

The Political Implications of Bernard's Monologues in Virginia Woolf's *The Waves*

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Introduction

Virginia Woolf's *The Waves*, completed in 1931, has been considered to be the most experimental novel in which Woolf described her intimate, aesthetic vision of life. The author herself regarded this book as her work of "vision," contrasting it with the following novel which she called "the novel of facts."¹ While Woolf was still working on and revising *The Waves*, however, she was well aware of the changing conditions of society from the late 1920s to the early 1930s, when the British Empire began to dwindle, and the industrialized, mass society was steadily on the rise. It is not entirely meaningless, therefore, to examine how the novel reflects her desire to keep up with those changes and to respond to them.² Indeed, in *The Waves*, we encounter scenes of London as an industrial city, and of the crowds in it, more frequently than in any other previous book. This novel distributes the six characters in various places in a developing mass society, and examines how they interact with it.

The Waves consists of the opening scene, seven interludes and the final line, all written in italics, and the monologues of six characters, each of whom represents a different attitude towards life and follows a different course of life. Through the polyphony of these six voices, it has been argued, Woolf tried to express her vision of life and her notion of self. Thus, many literary criticisms of this book have focused on the aesthetic traits of the narrative and the philosophical insights expressed through them. The narrative of Bernard has been considered especially important, since he makes the final soliloquy that seems to integrate all the six

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voices, and his voice has often been thought to overlap with Woolf's. Makiko Minow-Pinkney, for example, sees in Bernard the state of "androgyny," the state of mind Woolf thought to be essential to the truly creative writer (Minow-Pinkney (a.) 146-8).

On the other hand, political readings of *The Waves* seem to diverge greatly from one another according to the way they interpret the narrative of Bernard. Jane Marcus first offered the critical reading of Bernard's voice in relation to imperialism, class and gender. According to Marcus, *The Waves* "investigates the origin of cultural power" in the groups "formed by the British public school and in its values" (142), and Bernard exemplifies "the ideology of white British colonialism and the Romantic literature that sustains it" (145) which Woolf criticizes.³ Woolf chronicles the growth and death of Bernard in this "swan song of the white Western male author with his Romantic notions of individual genius" and his "confidence in the unitary self" (145) from a detached position. According to this reading, there is always an undeniable distance between the voice of Bernard and that of the author. Marcus thinks that Woolf uses the form of a Hindu prayer to the sun in the italicized text of the interludes, which describes the sun as marking its course during the day. Through this motif, Marcus suggests, "Woolf surrounds the text of the decline and fall of the West" with "the text of the East, random natural recurrence" (155).

In response, Patrick McGee believes that there is an implicit critique of imperialism in *The Waves*, but he questions whether it is possible to assume that "Woolf's relation to her characters is one of complete detachment and impersonal dissociation" (635). Instead, McGee hears Woolf's self-reflexive voice in her description of the imperialist, colonial subjects in the novel. At the same time, McGee cautions that the self-reflexivity in representation does not allow Woolf to escape her immanence in the system she represents (647).

In his recent study, Nobuyoshi Ota calls our attention to Louis who carries the image of the colonies and migration, representing the economic expansion of Britain across the Pacific. According to Ota, Louis has been marginalized in critical

debates because what he represents has been ignored by “the geopolitical unconscious” of the other characters in the novel and of critics. Rather than arguing whether Bernard is depicted as a colonizer/imperialist by the author= Woolf or not, Ota argues, we need to see how Louis and Bernard are differentiated from each other and how this opposition deepens our understanding of the global conditions the novel depicts(148-156).⁴

I agree with Marcus that “*The Waves* is a thirties novel” and “it is concerned with race, class, colonialism” (142). Certainly Woolf was not blind to the evils and defects of the patriarchal, imperial system to which Bernard belongs, but Marcus’s interpretation that the author / narrator is totally critical of Bernard may be flawed.

