vaguely definable and visually "[i]rritating" experience: "but, I thought, there is always a sediment of irritation when the moment is as beautiful as it is now [...] when all seems blown to its fullest and tautest, with beauty and beauty and beauty" (204). Woolf further expounds on the feeling of sensory

irritability induced into her awe-struck narrator at the sight of Sussex by evening: "a pin

pricks; it collapses [...] the pin has something to do with one's own impotency. I cannot hold

this – I cannot express this – I am overcome by it" (204). The narrator's inability to couch into

words the precise impact of the visual scene on her overwhelmed senses brings forth an oddly

aporetic moment – i.e. an uncomfortable state of emotional, mental, and psychological

undecidability, so to speak – the forcefulness of which would cause the narrator's sense of

self to "[s]plit" or disintegrate into several pieces (204). "The self splits up," Woolf explains,

because her narrator fails to settle or propitiate the innermost conflict brought to the surface of

her conscious awareness between two discrepant proclivities or states of mind: one the one

hand, "one's nature demands mastery over all its receives; and mastery here meant the power

to convey what one saw now over Sussex so that another person could share it;" on the other

hand, the inexpressible "beauty" of Sussex "was escaping all the time; one could only offer a

thimble to a torrent that could fill baths, lakes" (204). Thus, in order for Woolf's narrator to

appease the internal conflict triggered by her "eager and dissatisfied" self – a self with a

tantalizing, all-consuming, yet insatiable yearning for words and expressions that would best

communicate the majestic beauty of Sussex - the narrator would curiously conjure a second

"stern and philosophical self" whose task is to coax and dissuade her former "eager and

dissatisfied" part into adopting a different outlook or state of mind:

> But relinquish, I said (it is well-known how in circumstances like these the self splits up and one is eager and dissatisfied and the other stern and philosophical), relinquish these impossible aspirations; be content with the view in front of us, and believe me when I tell you that it is best to sit and soak; to be passive; to accept; and do not bother because nature has given you six little pocket knives with which to cut up the body of a whale. (author's parentheses 204-5)

The concept of a "self [that] splits up" into two personae, sub-selves, or voices is not only plausible, but also very "well-known" to Woolf since, as one may argue, it is an idea as old and antiquated as Ancient Greek times. In Theaetetus, for instance, Plato[2] writes:

> I have a notion that, when the mind is thinking, it is simply talking to itself, asking questions and answering them, and saying yes or no. When it reaches a decision – which may come slowly or in a sudden rush – when doubt is over and the two voices affirm the same thing, then we call that 'its judgement.' (quoted in Hermans and Hermans-Konopka 129)

Not unlike Plato's conception of the human mind which, while thinking, is viewed as "simply talking to itself, asking questions and answering them," the "two selves" which hitherto make up the mind of Woolf's narrator are equally portrayed as "[h]olding a colloquy about the wise course to adopt in the presence of beauty" (205). Interestingly, however, and in contrast to Plato's conciliatory scenario, the "colloquy" held within the inner alcoves of the narrator's mind would not yield a final, unanimous "judgement." On the contrary, it would result in more contention and disagreement, and foment a seemingly unstoppable cycle of "splitting" selves. Woolf observes: "I (a third party declares itself) said to myself, how happy they were to enjoy [...] noticing everything" (author's parentheses 205). A third self thus comes into view with the purpose of encouraging the former selves or voices to "enjoy[ably]" feast their eyes on the sublime vista of Sussex and to focus the bulk of their attention on the sensory gratification procured by the resplendent scenery. "While they [i.e. the three aforementioned selves] are thus busied," a fourth self will come forward in the most unexpected manner: "a self which lies in ambush, apparently dormant, and jumps upon one unawares" (205). This fourth self will swerve the other voices' attention away from the Sussex scenery towards a "freakish" beam of "light" and label it "a star;" an abrupt statement to which a different self will respond by saying: "'I take your meaning,' I said, 'You, erratic and impulsive self that

you are, [and] feel that the light over the downs there emerging" (205). In "Evening over Sussex," this process of internal "splitting" of selves will go on virtually *ad infinitum* until "the sun was [...] low beneath the horizon [and] darkness spread rapidly" all over the place (205). Thus, only when the bewitching, thought-provoking, and perceptually "irritat[ing]" outlines of the scenery begin to fade, giving way to murky pitch-darkness, could the narrator unify and "[s]ummon [her selves] together:" "now we have got to collect ourselves; we have got to be one self. Nothing is to be seen anymore" (205). The fall of Sussex into total obscurity proves capable of bringing the narrator's inmost uncertainty over the convenient or most satisfactory approach to employ "in the presence of beauty" to a total halt: "'Off with you,' I said to my assembled selves. 'Your work is done. I dismiss you. Good night.'" (205).

So far, I have chosen to discuss Woolf's essay "Evening over Sussex" as a portal to this chapter not only because it highlights Woolf's revolutionary notion of an internal "society" of selves standing, in its entirety, for the narrator's many-sided sense of her first-person subjectivity (an idea to which I briefly referred in the introduction part of this dissertation and which will be of central import to this chapter), but also because the narrative development followed by Woolf in this essay seems uncannily evocative of the very structure and themes (i.e. of the very succession of perceptual images, sensory impressions, and mental events) of The Waves' narrative. The opening lines of The Waves' first interlude, for instance, are highly reminiscent of Woolf' description of the visually unsettling (or "irritat[ing]") impact of auroral light on her perception of the Sussex scenery. In The Waves' opening interlude, Woolf writes:

> The sun had not yet risen. 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 [...] Gradually the dark bar on the horizon became clear as if the sediment in an old wine-bottle had sunk and left the glass green. Behind it, too, the sky cleared as if the white sediment there had sunk [...] the air seemed to become fibrous and to tear away from the green surface flickering and flaming in red and yellow fibres like the smoky fire that roars from a bonfire. Gradually the fibres of the burning bonfire were fused into one haze, one incandescence which lifted the weight of the woollen grey sky on top of it and turned it to a million atoms of soft blue. (3)

Not only does the liminal temporal framing chosen for the scene – i.e. the first few rays of daybreak, with its implication of vague "indistinguishable" outlines, blurred vision, and "soft," yet delightful "incandescence" – recall the fluidly shape-shifting light effects of the Sussex scenery, but the persistent and copious recourse to "as if" clauses, together with the close succession of rivalling metaphorical images (of a "creased" sea, of waves resembling "thick strokes moving," etc) equally suggest a "sediment[3] of [sensory or visual] irritation" and a sense of being overwhelmed, almost destabilized by sublime, extraordinary beauty. The flow of mental imagery at an almost breathless rate throughout The Waves' first interlude testifies to the general state of mental bewilderment and psychological indecisiveness that takes hold of the perceiver's mind at the sight of a "gradually" changeable, visually inchoate seascape. Beer observes, commenting on The Waves' opening interlude, that "the eye's assurance wavers with the changes of light, yet the mind remains determined to maintain [symbolic] distinctions" through recourse to a vast and dynamic repertoire of metaphorical images (77). The mind's striving to create clear-cut visual representations through which to convey a sense of the perceptually disorienting spectrum of iridescent light is even more prominently evoked by the very first lines of the novel (the lines immediately following the first interlude):

> '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 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.' (3)

As in "Evening over Sussex," the mind-boggling, visually destabilizing description of the maritime scenery in The Waves' opening interlude will initiate a violent branching-out or "splitting" of selves, who seemingly struggle to come to grips with the volatile visual patterns available to their nonplussed eyes. The anaphoric reiteration of "I see + [object]" clausal structures by the different selves that populate The Waves' world parallels the surfacing of multiple worldviews or perspectives through which the mind struggles to give a meaningful interpretation to incoming visual input. Thus, echoing the perceptually confounding effect of the Sussex scene on the narrator's mental faculties, The Waves' opening interlude will (in its turn) set the stage for the irruption or stormy emergence of the mind's multiple voices, whose outlooks and subjective makeup are strangely reminiscent of the subjectivity of the narrative selves in "Evening over Sussex." Bernard, for instance, would appear (like the first voice in Woolf's essay) to have an unquenchable craving for words and expressions that are likely to capture the intensity of each moment ("I am eternally engaged of finding some perfect phrase that fits this very moment exactly" (36)); Neville is clearly distinguished from the other voices by his "stern and philosophical" disposition; Susan (like the third self of "Evening over Sussex") finds immense satisfaction in "enjoy[ing]" natural beauty; whereas Rhoda is eternally dreamy-eyed, "erratic," and socially unpredictable.

Though Woolf does not explicitly mention in her novel (as she does in "Evening over Sussex") that The Waves' voices are an expression of a single, all-embracing mind or subjectivity, she nevertheless alludes to some form of neural linkage or "webs of nerves"

uniting the novel's selves, thus giving the reader the impression of a single body into which these voices ultimately coalesce and cohere.[4] Jinny observes: "membranes, webs of nerve that lay white and limp, have filled and spread themselves and float round us like filaments" (71). Woolf's suggestion that there exists an invisible body of "nerves"[5] holding the six voices together renders The Waves – much like "Evening over Sussex" – a fictionalized representation of what Woolf would call the "delicious society of my own body" (Selected Essays 206).

Enraptured, yet also confounded by the bewildering variety of selves her "body" could possibly accommodate, Woolf interjects in one of her journal's entries: "but how queer to have so many selves – how bewildering" (quoted in Martinson 12)! The manifold quality of Woolf's model of individual subjectivity has in fact been reverberated throughout her *oeuvre* as in, for instance, Orlando. In it, Woolf's narrator observes that the main character "had a great variety of selves to call upon, far more than we have been able to find room for, since a biography is considered complete if it merely accounts for six or seven selves, whereas a person may well have as many as a thousand." (Selected Works 548). In The Waves – a novel which Woolf began drafting *immediately* after Orlando was finished - Woolf undertakes to put her idiosyncratic vision of a fictional "biography" that "accounts for six or seven selves" to actual practice. Together, Bernard, Louis, Neville, Jinny, Rhoda, Susan, (and probably Percival, a voice whose forceful presence is felt throughout the narrative yet who never intercedes for himself in soliloquized speech) become as such an embodiment of what Fand would call a "sixfold protagonist [...] with one single subjectivity behind [the narrative's selves]" (53).

Odd and unorthodox as it may sound, Woolf's avant-garde notion of an inner "society" of her "body" has been espoused and authenticated by modern theoretical developments – particularly in the fields of philosophy, narrative psychology, and cognitive science – which have gradually led to a new understanding of the "self" as pluralistic, "multi-voiced," potentially "decentralized," and "dialogical." Anticipating Woolf's notion, Nietzsche argues, for instance, that the innate human "inclination towards something (a wish, a drive, a longing)" results in "man treat[ing] himself not as an *individuum*, but as a *dividuum*. [terms of scholastic philosophy: *individuum*: that which cannot be divided without destroying its essence, *dividuum*: that which is composite and lacks an individual essence]" (author's parentheses, author's brackets 57). Nietzsche's deconstruction of the rational idea of the "individual" self, together with his recognition of multiple facets of human identity, nature, or character (which manifest themselves in the guise of different "wish[es]," "drive[s]," and "longing[s]") is further supported by recent advances in narrative psychology. Rephrasing a number of "'self-plurality' theorists," Hermans and Hermans-Konopka argue that

> the existence of multiple selves or identities within the individual is by no means limited to cases of severe psychological disturbance.[6] [...] human beings, when experiencing emotions or thoughts that are inconsistent with a pre-established sense of self, may switch into an alternative concept of who they are. A person who perceives himself or herself as calm, for example, on experiencing rage, may 'flip' into a sense of self as righteous and aggrieved resulting in an alternative identity that is incompatible with the previous one. (130)

Indeed, not only do "individuals" have a multiplicity of selves or identities, but very often, these "voices," "selves," or "I-positions,"[7] as Hermans would call them, would "function like interacting characters in a story, involved in a process of question and answer, agreement and disagreement. Each of them has a story to tell about his or her own experiences from his or her own stance" ("Toward a Theory of Personal and Cultural Positioning" 248). The mind's

innermost selves or voices at times engage in a vivid, impassioned, bitter, or even enflamed

verbalized interaction or inner dialogue whereby "the *I* in one position [...] can agree,

disagree, understand, misunderstand, oppose, contradict, question, challenge and even ridicule

the *I* in another position" (249). The inner conversation (or "colloquy," as Woolf would refer

to it) that takes place between a person's multiple voices, Hermans explains, is attributed to

the fact that "the *I* fluctuates among different [...] positions, and has the capacity to

imaginatively endow each position with a voice so that dialogical relations between [them]

can be established" (248). The "I" is a mercurial social and inter-relational construct that

depends, for its very existence, on a dynamic repertoire of socially designed practices or

"positions" (for instance, "I-as-a-philosopher," "I-as-a-literature person," etc). These "I-

positions" have the power to frame and endow a person with a meaningful sense of self. As

explained by Woolf in "Evening over Sussex," the virtually infinite multiplicity of "I-

positions" one "individual" can assume throughout a lifespan may create an internal cognitive

tension that reveals itself in the vexed "dialogical relations" (or inner communicative

processes) developed among a person's multiple "I-positions."

