

**T.C.
ISTANBUL AYDIN UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTE OF GRADUATE STUDIES**



**NABOKOVIAN OTHERWORLDLY AESTHETICS EMPLOYING
BAKHTINIAN DIALOGICALITY IN
INVITATION TO A BEHEADING, LOLITA AND PALE FIRE**

PhD THESIS

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**Department of English Language and Literature
English Language and Literature Program**

DECEMBER, 2022

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare with the respect that the study “Nabokovian Otherworldly Aesthetics Employing Bakhtinian Dialogicality in Invitation to a Beheading, Lolita and Pale Fire”, which I submitted as a Ph.D. thesis, is written without any assistance in violation of scientific ethics and traditions in all the processes from the project phase to the conclusion of the thesis and that the works I have benefited are from those shown in the References. (29/12/2022)

Sepehr Daneshara



FOREWORD

I would like to firstly thank my supervisor, Dr. Gillian M. E. Alban for her unconditional support and critical comments. I do truly believe that without her ideas and guidance writing this dissertation would be very difficult, if not impossible. I am indebted to her not only for her remarkable supervision, but also the things she taught me. I should also thank Dr. Gunseli Sonmez Isci, Dr. Gamze Sabanci Uzun, Dr. Sahin Gok, and Dr. Sanaz Tabrizi for their direct contributions and helps throughout writing this dissertation.

I would like to thank Dr. Ferma Lekezalin for inspiring me throughout my Ph.D. level. My Special thanks go to my dear colleague Artem Kabakov, who commented on my writing and took the responsibility of proofreading. His critical comments and in-depth knowledge of Russian and English literatures helped me overcome numerous obstacles, especially understanding Bakhtin and Nabokov.

I am indeed very indebted to my parents who suffered greatly, but never stopped supporting me. I do know that being away for a mother who has only one child has been extraordinarily difficult; however, she could make it because I was her last true love. I hope I would also be able to thank my father who always had the dream of seeing me completing my dissertation and I also need to confess that without him, it could have been impossible for me to be where I am now. I shall also appreciate my dear colleague, Ms. Amina Zerdali, at my workplace who covered me in several instances to finish this dissertation. She has always been a remarkable friend to me. All my relatives and friends who supported and inspired me deserve appreciations more than just a “thank you.”

In the end, I would like to dedicate this dissertation to my late grandmother whose kindness and care shaped my heart and being. Love you grandma.

DECEMBER, 2022

Sepehr Daneshara



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ABSTRACT

This dissertation analyzes three major works of Nabokov—*Invitation to a Beheading* (2011a/1935), *Lolita* (2011b/1955), and *Pale Fire* (1982/1962),—employing Mikhail Bakhtin’s theory of dialogism, to show how the novelist implements and, eventually, develops Bakhtin’s theory to reveal his otherworldly themes.

In order to analyze these works, this study introduces the gap in analyzing postmodern metaphysical writings using Bakhtin’s literary approach, and starts with the argument of the study, which is how Nabokov uses and develops dialogic literary elements and narrative techniques to, firstly, reveal his otherworldly aesthetics and, secondly, separate his art from social texts.

Later, this study goes through general information on Bakhtin’s theory and its application in some modernist and postmodernist works. The last section of chapter one introduces the general ideas of Nabokov on literature and after this introduction, the functions and effects Bakhtin’s theory of dialogism provides the writer to address his literary themes are identified and made clear.

The final part of this study shows how Nabokov develops and contributes to Bakhtin’s theory of dialogism, which finally results in relative separation of his art—specifically *Pale Fire*—from social texts.

The Conclusion section of this study brings together the results of this study and concludes it with the claim that it could have been difficult, if not impossible, for Nabokov to achieve his literary goal of separating his art from sociopolitical meanings had he not used Bakhtin’s theory of dialogism.

Keywords: Carnivalism, Chronotope, Dialogism, Heteroglossia, Polyphonism, Otherworldliness



**NABOKOV'UN ÖBÜRDÜNYEVEİ ESTETİĞİNİ BAKHTİNİN
DİYALOGCULUK TEORİSİNİ KULLANARAK
İNFAZA ÇAĞRI, LOLITA VE SOLGUN ATEŞ'TE GÖSTERMEK**

ÖZET

Bu tez, Nabokov'un İnfaza Çağrı (1935), Lolita (1955) ve Solgun Ateş (1962) adlı üç önemli eserini analiz ederek yazarın Öbürdünyevi temalarını Mikhail Bakhtin'in diyalogculuk teorisini eserlerinde nasıl uygulayıp ve geliştirdiğini gösteriyor.

Bu çalışma, Bakhtin'in edebi yaklaşımını kullanarak postmodern metafizik yazıları analiz etmedeki boşluğu belirtiyor ve Giriş bölümünde tezin argümanı—Nabokov'un öncelikle kendi Öbürdünyevi estetiğini ortaya çıkarmak için diyalojik edebi unsurları ve anlatı becerilerini nasıl kullandığı ve geliştirdiği, İkinci olarak, sanatını sosyal metinlerden ayırdığını ortaya koymaktadır.

Daha sonra bu çalışma, Bakhtin'in teorisi ve onun bazı modernist ve postmodernist eserlerdeki uygulaması hakkında genel bilgiler vermektedir. Birinci bölümün son kısmını, Nabokov'un edebiyat üzerine genel fikirlerini tanıtıyor. Bu girişten sonra, Bakhtin'in diyalogculuk kuramının yazarın edebi temalarını ele almasını sağladığı işlevler ve etkiler belirlenmekte ve açıklığa kavuşturulmaktadır.

Bu çalışmanın son kısmı, Nabokov'un Bakhtin'in sanatının—özellikle de Solgun Ateş—sosyal metinlerden görelî olarak ayrılmasıyla sonuçlanan diyalojizm teorisini nasıl geliştirdiğini ve ona nasıl katkıda bulunduğunu gösteriyor.

Bu tez, sonuç olarak, eğer Nabokov Bakhtin'in diyalojik teorisini kullanmamış olsaydı, yazarın sanatının sosyopolitik anlamlardan ayırma şeklindeki edebi hedefine ulaşması imkansız olmasa da zor olabileceği iddiasıyla sonlanacağını belirtmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Karnaval Kuramı, Kronotop Kavramı. Diyalogculuk , heteroglossia, Polifinizm, Öbürdünyevi Estetiği



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I. INTRODUCTION

The twentieth century was a remarkable period in terms of the emergence of different literary approaches to texts, as well as many distinguished thinkers and scholars, such as Sigmund Freud (1856–1939) and T. S. Eliot (1888–1965), who helped their formation. However, Mikhail Bakhtin's (1895–1975) theory of dialogism can be reckoned as one of the most influential literary approaches not only because it opened a new horizon to the textual analysis, but also because it influenced many other prominent literary thinkers, like Julia Kristeva and Michel Foucault (1926–1984). What Mikhail Bakhtin tries to show through his theories is the fact that all main genres of literature, specifically novel, are dialogic in that they represent diverse perceptions of reality through the dialogic significations within themselves. Defining dialogism as “a fundamental mode of thought that emphasizes multiple simultaneous perceptions of reality” (Booker, 1995, p. 477), Bakhtin reckons any elements or significations within a text, ranging from the dialogues of two characters on a certain topic to implied significations of abstract concepts, as dialogic behaviors. In general, Bakhtin's analyses entail mostly sociopolitical works, which include both different voices in the form of dialogues on a specific topic and implied significations of diverse ideological codes.

Contrary to the social texts upon which Bakhtin's theory of dialogism is built, there are still works whose aesthetic or metaphysical qualities outweigh their ideological aspects, among which Vladimir Nabokov's (1899–1977) works may be the most eminent ones. Although there exist social significations within these types of texts, the mental, aesthetic qualities the writers of these texts try to express forth are of more importance compared to their ideological or social meanings. Moreover, to my knowledge, Bakhtin's theories have not been applied to these texts, specifically the comparative analysis of the works of Nabokov. Therefore, it is difficult not to notice a gap in analyzing these aesthetic works through a Bakhtinian approach, which only

encourages the researcher of this study to look at three important works of Nabokov, applying, and in specific instances developing Bakhtin theory of dialogism.

As Nabokov claims on several occasions, he always strives to create literary works which bear the minimum relation with their ideological and contextual characteristics. Therefore, according to his claims, he intends to represent in his works what he terms the otherworldly, or what his wife calls *potustronnost*. Although he never gives a clear definition of this term, some eminent Nabokovian scholars indicate that his otherworldliness implies a state where “the concepts of purpose and value lose all meaning” (Connolly, 2012: 159) and instead, the “sense of being somehow, somewhere, connected with other states of being where art (curiosity, tenderness, kindness, ecstasy) is the norm” (Nabokov, 2011b/1955: 210) becomes important. Taking these definitions into consideration, the present study attempts to fill in the gap in analyzing some preeminent works of Vladimir Nabokov—namely *Invitation to a Beheading*, *Lolita*, and *Pale Fire*—through the Bakhtinian theory of dialogism. In line with this analysis, this study sheds light on what functions and effects Bakhtin’s theory of novel provides Nabokov to reveal his otherworldly qualities—love or strong affection separate from any ideological and moral constraints, coincidental patterns, timelessness, his unique conception of imagination and the sublime experiences emerging from it. Finally, this study identifies the ways the significations of Nabokov’s otherworldly themes contribute to the formation of intense dialogicality in the analyzed works, which ultimately help the writer separate—although relatively—his art, specifically *Pale Fire*, from sociopolitical texts. To achieve this literary goal, firstly, the importance and general characteristics of Bakhtinian dialogism in the analysis of ideological texts should be made clear since this study will apply the same characteristics of Bakhtinian analysis while developing his theory at some specific cases to implement it on Nabokov’s metaphysical works.

What foregrounds Bakhtin’s theory of literature, and novel in specific, is its emphasis on the diversity of meanings in literary works while, at the same time, it points to the interrelations of characters and readers. By doing so, Bakhtin’s dialogism depicts how the new set of meanings evolve out of these interactions in connection with his concept of unfinalizability. By unfinalizability Bakhtin hints at the common nature of literary creations, in which the infinite interactions of several elements, such

as the interrelations of characters with each other, the signification of an ideological code or even the relation of texts with different readers with different mindsets, create diverse meanings within the architectonics of literary works. Therefore, instead of reckoning a set of meanings limited to the structure of a literary work, Bakhtin considers literary creations as phenomena shaped by several voices and discourses, the interrelations of which give birth to the formation of new meanings.

Contrary to Bakhtin's concept of formation of meanings, which highlights the creation of diverse meanings through the interactions of some dialogic elements and narrative techniques in literary works, there is a general tendency among many critical thinkers—mostly formalists—in the works of the twentieth century—e.g., F. R. Leavis (1895) and I. A. Richards (1893–1979)—to believe that there exists a set of meanings within the structures of works, without any emphasis on the interactions these meanings have with each other, readers and writers. For these types of thinkers, there needs to be a close reading to identify those sets of meanings within the texts which are hidden within stylistic aspects of a language. In other words, such literary critics reckon meanings as fixed entities or concepts hidden behind different literary elements and language experimentations. They also surmise that meanings behind the architectonics of literature are accessible through delicate and professional stylistic analysis, which must be carried by a group of expert critics. On the other hand, there emerge other schools of literary interpretations which reject the fixity of meanings within literary productions. These literary critics, like Stanley Fish (1983) and Jacques Derrida (1930–2004), think of the different possible meanings a literary text can bear within its structure, and Bakhtin seems to be the most eminent among these literary figures. What unites all members of the latter group is their belief in the plurality of voices and meanings evolving from different interactions in the reading act; that very belief which leads Bakhtin to his concept of 'plurality of independent and unmerged voices,' or to the understanding that of the fact that some characters, like Dostoevsky's (1821–1881), stand to have very unique characterization: "[They] are, by the very nature of writer's creative design, not only objects of authorial discourse but also subjects of their own directly signifying discourse" (Bakhtin & Emerson, 1984: 6). In other words, these characters seem to act as if they are independent from their writers, and as a consequence of these characters' relations with each other and readers, there

spring new meanings, which might not be intended by the writers of the texts. This perception on the creativity of meaning is the core of Bakhtin's concept of the *plurality of independent and unmerged voice*.

By forming the concept of the plurality of independent and unmerged voices, Bakhtin questions the very common idea that novels are entirely authoritative even from the third-person point of view, as Jane Yeh claims:

The third-person omniscient voice is the most wide-ranging and authoritative point of view. An omniscient narrator can enter the consciousness of any character; describe that character's appearance, speech, behaviour, thoughts, history, and motivations; know what has happened elsewhere or in the past and what will happen in the future; intervene in the narrative to make asides, such as comments on the action, forewarnings of future events, or wise reflections on life. (Yeh, 2006: 155)

Therefore, what Bakhtin intends to mean is the fact that novels are always intermingled with the voices of different characters whose characterization changes in relation to the material conditions and social classes they belong to, as Bakhtin states:

... the modes for plotting the story link one character to another not as one person to another person but as father to son, husband to wife, rival to rival, lover to beloved, or as landlord to peasant, property-owner to proletarian, well-to-do-bourgeois to declassé tramp, and so forth. Relationships of family, of life-story and biography, of social status and social class are the stable all-determining basis for all plot connections; contingency has no place here. The hero is assigned to a plot as someone fully embodied and strictly localized in life, as someone dressed in the concrete and impenetrable garb of his class or social station, his family position, his age, his life and biographical goals. (Bakhtin, 1984: 104)

One of the important points that Bakhtin hints at is the undecidability and open-ended nature of meanings in literary texts. For him, a firm consideration of a text under a complete authorial control is doomed to failure. For instance, there are three sections in Vladimir Nabokov's novel, *Lolita* (1955), all of which are narrated in the first-person point of view. The second section of the novel, for instance, is

narrated by a criminal, whose unstable mood characterizes him as an unreliable narrator trying to come up with excuses to release himself from his crimes. In addition to that, the overall reality of events is under question mainly because this unreliability characterizes the version of truth in his mind as well. However, when viewed from a wider perspective, it becomes obvious that the formation of the complete novel is characterized with the interaction of voices and consciousnesses of characters either with each other or within the consciousness of the narrator, Humbert Humbert. Eventually, for the readers to have a comprehensive understanding of this novel, they need to pay attention to the interrelations of the protagonist and other characters as well as the relations the protagonist intends to establish with the reader. In other words, this unreliability enforces the reader to infer the real events of the story through the dialogic presences and their interrelations with all the parties active in the creation of the text such as the writer, readers and the fictional world. Consequently, these interactions shatter the dominance of a fixed, direct authorial intention behind a single voice, and this is in relation with Bakhtin's concepts of undecidability and unfinalizability.

The concepts of undecidability or the open-ended nature of meanings—open-ended because as every individual is in the process of change and becoming; and as no individual can be finalized in terms of his consciousness, therefore there are always messages in the mind of any individual which cannot be uttered objectively and they resist being revealed because of the existence of the same fact i.e., unfinalizability—are intricately mingled with each other in Bakhtin's theory of the novel in relation to the interrelation of dialogic presences. Since Bakhtin reckons the existence of the novel genre in relation to having an abundance of several voices, ideological significations, and specifically the interplay of metalinguistic implications within their architectonics, he claims that a comprehensive interpretation of any text is always on hold because at any specific time and place of the reading act, the reader is under different social and individual influences:

Take one of the most widespread occurrences in our everyday life, conversations about some official meeting: they are all constructed on the transmission, interpretation and evaluation of various kinds of verbal performance, resolutions, the rejected and accepted corrections that are made

to them and so forth. Thus, talk goes on about speaking people and their words everywhere—this motif returns again and again; it either accompanies the development of the other topics in everyday life, or directly governs speech as its leading theme. (Bakhtin, 1981: 418)

Therefore, the idea of the existence of a fixed set of meanings within literary texts which could be objectively identified, as supported by formalists, gives way to the diverse possible meanings (truths) evolving from both texts and the interrelations of readers and texts. These types of texts, in Bakhtin's perspective, are polyphonic or dialogic. Moreover, these versions of truth are always in an infinite collision with the succeeding interpretations. And eventually, any derived meaning is undecidable and unfinalized in the entire novel genre. For instance, this idea of undecidability is evident in Vladimir Nabokov's novel *Pale Fire* (1962). In this work, readers come across four different sections, three of which are written by Charles Kinbote, who is similar to *Lolita*'s narrator Humbert in that he is also an unreliable source to identify truths from his narrations. For example, in section three of the novel, Kinbote, who is the neighbor and the putative commentator of John Shade and his poem, mischievously attempts to reflect his story of the Zemblan kingdom from John Shade's poem, which constitutes the second section of the novel. In this poem, which is written in four cantos and has 999 lines, John Shade gives a biography of himself and later continues expressing the issue of the loss of his daughter, Hazel, and the superficiality of the people surrounding him. Strikingly, in section two, there are no traces of the events Kinbote tries to reflect from the poem, and whatever Kinbote indicates in his commentary section is the revelation of his obsessions with some ideological circumstances. For instance, one of the central foci of the Kinbote's section is the illumination of his own nobility and the power he once had as Charles the king; however, there are no references to such events in "Pale Fire" the poem (section two). Therefore, for a reader to find an authentic understanding from the events of the novel, they need to go through the reflection of all dialogic presences both in the "Pale Fire" poem and other three sections of the story. As a result, in polyphonic novels like *Pale Fire* and *Lolita*, other narrators are given a chance to utter their versions of events through their consciousness. This capability in creating stories with an abundance of voices and contradictory levels of signification, which will be analyzed in chapter two, are the creations of polyphonic

texts in which the different voices of characters and narrators with “diverse nuances of contradictory creeds” emerge (Bakhtin, 1984: 16).

Dialogism constructs the base of Bakhtin’s theory on language and literary interpretation. According to Bakhtin, in the architectonics of the novel genre there are several elements and factors that have very intricate relations with each other more or less, like the characteristics of society and ideology. As individuals in a society are under constant influences from the utterances, words and actions of others or from social circumstances of their contexts, the texts are also under these strong interactions among the individuals and the significations of the fictional world represented within them. Therefore, by coining the term polyphonic or dialogic texts, Bakhtin intends to show the diverse linguistic and metalinguistic features inherited within the literary texts which give birth to the formations of diverse meanings. As a result of these embedded dynamic interrelations, dialogism is no longer a possibility, but an inevitable presence, characterizing the novel genre. This dialogism forms in different manners: between the narrator and characters, among characters, within the consciousness of narrators and characters, and—most importantly—between the reader and the text. Eventually, dialogism encapsulates all the ideological, contextual, historical and individual aspects of all parties, which allows M. Keith Booker to define it as “a fundamental mode of thought that emphasizes multiple simultaneous perceptions of reality” (1996: 477). However, there still exists the gap in implementing Bakhtin’s theory of dialogism in aesthetic or metaphysical texts, as Nabokov’s. Thus, this study will attempt to apply the theories of Bakhtin and their developed versions by Nabokov to examine the writer’s works, whose aesthetics is dissimilar to the texts Mikhail Bakhtin used in his research.

More than being limited to the interrelations of authors and characters, dialogism has another capability in giving birth to diverse meanings when exposed to subsequent epochs. As Caryl Emerson and Gary Saul Morson stress, the most important objective of Bakhtin is to pinpoint this third characteristic of novels, which is the revelation of the fact that “creativity (of meanings) is real, ongoing, and immanent” (Gary Saul Morson & Emerson, 1990: 298). By suggesting this point, Bakhtin means that the long-perceived schools of thoughts and their attempts at finding a specific set of meaning(s) not susceptible to the time and place characteristics

within texts are nothing more than a vain investigation and problematic assumption. Instead, Bakhtin takes the differences of interpretations into consideration and points to the inherent fact in the texts that the differences in interpretations are the result of the multiplicity of truth(s), which are to be different, contradictory and ongoing. For example, in William Faulkner's polyphonic novel *The Sound and the Fury* (1929), told by four different narrators, there is a sentence in Jason Compson's section commenting on the fact of Cathy's fornication: "ONCE A BITCH, ALWAYS A BITCH, WHAT I SAY" (Faulkner, 1929: 198). However, for the twenty-first century reader, who sees sex outside marriage as a very typical fact in everyday life, Cathy cannot be ascribed as bitch. In this sense, what is reckoned as a crime for Jason is simply nothing odd for the present reader today; and this fact is in close relation with the concept of unfinalizability, which was explained above.

Taking these characteristics of polyphonic texts into consideration, we come to what Bakhtin was willing to offer: the interpretation of literary texts and identification of the creative meanings are all dependent on the dialogic nature of the novel genre. In other words, the novel genre cannot be formed without the presences of dialogic relations, which show themselves in diverse ways. In the course of his analysis, Bakhtin finds all these elements within Dostoevsky's art and reckons him as the pioneer of this type of the polyphonic genre. In terms of the plurality of truth, he characterizes Dostoevsky's literature not as single, authorial texts in which the characters reflect the intentions of the author and nothing behind it; it is indeed the opposite: the characters in his works are pretty independent, pertaining to their social and historical context. The voicing of characters is no longer of a one-directional type in Dostoevsky's art: in fact, complex relationships among the characters and the author are unfolded there (Bakhtin, 1984: 7). Regarding unfinalizability, Dostoevsky's characters, specifically heroes, "eavesdrop" the words and intentions of others, compare them with their own, and finally present their intentions in relation to their unfinalized consciousness. An objective example of such an eavesdropping and the words of others, and consequently, shaping a dialogic consciousness for the hero of the story, is the hero in Dostoevsky's novella *Notes from Underground* (1864), where the protagonist's mind is influenced by others' views (readers' here), whereas, he, ironically, has the intellectual capability to go beyond others' views and finalize his

own utterance. This capability in going beyond others' and, at the same time, unfinalizability are shown in the form of interior monologue in the novella:

Isn't that shameful, isn't that humiliating? you will say, perhaps, wagging your heads contemptuously. "You thirst for life and try to settle the problems of life by a logical tangle. And how persistent, how insolent are your sallies, and at the same time what a scare you are in! You talk nonsense and are pleased with it; you say impudent things and are in continual alarm and apologizing for them. You declare that you are afraid of nothing and at the same time try to ingratiate yourself in our good opinion..."

Of course I have myself made up all the things you say. That, too, is from underground. I have been for forty years listening to you through a crack under the floor. I have invented them myself, there was nothing else I could invent. It is no wonder that I have learned it by heart and it has taken a literary form. (*italics added by the writer, Dostoevsky, 1992: 164–65*)

In the preceding excerpt, the sentences within quotation marks are in fact the reflections of other people's voices which are eavesdropped on by the Underground Man. Hence, the protagonist declares that he embraces different viewpoints. Additionally, these reflections of voices lead to the fact that the perception of reality is not equal to the reality itself: reality changes as it is perceived by different subjects (Bakhtin, 1984: 59). Thus, about the nature of ideological creativity, Bakhtin praises Dostoevsky's characters because the fame of his characters never perishes mainly due to their artistic personalities, which create diverse and multiple meanings within the mind of any reader from diverse epochs. All these features, according to Bakhtin, have made Dostoevsky's art great and consequently dialogic in a real sense among other writers of the novel genre (Bakhtin, 1984: 35). However, these claims of Mikhail Mikhailovich Bakhtin are in contradiction with the views of Vladimir Nabokov on literature, novels and Dostoevsky's art, which bears the importance of analysis mainly for two reasons: on a primary level, the otherworldly qualities that Nabokov highlights evolve from dialogic presences and their interrelations; the second important fact about Nabokov's poetics is that his otherworldly aesthetic experiences or qualities contribute to the formations of intense dialogicality in his works. As a result of these literary features, it can be deduced that Nabokov's works stand among the most

successful literary works mainly because of the remarkable role of dialogism within their architectonics.

As the topic of this study is a Bakhtinian approach to three major works of Vladimir Nabokov, the aesthetic assumptions of this novelist should be made known in advance, and this can be done only through the interviews and lectures he gave on different occasions. The first thing to shed light upon is that Nabokov's artistic perceptions are dramatically different from those of the writers of his own era. For him, the value of literature stands above finding any correlatives between the themes within texts and the external world. This nobility of literature is due to his belief that the sphere of literature is entirely different and independent from the ideological settings influencing individuals. Nabokov takes this conception of his own one step further, and believes in the total autonomy of art, i.e., the separation of art from any ideological and social signification. Therefore, Nabokov assumes that art is too noble to represent the ideological and contextual circumstances directly: "A work of art has no importance whatever to society. It is only important to the individual..." (Nabokov, 1990a: 43). In other words, it can be claimed that the value of art for Nabokov stands beyond showing the characteristics and facts of the ideological and social contexts. This novel view of literature is later associated with his claim that what makes literature remarkable in addition to its content (features) is in fact its formal structure or style, as remarked above, used in each work of literature in order to elevate it from among other entities in the world (Connolly, 2005: 103).

Taking the structural level into consideration, the world of literature for Nabokov is similar to the theory of "Forms" proposed by Plato, in which this material world is the shadow of the original Forms. However, for Nabokov the connection of this material world and the otherworld is the style or the formal aspect of its language. Although it is very difficult to find a definition of style by Nabokov, the studies of some Nabokovian scholars, like Trevor McNeely, give valuable insights as to how Nabokov praised the style of his works and in the meantime targeted foregrounding his literature. Nabokov, McNeely contends, uses stylistic elements, most prominently parody and self-reflexivity, in order to empower his language, unlike many realist writers. In addition to this, the most remarkable reason behind using stylistic elements is disguising his inclined artistic world, the otherworld, in which "the concepts of

purpose and value lose all meaning” (Connolly, 2012: 159). In other words, style is the matter or tool for building the hypothetical otherworld, *potustoronnost*, which is the world of literary creation in terms of its thematic aspect. And exactly from here, Nabokov’s paradoxical claims and theories on literature surface. Therefore, at this point of this study, a definition of Nabokovian *potustoronnost* is necessary in order to determine its relation with style. This term is thoroughly abundant in the works of Nabokovian scholars when they intend to analyze this novelist’s works. *Potustoronnost*—from Russian “other-sidedness,” “otherworldedness,” a term, as was stated above, coined by Nabokov’s wife as a synonym to his “otherworldliness”—can be defined generally as an “attempt” (creation) to show a kind of “dreamy elevation of the spirit,” as identified by Julian W. Connolly (2012: 103), in which the feelings, values, and other possible significations are entirely different from the ideological world or what we will describe later as ‘average reality.’ These qualities, as explained in detail in chapter three of this study, signify experiences for the protagonists of Nabokov’s works and appear there through dialogic presences within Nabokov’s works. In order to reveal these qualities, Nabokov uses style to hint at the nature of these experiences.