One characteristic of the narrative of Bernard is that it is accentuated by the stylized pattern of “the dissipation / dissolution of the self” and “the return of the self.” That is, he sometimes ceases the effort of retaining his identity and sees the world and life in a different way, but then comes back to his usual self. These two movements in opposite directions work as a set, like the swings of a pendulum, and this pattern appears repeatedly at various points in Bernard’s life, with increased intensity. This pattern, which I tentatively call the oscillating movement, has a close affinity with the pattern Woolf uses to describe her moment of vision, her “Moment of Being,” in which she grasps what she calls “reality.”⁵ The affinity is so strong that it is difficult to believe that Woolf wrote the narrative of Bernard only to dismiss it on the grounds that he is imperialistic or patriarchal.⁶ Rather, I suggest that this oscillating movement, which has been associated with Woolf’s aesthetic vision, has relevance to the fast-moving urban life described in this novel, and that it carries political implications here as well, reflecting Woolf’s own fluctuation between the desire to critique the established system and the awareness that she herself is part of the intellectual elite. In her pursuit of political content of the novel, Marcus either does not take heed of those oscillating movements and other traits in Bernard’s narrative, or interprets them as the sign of the deteriorating Western subject. I maintain, in contrast, that Bernard’s fluctuating subjectivity

questions the bourgeoisie mindset posed by the text, contributing to the overall social critique of the novel.⁷

In his study of *Mrs. Dalloway*, Peter J. Kalliney points out that “critics have found it difficult to explain the compatibility of the text’s political skepticism and the use of modernist narrative strategies” (96). This applies to *The Waves* as well. This paper is an attempt to study the aesthetic practice in *The Waves* and to illuminate the political awareness and concerns of Woolf lurking behind it. I focus on the motif of oscillating movement in Bernard’s speech, examining how this movement is related to Woolf’s concerns about the new phenomena of industrial society and her position in it.

Parties in the City

In Virginia Woolf’s novels, particularly *Mrs. Dalloway* and *To the Lighthouse*, parties play significant roles as places where various characters and the different elements of the novel converge. Parties have also been regarded as important because they help realize Woolf’s moment of vision amid transient human life. When we look at *The Waves*, however, the two parties in that novel—the farewell party for Percival and the reunion at Hampton Court—look much less substantial than the previous examples.

Critics who deplore the “decline” or “failure” of the party motif in *The Waves* argue that the balance between life and death, precariously maintained in the preceding two books, glides toward death and solitude in this novel. Others contend that the industrialized, mass society with its noise and alienating conditions brought about the failure of the communication and harmony among people.

Though I think each of these interpretations has a point, I would like to express some reservations about both of them. First, we should not ignore the presence of the modern, urban life in the novel. Second, when we try to account for the influence of the modern situation on the human mind described in the novel, we should not be too negative.

What separates the parties in *The Waves* from their predecessors is that they

are the reunions held in urban venues of the six people who live in different spheres of society, whereas the parties in the two preceding novels were held in closed, special spaces.⁸ The first party for Percival is held in a restaurant in London, whose swing door “opens . . . goes on opening” (87), through which strangers keep coming in, and brushing by them. When the party is warmed up, it is the roar of London, with all separate sounds of wheels, bells, and so on, “merged in one turning wheel of single sound” (97), that surrounds them and makes them feel “walled in.”

The symbolic movement of the door opening is also used in the description of social / business life to which Louis and Bernard are committed. Louis notices the rhythm of the eating-shop, where “hats bob up and down; the door perpetually shuts and opens” (67), and watches “the common mainspring” of business world “expand, contract; and then expand again” (68). For Bernard, too, his social life is “the mechanism” that opens and shuts, or expands and contracts, “like the mainspring of a clock” (185).

Another reason for the flimsy impression of the party scenes in *The Waves* may be that the oscillating pattern I described above looms too dominant. In the previous novels, as we recall, it is suggested that people should lose the identity of everyday life in order to experience a special moment. Likewise, at the party at Hampton Court, Bernard expressly states that silence falls on the six people and their egotism is blunted (159)—a sign that their minds will come closer. Here, however, the main concern of the narrative seems to be observing how “the walls of the mind”(162), which become transparent, get thick again, rather than describing what kind of sensations are experienced and shared when they become transparent. Even though the six characters declare that they have had a certain consummate moment, the climax and the dissolution of this heightened mood visit the six people at different times, and soon “all the insanity of personal existence” begins again (165). Thus this reunion is eroded by this rotating pattern of “the dissolution of the self” and “the return of the ego.”