As pointed out by Woolf in her essay and as rightly understood by Hermans, it is these

internal dialogical processes emerging by virtue of a person's conceptualization of him/herself

in different, yet somehow interrelated positions, which cause the self to become "a society of

mind with tensions, conflicts, and contradictions" ("The Dialogical Self as a Society of Mind"

152). In a "society of mind," meaning emerges as a result of the inner dialogue that takes

place between a person's multiple "I-positions." Each voice not only adds a new vision, a new

perspective, and a new understanding of the situation at hand, but also responds to and reacts

to the other voices by having them reflect on novel meanings or mental input. As explained by

Woolf in her essay, the need to respond to and to somehow appease a previous unsure, self-thwarted, or indecisive voice is precisely what motivates the narrator to enact another "I-position" or "summon" another voice. The mental recruitment by the narrator of another self surreptitiously forces the previous voice to alter its own mental processes by skewing, adjusting, or attuning them to the cognitive input of a newly conjured voice. The inner communicative relations that permeate the mind's inmost thought processes eventually cause the voices' idiosyncratic views, subjective outlooks, and sense of themselves to become internally "dialogised" - to use Bakhtin's phrase - inasmuch as they are constantly subjected to the other voices' encroaching views and perceptions, and are always accommodated to their actual or anticipated responses. As Bakhtin indicates, the "consciousness of [a character] is completely dialogised" if it is not only "intensively addressed to itself [but also] to another person, to a third person," or as in Woolf's conception of the mind, to another self or voice (213).

In The Waves, similarly, Woolf develops a picture of the mind that features dialogically interdependent voices, whose worldviews, self-understandings, and self-images are conditioned and continuously adjusted by the other voices' views and input. As Fand points out, "in their soliloquies, [The Waves'] characters often compare and contrast their qualities, as if trying to measure themselves relative to the others along some dimension" (54). To put it in blending terminology,[8] the voices' consciousness of the presence of other selves (or, to be exact, of the other selves' perceptions and thought processes) becomes a key input space, which serves to re-structure and re-adjust their own consciousness of themselves (a second or focus input space). By using other voices' subjective assumptions as a yardstick against which to gauge and assess their own selves, The Waves' voices engage in a mutual

negotiation of a dynamic and highly interactive sense of their own identities (152).

Throughout The Waves, identity reveals itself as a "dialogised" space or "blend" of the

voices' internal self-consciousness (i.e. their self-understanding or sense of who they are) as

well as of the other selves' projected awareness of them (i.e. their sense of identity as

mirrored, reflected, and understood by other selves). The constant adjustment and

accommodation of the voices' self-understanding to the other selves' subjective

understanding and judgement eventually leads The Waves' protagonists to develop a sense of

"selfhood" that is "locate[d]" between the "subjectivity of self" and the "subjectivity of

others;" what Alan Palmer refers to as a "situated [form of] identity" (41). In other words,

identity would grow and develop not as a consequence of an entirely individualized attitude

projected by a self-sufficient, autonomous, or "individual" self, but as the result of the

"situated" dialogue of multiple consciousnesses that leads to a collective production of a

"dialogised" sense of one's identity.

In this chapter, I therefore continue to use Fauconnier and Turner's Conceptual

Blending framework in order to help the readers further develop a sense of the voices'

subjectivities; one that is "located" between their own consciousness of themselves and their

consciousness of other selves. Blending theory, I argue, can be particularly useful not only in

explicating aspects of the dialogue that takes place within Woolf's internal "society" of

selves, but also in highlighting the multiple ways in which a "situated" sense of the voices'

identities can emerge through their inner performance of complex mental projections, leading

them to acquire and develop a "blended," yet highly interactive insight about their own selves.

By positing at least tow "input spaces" (one referring to the voices' consciousness of

themselves; the other to their consciousness of other selves) and a "blend" that collects insight

from both conceptual realms, blending theory may help Woolf's reader come to a closer understanding of the processes through which The Waves' figures co-construct a sense of themselves in relation to other selves or voices. Building on the argument developed in this dissertation's first chapter, I go on to suggest that the import of blending theory lies ultimately in emphasizing the manifold "patterns" of identity formation brought forth by a "situated" dialogue between The Waves' multiple voices. The "patterns" of dialogical identity highlighted by the blend's "emergent structures" are likely to expand our understanding of the diffuse model of individual subjectivity portrayed by Woolf in The Waves, which extends not only to its surrounding environment, but also to other selves or voices within the same mind.

II. II : Patterns of "situated identity:" toward a dialogised self-consciousness

In The Waves' second chapter, Susan provides an emotionally-charged account of the garden incident, which seems to lie at the heart of much of her subsequent feelings of desolation, sadness, and despair. Susan points out:

> Through the chink in the hedge [...] I saw [Jinny] kiss [Louis]. I raised my head from my flower-pot and looked through a chink in the hedge. I saw her kiss him. I saw them, Jinny and Louis, kissing. Now I will wrap my agony inside my pocket-handkerchief. It shall be screwed tight into a ball. I will go to the beech wood alone, before lessons. I will not sit at a table, doing sums. I will not sit next Jinny and next Louis. I will take my anguish and lay it upon the roots under the beech trees. I will examine it and take it between my fingers. They will not find me. I shall eat nuts and peer for eggs through the brambles and my hair will be matted and I shall sleep under hedges and drink water from ditches and die there. (6)

In this passage, Susan identifies the "kiss" that Jinny gave to Louis as the trigger for her tremendous agony and unbearable distress. She notes that her mind is suddenly seized by a rush of appalling imagery ("my hair will be matted;" "I shall eat grass and die in a ditch in the brown water where dead leaves have rotted") because the inner "warmth in [her] side turned to stone when [she] saw Jinny kiss Louis" (7). Clearly, Susan's emotional bewilderment,

anguish, and outrage are attributed to the symbolic loss of her cherished connection with Louis, having seen him kissed by Jinny. The shock and terror which immediately take hold of Susan are so overwhelming that she decides to promptly "wrap [her] agony" in a "pocket-handkerchief," to "[s]crew it tight into a ball," and to temporarily shroud her complex and intoxicated feelings in order to safely "examine" them in solitude.

In addition to emphasizing the scale of Susan's psychological mayhem, the garden scene reveals how Susan's identity and sense of herself are intimately and inextricably twined with her sense of other voices, namely Louis. The acute poignancy with which Susan couches her feelings testifies to the tremendous impact that her consciousness of the dissolution of her bond with Louis has on her inner psychic and emotional makeup. The seething outrage and quasi-suicidal despair at the heart of Susan's emotional response to the garden incident also highlight the impassioned and uncompromising manner in which Susan loves, relates to, and attaches herself to other voices.

Notwithstanding Susan's diligent endeavour to cloak her unspeakable sorrow in the veil of secrecy, other voices – namely Bernard - could not help but notice:

> Now [Susan] walks across the field with a swing, nonchalantly, to deceive us. Then she comes to the dip; she thinks she is unseen; she begins to run with her fists clenched in front of her. [...] She is blind after the light and trips and flings herself down on the roots under the trees, where the light seems to pant in and out, in and out. The branches heave up and down. There is agitation and trouble here. There is gloom. The light is fitful. There is anguish here. The roots make a skeleton on the ground, with dead leaves heaped in the angles. Susan has spread her anguish out. Her pocket-handkerchief is laid on the roots of the beech trees and she sobs, sitting crumpled where she has fallen. (6-7)

Though Susan struggles to maintain a blithe and seemingly unaffected front, Bernard does not fail to recognize the deceptive quality of Susan's "nonchalan[ce]." Bernard's use of the cognitive verb "think" ("she thinks she is unseen") not only highlights the intuitive ease or

facility with which he can access Susan's inner thought processes, but also acts as a reminder of the presence of an all-embracing, yet somehow "semi-transparent" mind or subjectivity bringing together and breathing life into the narrative's multiple voices (Collected Essays II 106).[9] Bernard's vivid anthropomorphic description of Susan' perceived surroundings ("the light seems to pant in and out;" "the branches heave up and down," etc) likewise bears evidence to his instinctive consciousness of Susan's inner emotional turmoil in the wake of the garden incident.

Acutely aware of Susan's anguish, Bernard decides: "I shall follow her [...] I shall go gently behind her, to be at hand, with my curiosity, to comfort her when she bursts out in a rage and thinks, 'I am alone'" (6). By having Bernard directly intercede for Susan's inner mental processes ("[she] thinks, 'I am alone'"), Woolf seeks to draw her reader's attention to the close dialogical connections momentarily formed among the two voices. The mind's establishment of intimate dialogical bonds between Bernard and Susan is further subtended by the close physical proximity between the two selves. Addressing Susan, Bernard points out: "when I heard you cry, I followed you [...] But soon that will cease. Our bodies are close now. You hear me breathe" (7).

The sensualised physical closeness evoked by Bernard's "breath[ing]" will ultimately result in the two voices' development of an intense mental connection. This cognitive bond is particularly revealed in their mutual (mental) staging of a complex blended network which integrates cognitive input from both Susan's and Bernard's minds. Susan avows: "I am squat, Bernard, I am short. I have eyes that look close to the ground and see insects in the grass" (7). By emphasizing her precise physical posture as well as certain elements available to her field of vision (namely the "insects in the grass"), Susan surreptitiously draws Bernard's attention

to the dominant "framing principle" of her perceptual field. This sort of cognitive manipulation will cause Bernard not only to align his angle of vision to Susan's perceptual stance, but also to mentally "simulate" a version of reality as seen from the point of view of Susan. Bernard points out: "You see the beetle too carrying off a leaf on its back. It runs this way, then that way, so that even your desire while you watch the beetle, to possess one single thing (it is Louis now) must waver, like the light in and out of the beech leaves" (author's parentheses 7). Bernard's consciousness of Susan's mental and perceptual processes causes him to envision the "objective" world of insects (which is concomitantly observed by Susan) through different cognitive, emotional, and psychological lenses; i.e. through lenses reflecting Susan's internal "psychological landscape." In Goldman's terms, this entails "putting [oneself], imaginatively, in a target's mental 'shoes' [...] where this can mean adopting [another person's] perceptual perspective, or, more broadly, their non-perceptual perspective as well, e.g., their desires, beliefs, and other mental attitudes" (86).

Similarly, Bernard's transitory adoption of Susan's "perceptual" and "non-perceptual" stance will eventually prompt him into infusing a sense of her subjective makeup into the observed scene of "wavering" insects. Bernard's projection is largely encouraged by the perceived similarity between the image of the "beetle," which appears so cautiously overprotective of "the leaf on its back," and Susan's obsessive desire to "possess one single thing;" i.e. Louis. As Susan herself points out: "I grasp, I hold fast [...] I hold firmly to this hand, anyone's, with love" (121). Louis, in a similar vein, also notes the firmness and obduracy with which Susan binds herself to the object of her love: "to be loved by Susan would be to be impaled by a bird's sharp beak, to be nailed to a barnyard door" (63).

In a way, Bernard's blending of his intuitive understanding of Susan's subjectivity with the perceived "insect" is intended to appeal to Susan's instinctive identification with natural processes (an idea upon which I expounded in the first chapter). On frequent occasions, Susan would not only conceive of herself in animal terms ("I stopped, I peered about like an animal with its eyes near to the ground"), but also impulsively identify with "the bestial and beautiful passion" inherent in nature (69). In fact, the raw emotional intensity ("the only sayings I understand are cries of love, hate, rage and pain" (69)) and unrestrained "passion" that animate Susan's "psychological landscape" are *precisely* what render her attachment to Louis so fervent and her emotional reactions (to the loss of her attachments) so distressing and heart-rending: "[Susan] has the stealthy yet assured movements [...] of a wild beast [...] When she sees us (Neville, and [Louis]) her face assumes a certainty which is alarming, as if she had what she wanted" (author's parentheses 62-3).

Hence, Bernard's intuitive blending of Susan's natural or instinctual impulses with the image of the "wavering" animal is clearly meant to warn her against the danger of attaching herself to Louis with raw, undiluted (natural) passion. Somehow, the wavering movements of the beetle "carrying off a leaf on its back" would remind Susan of the faltering of her subjectivity as she pins most of her hopes on her ardent and vigorous attachment to Louis. This "emergent meaning" - which comes in the form of blended insight – is then perceived by Susan: "'I see the beetle,' said Susan. 'It is black, I see; it is green, I see; I am tied down with single words" (7).[10] Susan's threefold repetition of the expression "I see" testifies to her achievement of important insight; namely that she is emotionally held captive, is confined, and "tied down" to the object of her Love. This insight is attained through what Linell calls (rephrasing Rommetveit) a "reciprocal adjustment of perspectives [that] is achieved by an

attunement to the attunement of the other" (154). The revelation at the heart of the blended

network, in other words, is not obtained by Susan through a process of direct perception (as is

the case in "moments of vision"). Instead, it is achieved by adjusting or "attuning" her mental

and perceptual processes to the peculiar understanding captured by Bernard's mind.

The blended insight co-assembled, achieved, and synthesized through the inner

dialogue between Susan's and Bernard's consciousnesses reveals how the voices' awareness

of other minds may well encourage them to re-articulate their self-understanding and self-

images, which become largely contingent on the intuited mental states of other selves. As

Bakhtin observes, "one voice alone concludes nothing and decides nothing. Two voices is the

minimum for life; the minimum for existence" (213). Similarly, Susan's achievement of a

certain form of knowledge (regarding her affective states and attachments) with the help of

Bernard brings to the fore one fundamental feature at the heart of human cognition; i.e. its

close dependence on and inextricable interconnectedness with the cognitive input of other

minds.