Nabokov’s conception of style applied to literary works disaffirms both the theories of Bakhtin and himself in a delicate manner, and it bears importance mainly to its relation with the argument of this study which builds itself upon the dialogic presences of Nabokov’s works. Whereas Nabokov praises Tolstoy because of his so-called capability in creating independent characters and because “Tolstoy keeps a keen eye on his characters. He makes them speak and move—but their speech and motion produce their own reaction in the world he has made for them” (Nabokov, 2002: 104), he claims that no written work can be polyphonic because all the characters within the literary creations represent the direct authorial voice of their writers: “My characters are galley slaves” (Nabokov, 1990a: 107). This claim that his characters are his “galley slaves” is a response in rejection of the idea of polyphonism in E. M. Foster’s works made during one of Nabokov’s interviews. In other words, what Nabokov praises the most in Tolstoy’s poetics, as will be further explained below, are in fact the polyphonic styles of the novelistic discourse that Bakhtin puts forward in analyzing Dostoevsky’s art, contrary to his claim that there does not exist polyphonism in his works. Adding

to this contradiction, he criticizes Dostoevsky in a very self-contradictory way for not having developing characters aside from authorial intentions, as in the following excerpt which might target Raskolnikov in *Crime and Punishment* (1866):

Dostoevsky's characters have yet another remarkable feature: throughout the book they do not develop as personalities. We get them all complete at the beginning of the tale, and so they remain without any considerable changes although their surroundings may alter and the most extraordinary things may happen to them. (Nabokov et al, 1982: 74)

In sum, Nabokov, on the surface, refutes all the polyphonic styles of texts; however, when the plane of investigation changes from Dostoevsky to Tolstoy, he praises the latter for the same Bakhtinian features (dialogism) abundant in his works, as in Anna's case in *Anna Karenina* (1878):

Tolstoy's prose keeps pace with our pulses, his characters seem to move with the same swing as the people passing under our window while we sit reading his book... We have thus the feeling now and then that Tolstoy's novel writes its own self, is produced by its matter, by its subject, not by a definite person moving a pen from left to right, and then coming back and erasing a word, and pondering, and scratching his chin through his beard. (Nabokov et al, 1982: 74)

For instance, as in the above excerpt, the main characteristics Nabokov foregrounds are the moments of partial separation from the authorial intention which appear through dialogic phases. He later develops this view and denotes that this independent characterization enters into a unique aesthetic world which has been addressed by him as esthetic otherworldliness, or *potustronnost* by his wife.

Besides questioning the polyphonic nature of novels, Vladimir Nabokov widens his uneasiness with the same dialogic nature of literary texts by claiming that the (average) reality of individuals has nothing to do with the aesthetic world of literary creations: "To be sure, there is an average reality, perceived by all of us, but that is not true reality: it is only the reality of general ideas, conventional forms of humdrumery, current editorials" (Nabokov, 1990a: 131). For Nabokov, as for many other postmodernists, the unique aesthetic world of a writer degrades the so-called

“average perception of reality” among the individuals. It is not the mission of postmodernist art to prove the existence of such otherworldly experience. Instead, postmodernist literature approaches this new otherworldly experience with ontological questions, as Brian McHale identifies: “Which world is this? What is to be done in it? Which of my selves is to do it?” (McHale, 2003: 10) In Toni Morrison’s novel *Beloved* (1987), for example, the character Denver is represented as a human being dominated by her imagination; however, this imagination is not the type of modernist binary one in modernism; it is a constructive and existential experience, which, at the same time, isolates her from the rest of the world:

In that bower, closed off from the hurt of the hurt world, Denver’s imagination produced its own hunger and its own food, which she badly needed because loneliness wore her out. Wore her out. Veiled and protected by the live green walls, she felt ripe and clear, and salvation was as easy as a wish. (Morrison, 2007: 28–9)

In the above excerpt, for instance, the sense of alienation is only soothed by imagination. If analyzed deeply, it will be clear that the episteme of such an imagination is not the matter of discussion in *Beloved*; it is in fact the result of such imagination which matters the most in postmodern literature. In postmodernism, in other words, the way any perceived reality is depicted is the focus of literary production and interpretation, and as a result, the identification of any episteme or epistemological approaches in modernism give way to the representation of possible existences. Extending the ontological experience of postmodern literature, Nabokov reveals the themes of his literature according to the architectonics of this literary movement in postmodernism. Compared to other practitioners of postmodern art, his mastery in depicting his art is complex; however, it will be revealed in this study that the most appropriate means of accessing this new world, potustoronnost, is the dialogic analyses of content and style of his works.

As this thesis will discuss in detail, these seemingly contradictory gaps between Mikhail Bakhtin and Vladimir Nabokov’s are not of an unbridgeable type. In order to show the possible solutions to the issues remarked above, this dissertation will analyze the structure and content of *Invitation to a Beheading* (2011a/1935), which is one of initial literary works primarily written in Russian and later translated

into English by himself. In this novel, the writer shook all the traditional concepts of literary formation; however, the most dramatic literary innovation came with his Gnostic views on the nature of reality and life, which is mirrored in this novel. Nabokov's gnostic views on life and reality connote a different perspective in that the material world people live in is the reflection of another authentic world, or what is commonly called the "spiritual world". Although Gnosticism points out that a thorough understanding of that spiritual world is implausible, for Nabokov some traces and significations of that world are still present in the material world (Conolly, 2005: 238), and therefore, the depiction of those significations— or at least a subjective depiction of that otherworld—falls upon literature.

Pushing the limits of modernism, Nabokov demeans and casts doubt on the fundamentals of human perception from the opening part of his novel *Invitation to a Beheading*: "Comme un fou se croit dieu, nous nous croyons mortels [As a fool believes he is God, we believe we ourselves are mortal]" (Nabokov, 2011a/1935: 1). This subversive deviation from and attack on the long-lasting holistic conception of reality might be one of the cases in literature which shows a clear vision of the modernist world through which the subjective sphere of being—that is "the intuitive "filling" and "transcendent" satisfaction of actual relations or references made within the body of consciousness itself" (SALMON, 1929: 58)—is taken into consideration, and at the same time, the objective perceptions are called into question. In a Bakhtinian sense, this version of depiction is assumed to be "representational dialogism" (Bakhtin, 1984: 65).

For instance, when Cincinnatus is given a chance to meet his wife Martha, he reckons himself not as a "transparent" but an "opaque" being whose world is akin to internal fears, doubts and insecurities which emerge in the form of inner dialogues, and this is indeed another example of his paradoxical claims on dialogism. In fact, whereas Nabokov initially claims that characters are under direct control of their authors, his own characters do not appear under direct authorial intention since their speeches are both conditioned by the environments they are set in and open to multiple interpretations, as in the opening of his novel which is written in French; in this case the alienated world of Cincinnatus and the style of its expression are the initial steps in Nabokov's poetics where he tries to escape from the realm of reality to an unknown

one, open to many possible perceptions by readers. On the other hand, as he describes these loopholes within his consciousness, despite his attacks on the concept and style of polyphonism, he uses dialogic techniques to illuminate the subjective world of doubt, uncertainty and modernist otherworldly significations. Nabokov, after exposing his otherworldly experience of literature in his Russian novel, *Invitation to a Beheading*, came up with an outstanding example of a case in which characters apparently stand outside of the ideological aesthetics defined by normative prisms; however, they hold several polyphonic qualities, some traces of which can be followed in the contextual and ideological world.

In *Lolita*, Nabokov depicts the protagonist of the story in a different state of being far away from the norms of social practices. Humbert Humbert, the narrator and protagonist of the novel, narrates the whole story from the first-person point of view and disregards the foreword note dialogically by revealing his perceptions of beauty and love in a very uncanny way to a normal 1950s American audience. His way of pointing and pertaining to the facts of his life is more of an obsessed mind—observed from the eyes of “bad readers”—that attempts to express an inexpressible devotion to a lover beyond the contextual limitations of his audience’s era. In several direct addresses, e.g., “Ladies and gentlemen of the jury, exhibit number one is what the seraphs, the misinformed, simple, noble-winged seraphs, envied. Look at this tangle of thorns” (Nabokov, 2011b/1955: 5) Humbert, the protagonist, tries to take advantage of his role as the narrator in order to influence and manipulate the reading audience—What is it if not an example of a certain dialogic behavior?!—In addition to this, the way his consciousness is constructed sustains two different levels; of a perverted and alienated character for a 1950s American reader, and on the other hand, of a pluralistic manner whose beauty reveals itself through the sublime affection Humbert has towards *Lolita* and the unique perception of seemingly unrelated coincidences which make sense only to Humbert in a far different way. In other words, as Page Stegner suggests, Humbert longs for “an ideal state that nymphets represent, a quality that exists beyond space and time,” (Stegner, 1967: 110)—beyond Nabokovian commonsense significations—and this view is similar to how Bakhtin identifies these spots in great works of literature: “...a communion of unmerged souls, where sinners and righteous men come together” (Bakhtin, 1984: 26–7). Even prior to these

confessions, the occurrence of contradictions and polyphonies comes into being in the Foreword Note. Whereas Humbert attempts to show his affection as pure and innocent to the audience, the Foreword section condemns him as a real pervert and depicts mixed ideologies out of Humbert's section; "No doubt, [Humbert] is horrible, he is abject, he is a shining example of moral leprosy, a mixture of ferocity and jocularity..." (Nabokov, 2011b/1955: 4).

This collapse of mixed ideologies remarked above is only one example of a dialogic situation which directly attacks the representation of the 1950s American society when the traditional perceptions of sexuality were at their turning point. During this period, American society experienced the most dramatic change in the representation of sexuality in social media, as seen in the lives of Marilyn Monroe and Brigitte Bardot and the publication of Playboy Magazine. The emergence of such shattering views which targeted the traditional pure moral realities is the main attitude of the postmodern era during which the nature of both literary and moral questions as well as means of literary depictions were changing. Moreover, whereas the previous work, *Invitation to a Beheading*, has a more modernist polyphonic features, *Lolita* bears both modernist and postmodernist behaviors of polyphonism through its style, and it simultaneously bridges the gap between the modernist *Invitation to a Beheading* and postmodernist *Pale Fire*—which will be discussed in chapter two of the study—acting as a transitional work.

It is in *Pale Fire* that the final subtle version of Nabokov's aesthetic maturity comes into being in *Pale Fire*. "An absolute text of uncertainty," as McHale claims (2003: 18), *Pale Fire* stands at the zenith of Nabokov's works in representing his "Potustronnost" aesthetic world. The foundations of such a genius incarnation may be rooted in Nabokov's agnostic ideas; and in fact, these ideas are the building blocks of his aesthetic world far beyond the access of publicly known reality. Having most of the Bakhtinian elements of the novel genre, and at the same time rejecting the inevitability of polyphonic structure in any novel, the reality of the novel is put under complex doubt in several points more similar to postmodernist works. For instance, when Kinbote claims that "...the (Zemblan) stuff will be true, and the people will come alive" (Nabokov, 1982: 196) only if Shade tries to create the story in verse, the hierarchy of reality and illusion will change and the privilege of the latter will be

marked. This whole process can be considered as a polyphonic relation of different genres: prose with poetry. In addition to this polyphonic content of the excerpt, the location of it within the commentary section which acts as the reflection of the real poem, “Pale Fire”, offers another postmodern polyphonic feature: self– reflexivity. This matter of postmodern polyphonic reflexivity acts as a second voice commenting on the original body of the poem, and claims that without the commentator’s notes the world of Zembla cannot come into being.

Another remarkable point which is present from the beginning of *Pale Fire* is the question of authorship and the reality of the text which has been left in ultimate indeterminacy, and that is why most of the readers of Nabokov’s novels cannot evade falling into moral and ideological traps. What Nabokov tries to denote is a transcendent fictional order beyond the usual realities of moral human beings, and interestingly enough, this unique aesthetic experience and world can come into being only through interplays of dialogues, as in one case where Nabokov reveals the same strategy he exerts throughout his literary experiments:

I feel I understand

Existence, or at least a minute part

Of my existence, only through my art,

In terms of Combinational delight. (Nabokov, 1982/1962: lines 971–4)

The “combinational delight” in the preceding lines refers to the joy of Shade in blending his otherworldly experiences with his existential experiences within his poem. This combination is also polyphonic in that the significations of one experience enter to the other one and come into existence in the form of a poem.

A. THE PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

This thesis firstly attempts to explore, on the basis of Bakhtin dialogism, the different features of dialogism in the novels *Invitation to a Beheading*, *Lolita* and *Pale Fire*, investigating which functions and effects the Bakhtinian theory of dialogism offers Nabokov to address his otherworldly themes in chapter two. In chapter three, it will be shown how Nabokovian otherworldly aesthetics contribute to the formation of intense dialogicalities in these novels, which finally lead to the relative achievements of Nabokov in separating his art—specifically *Pale Fire*—from sociopolitical texts. In order to do so, these novels' dialogic characteristics will be analyzed in relation to the time and place characteristics of their contexts. This study is supposed to shed light upon the main characteristic of dialogism in Nabokov's poetics, which leads to the creation of stratum of meanings within these texts.

Considering everything stated in the introductory section, this study will base its arguments firstly on negating Nabokov's idea of the nonexistence of dialogism in both other writers' and his own works through a Bakhtinian analysis of his dialogic works *Invitation to a Beheading*, *Lolita* and *Pale Fire*, indicating and explaining the dialogic behaviors of each work in relation to the literary movements they belong to, and at the same time, identifying the general nature of Nabokovian otherworldly qualities, which mostly evolve out of these dialogic interactions. Secondly, this study will explore the specific nature of Nabokovian otherworldly qualities or *potustronnost* experiences and the ways they are depicted. Finally, the conclusion of this study will illuminate the progress of Nabokov's dialogic literary maturation from *Invitation to Beheading* to *Lolita*, and finally from *Lolita* to *Pale Fire*.

Through all these analyses and illuminations, the research will provide possible answers to the following questions: What subtle functions and effects does Bakhtin's theory of dialogism provide Nabokov with in order to reveal his otherworldly aesthetics or qualities in the novels *Invitation to a Beheading*, *Lolita*, and *Pale Fire*? How do the main Nabokovian otherworldly qualities of *Potustronnost* contribute to the formation of intense dialogic behaviors in *Invitation to a Beheading*,

Lolita, and *Pale Fire*, which help the writer to separate relatively his art from ideological and moral texts, especially in the final analyzed work?

In order to show all the above-remarked qualities and answer the questions, this dissertation is divided into five parts. The overall picture of the study is given in this part, the introduction, which, as we have seen, starts with the argument of the study and points to the literary gap in analyzing several major works of Nabokov from Bakhtinian dialogic perspective and explains the general literary idea and approaches of Bakhtin on mostly social texts and how it might be related to Nabokov's rejection of dialogism and the nature of (his) aesthetics. In this sense, the necessity of analyzing Nabokov's texts through the main theory of dialogism as well as the developed versions of this theory by Nabokov will become transparent.

The second part, chapter one, will provide a detailed explanation of Bakhtin's theory of dialogism and the application of his theory on some canonical works. Finally, this section will shed light on the literary views of Vladimir Nabokov and the way he intended to build the architectonics of his works.

The third part, chapter two, will identify the elaborated dialogic nature of Nabokov's novels *Invitation to a Beheading*, *Lolita* and *Pale Fire*, and show how through these dialogic presences some otherworldly qualities represent themselves. By doing so, this chapter will show the remarkable role of dialogism in forming Nabokov's works and indicate the functions the dialogic literary elements and narrative techniques provide the writer to sketch out the general characteristics of his otherworldly aesthetics contrary to his claim in which he rejects the presence of dialogism.

The last chapter, chapter three, will present a detailed interpretation of Nabokov's novels *Invitation to a Beheading*, *Cloud, Castle Lake*, *Lolita* and *Pale Fire*, and show how some specific and Nabokovian otherworldly qualities lead to the creation of intense dialogicalities in his works.

The Final part, the conclusion, will sum up the results of the analyses in chapters two and three, and clarify the fact that one of the most—and maybe the most—appropriate approaches towards understanding Nabokovian Potustronnost is Bakhtinian dialogic analysis which will throw light upon his otherworldly

experiences. Moreover, this final part will provide clear answers to the questions and arguments raised in the introduction, clarifying the inevitable existence of dialogism in novels, and specifically Nabokov's works, and depict the sophisticated ways Nabokov's otherworldly qualities add up to the dialogic formations of his novel. Finally, it will be proven that without the role of Bakhtinian dialogism in his works, Nabokov could have never succeeded as one of the most influential writers of the twentieth century.



B. LITERATURE REVIEW

Michael Gardiner's *The Dialogics of Critique: M.M. Bakhtin and the Theory of Ideology* (2014) discusses Bakhtin and his theoretical assumptions. The content of the book is arranged in a very organized structure so that the reader can get a clear understanding about Bakhtin's general views on language and its main characteristics. This book is aimed at beginner readers who wish to have a general understanding of this literary thinker's views. For example, about Bakhtin's critical strategy Gardiner believes that his:

critical strategy is one of 'rescuing' a given text from the dead weight of sedimented dominant meanings, and to challenge this ideological closure by 'opening up' the text to a plethora of different readings or 'reaccentuations' which 'strive to expose and develop all the semantic possibilities embedded within a given point of view. (Gardiner, 2014: 137)

Another important aspect of the book is the linking of all the above-mentioned ideas with the realities of social life.

Another source that had contributions to this study is Ken Hirschkop's *Bakhtin and Cultural Theory* (1989). In this book, the writer tries to make a very sketchy outline of Bakhtin's main theories on novels and literary works in general by fetching several essays from different eminent critics. All these essays can stand as supporting evidence for the impact of Bakhtin's critical theories over other literary frames of analysis. Among ideas which relate Bakhtin's mindset to other literary approaches, there is the relation of Bakhtin's Carnivalism to both intertextuality and multiple meanings prevalent in texts. In fact, the exposure of Roland Barthes's general views and his remarks on the nature of texts can hold up the proposal and rebirth of polyphonic novels in the twenty-first century. In this regard, Hirschkop argues:

The self (subject) experiences himself and the world quite differently from the way in which he is experienced and perceived by others, and this difference is centered in his body. The subject's position in the world is determined in his body and it is from its vantage point that his gaze embraces a world which he sees as if from a frontier: 'I am situated on the boundary, as it were, of the world I see. In plastic and pictorial terms, I am not connatural with it' (28–30).

The Other, however, has a perspective on the subject that enables him both to see the external body that constitutes the subject's vantage point on the world, and also to see that as part of that world. This is a perspective that is at once radically different from that of the subject, yet also serves to complete it. (Bakhtin, Hirschkop and Shepherd, 1989: 203)

The potentiality of novels in becoming more reliable sources of interpretations and even truth is the matter of debate in several discussions of the dialogic or polyphonic structures of heteroglossic novels as discussed in this book.

In *Rethinking Bakhtin: Extensions and Challenges* (1991), Gary Saul Morson and Caryl Emerson elucidate the clear relation of Bakhtin's dialogism to the main concepts of the time such as democracy in the form of self-expression. These self-expressive capabilities are all supported under the shadow of polyphonism proposed by Bakhtin. In fact, the essays in this book all describe the way dialogism has affected the main concerns of both literary and social phenomena of the twentieth century. Throughout the book, different zones of interpretations which are portrayed by Bakhtin's main concerns are sophisticatedly analyzed, and these zones are later linked to other critics' main domains. Some of the socio-political and literary horizons of Bakhtin are also linked to the more controversial debates of the age such as Freud's Oedipus Complex, and eventually, the role of governments in suppression of these inner and fundamental desires of people is transparently shown in this book. As an example, the following excerpt can be referred to as the revealing of indirect influence of ideology on the formation of consciousness:

... for some reason we usually say that the best novelistic dialogue has those qualities: the unforced movement of common, popular, or natural talk; vivid displays of low (dialect, idiolect, oaths) and high (mutually liberating free speech. It would be shabby to dismiss all images of free dialogue as nothing but ideology, or I-Thou philosophy as just a utopian myth. (Gary Saul Morson, 1991: 174)

In his book *Dialogism: Bakhtin and His World* (2002), Michael Holquist focuses on all the main ideas of Bakhtin's writings and tries to propose a more tangible understanding of his main views. This book gives a clear grasp of the main topics

through its introductory and concluding chapters and bibliography. It also attempts to connect Bakhtin's dialogic concept to other thinkers' views, like Viktor Shklovsky (1893–1984), that have been ignored so far. More importantly, dialogism goes through a practical analysis of its proposed ideas and applies all of them to famous literary works. This book's main feature is the presentation of the methodological outlines of Bakhtin's theoretical assumptions. For example, in one part of the book, the author mentions the main mindset of Bakhtin towards the feature of language in conveying meaning:

The difference between inner and outer experience is not a single difference, least of all one that is merely spatial; and it is certainly not a difference that is absolute. The difference between the (inner) individual and (outer) society is conceived in terms that are quantitative: it is a graduated set of distinctions in the amount of meaning signs convey at different levels of dialogue. Here, as in many other ways, dialogism is very close to the thought of C.S. Peirce, especially to the notion that meaning may be defined as the translation of a sign into another system of signs. (Holquist, 2002: 48)

In the first section of *The Bakhtin Reader: Selected Writings of Bakhtin, Medvedev, Voloshinov* (1994), Pam Morris presents an essay by Voloshinov and Bakhtin investigating the relation of Bakhtin's dialogism to the other controversial topic of the age by Freud which leads to the revelation of the important role of language in the depiction of the inner desires of individuals. In sum, this book's analysis of the main treatment of Freud towards the functionality of language in general is taken under even deeper analysis, which leads to the illumination of his weak standpoints compared to Bakhtin's novel ideas. In other words, in this book, the strife of Freud's unconsciousness and Bakhtin's philosophy of language are contrasted, and this confrontation is in fact the clash of reality and intimidation of inner desires in the form of dialogues. In relation to this point, in one part of the book a note comes to the fore:

...Freud distrusts the surface motives of consciousness: he tries instead to penetrate the deeper levels of the psychical realm. Nevertheless, Freud does not take utterances in their objective aspect, does not seek out their psychological or social roots: instead, he attempts to find the true motives of behavior in utterances themselves—the patient is himself supposed to provide

him (doctor) information about the depth of ‘unconscious’ (39). ... Freud’s theory is a ‘projection’ of certain objective relations of the external world into the world of psyche. What finds expression there is, in the very first instance, the extremely complex social relationship between doctor and patient. (40–1) Every utterance is the product of the interaction between speakers and the product of the broader context of the whole complex social situation in which utterance emerges. (Bakhtin et al., 1994: 41)

Another book by Gary Morson and Caryl Emerson, *Mikhail Bakhtin: Creation of a Prosaics* (1990), stands as one of the main sources for the analysis of this study. In this book, the main theories and concepts of Mikhail Bakhtin are analyzed and elaborated more systematically by a few eminent critics. It introduces almost all of the key concepts by Bakhtin, and in addition to this, it clearly shows their relation to one another is shown clearly. Other important aspect of the book is the providing of a chapter in which Bakhtin’s theories and concepts are applied over some novels. This chapter breaks the ice of any misinterpretation or complication in getting to the core of Bakhtin’s concepts. The final feature of the book which plays a supportive role for this study’s methodological analysis is the explanation and coupling of Bakhtinian concepts to the presentation of psychological moods in literature books.

The Dialogic Imagination (1981) written by Bakhtin is the other principal source in introducing Bakhtin’s main assumptions. The book contains four essays concerning topics on dialogism and one introductory chapter dealing with Bakhtin’s life, his ideas and his own terminologies. A very brief skimming of the book shows its contents dealing with Bakhtin’s emphasis on the novel genre and his new definitions of it. Other important discussions encompass the philosophy of language in general and its unique characteristics, including the transformation of ideas through dialogues and polyphonism. The following excerpt, for example, illuminates one of the very widespread issues regarding discourse of novels in the contemporary age:

There is a highly characteristic and widespread point of view that sees novelistic discourse as an extra-artistic medium, a discourse that is not worked into any special or unique style. After failure to find in novelistic discourse a purely poetic formulation (“poetic” in the narrow sense) as was expected, prose discourse is denied any artistic value at all; it is the same as practical speech

for everyday life, or speech for scientific purposes, an artistically neutral means of communication. (Bakhtin et al, 1981: 260)

In *Mikhail Bakhtin: The Dialogical Principle* (1984), Tzvetan Todorov attempts to divide Bakhtin's theories into several fields, such as philosophical, linguistic, literary, and anthropological domains:

.... the object of linguistics is constituted by language and its subdivisions (phonemes, morphemes, prepositions, etc.) whereas that of translinguistics is discourse, which is represented in turn by individual utterances. To name the latter, Bakhtin has a recourse to a Russian word that can have several distinct meanings: slovo, which somewhat like Greek logos, means both "word" and "discourse" (among other things). And it is obvious that when the term is used to describe the object of translinguistics, it is equivalent to "discourse." (Todorov, 1984: 25)

In addition to these classifications, the book has a very conservative approach to structuralists' views of language which, according to Todorov, are indigestive and vague in many cases. As previously mentioned, while, on the one hand, Bakhtin goes through the linguistic features of dialogism, on the other hand, he contemplates the other remarkable features of this phenomenon in the novel genre in which the rules and even deep and delicate linguistic analyses cannot penetrate into the core of its (dialogism's) process.

Another important source for Bakhtinian studies is M. Keith Booker's work *Practical Introduction to Theoretical Approaches to Literature* (1995). The theories introduced in this book include most of the topics covered in Wolfrey's book, however, this work emphasizes the role of the identification of truth through Bakhtinian theories as well as a very distinct definition of the Bakhtinian term dialogism. According to Booker, the common notion of truth and any attempt to finding the final version of truth (meaning) in polyphonic novels is doomed to failure (Booker, 1995: 109). In polyphonic novels, Booker claims, as each character belongs to a specific social class with different mindset, values and significations, the signification of any fixed meaning in them is always deferred, and this fact in the formation of novels leads to his other term: heteroglossia. Heteroglossia, according to Booker's definition, refers

“not just to the words uttered by different groups in society but to the entire social, cultural, and ideological context of the novel... The dialogue in the novel thus dramatizes ideological struggles in the society as a whole” (Booker, 1995: 11). In addition to this, as the writers of novels belong to different epochs and settings, their conceptions of reality are fundamentally different from the readers of their books. This difference brings up to the concept of chronotope, which is another central term in Bakhtinian studies, defined as “the sense of time and space (and their relation) that informs the work” (Booker, 1995: 114). “For Bakhtin,” Booker writes, “the most fundamental characteristic of a society is the way it thinks about space and time, and this characteristic is inevitably reflected in one way or another in that society’s literature” (Booker, 1995: 114).