These two points I have made above are not unrelated. The novel chronicles

new technologies and phenomena in the industrialized society, but Woolf was not entirely antagonistic toward them. Rather than blaming the changes for rending the old ties of the community, she is more curious about what kinds of influences they exert on people's lives, and examines and records how her own mind reacts to them. The perceptions of Bernard recorded in his monologues, including his peculiar movement of oscillation, are deeply affected by these new phenomena. In the following we will follow Bernard's monologues and investigate the implications of his oscillating movements.

“Must” and “But”: Dissolution and Return of the Self

Tracing Bernard's narrative from the earliest point, we can see how the subject is formed through its interaction with the world outside it. As Bernard expresses it, through receiving a myriad of sensations, the consciousness of each individual develops, just as “the virginal wax that coats the spine melted in different patches for each of us,” and the wax gets “streaked and stained by each of us differently” (171). As one grows, however, the individual self creates a shell around itself; Bernard says that his “being grows rings” and his “identity becomes robust” (186). As mentioned, people live incorporated into the “machine” of the society. Louis as a young clerk observes the rhythm of the eating-shop and feels resentment and agony at not being included in that “central rhythm” of the common mainspring (67-68). On the other hand, Bernard, having got married and got a decent job, is quite satisfied with being “domesticated,” and murmurs “Life is pleasant. Life is good” (185, 192). The life in which Bernard is engaged as a citizen, which he expresses using phrases such as “Tuesday follows Monday” and “the usual order,” is the life that is accentuated and hurried by the word “must,” as in “must act,” “must catch trains,” and so on, and he sometimes asks if he must always “act.” At such moments, Bernard is visited by an opportunity to leave the “usual order” and enter a different plane of existence. Such experiences are called, alternately, “moment of escape,” “immunity,” “moment of appeasement,” “sunless territory of non-identity,” and so on. However, he comes back to the plane of usual life after a

while, because “one cannot live outside the machine for more perhaps than half an hour” (110). Therefore, even though one tries to shed one’s identity and go deep under the surface of daily life, one is drawn back by the call of “But”; “But we must go; must catch our train . . .”(166). In that sense, “must” is the word that safeguards one’s identity and promises a life that is “pleasant” and “good.” As Bernard, watching the lights in the bedrooms of small shopkeepers near Hampton Court and assailed by “a sense of the tolerableness of life”(166), observes:

That is the happy concatenation of one event following another in our lives. Knock, knock, knock. Must, must, must. Must go, must sleep, must wake, must get up—sober, merciful word which we pretend to revile, which we press tight to our hearts, without which we should be undone. (166)

Into this “domesticated” life does the death of Percival crash, breaking the shell of the mundane life. In order not to blunt the shock but to savor it directly, Bernard goes downtown and oars his way through crowds “seeing life through hollow eyes, burning eyes” (110). In the last section he recalls this event and explains that it was a strange experience “to see things without attachment, from the outside, and to realise their beauty in itself” (187). However, such an intense and extreme mode of being does not last long, and “the sequence” of the daily life is coming back. Bernard visits the gallery upon this moment, since he wants to prolong this mode of perception by submitting himself “to the influence of minds like mine[*sic*] outside the sequence” (111), and there he performs his funeral service for Percival by himself. This can be regarded an example of what Woolf calls a “shock-receiving” experience.⁹ At the same time, together with Rhoda’s experience of listening to music in a hall, this represents an urban phenomenon, in which one performs an act of mourning, individually, in one of cultural institutions of the city.

