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"I Heard the Same Thing Once Before": Intertextuality in Selected Works of Evelyn Waugh

Janelle Lynn Ortega

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“I Heard the Same Thing Once Before”: Intertextuality

in

Selected Works of Evelyn Waugh

by

Janelle Ortega

B.A. in English, 2001

M.A. in English, 2005

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the

Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

In English

The University of New Mexico

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Dedication

For My Husband, "If ever two were one, then surely we."

and

For Dr. John Howard Wilson, May Eternal Rest be Granted unto You.

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JMJ

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Abstract

Through the lens of structural intertextuality, this dissertation reveals the significance of literary allusion in some of Evelyn Waugh’s works. It investigates intertextual significance and intent that has, heretofore, been largely bypassed. This study tracks Waugh’s intertextual instances from his earliest novels through his short stories to one of his final works. Waugh’s intertextuality unearths a hope for not only literary culture but also the world at large.

A study of Waugh’s intertextuality uncovers an overarching theme of hope rooted in literary culture. This dissertation begins with an explanation of intertextual theory and the words and phrases pivotal to a cohesive understanding of these findings. It then proceeds through the works chronologically. Chapter One explores the use of Dante and Carroll in the novel *Vile Bodies* by explaining a deterioration of both culture and

humanity while providing a remedy that is literature. Then Chapter Two's discussion of Malory's text within *Handful of Dust* rejects the initial critical reaction of associating pessimism and fatalism with the text. Chapter Three's analysis of "Out of Depth" and *Love Among the Ruins* uncovers an intertextual analysis concerning Huxley, Shakespeare and earlier works of Waugh himself that purports the importance of reviving literary culture and reclaiming freewill. Chapter Four recognizes that Waugh's use of T.S. Eliot in *Brideshead Revisited* begins to confirm the essentiality of literature for the well-being or the individual as well as the world. The dissertation culminates in Chapter Five with *The Ordeal of Gilbert Pinfold* and its emphasis on the personal application of intertext.

Ultimately this dissertation reveals that by way of intertext Evelyn Waugh subtly challenges his readers to improve themselves by looking beyond their own experiences. The deeper he explores the art of intertext the more his texts reveal the troubles of the current age. At the same time, however, as this dissertation demonstrates, his use of intertext not only diagnoses the tribulations facing the modern world but also provides a cure in the form of a reviving literary culture.

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Introduction

In the summer of 2012, scholars from around the world flooded Internet blogs with criticism over the intertextual incongruity of Kenneth Branagh's interpretation of the "Be not afeard" speech from Shakespeare's *The Tempest*. Branagh, dressed as renowned 19th-century British engineer Isambard Kingdom Brunel, recited Caliban's speech at the opening ceremonies of the summer Olympics in London despite the macabre fact that in Shakespeare's play Caliban proclaims these words when he's about to kill a colonialist ruler who usurped the Isles. Notable Shakespearian scholar James Shapiro from Columbia University asks the question many of us did: "Why give him the lines Shakespeare wrote for a half-man, half-beast about to try to kill off an imperial innovator who took away his island?" (Florek). It seems that the director of the opening ceremony, Danny Boyle, was guilty of one of two things: either he cared little for the context of the speech and much for the poetic beauty of Caliban's words; or Boyle was, in an obtuse and subtle manner, acknowledging, in front of the world, the crimes of England. Regardless of the intent, the incident provoked a storm of discussion concerning the inherent possibility of miscommunication in regard to literary allusion.

This is a problem that British novelist Evelyn Waugh foresaw in the first half of the twentieth century and attempted, throughout his literary career, to rectify through intertextuality. In his futuristic and eventually apocalyptic novel *Vile Bodies*, his characters experience the same type of disjointed literary allusion as the opening ceremonies of the 2012 Summer Olympics. Having just left the man she loves to marry another for his money, Nina joins her husband, Ginger, on their honeymoon. Their exchange prophesies a relationship void of communication:

Ginger looked out of the aeroplane: ‘I say, Nina,’ he shouted, ‘when you were young did you ever have to learn a thing out of a poetry book about: “*This scepter’d isle, this earth of majesty, this something or other Eden*”’? D’you know what I mean? “this happy breed of men, this little world, this precious stone set in the silver sea....”’

“ ‘This blessed plot, this earth, this realm, this England

This nurse, this teeming womb of royal kings

Feared by their breed and famous by their birth...’

“I forget how it goes on. Something about a stubborn Jew. But you know the thing I mean?’

“It comes in a play.”

“No, a blue poetry book.”

“I acted in it.”

“Well, they may have put it into a play since. It was in a blue poetry book when I learned it.’ (*Vile Bodies* 283)

This scene warns of incommunicability and, consequentially, incompatibility. Readers encounter two characters opposed in their ideas concerning this literary allusion. Like Boyle’s use of Caliban, the “scepter’d isle” speech is often also mistakenly used to praise Britain. Ginger, who probably learned this speech in grade school, looks out the window of the airplane and revels in patriotic sentiments. Representing the modern world—the one in which England is a tragic, fallen kingdom—more than her insensitive spouse, Nina no doubt experiences much more depressing feelings. The “poem,” taken from Shakespeare’s *Richard II* (II.1.55-72), begins with John of Gaunt praising this hallowed

place, this “demi-paradise” that is England. But Gaunt’s speech ends with his indictment “That England that was wont to conquer others / Hath made a shameful conquest of itself.” Moreover, Gaunt expects little of the near future and laments “Ah! Would the scandal vanish with my life, / How happy then were my ensuing death.” Ginger only remembers the sentimental emotions of patriotism; however, Nina, having not only studied but acted in this play, should know the horror and tragedy this speech recalls. Furthermore, through the comparison between Ginger’s matter of fact prose recitation and Gina’s purposeful iambic pentameter, the narrator hints at a more refined reading. For Ginger, blissfully ignorant of the foreboding of tragedy of war, the speech has become what Heinrich F. Plett calls “adagios and aphorisms” (17) because:

the user of these quotations may easily lose sight of their original context... That has been happening to quotations for centuries. The result very often is that being devoid of their pre-texts they become worn out like ‘dead metaphors’. ‘For this reason they have to be revitalized by specific (‘defamiliarizing’) techniques in order to regain their semantic vigour. (16-17)¹

Because of his ignorance and insensitivity, Ginger inhibits effective communication. Likewise, readers ignorant of the context of this quotation would also see it as a “dead metaphor” or “dead meaning.” Ultimately, this scene from *Vile Bodies* suggests that understanding Waugh’s fiction requires discovering his intertextual sources so that readers may understand the full range of communication, or lack thereof, employed in

¹ The term “It’s a Brave New World” is just such an occurrence. Often upon discovering a new fad or advancement people say optimistically “Oh! It’s a Brave New World” not knowing that they are likening current conditions to a dystopia.

Waugh's texts. Otherwise, Waugh's fiction seems amusing, dated, and slight rather than sardonic, pointed, and engaging.

Known for his satirical wit and his criticism of the modern age, Evelyn Waugh communicates his hope for modernity through the lens of his literary allusions. Analyzing the intertextuality in several of his works from the standpoint of structural intertextual theory reveals his optimism for the chaotic age in which he believed he lived. This dissertation begins with an overview of intertextual theory and relevant terms that will aid the reader in a better understanding and explication of Evelyn Waugh's use of literary allusion. It then addresses Waugh's use of intertextuality in his novels and short stories that has heretofore been largely under appreciated.

The study commences with a close reading of Waugh's second novel *Vile Bodies* and Waugh's attempt through the interplay of allusions to prevent nihilism and eradicate literary ignorance. Lewis Carroll's imaginary lands and Dante's *Inferno* humorously warn readers of the relativism and nihilism engulfing the modern age. At the same time, however, Waugh uses his hypotext to illustrate the dialogue among writers of the past and present. This dialogue provokes intellectual thought which leads to a higher level of consciousness and thus hope for not only intellectual enlightenment but a purposeful life.

Next, *Handful of Dust* breaks the invisible constraints on potential with a Malorian intertext that defies literary stasis. Waugh bypasses the Tennysonian depiction of Malory and uses Malory as a straight source. By making this connection, he unhinges the expectations of fatalism garnered from a Victorian ideal of Malory. Tony, the protagonist, becomes a three dimensional character that is eventually bereft of any romantic notions that determine his fate. He becomes instead, real and malleable. The

allusions within the text prove application of the malleability depends upon a realization of freewill of which all humanity is gifted.

A comparison between Waugh's short story "Out of Depth" and his novelette *Love Among the Ruins* follows an inter-auctorial path that reveals Waugh's belief that literary culture is key to communication. Waugh begins in "Out of Depth" through the intra-auctorial combination of his characters from previous novels with Washington Irving's Rip Van Winkle. Instead of missing years of his life, Waugh's Rip travels to the future where society has effectively dumbed down and literature is recognizable but utterly incommunicable. *Love Among the Ruins*, however, takes this theme optimistically a step further and a step too far. It too takes place in the future. This future, however, only superficially experiences the arts. While the text is full of literary allusions to Tennyson, Shakespeare and Huxley, many of which are pronounced by the characters themselves, they are unaware of their meaning. This incommunicability is not due to the fact that the world has become more primitive (as was the case in "Out of Depth"), but rather due to fact that society has divorced the arts from their intellectual benefits. Yet, the intertextuality consistently reasserts itself to the point that reclamation of humanity by way of literary culture seems possible.

Waugh proceeds in this vein through his blatant use of intertext in *Brideshead Revisited*. It is through this novel, regarded by Waugh as his best work, that Waugh claims that the marriage between art and humanity is the remedy for the ills of the age. While this point has never been discussed by other Waugh scholars, it is evident that Waugh takes pains to recreate Eliot's *Waste Land* for the modern man and in his modern world. The man in this novel is Charles Ryder, who like the knight on his quest, journeys

in search of meaning. Through the combination of the hypotext and Waugh's own characters, however, Waugh claims that the elucidation of life's truths happens not in solitude but in communication with others who help to provoke thought.

Lastly, Waugh demands a reemergence of literary communication through a merging of the intertextual and the intra-auctorial in *The Ordeal of Gilbert Pinfold*. He reveals ardent support for this dialogue by peritext and intertextual gaps that reveal James Joyce, an author for whom he had previously and consistently professed a dislike. He strengthens a beneficial relationship between past and modern literature through peritextuality and transmodalization that focuses on the chapter "Circe" from *Ulysses*. Ultimately Waugh uses his hypotext and own narrative to reclaim important literary aspects of the past and recognize imperative aspects of modern literature to create an environment conducive to communication between stages of literature.

This dissertation proceeds from the idea that there is, indeed, a productive approach to Evelyn Waugh's use of intertextuality. While various scholars have mentioned Waugh's literary allusions in the form of cursory articles or comments, heretofore, none have embarked on such a thorough and meticulous investigation as to the purpose for, method of and development of his intertextuality as does this dissertation. This dissertation is the first work that employs intertextual theory and terminology as a pivotal means in explaining and understanding Waugh's intertextual methods. Moreover, where others have found allusions to certain texts (hypotexts) in Waugh's works, I affirm and augment the discussion by finding unmentioned intertexts (allusions) taken from the same hypotext. Pushing beyond other scholars in expounding upon the significance behind those intertextual occurrences, I reveal instances of hypotext in his work that no one else

has recognized (i.e., “Ulysses” by Joyce or “What the Thunder Said” from *The Waste Land* by Eliot). Furthermore, this study is the first to divulge the use and importance of a maturing intra-auctorial intertextuality² within his writing. Before embarking upon an analysis of individual novels and stories, however, in this chapter I will begin by establishing a definition of intertextuality that fits with Waugh’s aesthetics. First, the chapter summarizes the history of intertextuality and how its scholars have shaped discussions using the concept. Next, I distinguish between influence and intertextuality and identify the most influential theorists to interpret the novels of Evelyn Waugh. Finally, I discuss the varying types of intertextuality that occur most frequently in selected texts by Waugh.

Intertextuality: The Shaping of Texts’ Meaning to Other Texts

Julia Kristeva coined the term “intertextuality” and provided it with varying, though cohesive, definitions. In “Word, Dialogue and Novel,” an investigation of Mikhail Bakhtin’s ideas on heteroglossia and polyphony in text, Kristeva introduces Bakhtin’s idea of “the ‘literary word’ as an *intersection of textual surfaces* rather than a *point* (a fixed meaning)” (36). Kristeva further expounds on this concept:

...any text is constructed as a mosaic of quotations; any text is the absorption and transformation of another. The notion of *intertextuality* replaces that of intersubjectivity, and poetic language is read as at least *double*. (37)

Her idea of intertextuality takes the form of two axes with the “subject-addressee” occupying the horizontal axis and the “text-context” occupying the vertical axis. Any

² The use of self as intertext and his own comparison of his past and present writing self. This is discussed below.

given intersection of these two axes creates intertextuality. Later in the essay, Kristeva redefines the term as “intertextual dialogue” (42). Ultimately, her position on intertextuality is that every text speaks from and to other texts and produces “double” or even numerous meanings that, because of the continual production of literary texts, never cease in their development.

Yet there is an underlying idea in her essay that the intertextuality inherent in narrative is not always a conscious choice. For her, as for Bakhtin, text is dialogue, one that occurs between the writer, the reader, the text itself, and “exterior texts” (36). “Bakhtinian dialogism,” she tells her reader, “identifies writing as both subjectivity and communication, or better, as intertextuality” (39). She posits, however, that a text is imbued with Bakhtinian dialogism not necessarily because of authorial intention but because the dialogical process is an inherent aspect of communication. She later expounds on this supposition by arguing that these meanings can be extracted not only from the text or word itself but also from the structure of text (50). Literary genres, like texts, are in the constant process of production, Kristeva states, and are “an unconscious exteriorization of linguistic structures at their different levels.” Furthermore, she believes the novel is the genre that most effectually exteriorizes linguistic structures (37). Intertextuality, therefore, is inherent in the genre, and virtually inevitable in any specific example of the genre. Kristeva’s underlying implication is that texts have numerous (“at least double”) meanings, and that a novelist such as Waugh may employ intertextuality either consciously or unconsciously.

Following Kristeva’s early definition and use of “intertextuality,” subsequent scholars of intertextuality have disagreed on the original intent and worth of the term. Jay

Clayton and Eric Rothstein suggest that ‘intertextuality’ “won partisans fast [but] . . . not . . . because of its own coherence” (11). The main site of contention concerning the emergence of the word “intertextuality” concerns its purpose as a social or literary tool. Adolphe Haberer believes that, because the term came about in conjunction with Bakhtin who was, in Kristeva’s own words, “born of a revolutionary Russia that was preoccupied with social problems” (39), intertextuality initially focused on societal not literary influence (Haberer 56). Haberer slightly criticizes Kristeva’s association with the “hyperactive” editors of the avant-garde literary magazine *Tel Quel*, which, according to Haberer, was unsuccessfully attempting to apply scientific ideas to the study of literature (38). John Frow echoes this sentiment when he suggests that the language of current society that primarily concerns Kristeva does not translate to the language of literature (127). Similarly, Henerich F. Plett also downplays the term’s value in relation to the study of literature by suggesting that “intertextuality” was “originally conceived and used by a critical avant-garde as a form of protest against established cultural and social values” (3). For Plett, “intertextuality” emerges as little more than a defiant act against tradition. He seems to regard Kristeva’s flirtation with the avant-garde as somewhat similar to a rebellious teenager who with maturity will realize that parent, tradition, and classicism were right all along.

It is Manfred Pfister, however, who seems to grasp the implications of Kristeva’s use of the term. He believes that her objective “was not to provide a new heading for the various forms of allusion and quotation and to stimulate more subtle and systematic classifications, but to revolutionize our notions of art, literature, text and subjectivity” (211). Pfister’s definition better fits Kristeva’s use of the term when one considers her

ultimate rejection of its metamorphosis into something she did not intend. Regretting the constant misunderstanding of the term as a mere “study of source,” she eventually revoked her own use of it in 1974 in the essay “Revolution in Poetic Language” and replaced it with the word “transposition” (111). In spite of her recantation, a whole and varied field of scholarship continues to devote itself to the study of intertextuality.

Intertextuality: Points of Contention

One point of contention within the study of intertextuality involves distinguishing it from “literary influence,” a long-accepted term in use well before Kristeva introduced *intertextuality*. In fact, the practice of intertextuality began centuries, if not millennia, prior to modern writers such as Waugh. In the introduction to the book *Intertextuality: Theories and Practice*, Judith Still and Michael Worton posit that intertextuality, “in some form, is at least as old as recorded human society” (2). Similarly, Pfister states that “from the earliest traceable origins onwards, literary texts have always referred not only to reality (*imitation vitae*), but also to previous other texts (*imitation veterum*)” (210). Numerous scholars have dedicated their research to studying intertextuality as practiced in earlier stages of literature. For instance, Richard J. Schoeck recognizes and studies the “intertextuality” in the Renaissance texts. Derek N.C. Wood illustrates Milton’s use of the Bible in *Paradise Lost* as an obvious instance of intertextuality. In her attempt to define postmodern intertextuality, Linda Hutcheon follows a similar tack by discussing how Dante incorporated Virgil not only to give prestige to his text but also for didactic reasons (88). Hans-Peter Mai believes that applying the term “intertextuality” to cases of influence, such as those identified in Renaissance works, is unproductive because “[t]here seems to be a fundamental difference in the way in which ‘intertextual’ strategies were

pursued then and now”; Mai then cites authors whose practice was to reference renowned works simply to place themselves alongside those more famous authors (32). While influence to the point of imitation has and continues to exist in literary works, scholars as well as readers more often find originality imperative to highly regarded writing. As Clayton and Rothstein suggest, the modern use of influence “values individual creativity but continues to rely on the powerful tradition that is handed down” (12).

In *Influence and Intertextuality in Literary History*, Clayton and Rothstein add another dimension to this debate. They suggest that the term *intertextuality* is a generational marker for more recent critics who echo much what previous critics had done using straightforward terms such as influence, context, allusion, and tradition (3). They also recognize, however, that more often than not “influence has to do with agency, whereas intertextuality has to do with a much more impersonal field of crossing texts” (4). In contrast, some scholars, such as Friedman find that too much energy and time is wasted trying to differentiate the two terms; she argues that, if *intertextuality* now can mean *influence*, critics should accept that the overlapping meanings are merely the natural mutation that the word *influence* has undergone. Meanwhile, Clayton and Rothstein suggest that “No one chooses who and how they [*sic*] will influence or be influenced. Instead, it is more like an act of perception, in which one’s observation causes an action. Part of the horrific force of influence is that its action occurs merely as a by-product, an exercise of strength without really trying (7). In addition, Clayton and Rothstein suggest that the word *influence* itself is not fully determined because (perhaps obviously) *influence* itself has many definitions. While intertextual scholars disagree on

the appropriate use of the term, they often agree on the differing and sometimes opposing classifications within the field.

Plett identifies three groups of modern intertextual scholarship: the progressives, the traditionalists, and anti-intertextual. He humorously cites the failings of each group by reviewing what he sees as their worst attributes. According to Plett, progressives like Bakhtin, Roland Barthes, Kristeva, and Jacques Derrida allow their publications to have a “strangely abstract quality, at a decided remove from reality” (4). Riffaterre and Gérard Genette, among other traditional intertextualists, according to Plett, use the generic term *intertextuality* to make themselves sound like more capable theorists than they are. Lastly, he believes that the “anti-intertextual” are those people who believe literature has always been intertextual and, thereby, dismiss intertextuality and its theories as redundant rubbish completely.

While Plett exaggerates the flaws of each type of scholar, his grouping falls in line with most of Graham Allen’s classifications in *Intertextuality*. For Allen, the dedicated intertextualists (Kristeva, Barthes, and Derrida) see that the text and the language of the text converge with that of the reader and the reader’s societal environment, both past and present, to produce multiple and mutable meanings. To him, the structuralists—Riffaterre, Culler, Genette, and Laurent Jenny—represent a more stable and ordered look at intertextuality. Their interpretation of intertextuality promotes the notion that allusions exist within a text that intentionally alter the reader’s relationship with the text and uncover unchangeable meanings placed in the text by the author. Hence, a literary work cannot stand alone because it is necessarily interlinked with the tradition

that came before it and the context in which it is produced. For Allen, intertextuality is crucial to understanding literary studies today.

The problem, in the case of Evelyn Waugh, would best be presented as, “What should the academic reader do with the numerous allusions to other texts in Waugh’s stories and novels?” Structuralist theories of intertextuality best address this problem, especially those theories that, according to Allen, “argue for critical positions at times diametrically opposed to those of Kristeva and Barthes” (4). Of the structuralists whom Allen discusses (Culler, Jenny, Genette, and Riffaterre), Genette and Riffaterre advance the theories that most closely complement Waugh’s work. In their studies, Genette and Riffaterre focus not only on the process of intertextual reading but also on the outcome of such a reading. Their ideas differ from Kristeva’s because they believe that intertextuality can lead to fixed meaning while she sees intertextuality as part of an ongoing process of meaning. Allen summarizes their differences: “Gérard Genette and Michael Riffaterre both employ intertextual theory to argue for critical certainty, or at least for the possibility of saying definite, stable and incontrovertible things about literary texts” (4). Despite some differences on other matters, both Genette’s and Riffaterre’s approaches to textual interpretation assert that authors aim through intertextuality to lead their readers to a definite meaning.

Likewise, Evelyn Waugh believed in definite and stable meaning. Throughout his lifetime, he expressed this position or some version of this position in his letters and his nonfiction. In particular, when criticizing the subjectivity of radical modernism, Waugh shows that he would likely have agreed with Genette and Riffaterre concerning literary allusion. For example, Waugh wrote a letter to the Editor of the *Times* (18 December

1945) excoriating an exhibition of Picasso and Matisse at the Victoria and Albert Museum:

Señor Picasso's painting cannot be intelligently discussed in the terms used of the civilized masters. Our confusion is due to his admirers' constant use of an irrelevant aesthetic vocabulary. He can only be treated as crooners are treated by their devotees. In the United States the adolescents, speaking of music, do not ask: 'What do you think of So-and-so?' They say: 'Does So-and-so send you?' Modern art, whether it is Nazi oratory, band leadership, or painting, aims at a mesmeric trick and achieves either total success or total failure. (*Letters* 214)³

Waugh criticizes Picasso and Matisse for rejecting classic artistic tradition and faults their admirers for likening them to the great masters of art when they do not even have the capacity to appreciate the great masters. Waugh's friend, Robin Campbell, believing Waugh's letter was a clever artifice, wrote to Waugh and defended this new radical form of art. Waugh replied:

My letter to *The Times* newspaper was far from being a hoax. It was an attempt to defend friends such as yourself from the charge of depravity and affectation. . . . Most so-called innovators have in fact thought themselves revivalists, appealing to an earlier and purer virtue against what they consider the corruption of their immediate predecessors. Picasso and his kind are attempting something new in the sense of something

³ For a while thereafter, Waugh added "Death to Picasso" as a postscript in many of his personal letters.

different in kind. Titian might have thought Frith intolerably common but he would have recognized that he was practicing the same art as himself. He could not think this of Picasso. Chaucer, Henry James and, very humbly, myself are practicing the same art. Miss Stein is not. She is outside the world-order in which words have a precise and ascertainable meaning and sentences a logical structure. She is aesthetically in the same position as, theologically, a mortal-sinner who has put himself outside the world order of God's mystery. (*Letters* 214)

In essence, Waugh advances to two suppositions that ultimately tie literature to his deeply held religious beliefs. First, he argues that an artist who discounts the value of his predecessors—ignoring and rejecting them completely—winds up creating a new kind of art—and not an aesthetically pleasing art at that, in Waugh's view. Comparing Picasso's new kind of art to painting is akin to comparing cacophony to music. According to Waugh, an author can beneficially add to the vast cannon of literature only by acknowledging and responding to his accomplished predecessors.

Second, Waugh is presuming that words have exact, stable, and unchangeable meanings. Writers—such as Gertrude Stein or others of her temperament—who do not believe that “words have a precise and ascertainable meaning and sentences a logical structure” are not writers of literature but a writer of something else entirely (*Letters* 214). Rather, it is the “aesthetic framework” that creates true art:

There is the Easter sense in which all things are made new in the risen Christ. A tiny gleam of this is reflected in all true art. Every work of art is thus something new. Just as within the moral framework there is space for

infinite variations of behavior, so within the aesthetic framework. Most so-called innovators have in fact thought themselves revivalists, appealing to an earlier and purer virtue against what they consider the corruption of their immediate predecessors. (*Letters* 214)

Ultimately, Waugh's letter hints that intertextuality is for him essential to the creation of a literature that leads to specific and unchangeable truths about the text.

Intertextuality: Gérard Genette

A study of intertextual complexity in the works of Waugh entails the use of terms borrowed from Gérard Genette. Genette locates the purpose of literary texts in what he calls a "network of architexture" (*Architext* 83) wherein the dialogue among the text, the reader, and other texts forms an intricate web. Following the paths within this web necessitates the invention, definition, redefinition, and explication of numerous terms that elucidate the operations of intertextuality.

To understand Genette's intertextual lexicon, I must return again to the definition of *intertextuality* itself. Genette defines intertextuality, more restrictively than Kristeva, as "a relationship of copresence between two texts or among several texts: that is to say, eidetically and typically as the actual presence of one text within another," (*Palimpsests* 1-2). Genette identifies three types of intertextual relations: obvious, concealed, and implicit. Intertextuality is based on what he calls copresence: whenever part of a text is present in another text, an intertextual relationship exists. For Genette, intertextuality centers on allusion, quotations, and even plagiarism rather than the cultural or semiotic concerns that Kristeva privileges (Allen 101). His definition has instigated some controversy. Critics like Pfister argue that Genette's definition "runs counter to the vitally

expansive nature of this principle” (211). Mai, meanwhile, finds Genette’s definition inadequate in that it is “not particularly conducive to a better understanding” of intertextuality (51). Similarly, Plett agrees that an abstract and general definition “impedes understandability” (4). While keeping these objections and qualifications in mind, I regard Genette’s definition of *intertextuality* as a trustworthy tool, well suited for analyzing instances of obvious, concealed, and implicit intertextuality in Waugh’s writings.

Genette refines his understanding of intertextuality by providing additional definitions and terms. These refinements are especially useful in the analysis of Waugh’s intertextual occurrences. They include *paratextuality* (i.e., the relationships between the text proper and specific elements within the text), *metatextuality* (i.e., the “critical relationship par excellence” between texts in which one text speaks of another without direct quotation), and *architextuality* (i.e., the taxonomic categories of a work as indicated by the titles or, more often, by the subtitles of a text) (*Palimpsests* 2-5). The category that most particularly concerns Genette is *hypertextuality*, “any relationship uniting a text B ... to an earlier text A, upon which it is grafted in a manner that is not that of commentary” (5). Hypertextuality is also pivotal to the study of Waugh; as such, I will rely on his concept of the *hypotext* and the *hypertext* throughout my study. In *Palimpsests: Literature in the Second Degree*, Genette considers *hypertextuality* as the relationship between a newer text, a text that has literary allusion in it (the *hypertext*), with an older text (the *hypotext*) that the newer text refers to (5). In literary studies, James Joyce’s novel *Ulysses*, the hypertext, connects to various hypotexts such as *The Odyssey* and Dante’s *Divine Comedy*. The practice is far from new in literary practice, nor is it

limited to literature. For example, Greek writers relied on myths as hypotexts; Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde* relies on Boccaccio's *Il Filostrato* as Shakespeare's *Troilus and Cressida* is, in Genette's terms, the hypertext in relation to Chaucer's poem. Similarly, Andy Warhol's various reinterpretations of Campbell Soup's can of tomato soup are hypertextual; while Woody Allen's movie *Play it Again, Sam* is hypertextually related to Michael Curtiz's 1942 film *Casablanca*.

Hypertextuality has sometimes been regarded as plagiarism; for example, John F. Kennedy's 1961 inaugural address includes the statement, "And so, my fellow Americans: ask not what your country can do for you—ask what you can do for your country." Here, the hypertext depends on various hypotexts, including 18th-century French philosopher Jean Jacques Rousseau ("As soon as any man says of the affairs of state, What does it matter to me?, the state may be given up as lost."); Supreme Court Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes in 1884 ("It is now the moment when by common consent we pause to become conscious of our national life and to rejoice in it, to recall what our country has done for each of us, and to ask ourselves what we can do for our country in return."); and Kennedy's former headmaster at Choate School, George St. John ("As has often been said, the youth who loves his Alma Mater will always ask not 'what can she do for me?' but 'what can I do for her?'" (Matthews 23). In Kennedy's case, the putative "plagiarism" is more accurately understood as a sophisticated rendering of intertextual allusions. His famous quotation is clearly a hypertext.

To understand these definitions, it is imperative to recognize that Genette's distinction between the *hyper-* and the *hypo-*texts appropriately rejects the term *source* that scholars normally affiliate with imitative rather than creative use of other texts. As is

suggested by the examples above, Genette's hypotextuality does not mean that a writer (or artist, musician, or public speaker) looks to a previous work to obtain information for the newer work. Instead the newer work reinterprets and transforms the hypotext.

Likewise, I use *hypertext* and *hypotext* to analyze Evelyn Waugh's mastery as reinterpretation. Seen in this light, Waugh is no mere imitator or borrower. By applying Genette's terms, I intend to convey that Waugh's allusions and references to the works of precursors enhance his own uniqueness and imbue his novels (or his hypertexts) with deeper, richer levels of meaning.

I will also apply Genette's specific terms to instances of Waugh's intertextual practice. The most obvious literary allusions in Waugh's text appear as paratext, often in the form of book or chapter titles. Genette recognizes *paratext* initially and generally in *Palimpsests* as "a title, a subtitle, intertitles; prefaces, postfaces, notices, forewords, etc.; marginal, infrapaginal, terminal notes; epigraphs; illustrations; blurbs, book covers, dust jackets, and many other kinds of secondary signals, whether allographic or autographic (3). More simply, Graham Allen summarizes Genette's definition as "those elements which lie on the threshold of the text and which help to direct and control the reception of the text by its readers" (103). Later, however, in *Paratext*, Genette refines the term *paratext* by dividing it into two categories: *epitext* and *peritext*. *Epitext* refers to intertextual instances occurring outside of the actual text, such as letters, discussions, articles, gossip, and reviews (38); *peritext* refers to the covers, epigraphs, titles, notes or any other instances occurring as part of the actual work itself but not within in the story (16). Specifically, Waugh employs peritext such as epigraphs (quotations from *Alice Through the Looking Glass*), titles for books (e.g., *A Handful of Dust*, taken from T. S.

Eliot's *The Waste Land*, and chapter titles (e.g., "The Portrait of an Artist in Middle Age" taken, obviously from Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*). Through the lens of Genette's paratext and more specifically the category of peritext, I will illustrate how Waugh situates the reader in a better position to apprehend his intentions.

In passing, I will also rely on Genette's theories about genre to explain Waugh's use of intertextuality. In particular, I will employ his concept of "transstylization" ("a stylistic rewriting [or] a transposition whose sole function is a change of style" [*Palimpsests* 226]) to uncover Waugh's reinvention of Leopold from Joyce's *Ulysses* in *The Ordeal of Gilbert Pinfold*. To explore Waugh's meaning for this in the novel, I will also turn to Genette's concept of *antiromance*. Citing *Don Quixote* as an example, Genette identifies the anti-romance as a form related to parody and the mock heroic poem (*Palimpsests* 150-153). However, he goes on to note that it is neither because, in centering on the main character's delusion, *Don Quixote* goes beyond parody or the mock-heroic and in effect reverses the romance genre to become an antiromance. In Genette's terms, Cervantes's text not only reveals its hypotext, but it also repurposes its hypoggenre. In Genette's example, Cervantes, thus, transforms not only the character of the romance but also the category of genre as well.

Similarly, I will use Genette's concept of transstylization to explain how and why Waugh converts the quest motif of *Le Morte Darthur* into a pilgrimage in *A Handful of Dust*. I will limit my use of Genette's definition of transstylization to only portions of Waugh's stories and novels because, although Genette applies the concept to entire works, Waugh transstylizes only intermittently.

As part of his theories of transtylization, Genette also refers to the genres of pastiche and parody. Genette defines pastiche as “imitation without satirical function” (*Palimpsests* 24). Parody to him is “an imitation that is more heavily loaded with satirical or caricatural effect” (*Palimpsests* 23). Waugh chooses a style akin to pastiche in *Brideshead Revisited* through his imitation of the quest motif of *The Waste Land*. Even later in his semi-autographical novel *The Ordeal of Gilbert Pinfold*, he uses what Genette refers to as “self pastiche,” a genre that orders itself around “self imitation” (*Palimpsests* 125). In contrast, Waugh transforms this same quest motif into something similar to a parody in *A Handful of Dust*. Furthermore, in *Gilbert Pinfold* and *Handful*, Waugh employs Genette’s *transvaluation*, changing the original value of the hypotext within the hypertext (*Palimpsests* 343-4). In these cases, Waugh tends to extend more value, not less, to the hypotext.

Typically, Genette applies these concepts to entire texts, whereas I will focus on specific instances within texts. Furthermore, I will be tracing what Genette coins as *metatextuality*, instances in which one text alludes to another “without necessarily citing it (without summoning it), in fact sometimes even without naming it” (*Palimpsests* 4). This is a frequent occurrence throughout the works of Waugh just as it is in much modern literature. For instance, *The Waste Land*, free of its endnotes, is the text probably most well-known for its metatextuality. According to Allen, however, this aspect of intertextuality is “underdeveloped by Genette” (99). Indeed, Genette devotes only a brief paragraph to this form of intertextuality and ends by noting simply that few scholars study it. Then he effectively counters his own point by saying the inattention “may be about to change” (*Palimpsests* 4). Genette’s definitions, therefore, do provide an initial

foundation for beginning to understand Waugh's literary allusions; but, because of Waugh's circumscribed application of them, I must look to another intertextual theorist who can add meat to the bones of my argument.

Of all intertextual scholars past and present, the one whom I think Waugh would approve of would be Michael Riffaterre, primarily for his insistence on ignoring the minutia of language construction in favor of focusing on the literariness of the text itself. In his article "Compulsory Reader Response: The Intertextual Drive," Riffaterre effectively dismisses those intertextual theories that attempt to overthrow traditional meaning by dissociating words from language. First, he states that "this reader response to texts cannot be explained by linguistic structures" because nonliterary occurrences use the same linguistic structures ("Compulsory Reader" 56). Then he rejects the workings of Kristeva, Barthes, Derrida, and their followers by suggesting that "literariness . . . must be sought at the level where texts combine or signify by referring to other texts rather than a lesser sign system" (56). In essence, Riffaterre suggests that there is a danger in looking too closely at the makeup of literature because, when dissected to such a degree, literature stops being literature. The study of intertextuality taken to this extreme threatens to become meaningless.

In much of his writing Riffaterre defines intertextuality by explaining what it is not. In "Intertextual Representation: On Mimesis as Interpretive Discourse," he identifies a commonly mistaken synonym for intertextuality—*influence*. He cautions that "some scholars glibly mistake the intertext for sources and seem to think that intertextuality is just a newfangled name for influence or imitation. We must be clear that intertext does not signify a collection of literary works that may have influenced the text or that the text

may have imitated” (142). However, he goes on to propose that “intertextuality is not just a perception of homologues or the cultivated reader’s apprehension of sameness or difference. Intertextuality is not a felicitous surplus, the privilege of a good memory or a classical education” (“Intertextual” 142). In other words, intertextuality is neither authorial imitation nor a dispensable bonus feature available to some writers but not to others.

Riffaterre perceives intertextuality as a force demanding reader effort to uncover the meanings within the text. To him, intertextuality is an inherent feature unique to each particular text. He defines *intertextuality* as “a modality of perception, the deciphering of the text by the reader in such a way that he identifies the structures to which the text owes its quality of work of art” (“Syllepsis” 625). Intertextuality is akin to an intellectual function performed by the reader. He further states that the intertext itself is work that the reader “must know” in order to understand the overall significance of the text.

Many scholars, however, take issue with Riffaterre’s insistence on reader knowledge. Worton, for example, summarizes the principal criticism: “Riffaterre’s intertextual readings of individual poems are brilliant analyses, but they often depend upon erudition, on a vast knowledge of the literary canon” (*Intertextuality* 14). Similarly, while Clayton and Rothstein praise Riffaterre because he “used intertextuality most effectively in practical criticism” (“Figures” 23), they express their concern that Riffaterre’s critiques “draw on an encyclopedic command of French and English literatures” (“Figures” 26). Critics contend that such insightful readings are inaccessible to other readers. Even erudite readers cannot be confident that their readings of a text are thorough enough to meet Riffaterre’s standards.