The Garland Companion to Vladimir Nabokov (2014) edited by Vladimir E. Alexandrov is another source contributing to the present study. This book, introducing all the works of Nabokov, starts by summarizing the context of each work and then moves to their interpretation. For instance, in the section *Invitation to a Beheading*, Alexandrov hints at a political interpretation of this novel. On the first level, one is able to go through the political significations of the book which entail an “anti-utopian” allegorical reading of the novel by analyzing the “clash between individual will and totalitarian collectivity, which is based on taboos and the principle of voluntary submission and collaboration” (2014: 189). These principles in a political reading of the book, Alexandrov admits, should be analyzed in line with the life events of Nabokov in the 1930s which include his escape from the Bolshevik regime and his settlement in Nazi Germany (2014: 190). Aside from a political approach, metaliterary and metaphysical approaches to Nabokov’s works, according to Alexandrov, should be taken in relation to the philosophy of Gnosticism since Nabokov identified himself as an agnostic. The same could be traced in *The Invitation to a Beheading* in which the main character, Cincinnatus, is accused of having “gnostical turpitude” (Nabokov, 2011a/1935: 72), and according to Alexandrov, this philosophy has very weak relation with the ideological connotations:

Gnosticism is an eclectic religious doctrine... As the word, gnosis, suggests, a type of mystical cognition lies at the base of this teaching. Gnosis, as distinct from the rational type of knowledge, means knowledge which per se brings

healing and salvation. The Gnostic may acquire it by an act of divine revelation, chiefly through the mediation of a Savior or Messenger. Such Gnosis is knowledge of the benign acosmic Godhead; his emanations; . . . the Realm of Light. . . and . . . of the private divine spirit–self of man, which has been imprisoned [in the material world called Tibil, or the House of Death] by the world of demons [Archons] and the creator thereof [the Demiurge]. (Alexandrov, 2014: 191)

Barbara Wyllie's *Vladimir Nabokov* (2010) is another insightful book which analyzes some specific works of Nabokov comparatively. The part which deals with his most eminent work, *Lolita* (1955), sketches the background events during the publication of this novel. Calling *Lolita* his "pure and austere work," this book clings to some claims of Nabokov on this work, among which he (Nabokov) claims that "the danger (of *Lolita*) is the more real to me," (2010: 132), and from here, Wyllie points indirectly to Nabokov's metaphysics which turns out later to be relatively different from his contemporaries. This characteristic shows itself, according to Wyllie, from the beginning of the novel through the narration of John Ray's foreword section: "The foregrounded inter– and extra–textuality of Humbert's memoir is magnified by John Ray, Jr's Foreword which, in the paratextual tradition of the 'Gothic device of the posthumous manuscript from jail', establishes Humbert's crime and details the fate of the story's protagonists" (2010: 133). Therefore, this book can be considered as an overture to the clash of ideology and Nabokovian otherworldly themes which are identifiable in almost all his works.

Among many companions to either Vladimir Nabokov or his works, *The Cambridge Companion to Nabokov* (2005) edited by Julian W. Connolly, can be considered as a unique study due to the relation of Nabokov to different literary movements which are analyzed in this book. For instance, in one part of the book, Nabokov's extraordinary fascination with James Joyce's *Ulysses* bears significance mainly because what Nabokov praises in Joyce's work is, in fact, its polyphonic features which, whose very presence as a literary phenomenon he denounces later (Foster, 2005: 89). The influence of the modernist movement on Nabokov was so vast that, according to Julian W. Connolly, the dark illumination of the setting of his novel *Invitation to a Beheading* has been inspired by the modernists' view of their

environment and the dystopian depictions they have in their literary works (Conolly, 2005: 90). In section fourteen of this book, Connolly, explains Nabokov's aesthetics in detail in order to shed light upon his other complicated writings such as *Lolita* and *Pale Fire*. In explaining the ethics of his aesthetics, Connolly point directly to the dividing line between the ideological ethics which deceive most readers of Nabokov's works and Nabokov's perception of ethics, which should be delineated in advance: "The ethical ideology evolved in Nabokov's fiction can be described as an idealistic variety of rational individualism: moral values are derived not from a vision of a collective good but from respect and concern for the rights of the individual" (Conolly, 2005: 237).

One of the sources on which one of the arguments of this study has been built is Nabokov's lectures on different writers of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries published under the title *Lectures on Literature* (1982). In this book, Nabokov goes through the work of some specific European writers and analyzes their works in terms of their style and content, but more valuable than those analyses is one striking claim of Nabokov in this book which concerns the nature of Gustav Flaubert's ideas of a noble work. According to Nabokov, Flaubert praises the works which have the following noble feature within their architectonics:

Gustave Flaubert's ideal of a writer of fiction was vividly expressed when he remarked that, like God in His world, so the author in his book should be nowhere and everywhere, invisible and omnipresent... in such works where the author is ideally unobtrusive, he remains diffused through the book so that his very absence becomes a kind of radiant presence. As the French say, *il brille par son absence* he shines by his absence. (Nabokov et al, 1982: 137)

This ideal style of writing can be considered as a bridge between monologic novels in which the authors of such works apparently have direct control over their characters and events, and polyphonic novels through which characters gain independence—in this case a partial independence—and hide the authorial voice or intentions behind their voice and deeds. This claim is even in sharp contrast with what Nabokov previously said in rejection of polyphonism: "My characters are galley slaves" (Nabokov, 1990a: 107), meaning that he always has, as ideal writers have, full control over his texts and characters. In addition to this, in another part of his lecture, Nabokov

puts forward the concept of “irrational standards” (Nabokov et al, 1982: 446). This concept, as Nabokov admits, is a literary capability in that good writers concentrate on the details of life and events, and through them they come to the understanding that details are “more alive than the whole of the little thing which a man observes and greets with a friendly nod of the spirit while the crowd around him is being driven by some common impulse to some common goal” (Nabokov et al, 1982: 446).

Similar to his lectures on European writers, Nabokov delivered numerous lectures on Russian writers which are published under the title *Lectures on Russian Literature* (2002). Analyzing the works of eminent figures of Russian novelists in this book, his point of view on Dostoevsky and Tolstoy bears more significance, especially for the purpose of this study. For him, “Tolstoy is the greatest Russian writer of prose fiction” (Nabokov et al, 1982: 92), and one of the reasons for such greatness, Nabokov claims, is the creation of characters who can be the representative of ordinary people of their society, or as he admits, “characters as of people who really exist, people to whom their friends may be likened, people they see as distinctly as if they had danced with Kitty and Anna or Natasha...” (Nabokov et al, 1982: 94). This realism of characters is later related to the independence of characters as well as the plot structure in Tolstoy’s works, which, in fact, makes him unique among other Russian writers. The independence of characters, which is the second noble literary criterion of Tolstoy’s poetics, implies the existence of the same polyphonic features Bakhtin identifies in Dostoevsky’s works, however, this contradiction, which, on the first hand, rejects the existence of polyphonism, and on the other hand, praises a writer (Tolstoy) for having polyphonic features in his works, characterizes the core issue of Nabokov’s literary views. In the same lectures, he denounces Dostoevsky apparently for several issues concerning the characterization of characters in his works. Bringing the example of Raskolnikov in *Crime and Punishment* (1885), he claims that all major characters in Dostoevsky’s works do not undergo any changes in the course of the novels: “... throughout the book they [characters] do not develop as personalities. We get them all complete at the beginning of the tale, and so they remain without any considerable changes although their surroundings may alter and the most extraordinary things may happen to them” (Nabokov et al, 1982: 74). However, for an engaged reader of *Crime and Punishment*, the psychological changes that Raskolnikov undergoes, especially at

the end of novel, are striking. Even this view of having the main characters as flat in Dostoevsky's novels is in sharp contradiction with what he previously utters about the existence of Freudian elements in his works mainly because in Freud's theory characters undergo several phases of change: "Dostoevsky's lack of taste, his monotonous dealings with persons suffering with pre-Freudian complexes, the way he has of wallowing in the tragic misadventures of human dignity—all this is difficult to admire. I do not like this trick his characters have of "sinning their way to Jesus" (Nabokov et al, 1982: 71).

David S. Rutledge's *Nabokov's Permanent Mystery: The Expression of Metaphysics in His Work* (2010) is another comprehensive book on the structure and content of Nabokov's major works. In the introduction part of the book, it has been remarked by the writer that one of the most controversial issues regarding Nabokov's work is finding an answer to the question of ethics or morality in his writing, specifically *Lolita* (Rutledge, 2010: 1). In order to come over this literary dilemma, Rutledge suggests the fact that no moral answer should be sought in Nabokov's work at least mainly because understanding his (Nabokov) metaphysics can offer possible solutions to any moral question in his art. In the elaboration of the structure of Nabokov's works, it is essential, Rutledge admits, to pay attention to the importance of "cliches" because these cliches reflect Nabokov's views on life and the importance of details in life, because "Real life is always more complex, more rewarding, and ... never reducible to a single solution" (Rutledge, 2010: 33). Another topic Rutledge hints at is one important contradiction in Nabokov's perception of author and authorship. Whereas Nabokov identifies the narrators of stories as the representatives of their authors, on some other occasions, as in his lectures, he emphasizes the necessity of the distinction of narrators from their authors (Rutledge, 2010: 119).

In *Nabokov's Pale Fire: The Magic of Artistic Discovery* (2001), Brian Boyd analyzes the "Pale Fire" poem in relation to the other three sections within the novel. Privileging the necessity of a metaphysical interpretation over a political one, he points to the main theme of the work as the depiction of a world which represents escape from "prison of time, personality, mortality" (Boyd, 2001: 10). In other sections of the novel, he points to the centrality of the otherworldly significations in Nabokov's *Pale Fire*, and interprets the appearance of Shade's daughter, Hazel, in the poem as an

otherworldly “solution” to the bitter fact of mortality (of Hazel) which preoccupies Shade’s mind. Then he offers the possibility of reckoning Shade as the illumination of an otherworldly creature:

We might, of course, see the otherworldly role of the Shades as a sketch of a hereafter, but we may also read it as a metaphor, a possibility space, a concrete anthropomorphized scenario of the unimaginable, an image of surprise, an intimation of concealed design, the coy expression of an unjustifiable trust, a hint of what might lurk within the intimate texture of things. (Boyd, 2001: 258)

Brian Boyd’s other work *Stalking Nabokov* (2011) includes a set of essays on Nabokov’s life, works, and a comparison of other major Russian writers such as Leo Tolstoy with Nabokov. One of the important points remarked in this book is the skeptical view of some scholars on Nabokov’s metaphysics. Perceiving his beliefs and metaphysics “superfluous” by many readers (Boyd, 2011: 94), Boyd identifies the main reason of such a reception as not having enough knowledge of Nabokov’s deep aesthetics as well as knowledge of science. What foregrounds Nabokov strikingly from other writers, Boyd claims, is Nabokov’s unique genius “to suggest so many dimensions without ponderous system building, with the lightest and fastest of touches, keeping our imaginations off guard, jumping from one sudden foothold to another, rather than plodding along a predictable path” (Boyd, 2011: 97). Adding to this unique quality of Nabokov’s works, the role of his powerful imagination is fundamental in understanding his art because it functions as both a unique way of seeing things and offering new “ethical consequence” derived from that unique way of seeing things (2011: 97). Another widely accepted idea among many Nabokovian scholars is the wrong perception that Nabokov’s characters lack deep psychological dimensions, and Boyd in this book refers to the fact that Nabokov was not only a delicate psychologist, as shown in his analysis of several Russian and European writers, but also a “psychological experimenter” in relation to different branches of psychology which can invigorate his theory of otherworldliness through depiction of the psychology of his main protagonists who have diverse behaviors:

...abnormal, clinical, comparative, cognitive, developmental, evolutionary, individual, personality, positive, social; in relation to different functions of mind, whose limits he happily tests (attention, perception, emotion, memory,

imagination, and pure cognition: knowing, understanding, inferring, discovering, solving, inventing); in relation to different states of consciousness (waking, sleeping, dreaming, delirium, reverie, inspiration, near-death experience, death experience). (Boyd, 2011: 146)

Nabokov and the Question of Morality: Aesthetics, Metaphysics, and the Ethics of Fiction (2016) edited by Michael Rodgers and Susan Elizabeth Sweeney is another comprehensive study of Nabokov's aesthetics which consists of several essays by different scholars. This book covers the life and literary development of Nabokov similar to the previous work by Brian Boyd. Chapter twelve of this book depicts the gap between aesthetics and ethics in majority of Nabokov's works, and eventually attempts to establish a bridge between these two concepts in his poetics. Pointing to the very common bitter reactions, even from among Nabokovian scholars, about the representation of sex in his works, the book remarks two important reasons why it was difficult for Nabokov to overcome the problems of such illuminations in his works. The first obstacle for him was the common belief among twentieth century people who were obsessed with the Freudian concept of sex and sexuality, and the way they reckoned those revealed in literature as disturbing taboos (2016: 199) which turns out to show itself in the form of harsh criticism of *Lolita* and *Invitation to a Beheading* (1969):

Nabokov lived through, and was an agent in, a significant change in the norms of representing sex in literature, something visible both in the publishing history of *Lolita* and in the development of Nabokov's writing between that novel and the starring role of sex itself in *Invitation to a Beheading*'s complex structure of allusion. (Rodgers and Sweeney, 2016:199)

The second reason is perhaps the most prevalent criterion in understanding Nabokov's works, especially female readers of *Lolita*. Readers either try to view the events of the sexual scenes through the eyes of a specific character or keep a fictional distance between themselves and the (sexual) events in the story. The result of such interactions is the inability to understand the contextual circumstances the characters are actually set in, and consequently, this leads to a kind of misinterpretation:

To find oneself in such a situation is sure to lead to a range of troubling emotions, troubling in a different way from those aroused by looking at a

suicide's footprints in a graveyard. Even observing private families in their houses, as when Kinbote spies on the Shades, can be accommodated within an everyday, if rather shameful, idea of our relation to others. (Rodgers and Sweeney, 2016: 200)

What Nabokov does, the writer of this chapter claims, is to bring these concepts into focus even at the expense of having children involved within such acts, which characterizes “the most extreme statement of [his] aestheticism” (Rodgers and Sweeney, 2016, 201) and amorality.





II. CHAPTER 1. THEORIES

A. BAKHTINIAN THEORY

Parallel to the contributions of 20th century literary movements to hermeneutics, Mikhail Mikhailovich Bakhtin's theories of criticism paved the way for new interpretations not only for classical texts, but also for the literary works following his age. His influence was vast enough to bring together the major figures of literary and philosophical schools from different literary traditions to analyze his role in shaping modern interpretational approaches. Moreover, his influence had had controversial and contradictory claims, from Andrea Lesic–Thomas considering Bakhtin as a “structuralist of the Tynianov–Mukarovsky–Lotman kind” (2001:50), to Tony Bennett defining his entire literary theories as Marxist (1979: 103), to Brandist reckoning him as a complete anti–Marxist (2000: 70). Regardless of all these conceptions of Bakhtin's theories, it is clear that his influence has contributed greatly to other schools, especially through his notions of dialogism, or polyphonism in a general term, and carnivalesque which created new paradigms for the perception of meaning and signification.

What foregrounds Bakhtin's theory of literary interpretation is mainly the way he identifies the long–lasting and core issue of perceiving human consciousness and its representation. According to Mikhail Bakhtin, most classical literary productions suffer from a compositional misrepresentation through which a text seems to represent the direct consciousness, or intentions, of its author (*Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics* (PDP), 1984). This fallacy in poetics is more abundant in poetry, drama and even mythology. However, with the birth of the novel genre, the solid structure of such architectonics in literature shattered, and for Mikhail Mikhailovich,—excluding François Rabelais—Dostoevsky was the first and most remarkable practitioner who brought the new and real concept of polyphony into application. Before Dostoevsky, Bakhtin claims, the main purpose of literature was to put forward a work of art in which the contradictions and even one–to–one direct arguments between the characters

were avoided. However, for Mikhail Bakhtin, the matter of signification has to be shifted from linguistics to metalinguistics encapsulating “speech characterizations” (Bakhtin, 1984, p.182). Linguistic aspect of a speech, according to Bakhtin (1984: 181), treats language as a closed system which can be analyzed as an object. However, the study of small units of language is always limiting in terms of identifying meaning(s), as in the case of Bakhtin’s dialogic analyses, “it is impossible to detect in belletristic literature any really essential differences between a monologic and a polyphonic use of discourse” (1984: 181–2). And exactly from this deficiency, there arises the necessity to view language in a wider context, spotting its relations with the world and language (utterances) of other participants, which paves the way for the presence of metalinguistics. Metalinguistics approaches language not as an object, but as a living phenomenon which has its infinite relations with other pre-existing and existing social and individual (personal) factors, and when metalinguistics takes over the analyses of meanings in any text, one views language as a dialogic phenomenon in terms of its creation and relations within the form of speech characterizations: “Dialogic interaction is indeed the authentic sphere where language lives. The entire life of language, in any area of its use... is permeated with dialogic relationships” (1984: 183).

By bringing up the concept of speech characterizations, Bakhtin intends to cast doubt on the perception of monologism and the way it has dominated Western philosophy. In order to diminish the privileged role of monologic reasoning in hermeneutics, he illuminates the system behind a text and its author. Firstly, Bakhtin mentions that texts—or linguistic features in a broader sense—apparently represent a closed system within which “language styles, territorial and social dialects, professional jargon and so forth” (Bakhtin, 1984: 182) are only some of the characteristics the science of language linguistics can define, and this sole success of linguistics can be achieved only if they run parallel to each other—which, as Bakhtin implies, is impossible. In order for a meaning to arise from these linguistic features, there should be a kind of correlation among these elements within the text itself, and this reciprocal interaction can be resolved when they stand not only to have parallel but transactional behaviors among one another, and consequently, these processes within every single text have different characteristics which cannot be portrayed

through a firmly defined system. In other words, the monologism in the level of interplays of linguistic elements is doomed to failure, although, as Bakhtin identifies, many famous writers such as Leo Tolstoy (1828–1910) and Aleksey Pisemsky (1821–1881) used different variations of the above laid out linguistic elements. For instance, Bakhtin denounces these writers because they failed to create texts which could stand separate from the direct intentions of their writers, and whenever they intended to create a condition to avoid monotony by giving characters different voices, they failed due to the lack of their attention to both the real internal characteristics of language and the metalinguistic presences surrounding them. In other words, Bakhtin believes that what these writers intended to show was more or less “the creation of objectified and finalized images of people” (Bakhtin, 1984: 182). One good example of such an objectification is in the depiction of how Anna and Vronsky in *Anna Karenina* (1878) fell for each other the first time they met each other (Tolstoy, 2014: 158). The third person point of view on page on this scene of the novel goes through a descriptive narrative of how Vronsky felt when he saw Anna for the first time; however, there was not given a voice for the character to express his own senses in relation to the conversation he had with Anna. Tolstoy, seen from Bakhtin’s perspective, stands as a dictatorial imposer by finalizing every single image and word in his novels leaving no room for the discovery of truth through their own recognition.

Comparing the works of Dostoevsky to Tolstoy, Bakhtin argues that the characters in Dostoevsky’s poetics delay the finalization act and lead the reader into a sphere of infinite contradictory significations. For example, in his novella *Notes from Underground* (1864), although Dostoevsky characterizes the first-person narrator, and also hero, of the story with a very strong consciousness way different from other objectified characters, he leaves it to the reader through the internal dialogues of the Man to figure out the truth: “Oh, gentlemen, perhaps I really regard myself as an intelligent man only because throughout my entire life I’ve never been able to start or finish anything” (Dostoevsky, 1992: 18). Whereas he claims in the excerpt that his inertia is the main reason for his intelligence, just a page preceding this part it has been contradictorily asserted that it was indeed the intelligence of the Underground Man which resulted in inertia. In this case, in addition to the dialogic relation between the speeches of the hero, the way the Underground Man addresses the audience by calling

them “gentlemen” (Dostoevsky, 1992: 17) is polyphonic in that it asks for their active participation within his discourse.

Secondly, more than being uneasy with this notion of objectivity and monotony, it can be clearly inferred that Bakhtin was not eager to be considered as a structuralist in the sense that they (structuralists) believed that language must be examined within its own limits. He later extends his ideas on the nature of metalinguistics when he presents his semi–Derridean idea of arbitrary relations by the same token that he applies it to the relation between author and text. Metalinguistics, as he defines it, is the study of “the word not in a system of language and not in a “text” excised from dialogic interaction, but precisely within the sphere of dialogic interaction itself, that is, in that sphere where discourse lives an authentic life” (Bakhtin, 1984: 202), which has an underlying and pervasive sphere that affects a text and its author. As there exists a distance within this sphere, between a text and its author, there cannot be, as Bakhtin admits, a kind of direct correlation between them without being affected by the contextual circumstances of this space. What exists within this third space are social phenomena that influence the nature of perception and the perceiver, and even this space is itself affected by its surrounding time and place characteristics. This concept of time and place in literature is termed by Bakhtin as *chronotope* which characterizes the dialogic formation of novel:

... it [*chronotope*] expresses the inseparability of space and time... We understand the *chronotope* as a formally constitutive category of literature; ... In the literary artistic *chronotope*, spatial and temporal indicators are fused into one carefully thought-out, concrete whole. Time... becomes artistically visible; likewise, space becomes charged and responsive to the movements of time, plot and history. This intersection of axes and fusion of indicators characterizes the artistic *chronotope*.” (Bakhtin, 1981: 115)

As the *chronotope* of every literary text is unique, and the same time/space conditions cannot be reestablished, the significations of the prior *chronotope* differ from other ones. These significations cannot be purely explained through linguistic features of a text which are limited to texts and nothing outside of them. In the development of his theory of discourse in novels, Bakhtin expands his theory by adding other qualities to the mentioned characteristics of *chronotope* by shedding light

on the problematic representation of the concept of ‘distancing’ in “contemporary reality” (Bakhtin, 1981: 7). What disturbs Bakhtin about the representation of the distance between the written time of texts (specifically epic) and their present reception is the way they disregard the different and contradictory meanings a text can carry out because of the same process of “hierarchal” distancing (Bakhtin, 1981: 8). Hierarchical distancing, as Bakhtin claims, gives texts meaning in their every hierarchal—chronological—existence and one of the tangible examples of such a fallacy is the illumination of grand visions in the epic genre through which many modern writers lament about and seek to return to the ancient time presented in those texts. For Bakhtin, these writers reckon a direct and objective relation with the past overlooking the power of the distance laying between them and the original time and place of texts and chronotope. Such a fallacy in pointing the chronotopic features is visible in *Anna Karenina* in the scene when the narrator describes the feelings of Alexey Alexandrovich, Anna’s husband, when he realizes the betrayal of his wife (Tolstoy, 2014: 302). This part of the novel shows what Bakhtin considers as the core problem of most novelists in which they (writers/narrators) always take it as an inevitable fact that they can reach the truth(s) of texts objectively (Dentith, 1994b: 41).

Bakhtin’s third argument on the necessity of understanding polyphonism explains his intricate understanding of human consciousness and how it works in relation to external phenomena. It is worth noting that Bakhtin has a similar perception of consciousness and unconscious presented by Sigmund Freud where he (Freud) highlights the importance of illogical operations inside the human mind (1915). Since Bakhtin was more interested in illumination of how metalinguistics shapes signification, he assigned very important roles to the Freudian illogical and his own (Bakhtinian) dialogic interactions surrounding the individual consciousness. For Bakhtin, language is settled “only in the dialogic interactions (illogical presences) of those who make use of it” (Bakhtin, 1984: 183), not inside the mind of individuals without any influences from the external authentic (dialogic) entity. Even the long-believed patterned and independent consciousness is indeed shaped by dialogical transactions in the form of Hegelian thesis and antithesis dialectics, and it is from there that he develops his theory of dialogism. Bakhtin, imagining a single consciousness in search of truth, puts forward a tangible case of the inevitability of dialogism or dialogic

thinking: “Truth is not born nor is it to be found inside the head of an individual person, it is born between people collectively searching for truth, in the process of their dialogic interaction” (Bakhtin, 1984: 110). To put it another way, he believes that what humans consider as consciousness is formed only through the interactions they have with their surroundings; and without such interactions, consciousness has no meaning at all because it is a state of becoming, not being (Bakhtin, 1984: 287), and this idea has many things in common with Hegelian dialectics and the approach Hegel had towards the formation of and search for knowledge.

The common ground between Hegel and Bakhtin is indeed the concept of reaching truth(s), as the former one does so by implementing dialectical arguments and the latter one by welcoming polyphonic significations (not limited to linguistic and character-oriented elements). Taking into consideration a typical example of a subject in the process of identifying an object of inquiry, it is, in fact, the process and means of that epistemology that matter the most rather than the nature of episteme itself—which is actually vain for them—and for this excuse, both Hegel and Bakhtin ignored any dogmatic excuse, disregarding the real nature of interaction. For Hegel, the term dialectics stood firstly as a strong guard against the metaphysical reasoning in which a prior, unchanging epistemology to which all knowledge must finally refer was presupposed (Dafermos, 2018: 6). However, the ongoing process of life and the change within it did not allow Hegel to accept a methodology for gaining knowledge without paying attention to the same process of change in nature. In order to understand nature and everything encapsulated within it, one has to, as Hegel implies, examine and welcome the interrelations of reality in total and the contradictions at its core. Therefore, he came up with thesis–antithesis–synthesis approach so that humans could overcome the infinite contradictions consciousness face with. In addition to that, this dialectical reasoning would identify patterns out of chaotic and forever–lasting changes throughout the inquiry process.

Using and developing Hegel’s theory of dialectics, Bakhtin interconnects Hegelian perception of knowledge to his own theory of interpretation and proposes the concept of dialogism not only as a way of gaining knowledge for individuals, but also as an omniscient, dynamic fact which has its own dynamic process of signification. This process of signification is in an infinite state of transition from consciousness to

context, from context to text, from text to reader and from reader to other individuals through dialectical thinking. This process empowers them: Hegel to find reasons out of contradictions for the philosophical questions regarding being and knowledge; and Bakhtin to identify the signifying issue of modernity, and to attribute possible meanings not necessarily under modernist authorial implementations. But what foregrounds Bakhtin's approach is, in fact, the constructive paradox in his theory of polyphonism which has two unique features dialogical in their nature: while the term signification progress does not have a clear-cut methodology towards approaching polyphonic texts, neither is it open to interpretations not pertaining to all the constitutional elements both inside and out of texts (Bakhtin, 1981: 184). In other words, any signification must have implied connections with all the elements surrounding literary productions, and in this sense, even facing with and acceptance of contradictions are not only possible, but also necessary to reach any plausible meaning beyond the expectation of authors and readers. One of the most remarkable ideas of Bakhtin is the revelation of the fact that whatever exists within this world has relations with coexisting entities and even abstract significations. Therefore, everything in this world, as for Bakhtin, is in one way or another, in relation with (a) pre-existing thing or participant(s) or both. For instance, a work of art has its own unique relations with the external world as well as its own hidden contradictory linguistic and metalinguistic elements. The linguistic level involves the lexical and sentence structure of a text while the metalinguistic level adheres to the author, audience and the world.