Train Experiences

However, not every experience of discarding the self in daily life is as extreme as described above. In the following quotation, Bernard is aboard a train for Euston. With the observation that London, “guarded by gasometers, by factory chimneys”(79), looks more majestic than Rome, he is flung at “the flanks” of the somnolent city in the early train:¹⁰

Meanwhile as I stand looking from the train window, I feel strangely, persuasively, that because of my great happiness (being engaged to be married) I am become part of this speed, this missile hurled at the city. I am numbed to tolerance and acquiescence. (80)

In the second draft, the train is described as “a long slot-shaped chain of flesh” (516) or “a missile thrown at the flank of some ponderous & majestic animal” (515), and a passenger is “a joint of the caterpillar” (516). In both versions, we find a Futurist-like fascination with the speed and powerfulness of the train, and with city life as a “majestic animal.” Because passengers are part of it, they are “enlarged and solemnized and brushed into uniformity” (80), and one’s wish for differentiation as a self seems to be cancelled. His fellow passengers may not be fully conscious of this condition and they hurry to the gate, asserting themselves again, when the train reaches the destination. Bernard, however, is intrigued by the effect of the train on the human mind, and still lingers in the mood of “indifference” generated by it, when he walks out of the station.

For Dickens and Freud, the train was the epitome of the evil of industrialization, in which you are forced to sit in a railway carriage with total strangers, and your autonomy as a self seems to be violated. This is exactly what Neville feels in the presence of horse-dealers and plumbers in a train carriage (51). For Bernard as well as the narrators of Woolf’s short pieces such as “An Unwritten Novel” and “Mr. Bennett and Mrs. Brown,” however, the railway trip was an opportunity for observing people, and it was not disagreeable. Besides, the experience of riding in

a train, with its speed and the landscape seen from the window flying backward, opens before you a new horizon of perception, in which things and people are freed from the chain of their separate identity. As Minow-Pinkney and Schroder discussed, the Woolfs bought a motor car in 1927, and Woolf described a new way of perceiving things she gained from driving experience, in positive terms, in essays such as "Evening over Sussex: Reflections in a Motor Car" (1927) and "Street Haunting" (1930), and in her novel *Orlando* (1928). In *The Waves*, Bernard is not given a motor car, but similar sensations are expressed about the experiences inside the train.

The image of train trip figures in another of Bernard's retreats from the "usual order." Middle-aged Bernard suddenly becomes aware of the "habitual nature" of his action, and feels as if he sees "to the bare bottom" of life, "what habit covers" (131). Reaching the end of one stage of life (he describes it as "time lets fall its drop") in a kind of middle-age crisis, he is struck into numbness, and so he goes into retreat in Rome, spending "moments of escape" from usual life until he is ready for another stage. In this state, the image of the landscape seen from the train window is evoked:

Here am I shedding one of my life skins Here am I marching up and down this terrace alone, unoriented. But *observe how dots and dashes are beginning, as I walk, to run themselves into continuous lines*, how things are losing the bald, the separate identity that they had as I walked up those steps. *The great red pot is now a reddish streak in a wave of yellowish green*. The world is beginning to move past me like the banks of a hedge when the train starts, like the waves of the sea when a steamer moves. (134) (italics mine.)

We can find similar expressions in Woolf's 1930 essay "Street Haunting," in which the narrator enjoys an evening walk in winter London. Getting rid of "the shell-like covering" of the soul that gives us "a shape distinct from others," she becomes "a central oyster of perceptiveness" (20), and sorts various forms of

beauty (and horrors) sprinkled on the streets. In such a state each of us is not the unified “main being” we presume ourselves to be, but “*streaked, variegated, all of a mixture; the colours have run*” (24) (italics mine). In both quotations, the metaphor of a train trip is associated with alternative perceptions which are gained when the shell of the usual self is shed or crumbled.¹¹

What is still more noteworthy in the experience of the train and of losing identity, however, is that Bernard’s mood of “indifference” generated in the train for Euston extends itself when he walks amid the crowds of London, and enables him to see the city in a completely different way:

Having dropped off satisfied like a child from the breast, I am at liberty now to sink down, deep, into what passes, this omnipresent, general life. . . . The surface of my mind slips along like a pale-grey stream reflecting what passes. I cannot remember my past, my nose, or the colour of my eyes, or what my general opinion of myself is. . . . The roar of the traffic, the passage of undifferentiated faces, this way and that way, drugs me into dreams; rubs the features from faces. People might walk through me. (81)