In fact, the very word "cognition," Linell reminds us, is to be "resemanticized back to

Latin *co-* 'together with' and (g)*noscere* 'come to know, learn'; we think together with others

and the world" (109-10). This is why in The Waves, the different selves that populate Woolf's

society of mind would "come to know" or "learn" about themselves only relative to and in

comparison with other selves or voices. For instance, Rhoda's self-definition as a social

outsider ("I am nobody [...] all this great company [...] has robbed me of my identity" (16))

and as a foreigner to this world ("the world is entire, and I am outside of it" (10)) would

appear in the novel as the product of her frustrating inability to comprehend specific forms of

conceptual knowledge *cognitively available to other voices*. Once in the classroom, Rhoda avows:

> Now Miss Hudson [...] has shut the book. Now the terror is beginning. Now taking her lump of chalk she draws figures, six, seven, eight, and then a cross and then a line on the blackboard. What is the answer? The others look; they look with understanding. Louis writes; Susan writes; Neville writes; Jinny writes; even Bernard has now begun to write. But I cannot write. I see only figures. The others are handing in their answers, one by one. Now it is my turn. But I have no answer. The others are allowed to go. They slam the door. Miss Hudson goes. I am left alone to find an answer. The figures mean nothing now. Meaning has gone. [...] Look, the loop of the figure is beginning to fill with time; it holds the world in it. I begin to draw a figure and the world is looped in it, and I myself am outside the loop. [...] The world is entire, and I am outside of it, crying, 'Oh save me, from being blown for ever outside the loop of time!' (10)

Rhoda understands that her comrades possess the very knowledge scripts or structures necessary to solve basic mathematical equations ("[Miss Hudson] draws figures, six, seven, eight, and then a cross and then a line"). The fact that other voices would "look *with understanding*" at the "figures" on the blackboard makes Rhoda acutely aware of her own lack in those mental structures: "I cannot write. I see only figures [...] Meaning has gone." Rhoda's failure to pin down significant cross-space analogies between her inner mental processes and other voices' conceptual input results in her disrupting loss of a meaningful sense of self. The idea is clearly conveyed through the metaphor of "the loop of time," which stands for the logically structured, organized, and orderly (mental) realm inhabited by the other voices, and from which Rhoda is forever banished: "I myself am outside the loop."[11]

Throughout the novel, Rhoda would appear profoundly mystified and almost completely incognizant of the sort of conceptual knowledge that allows other voices to construct an identity of their own. In her forlorn attempt to develop a vague sense of identity, Rhoda would inquisitively look at other selves and wonder: "what then is the knowledge that

Jinny has as she dances; the assurance that Susan has as, stooping quietly beneath the lamplight, she draws the white cotton through the eye of her needle" (56)? The abiding feeling of terror, overwhelming sense of "nothingness," and crippling impression of "non-identity" that prey on Rhoda's mind throughout The Waves are clearly the result of her failure to come to a "situated" or mutually informed understanding of her subjectivity. She notes, to that effect, that "Jinny has her own knowledge, but keeps it to herself" and that "both [Jinny and Susan] despise [her] for copying what they do" (22). The blocking (of the transfer) of conceptual insight by both Jinny and Susan further alienates Rhoda from the realm of sociality. It leaves her with the unnerving impression of mental vacuity ("[Rhoda's] mind lodges in those white circles, it steps through those white loops into emptiness, alone" (11)) and ultimately leads her into a state of hopeless and profound despair.

Rhoda's eventual retreat into solitude highlights her incapacity to nurture strong mental and dialogical connections with other voices. By "put[ting] off [her] hopeless desire to be Susan, to be Jinny," Rhoda also concedes to her inability to perform the very blended network that would have allowed her to gain insight into other voices' subjective makeup (13). As Woolf herself points out: "it is [only] when [the] fusion takes place that the mind is fully fertilized and uses all its faculties" (A Room of one's Own 72). The idea of an unfulfilled or "[un]fertilized" mind is particularly captured by Rhoda as she experiences "some check in the flow of [her] being; a deep stream press[ing] on some obstacle" (29). Though at times, Rhoda feels the "stream [of her being] pour[ing] in a deep tide fertilizing, opening the shut, forcing the tight-folded, flooding free," she nevertheless ends up asking the ever-recurring question: "to whom shall I give all that now flows through me [...]? I will gather my flowers and present them—Oh! to whom?" (29). The notable lack of dialogical and

inter-relational dynamics with other selves renders Rhoda a reclusive and self-enclosed voice that can only find relief in "extreme solitude." As Bernard remarks, "Rhoda loves to be alone. She fears us because we shatter the sense of being which is so extreme in solitude – see how she grasps her fork – her weapon against us" (70).

In stark contradiction to Rhoda, Bernard's sense of self emerges only in perpetual dialogue with other selves. The instant he starts thinking of other voices "to whom [he] could say things: Louis, Neville, Susan, Jinny and Rhoda," Bernard feels himself becoming "many-sided" (61). He even points out: "I am not one person; I am many people; I do not altogether know who I am—Jinny, Susan, Neville, Rhoda, or Louis; or how to distinguish my life from theirs" (147). Through the figure of Bernard, Woolf captures the idea of a diffuse or "scattered," yet somehow "integrated" subjectivity that is capable of bringing "disparate" sensibilities into magical coherence and unity. Bernard avows: "at the moment when I am most disparate, I am also integrated" (40). The idea of a blended form of consciousness that can accommodate division, discord, and differences ("I do not believe in separation. We are not single [...] we are one" (35)) is also highlighted by Woolf in her Diary. In it, Woolf points out: "sometimes I like being Virginia, but only when I'm scattered and various and gregarious" (47).

In the novel, Bernard achieves the effect of magical unity among the "scattered" and "various" selves that constitute Woolf's "society of mind" through an ingenious and highly imaginative process of storytelling. The garden scene, for instance, features the different selves gathered "under the canopy of the currant leaves" and somehow brought together by the lush and vivid imagery so obviously characteristic of Bernard' fanciful stories:

> 'Let us now crawl,' said Bernard, 'under the canopy of the currant leaves, and tell stories. Let us inhabit the underworld. Let us take possession of our secret

territory, which is lit by pendant currants like candelabra, shining red on one side, black on the other [...] This is our universe [...] Here come warm gusts of decomposing leaves, of rotting vegetation. We are in a swamp now; in a malarial jungle. There is an elephant white with maggots, killed by an arrow shot dead in its eye. The bright eyes of hopping birds—eagles, vultures—are apparent. They take us for fallen trees. They pick at a worm—that is a hooded cobra—and leave it with a festering brown scar to be mauled by lions. This is our world, lit with crescents and stars of light; and great petals half transparent block the openings like purple windows. Everything is strange. Things are huge and very small. The stalks of flowers are thick as oak trees. Leaves are high as the domes of vast cathedrals. We are giants, lying here, who can make forests quiver.' (11)

The sudden "gusts of decomposing leaves" fill Bernard's mind with a rush of mental imagery of unruly "jungle[s]" and wild, fear-provoking animals. Bernard's vibrant description of the imaginary scene, his heightened sensitivity to shades and colors, together with his emphasis on very peculiar sensory and perceptual processes ("everything is strange") endow his story with the luring semblance of reality. His tendentious suggestions ("this is our universe [...] this is our world") and recurrent use of the first person plural ("*we* are in a swamp now [...] they take *us* for fallen trees"), on the other hand, not only bring the different voices into subtle unison, but also magically transport them into the fanciful world of the story concocted by Bernard's mind. As Neville explains:

when [Bernard] talks, when he makes his foolish comparisons, a lightness comes over one. One floats, too, as if one were that bubble; one is freed; I have escaped, one feels. Even the chubby little boys (Dalton, Larpent and Baker) feel the same abandonment. They like this better than the cricket. They catch the phrases as they bubble. (author's parentheses 19)

Bernard's "amus[ing]" and vivid weaving of his stories appeals to the other selves' minds and senses, inasmuch as it "free[s]" them from the constraints of the here and now ("I have escaped, one feels") and allows them to "float" on the imaginary edges of reality (26).

By using his unbridled power of imagination to construct verisimilar, yet highly enchanting fictional worlds, Bernard is able to induce other voices into a trance-like state of

reverie and to surreptitiously draw their attention towards his enthrallingly fanciful stories. He explains: "if I find myself in company with other people, words at once make smoke rings - see how phrases at once begin to wreathe off my lips" (35). Seeing even a complete stranger approaching (in this case a countryman), Bernard would promptly admit: "I at once wish to approach him; I instinctively dislike the sense of his presence, cold, unassimilated, among us [...] a smoke ring issues from my lips (about crops) and circles him, bringing him into contact" (author's parentheses 35). By means of storytelling, Bernard allows a sense of himself (as a storyteller) to emerge in the very dramatized interaction with other selves. He avows: "I need an audience. This is my downfall" (60). In other words, only by having other voices experience and recognize the import of his stories could Bernard attain a form of self-fulfillment and construct a meaningful sense of his own identity as a storyteller: "my being only glitters when all its facets are exposed to many people" (98).

Throughout The Waves, Bernard's identity (as a storyteller) is revealed to be the product of a blending process, since it depends not only on Bernard's individual conceptualization and verbalized articulation of his stories, but also on other voices' imaginative engagement with and heartfelt appreciation of them . To be able to sustain an identity as a storyteller, Bernard notes that he would "need the stimulus of other people" (41). He points out: "alone, over my dead fire, I tend to see the thin places in my own stories [...] everything becomes impervious. I cease to invent" (41). The core meaningfulness of Bernard's stories stems precisely from the dynamic mental and dialogical interconnections established between himself and other voices in the process of storytelling. The idea is clearly developed in the following passage (narrated by Neville):

> We all feel Percival lying heavy among us. His curious guffaw seems to sanction our laughter. [...] He 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. Among the tortures and devastations of life is this then—our friends are not able to finish their stories. (19)

In The Waves, Percival is portrayed as a "conventional" and "monolithic," yet highly captivating and charismatic figure that stands for characteristically hetero-normative ideals and values (42). As Bernard describes him, "he is heavy. He walks clumsily down the field [...] His magnificence is that of some mediaeval commander. A wake of light seems to lie on the grass behind him. Look at us trooping after him" (18-9).

Naturally averse to any form of "extravagance," Percival would "sanction" what he views as the verbal and imaginative excesses characteristic of Bernard's stories. Percival's abrupt interjection "No!" highlights his refusal to (jointly) stage the blended network, which could have allowed Bernard to endow his story with central meaningfulness. Bernard's story, in other words, would only become meaningful if it were recognized, experienced, and fully enjoyed by at least another voice or mind. This is why, in his attempt to maintain an identity as a storyteller, Bernard would state: "I [...] submit myself to the influence of minds like mine" (82). The story's reception and genuine appreciation by other minds provides Bernard with crucial framing input, allowing him to assign important significance to his verbalized narratives. As Trevarthen argues, "the human mind is innately organized for intersubjective participation with the interests and feelings of another human mind" (230). This may explain why the meaningfulness of Bernard's stories (which reveals itself in the form of "emergent structure") is closely dependent not only on Bernard's impassioned and enthusiastic

storytelling (input space 1), but also on other voices' view, appreciation, and perception of those stories (input space 2).**12**

Percival's subjective understanding of Bernard's story as wasteful, extravagant, and "insincer[e]" as such causes the story to lose its delightful meaningfulness. It also causes he overall network ("situated" between Bernard's and Percival's minds) to lose its integrative power and compactness: "the appalling moment has come when Bernard's power fails him and there is no longer any sequence." By "brutal[ly]" projecting the cognitive frame of "insincerity" onto Bernard's storytelling, Percival downplays the story's "emergent" significance, hence its incoherence and ultimate failure: "the sentence tails off feebly." Bernard's incapacity to finish his story underlines the story's reliance on equally significant "organizing frames" derived from both Bernard's and Percival's minds and projected into the final blend (wherein a meaning for the story emerges). As Linell explains, because "all parties to an interaction contribute in some way or another [...] to sense-making," the "situated meaning" which emerges by virtue of that very interaction can be said to be "co-construct[ed]" or "co-author[ed]" by at least two parties (61). This process of "co-authoring" of "situated meaning" is reflected in the very structure of blended network, which highlights not only the parties involved in sense-making (represented by the two input spaces), but also the meaning(s) generated and co-constructed by both minds (represented by the blend's emergent structures).

In The Waves, surprisingly, Bernard would continue to "co-author" "situated meaning" with Percival even after the latter's death. In the novel's fifth chapter, we learn that Percival has died in a battlefield in India: "he is dead [...] he fell. His horse tripped. He was

thrown" (79). <u>The Waves</u>' fifth section is devoted, for its most part, to mourning and commemorating Percival's death. In it, Bernard desolately admits:

> I ask, if I shall never see you again and fix my eyes on that solidity [i.e. on Percival's physical body], what form will our communication take? You have gone across the court, further and further, drawing finer and finer the thread between us. But you exist somewhere. Something of you remains. A judge. That is, if I discover a new vein in myself I shall submit it to you privately. I shall ask, What is your verdict? You shall remain the arbiter. (81)

Despite his physical death, Percival still remains one of the key "organizing principles" of Bernard's consciousness. The fact that Bernard would continue to "submit" himself to the "verdict" of Percival even after his death bears witness to that surreptitious presence of a "sense of 'otherness' within the self;" that is to say, not only is "our sense of self [...] intertwined with the voices of others," but "these voices can [...] intrud[e] into our self-consciousness [...] often in unwanted, unplanned, unwilled, and surprising ways" (Burkitt 306). The physical death of Percival does not preclude an internal dialogue of consciousnesses from taking place within the inner recesses of Bernard's mind since, as Bakhtin would argue, although "the other person's words are not present, [...] they [can still] cast a shadow on [the protagonist's] speech" (172-3). Hence, Bernard seems to imply that even though Percival is dead, it is precisely his voice that remains nonetheless vivid and somehow furtively "exist[s] somewhere" in the vast expanses of his mind.