In order to reveal the complexity behind this dialogic perspective, Bakhtin, at the first attempt, classifies the interpersonal forms of communication in the polyphonic structure of novels in terms of their linguistic levels. At this level, he comes up with a very controversial approach of considering everything from a single word to interrelations of sentences as dialogic. At the level of smaller units, Bakhtin highlights the philosophy of semantic position or what he also terms as microdialogue—voices or significations which complement each other within the discourse of a single character (Bakhtin, 1984: 184)—and defines this as the intersections of the other's impact on the contemplation and utterance of one's choice of words. This may be illustrated in William Faulkner's *The Sound and Fury* (1929) in which a remarkable part of Quentin's section is shadowed by microdialogues. For instance, the reflection

of Quentin's father's words on demanding an intimate relation among his children overwhelm and eventually form the interior monologues of Quentin through which he confesses his incestual desires (Faulkner, 1990: 113–4).

These words, as explained above, overflowing in the consciousness of an individual, as in Quentin's, cannot, according to Bakhtin, be formed without an external stimulus, and although he considers microdialogue as an internal polyphony—the formation of any form of utterance or thinking,—its existence should be taken into consideration in relation to external forces. In fact, the reason he praises Dostoevsky has its roots in these small elements abundant in his works as in *The Brothers Karamazov* (1880). For instance, when Ivan's consciousness is overwhelmingly obsessed with other characters' (ordinary people's, in general) words and their actions:

He taunted me! And cleverly, you know, very cleverly: 'Conscience!' What is conscience? I make it up myself. Why do I suffer then? Out of habit. Out of universal human habit over seven thousand years. So let us get out of the habit, and we shall be gods! He said that, he said that! (Dostoevsky, 1992: 554)

In the quote above, the internal dialogue revealed by the word "conscience" is directly influenced by the other characters' deeds and words in such an extreme way that he starts questioning the perception of conscience. This section of Dostoevsky's work is remarkable in illumination of how polyphonism affects humans and their perceptions in the world, firstly, by reflecting the normal status of consciousness when it does not necessarily have direct contacts (in terms of physical presence, not in an immaterial way) with outer stimulus, and secondly, by displaying the bitter fact that dialogic interactions of external realities cast doubt on the very perennial unchanged concepts of consciousness. Later, in the following lines of the excerpt, he implicitly discloses the contributions of humankind to the "torments" in his mind, however; the recognition of the presence of others in the formation of linguistic construction of consciousness is the main focus of Bakhtin's studies. In other words, the source of utterance of the word "torment" is, in fact, the reflection of the previously uttered word "teasing" by another character in the novel because it is explained as an interactional influence of I–other binary—his teasing ends up in the narrator's torment,—and as a

result, it becomes transparent that there would be no utterance at all without a prior stimulus.

When dialogism moves beyond the word structure, the plane of Bakhtinian investigation involves sentence formation. According to Bakhtin, the sentences within novels fall into three major categories with the last two ones having several sub-structures. The first type of discourse, namely 'direct, unmediated discourse' or 'lexicological nuance', is a type of utterance that serves to function as a direct means of conveying a message from a speaker which, as a matter of fact, remains within the frames of monologism. The most prominent feature of this type is the lack of orientation towards any contextual discourse, and supposedly, there exists only one relation and that is between the listener or reader and the speaker or author, the examples of which are identical in different parts of the novel *Anna Karenina* (1878). The most objective example of direct, unmediated discourse is in the opening of the novel where Tolstoy states that "All happy families are alike; each unhappy family is unhappy in its own way" (Tolstoy, 2014: 1), thus foreshadowing the events in the story. These direct messages without any external direction stand as the first category of discourses in Bakhtinian analysis. By bringing this maxim to the opening of the novel, it is indeed the author who addresses the hypothetical audience and foreshadows the thematic aspect of his novel from the beginning of his work.

It might seem as a taken-for-granted fact that all the speeches, specifically in literary works, have the discussed authorial behavior; however, when considered deeply, it will be transparent that there exists no such a thing in a real dialogic world. As Bakhtin claims, this type of discourse reckons a possible one-to-one connection disregarding the outer world or the context within which this utterance is formed. In other words, all the utterances are, in fact, dialogic or at least double-voiced:

... no living word relates to its object in a singular way: between the word and its object, between the word and the speaking subject, there exists an elastic environment of other, alien words about the same object, the same theme, and this is an environment that it is often difficult to penetrate. (Bakhtin, 1984: 276)

The second type of discourse, namely 'objectified discourse,' is a kind of discourse where the objects or referents are introduced directly by giving them the

power of voice. This type of discourse acts as an objective illumination of characters, events and ideas, and the most prevalent technique is using the ‘direct speech’ of characters. This type of speech maintains a kind of hypothetical distance between itself and the referential object as if the characters are acting independently from any authorial intentions, but the fact is that the author has more control over them. As Bakhtin suggests, these types of sentences do not necessarily need to be understood in relation to hidden polemics of characters since they represent the direct thought of their authors in novels (Bakhtin, 1984: 197). However, these direct speeches may have two different variations in terms of their formation in novels. The commonest is when a chance is given to characters to put forward their ideas, and in this sense, stylization is mainly used by authors in order to impose a sense of objectivity in emancipating the events and perception. As illustrated, using double quotation marks for direct speeches so that they could carry out a “direct referential meaning” aside from the strong authorial intensity is only one of the frequent techniques bearing “a certain distance and perspective” (Bakhtin, 1984: 186). This subtype of objectified discourse is also abundant in Leo Tolstoy’s *Anna Karenina*. In *Anna Karenina*, when Alexei is faced with his devastating feeling of disappointment from Anna’s betrayal, he utters a moral code which has more of Tolstoy’s philosophy in finding a meaningful peace in life through love (Bloom, 2003: 82) redirected towards the character, Alexei, by bringing it inside quotation marks: “Love those who hate you, but to love those you hate is impossible” (Tolstoy, 2014: 779). Later in his elaboration of objectified discourse, Bakhtin names this distant and objective style the one with “the unity of the character’s utterance,” but there is also another type with “the unity of the author’s utterance” (1984: 187).

The yardstick by which someone can identify the type of unity delineated above is the type of characters—major (hero or heroine) or minor—uttering the dialogues. Whereas usually the secondary or minor characters have that character-based insufficient unity—because it is completely dependent on the hero’s discourse,—the major characters’ speeches are generally stylized as they bear “authorial understanding” by being “directed toward their own referential meaning” (Bakhtin, 1984: 187). In other words, the discourse of minor characters in direct speech forms is dependent on the major characters’ as they (minor characters’ discourses) are

insufficient in terms of carrying authorial meanings. Considering the example of Anna Karenina, Anna, as the protagonist of Tolstoy's novel, is the most ideal case in representing the unity of the author's speech for example when she reveals the truth of her love relation to Dolly as well as her view of Alexei: "They say he's a religious, moral, honest, intelligent man; but they don't see what I've seen. ... he never once even thought that I was a living woman who needed love. They don't know how he insulted me at every step and remained pleased with himself... (Tolstoy, 2014: 585). It is indeed through her words that Tolstoy signifies the importance of love in marriages rather than any social limitations. In more advanced types of "the unity of authors speeches," literary elements play an important role. These elements may entail the usage of sarcasm, rhetorical speeches, etc.

In order to act as a self-sufficient unity, as noted above, stylization as a literary technique helps the major characters or heroes in order to make their utterances more "expressive, forceful, significant, elegant... to signify, express, inform, represent something" (Bakhtin, 1984: 187). By stylization, Bakhtin means literary stylistic devices that deviate a language in order to foreground it and carry several layers of meaning, and parody, symbolization, irony, allegory etc. are just some of these methods. The clearest example of stylization, for instance, is in the above quoted excerpt from *The Brothers Karamazov* (1878), when Ivan highlights the word conscience by bringing it in the form of direct speeches and questioning the wrong perceptions of humans in a form of rhetorical speech: "Conscience! What is conscience? I make it up myself. Why do I suffer then? Out of habit" (Dostoevsky, 1992: 554).

Although the presence of stylization adds different layers to the structure of novels, the main philosophy of authorial intention still rests behind these direct discourses. Even for Bakhtin, the second type of discourse is a deceptive skill used by some writers—specifically Tolstoy (1984: 188)—so that they may add intricacy to the architectonics of their works, but it must be noted that, if viewed from an authorial perspective, they are "single-voiced discourses," (Hays, 2008: 12) more similar to what Bakhtin finds in the language of poetry:

[in poetic language] Each word must express the poet's meaning directly and without mediation; there must be no distance between the poet and his word.

The meaning must emerge from language as a single, intentional whole... To achieve this, the poet strips the word of others' intentions, he uses only such words and forms... that they lose their link with concrete intentional levels of language. (Bakhtin, 1981: 297)

Finding the similar "stripping of other's intentions" in Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina* is not a difficult achievement. Regarding Levin as Tolstoy in the novel (Orwin, 2002: 186), it is possible to consider his words as the voice of the novelist. This identification of his views, for instance, on the role of women becomes more outstanding when his constant changes of mind is analyzed parallel to his other works, and consequently, though it is beyond this topic, this analysis highlights the remarkable role of Bakhtinian chronotope in literary works. For example, in *Anna Karenina*, Tolstoy portrays his perception of love through the voice of Levin, taking other speakers' words aside when they reckon on marriage and love as limitations to freedom and happiness: "Freedom? Why freedom? Happiness is only in loving and desiring, thinking her desires, her thoughts—that is, no freedom at all—that's what happiness is" (Tolstoy, 2014: 869). This stylistic technique—bringing direct speeches inside quotation marks—is but only a single-voicedness by rejecting the active voice of others and treating them not as real independent creatures aware of their social environment and individual characteristics.

These types of single-voiced discourses are also called imitational in that they objectively imitate the intentions of their authors. What authors do with these texts is to make use of the voicing of characters in order to hide their own intentions. In complicated versions of stylization, authors quit using direct speeches and implement stylization in indirect speeches uttered by characters. In this sense, the discourses of these characters become conditional in the sense that authors cannot impose their authorial intentions directly over the voices of characters. Therefore, there must be conditional stylistic interplays in the formation of novels when the characters are not represented through direct speeches. In order to have a full grasp of what Bakhtinian conditional discourse is, a full and deep analysis of both stylistic and contextual conditions—dialogic interplays—is necessary, and consequently, this analysis leads to what Bakhtin praises the most and terms as "dialogic discourse" or "double-voiced discourse" (Bakhtin, 1984: 185).

The third type of discourse, namely “double-voiced discourse,” has three different variations each of which challenges the traditional modes of narration in one way or another. The first variation, “unidirectional double-voiced discourse,” (Bakhtin, 1984: 199) deals mainly with stylization and points of view. The term stylization plays a very important role for Bakhtin and he defines it as “the narration of a narrator, when it functions as a compositional substitute for the author’s word” (Bakhtin, 1984: 190). Right from here, it is transparent that the role of narrators—second and third-person, and specifically, first-person—dominates most of Bakhtin’s literary theory regarding the usage of stylization. The first-person narrator, or *Ich-Erzählung* in Bakhtin’s theory, has different characteristics in that authors recount their stories in a way that they are aware of the distance between themselves and the narrators in their works. What this awareness brings into existence is a capability for the author to portray characters based not only on their individual features, but also their social and contextual factors. In Faulkner’s *The Sound and the Fury*, this Bakhtinian type of first-person narrative is more detectable in that all the first three chapters which are narrated in *Ich-Erzählung* mode contain both the individual and social factors of the characters; and the author, Faulkner, always had the idea of distance between himself and the characters. For instance, the first section of the novel which is narrated by Benjy pertains to both his mental retardation as well as his social place: “Hush now,” she said. “I’m not going to run away.” So, I hushed. Caddy smelled like trees in the rain” (Faulkner, 1990: 23). In this excerpt, the individual level of Benjy’s retarded characterization is depicted by means of the short sentences he makes and the social level is recounted through the stylistic element—symbol—in the word “tree.”

Stylization is not a limiting technique for Bakhtin. In fact, through stylization, authors implement personal literary techniques in order to penetrate inside the narrators’ discourses, and to do so, they cannot limit themselves to the objectification of authors’ real intentions; in fact, they need to view the literary worlds in novels from inside, from the eyes of characters and experience the external and even internal polyphonies within the fictional contexts. To see the world not only through their perspectives, but also from the characters’ mindset, the discourse of authors should enter into incompatible versions with those of characters. These incompatible and

conflicting exposures create the core of dialogism in Bakhtinian discourse analysis and it is from this point that linguistic features of a discourse give way to metalinguistic interrelations in the discourse of novels. For instance, the authorial intentions of Faulkner merge with those of Quentin in a form of satire to Southern values signaled by the word “Geography” (Faulkner, 1990: 88), and this satire is only one of the metalinguistic features that Bakhtin highlight:

She approved of Gerard associating with me because I at least revealed a blundering sense of noblesse oblige by getting myself born below Mason and Dixon, and a few others whose Geography met the requirements (minimum). Forgave, at least. But since she met Spode coming out of chapel one He said she couldn't be a lady would be out at that hour of the night... (Faulkner, 1990: 88)

In order for a successful novelist to enter the consciousness of their characters, as discussed in the preceding paragraph, they need to get to both individual and social circumstances of fictional contexts, and the more the author achieves this goal, the more subtle this becomes in producing (noble) polyphonic texts. On an individual level of discourse, authors portray their characters based on the conscious themes they (characters) bear in their minds; however, this individuality comes into contact with the social circumstances surrounding them. In order to portray the society (context) of characters, authors must come out of themselves, and only in this way they can see the world not only through their own eyes, but also through the characters' eyes in direct relation with the fictional world of novels. As a matter of fact, the first direct double-voicing of characters and authors arise from this stage where writers have to sometimes negate themselves in order to accept the presence of their characters; and in several cases, these characters may turn out to have different *skaz*—“a technique or mode of narration that imitates the oral speech of an individualized narrator” (Bakhtin, 1984: 8)—pertaining to the characters' personal, social, regional, racial and gender factors. As each of these factors have distinct characteristics, the depiction of those diversities in written form cannot be revealed through monologic discourses. Therefore, different variations and techniques are needed in the representation of voicing of these characters which might be drastically different from the authors'. As explained above, in this case of showing a different character, a writer may sometimes need to negate

some of their own individual and social factors. One good example of such a negation can be the parodistic inner polyphony of the protagonist in William Faulkner's *The Sound and the Fury*, Quentin, where he uses oral speech characteristics of language in the form of stream of consciousness in response to his father's conception of relationships; "Father I have committed what a pity you had no brother or sister No sister no sister had no sister" (Faulkner, 113–4). It is clear from the quote that the style he uses has no written characteristics of a language such as proper punctuation, capitalization or even direct speech quotation marks, and through these skaz features, the writer implements double-voiced discourses. Other than the illustrated examples of skaz, the representation of characters with different regional accents, as in Toni Morrison's *Beloved* (1987) where Beloved's and all the characters'—Sethe, Paul D—language is of an African variation: "I sit the sun closes my eyes when I open them I see the face I lost Sethe's is the face that left me Sethe sees me see her and I see the smile her smiling face is the place for me..." (Morrison, 2007: 213); or intellectual levels as in Faulkner's *The Sound and the Fury* in which the Benjy section is depicted in relation with his retardation, showing other usages of skaz. In sum, skaz is important for Bakhtin since it bridges the gap between the polyphonic structure of novels with the carnivalestic and chronotopic contents they represent.

While the term polyphony has more of structural significations, the term carnival denotes thematic aspects of Bakhtinian analysis. By carnivalesque, Bakhtin intended to show two main characteristics of the worlds novels depict. Firstly, he coined the term carnivalestic literature to point to content in novels which show the complex and diverse social and individual codes, behaviors, significations and, in general, interrelations unique to the epoch in which they are written. Since each epoch has its own unique time and space characteristics, and as meanings are tied to space and time (chronotopes), and the same epoch cannot be repeated under any circumstances, any specific and formal interpretation is doomed to failure, and therefore, readers of novels should always look for the carnival-like interplays of literary and metalinguistic elements and significations in order to reach authentic understanding. Although Bakhtin denounces Tolstoy's poetics, this denouncement does not mean that there are no examples of carnivalestic situations in his novels. Section four of chapter ten in *Anna Karenina* is a very good example of Bakhtinian

Carnavalesque. In this chapter, as the characters discuss the role of education and later attribute it to women, there emerge challenging ideas from different characters who belong to different social classes. While Alexei Alexandrovich disapproves of the education of women and their role in Russian society mainly because he bears an aristocratic and traditional masculine mindset, other voices shatter his (Alexei Alexandrovich's) and consequently, the hierarchal ideological traditions in defining the role and place of women in their societies (Tolstoy, 2014: 767–8). In addition to the deconstructing effect of carnivalescent scenes in terms of questioning the power relations and traditions, they also represent the perception of each character in relation to their socio-geographical factors, which indeed constitutes the main aim of Bakhtin by coining these literary terms.

The second goal of Bakhtin in coining the term carnivalesque is to shed light on the diverse and contradictory interrelations of people—like the participants in carnivals in specific—and their depictions in novels. According to Bakhtin (1984: 21–35), the diversity of people from different social classes and the interrelations among them not only add multiple layers of meaning to texts, but they also upturn the hierarchal positions of power relations, leading to the unfinalizability of meanings as they are in infinite contact with each other. In sum, all these features are depicted best in the polyphonic novels in which the abundance of both the dialogues among characters and internal polyphonies in their minds give space to the creation of meanings.

The other unique feature of unidirectional double-voiced discourse, which was defined partially in the introduction of unidirectional discourse, is the use of first-person point of view or what Bakhtin terms *ich-Erzählung*. Although Bakhtin claims that *ich-Erzählung* enables the authors to redirect their voice and speak from the characters' sides, the same discourse contains a metalinguistic feature which Bakhtin names “a word with a loophole” (1984: 222). This metalinguistic presence in the speech discourse of characters (most eminently heroes and heroines) always reckons a possible change of meaning within the mind of the utterer, and the same possibility is always conditioned by others' words and society. The best example which can fit the definition of Bakhtin's “word with a loophole” is detectable in Dostoevsky's *Notes from Underground*. While the narrator, the underground Man, in this novella can be

considered as a transcendent being with a conscious mind and tone of speeches, he still craves for having a half-conscious state of being maybe because the definitions of those half-conscious people might seem more rational than his (Dostoevsky, 1992: 4). Taking this example on page four of *Notes from Underground*, it would seem obvious that these types of discourses are conditional in that they are conditioned by other participants' dialogues and society. According to Bakhtin (1984: 198), even the most taken-for-granted oriented discourse of *ich-Erzählung* is susceptible to different fusions of meanings. A tangible example of such discourses can be epistolary novels in which they are written in the form of letters, using first-person point of view and always expecting, or at least supposing, reactions from the side of interlocutors. It is also worth noting that while these loopholes are present in unidirectional discourse where the speech of characters bear a low degree of subjectivity in the sense that they do not use diverse meaning-adding literary terms, they are conditioned by the implied presence of interlocutor(s). This possibility is also transparent in *Notes from Underground* where the writer tries to justify his addiction to pleasure in the pain of an implied interlocutor by addressing the other to answer him (Dostoevsky, 1992: 5).

The *ich-Erzählung* feature of the first variation of double-voiced discourse is also used in the second variation of double-voiced discourse, termed *vari-directional double-voiced discourse*; however, the dramatic point in which the diversity of these types arises rests upon all parodistic elements and the styles implementing those elements in the second category. The perception of parody is slightly different in Bakhtinian analysis. What parody does, according to Bakhtin, is indeed the infusion of a secondary layer of narration in order to reduce the objectivity of a text while mocking the original, preexisting voice or signification. In this sense, the author introduces what Bakhtin calls a *semantic intention* (1984: 189) as opposed to the original intention of the narrator, which means that the voices of narrator and author enter into a conflicting phase; however, because of the marked (privileged) discourse of the author, the main stream of events and meanings falls upon the voice of the other, the author. The semantic intention in the form of parodying is visible in the second section of *The Sound and the Fury* where Quentin's internal polyphony acts as a bitter mocking of his mother's voice when she wants her children to be closer to each other: "Why shouldn't you I want my boys to be more than friends yes Candace and Quentin

more than friends Father I have committed what a pity you had no brother or sister No sister no sister had no sister” (1990: 113–4). In this sense, the author does not state his intentions directly through the narrator’s voice. Instead, he implements the parodying technique in order to evade the monologic tone. In doing so, the character is forced to bear those opposing aims and disclose them through several literary elements and techniques other than parody such as distancing themselves from the objective mode of narration, using allegory, dilemma, irony, symbolism, metaphor and all the literary element and techniques that contribute to the creation of meaning within novels. It should also be remarked that what binds all these elements is their ability to produce diverse meanings through a combination of different voices. As a result, these parodistic discourses occur in terms of both style and content. The stylistic parody may be implemented in someone’s linguistic semantic choices such as the use of specific words or sets of dialects, while the parodying content goes beyond linguistic limits and may include individual perceptions of a person or social stereotypes or “characterological manners of seeing, thinking and speaking” (Bakhtin, 1984: 194). This occurs in *The Sound and Fury* where, as Thomas L. McHaney suggests, the whole work is a parody of Jesus Christ’s life in terms of showing the religious failure of the Compson family (2015: 163). Therefore, this type of discourse has a kind of behavior through which “aspirations [of the author and characters] pull in different direction(s)” (Bakhtin, 1984: 194), meaning that they are not confined to any objective form of discourse being directly imposed from the author. For instance, it would be very difficult to find Faulkner being completely voiced in any section of the novel: in Benjy section, for example, there is no room for a coherent subjectivity; Quentin’s section is filled with contradictions of loving or hating his family and society; Jason’s part is doomed to a vulgar Sothern value where sex out of marriage is called prostitution (Faulkner, 1990: 198).

The third variation of double-voiced discourse is the one Bakhtin praises the most among the other categories. In this type, namely the active type, the author approaches the characters in novels as if they are completely independent from authorial intentions. In this sense, the speeches of characters’—both hero’s or heroin’s, and other, secondary, characters’—stay outside the authorial control of its author; however, their roles predict or create the author’s discourse. One delicate example of

such a deviation from direct authorial voice is in Benjy's section of *The Sound and the Fury* when Benjy's recognition of something odd in Caddy's behavior and his consequent cry predicts a crisis which will affect the whole family and that is fornication: "Caddy was all wet and muddy behind, and I started to cry and she came and squatted in the water" (Faulkner, 1990: 26). The implied denotation of "mud" behind Caddy is an active internal polemic in Benjy's mind which implies her adultery.

Whereas the first two variations of double-voiced discourses are mostly used in modernist literature, the third variation characterizes the general sketch of postmodernist literature, yet its usage cannot be limited to it. For example, the above-mentioned excerpt from Quentin's section of Faulkner's *The sound and the Fury*, "Why shouldn't you I want my boys to be more than friends yes Candace and Quentin more than friends Father I have committed what a pity you had no brother or sister No sister no sister had no sister" (Faulkner, 1990: 113–4), has more of vari-directional type of discourse, but when its relation with the preceding dialogue of the text is taken into Bakhtinian discourse analysis, it becomes clear that it holds hidden polemics which cannot stand only within the limits of parody; indeed, it is the reflexivity and the consequences of the previous speech in which Quintin was only a passive listener where he was thinking of Herbert as the source of the family's corruption. Therefore, this eavesdropping can stand as a precise type of primary stimulus for the utterance of the hidden inner polyphony in Quentin's consciousness, appearing in the form of stream of consciousness (Faulkner, 113–4).

Looking from the Bakhtinian necessity of polyphonism as well as dialogic thinking, it is even unavoidable to have such stream of consciousness in Quentin's section of *The Sound and the Fury*. In this novel, the others' speeches act as stimuli which develop the dialogic discourse, yet their words are treated, as Bakhtin suggests, "antagonistically" (1984: 195). Antagonistic reflexivity in novels appears either as complete oppositional significations by someone else's words—sideward glance—acting as hostile interlocutors, or as results of direct or indirect social and ideological influences. Whereas the former one turns out to create more explicit forms of polemics, the latter type carries more implicit figurative meanings in the course of novels. The explicit polemics are mostly detectable in the architectonics of novels since they mainly produce external polyphonies such as verbal, reactionary give-and-take

speeches among the characters. In this form of discourse, according to Bakhtin, the intentions of authors sketch the backbone of the literary creations. This occurs in *Anna Karenina* where Tolstoy reveals his explicit consent with the idea of having women work through voicing of the intellectual Sergei Ivanovich:

I merely find it strange that women should seek new obligations,” said Sergei Ivanovich, “while unfortunately, as we see, men usually avoid them.”

“Obligations are coupled with rights. Power, money, honours – that’s what women are seeking,” said Pestsov.

“The same as if I should seek the right to be a wet nurse and get offended that women are paid for it while I’m refused,” the old prince said. (Tolstoy, 768)

In the implicit form, however, the polemics have more hidden layers of significations mainly because they carry not only explicit polyphonies and literal significations, but also implied dialogic interplays and figurative meanings. In other words, in obvious polemics, the discourse is directed towards someone else’s speech in a form of refusal speech. On the other hand, in hidden polemics the consciousness of the *ich-Erzählung* character establishes an internal polyphony within his mind or as, Bakhtin remarks, their “discourse is directed toward an ordinary referential object, naming it, portraying, expressing, and only indirectly striking a blow at the other’s discourse, clashing with it, as it were, within the object itself” (1984: 196), as in *The Brothers Karamazov* where Zosima’s internal polemics come into being as the result of being struck by the view of the Grand Inquisitor, claiming that the material needs of humans must be provided:

Very different is the monastic way. Obedience, fasting, and prayer are laughed at, yet they alone constitute the way to real and true freedom: I cut away my superfluous and unnecessary needs, through obedience I humble and chasten my vain and proud will, and thereby, with God’s help, attain freedom of spirit, and with that, spiritual rejoicing! (Dostoevsky, 1992: 164–5)

Internal dialogism, explained throughout this section, is one of the most important characteristics of the novel genre which foregrounds it from among other genres of literature. Bakhtin defines inner polyphonism as an “individual manner” (1984, 196) in which a person forms his speech within his consciousness according to

the speeches of the other. Therefore, for Bakhtin, the consciousness—or in other words, the way of thinking—is dialogical in the sense that it cannot be formed from inside without an external stimulus. Consequently, the most conspicuous examples of inner polyphonies are abundant in autobiographies where the authors use confessional types of narration through ich–Erzählung point of view. For Bakhtin, even in such personal modes of narration, there is no room for a specific objective meaning to insist upon as the dialogicality of any speech gives space to the creation of multiple meanings. Reckoning Sylvia Plath’s novel *The Bell Jar* (1963) as a semi–autobiographical work (Ira Mark Milne, 2008: 66), the protagonist and narrator of the story, Esther, discloses her main insecurities of being exposed to the society in the form of inner polyphonies. For instance, her “yes, yes, I see” external response to the teachings of her mother and grandmother form her inner polyphony of her lack of self–confidence: “I started adding up all the things I couldn’t do... I’d always spoil what I did so nobody would ask me to do it again” (Plath, 2015: 92–3). Or when she comes across the impressions of external entities (dialogism in a narrower sense), she reveals her sense of alienation all in an inner polyphony: “I felt dreadfully inadequate. The trouble was, I had been inadequate all along, I simply hadn’t thought about it” (94).