From the Romantic point of view, the crowds in a big city that brush by you without taking any heed of you are what alienate an individual. Conversely, if every other human in the crowds seems to jump at you, it would constitute Rhoda’s experience. In Bernard’s case, however, when he walks amid the stream of “undifferentiated faces,” just because no one knows you and their features are rubbed off, “like in a dream,” the liberation from the shell of self can occur. As in the first party scene, the “growl of traffic” becomes the continuo that brings on the vision of a vast stretch of time, against which human progress occupies less than “an inch or two,” and he thinks that “beneath these pavements are shells, bones and silence” (81). The prehistoric emerging in the city is a familiar Modernist vision; but then, he is also struck by the wish to embrace the whole world, including all the people:

No, but I wish to go under; to visit the profound depths; once in a while to exercise my prerogative not always to act, but to explore; to hear vague, ancestral sounds of boughs creaking, of mammoths; to indulge impossible desires to embrace the whole world with the arms of understanding—impossible to those who act. Am I not, as I walk, trembling with strange oscillations and vibrations of sympathy, which, unmoored as I am from a private being, bid me embrace these engrossed flocks; these starers and trippers; these errand-boys and furtive and fugitive girls who ignoring their doom, look in at shop-windows? (81-82)

What is meant by this “omnipresent, general life” which Bernard wants to sink himself into? This passage sounds highly ambiguous. The empathy he feels for the people on the street, including errand boys and girls looking into windows, can be taken to be a euphoric sentiment disregarding the social differences. Is Woolf showing Bernard's sentiment as a genuine wish, or is she mocking the self-indulgent sentiment of a young man? Or is Woolf taking an ironic distance while describing his sentiment? We cannot help but wonder.

It is difficult to decide on one correct interpretation out of these possibilities. I also suggest that, in order to examine the political stance the novel takes concerning the issue, the statement of Bernard should be examined in relation to the voices of other characters, which I intend to do in further study. Here, however, I would like to quote the comment of Rachel Bowlby from her article on “Street Haunting,” which I find apt for this passage, too: Woolf is not “making a moral point about the harmony of all mankind,” nor is she “willfully disregarding the effects of social and physical differences.”¹² Woolf is aware of the limit of Bernard's view, and she also knows that it is impossible for Bernard to “embrace the whole world.” Yet, though a slight tone of mockery is discernible in her description of Bernard's wishes and sentiments, Woolf may not be totally dismissive of them. In the final section, Bernard recounts how he was aware that beneath the “orderly and military progress” of social life there is “a rushing stream of broken dreams,

nursery rhymes, street cries, half-finished sentences and sights” (181) and how he longed to be immersed in it; “a thousand faces mop and mow,” he says, in the stream that is alive and deep. There is no mocking tone here, and we may infer from this phrase that, when Bernard wants to go beneath the surface of usual order, what he seeks is not merely to be visited by a vision of the prehistoric, but to embrace all the things and people that exist in the world now but that he has not been able to meet. Then, Bernard’s earlier remark about “general life” might be taken as a puerile form of the same kind of wish. All in all, what I find most intriguing here is that both the familiar modernist vision of seeing life under the eternal aspect of time, and the impulse to project oneself into the “general life” including people in different strata, are shown as the positive outcomes which result from discarding the desire to preserve one’s identity. This is the trait which cannot be seen in the canonical male Modernists whom Minow-Pinkney compares with Woolf, nor in, for example, Woolf’s *The Voyage Out*.

The Roles of the Oscillating Movement

Woolf did not hold the notion of the Romantic, autonomous subject. Unlike those whom Minow-Pinkney calls writers of “the romantic anticapitalist wing of modernism” (Minow-Pinkney (b) 172), she did not abhor new technologies because they destroy the organic community nor, I want to add, because they threaten the scaffolding of the self. Rather she accommodated the new perceptions which new technologies provided, and even tried to approach experiences which entailed the dissolution of the self. Part of the reason for this is aesthetic and ontological. All through her life Woolf had the desire to grasp and express the “reality,” the vision of the world seen without the husk of one’s self. Because of this ambition, she expresses the feelings of “dissolution of the self” again and again in the novel, and in the final soliloquy of Bernard, she tries to render “the world seen without the self” in the “eclipse” of individuality.