Bernard's question "what form will our communication take?" gestures to a different form of dialogue taking place within Woolf's "society of mind" in the wake of Percival's death; one in which the different selves will interact with an imagined, yet intensely felt presence of another figure or voice. Bernard points out: "but now [that] Percival is dead [...] I cannot find any obstacle separating us [...] As I talked I felt 'I am you.' This difference we make so much of, this identity we so feverishly cherish, was overcome" (154). As he speaks,

Bernard feels the spectral or incorporeal presence of Percival enveloping him. The ethereal

merging of different consciousnesses is also highlighted in the following vignette, where the

voice of Bernard unambiguously blends with that of Percival. Bernard points out:

> It is death against whom I ride with my spear couched and my hair flying back
> like a young man's, like Percival's, when he galloped in India. I strike spurs into
> my horse. Against you I will fling myself, unvanquished and unyielding, O
> Death! (158)

By conjuring the scene of Percival's death in the battlefield and by summoning his intrepidity

and valor in the face of an inevitable death, Bernard is able to conquer his own fears of dying.

Bernard's blending of his own voice with his consciousness of Percival illustrates Bakhtin's

notion of "the man in man;" i.e. the idea of a voice or consciousness that has "taken up

residence in" another person's consciousness (182).

The same idea is echoed by Neville, who develops throughout the novel an identity

that is largely contingent on his love relationship with Percival. In The Waves, Neville's

romantic interest in Percival appears, to a great extent, inspired and encouraged by the curious

resemblance between the two protagonists' inner cognitive processes. Neville avows: "I

cannot expose my absurd and violent passion to [Bernard's] sympathetic understanding. It too

would make a 'story.' I need someone whose mind falls like a chopper on a block; to whom

the pitch of absurdity is sublime, and a shoe-string adorable" (26). Through the voice of

Neville, Woolf sheds light on a perennial philosophical problem. Impassioned by literature

and poetry, yet also by grand intellectual and philosophical inquiries, Neville amalgamates (in

one single voice) two nearly-irreconcilable penchants; i.e. his voracious love for poetic

expression on the one hand, and his perpetual quest for a genuine or authentic form of

experience as expressed in and communicated through language on the other. He points out:

> Now begins to rise in me the familiar rhythm; words that have lain dormant now lift [...] I am a poet, yes. Surely I am a great poet. Boats and youth passing and distant trees, 'the falling fountains of the pendant trees.' I see it all. I feel it all. I am inspired. My eyes fill with tears. Yet even as I feel this, I lash my frenzy higher and higher. It foams. It becomes artificial, insincere. Words and words and words, how they gallop—how they lash their long manes and tails, but for some fault in me I cannot give myself to their backs; I cannot fly with them [...] There is some flaw in me—some fatal hesitancy, which, if I pass it over, turns to foam and falsity. (42-3)

Despite his unbridled passion for poetic expression, Neville feels at times that he is trapped within the very poetic imaginary weaved by the captivating machinery of literary language and poetic phrase-making. Unlike Bernard who sensuously and amusedly yields himself to the fantastic power of words, Neville appears more concerned with the genuineness of the very experience induced into him by dint of those words. Bernard further explains Neville's conundrum: "you wish to be a poet [...] but the splendid clarity of your intelligence, and the remorseless honesty of your intellect [...] bring you to a halt. You indulge in no mystifications. You do not fog yourself with rosy clouds, or yellow" (44).

Neville's striving for authenticity is particularly echoed by Percival who, "being naturally truthful, did not see the point of [Bernard's verbal] exaggerations" (82). Neville explains the reason why he and Percival would not identify with Bernard's storytelling: "[Bernard] tells our story with extraordinary understanding, except of what we most feel. For he does not need us. He is never at our mercy" (36). Unlike Bernard for whom storytelling is an end in itself, Neville and Percival seem interested in how words and phrases genuinely relate to and unassumingly reflect some deeper emotional and psychological reality. The two protagonists' capacity for plumbing the esoteric depths of poetic expression is highlighted by Neville who declares: "when I read Shakespeare or Catullus, lying in the long grass, [Percival] understands more than Louis, not the words – but what are words?" (24).

The ability to perceive, feel, and understand what lies beneath the semblance of words (characteristic of both Neville and Percival) contributes to creating a forceful cognitive bond between the two protagonists. Both Neville and Percival share the cognitive frames of "sincerity"/"remorseless honesty" as well as of "splendid [mental] clarity:" "He (i.e. Percival) reads a detective novel, yet understands everything" (37). They also share a capacity for feeling the arcane and unfathomable depths of what is being said or uttered. These shared cognitive frames are precisely what cause Neville to construct an identity and develop a sense of self in relation to Percival.

In the wake of Percival's death, Neville would therefore admit: "my past is cut from me [...] from this moment, I am solitary. No one will know me" (79). The death of Percival leaves Neville with no other self or voice to recognize and reciprocate what he actually sees, understands, and feels: "to whom I can expose the urgency of my own passion" (26)? Like the novel's other voices, Neville's identity emerges only by virtue of another self that perceives, acknowledges, and gives meaning to his inner cognitive and emotional processes. Neville's statement "no one will *know* me" likewise highlights the instrumental role played by other minds in helping the novel's voices develop and construct an identity of their own.

Hence, insofar as the voices' identities are dependent on the cognitive input of another mind, identity can be said to be the product of an integrative process that draws significance from the very relationship between minds. Input from other minds helps the novel's voices authenticate what they profoundly feel and perceive (an idea exemplified by the relationship between Neville and Percival). It allows them to draw their attention to aspects of their own subjective makeup (an idea staged and developed in the integration network between Bernard's and Susan's minds). It also enables them to meaningfully perceive and interpret

their own stories (hence the relationship between Bernard and other voices in the process of storytelling).

The "situated" patterns of identity formation developed between the voices' minds validate Sim's observation that "if Woolf rejects philosophical 'system' building [i.e. traditional narrative building] in literature, 'pattern making' may be a more apt phrase to describe the philosophical work that infuses so much of her writing" (The Patterns of Ordinary Experience 26). In The Waves, the connection between the voices' minds (like the "alliance" between the voices and their surroundings) is precisely what gives meaning to Woolf's narrative. Though at times, the mental patterns weaved among the novel's selves may eventually dissolve (as illustrated by the integration network between Bernard and Percival) or even fail to produce "situated" insight (an idea highlighted by Rhoda), they nonetheless act as a reminder of the larger mental picture or mental life depicted by Woolf in her novel. The mind, Charles Sherrington explains, is after all "an enchanting loom where millions of flashing shuttles weave a dissolving pattern, *always a meaningful pattern though never an abiding one*" (my emphasis, quoted in Fauconnier and Turner 22). By focusing on the patterned mental connections developed between the novel's selves, the reader may come to a closer understanding of important aspects of the voices' subjective and identitary makeup. Besides, by underlining the multiple ways in which mental input (stemming from more than one voice) is amalgamated and blended, Woolf shatters the Cartesian illusion of the individual self and resourcefully demonstrates, instead, how the mind exists as a "society" of smaller sub-selves.

Notes

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1. I shall analyze this essay at length because it features some very interesting parallels with The Waves. The curious similarity between "Evening over Sussex: Reflections in a Motor Car" and The Waves will be further developed in this chapter.

2. Woolf's acquaintance with Plato's philosophy is well established in The Waves. Louis, for one, avows: "I am then Virgil's companion, and Plato's" (27). Neville also points out: "we spin round us infinitely fine filaments and construct a system. Plato and Shakespeare are included, also quite obscure people, people of no importance whatsoever" (94). The fact that The Waves' voices would draw, in their attempt at self-definition, upon the insight and biographical accounts of Ancient Greek philosophers, testifies to the tremendous influence of such great thinkers on Woolf's own philosophy and outlook on life.

3. Notice that the word "sediment" is repeated at least twice in the first interlude ("the dark bar on the horizon became clear as if the sediment in an old wine-bottle had sunk and left the glass green;" "the sky cleared as if the white sediment there had sunk"). Clearly, Woolf uses the metaphor of "sediment" with reference to the changing gradations of colors and metamorphic hues of light as seen in the horizon during daybreak. As in "Evening over Sussex," the metaphor of "sediment" seems to evoke the sense of perceptual "irritation" and vague undecidability induced into the perceiver at the sight of such changeable patterns of auroral light.

4. In the introduction part, I referred to evidence in the literature by Woolf suggesting that The Waves' narrative voices are to be approached as an expression of a single subjectivity. Woolf points out that "the six characters were supposed to be one;" a dramatization of the fact that a person "is violently susceptible to all sorts of separate feelings" (The letters of Virginia Woolf 397).

5. In Modelling the Mind, Copland also interprets the voices' "shared images and motifs" as possible evidence for the existence of "neural networks [...] among [the mind's] conceptual domains" (85).

6. Even though "the existence of multiple selves or identities" is a property of a healthy, normally-functioning mind, it stands to reason that Woolf may have developed a sharpened sensitivity to her "multiple selves" as a result of her "manic-depressive illness;" a condition which – as I have pointed out in the introduction part of this dissertation – subjected her to severe and repetitive bouts of what she called "the voices that fly ahead." For a more thorough discussion of Woolf's illness, see Thomas C. Caramagno, The Flight of the Mind: Virginia Woolf's Art and Manic-Depressive Illness (Berkeley: The University of California Press, 1992).

7. Hermans conceives of "the self in terms of a dynamic multiplicity of relatively autonomous I-positions. In this conception, the *I* has the possibility to move from one spatial position to another in accordance with changes in situation and time" ("Toward a Theory of Personal and Cultural Positioning" 248). Hermans admits that although the expression "I-position" is closely related the concept of the social function or "role" acted out by a particular person in a particular social environment, he nevertheless intends the phrase "I-position" to be a "more

dynamic and flexible [r]eferent than the traditional term 'role'" (248-9). The term "role" emphasizes the externally constructed nature of the self, which becomes (in this particular conceptualization of the "self") a passive performer of social and cultural narratives weaved around a particular social role or function (such as the role of a parent, friend, teacher, etc). The term "I-position," on the other hand, draws attention to the subjective aspect of the individual's performance of social functions, hence the hyphenated quality of Hermans' notion of "I-position." "I-position" becomes, in other words, the locus of an ongoing dialogue between individual subjectivity (i.e. the peculiar worldviews, understandings, needs, and desires of a particular person) and external, pre-instated or already constructed social roles and discourses.

[8]. In Modelling the Mind, Copland uses Conceptual Blending theory to investigate a range of relational dynamics existing among The Waves' multiple "voices" (construed in her work in terms of six large input spaces). Copland's reading, it should be noted, remains focussed on the way Woolf's narrative "[bears] inscriptions of relational thinking" (i.e. how the narrative illustrates several forms of "cognitive mobility") and therefore hardly touches upon the peculiar or specific contents of the voices' subjectivities and identitary constitutions (34). My reading, like Copland's, also highlights these inter-relational dynamics, yet attempts, for the most part, to address this lacuna in the literature by showing how a highly "dialogised" sense of the voices' identities would emerge through their "co-construction" of "situated" networks of blended thought.

[9]. In "Modern Fiction," Woolf defines consciousness as that "luminous halo, a semi-transparent envelope surrounding us" (Collected Essays II 106). The Waves' interludes - with their magical evocation of a free-floating and insubstantial form of consciousness - likewise achieve the effect of a "semi-transparent" mind that surreptitiously propels or animates the novel's voices.

[10]. The "words" that Susan is referring to here are words that express her emotions such as words of "love" and "hate:" "'I love,' said Susan, 'and I hate. I desire one thing only'" (7).

[11]. The metaphor also alludes to Rhoda's expulsion from the Lacanian Symbolic (with its connotations of well-structured mathematical order) and to her lingering in the Lacanian Real (with its connotations of perceptual chaos and the absence of rigid rational order). This idea will be hinted at in the third chapter, mainly in relation to Rhoda's development of an insubstantial and "unanchored" form of subjectivity.

[12]. It goes without saying that a blended network involving Bernard and another voice (to whom the story is addressed) is triggered via the very process of storytelling. The story is not only mentally staged and verbally articulated by Bernard, but also imagined and simultaneously triggered in the mind of Bernard's addressee. In a typical scenario, similar components of the story that are triggered and mutually reflected in both minds (in the process of storytelling) would encourage both parties to "complete" or enact the blended network.

Chapter III: The Voices' Subjective Development: Towards an Integrated Personal Identity

III.I : "Living in the blend:" integrating different aspects of the self

In The Way We Think: Conceptual Blending and the Mind's Hidden Complexities, Fauconnier and Turner refer to the human mind's curious capacity to operate and "live in the blend;"[1] i.e. the capacity to conceptualize, mentally envision, and experience oneself in different temporal and spatial locations, as well as in both real and fantastic environments (constructed by our unrestrained imagination), while at the same time retaining the ability to maintain a seamless, uninterrupted, and non-fragmented sense of self across those disparate mental and representational spaces (233). The notion of "living in the blend" has been posited by Fauconnier and Turner in order to explain how a sense of personal identity would emerge and develop throughout a lifetime, despite obvious differences and potential conflicts between our mental self-representations and self-images. Instances of "living in the blend," Fauconnier and Turner observe, are manifest in the internal cognitive processing triggered or mentally prompted by the simplest linguistic constructions. For instance, a statement such as "'when I was six, I weighed fifty pounds,' [...] prompts [the speaker] to build an identity connector between him now and 'him' when he was six, despite the manifest and pervasive differences [between the two versions of himself]" (70). The human mind is naturally endowed with the ability to imaginatively integrate distinct or fragmented self-representations into a coherent and "blended" narrative about the self. This integrative process, Fauconnier and Turner

observe, is facilitated at the level of consciousness by virtue of perceived uniformity across

our temporally scattered memories (for instance, at different time points of our existence, we

still retain the same name, we carry the same genetic makeup, and we preserve a wide range

of other subjective and personal characteristics). These stable and unvarying identitary

qualities are precisely what help the conceptualizer cognitively maintain a certain form of

continuity and uninterrupted self-sameness across his/her multiple self-representations and

self-images.