Whereas the dialogicality of speeches in the third type of double–voiced discourse is a matter of multiplicity in terms of meaning, there are indeed two types of this dialogicality. The first type known as polemical dialogicality is the one when the speeches of a present, other speaker influence the speeches of the ich–Erzählung narrator. Examples of such a discourse are novels in which heteroglossia—“any utterance of any kind, to the peculiar interaction between the two fundamentals of all communication” (Bakhtin, 1984: XiX)—directly influence the consciousness of the narrator. However, there is also another type of dialogicality known as the hidden one. In hidden dialogicality there does not exist any other participant in the setting of novel, however, his speeches are still felt by the narrator in a way that they determine his discourse. In other words, the narrator apparently responds to the invisible presence of another person or even a present character whose silence and unspoken words shape the narrator’s responses profoundly. The most outstanding example of the power of silence on discourse of a narrator can be the opening of Vladimir Nabokov’s novel *Lolita* (1955) in which the Narrator, Humbert Humbert, confesses his deeds to an

implied jury: “Ladies and gentlemen of the jury, exhibit number one is what the seraphs, the misinformed, simple, noble-winged seraphs, envied. Look at this tangle of thorns” (2011b/1955: 5).

As the discourse of the other becomes profound in the third type of double-voiced discourse, the passive role of character’s words and utterances gives way to active roles through which they develop, shape, or even contradict the author’s. In this sense, the other’s speeches are no longer tools to carry the authorial intentions: in fact, they are active elements in the formation of dialogic double-voiced discourses, and looking from a different perspective, their existence is necessary and omnipresent. The most intricate form of active type of discourse occurs when, as Bakhtin claims, the characters themselves start narrating a story within the novels. For Bakhtin, this is a kind of divergence in the aspirations of characters, disturbing the fulfillment of direct authorial intentions. More importantly, this unique narratology is developed in postmodern literature where the reflexivity of the works, intertextuality and all other elements contributing to the dialogism of texts play fundamental roles in fabricating the frames and content of this literary movement. It is possible to claim that all postmodernism is about a tendency towards reflexivity, fragmentation, subjectivity, elusivity and dialogicality of meanings (Barry, 2009: 79) both in life and more specifically in metanarratives, as Jean-François Lyotard (1924–1998) believes, in literature (The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge, 1984).

What Bakhtin ambitiously intends to achieve throughout his theory of the novel is to widen the horizons of interpretation in literary speeches and discourses. He starts developing his theory by analyzing the fundamental features of spoken language and illuminating the very fact that these speeches are innately dialogic, and the long-lasting interpretational theories extending from classical to modern times doomed to failure whenever they conceived language as monologic. The necessity of the negation of the monologic structure of language comes into focus when it shifts to written literary works, especially the novel genre. He believes that modernist stylistics investigates the language of novels as if it is approaching a solid object with clear-cut definitions and features; however, when it undertakes delicate linguistic and metalinguistic analyses, the result turns out to be entirely different in that it becomes

clear that there is no one single and coherent system of signification behind the architectonics of discourses.

Bakhtinian dialogism does not stop within the borders of language. In fact, it moves to the sphere of human mind and subjectivity as well. For Bakhtin, the perception of the concept of subjectivity is a tricky matter. Whereas many writers, most remarkable Leo Tolstoy, reckoned a fixed and omnipotent condition for subjectivity and identified it as the sole center of perception and interpretation, Bakhtin privileges the role of intersubjectivity by highlighting the role of the other—society and other subjects. As consciousness is both linguistics and metalinguistic for him, the idea of the self, or linguistic I, is therefore subject to infinite exposures and changes under the influence of the other. In other words, the dialogic presence is not only present between the subject and the other, it is also more or less like an organic part of the self under constant change (Wolfreys, 2001: 21).

In sum, Bakhtinian dialogism contributes greatly to twentieth century literary criticisms, especially postmodernism, in shaping both its linguistic and content features. But what influenced all these modern literary approaches from the side of Bakhtin was how he paved the way for the possibility of presence of meanings from authorial and contextual enforcements, and in this sense, it is possible to assign it a great role for the contributions it made to postmodernist aestheticism which was in a relative parallelism with the fundamental concept of nineteenth century art for art's sake. One of the key postmodernist practitioners of this literary movement was Vladimir Nabokov (McHale, 2004: 18), whose works and concepts of literary productions signaled a fictional world in which meanings have no necessary compatible versions with those of ideological and real-life ones. As a result, Bakhtinian discourse analysis provided Nabokov, if not with all, at least with many narrative techniques and concepts (dialogic, carnivalestic, and chronotopic interrelations and representations) to illuminate his otherworldly or aesthetic worlds, as these worlds equally belong to both Nabokov and his works.



II. CHAPTER 1. THEORIES

B. NABOKOVIAN AESTHETICS AND DIALOGISM

The grip of twentieth century literary productions and theories encapsulate diversity, contradiction, as well as parallels between many interdisciplinary fields, and consequently, it is the era of the most drastic changes in the nature of literature as explained in the previous sections of this chapter. What unites all these modern literary approaches within this century is the lack of unity which prevails in the thoughts, theories, and approaches in terms of literary hermeneutics when compared to one another. Taking the examples of modernism and postmodernism, and contrasting their approaches towards the creation and aesthetics of art, the gap between one school of thought and the other becomes transparent. There are only a few artists that can stand as a bridge between these two entirely different schools of thought, and Vladimir Nabokov is maybe the most prominent among those examples. In addition to his outstanding role, Nabokov's literary theories and perspectives are both controversial and paradoxical when it comes to his lectures on different writers, specifically the Russians.

Vladimir Nabokov can be considered as a unique artist because of his artistic developments from modernism to postmodernism while bearing some other qualities from distinct literary movements. All these qualities and artistic maturation should be investigated along three different planes: stylistic, thematic, and reader–author interrelational levels. On the plane of stylistic features of Nabokov's art, while accepting the cruelty and absence of morality in *Madame Bovary* (1856), he praises the novelist Gustav Flaubert because of the style of his language (Nabokov et al, 1982: 138). Nabokov was devoted to using a kind of language that would cling to details as in realism (Durantaye, 2010: 192); however, his disdain for realism did not allow him to imagine himself close to realist writers. For Nabokov, reality was in fact the perception of the external world in combination with individual imagination. According to Nabokov, commonsense taste is inferior in that “the natural morals of

mankind are as irrational as the magic rites that they evolved since the immemorial dimness of time” (Nabokov, 2002: 444). In the explanation of this inferiority, he claims that readers and eventually writers attempt to come up with the goodness of what interests their ideological mindsets which indeed has got nothing to do with their natural and fundamental needs. To escape from the taste and products of commonsense, a writer must be a masterful enchanter to utilize the proper style of storytelling. This capability in implementing a subtle style of narration creates a kind of reality unique to the writer and does not necessarily have any external counterparts in terms of common reality. In other words, for Nabokov, the artist does not create art based on so-called commonsense’s characteristics; it is the opposite, in fact: writers should make realities not necessarily compatible with those of common ones but compatible with their personal perception and experience of imagination (Nabokov, 34–5). This feature is more obvious in Nabokov’s *Lolita* when the protagonist of the story recounts his relation with *Lolita* not in an ideological pedophilic manner, but in a different system of signification within which the love of a teenager is not a taboo, especially when the other party has the same feelings: “But we are lovers, aren’t we?” (Nabokov, 2011b/1955: 75). In this sense, Humbert is no longer a pedophile but a lover in his own personal imagination; however, in order to show this new innocent experience, he should stick to a different style of narration in order to foreground and consequently, separate it from other ideological concepts and themes.

In the course of his literary development, Nabokov suggests a distinct view of style, as he defines the term “not (as) a tool, it is not a method, it is not a choice of words alone. Being much more than all this, style constitutes an intrinsic component or characteristic of the author’s personality. Thus, when we speak of style, we mean an artist’s peculiar nature” (Nabokov, 2002: 94). This claim of his can be considered as a bridge relating his view of the content of literature to his perception of style. For instance, when confronted with the controversies of his novel *Lolita*, he claims that the strongest defense can come from *Lolita* itself because it is a reality above a common reality created by a unique style which can overcome the moral aspects of the text. However, when viewed from another aspect, this claim is in sharp contradiction with what he puts forward in his lectures where he suggests that literary texts are under full control of their authors. In order to be able to escape from the commonsense reality,

as Nabokov believes, the author or good author must use the literary elements which embed dual and even multiple layers of signification or representation of this imaginary third world, or what is termed as the otherworld. This term is widely used among Nabokovian scholars; however, there is no single definition on which all scholars can agree. But in all, it could be inferred that what Nabokov intends to depict by this term was to create, firstly, a third space other than the spheres of death and life, (Alexandrov, 2014: 3) and secondly, new significations in this new hypothetical, aesthetic world.

The general sketch of what is termed the otherworld, or *potustoronnost*, in most of his works, as identified by many scholars, including Vladimir E. Alexandrov (1991: 5), proves the fact that this term does not bear any religious or classical metaphysical connotations. For Nabokov, there exists a metaphysical possibility, but this Nabokovian metaphysics is a mixture of the acceptance of a transcendent experience intermingled with imagination, timelessness and also aesthetics which should be elaborated before revealing the nature of the term. On the level of imagination, Nabokov tends to highlight the importance of personal inference rather than the sole imitation of the objective, external world as in the realist movement. His perception of imagination is very similar to the way Gerard Hoffman defines this term:

Serving historical needs by uncovering or at least marking the ungraspable, the imagination is in fact dynamic and transformative, crosses the threshold of partitions, fills the space left vacant by perception and reason, includes emotion and desire; according to Kohler in *The Tunnel*, “the imagination [is] guided by feeling, fueled by desire” (591). It composes the immanent and transcendent, the familiar and the unfamiliar, past, present, and future, giving wide range to the virtual compared to the actual. (2005: 587)

As it is clear from the above excerpt, imagination is a state of mind which is characterized by emotions and desires, and tries to identify unidentifiable feelings or entities, which stand beyond the power of logic and human reasoning. Therefore, imagination is timeless in the sense that it is not entirely reliant on historicity, the changes historicity brings with itself, and even spatial limitations, and this view is frequently seen in Nabokov’s works. In *Invitation to a Beheading* (2011a/1935), for instance, the narrator of the story finds imagination or anything beyond real existence

as the sole means of freedom when he responds to his guard asking him for the identity of his savior (90), mainly because there does not exist any free place in the material world for him in the way he can find otherworldly people like himself. In his otherworld, people are not like puppets to act according to ideological norms of their societies; they tend to respond to momentary joys of imagination, or a sublime view which might be perceived epiphanically, which will be discussed and elaborated in detail in chapter three of this study. In fact, his specification of imagination anticipates his later explanation in which he sarcastically claims that it does not matter for him where he escapes (Nabokov, 90). In another instance, he utters his thoughts in the form of interior monologues through which dreams (as a kind of imagination in that it is different from commonsense reality) signify a possible world of freedom for Cincinnatus: "...in my dreams the world would come alive, becoming so captivatingly majestic, free and ethereal, that afterwards it would be oppressive to breathe the dust of this painted life" (Nabokov, 2011: 74).

The content of timelessness in Nabokov's works has different behavior in that it is associated with both his ideas and life. On the level of his life, his world was under constant migrations from Russia to Germany, to France, to England, to America, and finally to Switzerland. These migrations imposed a desperate sense of homelessness on him, and consequently, his love of Russia, his homeland, made him think of time as the annihilator of real pleasures. This theme is also depicted in most of his novels including *Invitation to a Beheading*, where the protagonist not only does not have any homeland, but he also conceives himself as an existence not belonging to this world. Adding to the bitter influence of time on his conscience, Nabokov was highly obsessed with the losses time brought for him, as he lost his father, mother, and more importantly his first lover, Svetlana Siewert (Boyd, 2006: 4). All these gloomy events made him think of imagination—and the memories born out of this imagination—as the only shelter where he could hide himself. For him, his life was cornered like everyone else's by two ends: birth and death; and what exists in between is destructive time which deprives people of their pleasures, as he clearly reveals the existence of these facts in his autobiographical work:

Over and over again, my mind has made colossal efforts to distinguish the faintest of personal glimmers in the impersonal darkness on both sides of my

life. That this darkness is caused merely by the walls of time separating me and my bruised fists from the free world of timelessness is a belief I gladly share with the most gaudily painted savage. (1965: 15–6)

If one attempts to find a very omnipresent common ground in Nabokov's aesthetic views among scholars, it is the unique way he defines his art publicly in several sources under the term aesthetics. As Connolly identifies the main concerns of Nabokov throughout his literary maturation, he underlines the artist's inclination to separate his artistic experiments from engaged writers in that he never wants to grab the attention of readers by illuminating ideological and social themes (Connolly, 2005: 232); instead, he always insisted on the autonomy of art where the emergence of unique "states of quickened ethical awareness" and "states of metaphysically refined consciousness" are inevitable (Connolly: 232). In definition of the philosophy of his ethics, Nabokov demands the critics of his age to "place the 'how' above the 'what,' ... (and) not let it be confused with the 'so what'" (Nabokov, 1990: 79). What Nabokov implies by bringing up the idea of 'so what' in literature is the spontaneous ideological messages of texts where the whole ambition of the reader is wasted on identifying them. Instead of focusing on social significations, authors should look for the ways to show individual experiences to "wonder at trifles" (Nabokov, 2002: 374), to step over the domains of reason and, eventually, enter into the animation of artistic subjectivity in their works. In this animated world, the artist is no longer under direct influence from the good and bad of society; what they care about is indeed the "childishly speculative state of mind" (Nabokov, 1989: 374) where beauty stands above morality, and momentary pleasures bear the highest artistic value. The backbone of art in this sense is built not necessarily in line with human reasoning, but on "a certain special... sinuosity, which only at first glance may seem awkward or obscure" (Nabokov, 1989: 76–7).

The binary treatment of imagination/reason cannot be limited to the spheres of ethics. The other controversial and even vague aspect of Nabokov's aesthetics encircles around what most Nabokovian scholars term as metaphysics. The trickiest problematic approach would be to confuse the classical definitions of metaphysics with Nabokov's. The Nabokovian metaphysics is different from the classical connotations in that it does not entail any references to God, religious, or any other supernatural phenomena. His metaphysics is actually similar to what Derrida identifies

as the problem at the core of western philosophy: the noble place of metaphysics of presence (Derrida, 2016: 23). According to Derrida, western tradition always privileges the recognition of the present and everything associated with it over anything related to the past. Nabokov has the same approach in the way he favors the momentary spiritual pleasure. Although making out his concept of spiritual ontology is very difficult or even a matter of serious skepticism, in order to understand it, one has to look at the way he compares spirituality with the material world. The material world is a swerve from the spiritual world (Connolly, 2005: 238). And in this secondary, material world, things are less real than they may seem to people. In addition to that, the world of reality in the material world is presented deceptively in that what seems absolute turns out to be a void, or an illusion. One very artistic depiction of such a theory can be found in *Invitation to a Beheading* where Cincinnatus figures out that what he used to reckon as the most transparent part of his company, a spider, was but a disappointing fraudulent craft made and moved by his captors:

... he pulled down the thick gray cobweb and with it the spider, which he had once nursed with such care.... Crudely but cleverly made, it consisted of a round plush body with twitching legs made of springs, and, there was, attached to the middle of its back, a long elastic by the end of which Roman was holding it suspended, moving his hand up and down so that the elastic alternately contracted and extended and the spider rose and fell. (Nabokov, 2011: 163)

Another interpretation of Nabokov's spiritual world would be the delicate scrutiny of the inner world of each individual (Rutledge, 2010: 127). There exists, Nabokov claims, a spark of the otherworld within the mind of people which can surface at the moments of deep gaze and contemplation, and these momentary pleasures can appear in the form of epiphany which can be inexpressible at the level of the material world. For instance, Nabokov warns the readers of the ethical fallacies they may come across while reading his novel *Lolita* under the influence of these worldly ideologies, and instead, claims that the real artistic production is a fight with clichés of this ideological world; "Clichés—expected modes of expression—may be the opposite of Nabokov's ideal of mystery; therefore, he plays with them and interrogates them in order to show that there is something much more in life than that which can be contained in average language" (Rutledge, 2010: 33). In this sense, the unique feeling of Humbert Humbert

toward *Lolita* and the style he uses have nothing to do with the ideological connotations of pornography, but the momentary blissful feeling of love: the love of beauty in terms of Nabokov's otherworld, and the love of a nymphet in terms of the otherworld versus worldly ideological significations of love and lust.

There is also another fact agreed on by the majority of Nabokovian scholars which is the unique style of Nabokov's by means of which his aesthetics can shine clearly. In his lectures on literature, Nabokov coins the term irrational standards the meaning of which gives important insights into his theory of aesthetics. Irrational standards is similar to Nabokov's view of the commonsense in that it underestimates the widespread tastes and values of typical people, but when the focus of the term shifts to the domain of aestheticism, it highlights the weight of details in human life and the depiction of those details in literature. For Nabokov "wondering at trifles" was an important task of literature and its author. In order to achieve that wonder, one has to look at the details of the world deeply in a way that they (specifically writers) separate and eventually foreground their experience of the moment of recognition and their expression in their works. (Nabokov, 2002: 446). For instance, in his short story "Cloud, Castle, Lake" (1937), the protagonist of the story becomes overwhelmed by the sublime views of the lake and greenery during his trip, and eventually, the otherworldly experience derived from his detailed gaze at those views enables him to abandon his company on the train. Although Vasiliy Ivanovich, the protagonist of the story, is humiliated by the surrounding people, the joyful details of "pure, blue lake, with an unusual expression of its water" gives him an extraordinary feeling that he "even pressed his hand to his heart, as if to see whether his heart was there in order to give it away." (Nabokov, 2011: 4). The orientation towards details in life shifts to the implementation of literary techniques and styles in order to arouse that inexpressible and unique otherworld experience in Nabokov's art.

While he is elevating the importance of style by suggesting that "style and structure are the essence of a book; great ideas are hogwash" (Nabokov, 2002: 24), he targeted the implementation of irony, parody, use of symbols, presence of a unique type of allegory in most of his works, the play of authorial intentions—to be discussed in the following paragraphs under the relation of author/reader—and the covering and laying bare the truth in literary works. Irony is maybe the most favorable element

among the others for Nabokov mainly because he tries to abase the reality of commonsense, and eventually, leads to his own imaginative otherworldly experience. In other words, in order to show his own idea of the otherworldliness of literature, Nabokov has no better tool than irony:

... it necessitates an ironic ... attitude toward the possibility that man can know anything definite about the “other” realm. One of the ways Nabokov’s conclusion pertaining to metaphysics merges into his aesthetic practice is through the multifarious forms of ambiguity and ironic undercutting that fill his works. (Alexandrov, 1991: 6).

As discussed in the Bakhtinian section of this chapter, these types of elements—in this case, irony—are incorporated under Bakhtinian stylistic analysis and are considered as dialogic tools. One example of polyphonic irony can be the gap between the obsession of Humbert as the lover of (the nymphet) *Lolita* and the expectations of the common twentieth century readers who see him as a pure example of a pedophile. The Foreword note and the first–person narrator in the text illuminate the important role of irony in showing the discrepancy between the otherworldly experience of Humbert and the worldly experience of readers:

This commentator may be excused for repeating what he has stressed in his own books...nature should come as a more or less shocking surprise. I have no intention to glorify “H.H.” No doubt, he is horrible, he is abject, he is a shining example of moral leprosy, a mixture of ferocity and jocularly that betrays supreme misery perhaps, but is not conducive to attractiveness. (Nabokov, 2011b/1955: 4)

The irony of the above excerpt arises when it is accompanied by Humbert’s own justifications: “All at once we were madly, clumsily, shamelessly, agonizingly in love with each other” (Nabokov, 2011b/1955: 7). As seen from the comparison of these excerpts from different sections of the novel, the recognition of the sublimity of love by Humbert turns out to have different meanings for the commentator on the book, Dr. John Ray.

Very similar to the praxis of irony, Nabokov’s texts are also abundant with literary element: parody. Parodying has an essential role in his poetics and he usually

uses it in order to humiliate the conventional and even ideological codes. By doing so, he first draws a very sharp skeptical attention to the manipulation of these codes not only in individuals' lives, but also in literary creations. In this sense, *Lolita*, for example, can stand as the parody of preceding genres specifically romance novels. The novel genre for Nabokov is not written according to the ideals of traditional values expressed in the romance genre, and if viewed from this aspect, the role of parody becomes visible both in ridiculing traditional thoughts and the novel genres. The second and the most important function of parody in Nabokov's poetics is the possibility of the otherworld experience it offers. In this regard, following the parodied material world and the commonsense values within it, there appears a secondary layer of the literary world in which values and tradition are entirely different from any existing ones. This second role can be traced in Humbert's own confessions when he attempts to illuminate his actions which, according to him, derived from his imagination. These deeds are indeed the parodied traditions of modern age ideology:

When I try to analyze my own cravings, motives, actions and so forth, I surrender to a sort of retrospective imagination which feeds the analytic faculty with boundless alternatives and which causes each visualized route to fork and re-fork without end in the maddeningly complex prospect of my past. (Nabokov, 2011b/1955: 8)

The main reason of an abundance of symbols in Nabokov's works is its effectiveness in carrying meanings beyond itself: "[Symbol is a] word or phrase that signifies an object or event which in its turn signifies, or suggests a range of reference, beyond itself" (Abrams & Harpham, 2008: 358). This competence of symbol in moving beyond itself was the most outstanding tool for Nabokov to illuminate the implied otherworldly experiences by means of moving beyond the common language of worldly subjects. In other words, the unique personal (otherworldly) experiences and imaginations are not expressible through common use of language as this quality of bearing multiple layers of meaning, as in symbolization, is highly praised by the protagonist in *Invitation to a Beheading*:

Not knowing how to write, but sensing with my criminal intuition how words are combined, what one must do for a commonplace word to come alive and to share its neighbor's sheen, heat, shadow, while reflecting itself in its neighbor

and renewing the neighboring word in the process so that the whole line is live iridescence; while I sense the nature of this kind of word propinquity, I am nevertheless unable to achieve it, yet that is what is indispensable to me for my task, a task of not now and not here. (Nabokov, 2011: 75)

This excerpt, which illuminates the inefficiency of the literal use of language, emphasizes rhetorically the necessity of figurative language in expressing the inner experiences which might entail the implementation of symbolization. Taking the revelation of the above excerpt, which hints at the inefficiency of direct addressing of feelings through words, into consideration, it can be inferred that most of Nabokov's otherworldly denotations are also signified through symbols in the majority of his works. In *Invitation to a Beheading*, one of the symbols which extends to the boundaries of the author's aesthetic otherworld is "Tamara Gardens," which is repeated several times throughout the narrative. This Tamara Gardens (Nabokov, 2011: 19–26) is characterized with an ultimate sense of joy and is always accompanied by pleasant descriptions which can be the symbol of freedom from the world of prison—which itself symbolizes Cincinnatus's society—and ultimate happiness very rare to be found among surrounding people.

The presence of the other literary element, allegory, can be traced only if one has a comprehensive grasp of Nabokov's metaphysics and ethics. Although Nabokov is uneasy with identifying his works in terms of allegorical references and calls the readers who look for "sexual and religious" allegories "learned loonies" (Nabokov, 2011a/1935: 212), any insight into his otherworldly experience cannot be achieved without allegorical interpretation. Regarding this paradox within Nabokov's aesthetics, one could say that the dominant type of allegories in his works are of ideas rather than of history or politics. In political and historical allegories, the matter of focus, as it is clear from their names, is on past and current historical events and political issues. However, in the latter type of allegory different modes of experience and ethics are sustained within the architectonics of the work. For instance, in *Pale Fire*, the world of Zembla can be reckoned as the allegory of Nabokovian otherworld for Kinbote, not Shade, if it is not substituted by Soviet Russia which will create a political and historical allegory. At a delicate level of analysis, the dynamics of

allegory has relations with the concept of authorial voice in literary texts which constitutes other paradoxical aspect of Nabokov's artistic theories.

The relationship between authors and their fictional characters and authors and their readers construct the most problematic and contradictory basis of Nabokov's philosophy of art and aesthetics. On the one hand, he advocates the idea that in any text, characters are under the complete control of their writers: "...characters are galley slaves" (Nabokov, 2011a/1935: 96). Yet, in his lecture on the nature of Proust's art, he praises the characters of this writer's works because they act freely:

Proust is a prism. His, or its, sole object is to refract, and by refracting to recreate a world in retrospect. The world itself, the inhabitants of that world, are of no social or historical importance whatever. They happen to be what the gazettes call society people, men and ladies of leisure, the wealthy unemployed... Proust's prismatic people have no jobs: their job is to amuse the author. They are as free to indulge in conversation and pleasure as those legendary ancients that we see so clearly reclining around fruit-laden tables or walking in high discourse over painted floors, but whom we never see in the countinghouse or the shipyard. (Nabokov et al, 1982: 259)

This contradiction affects his other theory in terms of the interpretation of his (otherworldly) works which might create the following questions: If the writers are the Gods of their texts, why should readers bother themselves finding the traces of hypothetical otherworld experience within texts and not in the biography of writers? Or if there is a similarity between the narrators and authors in texts, can the otherworldly experience of the texts be found throughout the narration of the narrator only? Can the narrators in this case be accepted as a reliable source for addressing the Nabokovian otherworldly experience? These and other possible similar questions are left unanswered in his theory of arts which impedes him from having a coherent body of theory akin to other contemporary scholars. One reason for such a gap might be the fact that his lectures target his undergraduate students and not professionals, and aimed at giving a survey of the fundamentals of literature; however, this contradiction is a matter of wider consequence in terms of literary interpretation.