At the same time, accommodating new technologies and phenomena in society, and being susceptible to new perceptions or to sensations of disintegrating

identity brought about by those changes, are the qualities presented in a positive light throughout the novel. They are even charged with social and ethical implications as well, since these qualities are opposite to the tendencies of the bourgeoisie to maintain their identity as fixed and protected. As many critics point out, Bernard is educated to become part of the Establishment whose work helps maintain the Empire. As a woman who is outside the mainstream of society, Woolf is critical of those traits of Bernard, but she must have also been conscious that she herself, as an intellectual who belongs to the same class, is being interrogated in the society at the beginning of the turbulent 1930s. By presenting a male intellectual of upper middle class as the final soliloquist of the novel, and by endowing him with the wish to get rid of his identity and to open himself up to the world outside of his milieu, Woolf shows both her critical views on the behaviors of her contemporary male intellectuals and the reflexive allusions to her own stance. Also, in his oscillating movement, Woolf shows her own decision, her own response to the interrogation of changing society: that she does not want to shut herself against the changing society, but wants to expose herself to changes.

Fixing one's identity is related to belonging to a certain group and identifying with its members, and the male characters in the novel exhibit different attitudes in this respect. At school, Bernard, Neville and Louis observe "the boasting boys" (33), jubilant cricketers and bullies who are to become members of the Establishment in future. Louis envies them but cannot join them because he is a son of a banker in Brisbane and is ashamed of his Australian accent. Neville, who is destined to become a university don because his disposition is not compatible with the ordinary life of a citizen, cannot join those boys either, and he feels a mixture of contempt and envy toward them. Only Bernard could go with them if he wished, but in his case, he is always "too late to go with them." One has to become a "pointed," integrated self to insert oneself into a group, but he is so "shaded with innumerable perplexities" (35) that he sees it as falsity to solidify and fix his being into one, definite self. For the same reason, it would also be difficult for Bernard to identify himself with the working class people he observes

with benevolence, or to dedicate himself to the cause of class struggle or other extreme doctrines. So, as in his other visionary experiences, his feeling of solidarity or identification with small shopkeepers or errand boys on the street might not last long.

The reunion at Hampton Court is marked, as mentioned, by the oscillation between “the dissolution of the self” and “the return of the ego.” When the reunion is over, Bernard goes over and reenacts the process of his oscillating movements I have discussed above in a remarkable way.

Bernard watches the lights in the bedrooms of shopkeepers, and imagines with compassion the humble, but pleasant life of a lower-middle class man. Then he listens to the “knock, knock” sound like the joint of the train, which he calls the “happy concatenation” of daily life. Next, far off down the river he hears the chorus, and he remembers the “boasting boys” and his wish “to be with them.”¹³ However, once more the dissipation of the self occurs, and he feels he cannot “keep myself [sic] together.” Yet in this half-sleeping state, he is still propelled by “But we must go . . . must, must, must,” and walks to the station, clasp[ing] the return half of the ticket (166-7).

Onto the oscillating movement of Bernard’s psyche, Woolf projects her reflections on what stance one might take in a society assailed by the surge of industrialization and the masses. He does not resent the alienation in the mass society, nor does he try to distance himself from it to protect his individual self. Trying to break the shell of the individual as much as possible, and dreaming of opening himself to the outside, while not allowing himself to rest on the identification with any group or ideological movement, Bernard totters, carrying his own self that seems always about to unravel. The scholar Marcus saw in him the white male subject which Woolf attacked, but I see Woolf’s self-reflexive projection of herself in this portrayal.