Riffaterre's methodology further suggests that the point of intertextuality lies in the attempt to decode the text. He indeed is the first to admit that readers will commonly encounter texts unaware of allusions to a hypotext. Nevertheless, he says, even unknown references in the hypertext can alert readers to gaps that, in turn, provide a "map" for a clearer understanding of the meaning behind the text ("Compulsory Reader Response" 57). Readers are then pushed to fill in these gaps and discover these meanings. To determine whether their experience with intertextuality is valid, readers must make sure their filler can be applied to and fit within the entire text ("Intertextual" 371). Ultimately, the intertextuality within works provides signposts and decoders that enable a reader to uncover additional meanings in the text. Riffaterre calls these decoders *connectives*: elements that materialize in various forms as syllepsis (e.g., "You most likely need a thesaurus, a rudimentary grammar book, and a grip on reality" [Atwood]), synonyms, or antinomy (e.g., "Answer not a fool according to his folly, lest you also be like unto him" [Proverbs 26:4]) that the hypertext shares with the hypotext ("Compulsory Reader Response" 57). Riffaterre eventually states, "It matters little that the reader cannot equal the analyst's skill, or that, given the premises, he could duplicate at least some of these critical feats. What does matter is that we have no proof that he could, alone, find the starting point" ("Intertextuality" 373). As long as the reader participates in the intertextual experience by attempting to recognize gaps and connectives, meaning will eventually emerge.

For my purposes in studying the works of Evelyn Waugh, Riffaterre proves most helpful when describing the manner in which intertextuality reveals the meaning of the text. Text, Riffaterre argues, can represent meaning in two ways "according to whether

the text represents reality by resorting to an intertext incompatible with that reality, or whether the text represents reality by negating an intertext compatible with that reality” (“Intertextual Representation” 143). The most consequential example of Waugh using an incompatible text is in *The Ordeal of Gilbert Pinfold*, in which he alludes to a text he publicly disliked—James Joyce’s *Ulysses*—in order to emphasize the meanings of faith and hope in the novel. Similarly, *Vile Bodies*’ negation of Dante’s purgatory recalls the possibility that the characters may in fact be in purgatory themselves. Examples of this type of intertextuality can be found in much of Waugh’s work, as this study will consistently point out.

In sum, various ideas from varying intertextual scholars may aid a reader in the understanding of Waugh’s intertextuality. It is, however, through Gérard Genette’s terminology and Michael Riffaterre’s methodology that meaning is most effectively uncovered. As Riffaterre suggests, intertextuality makes demands of the reader. Readers must be willing to work with co-presence in the text, whether obvious, hidden, or implicit. Through research and careful study, they must fill in the gaps that intertextuality presents. By focusing on Evelyn Waugh’s intertextuality, this dissertation will not only uncover deeper levels of meaning in the stories but will also unleash the intellectual potential of the reader and concurrently cultivate the dialogue necessary for the continuation of literary culture.

Chapter One: *Vile Bodies* as Alice's "Nice Dream" or Dante's "Nightmare"

"Each new age indulges in its own characteristic (and highly ambiguous) 'refusal to inherit' and chooses its own predecessors, preferably from an age older than that in which the detestable previous generation lived," (212) proclaims Gérard Genette over the cycle of dominating literary influence. He, however, continues with the caveat that "The father's turn will come (again) perhaps, when the following generation has exhausted the joys of 'postmodern' baroque and seeks new inspiration, or references, in the works of—who knows?—its naturalist forebears, for example" (Genette 112). He labels this tendency "the leapfrog evolution" then boldly professes that every generation of literature has something worthwhile to impart to all generations.

While Evelyn Waugh's Bright Young Things who populate the pages of his novel *Vile Bodies* evince Genette's conjecture by believing that their generation is the only generation with any useful knowledge, *Vile Bodies*, in fact, is testament to this conjecture. Waugh extends the lack of literary appreciation in *Vile Bodies* to such a degree that worthwhile literature becomes nonexistent to the Bright Young Things. Whether this situation was an effect of the First World War, of the habits of mere survival, or from pure selfishness, Waugh recognizes his era's modern generation as oblivious to any knowledge beyond their own experiences. He attempts, through *Vile Bodies*, to present the irrationality and incompleteness found in a world void of literary connection through an intertextuality encounter featuring himself and the work of Dante and Lewis Carroll.

Waugh illustrates the crisis of literary ignorance and encourages the mindset necessary to fight that ignorance at the outset of the novel through epigraphs that are from *Through the Looking-Glass and What Alice Found There*:

‘Well in our country,’ said Alice, still panting a little, ‘you’d generally get to somewhere else if you ran very fast for a long time, as we’ve been doing.’

‘A slow sort of country!’ said the Queen. ‘Now, here, you see, it takes all the running you can do, to keep in the same place. If you want to get somewhere else, you must run at least twice as fast as that!’

and

‘If I wasn’t real,’ Alice said—half laughing through her tears, it all seemed so ridiculous—‘I shouldn’t be able to cry.’ (*Looking-Glass* 145)

Waugh scholars often regard these quotations as invectives against modernity. Yet even while regarding the epigraphs as important to the understanding of Waugh’s text, many critics overlook a key element of the use of the epigraphs. According to Jacqueline McDonnell’s study of the *Vile Bodies*, neither of these quotations was included in the typescript or manuscript. Waugh added them only at publication. The mere presence of these quotations, therefore, denotes not only that the novel’s meaning is bound up in intertext, particularly in *Through the Looking-Glass*, but that Waugh wishes the readers to recall Carroll’s attitudes while reading the novel. The emendation of the epigraphs only prior to publication suggests Waugh feared that, without them, the intertext in his novel would go unheeded. The use of the epigraphs, therefore, is simultaneously an

acknowledgement of the importance and existence of intertextuality and a catalyst through which the readers may engage in this intertextuality.

The isolation of the epigraphs outside the narrative demands investigation. Although he does not mention Waugh in *Palimpsests*, Genette regards this type of literary allusion as a *paratext* (i.e., text surrounding the main text such as author's name, the title, preface, epigraphs, introduction, or illustrations); Genette asserts that such allusions “provide the text with a (variable) setting and sometimes commentary, official or not, which even the purists among readers, those least inclined to external erudition, cannot always disregard as easily as they would like and as they claim to do” (3). Thus, in some ways, consciously or subconsciously, paratexts will influence readings of the texts that follow them. Similarly, Susan Schneider Lanser agrees that such epigraphs are a type of “extrafictional structure” that may “indicate a tie between this text and the literary tradition; to enhance the status of the text; to communicate an image of the appropriate audience; or to bring a particular textual theme to the foreground” (125). The presence of a theme or image, however, does not imply nor demand any one particular specific experience. Genette, however, insists that the study of the impact such intertextuality has on readers is pragmatic because it deals with the potentially unnumbered relationships between the readers and authors arising from their different life experiences that, in turn, color their experiences with the text. While neither of these theorists mentions him, Waugh’s use of paratext epitomizes their theories as he, for example, uses epigraphs to unite his work with literary tradition and to make obvious the theme of not merely an erring society but a society that no longer finds solutions in literature.

While *Through the Looking-Glass* is the gateway to the intertextual lens of *Vile Bodies*, Dante's *Inferno* depicts the dangers in dismissing this lens of literary culture. As of yet, no scholars have written on the link found between these two classics within *Vile Bodies*. Scholars and readers know *Vile Bodies* as a funny book. Like Carroll's sardonic humor, Waugh's humor in *Vile Bodies* extends beyond a pleasurable fleeting impression into a permanent depiction of human error. Waugh uses this humor both to emphasize the fact that he is likening modern society to Dante's *Inferno* and to appease readers who may be offended by this comparison. Waugh begins by placing quotations from *Through the Looking-Glass*, in the form of epigraphs, as decoders for his book so that readers glean, even before the story begins, a similar seriousness found in the literary allusions to both Dante and Carroll throughout *Vile Bodies*. Later in the novel, the Carroll and Dante allusions intersect in three ways: the use of nonsense, movement, and identity. Eventually these innuendos allow readers to engage in retroactive nonlinear re-readings. By recognizing a spiritual Dantesque counterpart to Carroll's humor in these areas, the story transforms from a pleasurable trip down another rabbit hole into a dark spiritual quest in which the reader, not the protagonist, makes the journey.

In recognizing the intertextual weavings within *Vile Bodies*, such as the *Alice* paratexts, the readers share an awareness of this quest. While *Through the Looking-Glass* contributes significantly to this awareness (as I will discuss throughout this chapter), in *Vile Bodies* Waugh consistently alludes to a text that addresses the consequences of ignoring the realm of the eternal: the first book of Dante's *Divine Comedy*, *The Inferno*. Waugh must have studied *The Divine Comedy* carefully. He received the Everyman edition of it for his sixteenth birthday; later in his diary he commented that *The Divine*

Comedy is “most thoughtful and kind and useless” (Waugh 38). Even four years prior, at the age of twelve, he was already echoing *The Divine Comedy*, particularly *The Inferno*, in “The World to Come,” a poem written in three cantos dedicated to his father. In the poem, a man dies and, in his attempt to enter heaven, is told that he is “ignorant of the glory / And majesty of Heaven” (77-78). He must make a “wondrous journey” (79) with a guide and see the secrets of God’s creation, the good and the bad, before he can be purified of his sin and see God. In this poem, Waugh recreates Dante’s Hell. As in Dante and Virgil’s experience, the nameless narrator and the guide, Cyprian, encounter the presence of circling evil souls. The narrator and Cyprian stand on a platform while “creatures with the hearts of devils” (303) are “howling round” (306) them. Eventually even Dante’s three-faced Satan (Ciardi 32⁴) appears when the protagonist views Satan and describes him as the “once angel, now thrice devil” (313). “The World to Come” solidifies the fact that Waugh was particularly affected by Dante’s *The Inferno*. His poem illustrates an intimate and exacting appreciation for it thematically, structurally, and stylistically. While the poem exhibits his intimacy with *The Inferno*, it also proves a certain skill level. While he admires Dante and wishes to emulate him, Waugh fails to add unique flavor to the poem. It comes off as almost mimicry. It is not until many years later, in the writing of *Vile Bodies* that he displays a matured and unique finesse in his use of intertextually through his employment of *The Inferno* as lens through which to understand the modern world.⁵

⁴ Hereinafter cited by Canto and line numbers.

⁵ *Vile Bodies* as a possible intra-auctorial text when compared to “The World to Come” needs to be investigated.

While the readers initially experience intertext through the epigraphs, the first intertext encountered by name in the text itself is that of Dante's work. "Particularly against books the Home Secretary is. If we can't stamp out literature in the country, we can at least stop its being brought in from outside," says the customs official to Adam Fenwick-Symes as he inspects Adam's books (*Vile Bodies* 23). The officials graciously allow Adam to keep a few: a dictionary, a book on architecture, and some history books. Adam, however, must surrender "Subversive Propaganda" like his book on economics. Another book that excites one official's "especial disgust," *The Purgatorio*, "stays behind, pending inquiries" (*Vile Bodies* 25). As "downright dirt," Adam's Autobiography is the only one of Adam's books that is burnt.

While he mentions only *The Purgatorio* specifically in *Vile Bodies*, Waugh also draws on the simultaneous humor and terror of *The Inferno* throughout the novel. In essence, Waugh creates a "burlesque travesty," a literary form that, according to Genette, occurs when an author "modifies the style" of a hypotext without modifying its subject (22). Obviously *Vile Bodies* is not an epic poem. It does, however, deal with the devastating consequence of human sin and asserts that people eventually and eternally reap what they sow. Waugh initially alludes to Dante by satirically reinterpreting the theological and cardinal virtues in Purgatory (VIII, 88-93). Among the first to board the ferry at the beginning of the book are Mrs. Melrose Ape, a woman evangelist, and her girls, beautiful women singers who dress as angels. She has named three of these performers for Cardinal virtues—"Prudence," "Fortitude," and "Justice"—and two, "Faith" and "Charity," for theological virtues. These same virtues, along with others, appear in *The Purgatorio* as ever shifting stars that guide pilgrims with necessary grace to

their destination (e. g., VII 35-36 and VIII 85-90). In Waugh's novel, however, these virtues are humans who "crowded together disconsolately" not unlike the souls of hell. Unlike real angels, they participate in sadomasochistic behavior when they promise they "would pinch Chastity and Creative Endeavour," two of the angels, "when they got them alone in their nightshirts" (*Vile Bodies* 3). These costumed angels lack "real" corporeal wings; theirs are stage accessories. One even leaves her wings in the carriage of a train at the outset of the novel because she is distracted by a man. Waugh strongly hints that these are, it would seem, fallen angels.

Allusions to sin and Hell abound in *Vile Bodies*. The protagonist's name, Adam, obviously references the Old Testament parable of original sin, the choice of a person embracing evil over good. Second, demonic creatures appear throughout the narrative. Twice on this stormy ferry ride from the continent to England, Waugh refers to the presence of gargoyles, demonic creatures that were traditionally used to frighten believers into seeking the safety of the church interior. In describing Father Rothschild, observing everyone board the ferry, the narrator relates that "His tongue protruded very slightly and, had they not all been so concerned with luggage and the weather, someone might have observed in him a peculiar resemblance to those plaster reproductions of the gargoyles of Notre Dame" (*Vile Bodies* 2). Then while inside the bar Adam sits with a nameless journalist who looks like a "gargoyle of a man" (*Vile Bodies* 16). These gargoyles, appearing inside and outside, are inescapable. Lastly and most telling Mrs. Ape's own assertion on the Ferry that the world has "forgotten all about Hope" echoes the inscription that Dante encounters just outside Hell that reads "ABANDON ALL HOPE YE WHO ENTER HERE" (III, 9). Through such references, the novel seems to

indicate that the passengers are hell-bound: “Other prominent people were embarking, all very unhappy about the weather; to avert the terrors of seasickness they had indulged in every kind of civilized witchcraft, but they were lacking faith” (*Vile Bodies* 3). The ferry itself becomes a Charon’s Ferry transporting damned souls “to the other shore, / into eternal dark, into fire and ice” (III, 83-4).

While there is no worse place than hell, Dante reminds us, as does Waugh after him, we can laugh at the folly found there while acknowledging that the cause of humor—sin—should be avoided. *The Divine Comedy*, like the Alice books, is entertaining. If one acknowledges the futile attempts humans make throughout the book, especially in *The Inferno*, to thwart the Divine Plan the comedic effect is inescapable. Dante’s *Inferno* is this type of comedy in which he shows the absurdity of thousands of souls that chose suffering over happiness; the Hoarders and the Wasters, who most resemble Waugh’s Bright Young Things, find themselves divided into two mobs. Each mob circles the other while pushing tremendous boulders; each runs into the other mob with their weights then turn and start again. The purpose of their existence, even in hell, is absurd, an absurdity that while humorous is designed to educate those who are still living.⁶ These souls are not at all unlike the myth of Sisyphus who was eternally destined to push a heavy boulder uphill only to let it roll back down again. Waugh recaptures this entertaining futility in *Vile Bodies* revealing both a thematic and stylistic Dantean intertextuality.

⁶ According to Michelle Bolduc in *The Medieval Poetics of Contraries*, “the title “*commedia*” appears (only) twice,” in *The Divine Comedy* and these two instances are found exclusively in *The Inferno*. It is otherwise referred to “in sacred terms, as a ‘*sacrato poema*’” (168).

Lewis Carroll's absurd humor is didactic, particularly in *Through the Looking-Glass*, where Carroll explores the danger of folly. According to Peter Coveney, in *Through the Looking-Glass* "the tone is perceptibly sharper. The humour is more sardonic" with its "merciless, embittered ridicule" (337). Carroll's didacticism and, particularly, his sardonic humor connects his work to Dante's in that *The Inferno* ends with the narrator ridiculing the souls in Hell and shows them no mercy. To contemporary readers, such ridicule seems *schadenfreude*, enjoying others' pain. But this is not the only connection Carroll's work enjoys. In an article comparing the well-known Austrian philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein with Lewis Carroll, George Pitcher reiterates Wittgenstein's belief "that a serious and good philosophic work could be written that would consist entirely of jokes (without being facetious)" and believes that Wittgenstein had Lewis Carroll in mind when made the comment (Pitcher 387). Thus, Lewis Carroll's humor reveals a much deeper understanding of humanity than many people realize.⁷

By combining both the moral aspects of Dante's poem with the nonsensical humorous aspects of Carroll fantasy, *Vile Bodies* exploits the characters' irrational actions to establish a foundation and commitment to intertextuality. For example, in *Through the Looking-Glass*, directly after the Red Queen informs Alice that "to get somewhere else, [she] must run at least twice as fast as that!" (127), Alice rests because she is "so hot and thirsty!" The Red Queen reacts with "'I know what YOU'D like!' the

⁷ Interestingly it appears that the Waughs may have been knowledgeable about Wittgenstein as Waugh's grandson, Alexander Waugh, recently published a book concerning the Wittgenstein family, *The House of the Wittgenstein: A Family at War*, in 2009.

Queen said good-naturedly, taking a little box out of her pocket. ‘Have a biscuit’” (127). Being the gracious guest she is, Alice ingests the biscuit but nearly chokes.

Likewise, the characters of *Vile Bodies* ingest and suffer: they increase their sufferings by articulating wildly irrational “cures” that they graciously insist on taking. While preparing to return to England at the outset of the novel, many of the characters seek “to avert the terrors of sea-sickness they had indulged in every kind of civilized witchcraft” (*Vile Bodies* 4). The Ex-Prime Minister, Walter Outrage, takes twice the dosage of a preparation of chloral while Lady Throbbing and her twin sister, Mrs. Blackwater, down a bottle of champagne and begin to think the boat is moving when it is not. Others eat, like Carroll’s Alice, dry biscuits and then head to the bar to drink away their seasickness. Waugh’s characters, even the unnamed ones, repeatedly attempt to alleviate their problems with alcohol. For instance, at a car race, the barmaid explains to a group of spectators that champagne is a medicinal necessity: “People often feel queer through watching the cars go by so fast—ladies especially” (*Vile Bodies* 242).

Attempting to alleviate discomfort with alcohol is comical but also associated with imminent danger. This danger comes to fruition when Agatha Runcible, after partaking of her share of champagne, believes herself to be the back-up driver in the race and crashes her car causing permanent damage to herself. Even later, on her deathbed, she joins her friends and the hospital nurses in inebriating themselves. In a world where men and women live only for temporary pleasure, these characters consume dryness and, thereby, starve their souls; they deny themselves more permanent happiness and secure permanent sorrow. They, like Alice, embrace the opposite of their needs; unlike Carroll, however, Waugh’s humor retains a sense of human fallacy and its potential for harm.

Fittingly, when the ferry arrives at “the other shore,” the characters disembark only to enter a hellish customs office, echoing with “shrieks and yells.” Where Carroll provides a rabbit hole leading to Wonderland, Waugh leads his not-so-innocent characters into a torture chamber, instead of being bedecked with cupboards and bookshelves they are decorated with “contraband pornography and strange instruments” (*Vile Bodies* 23). Events are not only “curiouser” and “curiouser” as Alice would say but also distasteful and evil.

Although the fact that Adam is singled out at customs for daring to bring books into England makes a case for the loss of England’s moral compass, this act also reaffirms an avenue of escape beyond the story. The books that cause the most consternation and condemnation are Adam’s own *Autobiography* (a sort of confession) and the second book in Dante’s *Divine Comedy*, *The Purgatorio* (a book concerning the reparation of sin and heavenly reward). Taken together these two books represent the influence of literature on humanity. The *Autobiography* is a confession, a mirror, a *Looking-Glass*. *The Purgatorio* is not only the consequence of those actions found in the *Autobiography* but a promise of eventual eternal happiness. After reading parts of Adam’s *Autobiography*, laughing sinisterly at it, and calling it “downright dirt,” the customs official denies Adam his confession and absolution by burning the manuscript. Then the officials deny him Dante’s ability to “purge its guilt / and so grow worthy to ascent to heaven” (V, 6): when two officers confiscate his copy of *The Purgatorio* because it “excited [their] special disgust” (*Vile Bodies* 22). The “renewed hope” (*Vile Bodies* 21) instilled by Mrs. Ape’s singing is also only a ruse. Without the reflection of culture, in the form of books or artifacts, the characters cannot reflect upon themselves

and cannot improve. They are hopeless. However, the mention of these books act as a map for the readers. Riffaterre refers to these types of gaps in a text in “Compulsory Reader Response” as a common characteristic of intertextual instances. Although the characters forget the literary culture that could possibly lead them away from their misery, readers are continually reminded and their hope continually renewed through the demand for reflection.

Waugh seems to suggest that Dante and Carroll share, perhaps, a similarity of thwarted and nonsensical movement in a nightmarish territory. Through intertextuality, *Vile Bodies* claims this same territory. Yet, to date, only Rachel Falconer posits a connection between Carroll and Dante. In “Underworld Portmanteaux: Dante’s Hell and Carroll’s Wonderland in Women’s Memoirs of Mental Illness,” Falconer likens Alice’s leap down the rabbit hole to Dante’s journey into hell. She does not, however, connect Dante to the more mature Alice of *Looking-Glass*, who consciously seeks this new country. As mentioned earlier, no scholar has taken the next step: identifying and analyzing the intertextual appearance of both *Through the Looking-Glass* and *The Inferno* as the vehicle through which the story of *Vile Bodies* unfolds.

All three texts require their protagonists paradoxically to move backward in order to move forward. That is, they must diminish in order to succeed. In *The Inferno*, the speaker finds himself in a dark wood on Good Friday and beholds a “little hill” (I, 15) whose “shoulders glowed / already with the sweet rays of that planet / whose virtue leads men straight on every road” (I, 16-8). Yet, when he attempts to climb, he is stopped by a leopard, a lion, and a she-wolf. It is only when his guide Virgil appears to the speaker that the man learns the only manner in which he can ascend into heaven is by first taking the

opposing path and descending into hell. He must first undergo the hardship of examining his own sinful nature before he can begin to ascend.

Alice experiences a similar curious problem in *Through the Looking-Glass* although her “entry into fantasyland comes about through choice rather than accident” (White 110). In this book she is no longer the Alice who is “passively plummeted down into Wonderland” but instead a “very active Alice who works her way into Looking Glass Land through an elaborate game of didactic ‘let’s pretend’” (Reichertz 25). I suggest, however, that the mirror and the idea of reflection are keys to the story and believe that Carroll uses the looking glass as a tool for self-examination. Climbing into the mirror is only just the beginning of a journey that requires Alice to question her assumptions. After passing through the mirror, Alice begins to explore the strange new world she has found. She decides to climb to the top of a little hill to better view her surroundings. In spite of her many efforts she continuously finds herself “coming back to the house, do what she would” (*Looking-Glass* 77). She too, like Dante, meets three creatures: a Tiger-Lily, a Rose, and a Daisy. Alice tells them she is off to meet and talk to the Red Queen who they know is near the hill. The Rose behaves as Dante’s three beasts and tries to make her turn around by responding, “‘You can’t possibly do that’, said the Rose. ‘I should advise you to walk the other way.’” Alice does not heed the advice. She tries again, but “To her surprise, she lost sight of [the Queen] in a moment, and found herself walking in at the front-door again” (*Looking-Glass* 79). She rejects not only counsel but also humility. Finally after continued failure, she “thought she would try the plan, this time, of walking in the opposite direction ... She had not been walking a minute before she found herself face to face with the Red Queen, and full in sight of the hill she

had been so long aiming at” (*Looking-Glass* 79). In this pivotal moment in the text Alice embraces humility when she recognizes her fallibility, heeds the Rose’s advice, and chooses to go in what she perceives as the wrong direction in order to end up headed the right way. Like Dante, she surrenders with humility, abandons her self-assurance, and begins to progress.

This is a moment not of illogical movement but “an argument for meekly retaining faith in and obedience to an order that has come under fire, both from one’s peers and from one’s own reason” as Berger states of the entire *Looking-Glass* book (19).⁸ This moment of humility results in self-examination and successful action. While the sense of thwarted movement is evident, self-examination and humility are pointedly absent in *Vile Bodies*, Adam’s inability to master humility underscores the futility of his movements; he ultimately fails because his ascent is predicated on monetary gain. Although he had once hoped to become a writer, his main desire from the moment the bureaucrats confiscate his autobiography until the end of the novel is to pay off his debts—something he could do if he eschewed his pomposity and embraced any remunerative writing assignments. He attempts to gain money legitimately and logically but fails. Like *Comedy*’s speaker and Alice, his efforts to get around obstacles are thwarted. He writes a novel, which is thrown into a fire. He asks his future father-in-law, Colonel Blount, for money and receives a fraudulent check. He even wins thousands of dollars because he allows a “drunk Major” to place a thousand of his dollars on a horse,

⁸ In the realm of faith and humility, this same idea would also have been known to Waugh through the words of G.K. Chesterton who states in “My Six Conversations: III” (*The Well and the Shadows*), “a Catholic is a person who has plucked up the courage to face the incredible and inconceivable idea that something else may be wiser than he is.”

Indian Runner, for the November Handicap. After Indian Runner wins, however, the Major who placed the bet for him is just as much beyond his reach as are the respective hills for Dante and Alice. At the November Handicap, Adam sees the Major at a distance. “Suddenly, among the crowd,” we learn,

he saw the genial red face of the drunk major to whom he had entrusted his thousand pounds at Lottie’s. It seemed odd that a man so bulky could be so elusive. Adam was not sure whether the Major saw him, but in some mysterious way Adam’s pursuit coincided with the Major’s complete disappearance. (*Vile Bodies* 162)

Later in the book when the Major, in a coupe, finds Adam, he is sent away by the policeman before Adam can give his name. The Major once again “disappeared into the crowd” (*Vile Bodies* 233). Finally, when Adam stops actively seeking the Major, he finds himself face-to-face with him, much the way Alice catches up with the Red Queen once she stops trying to reach her. By then, however, readers are given to understand that it is quite possibly the end of the world and Adam’s money is worthless. The novel’s end finds Adam stuck in limbo by refusing to examine himself and failing to achieve the humility of either Alice or Dante’s speaker.

Following in the tradition of his hypotexts, Waugh concurs that the presence of a guide provides effective navigation of the labyrinth of nonsensical surroundings. These guides not only prophesize the future to some extent but also possesses specialized gifts of movement. The appearance of a guide in *Vile Bodies* reflects a long tradition of literary guides that goes back the Socratic dialogues and Boethius’s *Consolation of Philosophy*. The Socratic style, as Kristeva and others have pointed out, leaves little room for free

response from either the other characters or the reader (Kristeva 81). By the Middle Ages (as in the case of *The Divine Comedy*), the guide takes on a spiritual dimension.

Eventually in modern literature, this spiritual guidance often becomes disguised or subsumed. The guides in Carroll's texts are reminiscent of Virgil's role in *The Divine Comedy*; Waugh follows Carroll in this regard.

Waugh borrows aspects of Dante's and Alice's guides to create a new species of guide, who, while subtle, stimulates the exercise of reason and retains freewill. To understand Waugh's use of a guide, however, one must understand the two guides from whom he draws. In *The Divine Comedy* Dante's Virgil describes how the speaker, upon following Virgil into the first realm of the afterlife, will "see the ancient spirits tried in endless pain" and then will witness "a burning mountain" of "souls on fire yet content in fire" before he finally "will mount into the blessed choir" (I, 114). He also relates to the speaker that through Beatrice he has learned of the character's sinful life. Although Virgil makes it clear that he himself cannot enter heaven, he does exhibit a special liberty of movement that others do not. First of all souls in Limbo, Virgil's eternal home, cannot venture beyond its borders. God, however, has granted Virgil special permission so that he may lead Dante anywhere in Hell. Upon entering the Gates of Hell, Dante is told to leave by Charon, the mercenary ferryman, because he must travel "By other windings and by other steerage" (III, 90) to the other side of Acheron (the river of woe); the speaker is living, a soul in grace, whereas Charon is transporting dead souls will learn of their punishments for sin. Virgil, however, rebukes Charon and assures their passage. Indeed, he silences a few of the innkeepers of Hell and thus assures Dante's and his own

movement down into its depths. He possesses the means to facilitate Dante on an otherwise impossible journey.

Carroll's guides mirror Virgil by ensuring passage in hostile territory but also encouraging a greater degree of freewill during Alice's journey. Guidance in *Through the Looking-Glass* comes not from one guide but many, perhaps alluding to the use of literary history to aid sojourners of truth in many ways. In her journey Alice encounters many guides including the White Rabbit and the Caterpillar; but two particular guides, the Cheshire Cat and the Red Queen, also exhibit an ability to move freely but who, unlike Virgil, direct rather than escort her constantly on her journey. In *Alice in Wonderland*, Alice leaves the Duchess's house and finds herself lost in the woods. The Cheshire Cat appears, and Alice, always polite, asks "Would you tell me please, which way I ought to go from here?" (*Wonderland* 32). Always the mischievous philosopher, he responds that, if she does not know where she wants to go, it does not matter where she goes. In short, he asks her to think and consider for herself. Then he tells her that in two opposing directions live the Mad Hatter and the March Hare. After a brief conversation, the Cat asks, "Do you play croquet with the Queen today?" But the grinning Cat already knows the answer. Although Alice tells him that she has not been invited, he prophetically states, "You'll see me there' and vanished" (*Wonderland* 33). Soon thereafter he reappears and then "vanished quite slowly, beginning with the end of the tail and ending with the grin." (33). The Cat's prophecy of seeing her at the game comes to fruition when his head—the seat of knowledge and ratiocination, reappears, but the Queen sentences him to decapitation. His mere presence engenders the exercise of reason and aids in his free movement when an argument about how to decapitate a

bodiless head ensues. The Cat evades the intended decapitation when he again, or at least his head, disappears. While the Cheshire Cat carries the magic of movement and knowledge, his perplexing answers nudge Alice and others to think and reason.

This broadening of intellect increases with the introduction of The Red Queen as a guide. Although it was the Rose who appears to be Alice's first guide to maneuvering in Looking-Glass Land, it is the Red Queen who lays out, like Dante's Virgil, the path Alice will travel. It is here that one of the aforementioned epigraph takes place. As the Red Queen places pegs in the ground, at each peg she foretells how Alice will move about in this land. As Alice arrives at the last peg, the Queen is gone. It's a mystery, and "How it happened, Alice never knew, ... Whether she vanished into thin air, or whether she ran quickly into the wood ('and she *can* run very fast,' thought Alice, there was no way of guessing . . .)" (*Looking-Glass* 26). Many readers believe that, because many characters and much of the landscape resemble a chessboard, the movements made always coincide with movements made by chess pieces. For example, the Red Queen's disappearing trick is not a trick at all but a move she makes diagonally across the board. "So long as the Red Queen was in the square next to her, Alice could see her and hear her," Taylor asserts, "but when she steamed off in a direction which did not as yet exist for Alice, she simply vanished" (90). When Alice becomes queen, she too will be able to move freely like the Red Queen. The impossible will become possible. So, in the end, the Red Queen's instructions to Alice not only foretell her future, but also promise her, as does the presence of Virgil in *The Divine Comedy*, eventual free movement.

Waugh combines the characteristics of prophecy, free movement, and reason in the *Vile Bodies* guide, Father Rothschild, Waugh's version of a Carrollinian and

Dantesque guide. It is Father Rothschild who greets Adam he boards the Ferry, even though the two characters have never before met. A spiritual guide who exhibits the humor of Carroll's guides, Father Rothschild seems to know all about Adam's past: "I shall be interested to read your book when it appears—an autobiography, I understand. And may I be one of the first to congratulate you on your engagement" (*Vile Bodies* 8). Like the Cheshire Cat and the Red Queen, the priest also seems to know, although somewhat imperfectly, about Adam's future. He comments to Adam, "I am afraid you will find your father-in-law a little eccentric—and forgetful... We meet at Lady Metroland's on the twelfth, if not, as I hope, before" (*Vile Bodies* 8). In fact, Adam becomes a pretend son-in-law to Colonel Blount, and he does attend the gathering at Lady Metroland's. After his prophesy and before Adam can respond, Father Rothschild "disappeared" like the Red Queen. His "head popped back" (*Vile Bodies* 8) later and appears like the floating head of the Cheshire Cat. Rothschild leans on the ferry's railing, his tongue slightly protruding, seeming to bear "a peculiar resemblance to those plaster reproductions of the gargoyles of Notre Dame which may be seen in the shop windows of artists' colourmen tinted the colour of 'Old Ivory' (*Vile Bodies* 2). Carroll's Cheshire Cat, likewise, has "the mad grin of the appearing and disappearing gargoyle 'hangs over' the heads of the participant in the game of life" (Bloomingtondale 385). Father Rothschild, however, only appears to be mad. His disappearances and reappearances help avert danger. Like Virgil, he warns Adam that "There is an extremely dangerous and disagreeable woman on board—a Mrs. Ape" (*Vile Bodies* 8). Later, he demonstrates a Red Queen-like skill in movement; when the ferry arrives in England, he "fluttered a diplomatic laissez-passer and disappeared in the large car that had been sent to meet him"

(*Vile Bodies* 21). He is not detained and searched at customs with everyone else. He is beyond the reach of the officials, who possess the authority even to strip search young women from affluent and influential families, such as Agatha Runcible. His freedom, as well as his title, gives the impression that he belongs to the realm of the eternal.

By comparing Father Rothschild to the above-mentioned guides, Waugh eradicates the determinism inherent in the hypotexts. He is neither a philosophical genius forever damned to the outer circles of Hell nor a Queen forever stuck in an intricate, yet confusing game of chess. Later in the novel, it becomes apparent that Rothschild cannot prophecy the future with full accuracy of either Virgil, The Cheshire Cat, or the Queen. They know what will happen to their subjects. He does not. Although he knows of Adam's past, he does not control or know the future. Rothschild fails to divine that Adam will neither publish his memoir nor marry Nina. However, unlike Dante and Alice, Adam's eternal fate is not sealed. He is a fallible human rather than a bewildered traveler or a small girl, and can still strive towards good.

Waugh doesn't allow Rothschild the fatalism and determinism associated with the other guides. Instead, he presents Father Rothschild as a key for the restoration of humanity. He is the only person in the novel who takes a vested interest in others and concerns himself with their wellbeing. He restores hope, not just for the characters of the novel necessarily but for readers as well. While the Queen and Virgil both know exactly what will happen to their subjects, Rothschild cannot know because he is neither caricature nor deceased poet. As a semblance of hope for the characters and the readers, Rothschild fosters the realization that life not settled and that events do not have to remain in an absurd state. Rothschild thereby shows that humanity can seek and move in

another direction and that salvation must be worked out. Critic Terry Eagleton believes that Father Rothschild is a “suggested” though not “realized centre” in the novel (108). The false beard he carries in his suitcase, his ability to understand six languages, his laissez-passer and his motorcycle suggest that he too attempts to reach a center that is not himself. The minimal disguise in his suitcase shows that he possesses the secrets of free movement because it recalls how Mexican priests had to travel incognito during the persecution of Catholics in Mexico that took place even during the writing of *Vile Bodies*, persecution of which Waugh was aware. In fact he was so aware of the persecution of the Church there that according to biographer Selena Hastings his travel book about Mexico “Robbery Under Law” was in part “an impassioned history of the state’s persecution of the Church” (376). It was a time in Mexico’s history that disguise was a means of survival for many. The disguise of Rothschild itself most recalls the Mexican priest, José Ramón Miguel Agustín Pro Juárez (1891-1927, also known as the Blessed Miguel Pro) who, like Father Rothschild, is a Jesuit. Blessed Miguel Pro was known for often disguising himself as a beggar in order to hide from the Mexican authorities (Mueller). But Father Rothschild is not fated to die a martyr in *Vile Bodies*, even though his vocation is much like that of Pro. Because he wants to ensure the continuance of civilization, Rothschild keeps secrets to himself that are not secrets he seems to want to keep. He, like the Red Queen and Virgil, wishes to use his secrets to help others especially the younger generation who he feels leads a “very difficult” existence and who need to be lead away from a “radical instability in our whole world-order” (*Vile Bodies* 185). With his a keen sense of humanity’s sufferings, he is, as Flannery O’Connor writes, “one of Waugh’s best strokes” (160).

This “radical instability” that causes society to walk “into the jaws of destruction again, protesting [its] pacific intentions” (*Vile Bodies* 185) is a gradual evolution from purposeless movement into amoral stasis made meaningful to the readers only through its intertextual relationship with Dante and Carroll. For the first half of the novel, Waugh presents the characters as largely morally ambivalent. They demonstrate their ambivalence between good and bad by continually questioning themselves with “Do you? Or don’t you?” The actions of the characters reflect Waugh’s own criticism of contemporary society in an article entitled “Tolerance”: “the danger which faces so many people today [is]—to have no considered opinions on any subject, to put up with what is wasteful and harmful with the excuse that there is ‘good in everything’—which in most cases means an inability to distinguish between good and bad” (Gallagher 128). This type of ambivalence grounded in nihilism leads largely to inactivity, stasis.

Yet the characters of the novel are unaware of their inactivity because their adoration of self-pleasure gives the illusion of movement. They resemble Tweedledee and Tweedledum who suddenly grab hands with Alice, spin in a circle, and go nowhere. A simultaneous devotion to pleasure and relativism prevents Waugh’s characters from moving beyond an eternal infernal circling not unlike that of many of the souls in *The Inferno*. This circular movement is evident in all of Waugh’s writing; in fact, “the circle has been in the past a figure of perfection, but it has also been,” as it is in Dante’s *Inferno*, “the figure of empty, meaningless movement, of eternal hunger which never finds satisfaction or rest. It is in the ‘infernal’ sense that the circularity appears in Waugh” (Kernan 89). Still critics overlook the specific allusion to Dante in *Vile Bodies*. Dante’s *Inferno* is filled with circles and with inevitable, purposeless movement. Those

souls of hell who are not stuck in trees, mud, water, or ice are continually and perpetually circling.