On the plane of the relationship between authors and readers, Nabokov maintains other problematic theories which make his literary mindset on literature vague and maybe unauthentic in some specific parts. For example, his most controversial claim is that authors are always like gods in terms of creating their fictions and charters within them:

In connection with *Bleak House* we are concerned with one of those authors who are so to speak not supreme deities, diffuse and aloof, but puttering, amiable, sympathetic demigods, who descend into their books under various disguises or send therein various middlemen, representatives, agents, minions, spies, and stooges. (Nabokov et al, 1982: 137)

What he precisely means in the above excerpt is the omnipresent control over their writings. In his several interviews, published under the title *Strong Opinions*, he even identifies his own characters in his works as “galleys” (2017: 129) who are deprived of any independent existence. However, the core issue of his view on the role relation of authors and readers reveals itself when Nabokov defames Dostoevsky for having “galley slaves,” which indeed, were previously privileged by him:

Dostoevsky’s characters have yet another remarkable feature: throughout the book they do not develop as personalities. We get them all complete at the beginning of the tale, and so they remain without any considerable changes although their surroundings may alter and the most extraordinary things may happen to them (Nabokov et al, 1982: 74).

The example he provides for such a controversial claim is the character of Raskolnikov in *Crime and Punishment* where there is no change in his characterization throughout the whole events in the story: “... Raskolnikov does not go through any true development of personality, and the other heroes of Dostoevsky do even less so” (Nabokov et al, 1982: 74). In addition to this, when he praises Leo Tolstoy’s art, the most eminent feature that he finds in his literature worthy of honoring him with the words “the greatest Russian writer of prose fiction” is his capability in showing a masterpiece which seems to write itself, not as a work of literature written by a dictatorial author:

Tolstoy's prose keeps pace with our pulses, his characters seem to move with the same swing as the people passing under our window while we sit reading his book. ...Readers call Tolstoy a giant ... because he remains always of exactly our own stature, exactly keeping pace with us instead of passing by in the distance, as other authors do. ... We have thus the feeling now and then that Tolstoy's novel writes its own self, is produced by its matter, by its subject, not by a definite person moving a pen from left to right...(Nabokov et al, 1982: 94–5)

Another sphere of Nabokov's aesthetics deals with his perception of truth in literature which is in connection with his conception of the relations between writers and readers. In his essay titled *Good Readers and Good Writer* (1948), Nabokov comes up with some descriptions of ideal writers and readers which are in sharp contrast to the other descriptions accompanied in the same essay. A good writer, according to Nabokov, needs to be a “storyteller, teacher, enchanter,” and in order to be a great one, this writer must possess all the characteristics of this profession in a harmonious way. Accordingly, a storyteller infuses the element of entertainment with emotion in order to make the work of art an exciting mental experience. To be a great enchanter, one has to introduce the individual genius into the work of art in order to surprise the expectations of readers. Being an enchanter is closely related with the genesis of magic in the literary works which separates it from other entities in the world, and eventually, this aspect of literature is the most outstanding feature based on Nabokovian aesthetics. However, the very antithetical element from among those three professions is being a teacher. In his definition of a good teacher, Nabokov reckons these so-called good writers as the “propagandist, moralist, prophetic” (Nabokov et al, 1982: 37), as well as those individuals who possess the direct knowledge of simple facts.

The knowledge of simple facts cannot be limited to generalization of universal facts, as Nabokov admits (Nabokov et al, 1982: 32). A writer, and consequently the readers of such a writer, should “fondle details,” (Nabokov et al, 1982: 32) and precisely from this turning point the contradictions regarding the nature of truth arise. On the one hand, Nabokov, as discussed above in the illumination of his concept of the moral of being a teacher, claims that a writer

should lead the people through the facts of life. On the other hand, in the same essay, Nabokov comes up with a different idea of foregrounding the details of life based not on commonsense experiences, but the fictional ones in their works of imagination which are far different from the “public truth” (Nabokov et al, 1982: 32). This system of truth must be set according to the otherworldly imagination of the writer which creates fictions far from social facts. In addition to this inconsistency in his concept of truth, Nabokov claims that a good writer needs to be the follower of his very distinct definition of “nature,” which is, indeed, a deceiver for him, unlike the views of most theorists who reckon on nature as the source of originality. As the result of the nature of truth, Nabokov claims, a reader does not have to look for self-identifications with the versions of experiences depicted in literary works. Instead, they need to harmonize their personal imagination with the artistic delight of writers. This way through personal imagination, readers will be able to envisage a literary world and experience different from the worldly precedents, and by identifying the artistic delight of writers,—which has been left unanswered on how to identify—readers can appreciate and live through literary otherworldly experience.

As it can be deduced from the ideas of Nabokov on the nature of literature in general, and his art in specific, one may righteously find them pretty confusing. From his definition of metaphysics to ethics, and from the role and characteristics of ideal writers to good readers, the development of all his literary perspectives can be considered as entirely contradictory in a way that it might seem impossible to bridge the gap between them. This gap turns out to seem deeper when his view of the monologism of all literary texts is taken into analysis in relation to the opposing idea of Bakhtin, who advocates and insists on the presence of dialogism in the novel genre. The monologic nature of literary works, as presented by Nabokov, is not the matter of an interpretational flaw for the works of other writers. It is, in fact, the works of Nabokov himself which contradict the Nabokovian theory of the control and dominance of writers over their characters. Adding to the multiple contradictions explained above in Nabokov’s theory of art, it is also an artistic value fallacy to consider his works standing entirely independent from the common reality, having no direct correlations with the historical and social circumstances of the writer. However, his works can stand as successful artistic creations in which they bear the least possible

interactions with their social contexts. The three novels of Nabokov, *Invitation to a Beheading*, *Lolita* and *Pale Fire*, all present very delicate examples of Bakhtinian dialogic interplay within their surface structures which can be made bare through an analysis of the style Nabokov implements. The close study of the style of Nabokov's works will entail the deep analysis of the literary techniques such as irony, parody, use of symbols and allegory in his works, and it will be shown that through implementation of these literary elements he becomes trapped within his problematic theories of literature. However, at the end, the literary applications of those polyphonic literary elements help him to keep the furthest possible distance between the otherworldly experience and his most hated social and ideological representations.





III. CHAPTER 2. MODERNIST AND POSTMODERNIST POLYPHONIES IN NABOKOV'S ART

A. INVITATION TO A BEHEADING

Vladimir Nabokov's *Invitation to a Beheading* might seem very (sur)realistic in terms of its meaning and structure for novice readers of literature. The ubiquitous castle-like setting, the gloomy corridors of prison, and the abundance of characters contribute greatly to a symbolic interpretation of the novel. However, for Nabokov who has the intention of showing aesthetic otherworldly experiences, using realistic language with realistic elements cannot be an appropriate style. Nabokov's otherworld stands in parallel to the real, material world. Therefore, in order to represent such an aesthetic world, he tries to reflect the qualities of this otherworld through its dialogic relation with the material world, which exists as a gap that has not been studied by any researcher. Consequently, in order to fill in the remarked gap and in line with this study's literary goal, this section will analyze the dialogic structure of *Invitation to a Beheading* in order to identify which Bakhtinian narrative techniques and strategies Nabokov uses to address his otherworldly qualities. The definition of dialogism and its relation with the speech act theory of Bakhtin and social and contextual aspects of literary texts will also be explained. In addition to this, this chapter will identify the dialogic functions of Bakhtinian polyphonic discourses in revealing these otherworldly significations. As it will be shown and explained in this section, Nabokov uses mostly the primary and simple categories of discourses, including objectified and unidirectional double-voiced discourses to reveal some of his main otherworldly qualities such as the remarkable role of imagination and memory, timelessness and immortality, agnosticism and knowledge, and finally coincidental patterns. Before entering the explanation of the dialogic characteristics of this novel, it is helpful to go through some of the key ideas of Bakhtin and Nabokov once again so that the analysis would make more sense to the readers of this study.

One of the important points which must be remarked once more before we proceed any further is the definition of Bakhtinian dialogism. Dialogism, as M. Keith Booker defines, is “a fundamental mode of thought that emphasize multiple simultaneous perceptions of reality” (Booker, 1995: 477). There is, however, a misconception among a few Bakhtinian scholars that Bakhtinian dialogism deals only with the presence of dialogues and their interrelations in texts. On the contrary, it should be noted that restricting the concept of dialogism only to the interrelations of dialogues would narrow down the Bakhtin’s theory of literature to a kind of structuralist approach, which Bakhtin disdains. As opposed to the study of langue in structuralism, it is, in fact, the speech act or parole which is the focus of Bakhtin’s theory. Speech act theory, which Bakhtin advocates, deals with the performative aspect of an utterance, and therefore involves diverse aspects of a speech, all of which contribute to both the creation and understanding of meaning(s) evolving from that act.

The different aspects remarked above involve social and ideological features, the unique personal characteristics of individuals active within a speech act, the interrelations of these active individuals, and above all, the implied or explicit significations which arise from the convergence of all of them. In addition to these remarkable aspects of a speech act, it is necessary to point to the fact that, for Bakhtin, speech act does not necessarily mean an objective linguistic utterance. In addition to the linguistic aspects of a language, it is the metalinguistic aspect of an utterance which matters the most for Bakhtin. It should also be noted that for Bakhtin metalinguistics includes all possible signifying systems, such as implicit “collective symbiotic and cultural values of utterance” (Zou, 2018: 368). In sum, all existing implicit and explicit significations as well as the unfinalized versions of signification born out of any signifying system are the subjects of Bakhtinian theory of dialogism.

Bearing in mind these general characteristics of Bakhtin’s theory of dialogism, from this paragraph, this study will identify the main dialogic features of *Invitation to a Beheading* and the types of Bakhtinian dialogic discourses prevailing in this work in order to, firstly, shed light on the functions each of these discourses provides Nabokov to address his themes of literature. The second important reason for the identification of Bakhtinian discourse types is recognition of the effects each of these dialogic techniques leaves upon Nabokov’s otherworldly qualities. Vladimir Nabokov’s

Invitation to a Beheading has more of the modernist movement's characteristics due to the fact that it represents a dystopian society in which the protagonist yearns for a meaningful and ordered environment for himself. In addition to this modernist content feature, this novel includes diverse cases of interior monologue and stream of consciousness technique which reflect the disintegration of the protagonist, Cincinnatus. As a result, this novel's style of narration is quite different in terms of Bakhtinian Dialogism. The variations of dialogic discourses turn out to become more complex, starting from "direct, unmediated discourse," passing through "objectified discourse," and finally, finding the most elaborate forms in three subcategories of "double-voices discourse" (Bakhtin, 1984: 199). Strikingly, when the three works of Nabokov— *Invitation to a Beheading*, *Lolita*, and *Pale Fire*—are analyzed comparatively from the point of their dialogic structure and content, it turns out that Nabokov implements several Bakhtinian dialogic discourses in his works, using the primary and simple categories in *Invitation to a Beheading*, and later, during his literary maturity, he systematically uses other subcategories of double-voiced discourse to depict his aesthetic otherworld. In *Invitation to a Beheading*, the analysis of dialogism can be implemented in two different layers of sentence structures and dialogic representations, which reflect the content features of the novel. What these two layers of signification convey are some transformed, or converted versions of Nabokov's otherworldly qualities under the guise of worldly signification, which evolve out of Bakhtinian dialogic narrative techniques and strategies. Eventually, by analyzing and elaborating the dialogic behaviors of discourses in this novel, the nature of otherworldly qualities will be transparent.

At this point, this study aims at reminding the main characteristics of primary Bakhtinian dialogic discourse variation, "objectified discourse," (Bakhtin, 1984:199) of Nabokov's *Invitation to a Beheading*, depicting the functions and affects this type of discourse provides for the revelation of Nabokov's otherworldly qualities or themes. According to its sentence structure, *Invitation to a Beheading* is mainly of the second Bakhtinian discourse i.e., objectified discourse. One of the most outstanding characteristics of objectified discourse is the use of quotation marks within which the direct utterances of characters are inserted in order to show their objective views. However, when it comes to the description of settings or events, the dialogic structure of objectified discourse can be disregarded since these descriptions may involve the

discourse of both writer and characters. In this case, instead of analyzing the dialogic structure of discourses, one has to pay attention to the dialogic representations in the content of the works, for which reason, this section analyzes both the dialogic discourses and dialogic representations within *Invitation to a Beheading*. It should also be pointed out that this type of dialogism reckons a close hypothetical distance between the voice of the writer and characters. Although these types of discourses deviate partially from the direct intentions of their authors: they create speeches which do not necessarily bear the intention of their writers in specific occasions. Consequently, in order for one to distinguish which voice is the voice of the author or character, one has to pay attention to two important features within this discourse variation: unity of character's speech and unity of author's speech.

In a very concise definition, as the details are introduced in Bakhtin's section in chapter one, the unity of character's speech targets mainly the minor character's speeches and—in some specific and rare cases—the protagonist's. In this type of unity, the author tries to create discourses in relation to the characters' carnivalescic features. Although this type of unity does not usually bear authorial intentions, they create situations through which the discourse or the actions of these characters reversely reflect the authorial intention in the authorial unity of speeches in the discourse of the protagonists. For instance, there may appear dialogic literary elements such as irony and parody in the discourse of minor characters; however, their existence mostly does reversely signify a privileged quality in the discourse of the protagonist which the minor characters diminish. On the other hand, the authorial unity of speech mostly occurs in the voice of the protagonist. In order for a reader to understand which voice of protagonist bears the authorial unity, they need to look for the literary elements such as irony, parody, symbolization in the speeches of the protagonist. But the difference in the nature of the dialogic literary elements, like parody, in the discourses of minor characters and protagonists rests on the fact that the dialogic elements in the discourse of the latter group, protagonists, privilege a quality directly in their actions or speeches. If these literary techniques and elements are implemented in the discourse of the protagonist, it is very probable that they bear the authorial intention of their writers. Even at these points where different literary elements are used, one needs to be aware of the qualities of these elements, as elaborated in detail in the first chapter of this study. These elements deviate the direct intentions of writers and make them

conditioned to different chronotopic and carnivalesc features, all of which are dialogic characteristics of a language and consequently, texts. In addition to Bakhtinian objectified discourse, in the course of the novel, we see different shifts to the first subtype of the third category, unidirectional double-voiced discourse, as well. But above all, by showing all diverse variations of dialogism within Nabokov's works, his very firm idea that texts are under direct control of authors can be reconsidered; and—more importantly—by identifying these dramatic points, the otherworldly qualities hidden behind these dialogic representations can be revealed, because Nabokov signifies these qualities by using diverse dialogic narrative techniques and strategies.

From the beginning of the analysis of dialogism in *Invitation to a Beheading*, it should be noted that although Nabokov uses third-person semi-omniscient point of view in this novel, the stream of events is mainly narrated in relation to the protagonist's mind—Cincinnatus's,—and this feature sheds light on the subjective nature of this work. By calling this novel subjective in terms of its narration, the modernist literary features which reject the objective description of events come into attention. Consequently, the authors of such works of art cannot directly enforce their intentions as they did in realist movement. Thus, in the opening of *Invitation to a Beheading*, some iconic words foreshadow the characteristics of the coming sentences. Objectified descriptions of the setting encapsulate words such as “whisper,” “calm,” and “doubt” (Nabokov, 2011: 14), carrying hidden denotations, all of which signal a dialogic representation. The implied denotations of these words impose a subjective atmosphere that stands in relation to the way Cincinnatus perceives his environment. This dialogic representation, which depicts a unique perception of reality by Cincinnatus who identifies his environment without the presence of people with pleasant, peaceful sensations, brings into focus the fact that Nabokov as the author of his novels modifies the voice of his own to be compatible with Cincinnatus. In this case, Nabokov takes into consideration the characteristics of Cincinnatus's setting, which entail a prison with a nice view: the protagonist can see the peaceful greenery area. This kind of consideration of character's mood and setting is what Bakhtin calls carnivalesc feature of the novel genre. Although carnivalesc is a general Bakhtinian term, one of the implications from its nature can be the way the writers put

themselves in the place of their characters and try to look at the fictional worlds from their sides. Encompassing this carnivalescent feature, what these silent words within the objectified description of setting do is a hidden reverse foreshadowing of tumultuous events in the plot of the novel, which can be reckoned as the first function of objectified discourse. These tumultuous events also signal the first otherworldly theme of Nabokov's art through which apparently irrelevant and meaningless events or coincidences turn out to anticipate a serious event in the course of the novel.

As in the course of the novel it will be made clear, its general mood of is catastrophic, such as mocking the protagonist of the story, the arguments of characters on nonsensical subjects, the deception of Cincinnatus by a thirteen-year-old girl, etc. Bearing these events in mind, even this objectified description has at least one dialogic representation through which the coming events of the story are in a reverse dialogic relation with some words in the setting. By foreshadowing these events, the first characteristic of Nabokovian otherworldly protagonists evolve out of these objectified descriptions: compared to the minor characters whose discourses are mostly oriented externally, towards each other, the discourses of protagonists are mostly interiorized due to their calm and tranquil nature. This calm and tranquil mood of the protagonist also signifies the fact that unlike other minor characters in this novel, Cincinnatus mainly is not obsessed with worldly matters. In addition to this inner nature of the protagonist of *Invitation to a Beheading*, out of the dialogism of these silent words with the upcoming events of the novel, the second otherworldly characteristic of Nabokovian protagonists emerges: although they are surrounded by a chaotic environment, their inner worlds are never highly or directly influenced by their surroundings. For instance, in the following excerpt, Cincinnatus is being informed that he is going to be beheaded:

In accordance with the law the death sentence was announced to Cincinnatus C. in a whisper. All rose, exchanging smiles. The hoary judge put his mouth close to his ear, panted for a moment, made the announcement and slowly moved away, as though ungluing himself. (Nabokov, 2011a/1935: 14)

However, the reaction he shows seems like he is indifferent to what will happen to his physical aspect of being: But Cincinnatus was in no mood for talking. Even if the alternative was solitude in this cell, with its peephole like a leak in a boat—he did not

care, and asked to be left alone; they all bowed to him and left” (Nabokov, 2011a/1935: 14). This quote, in addition to representing the indifference of Cincinnatus, is another evidence that his inner world sustains a tranquil mood even during dramatic points in the novel. The name of the objectified discourse might imply the misconception that this type of discourse is monologic in the sense that it does not have any relation with any part of the novel; however, when looked from the Bakhtinian theory, it can be noted that in addition to the delicate relations, for instance in the above excerpts between these two descriptions, they also bear hidden worldly and otherworldly significations. One worldly signification evolving from this type of discourse is the cruelty and apathy of the people convicting Cincinnatus whose otherworldly calm mental nature—another signification—makes him act indifferently. In sum, the two important effects the Bakhtinian objectified narrative technique leaves on the characterizations of the main character in this novel are the depiction of calm and tranquil nature of otherworldly protagonist and the strong personality Cincinnatus has demonstrated by the fact that he does not get affected by external forces.

Contrary to his literary claims on the presence of dialogism, it could be inferred that the other reason Nabokov uses the objectified descriptions is to establish the gloomy conditions of his main characters before entering their direct discourses; and this reason acts as the second function of objectified discourses in *Invitation to a Beheading*. As the plot of the novel develops, the objectified descriptions unveil other inner conditions of the main characters in order to show the reader—considering an implied reader also being a dialogic act—that the inner sense they have does not result from hallucination; It is the results of different obsessions:

So we are nearing the end. The right-hand, still untasted part of the novel, which, during our delectable reading, we would lightly feel, mechanically testing whether there were still plenty left (and our fingers were always gladdened by the placid, faithful thickness) has suddenly, for no reason at all, become quite meager: a few minutes of quick reading, already downhill, and—O horrible! (Nabokov, 2001b: 14)

These excerpts from the opening pages of the novel depict a setting in which there is no physically existent person in Cincinnatus’s jail; however, his mind always reckons at least one implied presence to whom he directs his inner dialogism of “O horrible.” This inner dialogism which signals Cincinnatus’s main concern has got

nothing to do with what other characters do or say; this obsessional inner dialogism results from an extended metaphor in which finishing a book has been likened to coming to the end of a life journey. Therefore, for Cincinnatus as an otherworldly character, it is not the death penalty announced by the jury which elicits the inner polyphony “O Horrible!”; it is, in fact, the result of being about to finish a favorite book as an aesthetic pleasure. Therefore, bringing this inner dialogism within an objectified description is another dialogic effect to reveal the existence of such inner experiences objectively to the readers, and this can be reckoned as the third function of the objectified discourse in *Invitation to a Beheading*. In addition to this functionality, the utterance “O horrible!” (Nabokov, 2011: 14) is an internal dialogism which shows how Nabokov acts according to the context of a character, leaving aside his own unique chronotopic direct discourse. In sum, the other functions of Bakhtinian objectified description as a narrative technique are firstly the depiction of the gloomy atmosphere of the protagonist’s environment to reflect reversely the calm behavior of Cincinnatus and secondly the revelation of the inner experiences of the protagonist without any interference from his (author’s) side, which gives an objective mood to the text.

Looking at the nature of these objectified descriptions from a different aspect, in his work *Problems of Dostoevsky’s Poetics*, Bakhtin similarly mentions the very basic but delusory characteristic of monologism in which several voices, including authorial intentions, remain hidden (Bakhtin, 1984: 189), and therefore, need delicate analysis in order to reveal them. These micro characteristics, which include the use of stylization—parody, symbolization, hidden internal polyphonies, and so forth—in the form of inner dialogism are always shaped by and directed to someone else’s implied voice or presence. Therefore, from the opening of the novel, Nabokov uses different forms of dialogism to achieve different effects, which, firstly, sheds light upon the fact that the author shapes his discourse in relation to the chronotopes—“the intrinsic connectedness of temporal and spatial relationships that are artistically expressed in literature.” (Bakhtin, 1981: 84)—of his characters, and secondly, clarifies the fact that Nabokov uses dialogism in order to create specific effects to depict his otherworldly experiences.

After Nabokov uses objectified descriptions to give some sense of objectivity to the nature of Cincinnatus’s inner experiences, he creates objectified discourses of

characters for other purposes as well. For instance, already on the opening pages, when the first utterances appear, the initial reaction of the protagonist to his captor's dramatic fatal disclosure is only unarranged words of ironic appreciation, "Kind. You. Very" (Nabokov, 2011: 17). This ironic reaction to his jailor results from the latter's discourse: "'Having learned from trustworthy sources that your fate has been sort of sealed,' he began in a fruity bass, 'I have deemed it my duty, dear sir ...'" (Nabokov, 2011: 17). The revelation of the word "fate" in jailor's speech dialogically initiates in Cincinnatus's mind the otherworldly role of fate, which is addressed in almost all Nabokov's works. Bearing in mind the importance of fate in Nabokov's works, as in *Lolita* which is personified and addressed as "Aubrey McFate," and in *Pale Fire*, depicted through the characterization of Gradus, the response Cincinnatus comes up with uttering the word "kind" is in fact an ironic appreciation of the power of the word "fate" the jailor reminds him of, not the news that he is going to face with his fate of being beheaded. In this sense, the objectified discourse of a minor character acts as a stimulus to elicit an otherworldly quality in

Cincinnatus mind, which turns out to be the first effect of the objectified discourse. In other words, one of the main goals of the other characters' direct speeches in this work of Nabokov is to provide the grounds for the emergence of an otherworldly concept in the mind of Cincinnatus. While in *Invitation to a Beheading* the elicitation of some otherworldly experiences or qualities is revealed using this technique, in *Lolita* and *Pale Fire* the role of epiphany is added to this way of addressing the unique Nabokovian qualities for creating other effects, which will be discussed in the following sections of this chapter.

Whereas some specific words, which generally carry Nabokovian otherworldly significations, influence Cincinnatus internally, in another instance, right after the above dialogue in the novel, the narrator's comment on the power of such words and their meaninglessness for the jailer is put forward as "unmindful of the tactlessness" (Nabokov, 2011: 17). This comment, which aims at revealing of the incapability of the jailer in realizing the nature of Cincinnatus's thanking him—"Kind. You. Very" (Nabokov, 2011: 17)—in the form of an objectified speech, is a clear instance through which Nabokov depicts the superficiality of minor characters in that they never understand the unique experiences the protagonist is exposed to. In this sense, these objectified words of the jailer appear as a tool for Nabokov uses for several purposes.

firstly, it objectively hints at the direct ideas of minor characters, or what Bakhtin names the unity of character's speech. Secondly, it shows the second function of the objectified discourse on how language and some specific words, even within the objective discourses of minor characters, have dialogic, fundamental effects over Cincinnatus, even though these characters are not aware of their powerful language and discourse. In other words, language is powerful and influential for Cincinnatus because it is dialogic; the language of others affects him by eliciting responses and revealing his feelings. Thirdly, it manifests the source of these words as trivial individuals—trivial in the sense that they cannot infer what really exists behind the discourse of the protagonists—and consequently, their worlds as drastically different from those of the protagonists. Finally, objectified discourses build the necessary grounds for the formation of inner dialogisms, which usually appear in the form of long confessions. However, before entering the discussion and elaboration of both external and internal polyphonies which arise from the objectified speeches in *Invitation to a Beheading*, a quick glance at the way Bakhtin characterizes the nature of these external and, more importantly, inner polyphonies would be helpful. The discussion that follows highlights the emphasis Bakhtin puts on the presence of contradictions in relation to the existence of inner dialogues within the dialogic formations of texts in order to shed light on effects the dialogic texts have on the degree of authorial.

The relation that contradictions bear with Bakhtin's theory of literature is profoundly dependent on the nature of inner dialogues. In Bakhtin's theory of literature, the turning point in terms of the nature of dialogism appears through the formation of internal dialogues. As the "self-developing life" (Bakhtin, 1984: 286) of the novel takes place—which hints at the dialogic ways the plots of novels build themselves,—the boundaries between the authorial voice and the interplay of characters' tendencies (in terms of dialogues) loosen mostly in inner dialogues of protagonists, and therefore, the need for a subtle analysis of internal polemics becomes inevitable. Thus, the analysis in this chapter of the study is done for identifying the functions and effects the diverse Bakhtinian dialogic techniques have on the evolution of the otherworldly qualities in Nabokov's works:

In every style, strictly speaking, there is an element of internal polemic, the difference being merely one of degree and character. Every literary discourse

more or less sharply senses its own listener, reader, critic, and reflects in itself their anticipated objections, evaluations, points of view. (Bakhtin, 1984: 196)

As stated above, the focus of Bakhtin is a spoken language in which different perceptions on the nature of metaphysics of presence (Derrida, 2017: 22) are pointed out. Nonetheless, when it comes to written literature, the complexity of identifying any authentic meaning will be left to the interplay of contradictory relations in dialogues or other means of signification. Contradictions in representation of facts or themes necessitate delicate analysis of texts in relation to all the parties present in shaping the works of art, and one cannot impose their idea over the other's mainly because, according to Bakhtin, every discourse sees a problem from a different angle. Therefore, incompatibility and contradictions are the necessary features of dialogic texts which unfinalize any determinate meaning. Since this chapter bases its arguments on the presence and consequently, the functions and effects of dialogic narrative techniques and strategies in Nabokov's texts, which depict unique aesthetics otherworldly qualities, a close study of inner dialogues and the contradiction within them in the discourse of mostly the protagonists bears a high importance. In sum, the formations of different dialogic discourses are in direct relation with the degree of contradiction within otherworldly qualities they bear within their structure and content.