Fauconnier and Turner note, in the same breath, that when we think of the course of

our subjective development, "we connect the mental spaces that have [our representation of]

the baby, the child, the adolescent, and the adult with relations of personal identity, despite the

manifest differences" (95). The perceived differences or "dis-analogies"[2] in our mental

representations are what allow us to develop an awareness of the changes that have occurred

in ourselves over the course of time. A relation of "dis-analogy" between two or more mental

or representational spaces, Fauconnier and Turner argue, "is often compressed [in the identity

blend] into change. [...] the dis-analogy between the various [self-representations]

corresponds, in the blend, to change in[to] one unique [identity]" (99). A person's awareness

of the differences across his/her disparate or temporally distanced self-representations helps

mentally generate a form of "global insight" that captures the speaker's intuitive

understanding of the developmental changes in his/her personal identity. This "global insight"

(which is mentally triggered in the form of "emergent structure" within the personal identity

blend) allows the individual to develop a more comprehensive inner self-portrait and to

crystallize a more unified picture of his/her developing identity, despite obvious differences in

the mentally envisioned or recollected self-representations. Thus, a person "lives in the blend"

of his/her personal identity in the sense that s/he experiences a sense of identity that is the integrated or "blended" result of complex self-representations and self-conceptions developed over the course of time (i.e. the result of the mental fusion of different dimensions of the self).

Fauconnier and Turner's notion of "living in the blend" can be particularly useful for illuminating the internal processes whereby an individual would achieve a sense of inner psychological unity and subjective wholeness, despite stark contradictions across his/her multiple self-conceptions and self-images. Turner argues that in the process of our lifelong personal and subjective development,

> we manufacture a sense of stable personal identity despite the manifest evidence of discontinuity and variation across our individual lives. Despite the swarm of detail in which we are embedded, we use blending to manufacture small narratives of ourselves as agents with stable personal identities. [...] [A] stable personal identity that does not suppress the details [of an individual's life] is a result of blending across many complex and nuanced experiences, with analogies and dis-analogies between them. (23)

According to Fauconnier and Turner, a sense of the internal wholeness of one's personal identity stems from the subconscious act of integrating different memories, self-images, and snippets of personal experience in a way that ensures the indivisible oneness of a potentially fragmented subjectivity. Fauconnier and Turner point out: "conceptually, a person is involved in mental spaces over many times and places, through many changes. All those spaces contribute to a blend that has a single unique person" (205). For instance, "a person who failed once and succeeded once" in a particular test or trial is able to recover the sense of the indivisible "wholeness" of his/her split subjectivity by envisioning "a later situation that counts as equivalent to [or reminiscent of] a prior situation in which [s/he] failed," and by (conceptually) integrating the dis-analogous, yet closely related scenarios of later success and previous failure into blended oneness (259). Fauconnier and Turner further explain:

> the success [in a later situation] does not simply neutralize [the original] failure, setting the scale back to zero. It restores the protagonist's identity, making him 'whole' 'once again.' [...] In the blend, times are fused and the situations are blended, so success in the new situation counts as retrospective success in the old. No one is deluded: the old failure stands as unchangeable history. But in the integration network, the psychological context and weight of that failure are completely changed. (259-60)

In this example, the need to restore the sense of the "wholeness" of one's individual identity and to remedy the psychological wounds or fractures caused by the original failure is precisely what motivates the enactment of the blended network. Even though "the original failure and later success happen independently," Fauconnier and Turner argue, they "then get blended psychologically, producing global insight about character running over time" (260). The psychological blending of potentially conflicting, yet somehow tightly interconnected self-conceptions is at the heart of the subsequent feelings of satisfaction and self-fulfillment experienced by an individual upon restoring the wholeness of his/her subjectivity.

Thus, even though it is largely subconscious and operates "almost invisibly to [one's] [c]onscious" awareness, conceptual blending can be said to play an important restorative or psychologically healing function, inasmuch as it helps meaningfully and coherently integrate the fractured or uneasily juxtaposed morsels of a person's life experience (Fauconnier and Turner v). This curious cognitive faculty (which generally goes unnoticed in everyday life) is what allows us, eventually, to construct an "extended" sense of self (i.e. a self that extends over many times and places while maintaining a sense of uninterrupted continuity and self-sameness throughout). As Cánovas explains, "we [...] create our extended self by means of such processes [i.e. by means of blending processes]: we recall past selves, interact with them, integrate them in complex narratives, blend them with present and future selves, etc" (15).

Throughout this chapter, I use Fauconnier and Turner's notion of "living in the blend" in order to show how the different selves that populate Woolf's society of mind would achieve a sense of identitary and subjective unity by subconsciously merging the different snippets of their personal experience into well-integrated and "patterned" coherence. In The Waves, Woolf sets out to represent a continuously changing and infinitely complex mental picture (characterized by the marking "discontinuity of the thought, its lack of organization, its sudden breaks and shiftings" (Richter 43)), thus causing a number of critics to conclude that "the story of The Waves" is "schematic, frankly inconsequential" (Sykes 285).[3] Aware of the semblance of fragmentation and discontinuity given off by her narrative, Woolf would concede in one of her letters: "I wanted to give the sense of continuity [throughout The Waves], instead of which most people say, no you've given the sense of flowing and passing away and nothing matters" (quoted in Caramagno 275).

One way of overcoming the problem of a seemingly fragmented or dispersed consciousness and of achieving "the sense of [the] continuity" of her protagonists, Woolf points out in "A Sketch of the Past," is by "put[ting] the[ir] severed parts together;" a technique that enables her to seamlessly merge the fragmented and scattered details of her characters' flowing consciousnesses into an internally patterned form of coherence:

> it is only by putting it [i.e. the mental rush] into words that I make it whole; [...];
> it [i.e. writing] gives me [...] a great delight to put the severed parts together.
> Perhaps this is the strongest pleasure known to me. It is the rapture I get when in
> writing, I seem to be discovering what belongs to what; making a scene come
> right; making a character come together. (282)

By picturing her protagonists "com[ing] together" and by striving to integrate their "severed parts," Woolf also aspires to network various narrative fragments (such as the voices' memories, their daydreaming, the mysterious insight gathered in their moments of vision, and

the esoteric revelations gained through the fraught and peculiar encounters with other selves) into an ethereal, yet highly suggested sense of psychological and subjective unity.

In The Waves, Woolf's attempt to bring the fragmented or "severed parts" of her protagonists together is particularly revealed in the course of the latter's subjective development, since it is precisely at that stage of the novel that the reader can pin down (almost intuitively) a sense of the voices' identitary "wholeness." This wholeness implies that the different selves have acquired a feeling of inner psychological stability and a sense of personal completeness or fullness by subconsciously fusing the different elements of their lived experiences (such as their repressed feelings, emotionally-charged memories, fantasized self-images, etc) into the developing blend of their personal identities.

As Devylder points out, "one's personal identity is a very complex space that has been forged and integrated since an individual has been able to have impressions. It is the blended result of an intricate network of conscious and unconscious impressions which an individual has experienced throughout his life" (83). The notion of "identity as a blend" may help account for the various ways in which Woolf would "put [together] the severed parts" of her protagonists' consciousnesses – what Richter would refer to as "the 'scrambled' and often seemingly random data" of the voices' inner mental lives – into "a meaningful and patterned whole" (Richter 236). Blending theory, in other words, can be used to shed light on the patterned mental connections that lead The Waves' protagonists to develop an "extended" sense of self; one that brings together different aspects of the voices' subjectivities into a well-integrated sense of internal coherence.

Understanding the voices' identities in terms of "a diffuse network of mental spaces whose compression in the blend creates [a] unique person" (Fauconnier and Turner 205), I

argue in this chapter, may also help account for Rhoda's unfortunate suicide. Rhoda's death, that is to say, is the result of her inability to achieve the blended "wholeness" of her split subjectivity and to continue to "live" in the very blend of her personal identity. Rhoda's ultimate demise (on account of her failure to assemble "the severed parts" of her personal identity), I further suggest, supports the claim that throughout The Waves, Woolf appears more "attracted by assemblage rather than [by narrative] coherence" (Beer 87). Woolf's emphasis on the mental assemblages weaved between the "severed parts" of the voices' subjectivities adds to our overall understanding of the narrative's mind as a complex "pattern-making" entity; one in which seemingly protean self-representations are networked into an indissoluble "gestalt" where different "aspects of the self, time, and [perceived] reality form a reciprocal and interdependent whole" (Richter 20).

III.II : Patterns of subjective development: towards a view of the self as a blended "whole"

Upon looking at her reflection in the mirror, Rhoda admits to herself:

> That is my face [...] in the looking-glass behind Susan's shoulder—that face is my face. But I will duck behind her to hide it, for I am not here. I have no face. Other people have faces; Susan and Jinny have faces; they are here. Their world is the real world. The things they lift are heavy. They say Yes, they say No; whereas I shift and change and am seen through in a second [...] I hate looking-glasses which show me my real face. [...] I must push my foot stealthily lest I should fall off the edge of the world into nothingness. I have to bang my head against some hard door to call myself back to the body. (22)

By renouncing her "face," Rhoda also loses the most invaluable and most quintessential conceptual ingredient for the expression and salutary development of her selfhood; i.e. her mirror image. Although mirror images amount to what Lacan would call "imaginary"[4] (cognitive) constructs, their import in validating and substantiating the subject's developing sense of self remains nevertheless inestimable. As Fink explains, a specular reflection

provides the developing subject with an important "structuring image – one that brings order to the prior chaos of perceptions and sensations. It leads to the development of a sense of self, anticipating a kind of unity or self-identity that has yet to be realized. And it is what allows the child to finally be able to say 'I'" (88). Identification with a mirror image enables the developing subject to entertain the sense of the indissoluble unity of his/her subjectivity, and to transition from an initial experience of the self as being diffuse, perceivably confused, and scattered (i.e. prior to mirror identification) to one in which the self is experienced as one unified whole. This impression of wholeness, completeness, and totality given off by the mirror image is precisely what allows the subject a sense of individual agency and of being in full control over his/her bodily faculties.

Rhoda, on the other hand, appears to have lost a sense of her individuality as a direct result of her refusal to identify with her bodily image: "here I am nobody. I have no face" (16). By relinquishing her face, Rhoda not only fails to articulate a sense of her personal identity ("identity failed me" (33)), but also develops a fragile, extremely tenuous, and insubstantial sense of self: "they say, Yes; they say, No; they bring their fists down with a bang on the table. But I doubt; I tremble" (56). The destabilizing mixture of fear and self-doubt which Rhoda experiences throughout the The Waves is nothing but an expression of a latent indecisiveness about her own self-definition: "but there is no single scent, no single body for me to follow. And I have no face. I am like the foam that races over the beach or the moonlight that falls arrow-like here on a tin can" (68). Rhoda's awareness of her "foam[y]" evanescence, her feelings of insubstantiality and featurelessness, together with her inability to achieve the ultimate blended "wholeness" with her bodily image are what causes her to perceive other individual beings - that is, in stark contradiction to her own idea of herself - as

"whol[e]," complete, and "indivisibl[e]:" "I am drawn here [...] to light my fire at the general blaze of you who live wholly, indivisibly, and without caring" (69).