Notes

- * This paper is based on the paper read for the symposium “Virginia Woolf’s Party Space,” held at the 30th annual conference of the Virginia Woolf Society of Japan, on November 7, 2010. I would like to thank the chair, Motoko Ota, and the co-panelists for giving me this opportunity.
- 1 Woolf writes in her diary on November 2, 1932, when she was working on *The Pargiters*: “What has happened of course is that after abstaining from the novel of fact all these years—since 1919—& N[ight]. & D[ay]. indeed, I find myself infinitely delighting in facts for a change . . .” (*Diary IV*, 129).
 - 2 Alice Wood argues that Woolf became increasingly interested in analyzing British society and culture in the early 1930s, and started writing her *Good Housekeeping* essays from February 1931, which Wood calls the “turn of the tide” (32-34). It is difficult to think, however, that *The Waves*, which was being revised just before that, was not affected by her increasing interests in cultural / social criticism.
 - 3 Kathy J. Phillips also argues that *The Waves* criticizes Empire by showing “aspects of English life that groom ordinary citizens to take their place in a threatening community” (153), with the six people worshipping Percival the colonizer as a hero. Phillips, however, sees Louis as the character who shows the strongest impulse toward totalizing imperialism, and considers Bernard to be complicit in Louis’s will to domination.
 - 4 I agree with Ota’s opinion, but in this paper I don’t have space for discussing Louis. I focus on how I read Bernard’s narrative, and I will compare how this reading connects with Louis in another paper.
 - 5 Minow-Pinkney also offers illuminating discussion of Bernard’s “endless oscillation” (b. 80) and explains that this is the trait of the process of androgyny (b. 79-81).
 - 6 Here I have to add that it is not only Bernard onto whom Woolf projected her own feelings and thoughts. Rhoda and Neville also share Woolf’s own fear which she record in her diary and memoir. As McGee says, Woolf distributes pieces of herself in all of the six characters.
 - 7 In this paper, I focus on how we can read the political implication of the “aesthetic” traits of Bernard’s monologue. In order to examine the novel’s nature as a social critique, however, Bernard’s narrative should be viewed against the whole structure of the book. I intend to look at Bernard’s speech in relation to other characters’ voices, particularly Louis, and examine the structure of the novel in another paper.

- 8 Clarissa's party is held in London, but her party is a "magic garden" where a group of various people are assembled; Mrs. Ramsay's party is also held in a closed, intimate space.
- 9 Woolf writes in her memoir about the exceptional moments when she experienced "a sudden violent shock," which happen in the midst of habitual routine life, and says that the desire to put those experiences into words led her to a writing career: "the shock-receiving capacity is what makes me a writer" (*Moments of Being*, 72).
- 10 The cityscape of London with gasometers and factories, and the comparison with Rome, can be seen in Woolf's essay "The Docks of London," the first of her *Good Housekeeping* essays early in 1931. See Wood, 37-40.
- 11 For a brilliant analysis of this essay, see Minow-Pinkney (b.). Also see Bowlby, 209-219.
- 12 Bowlby, 216.
- 13 Here Bernard hears the chorus, "the song of the boasting boys, who are coming back in large charabancs from a day's outing on the decks of crowded steamers" (166), and remembers the "boasting boys" he saw in his public school days. The boys in the public school in his youth rode in the "brake" (horse carriage), but the "charabanc" in the 1920s is more likely to be associated with the bigger tourist coach used for day outings for workers. It might be possible, then, that here Bernard is listening to the chorus of workers returning from their outing and thinks of his wish to be with the boasting boys in the public school, which makes it clear that he does not belong to either group fully.

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バーナードの語りに見る政治的関心： ヴァージニア・ウルフ試論（1）

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1931年に出版されたヴァージニア・ウルフの『波』は、作者の美的ビジョンを追求した作品とみなされているが、同時にこの作品は、執筆していた1920年代後半から1930年代にかけての、工業都市ロンドンでの市民生活の描写に満ち、作者の社会への関心を反映している。本稿では、特に6人の語り手の一人、バーナードの語りの顕著な特徴である、彼が自己のアイデンティティ保持の努力を止める時に起こる〈自我の拡散〉と〈自我の回帰〉の振子運動に焦点を当てる。これは、ウルフの創作の根幹である、日常の生を離れて生の「リアリティ」を得ようとする「存在の瞬間」の美学と密接な関係をもつ精神の運動である。しかしこの作品では、新しい技術や都市生活の刺激に対して自己を閉ざさず、むしろ常に変化に自らをさらそうとするバーナードの態度が、上流中産階級のエリートでありながら、そのアイデンティティを保持しようとする傾向に逆らうという意味で、政治的な色合いを帯びる身振りにもなっている。そのバーナードの姿に、ウルフ自身の、大衆化と工業化の進む社会の中でどういうスタンスを取っていくかという問題意識が投影されているということを論じる。