Back to the analysis of dialogism, the central focal point of Bakhtinian dialogic analysis rests upon the hero or heroine of the novel, and here, in this study on *Invitation to a Beheading*, it is Cincinnatus who dominates and is dominated by the dialogues of others in relation to his own, and these dialogues signal the abundance of the presence of objectified discourse. It is in fact the possibilities offered by the dialogic characteristics of language which enable Nabokov to depict the inner perceptions of otherworldly characters like Cincinnatus. These kinds of characters, as Bakhtin claims, are "not only the objects of the authorial word, but also subjects of their own signifying discourse" (Bakhtin, 1984: 7). In other words, the discourses of these characters firstly reveal externally their own objective views, as stated above under the second function of the objectified discourse. On the other hand, whereas the implication of the minor characters' voices leads to the revelation of some specific otherworldly qualities with low degree of dialogic intensity appearing in the form of external dialogues, the formation of inner dialogisms emerges with a high degree of dialogic intensity, which

can be considered as the sixth effect or function of objectified discourse and will be elaborated after the discussion of external polyphony starting from the following lines.

As discussed in the first chapter of this dissertation, Nabokov, in a transitional phase from modernist to postmodernist literature, uses irony, symbolism, parody, and other literary elements, all of which are dialogic elements, in that they bear at least two stratum of meanings or effects. For instance, one of the most dramatic dialogic subjectifications in *Invitation to a Beheading* is preceded by the ironic waltzing and the abusing bearing of the jailer Rodion—these behaviors acting as a peculiar stimulus for Cincinnatus in the form of external dialogue within a direct discourse, which is also called objectified discourse:

... the compensation for a death sentence is knowledge of the exact hour when one is to die. A great luxury, but one that is well earned. However, I am being left in that ignorance which is tolerable only to those living at liberty. And furthermore, I have in my head many projects that were begun and interrupted at various times. (Nabokov, 2011: 18)

This excerpt is, in fact, a response of Cincinnatus to Rodion's carnivalesque behavior, which makes Nabokov change his behavior and discourse at different occasions and act in relation to the contextual settings of his characters. By appearing behind the discourse of other characters, firstly, Nabokov acts as a ruthless jailer, dancing indifferently in front of Cincinnatus, who is going to be executed. Secondly, he uses the voice of Cincinnatus, who is in a desperate situation, not aware of the day of his execution, which results in the formation of the above objectified discourse. Both of these changes prove the fact that Nabokov uses discourses in relation to the contexts of his characters, not his one-sided intention. In other words, this is another effect created by Bakhtinian objectified dialogism to deviate the direct authorial voice to be adapted to the carnivalesque situations of characters in order to leave utmost impression on the readers of this novel.

In addition to the existence of Bakhtinian carnivalesque characteristics in objectified discourse, the interruption that Cincinnatus is concerned about happens even after his speech is cut off, and this can never be taken for granted when Nabokov portrays such an interruption mainly because at such a point, there occurs a clash between worldly and otherworldly experiences. These interruptions are actually the moments of separation from the unique otherworldly experience in major characters

of Nabokov's works. Strikingly, here another effect, or function, of Bakhtinian objectified discourses emerges; in Nabokov's works, the objectified discourses of minor characters sometimes appear as obstacles, preventing the protagonists from indulging in otherworldly experiences. Thus, one of the reasons that Cincinnatus is not able to reveal the comprehensive otherworldly qualities he experiences is because of the interruptions brought by the direct speeches of these worldly characters. Looking from a different perspective, these interruptions pave the way for the emergence of inner dialogisms in Cincinnatus's discourse.

Although it is chapter three that depicts the ways the major otherworldly qualities contribute to the formations of intense dialogism in Nabokov's works, this chapter—as pointed in the argument of this study—already sheds light on what Bakhtinian narrative techniques and strategies Nabokov uses to address some otherworldly significations, identifying the functions and effects each of these discourse types leaves on the revelation of these significations or qualities. In relation to these revelations, the following excerpt is an inner dialogism which reflects the mentality of Cincinnatus as an otherworldly Nabokovian protagonist:

...the sphere of my own self still limits and eclipses my being.... I had a strange sensation last night... I do not know how to describe it, but I know this: through the process of gradual divestment I reach the final, indivisible, firm, radiant point, and this point says: I am! like a pearl ring embedded in a shark's gory fat—O my eternal, my eternal ... and this point is enough for me—actually nothing more is necessary I am here through an error—not in this prison, specifically—but in this whole terrible, striped world; a world which seems not a bad example of amateur craftsmanship, but is in reality calamity, horror, madness, error. (Nabokov, 2011: 72)

This above excerpt is also another form of the objectified discourse; however, it appears in the form of an inner polyphony, which is a delicate way of revealing inner thoughts in the form of confession. The above excerpt is also a dialogic representation in terms of thematic aspects in which the worldly or physical reality is dialogically contrasted with Cincinnatus's inner perceptions. In this sense, the physical world appears as a layer of limiting signification, repressing the other unique internal perception of Cincinnatus. These two diverse mental perceptions make the writer imagine himself at two different modes of experience, while, at the same time,

distances himself from his own chronotopes. Therefore, even in this example of an objectified dialogism, which is the weakest type of discourse in terms of imposing dialogic significations, the author is driven into the denial of his direct intentions and experiences in order to establish compatibility with the fictional world of his character. In sum, from the explanations above, it could be inferred that Nabokov uses objectified discourses in *Invitation to a Beheading* for different purposes. Firstly, he creates the gloomy atmosphere of the story through objectified descriptions in the opening pages of the novel to hint at the desperate situation Cincinnatus is set and to foreshadow the upcoming fateful, chaotic events of the novel. Secondly, through depicting such gloomy atmosphere by using silent words, he tries to portray the different unique (otherworldly) characterization of Cincinnatus. Thirdly, through depicting the unique characterization of Cincinnatus, Nabokov implicitly compares the protagonist with other characters and illuminates the strong inner quality of Cincinnatus in not being affected directly by the words or deeds of other characters. Finally, Nabokov uses objectified discourse of minor characters to elicit Cincinnatus's inner polyphonies, which bear more significance due to their nature in giving hints to some otherworldly experiences of the protagonist.

As the plot of the novel unfolds, contrary to Nabokov's literary points of view, it becomes more transparent that he does use different stages of dialogic discourses other than the objectified discourse, such as unidirectional, vari-directional, and active types, all of which bear intense dialogicality compared to the objectified discourse. In relation to this change, the discussion of this section from this point bases its analysis on the nature and development of other general Nabokovian otherworldly qualities evolving from the functions and effects of Bakhtinian double-voiced discourses (unidirectional, vari-directional, and active types), as these types of discourses are privileged by Bakhtin.

At one point in his work *The Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics*, Bakhtin points at some of the unique characteristics of Dostoevsky's narration, one of which is the dramatic moments through which the heroes are depicted in crises; and out of these crises, the development of an unfinalized hero comes in contact not only with other characters in novels, but also with "everything that enters the world of his novels" (Bakhtin, 1984: 73). Similarly, Nabokov in chapter three of *Invitation to a Beheading* gives some hints about the world he glorifies by attributing some ironic implication to

the world he lives in, i.e., prison: “[I] am surrounded by some sort of wretched specters, not by people” (Nabokov, 2011: 32). When it comes to the direct revelation of his main themes, Nabokov’s discourse in *Invitation to a Beheading* changes from the objectified to unidirectional double-voiced discourse. The appearance of ich-Erzählung in the form of I pronoun, use of irony and stylization are all the main characteristics of unidirectional double-voiced discourse, which is a complicated style compared to the objectified discourse. For instance, this ironic betrayal of Cincinnatus’s world— “[I] am surrounded by some sort of wretched specters, not by people” (Nabokov, 2011: 32)— is made in relation to the discourse of his lawyer when he asks him about his feelings. In the speeches made by the lawyer we can identify the speaker’s sarcastic expressions, the goal of which is nothing but to bring to the surface the lawyer’s stupidity and that of people in general in order to raise a kind of counterargument in hero’s consciousness: “‘As I was coming to see you,’ said the lawyer, ‘I was so spry and cheerful ... But now this trifle has distressed me—for, after all, it is a trifle, you will agree; there are more important things. Well, how are you feeling?’” (Nabokov, 2011: 32). This aim at illuminating the superficiality of humans in the form of counterarguments is also a dialogic behavior, uttered in the form of a unidirectional polyphony in that it bears a unique stylization such as sarcasm when the lawyer seems very happy to see the desperate condition of Cincinnatus. Eventually, the first effect that Nabokov achieves by bringing unidirectional dialogism in *Invitation to a Beheading* is the depiction of transcendent, otherworldly nature of Cincinnatus in that his mental perception is deeper than other (worldly) characters, and this depiction is achieved through specific dialogic stylizations within unidirectional discourses.

As the plot of the novel develops, the dialogic interplays turn out to have complex behaviors. As a result of this change, the objectified speeches of characters change to the dialogism of concepts—the hidden, intricate interrelation of different concepts or themes— within the novel mainly for the reason that in Bakhtinian double-voiced discourse, the structure of unidirectional, vari-directional, and active types of discourses are relatively alike. However, it is the utilization and content features which separate these discourses from each other. For instance, the dialogism of material life and Nabokovian life is explain further in a description of Cincinnatus’s disappointment from the objective world:

Everything has duped me as it fell into place, everything. This is the dead end of this life, and I should not have sought salvation within its confines. It is strange that I should have sought salvation. Just like a man grieving because he has recently lost in his dreams something that he had never had in reality, or hoping that tomorrow he would dream that he found it again. That is how mathematics is created; it has its fatal flaw. I have discovered it. I have discovered the little crack in life, where it broke off, where it had once been soldered to something else, something genuinely alive, important and vast... (Nabokov, 2011: 159)

The world which Cincinnatus despises in the above excerpt is the material world in which he has found a “little crack.” Just “soldered” to this bitter and broken life, Cincinnatus comes up with the significations of the otherworld which are “... alive, important and vast....” (Nabokov, 2011: 159). In the course of his disappointment with the life he has, there comes a gleaming light from the loopholes of the material world. However, he does not find his words efficient enough to express the unique pleasure overcoming his mind and being as the result of such an exposure. Despite this, he strives to express the inexpressible and wishes he had spent his life gathering as many words as possible because words—and dialogism as the product of them—can soothe the pain of life and consequently make him “...almost fearless of ... death” (Nabokov, 2011: 159). This incapability in finding any right words is also a dialogic act showing the fact that the character is in the search of words to combine with his own to describe such unique experiences. Although Cincinnatus acknowledges that he is incapable of finding the right words, unidirectional discourse provides him, and consequently Nabokov, with the chance to at least give some clues of the experience which is inexpressible. Taking this role of unidirectional discourse into consideration, the second effect of this type of dialogic discourse, which is the creation of discourses through which the qualities of some inexpressible otherworldly experiences are implicitly signified by addressing the explicit qualities of their opposite binaries, foregrounds itself. In other words, as in the above excerpt on the subject of superficiality of this world, Nabokov implies the pleasant, inexpressible qualities of his “genuinely alive, important and vast” otherworldly experience by pointing out the explicit, unpleasant qualities of this material world and by using unidirectional discourse in order to point to the expressible, inferior qualities of the

material world, by doing which he reversely privileges the qualities of his aesthetic otherworld (Nabokov, 2011: 159).

The importance of the expressibility of words for Cincinnatus in his last days of survival can be best understood if they are compared to his eleventh day of captivity, when for him nothing was real except for the presence of death:

... what matters to me all this, distant, deceitful and dead—I, who am preparing to die? Or else he would begin imagining how the author, still a young man, living, so they said, on an island in the North Sea—would be dying himself; and it was somehow funny that eventually the author must needs die—and it was funny because the only real, genuinely unquestionable thing here was only death itself, the inevitability of the author’s physical death. (Nabokov, 2011: 97–8)

On this day, he is in control of his words when he is talking about the inevitability of death as a worldly inescapable fact. On the same day and just before he senses the absurdity of life and inevitability of death, he reads a novel of about one thousand pages. Back then, this novel, *Quercus*, was considered as a “famous” literary work about the witnesses of an oak tree during six centuries through which “the author unfolded all the historic events—or shadows of events” (Nabokov, 2011: 97). The similarity between this writer and Cincinnatus is their will to search new things: Cincinnatus searching for words to express, and this writer searching for the nature of events. This search for Cincinnatus continues until he loses all his hopes and gives up. However, more important than highlighting these themes, it is parallelism between the worlds of these two novels which brings out the inevitability of dialogism in revealing Nabokov’s otherworldly realm, which resists clear-cut definitions in *Invitation to a Beheading*.

In contrast to Nabokov’s ideas of dialogism, most discourse types are objectified or unidirectional in this novel; however, the second sub-type of Bakhtinian polyphonic discourse, i.e., vari-directional, appears in chapter twelve of the novel when Cincinnatus meets his mother, and out of their speeches, he tries to utter parodistic ich-Erzählung statements (Bakhtin, 1984: 199) by frequent use of the subject I in order to express his inner repressions. Before explaining the examples and effects of vari-directional type of discourse, it is worth summarizing the main characteristics of this type of discourse, as the details have been discussed in Bakhtin’s

section in chapter one. In this type of discourse, the words of another character are brought into the mind of the main character and later parodied. This parodying aims at degrading the other's ideas in order to foreground the discourse of the protagonist. In addition to parody as a dialogic element, there is an excessive use of *ich-Erzählung* statement in this type of discourse to emphasize the subjectivity of characters—and specifically protagonists—and highlight their main concerns. Above all, the vari-directional discourse distances the direct intentions of writers from the discourse of their characters in that characters'—and specifically the protagonists'—utterances carry several layers of meaning through this type of dialogism; and eventually, these texts turn out to have intense dialogical representations. The main reason Nabokov implements this type of dialogism is, in fact, the privileging effects it leaves upon the minds and discourses of otherworldly protagonists by parodying and degrading the discourse of other characters. It should also be remarked that in a few instances, minor characters in Nabokov's works turn out to parody the discourse of the protagonists; however, the main logic behind their parodying intention is inferior enough to reversely privilege the mindsets and discourses of Nabokovian heroes or heroines.

In *Invitation to a Beheading*, vari-directional discourse of Cincinnatus serves two purposes: first to express the inner thoughts which cannot be expressed autonomously without direct external stimuli (direct speeches of a character), and second, to degrade the discourse of one of the interlocutors by parody. For instance, at the moment of his confrontation with his mother, Cincinnatus considers the reactions of motherly feelings as “drama” (Nabokov, 2011a/1935: 104) and accuses his mother of all the lies she has told him. However, this dialogue is the representation of the general authorial voice behind any disclosure of characters; mainly, as in this case, it carries a very bitter sarcasm within that parodistic *ich-Erzählung* statement. What Nabokov implies by these dialogisms in the pursuit of vari-directional discourse is the Nabokovian protagonists' hatred of hypocrisy or whatsoever seems—or is—unreal and fake. In other words, Nabokov uses vari-directional discourse to reveal the ideas of his otherworldly characters about specific abstract concepts.

This representation of Nabokovian otherworldly feelings reaches the very climax of its extravagancy when the emphasis of the dialogues shifts from the

protagonist to another minor character, M'sieur Pierre, who considers the "pleasure of love" only in terms of sexuality:

"The pleasure of love," said M'sieur Pierre, "is achieved by means of the most beautiful and healthful of all known physical exercises. ... During leisure hours, the laborer of love immediately strikes the observer with the falcon like expression of his eyes, his cheerful disposition, and his fresh complexion. Observe also my gliding gait. Thus we have before us a certain phenomenon, which we may call by the general term 'love' or 'erotic pleasure' that a man condemned to die finds it hardest of all to forget woman, woman's delicious body. (Nabokov, 2011: 119)

Since this excerpt does not come from the protagonist of the novel, its content varies drastically from that of Cincinnatus's, as Cincinnatus turns out to have at least neutral views regarding the role of women, or he never utters a sentence showing women as sexual means for the satisfaction of men. This is an ideal example of the dialogical confrontations (imaginings) which exist in the opposite direction of each other; however, they are not objectively revealed. This type of dialogism highlights the importance of the representation of inner perceptions which can only be detected through interrelations of different polyphonies. In the example of the above excerpt, the objective revelation of sexual desires stands in sharp contrast with the unexpressed sexual tendencies of Cincinnatus. Although Cincinnatus's view on sexuality is not revealed in this novel, the views of M'sieur Pierre's ideas reversely prove the possible, opposite views in Cincinnatus's mind. In a similar way, the characteristics of the second type of dialogic discourse—i.e., vari-directional—prevail in the rest of the chapter where M'sieur Pierre is highly annoyed when the words of the other character in the novel cannot add anything to his own dictatorial confessions, which in fact, turn out to impose their power in an ironical way: "...please don't interfere with my development of the subject; if you have something to add..." (Nabokov, 1935: 119). In this sense, M'sieur Pierre is highly obsessed with sex that he does not want to hear anything other than sexual significations. Therefore, when Rodrig Ivanovich looks at Cincinnatus and claims that the pleasure of the "poetry of moonlit nights" can also be reckoned as a pure source of joy, M'sieur Pierre is unknowingly and ironically trapped by the way other things, such as poetry, matter for Cincinnatus mainly because he (Cincinnatus) is concerned with otherworldly, aesthetic experiences, among which

poetry as an aesthetic creation is one phenomenon. In this case, Rodrig does not utter any word on the subject of sexuality; however, the loss of such an utterance bothers and indirectly degrades M'sieur Pierre views.

In addition to the degrading effect of vari-directional dialogism in the above example, another effect Nabokov tries to achieve through the parodistic discourse in the voice of other characters is the infusion of a sense of objectivity to show the superficiality of common people not only through the eyes of the protagonist. In fact, the inferior subject matters of other characters' discourses foreground the superficiality of themselves directly, and the loss of any response from Cincinnatus in this case signifies the inferiority of such views. It should also be pointed that the signification of this kind of loss is only possible to be made clear through vari-directional discourse, which entails the use of irony and parody. These plays of irony and parodistic ich-Erzählung statements signal the voice of the writer (Nabokov) which is carried by hidden dialogic formations of two different groups of consciousness—M'sieur Pierre and Rodrig on the one hand, and Cincinnatus on the other. These formations of consciousnesses are all the result of dialogic features of Nabokov's works, which enable him to sketch the outlines of his otherworldly aesthetic realm in *Invitation to a Beheading*. As Nabokov is not clear in depicting the qualities of his mental aesthetic otherworld in this novel, he tries to hint at the inferior characteristics of the worldly qualities through which their binaries would be privileged.

The third subtype of dialogic discourse, the active type, appears rarely in the chapters of the novel when there is no interference of characters, and this type of narration is what Bakhtin praises the most. Active type of discourse, which is the most complicated one among other double-voiced discourses, is characterized by hidden inner polemics or confessions. In this type of dialogism, the speaker does not address a present addressee; all that happens occurs in the mind of the narrator. In *Invitation to a Beheading*, for instance, in chapter eight – maybe the most iconic one in terms of this study, – Cincinnatus presents a hidden polemic of the odd awareness of his own being. He uses several styles including the first-person Bakhtinian Ich-Erzählung statement with more emphasis on the subject pronoun "I":

...I remember myself with lawless lucidity, I have been my own accomplice, who knows too much, and therefore is dangerous. I issue from such burning blackness, I spin like a top, with such propelling force, such tongues of flame,

that to this day I occasionally feel ... that primordial palpitation of mine, that first branding contact, the mainspring of my "I". (Nabokov, 2011: 73)

What Nabokov intends to achieve by forming this type of discourse is the effect of imposing a specific otherworldly quality directly, which, in fact, appears scarcely in *Invitation to a Beheading*. In the above excerpt, for example, one quality of the otherworldly state of mind is disclosed when the person is exposed to an infinite knowledge of one's own identity—which later they lose the track of,—that unique identity, or at least a glimpse of it, when they distance from the moment of their birth. This idea is in direct parallelism with Nabokov's idea that humans are trapped within two ends, birth and death, the interval of which is the moment of separation from otherworldliness and exposure to worldly experiences:

Over and over again, my mind has made colossal efforts to distinguish the faintest of personal glimmers in the impersonal darkness on both sides of my life. That this darkness is caused merely by the walls of time separating me and my bruised fists from the free world of timelessness is a belief I gladly share with the most gaudily painted savage. (1965: 15–6)

In another instance, this style of narration is further extended to achieve the function of showing an essential belief, highlighting Cincinnatus's belief on the essentiality of dreams in giving meaning to life whereas the commonsense's view is the opposite; dreams are the results of the reflection of real-life events:

I have long since grown accustomed to the thought that what we call dreams is semi-reality, promising, the promise of reality, a foreglimpse and a whiff of it; that is, they contain, in a very vague, diluted state, more genuine reality than our vaunted waking life which, in its turn, is semi-sleep, an evil drowsiness into which penetrate in grotesque disguise the sounds and sights of the real world, flowing beyond the periphery of the mind...But how I fear awakening! (Nabokov, 2011: 74)

Active types of discourse, as in the above excerpt, are complex because the author should disregard his common style of narration and take the responsibility of revealing the inner thoughts of characters, bearing in mind the characters' unique unfinalized and carnivalesque features within their fictional world. In the above excerpt on the nature of dreams, Cincinnatus defines the characteristics of dreams as semi-

otherworldly experiences in a way as if he has objectively experienced and, consequently, is impulsively confessing those experiences.

Therefore, the first function of the active type of discourse in *Invitation to a Beheading* appears as a means for the writer to disclose a specific otherworldly quality or belief directly by disregarding, firstly, his own context and, secondly, putting himself in the carnivalescent features of Cincinnatus's world. In the above excerpt, the dialogism of direct speeches changes into the dialogisms of concepts, which are complex forms of dialogic interplays, where some opposite abstract and concrete qualities are compared, and the privileged ones are reconsidered and preferred. This time, the dialogism of ideas occurs within the active type of discourse and reveals its second function: comparing the binaries of some worldly and otherworldly qualities explicitly in the form of hidden confessional discourse. The excerpt below, which follows the above excerpt, is another active type of discourse and the dialogism within it extends to the comparison of the world of puppet-like humans addressed as "here," pointing to the material world and as "there," referring to the otherworld of Nabokov:

The horrible 'here,' the dark dungeon, in which a relentlessly howling heart is incarcerated, this 'here' holds and constricts me.... There... the gaze of men glows with inimitable understanding; there the freaks that are tortured here walk unmolested; there time takes shape according to one's pleasure...." (Nabokov, 2011: 75)

The dialogism of worldly and otherworldly qualities later shifts to the gliding nature of language and represents a Derridean idea of signification by means of constant privileging and unprivileging plays of these two worlds in the form of binaries—the material world and Nabokovian otherworld,—privileging Nabokov's aesthetic otherworld. As these aesthetic experiences cannot be expressed directly further in *Invitation to a Beheading* by the author, Nabokov needs to appear in the discourse of Cincinnatus to make the otherworld experience implicitly understandable to the readers. Strikingly, the intense dialogism of otherworldly qualities is one of the most complicated dialogic characteristics implemented by Nabokov contrary to his claims on the presence of dialogism. As it will be shown in the further sections of this chapter, this experience of otherworldly qualities is different for Humbert Humbert in *Lolita* and John Shade in *Pale Fire* Compared to Cincinnatus. The latter, for instance, recounts the incapability of any human being in expressing their inner thoughts

through language. However, he does his best to express at least the partial perception of his unique experience of being exposed to an otherworldly realm within his chaotic mind:

Brought up into the air, the word bursts, as burst those spherical fishes that breathe and blaze only in the compressed murk of the depths when brought up in the net. And what I say is not it, not quite it, and I am getting mixed up, getting nowhere, talking nonsense... as there is in the world not a single human who can speak my language; or, more simply, not a single human who can speak; or, even more simply, not a single human; I must think only of myself, of that force which urges me to express myself. (Nabokov, 2011: 76)

What Cincinnatus confesses in the above excerpt signals the third function of the active type of discourse through which Nabokov acknowledges the inefficiency of language in revealing the objective nature of his otherworldly experiences. In this sense, Nabokov uses this type of discourse to create a subjective effect for a specific character for Cincinnatus in this novel to express his uneasiness with the human language in that it cannot reflect the otherworldly quality in his mind precisely. In other words, this dialogism acts as a means to address the presence of such an experience while referring to the incapability of language in defining its overall characteristics.

At the final dialogic imagination, Cincinnatus points to the fact that whereas his otherworldly experiences seem natural to him, they are reckoned unnatural and consequently forbidden by worldly people:

...even to this day I still feel an ache in that part of my memory where the very beginning of this effort is recorded, that is, the occasion when I first understood that things which to me had seemed natural were actually forbidden, impossible, that any thought of them was criminal. Well do I remember that day! I must have just learned how to make letters, since I remember myself wearing on my fifth finger the little copper ring that was given to children who already knew how to copy the model words from the flower beds in the school garden, where petunias, phlox and marigold spelled out lengthy adages. (Nabokov, 2011: 77)

The above excerpt is a tangible example of an active type of polyphony through which Nabokov attempts to achieve a specific literary goal. This goal indicates the

fourth feature of this type of discourse by which Nabokov clarifies the fact that even the partial depiction of the otherworldly experience, which is sensible to Cincinnatus, cannot be acceptable to others. Therefore, this function of the active dialogism provides Cincinnatus, and Nabokov in general, with the possibilities of remembering his unique otherworldly childhood memory and elaborating the pleasant feelings they left upon him – pleasant for Cincinnatus, not worldly people. For example, for Cincinnatus, the turning point of “‘here’” and “‘there,’” this dialogic real world of people and dream-like world of Cincinnatus (or Nabokov the author), is marked by the presence of death, which can be reckoned as a tangible example of the unnatural aspect of Cincinnatus’s perception. Whereas death is regarded as a dreadful event for ordinary people, for Cincinnatus it is a matter of emancipation from the world of mimicking humans (Nabokov, 2011: 90). Therefore, the one and only common ground for him and the others is the experience of death: “... because the only real, genuinely unquestionable thing here was only death itself, the inevitability of the author’s physical death” (Nabokov, 2011: 98). If analyzed dialogically, it will be clear that although death is the only common ground in terms of its inevitability both for Cincinnatus and the worldly characters in *Invitation to a Beheading*, the way each party perceives death is entirely different. For Cincinnatus, it is—through the active type of discourse, which he finds himself—to reveal the “genuinely unquestionable” (Nabokov, 2011: 98) death as a fact that will let him escape from the world of puppet-like people. Therefore, the effect that Nabokov creates by using active types of discourse is the subjective depiction of the possibility that Cincinnatus might be redeemed after his physical death. The reason that Nabokov uses this type of dialogism here is the high degree of subjectivity this discourse provides for the writer to illuminate his hypothetical intentions. Once again, the clash of these two dialogic thoughts in Cincinnatus’s mind verifies the inevitability of dialogism in this work, which turns out to have diverse functions and effects on the revelation of Nabokov’s aesthetic themes.