The fact that Rhoda would need to merge with her external self-representation (i.e. her mirror image) in order to maintain the "indivisible" oneness of her self-identity reveals, as Brandt points out, that "the notion of identity is a blend, that the capacity to conceive of something [in this case, the self] as being identical with itself [...] is the product of a blending process" (Explosive Blends 9). The mirror image offers key visual input that helps coherently "frame" and stabilize the subject's abstract conception of him/herself. "In the [identity] blend," Fauconnier and Turner suggest, a person's bodily image or, metonymically, a person's mirror reflection of his/her "face is projected from one input and the whole person [i.e. the person's sense of self] is projected from the other" (97). Within the integrated identity space (which is intuitively experienced and unreflectingly felt by the conscious mind as one single and coherent "whole"), a person's sense of self is brought with the mirror representation into an inextricable oneness. This oneness is the result of a cognitive blending of the "severed parts" of a person's subjectivity (namely the mirror representation and the individual's overall sense of self). "We cannot fail to perform this blend and we cannot in consciousness see beyond it," Fauconnier and Turner observe, "consequently, this blend seems to us to be the most bedrock reality" (78). We unthinkingly "live in the blend" of our personal identities (i.e. without realizing that it is the result of a subconscious blending process) because an "identity blend," Brandt explains, "presents to the mind the *unity* [and not the fragmented parts or components] of an entity;" in this case, the unity of personal subjectivity (author's emphasis, Language and Enunciation 285).[5]

Rhoda's inability to "live in the blend" of her personal identity, on the other hand,

provokes the total disintegration and crumbling of her subjectivity: "I am broken into separate

pieces; I am no longer one" (56). Throughout The Waves, Rhoda appears incapable of

fathoming "the whole and indivisible mass that you call life" because she is acutely aware of

her internal fragmentation and subjective incoherence (68). The excruciating sense of

subjective disunity and inner division is particularly highlighted by Rhoda as she describes

her painful experience of falling:

> We are nothing, I said, and fell. I was blown like a feather, I was wafted down
> tunnels. Then very gingerly, I pushed my foot across. I laid my hand against a
> brick wall. I returned very painfully, drawing myself back into my body over the
> grey, cadaverous space of the puddle. This is life then to which I am committed.
> (33)

Rhoda's struggle to assemble the "severed parts" of her subjectivity and to have them cohere

into a sense of inextricable oneness is revealed in the act of "drawing [her]self back into [her]

body." She points out: "I have to bang my head against some hard door to call myself back to

the body" (22). Somehow, Rhoda's reluctance to mentally "fuse" with her bodily image

would result in her development of tenuous connections with the very "material anchor" of

her subjectivity; that is to say, with her physical body. Fauconnier and Turner argue: "there is

a physical material anchor for this conceptual blend [i.e. for a person's 'identity blend'] – the

active living biological body that we can see and with which we can interact" (205). The self -

being an abstruse, abstract, and mercurial entity – cannot be cognitively apprehended unless it

is "mapped onto" a reassuringly stable material structure (i.e. the physical body). This

mapping process, Hutchins explains, has the power to *conceptually stabilize* and hold a

person's self-representation in place: "the [mental] 'holding in place' is accomplished by

mapping the conceptual elements [in this case, one's abstract sense of self] onto a relatively

stable material structure [in this case, the physical body]" (1562). Our mental representation of the physical body "anchors" the abstract, inchoate, and slippery notions that we entertain about ourselves by associating them with a reasonably stable physical structure. Without this primitive form of "anchorage," our sense of self is at risk of being reduced into dim conceptual and ideational indistinctness. A "material anchor," in other words, not only reassures us of our very material or substantial existence, but also becomes a secure basis or platform for subsequent theorizations about our own selves (i.e. for the development of a more complex "identity blend").

Rhoda's refusal to identify and coherently blend with her physical body, however, results in a feeling of being dispersed and un-anchored: "even I who have no face, who make no difference when I come in [...] flutter unattached, without anchorage anywhere, unconsolidated, incapable of composing any blankness or continuity or wall against which these bodies move" (64). Having lost touch with the foremost "material anchor" of her subjectivity, Rhoda would occasionally develop a view of the world that is unstable, "soft," insubstantial, and chaotic: "all is soft, and bending. Walls and cupboards whiten and bend their yellow squares on top of which a pale glass gleams" (13). The physical body – understood as a "material anchor" for self-representation – not only embeds the subject's self-understanding in clear-cut perceptible form, but also allows the development of a cognitively stable and materially anchored identity, thus giving the subject a feeling of his/her corporeal unity and subjective oneness.

Rhoda, on the other hand, would note an "enormous gulf" separating her from her physical body, thus causing her to look for some form of material anchorage elsewhere in the outside world: "all palpable forms of life have failed me. Unless I can stretch and touch

something hard, I shall be blown down the eternal corridors forever. *What, then, can I touch?* *What brick, what stone?* and so draw myself across the enormous gulf into my body safely" (my emphasis 83)? The unbridgeable "gulf" between the severed parts of Rhoda's identity is at the heart of her self-destructive feelings of subjective inconsequentiality and internal emptiness: "there I go to replenish my emptiness" (73). The unendurable insubstantiality and fragmentation of Rhoda's subjectivity would ultimately lead her to proclaim her hatred of both life and living beings, thereby foreshadowing her ill-fated suicide: "'oh, life, how I have dreaded you,' said Rhoda, 'oh, human beings, how I have hated you'" (108).

Rhoda's suicide is announced by Bernard: "the figure of Rhoda, always so furtive, always with fear in her eyes, always seeking some pillar in the desert, to find which she had gone; she had killed herself" (149). Clearly, Rhoda's suicide is due to her inability to achieve the blended "wholeness" of her personal identity and to have the fragmented parts of her subjectivity "come together" and cohere into a single unity.

Woolf's emphasis on Rhoda's need to develop a coherent personal identity – one that is firmly entrenched in stable mental schemata (such as the bodily schema which anchors or holds the mental representation of the self in place) – reveals her awareness of the complex mental dynamics that lead to the production of a well-integrated form of subjectivity. A stable and well-integrated personal identity has the power not only to uphold the subject's psyche and self-perception, but also to cushion the blow of a potentially distressing and psychologically-thwarting life experience.

"[A] narrative blend of the self as a stable identity," Mark Turner further explains, "is a worthy fiction that helps us grasp ranges of reality that are diffuse and complicated" (27). According to Turner, a stable and well-integrated personal identity is a "worthy fiction" in the

sense that it is largely the reflection of complex subjective conceptualizations and integrative processes performed by the mind. This "fiction" of the mind, however, is what underpins and sustains the subject's identity and sense of self throughout a lifetime. An "identity blend," that is to say, not only permits the integration of the diffuse fragments of personal experience into a cohesive narrative about the self, but also allows the subject to entertain a form of psychological indivisibility and oneness, thus paving the way towards the emergence of an overall sense of identitary unity.

In The Waves, the notion of an all-encompassing "identity blend" that brings together the severed components of personal subjectivity into a stable identitary unity is particularly highlighted by Louis. In the novel's sixth chapter, Louis describes the processes whereby the different fragments of his personal identity are "gathered together" and eventually blended into a stable and "compact" whole:

> 'I have signed my name,' said Louis, 'already twenty times. I, and again I, and again I. Clear, firm, unequivocal, there it stands, my name. Clear-cut and unequivocal am I too. Yet a vast inheritance of experience is packed in me. I have lived thousands of years. I am like a worm that has eaten its way through the wood of a very old oak beam. But now I am compact; now I am gathered together this fine morning.' (87)

In contradistinction to Rhoda who struggles throughout The Waves to bring the disjointed morsels of her personal subjectivity into an indissoluble unity, Louis clearly asserts that in the course of his subjective development, he has managed to merge various self-representations and accounts about himself into a sense of blended oneness: "I have fused many lives into one" (88). Louis's lexical choices ("a vast inheritance of experience is packed in me;" "I am compact;" "I am gathered together;" "I have fused many lives into one") suggest a conceptualization of his identity in terms of a blended network that brings together an array of

subjective and experiential input into well-integrated meaningfulness. Louis further expounds

on the processes that lead to the unfolding of his blended identity:

> I, now a duke, now Plato, companion of Socrates; the tramp of dark men and
> yellow men migrating east, west, north and south; the eternal procession, women
> going with attaché cases down the Strand as they went once with pitchers to the
> Nile; all the furled and close-packed leaves of my many-folded life are now
> summed in my name; incised cleanly and barely on the sheet. (88)

Louis's "many-folded," "compact," yet infinitely complex identity cannot be possibly

understood without reference to his "moment of vision" (discussed in chapter one). In the first

chapter, I explained how Louis's burdensome awareness of his cultural foreignness would

encourage him to (imaginatively) seek refuge in distant and historically ancient cultural

identities. Louis would point out: "I was an Arab prince; behold my free gestures. I was a

great poet in the time of Elizabeth. I was a Duke at the court of Louis the Fourteenth. I am

very vain, very confident" (67). Although they capture Louis's intense awareness of his

cultural difference, these self-representations (such as "a duke;" "a companion of Socrates;"

"an Arab prince;" "a great poet") would nevertheless allow him to downplay the "felt stigma"

of his cultural exoticism and foreignness. By fancifully envisioning himself in terms of

"splendid" foreign and exotic figures, Louis has been able (throughout an important part of

The Waves' narrative) to eschew the stigmatizing and psychologically destabilizing gaze of

his cultural entourage.

Acutely distressed and heavy-hearted, Louis would admit: "I desire so much to be

accepted" (89). Louis's painful awareness of the stigma attached to his cultural origins,

combined – uneasily though - with his profoundly cherished and fantasized self-image as the

descendant of imposing cultures and renowned civilizations make him appear (to Bernard) as

> a strange mixture of assurance and timidity. He looks at himself in the looking-
> glass as he comes in; he touches his hair; he is dissatisfied with his appearance.

He says, 'I am a Duke—the last of an ancient race.' He is acrid, suspicious, domineering, difficult [...]. At the same time he is formidable, for there is laughter in his eyes. (62)

Louis's uneasily juxtaposed cultural consciousnesses result in what Bernard would refer to as a "crack in the structure [of] one's identity" (60). This "crack" is the product of Louis's inability to psychologically reconcile his deep consciousness of his cultural importance, splendor, and magnificence with the excruciatingly "felt stigma" of his cultural foreignness, induced into his mind by a culturally biased society (an idea developed in the first chapter).

Embittered and resentful, Louis declares: "I will achieve in my life —Heaven grant that it be not long — some gigantic amalgamation between the two discrepancies so hideously apparent to me. Out of my suffering I will do it. I will knock. I will enter" (27). Louis's yearning to "amalgamat[e]" the "discrepan[t]" components of his personal identity and to achieve the "blended" wholeness of his fragmented consciousness is fulfilled later in the novel, especially as he begins to climb the social ladder and eventually becomes a respectable company owner: "I am immensely respectable. All the young ladies in the office acknowledge my entrance" (105).

The self-fulfilling sense of social respectability granted to Louis by virtue of his highly esteemed socio-economic position makes him feel "acknowledge[d]" and "accepted" once again by the very society that contributed to his rejection in childhood: "the boasting boys mocked me at school for my Australian accent" (115). Louis's awareness of the prominent position he has come to occupy within the fabric of English society helps him gradually recover a secure, stable, and confident self-identity. His personal achievement will allow him to "[h]eal" the psychological "fractures" lying deep within the structure of his identity, as a

result of the profoundly felt stigma of perceived social and cultural inferiority: "I have healed these fractures and comprehended these monstrosities" (88).

In fact, not unlike Fauconnier and Turner's previously discussed scenario of failure and subsequent success, Louis's climbing of the social ladder "does not simply neutralize" the history of rejection and felt stigmatization incurred by him throughout childhood and most of his adolescence. Now that he is a successful businessman, Louis retrospectively muses:

> my task, my burden, has always been greater than other people's. A pyramid has been set on my shoulders. I have tried to do a colossal labour. I have driven a violent, an unruly, a vicious team. With my Australian accent I have sat in eating-shops and tried to make the clerks accept me, yet never forgotten my solemn and severe convictions and the discrepancies and incoherences that must be resolved. (106)

Louis's economic success enables him to derive a sense of social recognition and acceptance that stands in stark contradiction to the feelings of inferiority and social inadequacy that he experienced earlier in the novel. The "disanalogy" between the two psychological states is what triggers a process of "psychological blending," allowing Louis to gradually integrate the "incoherences" in his subjective makeup and to ultimately feel whole, "gathered together," and undivided.

Louis explains: "I expunge certain stains, and erase old defilements; the woman who gave me a flag from the top of the Christmas tree; my accent; beatings and other tortures; the boasting boys; my father, a banker at Brisbane" (88). Louis's economic success does not obliterate the emotionally charged memories and the poignant history of psychological afflictions occasioned by his deep awareness of his cultural difference. As Fauconnier and Turner point out, at the psychological level, old and dismal memories "cannot be changed, and none of the terrible consequences that provide the guilt or shame [...] can be changed in the slightest detail" (259). And yet, the "psychological weight" of Louis's old memories of

felt stigmatization and socio-cultural rejection is considerably mitigated within the emergent

blend of his personal identity.

In the blended network that gives rise to a sense of personal identity, Fauconnier and

Turner explain, "the two situations [i.e. the old setback and the recent success] become one,"

thereby "providing in the blend [...] a stable and good character from which [certain aspects

of] the earlier input space [are] merely an unfortunate deviation" (259). Louis's expunction of

the "old defilements" that have afflicted his sense of identity is the result of a meaningful

psychological integration of a self-aggrandizing sense of socio-economic accomplishment

with a frustrated and deeply wounded psyche. Bernard remarks, in a similar vein, that when

"identity becomes robust, pain is absorbed in growth" (137). This integrative process would

ultimately give Louis the impression of having "healed" the psychological "monstrosities"

occasioned by a self-deprecating and socio-culturally thwarted past and of having "ma[de] it

up to"**[6]** his formerly aggrieved and wounded self.

Clearly, the psychological blending of the "severed parts" of Louis's subjectivity is at

the heart of his subsequent feelings of identitary wholeness and subjective "compact[ness]."

This inner psychological mechanism is what allows Louis, eventually, to positively assert "the

many men in [him]" (i.e. the self-aggrandizing historical and cultural figures with whom he

used to imaginatively identify), and to develop a unique identity out of seemingly "scattered"

self-conceptualizations and self-images: "out of the many men in me [I] make one; exist here

and now and not in streaks and patches, like scattered snow wreaths on far mountains" (89).

The gradual integration or blending of the "scattered" morsels of personal identity,

Woolf seems to imply, is what allows the novel's voices to bring a sense of wholesome unity

and identitary oneness to their deeply "fracture[d]" psyche, and to experience a sense of

indivisible totality and subjective wholeness despite deep psychological "incoherences" and seemingly irresolvable self-conflicts. These blending processes also enable The Waves' protagonists to develop a temporally "extended" sense of self that integrates a dynamic repertoire of images and self-representations into a unique and coherent narrative of personal identity.