Waugh infuses this “meaningless movement” with meaning much as the motion of all souls in hell is “a deviation of the soul’s proper motion” (Gross 45). The Bright Young things are guilty of this same deviation. They do not fit in just one category in Hell, but their circular movement is uniform. Because of their ambivalence and their selfish “meaningless movement,” the pleasure-seeking Bright Young Things seem at first to mirror the souls of the vestibule of Hell “whose lives concluded neither blame nor praise.” (III, 33). These are the opportunists, the souls who took neither the devil nor God’s side but who chose to live “only for themselves” (III, 36). Interestingly, in *The Waste Land* T.S. Eliot relates the condition of these same souls to modernity with a phrase borrowed directly from Dante: “I had not thought death had undone so many” (III, 53; Eliot 64). Waugh knew *The Waste Land* well, even calling Eliot’s poetry “incredibly good” in his diary (242), a fact that suggests that he was possibly and intentionally reinventing Dante’s opportunists. Indeed, Waugh’s Bright Young Things are similar to the crowd that Eliot’s narrator sees going over the London Bridge, the same crowd that a drunken Anthony Blanche in Waugh’s later novel, *Brideshead Revisited*, sees going to the river. This crowd is modernity.

Unable to escape the vicious cycles of meaninglessness, Adam becomes continuously disheartened with repetitiously making and losing money and remaking and breaking his engagement to Nina. He regularly circles up to and away from the Major who could ease his financial debt. Even the “great fun” promised in the whirlwind of premarital sex turns out to be only a “pain” (*Vile Bodies* 108) that leads Nina and Adam

back to the problems in their relationship. The major action undertaken by *Vile Bodies*' Bright Young Things is constant, pointless movement. They travel to and attend parties, but all parties are "the same party where one hears the same talk and sees the same faces" (Kernan 90). These Bright Young Things possess a false hope that happiness is within their reach, and, thus, their illusion causes them to fail to alter their cyclical courses. They are gamblers who believe that someday they will move beyond the unhappiness that they themselves are perpetuating.

Throughout *Vile Bodies* Waugh emphasizes the inherent paralysis of the lives of the Bright Young Things. For example, the photographers at Archie's party create "frozen" partygoers. Another instance of stasis takes place at a later party on a tethered airship where according to Davis "the passengers do not have even the illusion of progress since the dirigible is firmly tethered, their physical movements are even more constricted or obstructed by their cramped quarters" ("Title, Theme and Structure" 24). Because they are dancing, talking, and drinking, the characters are moving; yet, their passive movement leads to nothing. This illusory movement and the inevitable stasis culminate at the motor races that are the climax of the book.

The constant circling inevitably leads to a downward spiral—a vortex leading to the ultimate stasis of death. The Bright Young Things find themselves not in paradise but, instead, in a place closely resembling Dante's *Inferno*. In the final cantos of *The Inferno*, Dante and Virgil come upon the "hideous" Satan, who with his gigantic wings "beat them so that three winds blew from him in one great storm" (XXXIV, 50-1). This storm creates more ice that fixes him even more into place. It is his useless movement that secures his eternal position. The movement of the Bright Young Things leads to a similar paralysis.

In the self-centered “opportunistic” minds of Agatha, Adam, Archie, and Miles, sending a wire to make a reservation guarantees a hotel room. Their presumption deceives them. Because of the motor race, rooms in every hotel they try are booked. Consequently, they move from place to place in search of beds while attempting to avoid the notorious Royal George Hotel. Like Lucifer, who gets more and more fixed in the center of Hell the more he beats his wings, the more they attempt not to stay at the Royal George the closer and faster they are pulled toward it. Eventually their stay there is an experience of Hell itself filled with contaminated water, hundreds of bed bugs, and dirty tissues in the sheets. It, like Hell, affords no rest.⁹ The day after their nightmarish stay in the Royal George, the four characters attend the motor races where the circling continues. In order to be close to their friend in the pit, they are told to put brassards on their arms. Agatha’s reads “Spare Driver.” When the real driver gets injured, drunken Agatha demands to finish the race as the spare driver. She circles the course and eventually veers away, crashing into a monument and suffering a concussion that is, after much suffering, fatal.

A small, unrecognized Carroll quotation in *Vile Bodies* underscores the incessant circling that ends in death. The readers were alerted to this stasis with the first epigraph, from *Through the Looking-Glass*, when the Queen and Alice discuss the differing speed of their countries. Just prior to this scene when the Queen orders Alice to run, she yells repeatedly, “Faster!” and “Faster! Faster!” In an oblique allusion to Carroll overlooked by most critics, Waugh finalizes Agatha’s ultimate stasis. After her crash and during a party in her nursing home, Agatha suffers delirium, and she, too, yells “Faster” and

⁹ This experience of hell on earth is not unlike St. Teresa of Avila’s belief that often life is akin to “a bad night in a bad inn” an idea that I am further developing.

“Faster! Faster!” As if that allusion were not enough evidence for intertextual readers, Waugh repeats it. In a hallucination just prior to Agatha’s death, people yell “Faster! Faster!” at her. She also then yells “Faster! Faster” twice as an imaginary car sweeps her along a dangerous racecourse. Lying in her bed, Agatha is moving at the same pace as Alice. She is moving fast but going nowhere. The faster she goes, the more exhausted she becomes and the more frantic. Soon the nurses respond to Agatha’s mania with a hypodermic needle and a reassurance that there is nothing to worry about “there is nothing...nothing (*Vile Bodies* 285). Soon thereafter, she dies and disappears from the novel. This repetitive, frenetic circular movement has brought her only death.

Agatha’s death in *Vile Bodies* enacts a disharmony between the body and the soul that is likewise present in *The Inferno* and the Alice books. This disharmony precedes a loss of selfhood. In *The Inferno*, indeed in all of *The Divine Comedy*, there is no disjuncture between the body and the soul in the afterlife. During earthly life, some people, focusing on the body, attempt to ignore their souls. Consequently, the people in *The Inferno* must learn the lesson that attempting to separate the body from the soul is analogous to separating limbs from the body. This is, indeed, the theology behind the suffering of the contrapassos of *The Inferno*. On earth, the souls were careless with their bodies and caused them suffering; now, in Hell their bodies will cause their souls to suffer.

The worst suffering of the souls in *The Inferno* entails the isolation of body parts and paralysis of the body and soul. In the final floor of Hell, Dante sees only portions of bodies as he travels through Caina, Antenora, Ptolomea, and Juddeca, the four circles in this part of Hell. In Caina the sinners are covered in an ice floor up to their shoulders. By

bending, they can still partly protect their eyes from the cold infernal wind. In Antenora the dead are buried in ice up to their heads. They still can close their eyes. In Ptolomea, however, only half their faces are free from the ice. Paralysis is achieved in Juddeca where the sinners are completely encased in ice. These souls, once entire and mobile, have become stagnant and isolated.

Their placement in Hell is both the outcome of ignoring their spiritual identity and the cause of losing their sense of selfhood. This is not to say that they have no identity because Dante often recognizes people in Hell—a pivotal part of the work’s dark satire. One section of Hell, however, contains the souls who are unrecognizable: the section where the Hoarders and the Wasters reside. These sufferers’ souls “have become so dimmed and awry in their fruitless rages that there is no hope in recognizing any among them” (Ciardi 71). Although most other souls in Hell are somewhat recognizable, these have divorced their spiritual souls from their material souls and thus have obliterated their identities. They have so distorted their true natures that their sense of true self is gone. They relish their “self-centered selfhood because they have set a higher premium on self-advancement and the self’s material needs than on the love of God” (Green 54). Because they are completely ignorant of God, they cannot recognize themselves. Truly, “each damned soul knows only the partial truth about his or her moral and symbolic state” (Gross 49). Each is merely one of many similar ignorant suffering souls.

In *Alice in Wonderland*, Carroll also depicts paralysis that results from bodily implications. It is when Alice gives into her bodily desires without considering the repercussions that she begins to separate her soul from her body. With only one exception, bodily change in Alice is induced by eating or drinking (Greenacre 327).

When she is enticed first by a little bottle “with ‘drink me’ beautifully printed on it,” her body shrinks. She discovers another enticement: a cake “with ‘eat me’ beautifully marked in currants” (*Wonderland* 6). No other scene better encapsulates the separation between herself and her body than the moment when she eats the cake, grows to over nine feet tall, and finds her feet so “far off” that she begins addressing them as an entity other than herself. She decides that she will send them a “new pair of boots every Christmas” at the address, “Alice’s Right Foot, Esq. / Hearthrug, / Near the Fender, / (With Alice’s love)” (*Wonderland* 7). She fed her body because she desired an escape; but her supposed means of escape, eating, hinders her from being able to leave. She is trapped, seemingly separated from parts of her body, and so becomes alienated from her own self.

This alienation from her body entails not only a loss of self-identity, but also the loss of a clear identity in the eyes of others. First, she begins to question “Who in the world am I? Ah, that’s the great puzzle! And she began thinking over all the children she knew that were of the same age as herself, to see if she could have been changed for any of them” (*Wonderland* 7-8). She then wonders if she has somehow been changed into her friend Ada or Mabel. Soon thereafter, the White Rabbit sees her and angrily asks her, “Mary Ann, what are you doing out here?” Alice then obligingly takes on the role of Mary Ann and goes in search of the rabbit’s gloves. She runs into the Caterpillar who asks twice, “Who are you?” to which she responds, “I am not myself you see” (*Wonderland* 23).

In *Through the Looking-Glass*, this motif of identity loss leads to danger as Alice finds herself in the forest of forgetting. Here she forgets her name and encounters a fawn who also has forgotten his identity. Consequently, the two become friends. “And how,

who am I?” she asks. Then she promises herself, “I WILL remember if I can! I’m determined to do it!” But the effort proves unsuccessful, “and all she could say, after a great deal of puzzling, was, L. I KNOW it begins with L!” (*Looking-Glass* 87). Because the two have lost their names, their natural identities have become ambiguous. There is no fear of mortality nor is there “the concept of permanent identity” (Rackin 397). Instead, this loss of identity and names is associated with danger. Because neither Alice nor the fawn can remember their names, they do not fear for their safety. It is only when they come out of the woods and remember who they are that they regain their sense of self and the ability to preserve themselves. Consequently, the fawn runs away for its own protection, and Alice once again realizes that she is lost.

Instead of starting on a path to enlightenment as Dante does in *The Divine Comedy*, the Bright Young Things of *Vile Bodies* vanish into Alice’s forest of forgetting where they lose their identities and invite danger. Like the souls in Hell, the Bright Young Things first act as if their bodies are separate from their souls and, thereby, lose their identities through their careless attitudes towards their bodies. The disregard for their bodily wellbeing is usually exemplified in sexual experiences. At the beginning of the novel an “angel” leaves her wings in a train because she was “talking to a man.” She becomes, figuratively, a fallen angel. With her species changed her identity is lost. Soon thereafter, when Adam and Nina forgo marriage and give in to their sexual desire, they lose control and become irritated and bored with one another. They are no longer in love; what’s worse, they no longer know what they want and, thus, break up. Mrs. Panrast—who engages in some sort of sexual exploit with Chastity and worries if “that silly little girl had been talking”—seems to lose her sexual identity when Chastity confesses that

she “thought she was a man” (*Vile Bodies* 127). Just as, according to Kernan, every party is the same party, the characters seem interchangeable.

Waugh climaxes this loss of identity through a cinematic technique that alludes to *Through the Looking-Glass*. He uses Colonel Blount’s movie “A Brand From the Burning: A Film Based on the Life of John Wesley” to depict this loss in ways that would otherwise not be cohesive to the realism (although stretched at times) of the book. First it is important to recall that the cinema peaked Waugh’s curiosity to such an extent that he was a film critic and made his own film with Terence Greenidge. (“Intro” Davis, 7). In the movie, *The Scarlett Woman*, he, along with his friends, experiment with cinematography, lighting, and even special effect. The movie, itself, however, is a farce. It is a laugh at the expense of cinema because of its lack of realism. Mr. Blount’s movie is another farce not on the part of the Colonel but on the part of Waugh. First, Waugh suggests an intertextual linkage naming the film company “Wonderfilm” an obvious take on “wonderland.” The lack of realism is more pronounced, however, and affectively shows the fruitless movement of the Bright Young Things. “One of its peculiarities,” the narrator points out, “was that whenever the story reached a point of dramatic significant action, the film seemed to get faster and faster. Villagers trotted to church as though galvanized; lovers shot in and out of windows: horses flashed past like motor cars; riots happened so quickly that they were hardly noticed” (300-1). The film’s characters bear uncanny resemblances to the Bright Young Things, going from one dance party to the next, without purpose and meaning. Then the film, like the bodies in both Dante and Lewis Carroll’s texts, contort and disappear “sometimes the heads of the dancers would disappear above the top of the pictures; sometimes they would sink waist deep as though

in quicksand” (*Vile Bodies* 300). The dancers grow like Alice to such a height that they no longer fit in the camera frame. They also shrink to such an extent that they seem swallowed up by their surroundings. Through the movie the reader can see, not just surmise, that The Bright Young Things experience a divorce of body and soul.

In a telling allusion to Carroll, Waugh reinforces the notion that the separation of soul from the body ends, ultimately, in extinction. Adam, now bankrupt, earns a job as a gossip columnist but is prohibited from writing about any real person. He invents Imogen Quest who becomes the most sought after celebrity because

her character was a lovely harmony of contending virtue—she was witty and tender-hearted; passionate and serene, sensual and temperate, impulsive and discreet. Her set, the most intimate and brilliant in Europe, achieved a superb mean between those two poles of savagery Lady Circumstance and Lady Metroland. Soon Imogen became a byword for social inaccessibility—the final goal for all climbers (*Vile Bodies* 158).

Imogen Quest is a creation with clear affinities to the Alice stories. Her first name Imogen or “image” suggests a looking glass. Her surname, Quest, recalls both trips into Looking-Glass Land and Wonderland. Moreover, Imogen “fenced with a saber for half an hour every morning before breakfast” (*Vile Bodies* 158), a ritual that recalls the White Queen’s pre-breakfast exercise (also lasting half an hour) of practicing belief in impossible things. When Alice tells her that she “‘CAN’T believe impossible things,’” the White Queen replies, “I daresay you haven’t had much practice. When I was your age, I always did it for half-an hour a day. Why, sometimes I’ve believed as many as six impossible things before breakfast” (*Looking-Glass* 99). Imogen Quest is an impossible

thing, an invention, a personality without a body. She is what everyone wishes they could be. The more the public likes her and the more they chase after her, the more elusive she becomes until one day Adam sends her and her family to Jamaica never to return. The reading public fails to recognize that she is a figment of a journalist's imagination. She is an illusion, a mirror held up to society's pretensions and vanities. All the Bright Young Things who chase after Imogen Quest are dangerously chasing an Imagined Quest and will end up, like the object of their chase, as nothing, with nothing, bound in nothingness.

Another character exhibiting affinity with the Alice stories Colonel Blount, Waugh's version of Carroll's Caterpillar. When Adam ventures to Colonel Blount's house and rings the bell, the Colonel slams the door on him. After the second ring, the Colonel is more courteous but mistakes Adam for a man who wishes to sell him a vacuum cleaner. Later, the Colonel learns Adam's name and that he is, in fact, the fiancé of the Colonel's daughter, Nina. They lunch together and then take naps. Upon waking, the eccentric Colonel asks Adam, "Who the devil are you?" Learning Adam's name once again, he confesses, "I've such a bad memory for names. It comes of seeing so few people" (*Vile Bodies* 96). He then asks Adam's name one more time in order to write him a check for a thousand pounds. Like the Caterpillar, Colonel Blount is preoccupied with identity. Through this encounter with the Colonel, Waugh reiterates the consequences of losing one's identity. Because Adam has no concern for identity, he fails to verify that the check the colonel gives him is properly made out. To celebrate his newfound wealth, Adam takes Nina on a date, and they make the fateful decision to sleep together since the money will allow them get married. The next day, however, they realize that the Colonel has signed the check "Charlie Chaplin." They cannot get married. Because of their

inability to take heed and recognize false identity, they have made an ill-conceived decision that turns out to be “a pain,” according to Nina, a decision that will eventually end their engagement.

When the characters of *Vile Bodies* lose the safeguard of their names, danger presents itself. Four of the characters—Agatha, Adam, Miles and Archie—travel to see a car race, and, knowing one of the racers, they are allowed to watch the race from the pit but only if they assume other identities. Miles’s friend hands them brassards to wear on their arms. “Miss Runcible’s said, ‘SPARE DRIVER’; Adam’s, “DEPOT STAFF”; Miles’, “SPARE MECHANIC”; and Archie’s “OWNER’S REPRESENTATIVE” (*Vile Bodies* 228). Like Alice and the Fawn in *Through the Looking-Glass*, Waugh’s characters lose their names and their ability to detect imminent danger.

The consequences are fatal for Agatha who fully gives in to her lack of identity and, in so doing, brings on her demise. Agatha is Imogene Quest’s counterpart. Where Imogen was an identity without a body, Agatha is a body without an identity. This condition is foreshadowed at the beginning of the novel when, although she is from a well-known family, Agatha is stripped naked and frisked in the customs office. Once Agatha assumes a false identity, she obviously flirts with danger. While pretending to be the spare driver, she lights a cigarette three separate times and has to be reminded each time about the danger of smoking next to the four barrels of petrol. Later, after getting drunk from champagne, she assumes this false new identity. Miles’s friend, the driver of the racecar, is injured, and Agatha steps forward:

‘I’m spare driver,’ said Miss Runcible. ‘It’s on my arm.’

‘She’s spare driver. Look, it’s on her arm.’

‘Well, do you want to scratch?’

“No, I don’t want to scratch.”

‘All right. What’s your name?’

‘Agatha. I’m the spare driver. It’s on my arm.’

‘I can see it is---all right, start off as soon as you like.’

‘Agatha,’ repeated Miss Runcible firmly as she climbed into the car.

‘It’s on my arm.’

‘I say, Agatha,’ said Adam. ‘Are you sure you’re all right?’

‘It’s on my arm,’ said Miss Runcible severely. (*Vile Bodies* 246)

Confused in thinking that she is truly the spare driver, Agatha Runcible epitomizes how the Bright Young Things have lost their identities. They have all put themselves in precarious situations, none more so than Agatha. When she crashes the car, her old identity disappears completely. Her friends later learn that, “Miss Runcible had been found early that morning staring fixedly at a model engine in the central hall of Euston Station. In answer to some gentle questions, she replied that to the best of her knowledge she had no name, pointing to the brassard on her arm, as if in confirmation of this fact” (*Vile Bodies* 258). Agatha, like Alice, is a body with no name.

Even after she recuperates her name, the combination of intertextuality and intratextuality not only foretell of Agatha’s demise but also that of all the Bright Young Things. In the nursing home, a discussion between Adam and Agatha ends up in confusion over names. Speaking about his breakup with Nina, Adam says:

‘I’m desperate about it. I’m thinking of committing suicide, like Simon.’

‘Don’t do that darling...did Simon commit suicide?’

‘My dear, you know he did. The night all those libel actions started.’

‘Oh, that Simon. I thought you meant Simon.’

‘Who’s Simon?’

‘The young man who fell out of the aeroplane.’ (*Vile Bodies* 265)

This conversation introduces the perplexing fact that there are two Simons, potentially leaving the reader as confused as Agatha. In fact, this second Simon is a code for the reader. Riffaterre, in *Text Production*, believes that novels could not function without codes because codes enable communication between the readers and the text. Otherwise, a reader would only be talking to herself; codes allow a text to “control its own decoding” (Riffaterre 6). Waugh’s reference to a second Simon may be his attempt to invite readers to search their own memory for meaning. Recalling that earlier in *Vile Bodies*, Simon Balcairn committed suicide by carbon monoxide poisoning, readers realize that the specter of death has haunted this humorous novel from start to finish.

Waugh provides still another clue to the gravity of the Bright Young Things’ true situation. Soon after Adam and Agatha’s confused discussion, more people enter her room and eventually throw her a party. The impromptu bacchanalia takes its toll on Agatha as she “was already showing signs of strain. She was sitting bolt upright in bed, smiling deliriously, and bowing her bandaged head to imaginary visitors” (*Vile Bodies* 271). Something similar happened earlier when suicidal Simon, in disguise at a party, is seen “bowing across the room to empty places and to people whose backs are turned to him” (*Vile Bodies* 133). Booted from the party, Simon commits suicide only hours later.

When Agatha follows Simon in death, the natural forward movement of the story is interrupted and the text turns back on itself. In alluding to events earlier in the book,

Vile Bodies becomes both the hypotext and the hypertext. All intertextuality “introduces a new way of reading which destroys the linearity of the text. Each intertextual reference is the occasion for an alternative; either one continues reading, taking it only as a segment like any other, or else one turns to the source text, carrying out a sort of intellectual anamnesis” (Jenny “Strategy” 44-5). In an article he wrote on Ronald Firbank, Waugh commends this narrative technique: “The reader is aware,” he writes, “that a casual reference on one page links up with some particular inflection or phrase on another until there emerges a plot” (*Essays* 58) foretelling of his own development of the technique in *Vile Bodies*. The readers are meant to recognize the similarities between Simon and Agatha and realize that Agatha’s death is imminent. This preparation mitigates the potential shock of Agatha’s death. By this point, the novel’s seriousness is hard to overlook.

Still, some readers, carried along by the novel’s rollicking humor, may not quite realize that Waugh has all but “the linearity of the text” (Jenny, “Strategy” 44). Nonetheless, in the novel’s last chapter, the intertextual and intratextual allusions fully announce the novel’s implicit warnings. With Carrolllesque nonsensical irony, Waugh titles his chapter “A Happy Ending.” In reality, the last part of this book is neither happy nor really an ending. “On a splintered tree stump in the biggest battlefield in the history of the world” Adam sees “unrelieved desolation; a great expanse of mud in which every visible object was burnt or broken” (*Vile Bodies* 314). The scene looks back to the Great War and ahead to the future world war—perhaps even the Apocalypse. Adam is clearly, for Waugh, in a place resembling Dante’s eternal Hell. It is no surprise then that the Drunk Major, who is really a General, finds a fallen angel wandering around the

battlefield. Her inability to answer a simple question recalls all the purposeless movement, the mistreatment of the body, and the lack of identity strategically placed throughout the book. The General asks her name. Like Alice and Agatha, she responds, “I dunno.” “Oh, come, little one, you musn’t be shy,” says the General (*Vile Bodies* 318). Then she responds with a monologue concerning her own lack of self-awareness:

‘I dunno. I been called a lot of things. I was called Chastity once. Then there was a lady at a party, and she sent me to Buenos Aires, and then when the war came she brought me back again, and I was with the soldiers training at Salisbury Plain. That was swell. They called me Bunny—I don’t know why. Then they sent me over here and I was with the Canadians, what they called me wasn’t nice, and then they left me behind when they retreated and I took up with some foreigners. They were nice too, though they were fighting against the English. Then they ran away, and the lorry I was in got stuck in the ditch, so I got in with some other foreigners who were on the same side as the English, and they were beasts, but I met an American doctor who had white hair, and he called me Emily because he said I reminded him of his daughter back home, so he took me to Paris and we had a lovely week till he took up with another girl in a night club, so he left me behind in Paris when he went back to the front, I hadn’t no money and they made a fuss about my passport, so they called me numero mille soixante dix huit.’ (*Vile Bodies* 319)

A lost soul, she neither remembers her name nor anyone else’s. This monologue is representative of the tragic state of all the characters in the book. It is the repetitive story,

told with deceptive humor, of all the Bright Young Things who give in to bodily desire and lose their souls along with their identities. As with so many passages in the novel, intertextuality plays a key role in imparting this message. The name Bunny paired with a *white* haired doctor is an allusion to the white rabbit. Likewise, the reappearance of Chastity harkens back to the beginning of the novel, the fallen angels and the ferry about to transport souls to Hell. Indeed, these characters are left in the continually circling whirlwind of Hell as “presently, like a circling typhoon, the sounds of battle began to return” (*Vile Bodies* 321).

Vile Bodies presents a new version of an old motif: the descent into Hell. Waugh serves as a Virgil-like guide for the reader. In this early novel, Waugh has given his readers a seemingly amusing tour of Hell, leading them down a path that would not normally seem to be the path toward Truth by using humor and intertextuality. As Wittgenstein says, humor can portray truth (Malcolm 27-28). Every comedian knows that good jokes work only because they resonate with truth. Yet readers can only fully access this truth by recognizing that the humorous stupidity of the characters and society found in *Vile Bodies* actually reflects the world of the readers themselves. Admittedly, *Vile Bodies* can be read purely for its humor. As Genette points out, however, “Every hypertext, even a pastiche, can be read for itself without becoming perceptibly “agrammatical” it is invested with a meaning that is autonomous and thus in some manner sufficient. But sufficient does not mean exhaustive” (397). This ritual of “lifting the veil,” (*Text Production* 111) as Riffaterre calls it, is not a pointless exercise. The only way for the readers of *Vile Bodies*, as Waugh was fully aware, to break the cycles that lead to a hell on earth is by lifting the veil to expose realities facing modern society.

Waugh's lifting of the veil in this case involves an intertextual reading of Lewis Carroll and Dante's works. If readers consider the novel's intertextuality, their ultimate experience with *Vile Bodies* can simultaneously become both Alice's "nice dream" (*Looking-Glass* 195) and Dante's "nightmare path." They can, like Dante, descend into the core of Hell, "grappling [the] matted hair and frozen crust" (XXXIV, 74) of the devil, to find themselves miraculously right side up climbing out of a chaotic and deteriorating society.

Chapter Two: Lying in the Bed We Make: *Le Morte Darthur* in *Handful of Dust*

To my surprise I have learned that Evelyn Waugh made a mistake. Just two years before his death, in his unfinished autobiography, he writes of one specific accomplishment of his teenage career. “I caused my father pleasure by writing the Prize Poem,” he boasts. “The subject set,” he continues, “was an incident from Malory to be composed in Spenserian stanzas. It was characteristic of me at that period that I chose, not a story of heroism or romance, but the nostalgic disillusioned musing of Sir Bedivere after the death of Arthur” (137). It is true, he did write the Prize Poem for a poem called “The Return of Lancelot.” It is filled with “nostalgic disillusioned musings.” They are not, however, those of Sir Bedivere after the death of his King. They are instead those of Sir Bors reminiscing on his time at the Joyous Guard and the subsequent spiritual sufferings of Lancelot that necessitated his disappearance and his transformation into a contemplative hermit.

Fittingly, at seventeen years old, Evelyn Waugh unknowingly describes his forgetful older self when, near the beginning of the poem, Bors laments, “I am grown old and have forgotten much.” But the poem continues,

Night lives still though all our dreams are dead
 Sleepless I lay and, now and then, would touch
 With my hot hand the armour by my bed
 Or feel the cross that hung above my head
 And mutely pray for dawn. (The Return of Lancelot 88)

The lines reveal not the degeneration of the mind but instead the poignant struggles of the soul. The cross and the sword represent his dilemma between fleshly desires and sickness

of the spirit. He struggles whether to dedicate himself to his inner spiritual battle or his outward knightly pleasures. The content of the Prize Poem reveals what the young Waugh considered the most important aspect of *Le Morte Darthur* and ultimately any text: the universal human condition of either struggling away from or toward sainthood.

In his third novel, *A Handful of Dust*, Waugh returned to Malory as his hypotext to expand on this same theme. Frank Kermode regards this novel as “one of the most distinguished novels of the [twentieth] century.” Selina Hastings recognizes it as belonging to “a level of achievement very much higher than any he had previously attained” (313). Its success is due in large part to its intriguing use of intertextuality. The novel documents the failed marriage and treacherous quest of the protagonist Tony Last, offering in the process a subtle reminder of the eternal hopeful pilgrimage of humanity. In this chapter, I begin with a brief summary of the novel itself and a review of the scholarly work concerning its literary background. Then I trace how Waugh’s deviation from and adherence to Malory’s structure amplifies the theme of hope. Next I analyze the specific and subtle Malorian allusions associated with various motifs, including the supernatural, the uncanny, sleep, dreams, and visions. Ultimately, by tracing both intra-auctorial moments and Malorian allusions, this chapter reveals Waugh’s depiction of a positive pilgrimage that results not in a seemingly fatalistic end immersed in suffering but instead a hopeful beginning of peace and happiness.

A Handful of Dust begins with the protagonist, Tony Last, living in what seems to be harmony and tranquility at his beloved gothic mansion, Hetton Abbey, with his wife, Brenda, and his young son, John. Soon, however, the façade of this seemingly ideal life begins to crumble. Brenda deceives Tony into thinking she wants to study in London,

moves there, and promptly begins an affair with the penniless moocher, John Beaver. During one of Brenda's stays in London their son John, participating in his first hunt, falls from his horse and is fatally kicked by another horse. Soon thereafter Brenda asks for a divorce. Tony begins the divorce proceedings by trying to please Brenda but, realizing that he is being taken advantage of, stops acquiescing to her desires. He briefly escapes his problems by embarking on an expedition to South America in search of a lost city. While there he contracts malaria. His guide, Dr. Messinger, intends to bring help but instead drowns in a waterfall. Meanwhile, Tony's feverish hallucinations lead him to walk deliriously about the jungle and stumble upon Mr. Todd, a secluded plantation owner who nurses him to health. Mr. Todd then forces Tony to stay with him and read Dickens for the remainder of Mr. Todd's life. Thinking him dead, Tony's distant relatives "the impoverished Lasts," take over Hetton Abbey and Brenda is left penniless.

Most scholars who investigate the literary antecedents of *A Handful of Dust* tend to recognize Waugh's literary allusions as negative commentary on a dismal and hopeless world. Critics usually cite one of five main hypotextual authors: Malory, Dickens, Tennyson, Conrad, or Eliot. Greenberg (2006) explores Conrad and T.S. Eliot's connections but focuses on the premise that the allusions to Dickens increase feelings of helplessness and enslavement. Many, like Meckier ("Man Who Liked Dickens") and B. Allen discuss the novel's similarities to Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*. Others focus on the allusions to Victorian artists and authors as a sign of the decadence and frivolity of the times. "The chief cultural villains of the piece," Richard Wasson says, "are the Victorians. The picturesque medievalism of Rossetti and Tennyson and the melodrama of Dickens are as responsible for Tony's imprisonment in Todd's cottage as is the

faithlessness of Brenda” (134). Those critics who do discuss the Malorian allusions associate them with a misguided quest due to the same decadence found in Victorian frivolity. Edward Lobb (“Waugh Among Modernists”) mentions the Malorian quest motif but recognizes that Tony Last’s desire to restore Hetton Abbey and to find the lost city as a failed quest derived mostly from Eliot and Conrad. He sums up the story by declaring that “*A Handful of Dust* is about the cost of idealism and the futility of nostalgia” (131). Jeffery Heath also regards Tony Last as a failed quester when he says, “Unlike the pure knight of legend, who is guided by faith, Tony does not see the right goal, and he does not know the right questions. Rather than freeing the maimed king, he becomes one of the denizens of the waste land, waiting for a release that never comes” (120). Peter Firchow recognizes this maimed king, the fisher king, as Mr. Todd and states that the similarities between the Tristan story and that of *A Handful of Dust* “have never been really explored, though fairly often suggested” (“In Search,” 408). Wisenfarth alone recognizes Malory as positivity in the novel when he describes “Malory as a civilizing force” (203). He, however, does not develop the idea any further. While many scholars, such as Greenberg, study the differences between *Handful* and the short story also written by Waugh upon which the novel is based, no one combines this study with the increase in Malorian intertext. This chapter shows that the combination of an imbedded intra-auctorial message with intentional Malorian allusions reveals an optimism in *A Handful of Dust* heretofore unacknowledged by critics.

Critics often regard the structure of *A Handful of Dust* as the main problem with the novel. The sudden shift from civilization to a primitive uncivilized jungle provokes criticism even from Waugh’s most ardent proponents. In “Evelyn Waugh and the Upper

Class Novel,” Terry Eagleton suggests that, despite the shared themes, “the two parts of the novel really fail to cohere: and they fail primarily because the South American experience is uncertainly handled.” He goes on to explain that, “The whole episode, in other words, seems too realistic to justify its symbolic point, and too symbolic to justify its realism” (112). Writing to Waugh, Henry Yorke lamented, “the end is so fantastic that it throws the rest out of proportion. Aren’t you mixing two things together?” (Hastings 314). Evelyn Waugh replied, “The scheme was a Gothic man in the hands of savages—first Mrs. Beaver etc. then the real ones“ (*Letters* 88) and suggested that Yorke cannot believe the second part of the novel because he does not believe such people exist or that one would ever come into contact with them. In essence, Yorke lacks a willing suspension of disbelief. Waugh, on the other hand, knows that they exist and has been in contact with such people, as he relates in his travel novel *Ninety-two Days*, much of which Waugh repurposed for both “The Man Who Liked Dickens” and *Handful*. Waugh contends that disjointedness is real and that being aware of it can increase readers’ understanding of the world. The differences between ordinary, everyday Londoners and the primitive people of the South American jungle are superficial, Waugh suggests; deeper down—and in spite of these differences—humanity is the same.

Waugh engineers this necessary disjuncture through intertextuality, in this case by referencing two hypotexts: his own “The Man Who Liked Dickens” and Malory’s *Le Morte Darthur*. The first of these provides Waugh with a means for exploring the quest motif; it also allows him to demonstrate transition and growth as a writer through an intra-auctorial amplification. “Intra-auctoriality,” a term coined in English by Anita Obermeier, represents the same author in two different levels of writing. It is a “self

referentiality” that “works by weaving one continuous auctorial text, effectively writing the history of the author’s creative development” (20). In this case Waugh’s “weaving” is done through many different stages of his own writing. The reworking of the short story into the novel intra-auctorially reveals two important aspects of *Handful*. First, it shows that experience and time negate any supposed finality of the text. Second, and more important, it reveals that the radical structure was, in fact, planned.

Intra-auctorial in *A Handful of Dust* reveals four levels in the development of Waugh’s writing. The first level is Waugh’s youthful poem based on themes from Malory. The second level is found in a travelogue about Waugh’s time in the South American jungle. The third level is the short story “The Man Who Liked Dickens,” a product of Waugh’s own jungle experience. The fourth level in Waugh’s writing—*A Handful of Dust*—combines elements of the previous levels into a sort of intra-auctorial intertextual potpourri. The novel becomes the metatext of all the intra-auctorial hypotexts, some of which are simultaneously metatexts. Waugh once suggested that he could never be a professional artist as he felt he needed to continually improve upon his paintings. They were, to him, never done. The same goes for his writing, as the prevalence of intra-auctorial allusions showcases. His works are not static; themes and motifs from his earlier writing reappear in his later work.

The final chapter of *A Handful of Dust* shares a skeletal storyline with “The Man Who Liked Dickens.” According to Genette, a “sequel differs from a continuation in that it continues a work not in order to bring it to a close but, on the contrary, in order to take it beyond what was initially considered to be its ending “(*Palimpsests* 38). Accordingly, *Handful*’s final chapter is a sequel to the earlier short story. Amplifying the first version

with a sequel, Waugh explores the fluidity of meaning. The novel's last chapter becomes the epilogue of a tale that holds out the possibility of continuation.

To understand the continuity of the novel, we must first recognize this second version of the story as an intra-auctorial revision beginning with a transvaluation. Transvaluation, according to Genette consists of “axiological transformation “than can be broken down into a positive term (revaluation), [or] a negative term (devaluation). . .” (*Palimpsests* 343). Transvaluation, simply put, involves increasing or decreasing the import of a character or action by way of a new hypotext. This is the first and most obvious change that Waugh enacts in *A Handful of Dust*. The original short story begins with the introduction of the plantation owner—“Although Mr. McMaster had lived in Amazonas for nearly sixty years, no one except a few families of Shiriana Indians was aware of his existence” (128)—and proceeds to describe Mr. McMaster loading his gun. Soon the delirious Paul appears. The narrator refers to him only as “a white man” or “the man” until he divulges his name. Paul's background and his present predicament are apparent, but the focus of the story remains on Mr. McMasters. *A Handful of Dust* expands and reevaluates the roles of McMasters and Paul. Mr. Todd, the new McMaster, appears only in the last chapter in a role similar to his role in the short story. In *A Handful of Dust*, the character of Paul—now Tony—stakes his claim to the reader's sympathies by appearing in five previous chapters, a more significant role than in the short story. Paul/Tony has been revaluated while the character of McMasters/Mr. Todd undergoes devaluation.