In the novel, the idea of an extended and "laboriously gathered" personal identity that integrates an ever-expanding range of self-images is even more clearly illustrated by Susan (101). Throughout The Waves, Susan not only defines herself in terms of a wide gamut of natural elements ("I think I am the field, I am the barn, I am the trees [...] all are mine" (51)), but also adamantly stresses the "mine[ness]" of the very "possessions" with which she frequently identifies. Susan declares:

> *I possess all I see*. I have grown trees from the seed. I have made ponds in which goldfish hide under the broadleaved lilies. I have netted over strawberry beds and lettuce beds, and stitched the pears and the plums into white bags to keep them safe from the wasps. I have seen my sons and daughters, once netted over like fruit in their cots, break the meshes and walk with me, taller than I am, casting shadows on the grass. (my emphasis 100)

Susan's uncompromising and possessive attachment to the natural elements in her father's farm - and subsequently to her children – is linked to her childhood memory in the garden scene (discussed at length in chapter two). Susan's emotionally-charged reaction to the loss of her affective bond with Louis, I explained in the previous chapter, betrays her desire "to possess one single thing:" "'I love,' said Susan, 'and I hate. I desire one thing only'" (7). She points out: "I love with such ferocity that it kills me when the object of my love shows by a phrase that he can escape. He escapes, and I am left clutching at a string that slips in and out among the leaves on the tree-tops" (69). Susan's troubling memory of the loss of her love connection with Louis will become a recurrent leitmotif that acts as a reminder of her latent

anxieties about potentially losing other significant or treasured attachments. As she "sit[s] with [her] sewing by the table," Susan musingly contemplates: "I look at the quivering leaves in the dark garden and think: 'they dance in London. Jinny kisses Louis'" (52).

To make up for her psychologically devastating loss, Susan would develop a curious sentimental connection with a wide range of natural "possessions" available to her particularly in her father's farm. Susan points out:

> I shall go upstairs to my room, and turn over my own things, locked carefully in the wardrobe: my shells; my eggs; my curious grasses. I shall feed my doves and my squirrel. I shall go to the kennel and comb my spaniel. *So gradually I shall turn over the hard thing that has grown here in my side*. (my emphasis 28)

Susan's all-consuming need to expand the scope of her possessions is even more clearly revealed as she vows: "I shall possess more than Jinny, more than Rhoda, by the time I die" (69). Indeed, Susan's possessive yearning is not so much an expression of an unquenchable materialistic urge to amass property as a manifestation of a latent fear of losing her cherished connection with significant entities: "'I gape,' said Susan, 'like a young bird, unsatisfied, for something that has escaped me'" (124). Susan's distressing separation from the object of her love during her childhood results in haunting anxieties about the possible dissolution of her affective attachments with significant others. Somehow, her possessive attachment to different expressions of nature ("mine is the heron that stretches its vast wings lazily; and the cow that creaks as it pushes one foot before another munching; and the wild, swooping swallow; and the faint red in the sky" (51)) would allow her to compensate for her devastating affective loss and to appease "the hard thing that has grown in [her] side;" a reference to her feelings of loneliness, insecurity, and embitterment that took her by storm upon being severed from the object of her desire in the garden scene: "the yellow warmth in my side turned to stone when I saw Jinny kiss Louis" (7).

Within the mentally experienced or "lived" blend of past memories and present consciousness, Susan cannot help but experience the old apprehensions of losing her connection with the cherished object of her love, hence her overpowering urge to affectively bond with her "possessions," which play the role of an affective substitute and a psychological buffer against the destabilizing feelings of affective dissolution and loneliness: "Susan, staring at the string that slips in and out among the leaves of the beech trees, cries: 'He is gone! He has escaped me!' *For there is nothing to lay hold of*" (my emphasis 70).

Susan's desire to affectively bond with a wide range of natural elements in her father's farm will continue to obsess and weigh on her mind throughout a substantial part of The Waves' narrative. As she gives birth to her children, though, Susan begins developing an even stronger, more gratifying, and more fulfilling bond with her offspring:

> Here in this garden, here in this field where I walk with my son, I have reached the summit of my desires. The hinge of the gate is rusty; he heaves it open. The violent passions of childhood, my tears in the garden when Jinny kissed Louis, my rage in the schoolroom, which smelt of pine, my loneliness in foreign places, when the mules came clattering in on their pointed hoofs and the Italian women chattered at the fountain, shawled, with carnations twisted in their hair, are rewarded by security, possession, familiarity. (100)

Susan's feelings of security and self-fulfilment stem from her consciousness of the forceful and indestructible bond developed between her and her children: "I am fenced in, planted here like one of my own trees. I say, 'My son,' I say, 'My daughter,'" (100). Susan's consciousness of the substantiality of her bond with her offspring provides her with the very psychological reassurance and affective stability that she failed to secure in her childhood. So possessive and overprotective of her children (much like the beetle "carrying off a leaf on its back"), Susan would lull her baby to sleep and avow: "sleep, I say, and feel within me uprush some wilder, darker violence, so that I would fell down with one blow any intruder, any

snatcher, who should break into this room and wake the sleeper" (90). The maternal space allows Susan not only to fulfill her need for affective security (by maintaining a strong and binding mother-child connection), but also to restore the lost wholeness of her identity and to re-experience an immensely gratifying form of psychological fullness: "So life fills my veins. So life pours through my limbs. So I am driven forward, till I could cry, as I move from dawn to dusk opening and shutting, 'No more. I am glutted with natural happiness'" (91).

Susan's experiencing of a self-fulfilling osmosis with her offspring is symbolized in The Waves via a blend of consciousnesses that testifies to her development of an extended sense of self: "'His eyes will see when mine are shut,' I think. 'I shall go mixed with them beyond my body and shall see India. He will come home, bringing trophies to be laid at my feet. He will increase my possessions'" (90). By sensuously fusing her sense of self with her close consciousness of her sons and daughters, Susan succeeds not only in reclaiming the severed parts of her formerly fractured psyche and in recovering the bygone sense of having a secure and highly gratifying form of psychological and affective attachment, but also in achieving the irreducible wholeness of her psyche and in restoring the lost unity of her personal identity: "I cannot be divided, or kept apart" (51).

By integrating the scattered fragments of her life experience into a coherent narrative about the self, Susan would cultivate an extended and stable sense of personal identity that draws its fullness, richness, and "compactness" from the very blending processes performed across the "dis-analogous" domains of her personal experience. The different forms of psychological attachment that Susan develops throughout The Waves, that is to say, are nothing but an expression of her desire to create a compensatory sense of internal psychological balance by mentally integrating the conflicting moments of her life (i.e. the

moments of solitude in which she felt completely severed from the object of her desire, and other moments in her life where she developed intense attachments to her possessions, her children, etc) into the all-encompassing blend of her personal identity. These highly suggested integrative processes are what allow the novel's protagonists, eventually, to achieve the sense of having a cohesive and well-articulated personal identity despite the seeming discontinuity and dispersion characteristic of their thought processes, and "despite the swarm of details" in which their extended consciousness is "embedded."

The reader of The Waves is thus supposed to look into the bits and pieces of the voices' thought processes in order to extrapolate the general mental pattern responsible for the integration of their diverse experiences into a coherent "gestalt" or indissoluble identitary whole. In her Diary, Woolf explains that the overall effect of the "diffusity and breathlessness" generated by the depiction of the flow of consciousness in her writing is attributed to her inclusion of different "crumbs of meaning" within the text in yet very evocative and suggestive ways (140). She further points out, The Waves "was the greatest stretch of mind I ever knew [...] but I have never written a book so full of holes and patches, that will need re-building" (A Writer's Diary 155). The reader's role, that is to say, is to re-construct the mental pattern suggested by the succession of images, self-representations, and thought processes in the voices' minds, and to connect the "severed parts" of their identity blends in order to gain a form of "global insight" about their diffuse and temporally extended subjectivities.

At times, the reader's task (i.e. finding the "mental pattern") may nevertheless appear unwieldy and somewhat cumbersome, particularly when confronted with a dispersed consciousness that is constantly distracted by and almost completely absorbed in the thoughts

and impressions of other selves, and that struggles to develop a coherent sense of identity as a

direct result of this selfless immersion in other minds (an idea typically symbolized by

Bernard). Throughout The Waves, Bernard appears extremely conscious of other voices'

opinions and mental processes, so much so that he falls into a state of perdurable and nearly

irresolvable aporia about his own personal identity. He declares:

> Now, as a proof of my susceptibility to atmosphere, here, as I come into my
> room [...] I feel that I am that dashing yet reflective man, that bold and
> deleterious figure, who [...] at once flings off the following letter to the girl with
> whom he is passionately in love. [...] It is going to be a brilliant sketch which,
> she must think, was written without a pause, without an erasure. [...] I must give
> her the impression that though he — for this is not myself — is writing in such
> an offhand, such a slap-dash way, there is some subtle suggestion of intimacy
> and respect. [...] But I must seem to her (this is very important) to be passing
> from thing to thing with the greatest ease in the world. (author's parentheses 40)

Bernard's sharpened sensitivity to his addressees' intuitive thoughts and impressions ("she

must think;" "I must give her the impression;" "I must seem to her") makes him appear as a

nebulously defined and virtually fragmented voice, whose very identity is contingent on the

diverse, mercurial, and shape-shifting opinions of his social surrounding. Bernard's abiding

uncertainty about other selves' impressions and mental states, combined with his constant

attempts to adjust his inner thoughts to the (real or imagined) cognitive processes of other

characters contribute to a sense of irresolution about his own personal identity:

> Yet it [i.e. the mental rush] falls flat. It peters out. I cannot get up steam enough
> to carry me over the transition. My true self breaks off from my assumed. And if
> I begin to re-write it, she will feel 'Bernard is posing as a literary man; Bernard
> is thinking of his biographer' (which is true). No, I will write the letter tomorrow
> directly after breakfast. (author's parentheses 41)

Bernard's inability to finish his letter resonates with a deeper underlying state of uncertainty

and indecision about the very narrative of his personal identity. He admits: "What am I? I ask.

This? No, I am that. [...] Then it becomes clear that I am not one and simple, but complex and

many [...] I have to effect different transitions; have to cover the entrances and exits of several different men who alternately act their parts as Bernard. I am abnormally aware of circumstances" (39). Bernard's slippery, multifaceted, and constantly changing identity reflects an equally slippery and unstable self-opinion or self-understanding. He declares: "in my case something remains floating, unattached" (40). Bernard's "floating" and volatile identity results from his inability to develop a core self with a firm and conceptually stable self-conception, hence his constant "anxie[ty]" about "regain[ing] [other voices'] good opinion" (43). He points out, in clear indication of a vague and ill-defined sense of self: "I cannot remember my past, my nose, or the colour of my eyes, or what my general opinion of myself is" (59). Only as he "become[s] engaged to be married," though, could Bernard crystallize a stable self-understanding and develop a fulfilling sense of personal identity: "I who have been since Monday, when she accepted me, charged in every nerve with a sense of identity, [...] could not see a tooth-brush in a glass without saying, 'My toothbrush'" (58). The external validation granted to Bernard by virtue of his engagement to his beloved provides him with the very psychological reassurance needed for the development of a stable sense of identity: "this, then, serves to explain my confidence, my central stability, otherwise so monstrously absurd as I breast the stream of this crowded thoroughfare, making always a passage for myself between people's bodies, taking advantage of safe moments to cross" (60). By merging his poorly defined sense of self ("I cannot remember [...] what my general opinion of myself is") with his beloved's stable and positively affirming opinion of him (inferred from her agreement to marry Bernard), Bernard is able to achieve a form of self-acceptance and self-integration, and to somehow stabilize his own view of himself, which

used to be largely contingent on other characters' intuited thoughts and fickle or unstable impressions: "I have arrived; am accepted. I ask nothing" (59).

Even though Bernard's engagement does not preclude him from continuing to develop an inter-relational sense of self that finds immense gratification in storytelling and in the dramatized interaction with other selves, it nevertheless allows him to crystallize a core "identity blend" that draws its forcefulness, unity, and stability from the stable (and stabilizing) cognitive bond formed between him and his beloved: "I am engaged to be married. I am to dine with my friends tonight. I am Bernard, myself" (62).

Understanding the voices' identities in terms of a blended network of "severed parts" may therefore help Woolf's reader develop a more comprehensive view of the protagonists' inner subjective and identitary makeup. By examining the blended connections formed between the various parts of the voices' subjectivities, The Waves' reader may not only gain substantial insight into the underlying processes that lead to the cohesive integration of the protagonists' subjectivities, but also overcome the problem of a seemingly dispersed consciousness made up of a series of volatile impressions, scattered mental representations, and fragmented self-images. The "global insight" allowed to the reader through the patterned integration of the "severed parts" of the voices' identities also acts as a reminder of the mental reality represented by Woolf in The Waves, which camouflages a deep internal mental order despite the semblance of diffusion and dispersion given off by the fictional representation of consciousness.

Notes

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1. In her reading of <u>The Waves</u>, Copland uses the notion of "living in the blend" *symbolically* to refer to the way <u>The Waves</u>' voices would construct a six-fold "permanent" mega-blend through their coming together in special moments of unison (<u>Modelling the Mind</u> 99). In this chapter, I use Fauconnier and Turner's notion of "living in the blend" *in a totally different sense and for a completely different purpose*: i.e. to highlight aspects of the voices' developing subjectivities and to illuminate their complex identity formation processes.

2. The notion of "disanalogy," Fauconnier and Turner explain, "is grounded on analogy. We are not disposed to think of a brick and the Atlantic Ocean as disanalogous, but we are disposed to think of the Atlantic Ocean and the Pacific Ocean as disanalogous. Disanalogy is coupled to analogy" (99). To prove their point, Fauconnier and Turner refer to "psychological experiments [which] show that people are stymied when asked to say what is different between two things that are extremely different, but answer immediately when the two things are already tightly analogous" (99). In Blending Theory, the notion of "dis-analogy" between two mental or representational spaces is thus as evocative and significant as that of "analogy." A cross-space relation of "disanalogy" allows the conceptualizer to spot the difference(s) between two or more representational spaces that nonetheless share a certain degree of conceptual, ideational, or formal resemblance.

3. Sykes' observation emphasizes the failure of traditional critical approaches to <u>The Waves</u> (which gauge and construe a narrative in terms of its global representation of a particular set of logically-structured events, with numerous twists and turns) in capturing the essence of Woolf's novel, which is more about the internal, carefully "schemati[zed]" structure of Woolf's fictionalized (society of) mind.

4. For Lacan, the infant's encounter with and intuitive "recognition" of itself in the mirror is, at its very core, an act of "méconnaissance" or "mis-recognition." At this particular stage of the infant's psychological development (i.e. the "mirror stage"), the developing child, "still sunk in motor incapacity and nursling dependency," would naturally identify with a mirror image of itself that is apparently whole, complete, flawless, and autonomous (Lacan 2). The child's jubilant identification with its mirror image promotes the illusory (hence "imaginary") notion of independence and wholeness at a time when the child is still at its most weak and vulnerable. The mirror image as such gives the developing child a tantalizing ego-ideal towards which s/he will continue to strive later in life.

5. Fauconnier and Turner observe that "for the most part, blending is an invisible, unconscious activity involved in every aspect of human life" (18). Conceptual blending processes are "invisible to us and [are] taken for granted" because they are performed "behind the scenes;" i.e. invisibly to the conscious mind (23). In consciousness, a person would only take notice of the final product (i.e. the blended space) and would seldom dwell on the complex mental processes that lead to the crystallization of the "unified" blend being perceived or experienced, hence Fauconnier ad Turner's idea of "living *in* the blend" (i.e. as opposed to living in the conceptually distinct mental spaces that make up the integration network).

6. One effect of integrating "dis-analogous" events or life experiences (such as failure and subsequent success) into a "narrative blend of the self," Fauconnier and Turner argue, is the satisfying feeling of having "ma[de] it up to" one's former self (260).

Conclusion

The purpose of this dissertation was to offer a reading to <u>The Waves</u> that takes account of Woolf's conceptualization of her novel as "a mind thinking" and as a fictive representation of "the exact shapes" her mind holds. Completely immersed in the dizzying world of vivid impressions, unruly emotions, and shifting thought processes, Woolf's reader is often confronted with the difficult task of making sense of the jumble of mental imagery and transitory thoughts that course through the protagonists' minds, so as to have various dimensions of the mental realm depicted by Woolf in her novel cohere and coalesce "into a meaningful and patterned whole" (Richter 236).

Since, avowedly, Woolf is less interested in narrative building throughout her novel than in the representation of the "exact shapes" of inner mental life, the reader is invited to develop a heightened sensitivity to the dynamic patterns of thought suggested by the voices' soliloquies, and to use the esoteric insight highlighted by those peculiar thought patterns as a springboard towards a more comprehensive understanding of the protagonists' identitary, psychological, and subjective constitutions.

Conceptual blending theory, I argued throughout this dissertation, may well provide Woolf's reader not only with a useful and dynamic reading approach that is largely inspired by recent advances in cognitive theory, but also with an invaluable analytical toolkit that is especially befitting for probing and describing the inner recesses of the mind represented by Woolf's novel.

The import of blending theory lies especially in highlighting the constant interaction between the disparate mental and representational spaces dynamically prompted in the protagonists' minds (such as the interplay between the voices' sense of self and their mental representations of their material surroundings). Many of Woolf's critics, such as Harvena Richter, have long ago recognized those subtle connections or "alliances" developed between inner subjective and "objective" resources in Woolf's writings, and have alluded to the ways in which "the object [of] perception may be altered or coloured by the character's mind and emotions" (67). Their analysis, however, fails to capture the manner in which characters' intermittent revelations would ultimately produce a well-integrated or "blended" system of thought with incredibly rich subjective, psychological, and affective implications.

In my reading of The Waves, I have therefore tried to highlight the "blended space" not only as a privileged locus of interplay between different mental processes, but also as a springboard into the ways through which the voices' subjectivities would "extend" into their surrounding environment as well as into other selves within the same mind. Emphasizing these surreptitiously weaved networks of thought may help the reader visualize (among other things) the manner in which external resources can be used to guide the protagonists' inner thought processes. The same depicted surroundings would likewise inspire The Waves' protagonists with a variety of cognitive and psychological defence mechanisms (as demonstrated, for instance, in Louis's moment of vision). Eventually, various blended representations not only become entrenched in the voices' memories, but also contribute to "extending" their mental and psychological resources and to moulding their subjective constitutions and internal mindscapes.

Hence, the ultimate objective of my analysis is to illuminate various aspects of the rich and effervescent, yet diffuse and confusing mental picture represented by The Waves; one that is further mystified by the altered psychological states, peculiar thoughts, and unbridled imagination of six different selves or voices. By examining the blended alliances or connections developed between the various mental and representational processes conjured in the voices' minds (as they verbalize their internal thoughts), the reader is able to come to a fuller understanding of various aspects of the protagonists' consciousnesses, and to gain substantial insight into the very identity of the selves that constitute Woolf's fictionalized "society of mind."

One of the possible contributions of this study, especially to the burgeoning, yet rapidly expanding field of cognitive narratology (which examines the intersections between cognitive theory – i.e. our knowledge of how the human mind works - and narrative or literary studies) is that, in the process of using Conceptual Blending theory to analyze aspects of the fictional mind represented by The Waves, a dizzyingly wide range of meaning possibilities, *none of which can be described as typically or purely "conceptual,"* have been brought to the forefront. The meanings captured by those "emergent patterns" of integrated thought highlighted by The Waves' narrative are imbued not only with cognitive and psychological, but also with affective significance. These blended patterns of thought allow the reader to better visualize the "weight" of Louis's felt stigma, to fathom the depth of Susan's intense emotions, to stage the cognitive struggle captured by Rhoda's mind between her insubstantial subjectivity and the image of the waves in her basin, as well as between her featureless idea of self and her mirror image, etc. The label "conceptual" chosen by Fauconnier and Turner to describe their theoretical framework (which is probably a residual vestige of their previous

work on "conceptual metaphor") may possibly detract from the theory's potential for revealing a wide range of mental or cognitive meanings, and potentially deter a number of literary academics from using it to explain infinitely complex narratives that deal with the fictional representation of characters' mental functioning.

My reading of The Waves, I should note though, has not been without its limitations. In trying to explicate various dimensions of the blended connections staged by The Waves' fictional mind, I have come to realize that certain conceptual integration networks may indeed be viewed as more conspicuous and self-evident than others. For instance, in my second chapter, the cognitive bond developed between Susan and Bernard, which leads the former to develop a form of "situated" insight about her own emotional makeup, can be said to be more narratively palpable and self-evident than the one developed between Neville and Percival (even though it is highly suggested by the narrative). Similarly, in my third chapter, the sense of subjective cohesiveness and "compactness" can be said to be more obvious in the blended network staged by Louis than in the one represented by Susan (which requires the reader to be aware of the underlying impulse or driving force behind Susan's possessive urge).

This feature of The Waves' narrative may raise one possible, yet fundamental question which, I believe, is key to cognitive narratological inquiry and research, namely: to what extent could certain suggestive or highly evocative aspects of literary narratives heighten the reader's awareness as to characters' more opaque or obscure inner mental dynamics and functioning? In other words, how can certain passages of the narrative (particularly those where characters' mental functioning can be inferred with relative ease) help the reader extrapolate the cognitive patterns necessary for understanding and explicating more ambiguous or less explicit aspects of the same narrative?

Part of the answer, I conjecture, lies with leading cognitive narratologist David Herman, who views narratives as "pattern-forming cognitive system[s] [...] which can then be operationalized to create tools for thinking" (quoted in Nünning 236). True, current theories of mind and cognition can be used as invaluable analytical toolkits that can help us, as Zunshine argues in <u>Theory of Mind and the Novel</u>, "deliver a rich simulation to the cognitive adaptations constituting our Theory of Mind [i.e. our understanding of how the human mind works]" (25). Yet, literary narratives, with their complex representations of different mental dynamics *with varying degrees of explicitness*, may equally help the readers be perceptive of a whole range or continuum of peculiar, narrative-specific cognitive functioning, especially as instantiated by characters' inner thoughts. Most probably, narratives may well permit the readers to creatively use and exploit textual dynamics that represent relatively lucid and highly suggested knowledge about fictional minds as "tools for thinking" not only about the human mind's general cognitive capabilities (an idea well developed by Copland in <u>Modelling the Mind</u> (103-13)), but also about those vaguely represented, textually protean, or significantly more ambiguous aspects of the same narrative, which require a more advanced understanding of the narrative's peculiar style(s) of cognitive processing (i.e. of the narrative's specific ways of representing the inner depth of mental, psychological, and affective reality).

This area of cognitive narratological inquiry could be the topic of future research conducted not only on yet uncharted dimensions of <u>The Waves</u>' fictional mind, but also on other novels where Woolf undertakes to represent the "exact shapes" of her characters' inner mental worlds.

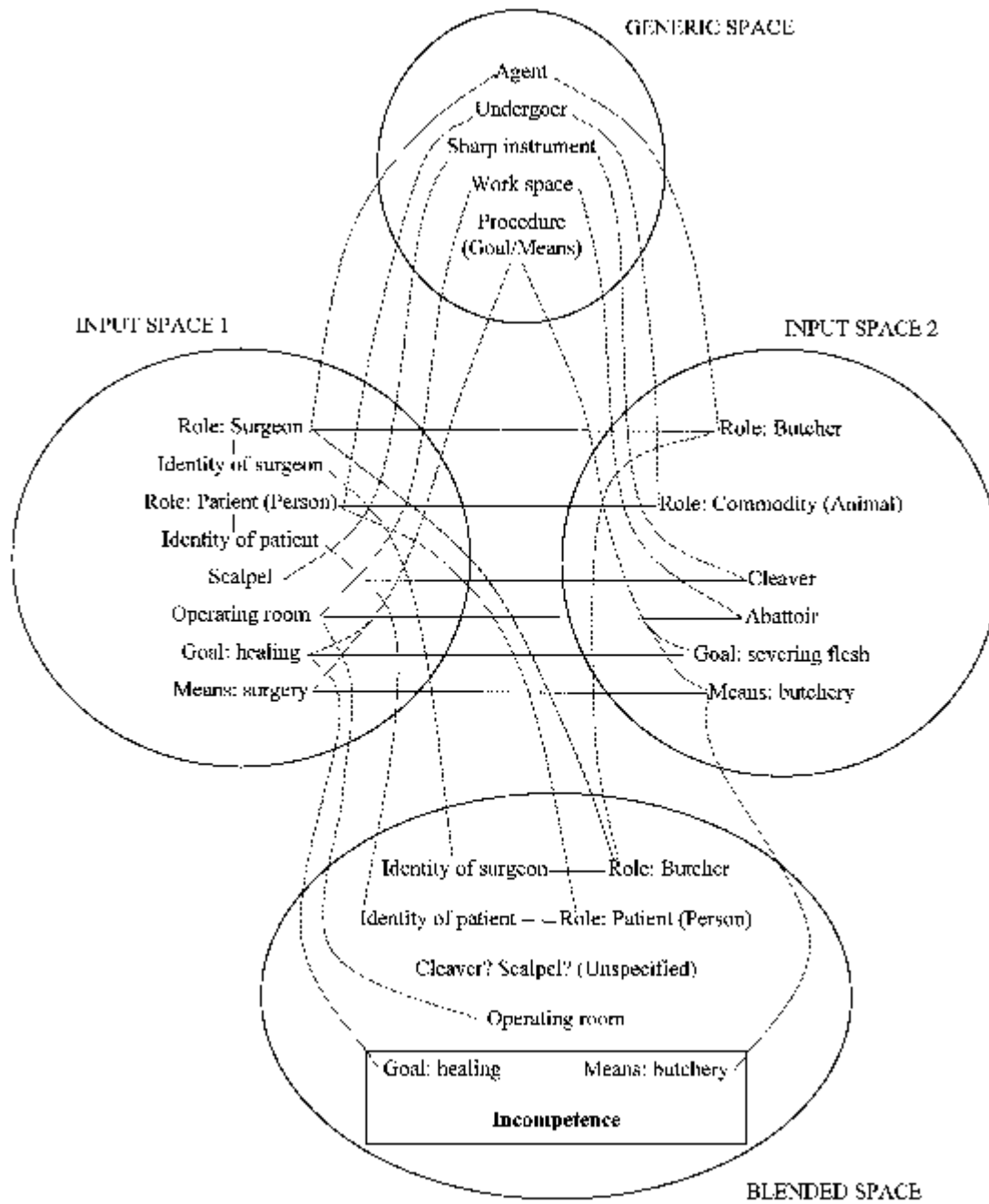**Appendix:** from Joseph E. Grady, T. Oakley, and S. Coulson's "Blending and Metaphor"

Figure 1. Conceptual integration network: Surgeon as butcher

(page 107).

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