The revaluation of Paul into Tony corresponds to the insertion of the quest motif into the novel. Through this motif, Waugh provides Tony with a higher purpose to his

travels, the fulfillment of which could affect all of humanity. This is at once both an amplification of motivation and a reevaluation of the main character. In “The Man Who Liked Dickens,” Paul Henty undertakes his expedition to win recognition, particularly from his wife. He believes “there was glamour about the whole journey which might, he felt, move even his wife’s sympathies” (131). He impulsively bases the expedition on a hope for reconciliation. While his wife engages in her second extramarital affair, Paul hopes that his departure and absence will increase her longing for him. By contrast, in the last two chapters of *A Handful of Dust* (“In Search of a City” and “Du Cote de chez Todd”), we learn that the desire for something more profound and lasting motivates Tony. Unlike Paul, Tony decides to leave his estranged wife after finally refusing to acquiesce to all of her divorce settlement demands. Initially, like Paul, he was escaping and “going away because it seemed to be the conduct expected of a husband in his circumstances, because the associations of Hetton were for the time poisoned for him, because he wanted to live for a few months away from people who would know him or Brenda” (217). After meeting Dr. Messinger, however, Tony decides to join him on a search for the allusive “city that the Pie-wies call...the ‘Shining’ or ‘Glittering,’ the Arekuna the ‘Many Watered,’ the Patamonas the ‘Bright Featherd,” (221). Critics often refer to this journey as a quest, and many see the quest motif as stemming from Tennyson’s *Idylls of the King*. Richard Wasson, for example, suggests that Tony’s quest is comparable to that of Tennyson’s Percivale (139), while Frederick J. Stopp believes that Tony searches for the mythical city of Avalon (178.).

As Waugh revalues the character of Paul into the questing Tony, he simultaneously devalues the importance of the quest itself. How can this be if it is the

quest motif that transforms Tony into more than a mere impulsive traveler? I believe that Waugh is bypassing any allusion to Tennyson (whose metatext is Malory) and alluding directly to Malory's text. According to Jonathan Greenberg, "...we might recognize in Tony's exile a variation on the modern paradigm of the voyage as a return to the beginnings.... In typical modernist fashion, moreover, Tony's regression is psychological as well as anthropological. He travels back to the land of childhood as well as precivilization; geographical dislocations becomes the occasion for, or literalization of, a metaphorical exploration of the self" (363). In other words, this search is not only a material search for a real city, but also Tony's attempt to explore his own self. The trip in search of the city shifts from a quest to a pilgrimage. In fact, renowned medieval scholar Dee Dyas, suggests that the search for Sankgreal in *Le Morte* is actually a pilgrimage itself and not a quest.

Viewing Tony's journey as a pilgrimage helps clarify the necessity of the novel's structure and the abrupt change in tone, which are so often criticized. Focusing on the wrong hypotext, critics mistakenly believe that the first and second parts of the novel cannot be reconciled with each other. Recognizing Malory as the hypotext, we realize that the novel's seemingly disjointed structure actually mirrors Malory's structure in *Le Morte Darthur*. The disparity between the two sections of the novel follows a similar disparity in the hypotext, *Le Morte Darthur*. In Malory's tale, the contrast between "The Quest of the Sankgreal" and that of the rest of the text is readily apparent. Much of the narrative of *Le Morte Darthur* follows the characters, major and minor, through various battles and adventures. Suddenly when the Grail appears, the battles cease. There is a

dramatic change of tone, paralleled in *A Handful of Dust* by the change from Tony's England to the Amazonian rainforest.

With this abrupt structural shift, Waugh's narrative can remove the sufferings that continually plague throughout the novel. These sufferings (e.g., land disputes, the death of his child, his wife's infidelity) all affect Tony, but only until the change in structure. "The disintegration of *A Handful of Dust* had to be answered by some process of reintegration, whether by flux and transformation in the hero's own character, or by the transfiguration of a world of chaos into a vision of order" (177), according to Stopp. Little by little Paul's only goal becomes survival at which point the troubles and concerns of his life in England are paraded before him in a vision. In the jungle, by means of a fever-induced hallucination, he sees all the troubles of his life. He witnesses a County Council meeting and pleads with the imaginary Brenda that he will not go. The meeting, nonetheless, appears before him. Lady Cockpurse, Miley, Reggie St. Cloud, Winnie, Ambrose, and the Mayor attend. At once, like Malory's procession of the Holy Grail or the flamboyant pageantry of the "Circe" chapter of Joyce's *Ulysses*, Tony:

picked his way through the surrounding thorn-scrub; the sound of music rose from the glittering walls; some procession or pageant was passing along them. ...At last he came into the open. The gates were open before him and trumpets were sounding along the walls, saluting his arrival; from bastion to bastion the message ran to the four points of the compass; petals of almond and apple blossom were in the air; they carpeted the way, as, after a summer storm, they lay in the orchards at Hetton. Gilded cupolas and spires of alabaster shone in the sunlight.

Ambrose announced, 'The City is served' (283).

Tony himself appears in the procession. This scene is strongly reminiscent of the Grail's appearance in *Le Morte Darthur*. All of Tony's trials and tribulations were merely temporary obstacles to the bliss of self-realization, acceptance, and peace. As Wasson points out, Tony is not undergoing a conversion; his search is for Camelot, not Rome. Stopp goes one step further, suggesting that perhaps Tony is searching for Avalon and, therefore, his immortality and the secrets concerning his own immortal soul.

On the surface, Malory's story of the Sankgreal concerns a materialistic quest for a tangible Grail. But the spiritual encounter between the knights and God proves to be the real story. Understanding this point is crucial for an appreciation of Waugh's aim in *A Handful of Dust*. For both Malory and Waugh, spiritual pilgrimage mattered more than a materialistic quest. Through allusions to Malory, Waugh replicates Malory's attempt to transcend what Dyas calls the "spiritual reductionism" resulting in a materialism that obscured the real meaning of pilgrimages (65). As a Catholic, Waugh recognized that all humanity is called to pilgrimage and that everyone participates in the pilgrimage in their own way. "There are evident dangers," Waugh wrote:

In identifying ourselves with Saint Francis or Saint John of the Cross. We can invoke the help of the saints and study the workings of God in them, but if we delude ourselves that we are walking in their shoes, seeing through their eyes and thinking with their minds, we lose sight of the one certain course of our salvation. There is only one saint that Bridget Hogan can actually become, Saint Bridget Hogan, and that saint she must become, here or in the fires of purgatory if she is to enter heaven. She

cannot slip through in fancy dress made up as Joan of Arc. (“St. Helena Empress” 407)

A Handful of Dust's first Malorian intertext occurs within a dream realm. This realm is the most significant part of the knights' journey in the pilgrimage in “The Search for the Sankgreal.” In *Handful*, Waugh assigns Malorian character names to the rooms where Tony, his wife, and his son sleep but to no other section of the house. The family bedrooms are complete “with their brass bedsteads, each with a frieze of Gothic text, each named from Malory, Yseult, Elaine, Mordred and Merlin, Gawaine and Bedivere, Lancelot, Perceval, Tristram, Galahad, his own dressing room, Morgan le Fay and Brenda's Guinevere, where the bed stood on a dais, its wall hung with tapestry” (150). A.S.G. Edwards notes that readers should associate these names with their own knowledge of Malory. But, Edwards continues, “the symbolism of Brenda's room is self-evident: like Malory's queen, she is a catalyst, a means of creating the circumstances for the initial preservation and subsequent destruction of Tony's idealized world” (“Waugh's *Handful*” 105). Edwards argues that the name *Guinevere* determines Brenda's fate, in essence foretelling her infidelity. It is worth remembering, however, that Brenda is not the only inhabitant of the Guinevere room. Previously, Tony's parents inhabited the room, and they were “inseparable in Guinevere” (*Handful* 15). Their obvious attachment to each other refutes Edwards's claim. The Guinevere room does not dictate fates; rather, the people who stay within her walls choose their own futures.

Nor does the name of Tony's dressing room suggest any determinism. Edwards in his article “Waugh's *Handful* and Malory”, spends paragraphs suggesting that Tony's room, “Morgan le Fay,” foreshadows Tony's ultimate fate at the hands of Mr. Todd. But

neither Edwards nor any other Waugh scholar that I know of has noted a curious mistake in the text of *A Handful of Dust*. In the middle of the novel, before Tony learns of Brenda's affair and prior to their son's death, Brenda spends a few days at Hetton. One morning, "Tony walked in and out between Mordred and Guinevere as he always did while they were dressing." Then after speaking to Brenda, "He went back to Mordred for his tie. . ." (107). Here, Tony's dressing room is called Mordred, not Morgan le Fay, as is the case elsewhere in the novel. This mistake is found both in his published versions and the manuscript, in his own hand (39).¹⁰ Considering that these two characters are of different sexes and even two different generations in the Malory story, this mistake is hard to explain. What is clear is that Waugh did not necessarily equate the characteristics of Morgan le Fay with Tony's fate. There is no need to read fatalism in these Malorian references, as Edwards does. To the contrary, Waugh asserted the general and universal truth that people direct their own lives.

Waugh even creates a specific room, the uncomfortable bedchamber Galahad, to illustrate the significance of free will. It is important to note that Malory's knight Galahad, who is the only knight thought to fully experience the Grail, is also the only knight who seems not to suffer any interior struggles or conflicts while on the quest. At the beginning of Waugh's novel, Tony is hoping for a quiet family weekend at Hetton. To his chagrin, they receive a telegram telling them to expect John Beaver. Brenda consoles Tony by saying, "Anyway, he can go into Sir Galahad. No one who sleeps there ever comes again. The bed's agony I believe" (29). When he arrives, sure enough Beaver

¹⁰ Evelyn Waugh's library, even down to some waste baskets, and including many manuscripts and typescripts is property of the The Harry Ransom Center at The University of Texas at Austin.

“did not at all like the look or feel of the bed; the springs were broken in the centre and it creaked ominously when he lay down to try it” (29). Throughout the night, Tony’s guest “was far from being comfortable” and “rolled impatiently about the bed in quest of a position in which it was possible to go to sleep” (34). This uncomfortable sleeping situation is not unlike the hard ground, rocks, chapel pews on which the knights themselves suffered their nighttime hours. Like the enchantress Morgan le Fay or the wizard Merlin, Tony and Brenda attempt to inhibit Beaver’s free will. In spite of the lack of material comfort that Galahad provides, however, Beaver, recognizing the potential for an affair with Brenda, stays on for another night. If we agree with Edwards that the rooms reflect the people who stay in them, then the adulterous, mooching Beaver would be Galahad, which he most definitely is not. The rooms, therefore, illustrate not the mirroring of their namesakes but instead the control each individual human has over his own quest in spite of the influence of outside forces.

In Malory’s text, Guinevere and Lancelot are the adulterous couple; in Waugh’s, it’s Beaver and Brenda. While Lancelot and Guinevere eventually acknowledge the sinfulness in their transgression of infidelity, Beaver and Brenda do not. Unlike Lancelot, Beaver does not even consider the existence of sin. He is nihilism personified. Given the chance to engage in infidelity, Beaver does so. *A Handful of Dust* deliberately recalls the world of the Sankgreal where everyone is trying their utmost to acquire the Grail; but, in the modern world of Waugh’s novel, issues of virtue and sinfulness are not taken seriously. Only a few, like Tony, are willing to undertake the pilgrimage towards spiritual fulfillment. It is not an easy path. The questing knights in *Le Morte Darthur* are plagued with dreams and visions that leave them tired and confused. Likewise, Tony is prone to

nightmares. In this house, “Morgan le Fay had always been [Tony’s] room since he left the night nursery. He had been put there so he would be within calling distance of his parents, inseparable in Guinevere: for until quite late in his life he was subject to nightmares” (15).

The nature of dreams in *A Handful of Dust* points to *Le Morte Darthur*, specifically “The Search for Sankgreal,” as the hypotext. It is important to note that more than half of the dreams in *Le Morte Darthur* appear during the quest alone. These dreams, particularly those in “The Search for the Sankgreal,” convey the real message of the text: the struggle to overcome sin and achieve sanctity. To understand how Waugh’s hypertext borrows from Malory’s hypotext, we must first examine the type of dreams that occur in “The Search for the Sankgreal.” Macrobian dream theory, according to Stephen Russell, provided the most influential understanding of dreams in the Middle Ages. Macrobius divides dreams into two categories and five subcategories. First, he separates insignificant dreams from significant dreams. The insignificant dreams come in the form of *insomnium* (nightmare) or *visum* (an image experienced between wakefulness and sleep). There are three types of significant dreams: the *somnium*, which disguises truth through enigmatic symbols and images; the *visio*, a prophetic vision; and the *oraculum*, the materialization of an important elder who gives advice during the dream (Macrobius 87-90). C.S. Lewis points out in *The Discarded Image* that real dreams can take on more than one characteristic and can thus become a combination of different dream types (54). In fact, four of the nine dreams in the *Le Morte* display more than one characteristic of Macrobian theory at a time. This mixture of traits adds to the complexity of both the dreams themselves and the state of the dreamer. This complexity in the dreams allows for

deeper impressions and deeper struggle. They are “concrete manifestations of important themes of the work” (22), as Donna L. S. Shelton suggests of many of the dreams in the book. Indeed, dreams (or the dreaming state) emerges as an important theme in and of itself.

The dreams in *Le Morte Darthur* are derived from the old French Arthurian Vulgate, though Malory alters them to suit his purposes. An extensive study between the Vulgate (the hypotext) and *Le Morte* (the hypertext) shows that Malory altered the fatalistic endings of the dreams in the Vulgate to emphasize the idea that individual will and action, not fate, create the knights’ ultimate outcome. Likewise, Waugh changes the dreams that occur in the original short story, allowing Tony the freedom to create his own ending. Waugh’s change is an intra-auctorial statement. In “The Man Who Liked Dickens,” after the Professor’s death from malaria, only two dream visions occur. First, as Paul is trying to find his way out of the jungle “the whole forest became peopled for him with frantic apparitions, for no conscious reason at all” (134). Paul accepts this vision as real when

Later he seemed anaesthetized and was chiefly embarrassed by the behavior of the inhabitants who came out to meet him in footman’s livery, carrying his dinner, and then irresponsibly disappeared or raised the covers of their dishes and revealed live tortoises. Many people who knew him in London appeared and ran round him with derisive cries, asking him questions to which he could not possibly know the answer. His wife came, too, and he was pleased to see her, assuming that she had got tired of her

guardsman and was there to fetch him back; but soon disappeared, like all the others. (134-5)

This dream vision reveals that Paul is passive (unlike Tony in *A Handful of Dust*). He is not a quester searching for either a material city or a spiritual city. He is not a poser of questions, but the one who is being asked. His reactions to his dreams are merely emotional. He is “embarrassed” and he is “pleased,” but he is not actively questioning or searching.

It appears that Tony is headed towards his ultimate imprisonment in the last two chapters of *A Handful of Dust*. The emphasis on dreaming, however, shows that in spite of his physical limitations his spirituality is growing and has the potential to expand even more. Like Malory’s knights whose visions and dreams occur alongside the waking world, Tony’s dreams occur in the midst of the conscious world. Furthermore, they gradually increase as he traverses closer to the end point of his material search of the city.

Similar to what Malory’s knights experience, Tony is tested and his pilgrimage transformed by the visions and dreams he experiences. Like the knights in Malory who begin their journey focused most probably on the “good odoures, and ... metis and drynkes¹¹” (Malory 503) that came with their first encounter with the covered Grail, Tony initiates his quest with a self-indulgent vision. He pictures the city he will find in the Amazon as:

Gothic in character, all vanes and pinnacles, gargoyles, battlements, groining and tracery, pavilions and terraces, a transfigured Hetton, pennons and banners floating on the sweet breeze, everything luminous

¹¹ “Wonderful smells and.... Succulent Meat and drinks.” Translation mine.

and translucent; a coral citadel crowning a green hill top sewn with daisies, among groves and streams; a tapestry landscape filled with heraldic and fabulous animals and symmetrical, disproportionate blossom. (222)

He envisions a purely materialistic city to replace his “whole Gothic world” that had “come to grief “(209) because of Brenda’s infidelity. He searches for peace outside of himself instead of within, for material rewards instead of spiritual.

Although Tony initially focuses on the materialistic aspect of his journey, the foundations of his spiritual journey are laid through allusions to Malory’s Percival. Early on, Tony’s judgment is impaired, yet he remains unaware. He mirrors Percival, who meets an unknown and beautiful woman on a ship and almost has sex with her. Percival is, in fact, already lying next to her when he makes the sign of the cross, the lady, and her pavilion immediately vanish. This outward declaration delivers him from sin. Tony, although perhaps subconsciously, also saves himself from temptation. He experiences a meeting similar to Percival’s dream vision of the devil disguised as a woman. He meets a beautiful young lady, Therese Vitre, during the voyage to South America. After days of chaste courtship and mutual affection, Tony reveals that he is married. Therese demands immediately to return to the ship and vanishes from Tony’s life. Unlike Percival’s temptress, Therese is no demon; yet the potential consequences for Tony are the same. Her name and the fact that she is from France bring to mind Saint Terese of Lisieux, a saint with whom Waugh was most likely familiar.¹² As with Percival’s vision, she

¹² Like many Catholics Waugh had a devotion to the saints “We are advised to meditate on the saints” he tells his readers. (St. Helena Empress 407). I have as of yet found no specific mention of St. Therese of Lisieux in Waugh’s personal writing but besides being

represents a test. Tony, like Percival, confesses and Therese disappears. Her disappearance makes it obvious that Tony is not only imperfect but also unaware of his own transgressions. Percival's reaction to his near transgression is to punish himself. "Sithyn my fleyssh woll be my mayster, I shall punyssh hit." He declares. "And therewith he roof hymselff thorow the thigh, that the blood sterte about hym, and syde, 'A good Lord, take thys in recompensacion of that I have myssedone ayenst The Lorde.'" (Malory 531). In contrast, Tony provides only a small clue that his conscience or feelings are moved because of his sin. When Therese states, "Let's go back" to the boat, Tony replies, "You say that as if you were saying goodbye." Although Tony remains unaware of the danger of his possible transgression, the text has begun to suggest that more is at stake on this journey than a mere material discovery. For Tony, this will ultimately be a spiritual journey, a pilgrimage.

Tony's spiritual turmoil increases with each of his subsequent visions and culminates in the realization that the "city" he seeks must be found within himself. These visions occur as malaria begins to affect his mind and body. For three days, a vision of Brenda sits with him in the canoe. She hardly says anything, but Tony keeps talking. On days when the fever subsides, Brenda vanishes. The vision intensifies when he finds himself sick and alone in the jungle and Brenda begins to speak to him. She urges Tony

a well read Catholic three facts make me believe he knew her story. First, He was good friends with Ronald Knox and even copublished Knox's translation *Imitation of Christ*. Knox, himself, translated Therese's own Autobiography. Second, he was well aware of the legacy of the Carmelite order and spoke specifically of two other Saint Theresas of the same order, St. Teresa of Avila and her devotee Sister Teresa Benedicta a Cruce (Holocaust victim Edith Stein). St. Benedicta's dedication to St. Teresa of Avila's teachings are almost identical to those of St. Therese of Lisieux. Lastly, he named one of his daughters, Teresa.

to attend a county council, and in his vision he does so. Almost all of the characters involved in the first part of the novel attend: Brenda, Reggie St. Cloud, Lady Cockpurse, Mrs. Beaver, Winnie, and the servant Ambrose. Green mechanical rats and a green mechanical fox appear. The council meeting begins with the discussion of road widening project and ends with the imitation of animal sounds, a declaration of love by Brenda and Ambrose, preparations for a hunt, and a card game. The chaos of the dream and the deterioration of the conversation takes on a quality similar to the “Circe” episode in Joyce’s *Ulysses*: the impossible appears possible, reality is indistinguishable from the imaginary and at the center appears a man suffering from a serious bout of messianic complex. Because of its incredulousness the dream appears absurd and inconsequential.

Like Malory, Waugh combines dream types in order to call attention to their importance. Tony’s council meeting dream borrows elements from all of Macrobius’ dream categories. It is a nightmare because of its absurdity. It is a *visio* because Tony is half awake and half asleep due to the delirium of fever. The fragmentation of the dream, the odd outbursts (e.g., “No bathing in Brazil,” and “clucking sounds in imitation of hens”), and the appearance of strange people and objects like Winnie and the green rats are indicative of the enigmatic symbols found most often in *somnium* dreams. The presence of the mayor who has appeared at no other time in the novel and the final appearance of Ambrose could represent the elderly knowledgeable figures of the *oraculum* dreams.

Most importantly, the fact that Tony not only achieves his encounter with the city but makes that achievement possible through his own efforts emulates Malory’s use of the prophetic *visio* dreams. In these dreams, Malory often changes the outcome and

places the determination of the future squarely on the knights' shoulders. This was a major change from the Vulgate, which originally employed the dreams to decry the inability of the knights to achieve or experience anything beyond what was determined in the dream. A comparison between the Sankgreal and the Vulgate shows subtle differences, namely that the characters have more free will in the latter. There are many occurrences of this transvaluation on Malory's part, but one of the most telling is when Malory edits a part of a *visio* dream in which Lancelot runs away from God (Vulgate 43). A pure *visio*, according to Jo Goyne, "assert[s] certain inevitability for disaster in human life" (88). Malory reproduces the same dream within his text but makes it a *somnium*, an *oraculum*, and a *visio*. The mixing of all dream types enables Lancelot not only to hope for but also to work for his ultimate attainment of the Grail, his salvation. It is his own efforts that allow him to arrive "before a castell, on the backe [syde, whiche was ryche and fayre, and there was a postern [opened toward the see, and was open] withoute ony keypyng, save two [lyons kept the entre; and the moon'e shone right clere." Lancelot then hears a voice: "Launcelot, go oute 'of this shy [and entre into the castel,] where thou shalte 'see a grete parte of thy desire" (Malory 575). Lancelot enters and beholds "the holy vessell coverde with rede samyte." He then falls into a twenty-four day sleep and is put "in penaunce" by the Lord, after which he is "hole" and takes upon himself a hairshirt (577). Those who helped him say, "Sir, the Queste of the Sankgreal ys encheved now right in you "and "he toke the hayre and clothed ym in hit" (578) showing that his achievement is spiritual.

Similarly, hope is to be found in Tony's journey in that the initial *visio* changes: he not only sees the city but achieves it through his own efforts. All the dream characters then leave Tony alone except Ambrose. At this point he views his long awaited city:

Looking up from the card table, Tony saw beyond the trees the ramparts and battlements of the City; it was quite near him. From the turret of the gatehouse and heraldic banner floated in the tropic breeze...the sound of music rose from the glittering walls; some procession or pageant was passing along them. He lurched into the tree-trunks and became caught up in roots and hanging tendrils of bush-vine; but he pressed forward unconscious of pain and fatigue.

At last he came into the open. The gates were open before him and trumpets were sounding along the walls, saluting his arrival; from bastion to bastion the message ran to the four points of the compass; petals of almond and apples blossom were in the air; they carpeted the way, as after a summer storm, they lay in the orchards at Hetton. Gilded cupolas and spires of alabaster shown in the sunlight. (*Handful* 283)

Interestingly, Tony seems to change his dream on his own. Even Ambrose's advice to remain in the hammock goes unheeded. He takes decisive action, throwing off his blanket and going in search of what he needs. In spite of it all, he reaches his destination, and Ambrose states, "The City is served." He echoes the sentiments expressed to Lancelot that "the Quested of the Sankgreall ys encheved now right in you." The city is manifest in Tony himself. Tony is the "procession" awaited by the city.

It is a mistake to despair in Tony's final predicament of becoming a slave. Comparing Tony with Lancelot allows the reader to recognize that, although Tony may suffer Mr. Todd's imprisonment for the rest of his days, eternal happiness is still possible. Like Lancelot who once again welcomes penance by putting on the hair shirt, Tony's temporal sufferings are not ended. He finds himself a prisoner reading Dickens to Mr. Todd. But the remaining allusions to Malory challenge any sense of determinism. Just when it seems Tony might find a means of escape, he sleeps through a visit from outsiders who have come to look for him. This dream is not unlike Lancelot's twenty-four days of sleeping penance. In both texts, nothing is achieved during uninterrupted sleep (whether the sleeper is Galahad, Lancelot, or Tony). Unlike King Arthur, who dies and according to Malory probably will not return, Tony does have a real chance of returning. A monument commemorates his death, yet he is very much alive. Later, when Teddy Last—one of the inheritors of Hetton—chooses, "Galahad for his bedroom" (307) he recalls the bed made by Salamon's wife and the angel's proclamation to Salamon that "the last knight of thy kindred shall rest in this bed" (Malory 366). But in Waugh's text, Teddy becomes not the last knight but a knight of the family Last. Instead of an ending, there is a continuation of the family. Teddy makes his bed into his own salvation, just as salvation is available to Tony when he learns that the city he seeks is within himself.

Through Waugh's allusions to Malory's work, we now see that Tony's pilgrimage is not material, that his sufferings are only temporal, and that he (and we, the readers) can have hope in the eternal. As Jonathan Greenberg says, the novel is ultimately about "our response" to the fate of others (354). Tony has been given the chance, also given to many knights at the end of Malory's story, to live a mostly contemplative life in which he

can move towards his own salvation. First, however, like the knights who return to Camelot to witness and participate in the dissolution of the Round Table and the fighting between the knights, he must continue to live and to suffer. If he chooses, he can become like the suffering and repentant Lancelot at the end of Waugh's youthful poem "The Return of Lancelot", who finally recognizes that peace and salvation do not come from without but from within. "I am old / And have learned much alone," Waugh's Lancelot muses and continues:

And this I earned; the world is not more sweet
 For man's good acting, or for human pain
 More ugly, nor more wise for any human brain
 The world is neither good nor bad, and Rest
 Abides as much in forest, down and stone
 And may be met in crowds. Those are the blessed
 Who find it in themselves alone and guard it Best
 ("Return of Lancelot 93).

While Tony's quest appears unsuccessful, the Malorian allusions indicate that his pilgrimage is not. In the end the story is not solely about Tony. The novel tells the story of Everyman. In the end, Waugh's allusions to Malory reveal that it does not matter what beds we are given or what beds we have made. What matters is that we recognize that we can continually make and remake our beds until our stories are over and, like Galahad, we can sleep peacefully.

Chapter Three: “Out of Depth” Revisited

“Out of Depth” and “Rip Van Winkle”

In his book *The Life of Evelyn Waugh*, Douglas Lane Patey describes Waugh’s short futuristic story “Out of Depth” as “actively propagandist” and an attempt by Waugh to “establish himself as a believer in good standing” (110). “Out of Depth,” the first of Waugh’s two futuristic short stories, however, does not represent a “believer in good standing” but instead a believer without understanding. It is a treatise on the importance and existence of mystery. As a catalyst to a meaningful life, Waugh explores this theme through intertextuality, primarily through his use of “Rip Van Winkle” and through the subtle references to Aldous Huxley, Shakespeare and, surprisingly, himself. Perhaps, as evidenced by Patey’s displeasure with the story, Waugh may have missed the mark in relying on the hidden meanings of intertextuality to convey hope. Consequently, Waugh revisits the theme years later in *Love Among the Ruins*. Once again he alludes to Huxley, Shakespeare and himself. *Love Among the Ruins*, however, expands his message by suggesting that truth and happiness appear in the form of the arts. In this dystopian future—unlike the future that Aldous Huxley posited—literature and arts merely slumber and only need to be reanimated. In fact, this story, although written second is a hopeful prequel to “Out of Depth.” Ultimately it is the intertextuality of these two stories taken together that effectively become the kiss that can reawaken an appreciation for the mysteries, meaning, and hope found in great works of literature.

On first glance, the intertextuality in “Out of Depth” seems obvious. The surface story details a strange episode: an American, Rip Van Winkle, meets a sinister man, Dr. Kakophilos, who transports him to a primitive futuristic England. Unable to speak or

understand the mutated English language and being a white person in a land run by black overlords, Rip is treated as a savage. He lives a disjointed existence until he finds himself in a chapel, recognizes the familiar Latin Mass, and is immediately transported back to his regular time. There is no denying the fact that it is the recognition of an aspect of Catholicism that seems to remove Rip out of the future and return him back to his proper time. The story may, therefore, seem to be meant for an exclusively Catholic audience. It is shortsighted, however, to view “Out of Depth” as only a Catholic story; more importantly, it is also a direct statement on the effect and importance of intertextuality in literature. Through intertextuality, the story alludes to the significance of mystery for all of humanity.

The existence of intertextual mystery generates action. It is the necessary first step toward purpose. Waugh first announces an ulterior purpose—namely, advocating for the timelessness of literature—through the reemergence of literary historical character, Rip Van Winkle. The story’s incredulous intertextual/intra-auctorial mixing of Waugh’s characters from previous novels and Washington Irving’s Rip Van Winkle reveals a gap in understandability. The unlikelihood of these characters meeting anticipates a “thematic kinship” between the two stories, particularly in the form of time travel. Waugh tantalizes the reader with the anticipated time travel. Consequently, by elaborating on Irving’s version of Rip’s adventure the intertextual uncanny surfaces in the uncomfortable experience of knowing that meaning can exist in spite of the inability to comprehend said meaning. Waugh again switches gears and allows intratextuality (as opposed to intertextuality) to demonstrate the necessity of acceptance of and surrender to mystery. That surrender is the only catalyst for hope and change. Finally, Waugh captures the

joyous infancy of intertextual ignorance by binding all the intertextual elements together through the presence of the Latin Mass. It is the surrender to this ignorance and recognition of mystery that provides a catalyst for hope and change.

Rip Van Winkle's appearance in this new setting anticipates a thematic kinship between the hypotext, "Rip Van Winkle," and the hypertext, "Out of Depth." The story engages in two levels of thematic kinship: action and experience or, in other words, time travel and the reaction to it, the uncanny. Waugh does not merely elaborate on Irving's story about Rip. Instead, he acknowledges the validity of Rip's story and extends his adventures for him. While Rip recognizes but does not understand the world around him, the reader is similarly allowed to recognize Rip without understanding his presence in a modern story.

Waugh makes this intertextual occurrence even more powerful by maintaining an allegiance to Irving's Rip. In other words he does not imbue him with a better, more heroic personality or change the original story. He instead demonstrates not only literary timelessness but also literary successfulness by staying true to Irving's Rip and paying homage to the character's enduring qualities. The fact that Waugh maintains Irving's Rip adds weight to the importance of "Rip Van Winkle" as an antecedent. Waugh is not creating a *new* character with the same name. This is the familiar lazy Rip of the Catskills. Waugh is resurrecting an existing character and placing him in a new circumstance. The narrator of the hypotexts relates that, "Rip Van Winkle, however, was one of those happy mortals, of foolish, well-oiled dispositions, who take the world easy, eat white bread or brown, whichever can be got with least thought or trouble, and would rather starve on a penny than work for a pound. If left to himself, he would have whistled

life away in perfect contentment” (Irving 15). Rip’s wife continually berates him for this laziness. Throughout the story, however, even though it causes him to miss decades of time, he maintains this laziness. Similarly, “Out of Depth’s” Rip is not only lazy but also “had got to the decent age when he disliked meeting new people. He lived a contented life between New York and the more American parts of Europe and everywhere, by choosing his season, he found enough of his old acquaintances to keep him effortlessly amused” (*Complete Stories* 146). As Waugh’s story begins, Rip is most at ease when he is seated among others while he listens to or tells stories. For him, life is an amusement.

Although he does not make him heroic Waugh does transvaluate Rip and, in so doing, claims that literature has more than mere entertainment value. He transform him from a two-dimensional buffoon to a three-dimensional man with limited moral compass.¹³ Waugh’s tale, unlike Irving’s, presents a more deliberate decision on Rip’s part to be imprudent. Like Irving’s Rip, he enjoys telling tales and learning new gossip. As the dinner party progresses, Rip “got going well and soon had six neighbours listening as he told some successful stories in his soft, lazy voice; he became aware with familiar, electric tremors that he had captured the attention of a lady opposite on whom he had had his eye last summer in Venice” (*Complete Stories* 148). Waugh, however, imbues his Rip with a conscience. Although his tendency is to be just as lazy as Irving’s Rip, he experiences moments of premonitions, doubt, and despair. He does not meet a short little leprechaun-like man but instead walks into the room immediately “aware of something foreign and disturbing” (146) and sees “an elderly, large man, quite bald, with a vast white face that spread down and out far beyond the normal limits ... down in the depths

¹³ Waugh revisits this type of man in Rex Mottram of *Brideshead Revisited*.

of the face was a little crimson smirking mouth; and, above it, eyes that had a shifty, deprecating look, like those of a temporary butler caught out stealing shirts” (*Complete Stories* 146). As the evening progresses he “found himself continually gazing down the table to where, ten places away, Dr. Kakophilos was frightening a pop-eyed debutante out of all semblance of intelligence” (147) but then momentarily takes comfort in the fact that “he had been brought up a Catholic and had therefore no need to fear black magic” (147). But yet again the presence of Dr. Kakophilos impinges upon him like a “cold draught” (148) when the doctor sneaks up to Rip and asks for a ride home. The original Rip, of the Catskill Mountains has no reservations helping the strange elf-like character or serving his friends. Waugh’s Rip, however, continually feels unease and doubt in the presence of Dr. Kakophilos. Unlike Irving’s Rip, who drinks the draught just to drink, Waugh’s Rip drinks because he feels uneasy. He feels less uneasy as he drinks but also feels less in control of his ability to reject the “black magic” of Dr. Kakophilos. It is clear then that he chooses, unlike the Rip of the hypotext, the black magic. The anticipation of a “thematic kinship” in the form of time travel between the hypotext and the hypertext has climaxed.

By satisfying this anticipation even before the story begins, Waugh transforms Irving’s entertaining tale into a morality play on the power of literature and the need for humanity to maintain that power. Rip Van Winkle’s diegetic transposition into London’s upper crust of the 1930s illustrates the possibly endless expanse of literature’s effect on the world. “Diegetic transposition” or “transdiegetization” is, according to Gérard Genette, an intertextual “change in social setting” (*Palimpsests* 296). Fittingly, the first word of “Out of Depth,” “Rip,” claims the story as a discourse on intertextuality that is almost violent in its abruptness. Rip’s name suggests a play on words because the

character has been ripped out of Irving's story and placed unceremoniously and without explanation into Waugh's story. In fact, his presence there could well be considered a "rip off" if Waugh did not use Rip originally.

In Waugh's case, however, the use of "diegetic transposition" illustrates the possibility of literature's timelessness and boundlessness. This transposition elevates Rip's social class and transports him across the Atlantic, about a century and a half into the future. In *Palimpsests*, Genette writes of similarly creative diegetic transpositions when he asserts that it is possible

within the fantastic code, to mix heterogeneous historical references; a time machine will do the trick and had often done so in science fiction since H. G. Wells. Such an invention may enable a character to leave his diegesis, temporarily or not and penetrate another. This is what happens in Mark Twain's *Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court* (1889) the title of which is perfectly indicative of its operating principle. (*Palimpsests* 310)

Although Genette does not spell it out, this example is not a simple diegetical move that emphasizes not only the passage of time but also a geographical transposition as well. As Twain demonstrates through his story, the geographical and temporal transportation results in hilarity and suspensefulness through the transtextuality of Malory. In Waugh's story, this initial time travel is an "operating principle" because it promotes the timelessness of Irving's story. It speaks now, not just to Americans, nor to the 19th century but also to the 20th century. As we will see later, when Rip does find himself in the future it is a future not unlike that of the Connecticut Yankee's home in the Middle

Ages. Rip is now transcontinental and transcultural. This type of diegetic transposition therefore is not just a simple diversion in the story but also a treatise of the historicity of literature and its potential infinite impact on humanity.

The obviousness of the social diegetic transposition emphasizes the contrast between the environment of the hypertext and the environment of the hypertext, which illustrates a lazy decaying world. Rip is no longer in a pre- and post-Revolutionary War environment fighting for survival and freedom. He is now in a lavish environment without any particular focus, an environment befitting of Rip himself. It is this focus on amusement mixed with intratextuality that brings what Waugh believed to be a sickness of society to light. The story begins at a dinner party where all the guests engage in frivolities, drinking, eating, gossiping, laughing, and smoking. Everyone has become Rip. This simultaneous intra- and intertextual meeting illustrates Waugh's desire to expose a climate of literary laziness. His critique even includes himself as a writer. It is a moment of intra-auctoriality. This term, coined by Anita Obermeier, "represents the same author in two different levels of writing" (18-9). This moment of "intra-auctoriality" is made possible by a combination of inter- and intratextuality. Waugh forces characters of his early novels to meet Irving's Rip Van Winkle. Alistair Trumpington, Lady Metroland, and Norah all appear in previously published novels of Evelyn Waugh, in particular *Vile Bodies*, *Scoop*, *Black Mischief*, and *Put Out More Flags*. This dinner party is the epitome of the lives of the characters as known from the previously written works.

Evidence of their superficiality is found in the previous novels of Waugh. Like Rip, these characters are beyond the confines of time, not because they are bigger than life but because they are lifeless. When set alongside Rip, it becomes apparent that they

mirror Rip. In the original story, when Rip awakes and returns to his town years later he has learned nothing. He takes up where he left off being a particularly lazy person who has learned nothing from having slept away years of his life. In Waugh's story, the addition of Rip to the group indicates a conscious decision to engage a literary conversation on the current state of the liberal arts. It is not enough just to show literary decay. One must take a stand against habits of literary decay. Waugh deprecates his previous writing by having these characters even sit down to eat with Dr. Kakophilos, literally a doctor of bad philosophy, who casts his shadow on their banal lives.

By simultaneously retaining a thematic kinship between his story and that of Irving while engaging in a transvaluation, Waugh reveals that the deterioration of the liberal arts coincides with the decay of civilization. Dr. Kakophilos transports Waugh's Rip five hundred years in the future. But, where Irving's Rip is greeted with a long sought after liberty, Waugh's Rip encounters extreme oppression. Civilization has devolved. The first clue that culture has decayed is his recognition that the ruins he sees are those of Leicester and Trafalgar Squares. And while Rip comes from an environment of the social elite, he is recognized in the future as a feared anomaly. The women who live in primitive huts pull up their ladders when they see him. The men look at him as if he were a circus freak. Fear of him as a savage culminates when one of the black leaders measures his head with calipers.

The combination of intra- and intertextuality reveals that this future literary decay coincides with language decay and, therefore, results in the inability to express or grasp meaning: "They spoke slowly in the sing-song tones of an unlettered race who depend on oral tradition for the preservation of their lore" (*Complete Stories* 152). The language of

literature has devolved into a simplified, sophomoric state accessible to simple and unsophisticated minds. The text emphasizes this lack of communication, using Joycean intertextuality to explain Rip's situation. The narrator relates that to Rip the language is "familiar yet unintelligible" (152) effectively echoing Stephen Daedalus' description of a priest's English as "so familiar yet so foreign" (*Portrait* 140). Daedalus continues:

the language in which we are speaking is his before it is mine. How different are the words *home, Christ, ale, master*, on his lips and on mine! I cannot speak or write these words without unrest of spirit. His language, so familiar and so foreign, will always be for me an acquired speech. I have not made or accepted its words. My voice holds them at bay. My soul frets in the shadow of his language (189).

Waugh's allusion, however, allows the reader to understand a much more frightening situation. Rip can neither understand nor be understood. Although there are meanings beyond the "sing-song tones," they are meanings he cannot know. Waugh has effectively entered Joyce's dialogue; but, instead decrying the usurpation of languages as the cause of exclusion and suffering of the future, it is the decay of the mind that leads civilization to tragedy.

Again by coupling intra- and intertextuality, Waugh solidifies the inability to grasp meaning while acknowledging its existence. Soon Rip is measured with the calipers; a black man reads Shakespeare to Rip, whom he considers a savage. This is a clear allusion to Huxley's dystopian novel *Brave New World*. First, its mention brings to light the similarities between the Acoma Pueblo Indians (considered savages in Huxley's novel) and the huts of naked "lononeer" (Londoner) of Waugh's future. It clarifies the

danger in limiting human potential, which if limited becomes unnecessarily dwarfed by the powerful. Second, and more obviously, it recalls the hidden *Works of Shakespeare* in the pueblo that Huxley's John learns and memorizes. As *Brave New World* progresses, it is in fact the words of Shakespeare that help John deal with his new situation in society.

Concurrently, this also mirrors an event in other works by Waugh—*A Handful of Dust* and the short story upon which the novel is based, “The Man who Liked Dickens.” Both end with a man stranded in a remote jungle forced to read aloud from antique books. In *Handful*, however, they are not the works of Shakespeare but those of Dickens. In all three cases, remnants of classics are revered by those in power, not because of their meaning but because they are antiques and or unique. The protagonists are the only ones who understand the meaning behind the text. Those who force the readings are ignorant of the depth of compassion, love, humor, and forgiveness these works promote. This ignorance in the midst of knowledge is a simple and clear illustration of how meaning does not cease to be just because people cease to recognize it.

Hope for the reemergence of the ability to once again recognize and embrace the meaning of literature springs from the reverence the future Londoners express towards one of the oldest, recognized and intertextualized phrases in Roman Catholic Liturgy. Rip's time in the future ends with *Ite, missa est*—this is the mass. According to The Catholic Encyclopedia, “It is undoubtedly one of the most ancient Roman formulæ, as may be seen from its archaic and difficult form. All the three oldest Roman Ordines contain it.” The Encyclopedia goes on to explain its significance:

Ite, missa est finita; or *est* is taken absolutely, as meaning “exists,” is now an accomplished fact. The real explanation seems to lie rather in

interpreting correctly the word *missa*. Before it became the technical name of the holy Liturgy in the Roman Rite, it meant simply “dismissal”. The form *missa* for *missio* is like that of *collecta* (for *collectio*), *ascensa* (*ascensio*), etc. So *Ite missa est* should be translated “Go it is the dismissal.”

According to many theologians, as researched by Matthew Rose, the phrase contains within it a larger message¹⁴, much of which is intertextual. Rose relates that Saint Thomas Aquinas believes that “missa” in this instance also means “sent” and that it recalls the instance in the Bible of Christ being sent to sinners. Rose’s research indicates that Emeritus Pope Benedict XVI believes that “missa” means mission. Instead of merely a concluding phrase it, “gradually took on a deeper meaning. The word ‘dismissal’ has come to imply a ‘mission.’ These few words succinctly express the missionary nature of the Church (Benedict XVI, *Sacramentum Caritatis*). It is Rose’s mention of Archbishop Fulton Sheen, (a contemporary of Waugh’s) however, that hints towards one of the most significant phrases in the Bible. Venerable Fulton J. Sheen suggest that “*Ite, missa est*” alludes to Christ’s last words, “It is finished,” perhaps the most famous words in the Judeo Christian Tradition. Sheen says “The redemption of man is finished ... Love can do no more than die. It is finished: ‘*Ite, missa est.*’ His work is finished. But is ours?” (Sheen) The application of Sheen’s interpretation in this instance strengthens the resolve of Rip to live a more meaningful life. Given the millennial old oral, literary and

¹⁴ Credit for grouping these theologians, their ideas and quotes together in a concise explanation of “*Ite, missa est*” belongs fully to Matthew Rose who did the research and grouping for his blog <https://quidquidestest.wordpress.com/2012/08/09/what-does-ite-missa-est-really-mean/> Linking their explanations to intertextuality, its significance and, of course, Waugh, is my doing.

theological traditions associated with this phrase and the significance supported by the theologians, the intertextual connection in “Out of Depth” is not only undeniable but largely unavoidable. Unlike the incomprehensible words of Shakespeare in Huxley’s novel, or the Shakespeare read to Rip, the people at this mass not only understand that there is a significance behind these foreign words but they also respect and honor that significance.

The use of intertextuality in this story culminates in intra-auctorial that demonstrates Waugh’s desire to be an active participant in maintaining seriousness in literature. It is when Rip recognizes the reverence toward an uncomprehend intertextual meaning that he awakes and finds himself in present day. He asks for a priest and confesses, “I have experimented in Black Art.” (156). The confession is much more than Rip’s admission that he had allowed Dr. Kakophilos to lead him into sin. It is also in intra-auctorial reference. “Black Arts” is an allusion to Waugh’s book *Black Mischief*. While this novel can be criticized for racism, the real point is that Waugh is actually making fun of society’s treatment of blacks. It is not blacks that he laughs at but a white society that pretends to be superior to other races. Although, that story can be considered didactic, Waugh seems to suggest that the problem with the world will not be fixed by echoing its faults. This moment of intra-auctorial in “Out of Depth” is an acknowledgment by Waugh of having delved in less serious and less timeless literature. Rip’s confession is Waugh’s resolution to devote himself to the maintenance of a meaningful literary culture.

Because the commencement of this pursuit coincides with Waugh’s conversion to Catholicism, “Out of Depth” was mistakenly underrated, prompting him to revisit the

theme years later in *Love Among the Ruins*.” As stated above, numerous people criticized “Out of Depth” as a purely religious treatise. While he did not agree that “Out of Depth” was too religious, he does curb overt religious references in *Love Among the Ruins*.

Nevertheless, Waugh did not receive accolades for *Love among the Ruins* either. In fact, he was criticized for it to such a point that he defended it in an article for *The Spectator* in 1953: “It is a brief, very prettily produced fantasy about life in the near future with certain obvious defects. ...As it stands it is designed purely to amuse and is therefore subject to a snap verdict, yes or no. Either it comes off or it fails” (*Essays* 441).

Although, Waugh suggests that the story is merely meant to entertain, the intertextuality found in “Love Among the Ruins” demonstrates that he wishes to illustrate the mysterious complexities of humanity and literature’s capacity to make those complexities bearable.

“Out of Depth” as Love Among the Ruins

Although written after “Out of Depth,” *Love Among the Ruins: A Romance of the Near Future* is a hopeful prequel to the earlier story. Intertextuality in *Love Among the Ruins* suggests that the deterioration of civilization can be halted through meanings only art can provide. Critic Christopher Hollis of *The Tablet* identified the key intertextual sources in his review of the story:

There is nothing new about writing histories of the future. But, of course the great difference here between the nineteenth and the twentieth centuries was that the nineteenth century authors—William Morris, Tennyson, Ballamy—always imagined that the future would be better than the present. None of the authors of the twentieth century imagines that,

and Mr. Waugh is only one of a considerable company in foreseeing it as dreary and inhumane. Yet he has his own vision. He is looking to a much nearer future than George Orwell or Mr. Aldous Huxley.

(Critical Heritage 357)

The futuristic theme itself allows Waugh to converse with authors past and present. He shows his intentions of doing so by borrowing the first half of the title from Robert Browning's poem of the same name. In his pastoral poem, Browning muses on the remnants of a once dominant and thriving civilization and concludes that love alone survives the passage of time. Initially and superficially, Waugh's short story transstylizes Browning's lament for a once thriving civilization. Throughout the story, however, what Riffaterre refers to as "ungrammaticalities" ("Intertextual Representation" 148) surface and reveal Waugh's posturing as different from that of Browning's. This reveals Browning's peritextual occurrence as a signpost signifying a plethora of literary allusion that culminates in metatextuality. This metatextuality comes from five prominent artistic allusions, two are artistic and three are literary: unknown painters, Aldous Huxley, Shakespeare, and the early works of Waugh. Together these allusions show that man is immersed in and made up of mystery that literature alone speak to.

The impulse to compare the two different pieces titled "Love Among the Ruins" inevitably leads to the appearance of a "thematic kinship." Yet few articles compare Waugh's *Love Among the Ruins* to Browning's identically named poem. This paratextual, and more specifically, peritextual occurrence, is as obvious. Robert Browning published his poem in 1855. The narrator of his poem contemplates a flourishing age past that once

stood in the spot where his beloved awaits him. Now only sheep wander among the ruins of an erstwhile:

. . .city great and gay,
 (So they say)
 Of our country's very capital, its prince,
 Ages since
 Held his court in, gathered councils, wielding far
 Peace or war (7-12).

But the flourishing of that kingdom was in vain:

O heart! Oh blood that freezes, blood that burns!
 Earth's returns
 For whole centuries of folly, noise and sin!
 Shut them in,
 With their triumphs and their glories and the rest!
 Love is best. (79-84)

In the first line of the poem, “great and gay” carries its own intertextual meaning as it is believed to be taken from Edmund Spenser’s “Ruins in Time” (1251). It too was a poem devoted to the fleeting triumphs of civilization. Browning, however, ends with the small though powerful phrase “Love is best” emphasizing it as a stronger and more sustaining force than the eventual decay of everything else. In the end, success and affluence are fleeting. Love alone endures.

A similar mood and setting in Waugh’s story initially seem to anticipate a transstylization of the poem. Transstylization, according to Gérard Genette (*Palimpsests*

226), is the reworking of one hypotext into a different genre that becomes the hypertext. The form of transstylization that Waugh takes on is that of prosification, turning a poem into prose. Naturally, embellishments are inevitable in this case. The descriptions of the setting emphasize the pensive and the pastoral. Following Browning, Waugh infuses the beginning of his story with a certain *ubi sunt* mentality for time's deterioration of ages past. The protagonist of the Waugh's story, Miles Plastic, laments his release from his rehabilitation center where he had been incarcerated for almost two years for burning down an air force station and killing dozens of people. Miles first appears in a pastoral setting and pensive mood similar to that of Browning's as he is "sauntering among the sleeping flowers," and is "suffused with melancholy" (*Complete Stories* 470) at the realization that he must abandon his home of twenty-two months.

On the outside, he meets Clara a ballerina who is being pressured to have herself euthanized because of her "gold corn beard" (483). Miles and Clara find themselves in a paradise of love beyond the "advances" of the civilized world. Their meetings are an escape from their "successful" government-run lives:

'I knew it would be a mistake to let the beastly doctor poison me,' said Clara complacently. Full summer came. Another moon waxed over these rare lovers. Once they sought coolness and secrecy among the high cow-parsley and willow-herb of the waste building sites. Clara's beard was all silvered like a patriarch's in the midnight radiance. (488)

After sex, Miles relishes the feelings of the moment: "On such a night as this...on such a night as this I burned an Air Force Station and half its occupants" (488). His nostalgia for the destruction and ruin that he imposed on the facility mirrors Browning's narrator's

effective dismissal of the success of a monarch. To Miles, nothing is as important as his relationship with Clara. He concurs with Browning's narrator that "Love is best."

Ungrammaticalities in Waugh's text, however, suggest that in spite of its similarities, *Love Among the Ruins* is not necessarily just a transstylization. In his article "Intertextual Representation," Michael Riffaterre uses the term "ungrammaticality" to define a sign within the text that seems to act in opposition to the surrounding material (148). The ungrammaticality in *Love Among the Ruins* is thematic in that its concluding premise acts against that of Browning's poem. Although initially Miles reaches the conclusion that "love is best" and lasting, as does Browning's speaker, his opinion reverses dramatically by the end of the story. His relationship turns sour, and he abandons the hope that two lovers can love each other until the end of eternity. In fact, Clara disappears for weeks after learning she is pregnant. Miles imagines she has gone into hiding in the country with her relatives, which fits Browning's poem, in which the speaker's lover waits for him in a clearing. However, Miles eventually learns that Clara is still in the city. She is, in fact, in the hospital. He visits and learns that Clara has undergone an operation that has aborted her baby and removed her beard in order to "restore" her aesthetic beauty. Clara has not found sanctuary in the ever growing flora and fauna of the natural world but instead in the institutions of a dehumanizing society. Browning's couple meets and communicate with their eyes at the conclusion of the poem. Miles and Clara's last meeting, however, consists of dehumanized eyes made up like cats and Miles eyes focused only on the television. There is no communication. There is no love.

One ungrammaticality, however, provides a glimmer of hope that the arts of the past have not been completely demolished and hidden. While Browning laments the useless triumphs of the past and their complete deterioration, Waugh honors remnants of these triumphs that have withstood the passing of time. These remnants are instances of art and literature. Along with the peritextual reference in the title, another conscious appeal to intertextuality follows the title with the description of “a rich, old fashioned Tennysonian night” (468). The ungrammaticality presents itself on two levels here. First, by recalling artifacts that have stood the test of time, Waugh honors the endurance of past civilizations to survive in at least some aspect. Second, these artifacts are specific literary and historic allusions. Unlike Browning’s vision of a dystopia that falls to ruin, Waugh argues that the literature of a bygone age is a necessary relic for the continuation of a healthy civilization.

Interestingly, although neither Browning nor Tennyson appears by name in the remainder of the story; their presence and that of other authors signifies not an intertextual dead end but instead a type of literary communion among timeless authors and humanity. At one point after making love to Clara, Miles retreats even further back into literary history when he dreamily muses “In such a night as this...in such a night as this” directly quoting Act V, scene i from Shakespeare’s *Merchant of Venice*. As with his references to the Victorian poets, Waugh never mentions or quotes Shakespeare again in this text, but Miles’s recollection of the quotation—even if he is ignorant of its source—reveals that Shakespeare still exists in a type of literary unconscious in the minds of men and women. Unlike “Out of Depth” in which Shakespeare is used to even further accentuate the lack of communication between Rip and others, Miles calls upon

Shakespearean language to explain to himself and Clara his own sentiments. The fact that he does not mention Shakespeare by name indicates that his works still live in the literary subconscious even if nowhere else.

Admittedly, Waugh expands his metatextual intertextuality to other modes of expression in *Love Among the Ruins* and thus increases the presence of mystery. He begins with visual art. When introduced to Clara's apartment Miles observes "[t]wo little paintings hung on the walls, unlike any painting Miles had seen before, unlike anything approved by the Ministry of Art. One represented a goddess of antiquity, naked and rosy, fondling a peacock on a bank of flowers; the other a vast, tree-fringed lake and a party in spreading silken clothes embarking in a pleasure boat under a broken arch" (487). By this point in the story the reader knows that the Ministry of Art has approved only paintings by Picasso and Legers (473). Some readers may be tempted to consider the presence of unnamed text and paintings in the story as an ungrammatical dead end because of the anonymity of the artists; the paintings are actually a signpost for a more invested experience with the story. Riffaterre states in the conclusion of *Semiotics of Poetry* that "any ungrammaticality within the poem is a sign of grammaticality elsewhere" (164-5). Waugh's allusions signal the reader to investigate these instances of intertextuality. The appearance of the unnamed art pieces brings the importance of this metatextuality to the forefront and encourages a deciphering of the meaning of these allusions. Uncited and unnamed, these gaps of information propel the reader into a search. The source of these paintings is, in fact, a mystery—a mystery that deepens when we learn that they are not the approved Picassos or Legers. The only manner to know these paintings is through negation. Riffaterre calls this an act of "reverse mimesis" in which "an object is offered

for our identification through the mimesis of what it is not. We are able to discover the equivalence through a sustained correspondence, term for term, between the semes defining the meaning of the object and the semes of its counterpart, of the “nonobject” (“Intertextual Representation” 153). Since the paintings are not Picassos or Legers, they are not abstract, cubist, or tubist renditions of humanity. They do not “overthrow the subject” and replace it with the object or “consider the human figure as a plastic value” as Legers reportedly believed (Neret 98). Clara’s contraband paintings are, instead, artifacts that give real and substantial value to humanity. So while we may never know the artist behind the paintings we can know the meaning they convey.

The mere presence of the paintings in the story emphasizes Waugh’s belief that this “near future romance” occurs at a time when art no longer attempts to reflect life and humanity. In “The Death of Painting,” Waugh dismisses abstract artists because “Today high honours and high prices are given to the practitioners of ‘nonrepresentative art’. Patronage is in the hands of people who no longer seek joy in possession; the directors of public galleries conceive it as their duty to instruct by exemplifying ‘movements’, however repugnant they may find the task” (*Essays* 504). He includes Legers and Picasso in what he considers this erroneously lauded group of painters. According to Waugh, who himself was an artist, the real artist must

represent visual objects. Anatomy and perspective must be laboriously learned and conscientiously practiced. That is the elementary grammar of his communication. Secondly, that by composition, the choice and arrangement of his visual objects, he must charm, amuse, instruct, edify,

awe his fellow men, according as his idiosyncrasy directs. Verisimilitude is not enough, but it is the prerequisite. (507)

Clara's paintings represent people engaged in actual living. They are not abstract forms leaving the viewer to create his own meaning out of them. As metatextual allusions, Clara's paintings represent a philosophy of art that places humanity at the center of art and that treats people not as a disposable superficial dead objects but as its meaning, purpose, and focus of art.

The ungrammaticality of the presence of these allusions compels the reader to participate and work out the hidden meaning of the story. Riffaterre posits that it is only through uncovering the connections contained within these ungrammaticalities that any story will divulge its true meaning. He discusses how merely the use of words like *salesman* found in Proust's moment of buying a branch of apple blossoms and the word *glazed* from Williams Carlos Williams's poem "The Red Wheelbarrow" harbor intertextual meaning that not only demands but also makes inevitable the exploration of that meaning:

These connectors work by triggering presuppositions, by compelling the reader to recognize that the text makes sense only by reference to meanings found neither within the verbal context nor within the author's idiolect but within an intertext. The reader's assumption-though he need not make it by a fully conscious process-is that the difficulty he experiences in deciphering the ungrammaticality of a given sign must be pointing to a grammaticality elsewhere, among the semiotic

systems of the sociolect and/or among other literary texts. (“Intertextual Representation” 148)

In the case of Waugh’s story, the ungrammaticality surfaces in the presence of literary and artistic relics that appear out of place in this dystopia because they not only contradict the state of affairs in this futuristic world but also because their presence contradicts the dismissal of the past in Browning’s “Love Among the Ruins.”

With their ungrammaticality as signposts, three of these intertextual occurrences provide a similar connecting metatextual signal. In neither the reference to Browning nor to Shakespeare nor to the paintings are the artists or writers named. These are examples of what Genette terms “metatextuality,” Genette’s “third type of textual transcendence,” which “unites a given text to another, of which it speaks without necessarily citing it (without summoning it), in fact sometimes even without naming it” (*Palimpsests* 4). The non-scholar and average readers of *Love Among the Ruins* may not recognize the peritextual reference to Browning’s poems or the line from Shakespeare. Even if they did, I propose that they would be pressed to know immediately from where the quotations were taken. One might ask “what is the point of the metatextual intertextuality if average readers cannot place the allusion?”

Waugh extends this type of human-centered art metatextually throughout the story ultimately revealing two guiding principles: that meaning does exist and that humanity is naturally propelled to uncover that meaning. The intertextual clues or connectives thus far laid by Waugh indicate that the meaning of his story is not subjective but eternal, and thus contradicts any notion of the “death of the author.” For example, Barthes suggests “there is one place where this multiplicity [intertextual voices] is focused, and that place

is the reader, not as was hitherto said, the author. The reader is the space of which all the quotations that make up a writing are inscribed without any of them being lost; a text's unity lies not in its origin but in its destination" (148). In Barthes' view, meaning is malleable and changes with each reader— perhaps even with each successive reading of the same reader. Waugh, however, intends a specific meaning and insists upon it. While Waugh would have most likely scoffed at the jargon of the intertextualist scholars, his beliefs on the subject would likely fall in line with those of Riffaterre. Riffaterre proposes that the gaps of "difficulty" in any text "suggest that, when it activates or mobilizes the intertext, the text leaves little leeway to readers and controls closely their response. It is thus," Riffaterre continues, "that the text maintains its identity despite changing times, despite the evolution of the sociolect, and despite the ascent of readerships unforeseen by the author" ("Compulsory Reader" 57). The artist presents a meaning that endures. "The artist's only service to the disintegrated society of today," Waugh stated in "Fan-Fare," "is to create little independent systems of order of his own" (304). Waugh recognizes that the author has the means to restore a sense of order to a decaying society and that this vocation goes hand-in-hand with his role as an artist. In other words, according to Waugh, there is an undeniable link between the arts and the decay or rejuvenation of society. The resurrection of these "systems of order," however, can only resurface through an active reading that attempts to fill in those intertextual gaps.

An attempt to fill in many of the gaps in *Love Among the Ruins* leads directly to Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*. Similar tragic themes emerge in both stories. Themes alone, however, are too commonplace to define the intertextuality of a piece. Worton says that "any intertextual reading must focus on textual utterances, not on

themes which, given the nature of the cultural and social continuum, are necessarily shared by various writers and readers” (19). Unmistakable intertextual utterances in Waugh’s story provide evidence of the specific hypotext that Waugh drew upon and intentionally engaging in intertextuality. After establishing the purposeful allusions we can then recognize with certainty a copied theme: the debilitating fracture between humanity and nature.

Waugh begins by mirroring a poignant “textual utterance” of Huxley to illustrate the permeating nihilism of this future. After this obvious textual allusion, similar themes become more apparent. By decoding *Love Among the Ruins* through Riffaterre’s theories on ungrammaticalities, the reader can see the dialogic intertextual relationship that Waugh initiated between his present and past work and that of Huxley. The similarities between *Brave New World* and *Love Among the Ruins* concern the problems of future societies. There are differences between the two texts, however, and these differences show that Waugh wants to hold out hope for a better future. Waugh offers a solution for the ills of these futuristic societies, where the deterioration of the humanities and arts results in a society void of human decency. His depiction of the future illustrates a world in transition, a world that has not yet reached full decay. As such his short story is a hopeful warning that the dire path can be altered by the restoration and strengthening of the relationship between society and the arts.

Although Waugh utilizes *Brave New World*, his story is not a sequel but a prequel both to Huxley’s novel and his own “Out of Depth.” *Love Among the Ruins* warns that a civilization like that of *Brave New World* could result from the erroneous ways of civilization, but through intertextuality he posits that such a world is not imminent and

can be avoided. If the arts and humanities are valued, they will become an antidote to a Godless and animalistic society.

By first mirroring and then eschewing Huxley's use of an analogue for God, Waugh responds to the critics of "Out of Depth" by showing them the Godless future they are choosing. In Huxley's novel, the expunging of "God" from the language first becomes apparent while the director explains the "education" of babies. The eight-month-old babies are enticed by beautiful flowers and colorful storybooks. They are then conditioned into hating them through electric shock and loud sirens. Proud of this indoctrination, the director says, "What man has joined, nature is powerless to put asunder" (22). In this reworking of Mark 10:9 ("What therefore God hath joined together, may not man put asunder"), God is completely erased from the equation. In fact the only one who remembers God at all in Huxley's novel is the "savage," John, who grew up on a Native American reservation removed from "regular" society. Later in the novel, he says, "Oh, God, God, God...", which the others regard as a foreign language: "Whatever is he saying?" (207). The most prominent godless expression in the book, however, appears in the phrases, "Oh Ford!...I've gone and woken the children" (29), "Ford, no!" (139), "(Ford!)" people think when they see the only decrepit, fat, and ugly woman in their society, "you simply couldn't look at her without feeling sick" (154). The obvious allusion to Henry Ford and the mass production of automobiles indicates that technology has replaced God.

Whereas Huxley focuses on the evils of technology, Waugh shifts the focus to false ideologies, the true evil. Waugh mirrors Huxley's use of an analogue and in so doing makes the analogue do double intertextual duty. He concurrently responds to the

criticism he received for “Out of Depth” while eschewing Huxley’s theme by showing that society is responsible for its state. This is the most apparent metatextual occurrence of the novel and is in fact a “textual utterance.” When released from his rehabilitating center Mountjoy, Miles is congratulated by the Minister of Welfare and the Minister of Rest and Culture—“colleagues in the Coalition Government.” The Minister of Welfare shakes Miles’s hand and instead of the customary “God be with you” or “Peace be with you,” he says, “State be with you” (477). Moments later the Deputy Chief releases him by repeating “State be with you, Mr. Plastic” (478). Using “state” as an analogue for God is common practice in this society. During Miles’s first night away from Mountjoy, he tells a sub-official that he has a job in the Euthanasia Department. The official exclaims, “Great State! You must have pull!” and continues “Orphans get all the plums. I had a Full Family Life, State help me” (481). Later when Miles’s boss gets mad he shouts “Then for State’s sake what are you wasting my time for?” (484). Miles’s society has morphed the exclamations of prayer— “Great God!” “For Christ’s sake” and “God help me”—into pleas of help directed toward the government. Even though today these phrases are usually uttered without religious intent, at least use of the phrases acknowledges God’s existence. God is still recognized, if only at a subconscious level, when one utters, “Great God” or “Oh my God” or even the highly detestable “OMG.” In Waugh’s “near future,” however, not even the vestiges of the word “God” remain. The Creator is not even a memory. In *Love Among the Ruins*, this moment is intra-auctorial: Waugh responds to the critics of “Out of Depth” by presenting the ridiculousness of getting rid of God. It is almost as if Waugh decided to remove God entirely from this story because “Out of Depth” had been considered too religious. In “Out of Depth” people still hold the

Catholic liturgy in reverence, and a priest still performs the sacrifice of the Mass. But in *Love Among the Ruins*, God is dead. The nativity play has become an “old obscure folk play” (492) and Christmas is now “Santa Claus Day” (492). Instead of the danger of technology that Huxley projected, Waugh decries the ideology of critics and people of importance who deny the existence of God.

It is precisely in the analogical metatextual allusion to Huxley, however, that Waugh reveals the hope he still holds out for the future of society that Huxley seems to lack. The possibility of restoring a humane society emerges from an intertextual object of puzzlement: his mimicking of Huxley’s use of an analogue for God while substituting it with a different word for that analogue. Waugh’s analogue “State” reveals a surrender of power to the government instead of loss of power due to technological advances. This is domination disguised as help, much like forms of government that already existed in Waugh’s time—Soviet Russia for instance—that were threatening to subsume free societies. In his review of Harold Laski’s *Faith, Reason and Civilization*, Waugh called attention to Laski’s belief that “the state is the teacher; but mere instruction is not enough; the seed must fall on a prepared soil; the child from an impoverished home cannot hope to be a scientist; therefore it is the duty of the state to ensure a home for each of its subjects” (*Essays*, 278). Waugh ridicules Laski for supporting a government that represses its citizens, who are enduring “long toil, hard living, constant supervision, ruthless punishment, recurrent tragedy” that “[they] may not realize it, but [they] are happy at this moment” (*Essays*, 280). Waugh foresees a world in which the mysteries of feelings, thoughts, and sufferings of the citizens are dismissed by the all-knowing power of the state. Fortunately, in Miles Plastic’s world the citizens may still control themselves

as long as they choose to. To Waugh, the deterioration of society is not due to technology as Huxley's novel projects but is instead the consequence of relinquishing freedoms so as to avoid being discomfited by mystery.

Relinquishing liberties in order to evade the mysteries of the human body pervades both stories. This surrender begins with forced sterilization that allows for unlimited sexual gratification. Interestingly, in both stories the women alone are responsible for sterilizing themselves while the men need only enjoy the sexual act. Huxley's and Waugh's societies both view fertility not as a stage (much less a mysteriously granted gift) in the cycle of humanity but as an illness or sickness of the women. Women are forced to reject and suppress their nature in order to fulfill societal norms. In both of these societies, sterilization ensures happiness. In Huxley's world the women are all on prescribed contraceptives that they wear on a "surrogate cartridge belt" (50). This world is one in which the population lives only for the pleasure of sex: "everyone belongs to everyone else." No enjoyment is taken from reading or art or friendships. Art, in fact, does not exist. Emotions have replaced thought at the movies (now termed *feelies*). Both dystopias, for the most part, are equally suspicious of natural sexual instincts. They no longer regard sex as either an expression of love or as a means to procreate. All that is left is the pleasure aspect of the sexual act. In *Brave New World* procreation has been limited to laboratories and test tubes in which the workers decide precise combinations of genes. Young children are encouraged even before they understand their bodies and themselves to engage in "rudimentary sexual game(s)" (31). When older, they are discouraged from getting attached to one particular sexual partner. Fanny warns her friend Lenina not to get into a committed relationship

I really do think you ought to be careful. It's such horribly bad form to go on and on like this with one man. At forty, or thirty-five, it wouldn't be so bad. But at your age, Lenina! No, it really won't do. And you know how strongly the D.H.C. [the Director of Hatcheries and Conditioning] objects to anything intense or long-drawn. Four months of Henry Foster, without having another man—why, he'd be furious if he knew. ...After all, every one belongs to everyone else. (41, 43)

Sex is a central issue in both texts, and both treat intercourse as scientific, ordinary, and even mundane. The presence or theme of sex in these texts functions as one of Riffaterre's ungrammaticalities in the sense that its presence is, at the moment that each story was published, a taboo subject in literature, a subject mentioned in syllepsis and subtext.

Both novels have a protagonist whose encounter with sex confounds commonplace assumptions. In Huxley's novel, John is a "savage" born in a Native American pueblo to a non-native mother who freely has sex with men. She is later attacked by the pueblo women who are horrified by a woman who strips hoping for sex. Waugh's protagonist, on the other hand, has had sex before:

For Miles, child of the State, sex had been part of the curriculum at every stage of his education; first in diagrams, then in demonstrations, then in application, he had mastered all the antics of procreation. Love was a word seldom used except by politicians and by them only in moments of pure fatuity. Nothing that he had been taught prepared him for Clara. (487)

The difference is that sex with Clara contains an element of mystery.

In both texts, sexual gratification has associations with the words of Shakespeare. In Huxley's dystopia, no one reads or understands Shakespeare not only because it is prohibited but also because it is beautiful. The argument against beauty is that "Beauty's attractive, and [they] don't want people to be attracted by old things. ...You've got to choose between happiness and what people used to call high art. We've sacrificed the high art. We have the feelies and the scent organ instead" (219-20). Nevertheless, some words from Shakespeare surreptitiously survive. John the savage expresses his deep love for Lenina. She, however, does not understand love; she understands only lust and her unbridled ability to satisfy that lust. For John, however, there is still a mystery in the sex act in that it is enigmatically coupled with marriage. In his attempt to fight the temptation to have sex, he repeats Prospero's words to Ferdinand in *The Tempest* upon bestowing Miranda to him: "If thou dost break her virgin knot before all sanctimonious ceremonies may with full and holy rite be ministered" (191). Lenina, however, does not understand his struggle, presses him close and nearly rapes him. In his escape, the only words that come to him are the words used by Othello to Desdemona: "O thou weed." Lenina, of course, does not understand.

Waugh's future society espouses the ironic belief that infertility is imperative to the future of society, including the future of art and culture. The ballerina Clara explains that her "gold-corn" beard is a result of attempted sterilization called the "Klugmann's Operation": "I never wanted it done. I never want anything done. It was the Head of the Ballet. He insists on all the girls being sterilized. Apparently you can never dance really well again after you've had a baby" ("Love Among" 484). In this short story there is an astounding perversion of priorities. The advancement of art supersedes procreation.

Nevertheless, as with the hopeful ending of “Out of Depth,” Evelyn Waugh diverges from Huxley’s hopelessness in that his story depicts a society transitioning away from natural law while—crucially—still retaining the possibility of returning to it. Yet, unlike Huxley’s meticulously controlled test tube babies and infertility, the people of Waugh society are still allowed to procreate naturally. In Huxley’s novel, the fact that Linda gets pregnant is repugnant and disgusting. When Clara gets pregnant, however, Miles merely seems to regard it as a surprising and perhaps (his counselor suggests) scary enterprise. The characters of Huxley’s novel despise the naturally conceived savage; in contrast, Miles is ready to take on the role of father. Naturally fertility and procreation is not wholly despised just yet in Waugh’s dystopia.

Furthermore, Waugh makes hope evident through a simultaneous metatextual intra-auctorial use of Shakespeare. In Waugh’s future world, Shakespeare still exists in the literary unconscious. After one of Miles and Clara’s first sexual encounters, Miles recalls some words from Shakespeare. Early in their relationship after “they sought coolness and secrecy among the high cow-parsley and willow-herb of the waste building sites,” Miles (“al male, post coitum tristis”) says, “On such a night as this...on such a night as this I burned an Air Force Station and half its occupants” (“Love Among” 488). The allusion comes from the line “in such a night as this,” part of Lorenzo’s and Jessica’s loving banter as they competitively and sardonically compare their romantic night to that of thwarted or wicked lovers of literary antiquity. Neither Miles nor Clara seem to know where this expression originates. Yet the ironic tone of Lorenzo and Jessica comparing themselves to thwarted lovers mirrors Miles, who compares his love to killing dozens of innocent men. Lorenzo and Jessica are playfully sarcastic; Miles is not. He is completely

ignorant as to whom he is echoing. This ignorance, however, does not negate the meaning behind the words.

Instead, it reveals with greater emphasis that—unlike in Huxley’s novel and “Out of Depth”—Shakespeare’s words are a communicative tool, a tool alive and well in the literary subconscious. Carl Jung states that a work of art “has its source not in the personal unconscious of the poet, but in a sphere of unconscious mythology whose primordial images are the common heritage of mankind” (80). Moreover, “in each of these images there is a little piece of human psychology and human fate, a remnant of the joys and sorrows that have been repeated countless times in our ancestral history, and on the average follow ever the same course” (81). Although Jung states that these images must “be translated into conceptual language,” Miles’s use of Lorenzo and Jessica’s speech is already in use in the language. Although he may not be aware of the author of this metatextual allusion he still honors it as a communicable image. Shakespeare’s role in *Love Among the Ruins* differs from the role of the unintelligible Latin Mass in “Out of Depth.” Waugh replaces ignorant savages honoring a mysterious ritual with Miles honoring a timeless playwright he does not know. Instead of a primitive people sitting around a man whose language they do not understand but honor, we now have a man resorting to the collective literary unconscious to communicate the almost incommunicable feelings of love. Shakespeare may live only in the oral culture of the people, yet he still lives. As long as the truths found in Shakespeare continue to echo in the literary unconscious, the possibility to reclaim the mysteries of humanity’s hidden sexual nature remains.

Waugh warns, however, that the rejection of the laws of nature eventually lead to the complete destruction of literature. Thematically both *Love Among the Ruins* and *Brave New World* describe attempts to achieve happiness by evading nature. Eventually both societies attempt to evade the symptoms and sufferings of death. When they can no longer maintain the artificial façade of happiness in youth they resort to euthanasia. In order to function well, the societies must erase any vestige of what they deem unattractive. The men and women of Huxley's novel extend the appearance of youth and beauty through artificial means. When, however, the years of forced enslavement to drugs causes their bodies to shut down, they are immediately subject to gradual euthanasia. The doctors prescribe the savage's mother, Linda, "twenty grammes of soma a day," saying that it "will finish her off in a month or two. ...One day the respiratory centre will be paralyzed. No more breathing. Finished. And a good thing too. If we could rejuvenate, of course it would be different. But we can't" (154). Once their bodies begin to decline, the elderly are moved to Park Lane hospital for the dying. While the text does not specifically state that the elderly are always euthanized, the use of soma on Linda suggests it. When Henry describes the smoking stacks on his date with Lenina, he reveals that humanity is valued only through a utilitarian outlook. As the bodies of the dead are cremated, the smoke stacks allow for "phosphorous recovery." Henry rejoices in the fact that it is "fine to think we can go on being socially useful even after we're dead" (73). In other words, humanity is valuable only for the scientific and technological resources it provides.

In *Love Among the Ruins*, euthanasia underlies the story as a symptom of a society in which attractiveness trumps life. Miles's rehabilitation comes with a job at the

Euthanasia Department. In Waugh's future world, euthanasia started as a supposed act of mercy and evolved into a commonplace procedure. That is, euthanasia

had not been part of the original 1945 Health Service; it was a Tory measure designed to attract votes from the aged and mortally sick. Under the Bevan-Eden Coalition the service came into general use and won instant popularity. The Union of Teachers was pressing for its application to difficult children. Foreigners came in such numbers to take advantage of the service that immigration authorities now turned back the bearers of single tickets. (479-80)

The application of euthanasia is commonplace. It is a service that the people of "the very near future" believe should be equally available to all. Illustrating the absurdity of government-sponsored euthanasia, the Director of Euthanasia admonishes the "damned sentimentalists. My father and mother hanged themselves in their own backyard with their own clothesline. ...There are still rivers to drown in, trains—every now and then—to put your head under; gas-fires in some of the huts. The country is full of the natural resources of death, but everyone has to come to us" (482). Those who desire to be euthanized or want others euthanized evade the norms of human nature. Huxley and Waugh's depiction of euthanasia accentuates a resistance to the natural human realities of death, dying, and suffering. But the fact that Clara rejects euthanasia at the beginning of Waugh's story shows that there are still those in this dystopia who will not sacrifice life for the comfort of beauty.

Waugh's combination of intertextuality and intra-auctoriality, however, divulges that a society that values appearance above nature will eventually eradicate art

completely. In *Love Among the Ruins*, the state seems to acknowledge art, as illustrated by the inclusion of Legers and Picasso in education and the creation of a governmental Drama Department. But the official, state-approved values are misplaced. This art (which Waugh thinks is bad) will soon be eradicated as well. After he sorrowfully learns that Clara has lost her beard (and half her face) and had an abortion, Miles burns down his old prison. He attempts to euthanize others in response to news of Clara's operations. He returns to work calmly that same day only to discover that, because of his action, many people have once again recalled the mysteries of life and death. Now only one person waits to be euthanized: "Miles turned to the periscope. Only one man waited outside, old Parsnip, a poet of the '30's who came daily but was usually jostled to the back twice in Miles's short term he had succeeded in gaining admission but on both occasions had suddenly taken fright and bolted" (496). Even the poets, it seems, are now killing themselves off.

Parsnip is not unknown to readers of Waugh. The character appears in Waugh's novel *Put Out More Flags*:

The name of the poet Parsnip, casually mentioned, reopened the great Parsnip-Pimpernell controversy which was torturing Poppet Green and her friends. It was a problem which, not unlike the Schleswig-Holstein question of the preceding century, seemed to admit of no logical solution, for, in simple terms, the postulates were self-contradictory. Parsnip and Pimpernell, as friends and collaborators, were inseparable; on that all agreed. But Parsnip's art flourished best in England, even in embattled England, while Pimpernell's needed the peaceful and fecund soil of the

United States. The complementary qualities which, many believed made them together equal to one poet, now threatened the dissolution of partnership. (42)

However, Parsnip is not just a character but a stand-in for an actual poet, one of Waugh's contemporaries. The "inseparable" poets mentioned in the passage above are aliases for Christopher Isherwood and W.H. Auden, friends and leading poets of the 1930s. Their move to America, according to Carr was "largely regarded as an act of cowardice or escape" (33) and was seen as a huge affront in many literary and scholarly circles at the time. Recognizing Parsnip as Auden and bearing in mind what Carr says about the two merely being part of "contemporary history," we get the sense in his early work that Waugh sees these two modernists as a passing fad. Referring to Isherwood and Auden's collaboration in *Journey to War*, Waugh regarded Isherwood's work as "flat" and "boring" (*Essays* 252). His criticism of Auden, however, is much harsher:

Mr. Auden contributes some good photographs and some verses. The English public has no particular use for a poet, but they believe they should have one or two about the place. There is an official laureate; there is also, always an official young rebel. I do not know how he is chosen. At certain seasons the critics seem to set out piously together to find a reincarnation of Shelley, just as the lamas of Tibet search for their Dalai Lama. A year or two ago they proclaimed their success and exhibited Mr. Auden. It is unfair to transfer to him the reproach that properly belongs to them. His work is awkward and dull, but it is no fault of his that he has become a public bore. (*Essays* 352)

Waugh obviously aims this jab directly at the literary taste and understanding of the English people. In other words, according to Waugh, society bestowed acclaim on an untalented and boring poet. By praising work of this type, the public has ceased to acknowledge literature for what it should be. In this circumstance, literature eventually deteriorates and vanishes, as does Parsnip.

In killing off Parsnip, Waugh deliberately makes his past satire of Parsnip and Pimpernell pointless and irrelevant. Waugh is simultaneously killing off one of his characters and dismissing the false praise attached to him (and his real-life counterpart, Auden). He forces a change in the conversation about what constitutes good literature. The killing of Parsnip recalls St. Thomas's Aquinas's realization that the *Summa Theologica* was nothing compared to the truths it meant to relay.¹⁵ So, too, Waugh seems to say that his prior works and the conversation on good art are now irrelevant in a time when humanity is degraded.

As sobering as this realization is, he makes it clear through intratextuality and intra-auctorial that, even in such dire circumstances, there is still time to reclaim literary culture. After Clara fails him and Parsnip is euthanized, Miles is summoned to the Regional Director of Satellite City. The government is unaware that he is the one who burned the prison. While waiting for the minister, Miles "looked from the waiting-room window at the slow streams of traffic. Just below him stood a strange, purposeless obstruction of stone. A very old man, walking by, removed his hat to it as though saluting an acquaintance. Why? Miles wondered" ("Love" 498). This obstruction of stone is

¹⁵ Waugh was familiar with Aquinas/ "Reading Aquinas" he says in his Diary on Saturday January 14th, 1933.

probably the statue of Lord Nelson. Since this story is set the near future, the old man can probably remember that Nelson stands for heroism in battle fighting for Britain. The ruin itself recalls the ruins that Rip comes across in “Out of Depth” that no longer signify what they once did. (Rip also passes Trafalgar Square.) Because Miles wonders of “why,” there is an inkling of hope. He is being forced by directive of the government to marry someone he does not know and act as the “counter-propaganda” against those who believe that current society is failing; yet, “in perfect peace of heart, Miles followed Miss Flower to the Registrar’s office” (501). At the last minute, however, “the mood veered” (501.) Miles finds something in his pocket—“his cigarette lighter, a most uncertain apparatus. He pressed the catch and instantly, surprisingly, there burst out a tiny flame—gemlike, hymeneal, auspicious” (501). The suggestion is that he will either light himself on fire, the building, or something else in the near future. In spite of his indoctrination, there is still something alive in him that causes him to fight the current dehumanizing conditions. Although his fight consists, contradictorily in killing humans, at least he can still acknowledge that there should be a battle for restoration and his violent reactions to this knowledge have the potential to ignite a flame bigger than the one from his lighter.

This flame is one of many that appear at the end of Waugh’s stories to signify hope. For example, at the end of “Out of Depth,” two candles are burning. This reoccurrence in *Love Among the Ruins* looks ahead to Waugh’s use of the candle image in *Brideshead Revisted*, where the abandoned chapel is once again in use. Both instances signify rebirth. Rip is reborn again into the present 1930s, and the Roman Catholic Faith is resurrected at *Brideshead*. In *Love Among the Ruins*, Waugh presents a decaying society devoid of the arts and literature. Yet ultimately, through intertextuality and

specifically intratextuality, he depicts the strength of humanity to fight against the depreciation of the arts and recover the ability to overcome the vicissitudes of the human condition and its mysteries through literature.

Chapter Five: “Quomodo Sedet Sola Civitas:” Response to Eliot’s Perilous Chapel

“I heard the same thing once before—from someone very different,” (221)

Charles Ryder of Waugh’s novel *Brideshead Revisited* informs Cordelia after she explains that people project their hate for God on those who most resemble him. As evidenced by Waugh’s own statement on the dust jacket of the novel’s first edition, *Brideshead Revisited* revolves around God, specifically the “divine workings in a pagan world.” Yet it is important to recognize that this centering on God stems from intertextuality and thus requires and invites an investigation of the novel’s intertextuality. Ryder’s comment points readers in this direction. In *Brideshead*, this “thing” materializes as the search for sense and meaning found in Eliot’s *The Waste Land* and the “someone very different” is, of course, T. S. Eliot.

In *Brideshead*, the message is said by someone “very different”: Evelyn Waugh speaking through Charles Ryder, who narrates the novel. Moreover, the novel adopts a new manner of relaying the message. The novel is first and foremost a narrativization of *The Waste Land*, retaining traces of Eliot’s stylistic fragmentation. Most importantly, however, Waugh transforms *Brideshead* into an amplified narrative of Eliot’s poem. Gérard Genette, who loosely defines “amplification” as the “obverse of condensation,” describes the amplifications of Sophocles and Euripides as “variations upon the themes of their predecessors” (*Palimpsests* 262). This is precisely Waugh’s treatment of *The Waste Land*. He not only follows its path but also answers its questions.

When comparing Evelyn Waugh to T. S. Eliot, scholars inevitably discuss the technical aspects of Waugh’s novel, *A Handful of Dust*, but fail to mention *Brideshead Revisited*. Applying their comparison to *Brideshead* reveals that Waugh emulates and

answers the spiritual questions that Eliot posits in *The Waste Land*. The similarities between the works emerge from their shared thematic elements. The most obvious of these thematic elements concerns the protagonists' journey toward a chapel. The main difference is Waugh's diegetic development of the theme and his metadiegetic insertion of humanity. It is the presence of human influence in *Brideshead* (and its absence in *The Waste Land*) that guarantees a clearer conversion. Consequently, a comparison between these two journeys indicates that both poet and novelist make the same diagnosis, one of worldly decay, but that the human element of *Brideshead* allows for a more decisive remedy.

A study of Waugh's life and works reveals that Eliot etched a lasting impression upon the novelist's mind. The two writers were similar in the most personal way; "both men" according to scholar Joseph Pearce, "had sullied themselves in the sordid reality of modern culture" and eventually both "turned away in disgust, seeking something with the gravitas and goodness that modernity lacked" (1). *The Waste Land*, according to Pearce, "exposed contemporary culture as a desert inhabited by a lifeless people devoid of any roots and from any connection with the permanent things, sinking in a quagmire of narcissistic selfishness, as vacuous as it was vain" (1). While many of Waugh's earlier novels "do much the same," in Pearce's words, as *The Waste Land*, it is not until *Brideshead*, written 22 years after the publication of *The Waste Land*, that Waugh explicitly agrees with Eliot's assessment of the world in an effort to rectify its errors. The world has lost its faith and hope because it has lost its humanity.

Waugh's novel mirrors the last section of *The Waste Land*, "What the Thunder Said." The journeyman of this section and Charles Ryder of *Brideshead* both attempt to

restore the world through a pilgrimage. They each journey toward a chapel. Unlike the self-motivated and solitary search of Eliot's protagonist, Ryder's journey is directed by human interaction, the main metadiegetic insertion in the novel. Ryder is so directed by others that he is virtually unaware of his journey until the novel's close. In both works, the story begins near journey's end, whereupon overdone aspects of the chapel greet both protagonists. In spite of this apparent grotesqueness, both protagonists continue the pilgrimage, a continuation that leads to an abandoned chapel symbolizing the deterioration of the Judeo-Christian tradition. The readers and protagonist of Waugh's novel, however, explicitly recognize that humans cause and suffer from this deterioration. Additionally, both authors associate the chapel with death. Waugh, however, depicts a human reaction to the inevitability of death that leads toward conversion. In *Brideshead Revisited*, Waugh transforms Eliot's inconclusive poetic and solitary search for meaning into an applicable human narrative resulting in revelation.

An examination of Waugh's writing, especially *Brideshead Revisited*, dispels the temptation to label the similarities between the two works as mere coincidence. Waugh's most recognized allusion to Eliot stems from his decisive act of choosing *A Handful of Dust*, a direct quotation from *The Waste Land*,² over his working title, *A Handful of Ashes* (Davis, *Evelyn Waugh* 73). But Waugh's relationship to Eliot consists of much more than a peritextual allusion. In 1926, after buying a copy of Eliot's poetry, Waugh wrote in his diary, "T. S. Eliot's poems are incredibly good" (242). Later in life, according to Martin Stannard, Evelyn Waugh regarded Eliot as one of his "literary heroes" (*Critical Heritage* 4). The obvious referencing of *The Waste Land* in *Brideshead*, however, reflects most explicitly his acquaintance with the work. He does not merely allude to it but directly

names it when, at the beginning of the novel, drunk Anthony Blanche stands on a balcony “and in languishing, sobbing tones recited passages from *The Waste Land* to the sweated and muffled throng that was on its way to the river” (33). Blanche recognizes this throng as Eliot’s comatose crowd that “flowed over the London Bridge” in *The Waste Land*. By beginning his novel with such an intimate connection between the two works, Waugh establishes the context for further and more profound parallels.¹⁶

The interconnectedness of the works commences with the depiction of a hero destined to restore sense to a chaotic world. Eliot wrote *The Waste Land* in 1922 when he was recovering from a nervous breakdown and experiencing, according to his biography Lyndall Gordon, “a period of nightly vigils, visions and panic” that eventually led to his conversion five years later (*Imperfect Life* 4). *The Waste Land* illustrates his attempt to cope with a fragmented society. In his notes Eliot credits “the plan” of *The Waste Land* to Jessie Weston’s book *From Ritual to Romance*. Her book traces the origins of the chivalric Grail legend in which a lone quester attempts to restore the kingdom through a pilgrimage. Eliot’s protagonist also sets out alone in an attempt to understand the “fragments” (line 431) produced by a decaying world. This protagonist is alone in his chivalric journey; however, the use of *From Ritual to Romance* (along with many more

¹⁶ There are many less pointed allusions to *The Waste Land* in the novel that I will not be discussing in this chapter but that are, nevertheless, important to acknowledge. One is stylistic features as shown in fragmented conversations during their visit to Tapestry Hall 276. Another is theme of fortune telling, Eliot’s Tarot cards vs. the reading of the feet in Handful. The other is imagery not associated with the chapel but found within “What the Thunder Said” that is the rocky dry terrain. These seem alluded to in Julia’s depressed episode that becomes catalyst for her break up with Ryder: “Never the shelter of the cave or the castle walls. Outcast in the desolate spaces where the hyenas roam at night and the rubbish heaps smoke in the daylight...nothing but bare stone and dust” (*Brideshead* 288).

hypotexts, as we see in Eliot's footnotes) shows that intertextual communication accompanies him on his journey.

Waugh, blaming "modern civilization's...spiritual poverty" on modernity, also, like his hypotext, attempts to restore civilization through what Michael Gorra calls "a chivalric conception of the Catholic world" (213). Waugh even alludes to this purpose when he warns on the dust jacket of the first edition of *Brideshead Revisited* that it "is NOT meant to be funny...the general theme is at once romantic and eschatological. ...It is nothing less than an attempt to trace the workings of the divine purpose in a pagan world." Unlike the heroes of the chivalric stories revered by Weston and imitated by Eliot, Waugh's hero is neither aware of his mission nor alone. The "workings of divine purpose" propel the agnostic hero of the novel, Charles Ryder, toward his ultimate conversion. He journeys only because of his acquaintance with the Catholic Marchmain family, who introduce him to the chapel. Ryder does not seek the chapel, as does Eliot's hero, but experiences it through the force of human influence.

Waugh, therefore, simultaneously engages in two types of amplification of Eliot's poem. Waugh employs what Genette terms diegetic development—"the role of expansion: distension of details, descriptions, multiplication of episodes and secondary characters, maximum dramatization of an adventure hardly dramatic in itself" (*Palimpsests* 264). He expands the quester's story by applying the theme to actual life without changing the story. The intertextual occurrences that coincide with the hypotext are instances of this expansion. While Eliot's poem alludes to the quest as life, Waugh brings the quest to life in the character of Charles Ryder. In other words, the journey within *The Waste Land* is diegetically transposed (Genette, *Palimpsests* 310) into

contemporary life. Charles Ryder becomes the quester. Consequently, Waugh engages in “metadiegetic insertion,” which, according to Genette, is an extension of “episodes that are extraneous to the initial theme but whose incorporation make it possible to extend it and invest it with its full historical and religious significance” (*Palimpsests* 265).

Naturally, because of the application of the hypotext in *Brideshead*, new details emerge. By providing the quester—now transposed into the real, modern world—with a name and personality, Waugh ensures that the quest entails human interaction. This interaction and companionship, mainly in the form of Sebastian Flyte and his family, supplants the solitary divide of *The Waste Land* that separates the quester from peace he seeks.

Further similarities ensue. Both Waugh and Eliot associate the initial experience of the chapel with outlandish distortions that tempt the protagonists away from the church. Just prior to entering Eliot’s chapel in “What the Thunder Said,” “Bats with baby faces in the violet light” appear and “crawled head downward down a blackened wall” (280-82). Cleanth Brooks, acknowledging Jessie Weston’s argument that the journey to the chapel involves initiation, believes that these bats are a “nightmare vision” of baptism (28). The seeker must endure this horrific vision if she wishes to find the truth. Brook’s interpretation alludes to the grotesque perversion of the normal depiction of innocence and purity in the faces of saints and angels that adorn the interior of the church. Eliot, however, complicates this vision. He provides neither saintly statues in the church’s interior nor gargoyles used to scare away demons on the church’s exterior. He mixes elements of both saint and demon. These creatures are bats and babies. This image is not merely a “monstrous distortion” (Schwarz 224) but the truly grotesque perversion of good.

Waugh perverts the symbolism of religion by replacing it with demonic aspects and overdone art. This same perversion of good results in Charles Ryder's doubt and skepticism concerning the human aspects of the Catholic Church. In comparing Eliot to Waugh, Avril Horner and Sue Zlosnik state that the absorption of *The Waste Land* "into high culture" influences Waugh's *A Handful of Dust*. They believe that parodied aspects of the gothic from *The Waste Land* resonate within it (224-7). Their interpretation also applies to the description of the chapel in *Brideshead*. Waugh transforms the gothic horror of Eliot's bats into the hideousness of human art. Upon his first acquaintance with the chapel, Charles, unlike the seeker of *The Waste Land*, recognizes:

The whole interior had been gutted, elaborately refurnished and redecorated in the arts-and crafts style of the last decade of the nineteenth century. Angels in printed cotton smocks, rambler roses, flower-spangled meadows, frisking lambs, texts in Celtic script, saints in armour, covered the walls in an intricate pattern of clear, bright colours...the altar steps had a carpet of grass-green, strewn with white and gold daisies.

(*Brideshead* 39)

The chapel becomes, according to Sebastian, "a monument of art nouveau," an artistic style devoted to elaboration. Although Waugh's description of the chapel possesses none of the overtly demonic aspects of *The Waste Land*, it depicts the hideousness in a similar fashion. The grotesqueness so overwhelms the usually talkative Charles that he can only utter, "Golly" (39). He perceives the chapel as sickeningly sweet. The architecture distorts the teachings and beliefs of the Church to such an outlandish degree that it baffles even its admirers. Indeed, Sebastian demonstrates this dilemma of simultaneously

desiring to embrace and turn from the chapel. This is the only building that he insists that Ryder see. This insistence suggests that the experience with the chapel is worth reflection regardless of the aesthetic pleasure taken from it. Only seconds after entering the chapel, however, Sebastian demonstrates the human impulse to turn from the chapel by saying, “Now if you’ve seen enough we’ll go” (39) and leads Charles quickly away.

Nevertheless, neither Eliot nor Waugh allows an indefinite retreat from the chapel. The ugliness is a trial that the protagonists must experience. In order to arrive at goodness the hero must endure evil. Eliot’s hypotexts lead him to the literary tradition of heroic purgation. The author of *From Ritual to Romance* echoes the “Adonis Myth” from Eliot’s other major source, *The Golden Bough*, when she states that the heroes of the grail legend consistently experience “purification by fasting and prayer” and descent “into the Nether World,” (184). The “Nether World” entails an encounter with lost and suffering spirits.

Eliot’s other sources, the Spanish mystics John of the Cross and St. Teresa of Avila, not only reinforce this tradition of purgation but also teach its necessity. By calling the experience leading up to the chapel in *The Waste Land* “a kind of hell inhabited by unnatural creatures,” that “represents a kind of dark night of the soul” (124), James Miller, Jr. alludes to the mystic Eliot revered most, St. John of the Cross (Eliot, “Thinking” 443). Both St. John of the Cross and St. Teresa of Avila suffered numerous demonic temptations. In their writings they teach that these temptations were the devil’s attempt to “destroy the soul’s progress” through worldly or divine goods; fighting against these temptations, however, is part of the purgation necessary for union with God (Kurian 91). The protagonist experiences both the worldly and divine temptation in this

“nightmarish” baptism. Literary and religious traditions, however, force Eliot’s protagonist to continue his journey.

Similarly, the diegetic insertion of human interaction in *Brideshead* sparks the beginnings of the recognition of goodness. Up to this point the questers of both works have beheld horrific distortions. Eliot’s pilgrim must recognize and deal with the evil inherent in those distortions. Waugh’s distortions, however, force recognition of growth, change, and truth. Although the chapel appalls Ryder, Waugh does not intend to equate the hideous, the overdone or elabortion with evil. In fact, in his essay on Evelyn Waugh’s travel books, Richard Voorhees relates that Waugh devotes much of his book, *Labels*, to the adoration and praise of the art nouveau master, Gaudi (197). Waugh recognizes worth in elaborate art. It is not so much the style of the chapel that he finds appalling as its potential for distraction.

Waugh’s irony in depicting an appalling distraction through Art Nouveau reflects his desire, through human interaction, to distinguish between the subjective human reaction to the aesthetic and absolute infallible truths. Unlike Eliot’s lone quester, Ryder is able to begin interpreting and understanding reality through his interaction with others. When Cordelia remarks that the chapel is “beautiful,” Charles dismisses any inherent objective good in the chapel by responding, “I think it a remarkable example of its period. Probably in eighty years it will be greatly admired... Well it may be *good* now. All I mean is that I don’t happen to like it much” (*Brideshead* 92). Waugh’s intentionally italicized *good* reflects Charles’ belief in the subjectivity of good. According to Ryder, the beholder defines good. Katharyn W. Crabbe summarizes his consequence of placing too much faith in subjectivity by acknowledging that, “In his youthful arrogance and his

worldly state, he can appreciate it only as it exists in a certain period and in aesthetic terms. As a religious structure it has no meaning at all for him” (101). Even Valerie Kennedy asserts that Ryder delights in his “pleasures of the senses” (36). But the problem is not merely pleasure in and of itself but instead his reliance on the pleasure to define truth. He suggests that the chapel may be good to some but declares that even eighty years from now it will never become a definite good.

Waugh relies on the curiosity emerging from the rest of the conversation to propel Ryder toward his journey’s end. Bridey, the elder brother and quasi seminarian, joins the conversation by asking, “But is there a difference between liking a thing and thinking it good?” (*Brideshead* 92). He refers to the chapel in its entirety and, subsequently, its ability to house the Eucharist. Waugh and Bridey both wish to establish recognition of the inherent goodness of the chapel. Despite its hideousness, the chapel is good. They both continue to suggest that whether a person acknowledges or fails to acknowledge the relevancy of the Eucharist, it remains an ultimate good. The Protestantism of the majority of Waugh’s readers and Charles Ryder’s agnosticism, however, prevent overt theological positing. Such positing would bridle communication because, as Joseph Pearce, states any overt mention of God in Waugh would be “descending to the level of didacticism and preachiness, two traits that are usually destructive to the power of the Muse” (10). Bridey merely introduces Ryder to the possibility of absolute truth. Unlike Eliot’s quester, he need not rely on his knowledge alone. Others help him began a dialogue concerning truth. Ryder’s communion with others initiates his approach to the essence of the chapel by questioning the veracity of his thoughts, feelings and sentiments.

Just as both T. S. Eliot and Evelyn Waugh attempt to lead their protagonists into the chapel, both ironically depict the chapel's abandonment. In so doing, they lament the deterioration of the Judeo-Christian tradition. Eliot depicts the historic and repetitive suffering of the Jews by pondering:

What is the city over the mountains?
 Cracks and reforms and bursts in the violet air
 Falling towers
 Jerusalem Athens Alexandria
 Vienna London?
 Unreal. (*Waste Land* 372-77)

Jerusalem, as he was well aware, has suffered the most atrocities of the named cities. Throughout history, it and its people have endured destruction, invasion and usurpation. Nancy Hargrove summarizes the tumultuous history of Jerusalem:

Jerusalem, a great center of learning and religion as well as political power, was sacked numerous times in the period prior to Christ's birth...its Great Golden Age from the fourth to the seventh centuries was ended by a Persian invasion in 614. It was again taken by barbarian forces in the eleventh century by the Turks, in the thirteenth century by the Tartars, and in the sixteenth century by the Turks. (84)

If, as Hargrove suggests, Eliot's use of Jerusalem denotes the suffering of Jerusalem before and after Christ, then Eliot consciously regards the suffering of Judaism as the origin of Christianity—or at least as a foundation for civilization. The order in which he places the cities indicates Jerusalem's influence on later civilizations. In turn, he extends

the suffering of Jerusalem to all other cities. Eliot's reference to Jerusalem reveals that he regards Judaism as a foundation for civilization. Its constant suffering reverberates throughout history.

Eliot also demonstrates the necessary interconnectedness of Judaism and Christianity that compels the reader of *The Waste Land* to expect the despair and the abandonment of the chapel. He alludes to the interconnection of the faiths as a "Murmur of maternal lamentations" (368). Eliot concurrently mourns the destruction, decay, and suffering of Christianity and Judaism. According to Hugh Kenner, through this "murmur," Eliot mirrors Jesus' commandment to the wailing Jewish women at Calvary: "Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but for yourselves and your children" (*Invisible Poet* 173). Furthermore, this "maternal lamentation" and Christ's commandment foretell of future destruction, the Romans' ransacking of Jerusalem some thirty-five years later. This, however, is not merely one agony. Here, Christ prophesies that the mothers will suffer upon seeing their children tortured. Christianity, therefore, is permanently and inextricably entangled not only with past and present sufferings of the Jewish people but with the sufferings of posterity. It is indeed this suffering that validates Christianity. The abandonment of the chapel logically follows the despair and destruction associated with the Jewish people. The grail-searching knight finds the chapel "In this decayed hole among the mountains" (386). The city, however, according to Eliot, is "over the mountains." The chapel, therefore, is under the city. If one delves into Judaism, according to this imagery, one will logically encounter Christianity.

As Judaism suffers the decay of its center, Jerusalem, so must Christianity suffer the decay of its center, Christ. Eliot bases his chapel references most explicitly upon a

chapter concerning the Perilous Chapel in *From Ritual to Romance*. In searching for the Grail, the various knights of the Grail legends attempt to find what Weston regards as an object, “equated with the central Sacrament of the Christian Faith” (188). The sacrament to which Weston refers is the Eucharist and the priest’s participation in consecrating the bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ. The narrator, however, who expects to find the Grail, finds nothing in the “empty chapel” but that “It has no windows and the door swings” (*Waste Land* 389-90). The crucified Jesus remains crucified and dead. The chapel is void of all relics related to the essence of a truth that the seeker wishes to obtain.

Eliot fails to explicitly reveal the cause of suffering. Waugh, however, through a metadiegetic insertion, clearly declares that mankind both causes and suffers from the abandonment of the chapel. In both a miniature and in an eternal grandiose way, Waugh mirrors Eliot’s image of the abandoned chapel. After Mrs. Marchmain, one of the few devotees of the chapel, dies, the Bishop decides to close it. Cordelia describes the desolate deconsecration of the chapel to Charles by stating that:

The priest came in—I was there alone. I don’t think he saw me—and [he] took out the altar stone and put it in his bag; then burned the wads of wool with the holy oil on them and threw the ash outside; he emptied the holy water stoup and blew out the lamp in the sanctuary and left the tabernacle open and empty, as though from now on it was always to be Good Friday... I stayed there ‘til he was gone and then, suddenly there wasn’t a chapel there anymore, just an oddly decorated room. (220)

In *Brideshead Revisited*, the swinging door in *The Waste Land* becomes the door to the tabernacle that houses the body of Christ. The priest leaves the door open and perhaps swinging. The tabernacle alone is a chapel in itself, a chapel with no windows and a swinging door. Similar to the absence of the Grail in *The Waste Land*, all remnants of Christ, especially the most important, the Eucharist, disappear from the chapel. Both Eliot and Waugh believe that the tabernacle houses Christ. It is reminiscent of the Italian mystic Padre Pio Pietrelcina, a contemporary of both writers, who allegedly said, “It would be easier for the earth to be without out the sun than to be without the celebration of mass” (Manelli 15). With the tabernacle empty and the ground deconsecrated, the chapel is worthless.

In depicting Cordelia’s observation of the priest’s acts (another insertion into Eliot’s story), Waugh clearly blames humanity for the abandonment of faith and the chapel, likewise implicating Ryder in the blame. Marston La France, a Waugh scholar, asserts that within *Brideshead* the hero will either become “the exploiter or victim of [his] environment” (15). According to Waugh’s view of humanity, however, Ryder becomes both “exploiter” and “victim.” Eliot only vaguely holds man responsible for the decline of the Church through references to “hooded hordes” (369) and the cry of the crow (393) that remind the reader of Peter’s betrayal of Jesus. Waugh, however, symbolically depicts humanity’s participation in the decay of the faith through the priest’s gestures in the chapel. The priest’s actions lead to a type of “Good Friday” for Cordelia. Eliot never shows humanity emptying the chapel or stealing the chalice. But the human involvement of the priest and Cordelia’s interpretation of his rites make Ryder recognize the centrality of man’s actions in disrobing the Church of her essence.

Although Cordelia, like Eliot's narrator, alludes to the sufferings of Jerusalem and likens the city to an abandoned chapel, her allusion extends the hypotext by providing the fulfillment of Christ's prophecy. She recalls not just the city but specifically the people of Jerusalem. She likens her reaction of the deconsecrated chapel to the emotions of Jerusalem's inhabitants. "Well," she tells the agnostic Charles, "if you'd known what the Jews felt about their temple. *Quomodo sedet sola civitas.*" In translation the phrase reads "Just as the city [that was once full of people] sits alone." The Biblical hypotext of this quotation is Lamentations 1:1. It recalls the sufferings of Jerusalem half a millennium before Christ. Since Christ's death, it has been used during the Tenebrae as part of the Triduum and the solemn remembering of Christ's death and descent into hell on Good Friday. Ryder's remembrance of this lament two other times in the book emphasizes its intertextual undercurrent. Although the lament from the Bible, as stated in *Brideshead*, fails to mention the people, Cordelia's remembrance of them illuminates their importance. The "maternal lamentations" have come to pass in *Brideshead*. While Eliot alludes to the "Unreal" city of Jerusalem, Waugh gives life to the decay and its impact on everyday life. The Biblical allusion compares a vibrant city to a dead city. Waugh attributes the vibrancy of the first to man. According to Waugh, man not only contributes to the decay of the Faith but also suffers its decay.

This phrase *Quomodo sedet sola civitas* contains within its repetitive use an interesting intertextual, non-linear, and intra-auctorial significance that extends beyond the decay of faith into the development of Ryder's own character. Ryder recalls it three times within his novel. The first is the above mentioned. The second occurs after his trips to South America:

Here I am, I thought, back from the jungle, back from the ruins.
 Here, where wealth is no longer gorgeous and power has no dignity.
 Quomodo sedet sola civitas (for I had heard that great lament, which
 Cordelia once quoted to me in the drawing-room of Marchmain House,
 sung by a half-cast choir in Guatemala, nearly a year ago).
 (*Brideshead* 237)

This intertextual moment recalls the Bible's depiction of the ransacking of Jerusalem years both before and after Christ. It can also be seen as an instance of Riffaterre's "nonsequential nonnarrative readings" ("Intertextual Unconscious" 381) because it recalls and develops a previous theme with the exact same quotation. The theme is the long and dreary road of conversion. Cordelia knows Ryder has never heard the term and says, "You've never been to Tenebrae, I suppose?" "Never" he replies. Then he wonders, "Still trying to convert me?" to which she responds "Oh no." In his mind, he couples that previous conversation with the fact that he has recently heard the words sung, suggesting a development in his own understanding of the words *Quomodo sedet solo civitas*.

This theme, however, is at the same time an intra-auctorial development. The Latin and the primitive participants recall a similar Mass analyzed in this dissertation's chapter on "Out of Depth." Ryder's witnessing of the "half-caste choir" is like Rip appearing "in a log-built church at the coast town" as he finds himself "squatting among a native congregation" where "[t]he priest turned towards them his bland, black face. "Ite, missa est" (156). This intra-auctorial moment is important not because of the similarities between the two stories but because of their dissimilarities. As already discussed, "Out of Depth" was criticized as a pandering theological tract. Suddenly faced with the unknown,

Rip becomes a believer upon seeing the Mass. Ryder, however, experiences a Mass, internalizes it, but is not converted instantaneously. The words spoken before are spoken again by a very different person, or in this case, persons. This time, unlike Rip's sudden conversion, the experience of the Mass in a displaced world is not met with instant acceptance but instead with thought and a time-consuming, and sometimes unconscious, search for significance.

Waugh also recreates the association between the chapel and death that Eliot refers to in *The Waste Land*, but unlike Eliot, he uncovers a greater personal significance in death. *The Waste Land* is full of the imagery of death and dying. The chapel rests in a "decayed hole" and houses "dry bones." The poem seems to explain to the reader that death is inevitable. Miller states that, "The scene may represent coming to terms with...the malaise of death" (125), but there is no explicit evidence that Eliot desires the narrator to "come to terms" with the inevitability of his death. *The Waste Land* only depicts a narrator who must confront death.

Waugh amplifies his characters' experiences with death by making personal connections. On his death bed, Lord Marchmain suddenly remembers the chapel and asks Cordelia of its fate. He recalls giving it to his wife because "We've always been builders in our family. I built it for her; pulled down the pavilion that stood there; rebuilt with the old stones; it was the last of the new house to come, the first to go... I left her in the chapel praying. I never came back to disturb her prayers" (334). Through his memory of the chapel, Lord Marchmain confesses his faith. Marchmain is benefactor and victimizer. He destroys and builds. He prides himself on being a builder and, therefore, sees the chapel at least partially as a result of his efforts. His hesitancy to disturb his wife's

prayers with his presence is his unspoken acknowledgement of and honor for prayer. By running away to Italy with his mistress and abandoning his wife in the chapel praying, he avoids the truth of his inescapable death and judgment. His recognition of himself as a builder and destroyer and his respect for prayer reveal an unconscious avowal to the Catholic faith. He, like Ryder, unknowingly journeys to the chapel. He proceeds in ultimately discovering its true essence. His conversion on his death bed, apparent in his making the sign of the cross, is the logical step in his journey. Despite his disbelief, in the end he cannot escape the truth of an eternal life.

Unlike *Brideshead*, *The Waste Land* leaves readers to suppose a possible conversion. Because Eliot did not convert to Anglicanism until 1927, he could not pretend to alleviate his spiritual turmoil. Written before his conversion, *The Waste Land* nevertheless asks questions concerning faith. He, like his narrator and the Knights of the Holy Grail, journeys toward answers. Eventually T. S. Eliot recognized the importance of religious belief. He eventually grasped that which he sought, that which grew nearer in his search, the reality that faith and the divine is much more than a building. "Eliot looks to the Church," Stephen Spender writes, "and finds it the single enduring building which survives in the chaos of our civilization" (284). Yet, Eliot's conversion arrives too late for the narrator of *The Waste Land*. The survival of the chapel fails to guarantee the narrator's acceptance of an eternal meaning. This inconclusiveness ultimately reveals that the search found within the poem is ultimately fruitless, at least in terms of finding peace and meaning.

Evelyn Waugh, however, validates Eliot's search by providing faces and names and companionship as pivotal tools in the resolution of the search. His conversion to

Catholicism fourteen years prior to the publication of *Brideshead Revisited (Diaries)* allows and perhaps obliges Evelyn Waugh to expose Charles Ryder's acceptance of the Church. Throughout the novel, Charles rejects, ponders, doubts, and, most importantly, questions Catholicism. In analyzing *The Waste Land*, Hugh Kenner recalls a quester who "had only to ask the meaning of things that were shown him. Until he has asked their meaning they have none" (171). Although Eliot uses the disjointed pieces of "What the Thunder Said" to express wonder, the narrator never officially asks the meaning of the things he sees. Even if it is argued that he does ponder meaning, he, unlike Ryder, has no one to ask. His questions fall not on deaf ears but on no ears. For him, the things he encounters have no meaning because there is no dialogue, no communication, and no reason for either. He subsequently receives no answers. Charles Ryder's intimacy with humanity, however, allows him to find meaning and purpose not present in *The Waste Land*. He consistently asks the meaning of the Church and Her rites throughout the book. The ideas and meanings associated with the Church occur and reoccur throughout the novel. *Quomodo Sedet Sola Civitas* is a clear example of these Church associations. At the beginning of the novel he questions Sebastian's Catholicism and doubts the relevancy of prayer and the saints (87). His questions continue through the book and end at Lord Marchmain's deathbed where he questions the importance of Last Rites (329) and doubts their efficacy.

The response found in *Brideshead* acts as a sequel to *The Waste Land* and an extenuation of the poem's themes. Unlike the solitary narrator of the poem, Ryder's doubts and questions are met with responses. These responses culminate in Ryder's recognition of not only the relevancy of the chapel, the tangible presence of the Church,

but also the existence of undying unchanging faith. Eliot, however, attempts to reconcile this abandonment with “fragments” of religions that provide only temporary relief. “Datta. Dayadhvam. Damyata” and “Shanti Shanti Shanti” are efforts at prayer in their way but they do not express the eternal nor answer the prayer. They do not rectify the past and promise permanent peace in the future. They are words without application. Unlike the narrator of *The Waste Land*, who experiences the chapel only once, Ryder returns again, in memory and in person. In the frame narrative at the end of the novel when Ryder unintentionally returns to *Brideshead* with his troops, he receives one last human response to his spiritual doubts. He learns from his quartering commandant that the Chaplain Father has reopened the Chapel and a “surprising” number of troops use it (346). That the chapel reclaims its intended function and that Ryder is lead to it after so many years is a hopeful alternative to the experience of Eliot’s quester whose last encounter of the chapel is with its abandonment.

Some of the last words of Waugh’s text fuse Waugh’s own intratext and the gems of *The Waste Land* with what he believes is the truth of the church to form a hope lacking in Eliot’s work. Ryder enters the chapel. This time he does something he has never done before. He confesses, “I said a prayer, an ancient, newly learned form of words” (*Brideshead* 350). This is an intratextual moment. The idea of ancient prayer has appeared before when at the beginning of the dissolution of his relationship with Julia he observes:

Her pale lips moved on the pillow, but whether to wish me good-night or to murmur a prayer—a jingle of the nursery that came to her now in the twilight world between sorrow and sleep; some ancient pious rhyme that had

come down to Nanny Hawkins from centuries of bedtime whispering, through all the changes of language from the days of pack-horses on the Pilgrim's Way—I did not know. (293)

Julia's words signify the ending, in the twilight of the day, of their relationship; now paired with his "ancient, newly learned form of words" at the dawning of the day, his prayer signifies the dawning of eternal peace. He recants his rejection of Christianity and realizes that, "Something quite remote from anything the builders intended has come out of their work, and out of the fierce little human tragedy in which I played; something none of us thought about at the time" (351). "Builders" is an intratextual reference to Lord Marchmain. While he intended the chapel for his wife, its use is now universal. Neither the builders, the Marchmains, nor Charles knew that they were unconsciously participating in the divine plan to re-establish the chapel that manifests itself in:

a small red flame—a beaten copper lamp of deplorable design, relit before the beaten copper doors of the tabernacle; the flame which the old knights saw from their tombs, which they saw put out; that flame burns again for other soldiers, far from home, farther, in heart, than Acre or Jerusalem. It could not have been lit but for the builders and the tragedians, and there I found it this morning, burning anew among the old stones. (351)

As with *A Handful of Dust's* priest, whose homilies are erroneously geared towards Catholics in foreign countries, or "Out of Depth" with its Latin mass of the future, *Brideshead's* spirituality, seen in the light of Eliot's poems, shows that faith endures for humanity and because of humanity. In spite of the trials and suffering of the material aspects of the chapel (the lamp, the candle and doors of the tabernacle) Christianity

survives. The lit candle, which denotes Christ's presence within the tabernacle, burns anew for him but continues to burn eternally among the old stones. In the end he realizes that that his curiosity leads to meaning, meaning to regeneration and regeneration to truth.

To view *Brideshead* as an embellished, amplified, and applied version of *The Waste Land*'s "What the Thunder Said" is to recognize Waugh's conclusion that the search for meaning can be regenerated only through the instrument of God's grace, which is humanity. For decades Waugh scholars have argued over the eternal triumph or eternal abandonment of faith in the novel.¹⁷ Some completely reject the veracity of Charles Ryder's conversion because of his apparent apathy and alienation at the beginning of the frame narrative's prologue (Mooneyham 1). Ryder, however, does not fully achieve conversion until the frame narrative's epilogue when he realizes that his life was not a purposeless wandering but a meaningful journey through experiences with the faithful culminating in the recognition of the eternal existence and truth of the Roman Catholic Church. Many scholars, however, refuse to accept such a summation of the novel. For this reason they must compare the obvious similarities between the chapel references of *The Waste Land* to those of *Brideshead*. Only then will scholars recognize that Waugh, like the Marchmains, consciously interacts with Eliot. He resolves Eliot's spiritual doubts through his illustration of humanity's participation in solving the questions and sufferings of despair. In the end Waugh achieves what he had hoped for on the dust jacket of his second edition. He explicitly illustrates the "workings of the divine purpose" through

¹⁷ The most spirited debate belongs to John W. Osborne and Donald Greene who consistently use *Evelyn Waugh Newsletter* as their battleground.

human works—specifically those Eliot and Waugh himself, offspring of the “pagan world.”

Chapter Five: Pinfold as Bloom: A Reconsidering of Joyce

Although at first glance James Joyce's *Ulysses* appears entirely incompatible with any novel written by Joyce's ardent critic Evelyn Waugh, its intertextual presence in *The Ordeal of Gilbert Pinfold* illustrates that experience shared and communicable not isolated and incomprehensible makes suffering bearable and surmountable. Just as *The Odyssey* governs much of the meaning and structure of *Ulysses*, *Ulysses* directs the meaning and structure of particular incidents of *Ordeal*. Concerning the significance of Joyce's use of Homer's *Odyssey* in *Ulysses* Genette notes, "It is perfectly possible to read *Ulysses* as a self-enclosed work; such a reading would nevertheless be incomplete" (*Palimpsests* 309). Because of the repeated and consistent Joycean intertextuality present in its text, the same can be said for *The Ordeal of Gilbert Pinfold*. Failing to regard the numerous Joycean allusions in the novel is an "incomplete" reading of it.

Building on this Joycean co-presence, *The Ordeal of Gilbert Pinfold* transforms the solitary and somewhat inscrutable quest story found in *Ulysses* into an enjoyable, redemptive story that reinvigorates modern literature with an understandable, communicable remedy to human suffering. The hypotext manifests itself through a pattern of Riffaterrean "gaps" within the text. These are intertextual hints not fully understood by the reader at first glance. Eventually elements of the hypotext fill in the gaps, which then become the "connectives." These connectives reveal the author's opinion of the hypotext in question, culminating in what Michael Riffaterre calls the "intertextual mimesis" in which the novel engagement rejects the original presentation of Joyce's *Ulysses* through what Gérard Genette terms "transstylization." By changing the style of the story, Waugh transforms Leopold Bloom's story from a romance or an episodic narrative into what Riffaterre termed an "antiromance." Additionally, the

acknowledged autobiographical aspects of Waugh's novel form a comedic "self-pastiche" through which his sufferings unite with those of Bloom to create a new genre. While Waugh remains dubious of *Ulysses* as a work of art, his transtylization of it leads to a more positive rendering of its themes. By applying literary allusion in this way, Waugh engages in a "transvaluation" that augments the moral, practical, and literary value of *Ulysses*. In showing that trials and sufferings can be overcome, Waugh demonstrates how literature can be responsible for and capable of continuing a hopeful and enjoyable existence of humanity. In this sense, his project goes beyond what (in his view) *Ulysses* was able to accomplish. According to Waugh, *Ulysses* obfuscates an understanding of the power and goodness of modern literature, but his transtylization of it attempts to reclaim literary culture as a more inclusive, conveyable, dialogic, and indispensable art.

Gaps in knowledge initiate the intertextual experience. These gaps, Riffaterre tells us, appear as something beyond the reader's present knowledge of the text. The initial presence of allusion creates them. In his article "Compulsory Reader Response," Riffaterre states that the intertext becomes apparent through these

gaps that need to be filled, references to an as yet unknown referent, references whose successive occurrences map out, as it were, the outline of the intertext still to be discovered. In such cases, the readers sense that a latent intertext exists suffices to indicate the location where this intertext will eventually become manifest. (57)

The increase in their occurrence strengthens the urge to fill them in. Often the initial gaps are not clearly recognizable until their repetitiveness augments the readers' awareness of

them. The gaps are active because they “compel [readers] to look for the intertext” (Riffaterre 58). They are not merely a stylistic adornment but an intentional catalyst for intellectual pursuit.

The readers need look only as far as the first chapter of *The Ordeal of Gilbert Pinfold* to encounter the initial gaps that point toward the hypotext. The most intertextually obvious peritextual gap is the second one to occur in the novel, namely the title of the first chapter “Portrait of the Artist in Middle Age.” This is an obvious allusion to *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, James Joyce’s autobiographical Künstlerroman. This is not the only time Waugh has alluded to Joyce’s *Portrait* either. Earlier in his career Waugh entitled one of his short stories “Portrait of a Young Man with Career.” While many critics and Waugh scholars comment on the intended humor of this allusion in *Ordeal*, none have explored or questioned its relevance to the novel. Until this chapter, to the best of my knowledge, no critic has written on any Joycean presence within *Ordeal*.

The first chapter of *Ordeal* paints a sardonic picture of fifty-year-old, troubled, and tired novelist, Gilbert Pinfold. Pinfold values his friends but feels undervalued by them. He considers himself misplaced in the modern age. “His strongest tastes were negative,” the narrator shares, “He abhorred plastics, Picasso, sunbathing, and jazz—everything in fact that had happened in his own lifetime” (11). Even by his own confession, he drinks too much, eats too little, and is prideful and standoffish. He is depressed, forgetful, and lacking in vitality. He feels so uncomfortable that he compartmentalizes events in his life to such an extent that he almost has two personalities. Pinfold, however, expresses an awareness of these faults and experiences

the guilt over them more acutely because he is a Catholic. The narrator reveals that Mr. Pinfold became a member of the Catholic Church later in his life and exhibits much personal though private and perhaps prideful devotion to his faith. It is precisely his judgment and rejection of his world and those in it that sink him deeper and deeper into a life of exclusion and silence.

Gilbert Pinfold's situation in life is quite different from that of Stephen Dedalus whose artistic awakening is depicted in *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*. Stephen is younger and more vivacious than Pinfold. Unlike Gilbert, Stephen spends his early life trying to make sense of humanity through language. Becoming more intellectual as he grows, he develops proficiency for classical studies. Ultimately, he rejects tradition and, in so doing, rejects the Church in order to dedicate himself to his artistic quest. The closest comparable text by Waugh to *A Portrait of the Artist* is Waugh's own unfinished autobiography, *A Little Learning: An Autobiography*. In it Waugh relates the origins of his life, his ancestors, his early childhood, adolescence, his spiritual background, and his early adulthood. Comparable to *A Portrait*, as the title suggests, he bases the story line on his academic education and its influence in his life. He even possibly seems to take a jab at Joyce's terror as a young child hiding and listening to his aunt threaten him:

In the backwash of the psychological speculations of the last generation there flounders a naïve curiosity about early childhood. A year or two before the time of writing I submitted to an interview for the television. My questioner was plainly much more interested in my life in the nursery than in any subsequent adventures... Instead he seemed eager to disinter some hidden disaster or sorrow in my childhood. I was a disappointing

subject. Save for a few uncertain flashes my mind is dark in the years of illiteracy; or rather, save for a few pale shadows, it is an even glow of pure happiness. (*Little Learning* 28)

Waugh effectively ridicules those he considered grudge-holding writers like Joyce who fault parental error more than he thinks they should. Stephen Dedalus is the quintessential type of artist that Pinfold would dismiss as revoltingly modern. In fact, in many ways Gilbert and Stephen are opposites personally, artistically, and spiritually.

It is a mistake, therefore, to assume that the hypotext of “A Portrait of the Artist in Middle Age” is *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*. Even suggesting that this chapter is a parody of Joyce’s first novel would be a mistake. Riffaterre believes that when solving the problem of the unknown intertext, the intertext must be able to make sense in relation to the entire hypertext (“Intertextual Unconscious” 371), which *A Portrait* does not in this instance. The manner in which Waugh replaces the words *as A Young Man* from Joyce’s title with *in Middle Age* indicates that the intended hypotext is, in fact, *Ulysses*. Gilbert Pinfold’s present state is much more in line with that of another Joycean character, Leopold Bloom of *Ulysses*, a man of “middle age.” Joyce introduces Leopold Bloom, also a converted Catholic man in his fifties, dealing with the everyday struggles of life. Like Pinfold, he feels a distinct separation between himself and his friends. He, too, is lonely, bored, and out of sorts. Both Pinfold and Bloom struggle to survive the disappointments and tedium of life. Ultimately, the two novels both revolve around a middle-aged man’s search for meaning and purpose.

Recognizing the peritextual allusion to *Ulysses* and Leopold Bloom in the title of first chapter as well as the intertextual similarities between Pinfold and Bloom forces the

readers to engage in the simultaneous nonlinear experience of both texts. First readers are faced with a choice. In his article “Status of Intertextual Discourse,” Laurent Jenny states that intertextual points force the reader to choose to regard the importance of the allusion: “Each intertextual reference is the occasion for an alternative; either one continues reading, taking it only as a segment like any other, or else one turns to the source text, carrying out a sort of intellectual anamnesis” (44-5). Once the hypotext is recognized, the readers cannot help but engage both texts. Genette summarizes Lejeune’s “palimpsestuous reading” by noting that “one who really loves texts must wish from time to time to love (at least) two together” (*Palimpsests* 399). This simultaneous reading also eliminates time barriers. Riffaterre believes that the intertextual signposts—which he terms “connectives”—often initiate retrospective reading “that contradicts the basic rule of any narrative that demands a progression from one point to the next” (“Intertextual Unconscious” 381). Additionally, Kristeva points to the intertextual crossroads of a horizontal axis (subject–addressee) and vertical axis (text–context) of intertextuality in which the author and reader intersect with the past meanings of the text (*Reader* 37-38). Such intersections reveal the possibility of other gaps that require attention.

By looking at the intertextuality this way, readers of Waugh may recognize that there is an intertextual clue even before the first chapter in the title of the novel. Not much has occurred before this first chapter. There is little content with which to engage in a retrospective reading after becoming familiar with the hypotext. The only content available to the readers before the first chapter is the minimal peritextual material that precedes it: the dedication, the note, and the table of contents, or the title itself. In this case, however, the title is the first moment of peritextual intertextuality to indicate

Waugh's intended allusion to the writings of James Joyce. This first incident of nonlinear intertextual perception of the novel precedes even the story itself.

The first allusion to James Joyce's writing appears on the cover of the book itself in the name Gilbert Pinfold, appropriated, I believe, from Joyce's friend and critic Stuart Gilbert. I fully recognize that such an allusion can appear to be a coincidence. Given Waugh's mention of names in *Ordeal* itself, his particularity in choosing names, basing characters on real people and his knowledge of the writings of Stuart Gilbert, I believe this name is an intentional literary allusion. In his fictions and in his nonfiction, Waugh was always open about the fact that his choice of names for his characters represents specific characteristics of real people. Even in *The Ordeal of Gilbert Pinfold*, a self-professed semi-autobiography, the narrator relates that "The Pinfolds were addicted to nicknames and each of these surrounding families had its own private, unsuspected appellation at Lynchpole, not malicious but mildly derisive, taking its origin in most cases from some half-forgotten incident in the past" (7). Waugh, himself, was particular in devising nicknames and aliases from the beginning of his writing career; and although he asserts in many books as he did in *Vile Bodies* that the characters are "wholly imaginary," critics are convinced that he based many of his characters on real people but provided them with new names. Sykes believe this was a regular occurrence and lists Jack Squire, David Lennox, Miles Malpractice as instances of this (Sykes 86). Waugh himself even speaks of this propensity in his autobiography when he tells of a new second-master who "later provided certain features for the character, 'Captain Grimes'" in *Decline and Fall*. In fact for the rest of the treatise on this second-master, he refers to him as Grimes. Martin Stannard states that because young socialites considered his first

novel, *Decline and Fall*, to be a roman à clef about them it “forced Waugh and his publishers to alter two names. ‘Martin Gaythorn-Brodie’ and ‘Kevin Saunderson’ were clearly portraits of Eddie Gaythorne Hardy and Gavin Henderson. In the second impression they became ‘Miles Malpractice’ and ‘Lord Parakeet’” (*Critical Heritage* 14-15). Waugh’s initial aliases show that he wanted the people he based his “fictitious” characters on recognizable. This is obvious in his use of rhyming the fake names with the real names and even only adding the letter “e” to distinguish the real Gaythorn from the fictitious Gaythorne. Given Waugh’s usual intentionality in choosing names for his characters, it would make sense for the name “Gilbert Pinfold”—the name of the novel’s principal character—to be significant and suggestive.

If Waugh chose the name “Gilbert Pinfold” for particular reasons, it behooves us to make some educated guesses. Since Waugh took a peculiar interest in *Ulysses* and since the influence of *Ulysses* is highly important for understanding this novel, one possible educated guess would be for the name to have some connection to Joyce. Although Waugh condemned much of Joyce’s writing, he was drawn to *Ulysses* and took an interest—not always favorable—in scholarly work on the novel. For example, in 1952 he wrote to Nancy Mitford, “I am greatly interested to learn that you know Stuart Gilbert whose work I treasure as a classic example of ingenuity run mad. Have you read his exposition of *Ulysses*? A laugh (not wholly derisive either) on every page” (*Letters* 375). Literary scholar and translator Stuart Gilbert (1883-1969) was a friend of James Joyce. With Joyce’s encouragement and blessing, he wrote a guide to the novel entitled *James Joyce’s Ulysses*. In this study Gilbert proposes that each chapter is governed by an allusion to the *Odyssey*, a type of art, a symbol, and a technique. According to Genette,

after the removal of the chapter titles in *Ulysses* that correspond to episodes in Homer's *Odyssey*, Gilbert's *James Joyce's Ulysses* was in effect an orchestrated "leak" by Joyce and his friends. The intentional publication of books like Gilbert's was "designed to guide readers even more specifically than did the original headings" (*Palimpsests* 307). It is highly unlikely that Waugh, if he had dismissed Joyce altogether, would have invested any time reading an analysis of a Joycean work. By indicating that he had read Gilbert, he also tacitly acknowledged having read *Ulysses*. It appears that Waugh, therefore, was not only acquainted with *Ulysses* but aware, because of his Gilbert association, of the intentional intertextual usage within the narrative.

Just as the name "Gilbert" could have a connection to *Ulysses*, so too could the name Pinfold. The names chosen for (and later abandoned) the characters in *Decline and Fall* rhyme with their real life doppelgängers. Similarly, Pinfold rhymes with his counterpart's first name, Leopold, *Ulysses*' protagonist. Ultimately, the title itself is a prime example of peritextual intertextuality that is apparent even before reading the text itself but only clear after the first and more obvious allusion is recognized. It is not uncommon, according to Laurent Jenny, to encounter a textual reference that "destroys the linearity of the text" and "contradicts the basic rule of any narrative that demands a progression from one point to the next" (381). The readers need only read the peritextual name of the chapter, which explicitly refers to *A Portrait*, and backtrack, consciously or otherwise, to the name of Waugh's book to find other indications of the intended allusion. This nonlinear reading outside of the story proper propels the readers into a deeper sensibility of Joycean allusions even before the story begins. It conditions readers to be hypersensitive to the subsequent occurrences of the hypotext.

After recognizing the two peritextual instances discussed above, the readers can delve into the real purpose for the presence of *Ulysses* within *Ordeal*: to reveal the important and redemptive aspect of successful dialogue. Waugh, of course, commences a dialogue by ensuring a reaction through a surprise, namely that he alludes to Joyce at all. As a cultural conservative, Waugh has little praise for the experimental modernist, James Joyce. In 1944, in a review of Harold Laski's *Faith, Reason and Civilization* for the *Tablet* ("Marxism, the Opiate of the People"), Waugh criticizes Joyce's artistic techniques: "James is understood by nobody" (*Little Order* 150). In a letter to his daughter Margaret in 1964, he compares Marcel Proust to Joyce, saying that he thought Proust "began well but went dotty half way through like J Joyce in *Ulysses*. No plan" (*Letters* 622). This is a clear acknowledgement of three important facts on the part of Waugh. First, that he had indeed read *Ulysses*; second, that Joyce "began well" and thus is in part praiseworthy; and lastly, that it is not Joyce's story but Joyce's style that he dislikes. Waugh's fervent dislike of Joyce's style, however, stems from his sense of a deteriorating literary culture. In a 1955 article, "Literary Style in England and America," he lambasts modern literary academia by referencing the errors of Joyce:

There is a lurking Puritanism at Cambridge (England) and in many parts of the New World, which is ever ready to condemn pleasure even in its purest forms. If this seems doubtful consider the case of James Joyce. There was a writer possessed by style. His later work lost almost all faculty of communication, so intimate, allusive and idiosyncratic did it become, so obsessed by euphony and nuance. But because he was obscure and can only be read with intense intellectual effort—and therefore

without easy pleasure—he is admitted into the academic canon. But it is just in this task of communication that Joyce’s style fails, for the necessary elements of style are lucidity, elegance, individuality; these three qualities combine to form a preservative which ensures the nearest approximation to permanence in the fugitive art of letters. (*Essays* 478)

Sadly style, according to Waugh, matters more than pleasure in the hierarchy of academic importance. This focus on style and rejection of pleasure, however, limits access to literature. James Joyce’s writing epitomizes, in Waugh’s mind, this inaccessible literary culture. Somehow, Waugh laments, the world’s leading literary intellectuals have managed to transform what was once considered a leisurely and healthy activity—reading—into grueling, unenjoyable, and sometimes detrimental work. As such, it is inapproachable. This lack of connection between society and literature leads perhaps inevitably to the demise of literary culture. Waugh’s use of an incompatible intertext is intentionally surprising. He uses an intertext that “goes dotty halfway through” (*Letters* 622). The co-presence of *Ulysses* in *Ordeal*, therefore, must then be a means to engage the readers with the unexpected artifice of a seemingly inappropriate intertext. “Representation” of this sort, Riffaterre suggests, “is thus the stronger because it is out of the ordinary and because it demands of the reader special tolerance of impropriety that only the extraordinary legitimates and that we significantly call poetic license” (“Intertextual Representation” 143). Waugh’s use of Joyce is intentional irony. Scientists intentionally use a live virus of the disease that they intend to eradicate in the vaccination for those same diseases. Waugh uses Joyce to restore a communicative style that he considers imperative to the health and meaning of literary culture.

Waugh first attempts to restore communication by recalling the timelessness of literature through the initiation of a dialogue among himself, Joyce, and Shakespeare. Pinfold embarks on a sea journey aboard the “Caliban, a one class ship sailing in three days for Ceylon” (32). The name *Caliban* conjures the spirits of both Shakespeare and Joyce. The S.S. Caliban sits alone in the sea and recalls *The Tempest’s* Caliban who lives on a secluded island in the middle of the ocean. Shakespeare’s Caliban, the evil, wild offspring of a witch, is slave to the usurper of the island. In the play he attempts to rape and murder. Although his presence forces an association with anger, wrath, and imprisonment, it is really his ability to fracture accepted modes of communication with his own language that inspire horror in his presence. “It is as if,” Schiegel believes, “the use of reason and human speech were communicated to an awkward ape.” But “he is, in his way, a poetical being; he always speaks in verse. He has picked up everything dissonant and thorny in language to compose out of it a vocabulary of his own” (*Lectures* 395). Interestingly, Schiegel’s description of Caliban’s use of language is not unlike that of Waugh’s description of Joyce’s language. Alone with their ingenuity, unable to express themselves through accepted modes of language, they both create new modes of language.

Waugh’s S.S. Caliban, however, recalls and rejects the idea in *Ulysses* that dialogue between past ages of literary history and modern literature is an impossibility. As Waugh knew from his reading of *Ulysses*, Joyce himself refers to a moment of intertextuality through his own use of Caliban. Joyce sets the stage for a new era of literature in the “Telemachus” chapter. Stephen Dedalus looks in the mirror, and Buck Mulligan says, “The rage of Caliban at not seeing his face in a mirror...If Wilde were

only alive to see you.” Stephen replies: “It is a symbol of Irish art. The cracked lookingglass of a servant” (6). Mulligan refers to Wilde’s comment in his preface to *The Picture of Dorian Gray* that “The nineteenth century dislike of Realism is that of Caliban seeing his own face in the glass. The nineteenth century dislike of Romanticism is that of Caliban not seeing his own face in the glass” (2). Nineteenth-century literature entails a paradox. Readers ask for truth but shudder from it. Stephen suggests that he is the product or perhaps author of a new art form. Mulligan believes that Wilde would be shocked to find out what literature has now become and that it would be unrecognizable. Buck and Stephen suggest that the dialogue between nineteenth-century literature and modern literature is impossible. Joyce freely admits that that literature has evolved into something unrecognizable. But Joyce did not amaze Waugh and perhaps would not have even amazed Wilde precisely because he has taken timeless themes and transformed them into a highly subjective and self-conscious art understandable only to Joyce himself—and seen through the lens of a cracked mirror at that. The Caliban allusion forces *Ulysses* to begin with a blatant declaration that modern literature is neither recognizable nor comprehensible and, therefore, no longer, timeless.

By alluding to Caliban, Waugh extends the conversation on literature from his hypotext, *Ulysses*, to the hypo-hypotext, Wilde’s Preface, and as already shown, the hypo-hypo-hypotext,¹⁸ *The Tempest*. Although throughout *Ulysses* Joyce occasionally quotes or alludes to Shakespeare, his character and style suggest that he and other modern Irish artists are at the top of a hierarchical pyramid. Here, for example, he allows Wilde

¹⁸ I adopt Gerard’s use of “hypotext” to create the word “hypo-hypo-hypotext.” In my studies I have found no other word to describe this occurrence in literature with simplicity.

to overshadow Shakespeare while modern Irish literature overshadows Wilde. That is a rift in the communication of meaning. Waugh's setting-based allusion to Shakespeare's Caliban, on the other hand, recognizes the unfortunate fact that the original hypotext, while not having lost its presence, seems to have lost its meaning with *Ulysses*. In his article, "Mr. Bloom Inside and Out: Some Topologies of the Initial Style of *Ulysses*," Tony Thwaites suggests that that Mulligan and Stephen are "after Wilde" and that, therefore, the mirror reflects only "Irish art" (368). Waugh's welcoming of Shakespeare as well as Joycean references signals his attempt to reconnect past literature with present in an understandable and comprehensible way instead of usurping literature of the past with his own. Unlike Joyce who obfuscates the significance of Shakespeare while maintaining the allusion, Waugh gives equal weight to each allusion thereby opening up each stage of literature for discussion. Waugh's *Ordeal of Gilbert Pinfold*, then, is not Mulligan's cracked servant's mirror but instead a three-way mirror in which Shakespeare, Wilde, and Joyce are all clearly visible to Waugh who sets Pinfold in the middle ready to react to the movement of those who precede him.

Waugh's *Ordeal* then challenges the value of *Ulysses* as a modern experimental novel by reproducing it not as the modern episodic narrative it is known as (Gilbert 3) but as an episodic anti-romance. In the reflections of this three-way mirror, there seem to be two men who are primarily dramatists, Shakespeare and Wilde, and two who are primarily novelists, Joyce and Waugh. In, *Ulysses*, however, Joyce erases the traditional rules of genre and combines so many genres that the novel cannot be approached with one lens but many. Michael Sinding's article "Genre Mixta: Conceptual Blending and Mixed Genres in *Ulysses*" elaborates on the varied genres Joyce employs in order to

present his story to his reader. Sinding suggests, as do many of his sources, that readers of *Ulysses* can only fully appreciate the novel if they possess an understanding of each genre primarily: epic, novel, and drama. (590, 614) Yet, ultimately he suggests that genre blending in *Ulysses* culminates in a new form of genre. It is virtually impossible then to fully appreciate the novel since no one can have a complete grasp of Joyce's new genres. Fittingly, Joyce himself has become a new Caliban who with the bits and pieces of other authors speaks only his genre.

Waugh begins to dismantle the complex genre of *Ulysses* by transstylizing "Circe" into an identifiable, episodic anti-romantic self-pastiche and therefore increases its receptivity and understandability. Waugh recovers communicability by bridging traditional literary culture to modern literary culture through the usurpation and simplification of *Ulysses*' "Circe." This transtylization—focusing on the spoken word instead of style—better illustrates the horror of the setting, the purpose of the characters, and the lessons found in themes for both the hypo- and hypertext.

Although both texts illustrate numerous whirlwind events that impede focus, Waugh's third person narration redirects focus on Pinfold's personal turmoil. "Circe" commences with what Stuart Gilbert describes as an "animal world" (301) and this animalistic world is soon serenaded by Cissy Caffrey who sings "I gave it to Molly / Because she was jolly, / The leg of the duck, / The leg of the duck" (351). Pinfold's circus similarly begins with music and animals. As is the case for Leopold Bloom, Pinfold's experiences are quick snap shots of disjointed events. He rests in his cabin only to be startled by the sound of a jazz band followed by the lively footsteps of a dog in the cabin next door. He hears the jazz band again followed by a Calvinistic sermon, a

confession, and another band. Later, he overhears black slaves dragging their chains across the floor and being mistreated by the crew. He listens to a mutiny, a man getting shot, and the captain lamenting these incidents. In all of this commotion, he experiences only one sympathetic voice—that of a nurse as she offers to pray a rosary with a sailor. He then hears the sadistic and masochistic beating and murder of a sailor. Mirroring “Circe,” Gilbert Pinfold’s ordeal commences in a circus itself complete with music, animals, and various ringmasters. As he rests in his sleeping cabin on the *Caliban*, he hears what could be described as a dramatic radio broadcast involving dozens of scenes and actors. Like Leopold Bloom in “Circe,” Gilbert Pinfold witnesses or overhears numerous incongruent and outlandish occurrences.

Waugh’s “transmodalization” of *Ulysses*, however, allows Pinfold to initially only witness and not participate in the madness of the drama around him, and this separation allows him to easily convey a cohesive struggle within the story. First, Waugh replaces the screenplay of “Circe” with a third-person narration. Genette dedicates a portion of *Palmipsests* to the act of an author switching from a dramatic hypotext to a narrative hypertext. He calls this “intermodal transmodalization.” Usually when transmodalizing from drama to narrative, an author will expand a moment that he feels deserves more detail and attention. (285). Waugh’s intermodal transmodalization, however, largely decreases detail while increasing didactic value. Contrarily, according to Stuart Gilbert, *Ulysses*’ meaning is not about morals or teaching:

The ‘meaning’ of *Ulysses*, for it has a meaning and is not a mere photographic ‘slice of life’—far from it—is not to be sought in any analysis of the acts of the protagonist or the mental make-up of the

characters; it is, rather implicit in the technique of various episodes, in nuances of language, in the thousand and one correspondences and allusions with which the book is studded. Thus *Ulysses* is neither pessimist nor optimist in outlook, neither moral nor immoral in the ordinary sense of these words; its affinity is, rather, with an Einstein formula, a Greek temple, an art that lives the more intensely for its repose. *Ulysses* achieves a coherent and integral interpretation of life, a static beauty according to the definition of Aquinas (as abridged by Joyce): *ad pulchritudinem tria requiruntur integritas, consonantia, claritas*.¹⁹ (Gilbert 8)

The significance of *Ulysses*, according to Gilbert, is not found through didacticism or analysis but from its untouched representation of real and complex life. Waugh, however, believes that this representation is so convoluted and confusing that no real consolation can emerge. Style and minutiae of life have dismantled any cohesiveness.

Waugh's intermodal transmodalization entails a new vocalization by replacing stage direction with an omniscient narrator. The focus on props and costumes that accompanies the drama of "Circe" diminishes substantially while the real conflict contained within the spoken word emerges. Unlike the screenplay of "Circe," which leaves no room for character motive, Waugh accentuates the importance of transparency by allowing the narrator to reveal Pinfold's own thoughts. Furthermore, unlike Joyce's Circean characters who appear physically and sometimes magically on stage, Pinfold's uninvited guests appear only as locutions and thereby are clearly distinct from Pinfold's true reality. Lastly, the readers stay grounded in this reality because of Pinfold's constant

¹⁹ "Three things are needed for beauty, wholeness, and harmony and radiance."

interactions with actual physical characters. Waugh's transformation of "Circe" makes clear the reality of the nightmare inherent in miscommunication.

Joyce begins *Ulysses* by detailing this inability to communicate. It is, however, the magic and supernatural that he focuses on, thus hiding the theme of lack of communication and impeding understanding. "Circe" opens with a taunted deaf mute; then "a pigmy woman swings on a rope slung between two railings, counting. A form sprawled against a dustbin and muffled by its arm and hat snores, groans, grinding growling teeth, and snores again. On a step a gnome toting among a rubbish tip crouches" (*Ulysses* 351). Gilbert summarizes this chaotic scene in which "the 'atmosphere' of the episode is created in the opening 'stage directions'—mist, squalor, impeded speech and movement, stunted creatures, a pigmy woman, a Caliban growling in bestial slumber, a Sycorax returning to her lair" (301). Joyce's "Circe" is a freak show emphasizing isolation due to the lack of communication. These three characters are among company but unable to communicate. There is one man who can neither hear nor speak, a "Caliban" who only groans, and a gnome cowering from both of them.

Waugh imitates the supernatural within *Ulysses*; but, by confining the setting and eliminating and redefining characters, he better conveys the horrors of inarticulation. Genette refers to the change of setting and identity of characters from the hypotext to a hypertext as "heterodiegetic" (*Palimpsests* 296). Both stories occur for the most part in a supernatural realm. While not as extravagantly and outwardly magical, *Ordeal's* setting evokes a similar supernatural tone. The name of the boat, S. S. Caliban, recalls images of Shakespeare's magical and powerful *Tempest*. But Waugh's strange world does not limitlessly expand as Joyce's does; in fact, it closes in on itself. Pinfold is in a boat, not a

brothel that transforms into a Bloomian paradise. The pairing of the boat with the personality of Pinfold himself accentuates the miscommunication. This happens even before Pinfold embarks on his journey. He wishes to “escape” and so sends a letter to a travel agency asking that they reserve a room for him on a boat going anywhere. Communication fails. They do nothing but send him pamphlets and make him indignant. Eventually, his stay in the ship necessitates communication, but he cannot communicate. First, he attempts to telegraph his mother, but he “tried to compose and inscribe a message. The task proved to be one of insuperable difficulty” (40). Later when the steward comes in another inability to communicate ensues.

‘I’m not very well. I wonder if you could unpack for me?’

‘Dinner seven-thirty o’clock, sir.’

‘I said, could you unpack for me?’

‘No, Sir, bar not open in Port, sir.’ (40-1)

Being on a boat, Pinfold is dependent upon telegraphs and stewards. A telegraph, one of the simpler forms of communication, proves too complicated for Pinfold. The steward, who is supposed to ease his comfort, cannot even understand him. By enclosing the setting and minimizing the characters, Waugh reinforces the idea Pinfold needs communication but is thwarted whenever he tries.

Later, while in the depths of his hallucinations, he becomes the laughable protagonist of an anti-romance. Here, the vocalization of Pinfold shows that one can solve life problems with communication. Waugh emulates the complexities and problems of sexuality and religion that overwhelm Bloom’s life. Joyce’s theatrical style, however, does not allow Bloom to reach beyond himself in hopes of help. He remains stuck in a

circus-like play doing what he is told to do and becoming what he is told to become without struggle or doubt. In *Ordeal*, the voice of the narrator conveys Pinfold's recognition of his human errors and his struggle with those errors. It is then possible for Pinfold to surmount the obstacle in his life and achieve victory.

One of Bloom's major problems is his inability to either recognize or appease his sexual frustration. "Circe" is, obviously, a sexually charged atmosphere; at the least, most of the chapter takes place in a brothel. Sexuality, sexual attraction, and sexual identification (gender) are major themes in "Circe." The readers already know, however that Bloom gratifies his own sexual frustration. Earlier in the novel, Bloom masturbates as he watches a young lady named Gerty MacDowell. In the beginning of "Circe," Gerty reappears in an occurrence of intratextuality:

THE BAWD

(her wolfeyes shining) He's getting his pleasure. You won't get a virgin in the flash houses. Ten shillings. Don't be all night before the polis in plain clothes sees us. Sixtyseve is a bitch.

(Leering, Gerty MacDowell limps forward. She draws from behind, ogling, and shows coyly her bloodied clout.)

GERTY

With all my worldly goods I thee and though. (she murmurs) You did that. I hate you.

BLOOM

I? When? You're dreaming. I never saw you. (361)

In this exchange, Joyce conflates the readers' knowledge with that of the characters. Earlier, Gerty knows she is being watched, but she does not know Bloom or what he is doing. Here, however, she has become all-knowing. In spite of the truth of his sexual action, Bloom avoids acknowledging his sexual problems as he denies having ever seen Gerty. Because there is no obvious narrator in "Circe," the readers cannot know if Bloom confesses his sexual frustration and action to himself or not. By choosing drama, Joyce eschews truths he could otherwise pass between the readers and the narrator in favor of another more stylistic agenda.

If Joyce often shocks readers with sexual innuendo, Waugh addresses the taboo topic of sexuality more cautiously. Surprisingly, Waugh, a morally espousing Catholic conservative, introduces masturbation unabashedly into the onset of Pinfold's ordeal. Waugh speaks of masturbation not to outrage readers but to reclaim their participation by resurrecting a moral framework Joyce evades. The first voice Pinfold hears in his delusion is that of a clergyman giving a sermon followed by male voices singing a Calvinist hymn, after which the clergyman speaks:

'I want to see Billy alone after you dismiss,' said the clergyman. There followed an extempore, rather perfunctory prayer, then a great shuffling of feet and pushing about of chairs; then a hush; then the clergyman, very earnestly; 'Well, Billy, what have you got to say to me?' and the unmistakable sound of sobbing.

Mr. Pinfold began to feel uneasy. This was something that was not meant to be overheard.

‘Billy, you must tell me yourself. I am not accusing you of anything. I am not putting words into your mouth.’

Silence except for sobbing.

Billy, you know what we talked about last time. Have you done it again? Have you been impure, Billy?’

‘Yes, sir. I can’t help it, sir.’

God never tempts us beyond our strength, Billy. I’ve told you that haven’t I? Do you suppose I do not feel these temptations, too, Billy? Very strongly at times. But I resist, don’t I? You know I resist, don’t I, Billy?’ (50-51)

Waugh draws the readers into the experience by recognizing Pinfold’s uneasiness. The sexual moral compass apparent in *Ordeal* engenders the conflict between will and desire that is addressed far differently in *Ulysses*. Bloom, in his narcissistic desire, denies any sexual indecency. By contrast, Billy confesses to the priest. Pinfold is appalled: “Mr. Pinfold was horror-struck. He was being drawn into participation in a scene of gruesome indecency” (50-51). Pinfold’s reaction to this confession suggests that Waugh expects to set up a similar reaction in the readers. In “Circe,” Bloom’s denial of his masturbatory act lacks an explanation. The readers do not know if Bloom feels physically endangered, embarrassed, guilty, or ashamed. “Circe” recognizes masturbation as neither amoral nor immoral. Waugh’s allusion to Bloom’s act of masturbation through Billy’s shame opens the subject to serious dialogue and thus acknowledges a deeper meaning. In his article “The Text Within the Text,” Jury M. Lotman defines *text* as needing “an interlocutor. This requirement reveals the profoundly dialogical nature of consciousness. To function a

consciousness requires another consciousness—the text within the text, the culture within the culture” (378). In other words, Waugh’s intertextual recollection of Bloom’s masturbatory act paired with that of Billy’s confessed act allows for a conflict. This reaction was impossible for Joyce because his fictional character compartmentalizes not only moral but also cultural [and literary] norms. So while masturbation in *Ulysses* adds shock value, humor, and titillation, the allusion to masturbation in *Ordeal* compels the characters and consequently the readers to consider it an act with more profound, sectarian ramifications. Its presence in *Ordeal*, therefore, is communicative in that it initiates dialogue.

Bloom, on the other hand, does not stay true to his character but becomes someone else entirely. “Circe” climaxes with Bloom’s messianic transformation. The presumptive savior of Dublin, he metaphorically gives birth to hundreds of children and announces to his followers, “Yea, on the word of a Bloom, ye shall ere long enter into the golden city which is to be, the new Bloomusalem in the Nova Hibernia of the future” (*Ulysses* 395). He then promises a “Union of all, jew, moslem and gentile. Three acres and a cow for all children of nature” (399). Soon, however, he prepares to be sacrificed. After the parenthetical stage direction, “Lieutenant Myers of the Dublin Fire Brigade by general request sets fire to Bloom, Lamentations,” Bloom declares

BLOOM

(in a seamless garment marked I. H.S. stands upright amid phoenix flames) Weep not for me, o daughters of Erin. (he exhibits to Dublin reporters traces of burning)

(The daughters of Erin, in black garments, with large prayerbooks and long lighted cangles in their hands, kneel down and pray.) (406)

“Mute, shrunken, carbonized” (407), Bloom has transformed into a Messiah who will save Ireland. He himself alludes to the words of Christ at the crucifixion: “Weep not for yourselves but for your children.” Like Christ, Bloom sacrifices himself for Ireland.

By emulating the heroic deeds of Bloom in Pinfold’s hallucination, Waugh communicates that both protagonists are anti-heroes who can neither understand nor respond appropriately to the outside world. In other words, Waugh shows that both characters, thinking they are more important than they are, continually misunderstand and miscommunicate. *The Ordeal of Gilbert Pinfold* becomes a parody in the form of an anti-romance. Like Don Quixote, Pinfold’s anti-heroic adventures begin with numerous imagined conflicts. Whereas Quixote imagines, giants, criminals, abusers, and princesses, Pinfold conjures nightmarish schemes. He is the only witness to a conspiracy as only “He was able to hear quite distinctly not only what was said in his immediate vicinity but everywhere. ...Through some trick or fault or war-time survival everything spoken in the executive quarters of the ship was transmitted to him.” His hallucination soon escalates and he hears, “By God, I’ll shoot the first man of you that moves.” This is immediately followed with “a crash, not a shot but a huge percussion of metal as though a hundred pokers and pairs of tongs had fallen into an enormous fender, followed by a wail of agony and a moment of complete silence” (64) at which point Pinfold knows he has overheard a horrific act. Later, he hears that the captain of the *Caliban* himself has sent the injured man to “hell spot” instead of a proper hospital.

Similar to Bloom, whose “Circe” adventure climaxes as he transforms into a messianic figure, Pinfold also becomes a savior figure. Unlike Bloom, he doubts his own importance. Bloom is offered up for sacrifice, but Pinfold readily and honorably sacrifices himself without struggle. Although he does not see himself as a Messiah, he believes he is called to sacrifice his life for those on the ship. As the *Caliban* nears Gibraltar, a setting of importance in *Ulysses* and in the solitude of his cabin, Pinfold overhears sailors complaining that the Spanish will not let the ship pass Gibraltar until the crew has given up a secret agent who is traveling with them. Pinfold soon learns that the Skipper and the General have decided to make Pinfold pose as the agent and go with the Spanish to be imprisoned. Like Bloom he resigns to his fate and “then he t[akes] off his evening clothes and put[s] on his tweeds. Whatever outrage the night brought forth should find him suitably dressed” (*Ordeal* 138-9). He waits for his persecution; but, unlike Bloom, his does not come. So he seeks his persecutors. At not finding them,

he was truck with real fear, something totally different from the superficial alarms he had once or twice known in moments of danger, something he had quite often read about and dismissed as over-writing. He was possessed from outside himself with atavistic panic. ‘Oh, let me not be mad, not mad, sweet heaven,’ he cried. (142)

He has the sudden, paralyzing fear that what he had always imagined as communication and dialogue was nothing but the insane ramblings of his own brain. This realization is something Bloom never experiences.

Pinfold cannot yet completely break from the anti-heroic mold that he shares with Bloom because he continues to reject communion with others by remaining trapped in

dialogue with only himself. Instead of recognizing his temporary madness, he denies it by finding a more palatable reason. It must be

. . . a hoax, he said to himself. It was all a hoax on the part of the hooligans. He understood all. They had learned the secret of the defective wiring in his cabin. Somehow they had devised a means of controlling it, somehow they had staged with whole character to tease him. It was spiteful and offensive, no doubt; it must not happen again. But Mr. Pinfold felt nothing but gratitude in his discovery. HE might be unpopular; he might be ridiculous; but he was not mad. (142)

Like the Bloomsian Christ, Pinfold continues imagining his persecution. Although Waugh tones down the outlandish conspiracies that Pinfold faces, he retains the premise that in his own mind Pinfold is a victim.

Waugh continues by mimicking and rejecting the sexual enslavement Joyce provides for Bloom. Waugh responds to Joyce's experiment of sexual identity by asserting that meaningful communication or dialogue only takes place when identity, sexual or otherwise, is static. Waugh thus mimics Joyce while rejecting him. In "Circe" after Bloom laces up Bella, the mistress of the brothel transforms into Bello, and Bloom transforms into a woman. Bello curses Bloom as "Henceforth . . . unmanned and mine in earnest, a thing under the yoke. Now for your punishment frock. You will shed your male garments, you understand" (*Ulysses* 436). Pointing to the prostitutes, Bello later tells him, "As they are now so will you be, wigged, singed, perfumesprayed, ricepowdered, with smoothshaven armpits. Tape measurements will be taken next your skin. You will be laced with cruel force into a vicelike corsets of soft dove coutille with whalebone busk to

the diamond-trimmed pelvis" (437). Bello forces Bloom to become an effeminate sex slave. Bloom protests, "I tried her things on only twice, a small prank, in Holles street" (437). His protest, however, is also an admission, as implied by the fact that he becomes a happy, subservient woman. He expresses neither struggle nor fight to deny the fluidity of his gender.

Pinfold's silence in response to the taunts indicates that Waugh dismisses such transgenderization²⁰ as absurd. Initially, Pinfold is taunted in much the same manner as Bloom. He "overhears" passengers on the boat talking disparagingly about him. They find that "he is very peculiar altogether. His hair is very long" they say adding "he's wearing lip-stick." And "He's painted up to the eyes" (*Ordeal* 147). They chastise him for crossing gender boundaries. They even accuse him of being "impotent for years" (148). In "Circe," Bloom is also called impotent, but his response is giving into a transgender role. After hearing these taunts Pinfold jumps at the chance to prove his manliness. He hallucinates that the imaginary Margaret's father sends her to sleep with him. He wonders how to prepare for her. "Should he draw her down to sit beside him on the bunk?" "Somehow," he muses, "He must dispose her, supine, on the bunk. ...He took off his pajamas and hung them in his cupboard, put on his dressing gown, and sat in the chair facing the door, waiting" (170). Margaret, however, never comes. Pinfold, in fact, is so ready to prove his manhood, even at the expense of cheating on his wife that he goes in search of Margaret. Not finding her, he finally gives up and warns this imaginary woman, "If you want to come to bed with me, you'll have to come and join me there."

²⁰ Waugh also dabbles in transgenderization years earlier in the character of Panrast in *Vile Bodies*.

But when she does not come and tells her parents that she went into him and he was asleep, her sister General taunts once again, “Gilbert knew he wasn’t up to it. He’s impotent, aren’t you, Gilbert? Aren’t you?” (174). Goneril echoes Bello’s taunts to Bloom: “What else are you good for, an impotent thing like you?. . . It’s as limp as a boy of six’s doing his pooly behind a cart. Buy a bucket or sell your pump. (loudly) Can you do a man’s job?” (441). But Waugh’s novel produces a distinctive difference. For Pinfold, the torture comes in the form of words only. They are words, in fact, that he chooses to ignore. He lays down on his bunk, tired of the antics. He does not give in to the circus that is going on in his brain. He remains himself. Dialogue has been thwarted. He literally is willing to put the subject to bed.

In fact the suggestion of Pinfold’s gender fluidity gives Waugh the opportunity to reject the failure at communication apparent in Joyce’s work. As the voices continue to bother Pinfold, he thwarts their attempts by realizing that they never wanted to communicate anyway. They want to be heard but do not want to listen. The voices begin to narrate his every movement and respond to his every thought. In a conscious decision, Pinfold recognizes their noise as mere gibberish being broadcast through the technical skills of Angel, a supposed BBC interviewer:

Mr. Pinfold fought back with the enemy’s weapons. He was obliged to hear all they said. They were obliged to hear him. They could not measure his emotions but every thought which took verbal shape in his mind was audible in Angel’s headquarters and they were unable, it seemed, to disconnect their Box. Mr. Pinfold set out to wear them down with sheer boredom. He took a copy of *Westward Ho!* from the ship’s library and

read it very slowly hour by hour. At first Goneril attempted to correct his pronunciation. At first Angel pretended to find psychological fervent words. But after an hour or so they gave up these pretenses and cried in frank despair: ‘Gilbert, for God’s sake stop.’ (203).

This is Waugh’s wake-up call to the admirers of Joyce’s style, which, according to Waugh, consists of nonsense words and noise rather than true communication. Pinfold turns the tables, tormenting his tormenters with nonsense texts by “reading alternate lines, alternate words, reading backwards, until they pleaded for a respite. Hour after hour Mr. Pinfold remorselessly read on.” (203). Pinfold responds in the manner in which he has been approached. His language and its confusion parody Joyce’s. Pinfold has also now “lost all faculty of communication,” as Waugh once described Joyce’s work. This move, however, is intentional. He is showing how the one-sidedness and egocentricity of Joyce’s newfangled style leads only to boredom.

Waugh uses *Ordeal* ultimately to restore a simpler literary style and, in so doing, recalls the underappreciated important simplicity of traditional literature. Two of the voices, Margaret and Angel, inform Pinfold that only the two of them have ever existed. Pinfold becomes convinced that Angel, with his broadcast expertise, has played many of the voices that he has thought were other people. When Pinfold finally decides that he will tell his wife that this Angel has been communicating with him telepathically, Angel proposes a deal. As long as Pinfold does not communicate the truth to his wife about Angel and Margaret, Angel promises to never speak to Pinfold again. Once Pinfold communicates his affliction with a tangible character, the wife, his tormentor and Margaret vanish. The experience was “most exciting” while it happened, but now “[n]o

sound troubled him from that other half-world into which he had stumbled” (229). Those voices were from a half-world, an illusion. They did, however, help Pinfold realize that communion, not isolation, leads to truth.

The Ordeal of Gilbert Pinfold embraces the incredulous story of Joyce’s Circe chapter while negating its style in order to reclaim literature as a universal experience. *Ordeal* combines both types of intertextual mimesis as defined by Michael Riffaterre, compatible and incompatible. In this case *Ulysses* is simultaneously rejected and accepted. *Ulysses* is incompatible with *Ordeal* because it rejects Waugh’s belief that good literature should be easily understood and not obscured by stylistic endeavor. So, naturally, Waugh changes the style while maintaining the story of a man struggling to overcome isolation through the solitary quest for purpose. Finally, after all his ordeals, this quest becomes evident both to Pinfold and the reader. He has quested towards and sought truth. In the simple telling of his story, Waugh has made truth apparent. So in the end, Pinfold knows “and the others did not know—not even his wife, least of all his medical adviser—that he had endured a great ordeal and, unaided, had emerged the victor.” He recognizes that “[t]here was a triumph to be celebrated, even if a mocking slave stood always beside him in his chariot reminding him of his mortality” (231). He rejoices not in the absence of the maddening voices but instead in his ability to communicate and be understood. It is at this point, on the last page of the novel, that Pinfold’s writer’s block is remedied and he sits down to write “The Ordeal of Gilbert Pinfold / A Conversation Piece/ Chapter One/ Portrait of the Artist in Middle Age.” Waugh has extended the discussion to the readers by allowing *Ordeal* to be both the hypo- and the hypertext. This moment of intratextual reference takes the story full circle

and again enlists Joyce for help in the search for truth. Waugh has created a text geared toward the dialogue of and about literary greats. Waugh through Pinfold acknowledges the mortality and the fickleness of victory, but challenging modernism's stylistic demons the writer and character simultaneously enter eternity through the creation of an understandable and communicable work of literature.

Conclusion: Evelyn Waugh and a Literary Humility

In the middle of his early adult years, a time in his life when all his friends exude success and he alone seems to fail, in his despair, Evelyn Waugh decides to kill himself. In the late hours of the night “with thoughts full of death” he walks to the beach, undresses and ventures into the ocean determined to swim far enough that he will not have the strength to return to shore. On the shore he leaves a single sentence, “θάλασσα κλύζει πάντα τάνθρώπων κακά” (*A Little Learning*, 229)²¹ While many scholars recall this attempt at suicide and even reference his note they often omit the line,²² from their text. I assume this is due to the inaccessibility of Ancient Greek or because Waugh fails to explain it thoroughly. Waugh’s relationship with this quote, however, epitomizes his gradual commitment to the value of intertextuality. The line is from Euripides’s *Iphigenia in Tauris* (Euripides, 1193). The play tells of Iphigenia who is saved from sacrifice by becoming one who sacrifices others. Waugh suggests that the line is a general phrase stating that the sea “washes away all human ills” (229). *Lattimore in The Complete Greek Tragedies* translates it as “The Sea is absorbent of all evil” (395) but Professor Phillip Bartok of St. John’s College Santa Fe poetically transcribes the sentences as, “The sea washes away all human evils” and Father Gaspar Hernandez Peludo Ph.D, of Salamanca and fluent in Ancient Greek as well, translates the sentence as “The sea, with its waves purifies men of their evils.” In other words, Waugh employs an indefinable and allusive intertextual sentence to explain himself. His experiences, his

²¹ Philip Bartok latinized/romanized this for me as “thalassa kluzei panta tanthrōpōn kaka.” (email)

²² Joseph Pearce in *Literary Converts* (158), Insausti in “Fictionalizing Memory: Waugh’s *A Little Learning* (279)” and Lorene Duquin in her novel *A Century of Catholic Converts* (91.) (among others) all mention the episode but bypass the Greek.

suffering, he says with this note, is beyond the comprehension and understanding of others and, it would seem, beyond his own comprehension as well. The only way to bring sense to his actions is an inaccessible intertextual sentence.

As luck would have it, he was stung by jellyfish before arriving at “the point of no return.” “The placid waters were full of the creatures,” he would later recall, and this was to him was “a sharp recall to good sense.” It led him to change his mind, return to shore and dress. He then “climbed the sharp hill that led to all the years ahead” (*Little Learning* 230) but not before he “tore into pieces [his] pretentious tag” (*Little Learning* 230). He was saved not by knowledge, will, or an act of his own but instead by an outside force. His saving grace was a forced humility that caused a reconsideration of his plan. Upon being stung by the jellyfish, he surrendered his will and consequently chose, against his current inclination, to fight against despair. Tearing up his obtuse intertextual suicide note was a step in relinquishing his literary pride. While the battle against pride was not easy, he gradually achieved humility through and for his use of intertextuality. This humility is not only the reason we have dozens of books and scores of short stories to enjoy but is also at the heart of their foundation. They are dedicated to that same struggle between pride and humility while fighting for a recovery of literary culture. This experience is revisited again and again in his writings through the presence of intertextuality. To learn anything new, to fully engage in the art of writing and reading literature, exercises the virtue of humility. Waugh’s works exude a willingness to recognize, accept, and embrace the fact that society needs not only physically and emotionally but literarily as well.

Ultimately, Waugh’s use of intertextuality enforces the importance of intellectual humility within and beyond himself. Tracing his intertextuality from his first text to the

last shows a maturation of his own personal humility as a writer and thinker. His displeasure with modern literature slowly transforms into the humble conclusion that every literary age can contribute positively to civilization. Waugh's first novel, *Vile Bodies*, expresses his disgust at the younger generation and excoriates their inability to look beyond themselves towards the great scholars of the past. Relying on intertextuality in "Out of Depth" and *Love Among the Ruins*, Waugh bridges space and time while, simultaneously, warning of the two extreme directions intertextuality can take. Importantly, Waugh questions his own participation in intertextual dialogue. *A Handful of Dust* represents Waugh's recognition that he cannot control modernity's use of the arts but that he can guide its path by controlling his own use of it. The use of Eliot's *Waste Land* in *Brideshead Revisited*, on the other hand, suggests that intertextuality is useless unless personally and individually approachable. Waugh's transformation as an intertextual writer and his ultimate statement on intertextuality culminates in *The Ordeal of Gilbert Pinfold*, in which he allows Joyce, a writer for whom he once professed great dislike, to help break down his own judgmental conceit and to admit, in the end, that intertextuality necessitates a personal experience of developing an appreciation if not acknowledgement of all contributions to literature.

Vile Bodies retains and maintains hope for the younger populace by employing Lewis Carroll and Dante Alighieri to lay out a path towards the cultural improvement of society. Nevertheless, Waugh faces a slight danger of alienating the younger generation he hopes to help. To be fair much of his distaste for the younger generation was due to the fact that while he was writing *Vile Bodies* his first wife cheated on him and, despite his pleas, she refused to reconcile. However, revealing lessons from past authors

unfortunately also stifles Waugh's own voice as a modern writer. To bring truth to light is usually a thankless task. Indeed Waugh personifies this dilemma with Simon Balcrain, the *Vile Bodies* journalist who kills himself because he is considered an outsider. Because both the older and the younger generation deny him entrance into a particular party, Balcrain must disguise himself as a man of importance (akin though not exactly parallel to Waugh's use of Dante and Carroll.) Balcrain is discovered and forced from the party by the exclusive older generation. It is only when he writes a fictitious piece for the newspaper with real names that he is recognized as an important literary contributor. He, however, has failed himself. This too was the dilemma Waugh faced in writing *Vile Bodies*: producing a book critically evaluating modernity, himself included, or steer clear of didacticism and we embraced. He chose to hide the truths he saw with intertext.

While the name given to the younger generation, "The Bright Young Things," is supposed to be humorous as well as ironic, it is also a label that may deter discussion. Waugh himself was only twenty-six years old at the time of this novel, yet he disassociates himself from the label. He critiques this young generation collectively but fails to apply to himself the novel's lesson—a lesson in humility (namely that others might know more than oneself). While the works of Carroll and Dante enlighten the path to knowledge, this path is hidden from the readers beneath a deprecating critique on society. The immediacy of Waugh's lesson on the importance of hypotexts is also somewhat hidden.

While Waugh may not be encouraging every reader's reaction to hypotexts, through *A Handful of Dust* he does begin to recognize the varied uses and interpretation of hypotexts. Intertextuality in this novel elucidates the freewill inherent in all people.

There can be then a plethora of interpretations and reactions to an intertext. Unlike his approach in *Vile Bodies*, he does not mock these interpretations but instead clearly presents the influence they have on others. Because of readers' interpretations of their experience, he even attempts to create a new experience. Although he probably knew that most people would only backtrack as far as Tennyson in trying to understand his use of Malory's quest motifs, he laid out a new approach. For example, he appropriates Arthurian names and repurposes them such that they no longer denote the romantic flowery pictures that Tennyson famously conveyed. While this point can pertain to Waugh's repurposing of many Arthurian names, it is the repurposing of Galahad that is most significant. Tony and Brenda regard it as a horrible room while his cousin Teddy considers it fine. When Tony finally meets Mr. Todd at the end of the novel, Mr. Todd's reaction to Dickens shows that much of the novel is a depiction of people satisfied with mediocre, superficial, and static interpretations of literature. Mr. Todd weeps over passages in *Little Dorrit* yet finds no problem keeping Tony as his prisoner. In the end Waugh seems to suggest that we must all steer clear of weak and superficial interpretations lest we limit ourselves to a rut of insignificance and get everyone else stuck with us.

By way of his short story "Out of Depth" and his novella *Love Among the Ruins*, Waugh depicts the dangers associated with extreme reactions to intertextuality. Rip Van Winkle of "Out of Depth" occupies the same superficial seemingly immature character of Irving's tale. By finding himself among Waugh's own characters he appears as nothing but a name. In the original story, Rip is focused mainly on entertainment. Intertext, therefore, has just merely become an object, unseen, unappreciated, and undervalued. The

same holds true for the old Shakespeare book the black man tries to read to him once he is in the future. To the “educated” man, reading the passages the book is nothing more than an expression of the desire to communicate. It, however, is not communication. The intertext, the hypotext, as noted through the above example, has lost value. As an intertext with no value it becomes a source of friction, a difference between Rip and the others. It is not a bridge builder. It fails to engage dialogue and, therefore, fails to reveal personality. It is the Mass at the end of the story, with words that come directly from the Catholic Liturgy that reveal the successful function of an intertext. Intertext is not a means of exclusion but instead a means of inclusion. “Out of Depth” reveals that intertext must speak to the learned and the unlearned. It must not intimidate the reader but instead work for the readers. Through Rip’s experience, Waugh proposes that intertext must enhance communication not make miscommunication more apparent.

Yet, Waugh recognizes that the use of intertext to unite can also be misused to unite people into a collective apathy through the over-adulation of the arts. From the outset of *Love Among the Ruins* it is obvious that Waugh warns of a universal stagnant consensus on certain hypotexts. When the story begins with a “Tennysonian night” in a world whose weather is created by the government, there is no room for spontaneity or uniqueness. Even the usage of “Tennysonian night” suggests readers should comprehend what a Tennysonian night implies and perhaps even revere Tennyson. No differing opinion of Tennyson is permitted. This future world’s high regard for only two artists, Picasso and Legers, which is conditioned from a young age, demonstrates that this utopian government has usurped the right of subjectivity. As much as readers love a renegade who fights the current and refuses to relinquish his subjectivity, there is a

danger in liking intertext merely because it is different. Miles falls prey to this. He is immediately attracted to the unusual. *Unusual*, as shown in Waugh's own writings, does not mean *good*. Miles finds Clara attractive because she is different. Everything about her is different: her cups, her paintings, and her face.

It is through the intertext that we find the barrier to real connection and communication. The "Tennysonian night" is accepted by all but understood by none. Shakespeare, too, is accepted in that his words are spoken by Miles and heard by Clara. However, in a world where Shakespeare is no longer studied, no longer revered, and no longer regarded, the oral recitation, as in "Out of Depth" here means nothing and communicates nothing. It is non-existent except perhaps to the readers who are able to recognize its meaning and analyze its place. In this case, however, uniqueness supersedes message. Meaning has vanished. Art is dead. By coupling his story with Huxley's *Brave New World*, in which all art has been eradicated, it becomes apparent that art in *Love Among the Ruins* is merely a function of the state. In many ways the art promoted in this story corresponds to Robbe-Grillet's assessment that art "only survive[s] to the degree that they have left the past behind them and heralded the future" (10). Waugh reveals that in losing the culture that helped create the art runs the danger of promoting meaninglessness. "Art cannot be reduced to the status of a means in the service of a cause," according to Robbe-Grillet (37). This is what occurs in *Love Among the Ruins*. The cause is yielding and promoting the future and the means by which to do that is to create incommunicable art or art that has lost the means of communication. *Unique* and *significant* do not equate. This, Waugh agrees, is the danger of modernity. Everyone

wants that which is new; but, without application and communication to real life, newness is useless. It is the reference to Huxley that forces application.

In the end it isn't modern thought that upsets Waugh but the blind love of modern thought, an unexamined love. What Waugh sees from the moderns is the much spoken of fragmentation. Everything is fragmented in all realms of the arts due to the inability to easily comprehend the meaning and purpose of life amid suffering. Fragmentation, even Waugh would agree, is a valid means of expression. This expression and the meaning behind it, however, must be developed through thought. It is not enough to merely embrace every artistic example of fragmentation merely because it depicts the sufferings and despair of the age. Waugh's *Love Among the Ruins* shows that unfortunately and all too often fragmentation is embraced without development. Waugh, himself is not innocent in this respect. He, too, fell blindly for the use of modern fragmentation as shown in his essay "In Defense of Cubism," which he wrote at thirteen years of age in an attempt to mimic the thought of his older brother's girlfriend, with whom he had become enamored. In his defense he was thirteen and in love. Such defense, however, isn't a defense at all but a profession of blind allegiance to a school of thought. *Love Among the Ruins* is an attempt to eradicate the unexamined and unanalyzed adulation of arts. Such reaction to the arts is, indeed, dangerous, and as in the case of Clara, makes men the slaves of art instead of beneficiaries.

Furthermore, *Love Among the Ruins* reveals that the readers are always the masters of the intertext whether or not they are acquainted with the hypotext. This is yet another reason *Brave New World* is alluded to but not mentioned: one need not be familiar with an intertext to understand and recognize its value. How can this be? This

can occur because intertext is visible through universal themes that need not always be attached to specifically named hypotexts. They, therefore, welcome thought and discussion from all. Over time, Waugh included more minds into the great intertextual debate.

In what he considered his masterpiece, *Brideshead Revisited*, Waugh begins to rebuild upon the aforementioned fragments. Yet, the fragments are important and must remain. They are indeed, as Waugh, finally begins to admit, the foundation for the literature and arts that will follow. Recall Anthony Blanche loudly and drunkenly reciting T. S. Eliot to the group is headed to the river. His recitation is not similar to the numerous recitations still required by high school English teachers of portions of “The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock” or sections of *The Waste Land*. While maintaining the oral life of literature is important, the import disappears if it is not coupled with an understanding or application to real life. They become dead words.

With *Brideshead Revisited*, Waugh applies Eliot’s poem to humanity making it both understandable and approachable. This application of Eliot requires a response. Waugh relinquishes the role as a comic laughing at modernity and takes up the role of sympathizer. As such he attempts to find an answer for the fragmented society he sees in the art around him. What he strives for is an answer, a dialogue, not a solution that cancels out this fragmented art. In creating this solution he creatively dialogues with Eliot. Indeed, regarding intertextuality Eliot and Waugh held the same views and explained those views with the same images. In 1929 Waugh wished that amateur writers would get it into their heads that novel writing is a highly skilled and laborious trade” (73). As he continues, his advice transforms into a guide through which to experience

literature as a whole. “One has for one’s raw material every single thing one has ever seen or heard or felt, and,” he continues

one has to go over that vast, smouldering rubbish-heap of experience, half stifled by the fumes and dust, scraping and delving until one finds a few discarded valuables. Then one has to assemble these tarnished and dented fragments, polish them, set them in order and try to make a coherent and significant arrangement of them. It is not merely a matter of filling up a dust-bin haphazard and emptying it out again in another place.

(*“People Who Want to Sue Me”* 73)

Writing is a conscientious detailed task that necessitates labor focused on achieving a particular composition. Undoubtedly much of the “smouldering rubbish-heap” consists of the words and works of a variety of authors. As such the composition can only be appreciated when its pieces, its intertextuality, is appreciated.

Interestingly and fittingly, Waugh echoes T. S. Eliot’s own theory on poetic creation in his famous essay from nine years earlier “Tradition and Individual Talent.” Eliot writes that “the poet’s mind is in fact a receptacle for seizing and storing up numberless feelings, phrases, images, which remain there until all the particles which can unite to form a new compound are present together” (*Selected Prose*, 41). Although no critics have compared the two professed processes, the similarities are obvious. Waugh and Eliot both describe the mind as an area of refuse. Waugh refers to a “landfill” and later a “dust-bin”; Eliot, to a “receptacle.” In each case the jumbled mess of experience is useless until the right arrangement occurs. Waugh’s process responds to Eliot. He is not merely echoing or mimicking or even discounting or rejecting Eliot. He is instead using

Eliot's ideas as a springboard in describing the work of the fiction writer. Eliot's idea is one of the momentarily discarded valuables that Waugh must polish and set aside other ideas to describe the much involved and grueling work of the fiction writer. Indeed this allusion confirms Eliot's belief that "No poet, no artist of any art has his complete meaning alone. His significance, his appreciation is the appreciation of his relation to the dead poets and artists" (*Selected Prose* 38). A greater appreciation for Waugh emerges from Eliot's words just as a greater appreciation for Eliot's emerges from Waugh's.

He puts into practice this mode of writing when he transstylizes *Brideshead*. Both *The Waste Land* and *Brideshead* are attempts at creating something new and whole to heal the fragmented world. Waugh's use of Eliot's poem exemplifies the necessity of rebuilding not only art but also society. Ryder embarks on a journey that lasts the entire novel and follows the footsteps of the quester in *The Waste Land* but does not mimic earlier questers. The transtylization of *Brideshead Revisited*, the move from poem to story, clarifies for the first time Waugh's admission that there are those who can express the angst of modern times better than himself. While he was never opposed to modern literature, it is in *Brideshead Revisited* that he acknowledges and embraces the opportunity to let the moderns teach him. He was always an admirer of Eliot, but the transvaluation of *The Waste Land* through the changing of the genre puts a single person at the center of the journey. He has lost the satire, the name-dropping, and the joke cracking at the expense of modernity to tell the story of a man (and at the same time many men) on a search for meaning. The success of this search requires human connection. Ryder relies on the Marchmain family, and Waugh relies on Eliot. Neither the narrator nor Waugh can create or reach a promised land, happiness, or meaning

without the help of the modern conversation. This is a far cry from “Out of Depth,” a similar (albeit propagandist) story. Yet, it ends with the same answer, with the presence of Christ in the Eucharist. The difference, however, is that Waugh and Ryder allow modernity and the archetype of literature of the time to lead. Ultimately, the intertext of *Brideshead* steers Ryder to the end of his journey in which, although alone in the chapel, he is surrounded by a million intertextual guides and friends.

Who better to aid Waugh than T. S. Eliot, a man similar to Waugh both in values and morals, who was also regarded as guarded, hot headed, and cantankerous. Waugh’s references naturally begin with Eliot’s “Tradition and Individual Talent.” Waugh, alone however, springboards off of Eliot’s essay to express the fact that it neither tradition nor individual talent, as important as they are, that brings about progress. It is instead, as the case of Charles Ryder suggests, the ability to step beyond one’s desires, one’s preferences, and one’s life to experience the life of the other or others that makes art, any art, worthwhile.

With *The Ordeal of Gilbert Pinfold*, Waugh flings the door to communication wide open by acknowledging his own fallibility. Through all his underlying critique of the decay of literature in society, he finds himself and recognizes himself in error. This is not just merely the recognition of himself as a cantankerous old curmudgeon. His desire is to improve. *Ordeal* reveals that the sins of cultural decay he commented often about were sins that he himself committed. He had been using allusions as a means to restore to memory the forgotten greats. In reality, his own inability to live in the present and recognize that the solution to reviving literature is not merely a matter of knowing the past, but applying the past to present condition.

The use of Joyce's *Ulysses* in *Ordeal* is an application, a way of putting a name—even a face—to the turmoil of his own modern quest. While his emphasis is on Joyce, Waugh finally combines Eliot, Shakespeare, Joyce, and himself and applies the mixture of all of these great writers to his experience on the boat. Ultimately, this is the point of literature. We should not sit down and hash out meaning from all that we have ever read. Instead we need to allow that, in moments of sanity or insanity, what we have read comes back to us and reminds us that we are humans and works in progress. In this way it is quite apparent that we do not have to be literary scholars to reap the benefits of literature. We must only be open to the malleability of the literature and changing of the times. We must, in other words, be humble or literature will not be for us.

Through the intertextuality found in his works, Evelyn Waugh attempts to be a cultural resuscitator. Many of us remember, as children, hearing of the Dark Ages and imagining a dismal, culturally dead society, only to discover later that there were scribes diligently copying and preserving literature. While libraries were burnt and fewer great works were created, scribes, working in silence, maintained the voice of authors past. Waugh felt he lived in a time akin to the Dark Ages. As scholars point out, Waugh viewed the modern world skeptically. He, according to Selina Hastings “regarded the modern age with distaste (224). He was “vexed” about “modernism and modernity” (Greenberg 251). Donat Gallagher regards him as a “conservative rebel” in a “modern and liberal era” (40). According to Gallagher Waugh’s many articles prove that he “knows all about the current fashion—but is opposed to it” (112) as especially shown in the articles of “Political Decade” in which Waugh takes on many modern political and social injustices (151-285). He felt that the world had fallen into chaos and was headed

to a place not unlike the primitive atmosphere of “Out of Depth.” He, however, becomes a modern scribe by preserving old literature through the creation of new. Believing himself to be in a time of cultural decline Waugh invests his work with voice of previous authors but also allows them to engage in the literary conversations of the present.

Yet while this was done consciously and meticulously as my dissertation proves, his answer to cultural decay was simple: to humbly cherish and know the humanities and to analyze his works and to recognize and acknowledge their hypotexts. However, he would never have consciously thought about the terms of intertextuality I have used in this dissertation. Indeed, according to the late Waugh Scholar John Wilson, “Waugh wouldn’t give two hoots about intertextual theory. He would quickly absorb it (indeed he understood it even before it was theorized) and immediately dismiss it as the inarticulate attempts of scholars to state the obvious, ponderously and unpleasantly (and unintelligibly)” (Email). Waugh would have dismissed the theorizing of intertextuality not because it was unimportant but because it seems to work against the main point of intertextuality that he grew to faithfully understand. He ultimately understood the use of intertextuality not as means to express his intelligence but, instead, as the means by which to humbly recognize the intelligence of others. Others, he eventually learned after decades, often could say what he wanted to say better than he. They could even say better things than he. Ultimately Waugh’s intertextual evolution teaches us that we do not merely “read to know we are not alone,” as C. S. Lewis is believed to have said; instead, and more specifically, we read to remedy the solitude of our singular arrogance by fostering a willingness to accept the wisdom of others that we alone do not possess. It is only then that any encounter with literature is hopeful and in anyway worthwhile.

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