As the protagonist of the story strives to make sense out of the absurdity of all the (ordinary) humans surrounding him, the most inordinate obstacle for his physical and odd mental perspicacity emerges from his confrontations with other characters, and this fact is alluded to Socrates by the writer. Before discussing the role of Socrates in Nabokov’s work, the role Socrates played in Bakhtin’s theory should be made clear.

Bakhtin praised Socrates greatly mainly because he shrewdly subverted the authorial (single-voiced) discourses of the ordinary people of his age for a humble ambition, and that was the revelation of the new versions of truth:

Socrates was a great master of the anacrisis: he knew how to force people to speak, to clothe in discourse their dim but stubbornly preconceived pinions, to illuminate them by the word and in this way to expose their falseness or incompleteness; he knew how to drag the going truths out into the light of day. Anacrisis is the provocation of the word by the... (Bakhtin, 1984: 110–1)

The word “anacrisis” above is defined by Bakhtin as “a means for eliciting and provoking the words of one interlocutor, forcing him to express his opinion and express it thoroughly” (Bakhtin, 1984: 110–1) in order to delineate the weak logic behind their opinions. Similarly, in Nabokov’s *Invitation to a Beheading*, there is an allegorical allusion to this concept of Socratic dialectics: “I also remind you that tonight, there will be given with sensational success the new comic opera Socrates Must Decrease. Now I make way for other performers and hope, townspeople...” (Nabokov, 2011: 171). In other words, what the deputy city director—and in general, all mimicking people—intends to establish is a homogeneous society without the nuisance of any subversive polyphonies. In the case of *Invitation to a Beheading*, this allusion might bear another significance in addition to the dialogic literary element, allusion; as Socrates was imprisoned and executed mainly due to his dialogues which aimed at disclosing—and consequently, diminishing—the superficiality of common people’s thoughts and beliefs, Cincinnatus is being executed for the same reason, in that his mind and way of life is dialogic in the sense that through give-and-take speech acts or dialogues with other superficial people like Rodrig and M’sieur Pierre, he tries to offer another alternative to this dark world of common people, i.e., esthetic otherworld, which can only be revealed through Bakhtinian dialogic representations. In other words, Nabokov uses different functions and effects resulting from dialogic narrative techniques and strategies in *Invitation to a Beheading* in order to elicit some of the raw otherworldly qualities—raw because the otherworldly qualities are not explicitly revealed in this novel.

As explained in detail in section four of chapter one, one of the important literary aims of Nabokov is to produce works which are completely aesthetic in nature. By calling his works purely aesthetic, he wants to be different from his other

contemporary modernist writers in that in his works, there would be no traces of ideology or political messages. In order to attain that goal, he gives a very implicit description of a different and transcendent world—not necessarily transcendentalism—which is in one-to-one conflict with the world of everyday people. It is shown in this section's analysis that whatever he tries to sketch out is a dialogic derivation that is exerted by several Bakhtinian discourse styles: whether from the speeches of others or the reflection of their abstract ideas, implication of the ideology on his mindset, or the obsessive past which entraps him at times. Whether it is the reflection of others, the ideology or the past, their revelations appear in the form of external or internal polyphonies, and these dialogic representations are the only ways of explicating the Nabokovian otherworld. In addition to this, Nabokov systematically uses dialogic discourses and representations in *Invitation to a Beheading* to achieve specific effects. For instance, the objectified discourses, which constitute the majority of discourses in *Invitation to a Beheading* are implemented by Nabokov to depict objectively the unique inner world of Cincinnatus, sketch the cruel environment of the protagonist, and finally, foreshadow the disastrous events in the plot of the novel. The other sub-types of double-voiced polyphonies are also implemented for creating specific effects. Unidirectional discourse is used to illuminate the specific qualities of Cincinnatus's perception in relation to the worldly qualities of other common characters through its emphasis on ich-Erzählung mode and give some hints on the inexpressible otherworldly qualities Cincinnatus experiences. Vari-directional discourse is used by the writer in order to achieve two important goals: to express inner thoughts which cannot be expressed without external stimuli and to degrade the ideas of other characters by parodying their thoughts. Active type of discourse, which is used rarely in this novel, is used to point to specific qualities with high degree of subjectivity without addressing any possible external stimuli. The other function of this type of discourse is the role it plays in bringing to the surface the confessional otherworldly polemics which are mostly addressed explicitly. In sum, the types of discourses and dialogic representations in *Invitation to a Beheading* make transparent the fact that Nabokov could not have pointed to very general qualities of his aesthetic otherworld if he had not used different Bakhtinian dialogic elements, narrative techniques and strategies.

III. CHAPTER 2. MODERNIST AND POSTMODERNIST POLYPHONIES IN NABOKOV'S ART

B. LOLITA

Lolita (1955) is considered as Vladimir Nabokov's most famous and controversial work in terms of its content and structure, and critics have written numerous articles on this literary masterpiece. However, one of the points missed by many of the scholars can be a delicate Bakhtinian study of *Lolita*'s form, and through its form, the controversial content of this literary masterpiece. Contrary to Nabokov's literary claims, the structure and content of *Lolita* call to attention the excessive dialogic presences throughout the novel. Eventually, in this section, the dialogic formations in this novel will be analyzed in order to identify which types of Bakhtinian dialogic narrative techniques and strategies Nabokov implements in order to reveal his otherworldly themes. Moreover, this section will identify the function of Bakhtinian dialogic discourses used in *Lolita* in revealing Nabokov's otherworldly qualities of art, such as beauty, aesthetics and the sublime, fate and coincidental patterns, timelessness and immortality, comparing the delicate structure and content of this work of art with the writer's previously analyzed work *Invitation to a Beheading*. Parallel to these identifications, it will be shown that in *Lolita* Nabokov's otherworldly significations bear intense dialogicality in terms of their representation, and this abundance in implementing more dialogic techniques sheds light on the fact that this increase is in direct relation with literary maturity of Vladimir Nabokov, moving from modernist techniques of narration to postmodernist poetics. For instance, one of the most intensive dialogic formations appears in the Foreword note written by Dr. John Ray, a psychiatrist, who tries to reflect different impression from the main text written by Humbert Humbert. This attempt from the side of Dr. Ray is an objective example of a dialogic existence, which gives this novel the specific effect that the primary section

rejects the content of the second part written by Humbert Humbert. In this sense, the first instance of a dialogic relation emerges.

Lolita is divided in three different sections. The first section of the novel, the Foreword, is written by Dr. John Ray who is a psychiatrist and has received the manuscripts of the second section of the book, written by Humbert Humbert, through one of his friends. The second section of the novel encompasses the main story of the novel from Humbert's point of view. Finally, the last part, entitled "On a Book Entitled *Lolita*," reveals Vladimir Nabokov's ideas regarding the content of this novel in general. Although it is very clear that the author of all three sections is Nabokov, his style of narration changes dramatically in all three sections of the novel. For instance, in the Dr. Ray's narration, Nabokov uses a kind of language which is compatible with the mindset of a common psychologist who gives a general idea on the actions of Humbert and blames him for his crimes. This part of the novel stands as a moral overture to the subsequent events of the story. However, the second section, including the main events of the story from Humbert's point of view, shows the events from a different perspective, through which the narrator tries to release himself from the crimes he has committed. On a primary level, these two examples show that the author of the story, Nabokov, uses two entirely different discourses, and if analyzed delicately, it will be transparent that Nabokov forms the voice of each section according to each character's chronotope—"...the intrinsic connectedness of temporal and spatial relationships that are artistically expressed in literature." (Bakhtin, 1981: 84). Consequently, it becomes clear that it is the chronotopes of characters which characterize the discourse of the writer in *Lolita*.

All three sections of *Lolita* are penned in first-person point of view. The first section is narrated by a first-person unreliable narrator in the Forward note, which acts as an overture to the other dense section of the novel which is narrated from the eyes of the protagonist of the novel. As stated above, the existence of these two sections, in which the first part negates the actions of the second section is the first evidence that Nabokov writes his works, specifically *Lolita*, with polyphonic elements. The Forward note, from scratch, bears some contradictory promulgations, and this style opens the doors for the necessity of dialogic analyses. Whereas the putative writer of the Forward note, Dr. John Ray, remarks at one point that the commitments of Humbert are purely

evil, he acknowledges that the “the very scenes...of sensuous existence are the most strictly functional ones in the development of a moral apotheosis” (Nabokov, 2011b/1955: v–vi). The “scenes of sensuous” implies the pedophilic act of Humbert Humbert and in this sense, it stands as in an antithetical relation with the concept of morality Dr. Ray discusses. This polyphony of antithetical discourse is a combination of the first two types of Bakhtinian polyphonic discourses (Unidirectional double-voiced discourse and Vari-directional double-voiced discourse (Bakhtin, 1984: 199).

The unidirectional type of discourse highlights the role of “stylization, the first-person point of view and unobjectified discourse of a character” (Bakhtin, 1984: 199). Stylization appears in the form of the symbolism of “morbid states” (2011b/1955: v) to address the taste of many scholars in literature. What Nabokov tries to implement through this symbolization is the strong hidden ironical effect it carries in order to abase the inferior taste of common literary scholars, who aim at evaluating every work of art from the vantage point of morality. Therefore, Nabokov’s discourse here is double-voiced because his style bears a hidden polyphony addressing the primary qualities of otherworldly aesthetic experience in that its content may disturb the expectations of the same inferior literary scholars. In other words, Nabokov from the beginning of his narration attempts to imply the fact that the first characteristic of his otherworldly experience is the signification of unnatural or uncanny concepts or deeds for the commonsense by using unidirectional discourse, and this signification reflects the first effect of this type of discourse. The vari-directional discourse, on the other hand, entails a parodistic discourse aimed at degrading the other’s work in order to foreground the speech of the narrator. Dr. Ray parodies the content of Humbert’s story and labels it as an “offensive” work of art (2011, p .v) while imagining the reaction of the readers of *Lolita*. In this sense, Dr. Ray is pretty sure that the readers of *Lolita* will blame Humbert for his destructive role in *Lolita*’s life, and that is why he calls Humbert’s story “offensive” (2011b/1955: v). Consequently, the dialogic effect created in this section targets the same commonsense readers to be able to bear the so-called “offensive” content of the story in section two in order to be exposed, even partially, to the uncanny content of the novel, which will later be linked to the otherworldly qualities.

Whereas the opening of *Invitation to a Beheading* is characterized by the objectified dialogic discourse, the opening of *Lolita* bears the characteristics of the second type of Bakhtinian double-voiced discourses: unidirectional. There are mainly two reasons why the behavior of polyphonies changes in the course of Nabokov's literary maturity from *Invitation to a Beheading* to *Lolita*. Firstly, it is very probable that Nabokov followed the natural line of transition from modernism to postmodernism, and in this regard, he tried to make his works more subjective by using the first-person point of view and other Bakhtinian discourse styles. Secondly, it is clear that the main intention of Nabokov in depicting the otherworldly aesthetic experience could not be achieved only by using Bakhtinian objectified discourse. Therefore, Nabokov needed more sophisticated styles of narration to reveal the subjective inner experiences of his otherworldly realm.

Dr. Ray, in the course of his notes, calls attention to reconsidering the idea of the unnatural in the world of arts and human perception similar to the way Cincinnatus puts the same unnatural ideas forward (2011b/1955: 158). In Cincinnatus's case, the unnatural turned out to signify another world for the protagonist through the active type of dialogism. In *Lolita*, the dialogism of natural and unnatural approaches of perception represents itself through vari-directional type of polyphony by parodying the voice of an implied reader when Dr. Ray claims that any deviation from the normal, even at the expense of bearing the word "offensive," is the twist of literary birth: "what ...has stressed ... books, ... namely ... "offensive" is frequently but a synonym for "unusual;" and a great work of art is of course always original, and thus by its very nature should come as a more or less shocking surprise" (Nabokov, 2011b/1955: vi).

What goes under this polyphonic utterance is the hidden message of Nabokov that emphasizes on the necessity of an uncanny artistic creation. Therefore, Nabokov defers his direct intention of pointing out to that novel taste in literature by hiding behind the chronotopic words of Dr. Ray. By parodying the taste of the commonsense, Nabokov rhetorically reveals the first otherworldly quality in *Lolita*, i.e., its uncanny subject matter. In other words, parodying here acts as a tool for Nabokov to sophisticatedly point to the inseparability of what many consider as "offensive" content from the plot of the novel. The final parodying vari-directional claim in the Foreword section contradicts what he warns in the previous lines: "...in this poignant

personal study there lurks a general lesson; the wayward child, the egotistic mother, the panting maniac these are not only vivid characters in a unique story: they warn us of dangerous trends; they point out potent evils” (Nabokov, 2011b/1955: vi). The intense parody in calling Humbert’s section a “personal study” highlights how a superficial reading of section two might lead to common problematic understandings. It is problematic at least because it is not a personal study; it is in fact a serious case of crime while, at the same time, it holds unique style and some unique literary qualities. Moreover, the above quote establishes a contradiction with the quote preceding it on the theme of the so-called “offensive” literature by reminding the readers that *Lolita* is a moral work of art in that it warns us to be wary of our loved ones not to be trapped in such a big crime in this world full of “potent evils” (Nabokov, 2011b/1955: vi). In this regard, Nabokov uses vari-directional polyphony to hint at a remarkable contradiction on a subjective level of interpretation. This contradiction foreshadows similar diverse cases the subjective mode of Humbert’s narration will bring forth. This style of narration points out the second role of vari-directional discourse in *Lolita* through which Nabokov attempts to keep even moral readers of the story engaged in the course of events while he is pointing at specific qualities of his art.

Therefore, contradiction is an inseparable element of *Lolita* and it mostly acts as a bridge to keep the ideological and moralist readers attached to the plot of the story. Taking this contradiction into consideration, what happens in the first section of the novel is therefore a dramatic change in the voice of Nabokov to represent himself as the self-contradictory Dr. John Ray and use a discourse in relation to being a psychiatrist who at times tries to point to the unique features of Humbert’s narration, and at other times blames the writer of the second section, who is Humbert.

The second section of the novel starts with the first-person unreliable narration of the protagonist of the novel, Humbert Humbert. The reason for characterizing this point of view as unreliable can be due to the passionate feelings he holds while confessing his deeds. This unreliability has also things in relation to the contradictions in the novel, which are mostly aimed at releasing Humbert from the crimes he has committed. In this sense, the second binaries of contradictions mostly target the readers—or the jury members in the novel—to raise sympathy with what Humbert

brings up as excuses. The type of discourse on the first page of the section is unidirectional, firstly, because he addresses the name of his lover as if he is talking to a present group of interlocuters, and secondly, because of the way he utters *Lolita*'s name is accompanied with a great passion, like an internal polyphony reflecting the ideas of the protagonist. However, at the end of the same page, he gives some hints about the possible issues that he may come across while narrating his story because these notes will be presented either to the jury members who are going to execute him by addressing them directly: "Ladies and gentlemen of the jury, exhibit number one is what the seraphs, the misinformed, simple, noble-winged seraphs, envied. Look at this tangle of thorns" (Nabokov, 2011b/1955: 1) or to the twentieth and twenty-first centuries readers. The phrase "tangle of thorns" in a unidirectional polyphony is a dialogic representation in that it acts as a defense tactic to respond to the possible bitter reactions of the readers of *Lolita*. In this case, the author attempts to consider himself in the place of a criminal and respond to the offended reactions of his audience. Yet he is sure with high confidence that his art (confessions) and rhetorical skills will or may alter the nature of his deeds: "You can always count on a murderer for a fancy prose style" (Nabokov, 2011b/1955: 1). This invitation to bear with his version of the story is a unique polyphonic behavior in that the writer attempts to establish a very close relationship with his audience to gain their sympathy, and consequently, to release himself of the crimes he has committed. Eventually, the first effect of unidirectional discourse in Humbert's narration serves as a defense mechanism by addressing the jury members to release himself from his pedophilic crime. In this sense, the first evidence for the inevitability of polyphonism's presence in Nabokov's works becomes clear in that the narrator uses the characteristics of this type of double-voiced discourse to reveal the events of his crime with the least possible annoyance from the side of jury members and readers.

After disclosing the fact that there was a precursor to *Lolita*, Humbert intends to sketch his abstract perceptions of *Lolita* and his relationship with her in the minds of the jury (and hence readers) (Nabokov, 2011b/1955: 12). And to do so, he has to create his own words in order to signify them in a proper way. The creation of the word "nymphet," for instance, attributes some mixed characteristics of childish traits with those of women, and from here, the dialogism of concepts appears in the body of the

work. The dialogism of concepts in *Lolita* appears through the combinational qualities of childhood with womanhood (Nabokov, 2011b/1955: 10). Looking at this case from a wider perspective, it is obvious that without the presence of Bakhtinian dialogism Humbert could not have defined the combinational qualities of two distinct groups of individuals. In other words, Humbert uses dialogism to signify a new concept, i.e., “nymphet” out of the qualities of womanhood and girlhood. In this sense, the first role of dialogism of concepts is in creating new meanings from the merging of the definitions of two distinct concepts comes forth. Right in the middle of the definition of the word “nymphet”, there emerges a vari-directional polyphony—the second type of double-voiced discourse which includes parodistic elements and the styles implementing those elements from the first-person point of view—which acts as a rhetorical question in order to raise the debate to a higher level of signification: “Between those age limits, are all girl-children nymphets? Of course not. Otherwise, we who are in the know, we lone voyagers, we nympholepts, would have long gone insane” (Nabokov, 2011b/1955: 10). By calling it a higher level of signification, this study aims at showing the fact that Humbert attempts, by using vari-directional discourse, to convince the jury that *Lolita* was different from other nymphets because she was “incomparably more dependent on the spatial world of synchronous phenomena than on that intangible island of entranced time where *Lolita* plays with her likes” (Nabokov, 2011b/1955: 12). Taking the two important dialogic concepts—“synchronous phenomena” and “intangible island of entranced time”—which are analogously analyzed in the above excerpt, and defining dialogism as “a fundamental mode of thought that emphasizes multiple simultaneous perceptions of reality” (2011b/1955: 477), once more it becomes transparent that Nabokov uses dialogic representation in order to create new meanings. Every time Nabokov compares two different qualities when it comes to addressing *Lolita*, it seems that his voice bears two layers of signification as if the first Nabokov perceives *Lolita*, as in the preceding excerpt on the theme of “synchronous phenomena,” in terms of worldly or physical circumstances, whereas the second Nabokov perceives her from the otherworldly point of view. Therefore, the first function of dialogism of ideas which is the creation of new meanings within a var-directional polyphony can be the most important effect Nabokov achieves through applying Bakhtin’s theory of dialogic imagination.

Strikingly, the vari-directional discourse continues throughout the novel with more parodying features in order to highlight the fact that Humbert's intelligence and sophistication is above the imagination of people and specifically the psychiatrist who is deceived by Humbert's genuineness of eloquence and rhetorics or sincerity: "I discovered there was an endless source of robust enjoyment in trifling with psychiatrists: cunningly leading them on;... inventing for them elaborate dreams, pure classics in style (which make them , the dream-extortionists, dream and wake up shrieking)" (Nabokov, 2011b/1955: 34). In this case, once again, by elaborating "dreams" to psychiatrists, Nabokov reckons two possible levels of perception; the inferior level of psychiatrists in general and the superior level of Humbert's who parodies and deceives the former group (psychiatrists). As the novel continues, this type of discourse dominates the chain of thoughts in Humbert's mind and is the only means of redirecting them into his story in the second section of the novel. Here, the third function of vari-directional polyphony emerges: to stress the noble intelligence of otherworldly people, as Humbert in this case. In other words, Humbert uses vari-directional discourse to parody the approaches of psychiatrists, who are apparently experts in identifying the complexities of their patients, but are not smart enough not to get caught in the game Humbert plays with them.

Surprisingly, in Humbert's case, it is Humbert himself who plays with psychiatrists' ways of interpreting and explaining dreams. On another occasion, before the revelation of his views on psychiatrists, he uses the most favorable Bakhtinian discourse, which is the active type of discourse, or the third category of double-voiced discourse. In Bakhtin's theory of language and the role of dialogism, hidden polemics and autobiographical confessions are all the characteristics of the active type of discourse where the subjectivity of characters reaches its zenith. For instance, Humbert keeps reminding himself how in the story of *Lolita* he is "convinced... that in a certain magic and fateful way *Lolita* began with Annabel" (Nabokov, 2011b/1955: 8). In this internal polemic which is preceded by questioning himself, Nabokov has no other way except using the third type of polyphonic discourse, the active type, which can bear many elements within itself mainly because there seems to be no external stimulus to evoke such a revelation regarding his affection towards *Lolita*. Therefore, what Nabokov mostly does in revealing the inner complexities of his characters is to use the

same Bakhtinian dialogic techniques. These inner complexities are dialogic representations in that they represent at least two different perceptions: one is the perception of Humbert's first love, named "Annabel," and the second one is the existence of *Lolita*. However, what foregrounds *Lolita* besides her physical similarity to the deceased Annabel is some otherworldly nature *Lolita* possesses. Therefore, these dialogic complexities represent two different mental qualities while, at the same time, they hold partial similarities between these two teenagers. This form of dialogic representation is the utmost example of Bakhtinian dialogism, appearing in the form of an active type of

polyphonism. The effect that Humbert achieves by implementing the active type of discourse, for instance, in the above excerpt on the similarity of *Lolita* and Annabel, is the revelation of his inner thoughts without being forced by an external stimulus, and this appears as the first function of active type of polyphonism.

In other extreme instances, dialogism of entirely different concepts takes control of Humbert and from the very early stages, he is baffled to the point that he hesitates for moments, but there is no other way except continuing from the same dialogism to reach his inner desires. In general, the inner desires of Nabokovian protagonists are mostly revealed in three ways: they emerge either from the existence of others (characters or implied readers), or the transparent dialogues between characters, or the ideology of this material world, all of which are external stimuli. On the other hand, inner polyphonies may emerge as a response to an implied listener who/which can be reckoned as an internal stimulus mainly because there does not exist a physical entity in the real world. However, something is common among all these factors and that is their dialogic relation with the consciousness of Nabokov's protagonists. The existing relation between these dialogic imaginations is what makes Humbert move forward. For instance, the following lines show how the clashes of contradictory forces exhaust him; however, the result of such dialogic exposures is the only way out:

The trouble was that those gentlemen had not, and I had, caught glimpses of an incomparably more poignant bliss. My world was split. I was aware of not one but two sexes, neither of which was mine; ... But to me, through the prism of my senses, they were as different as mist and mast. ... One moment I was

ashamed and frightened, another recklessly optimistic. (Nabokov, 2011b/1955: 14)

As pointed out above, out of shame and fear, there emerges an optimism: “At other times I would tell myself that it was all a question of attitude, that there was really nothing wrong in being moved to distraction by girl-children” (Nabokov, 2011b/1955: 14–15). Consequently, the dialogic imagination and the infinite interrelation of these concepts act as Hegelian synthesis phase, which is the phase of creation of another concept—“optimism” in the above instance— from the clash of two existing concepts—“shame” and “fear.” This also sheds light on the second function of dialogism of concepts: leading the consciousness to other moods to look at things differently and continue indulging in his narration of otherworldly experiences.

The hesitations and inner polyphonies in Humbert’s mind continue to impress him as if they are his twins even when everything might seem amicable: “Eh bien, pas du tout! Instead of basking in the beams of smiling Chance, I was obsessed by all sorts of purely ethical doubts and fears” (Nabokov, 2011b/1955: 69–70). The French phrase appearing in the beginning of the preceding excerpt, meaning “well, not [a problem] at all,” is what Bakhtin terms heteroglossia, which shows different voices with an inner polyphonic structure, representing different forms of perception. In this instance, the phrase in French acts as a second voice or polyphony, approving the mood of Humbert who is confused by “doubts and fears” (Nabokov, 2011b/1955: 69–70). Above all, these presences imply how a single utterance is composed of different coexisting dialogic elements even in Nabokov’s work contrary to his literary claims.

On the final pages of the second section of the novel, the dialogic imagination extends to the realm of atheism and God where in an active type of discourse, Humbert mockingly uncovers his skepticism which has overwhelmed his mind. This mockery brings into attention the presence of polyphonism even in his speeches aimed at degrading fundamental thoughts and beliefs when there is no discussion of serious matters:

With the utmost simplicity and clarity, I now saw myself and my love.... A couple of years before, under the guidance of an intelligent French-speaking confessor, to whom, in a moment of metaphysical curiosity, I had turned over

a Protestant's drab atheism for an old-fashioned popish cure, I had hoped to deduce from my sense of sin the existence of a Supreme Being. (Nabokov, 2011b/1955: 366)

The playful mood of the narrator in the world of morality, as is absolutely predictable, is resolved through the dialogism of ideas, concepts and abstract perceptions which are shown in the form of a poem: "The moral sense in mortals is the duty/ We have to pay on mortal sense of beauty" (Nabokov, 2011b/1955: 366). Comparing these lines of poem with the excerpt preceding it, the main concepts of each one is related dialogically. For instance, in these two lines of the poem, the dialogism of morality and beauty occupies Humbert's mind at the same time, which later changes to the preference of the latter for him, because in his aesthetic otherworld beauty stands above all other phenomena. In the above excerpts, the active type of polyphony reveals its second effect through which Humbert discloses directly the intense inner beliefs regarding the fundamentals of religion and atheism. In other words, the active type of discourse illuminates the core beliefs of Nabokovian otherworldly protagonists: Cincinnatus confessing his agnostic views, Humbert pointing to his doubts regarding Christianity in general.

These delicate dialogical representations shed light on the fact that Nabokov wrote *Lolita* parallel to Bakhtinian definition and characteristics of the novel genre, where different languages and voices (carnavalesque) characterize the way he wanted to symbolize his world, which, once again, credits Bakhtin's theory of dialogism in the sense that that Nabokovian otherworld is represented through Bakhtinian dialogic representations. For instance, the above excerpts, in addition to holding two layers of signification through dialogic representation, are the objective examples of a carnivalesque genre when/where the language of poetry intermingles with the language of novel to show the diversity of views and increase the degree of subjectivity in writing.

In terms of reconsidering the ideology and ethics, in very few cases, Nabokov tries to have a moderate degree of objectivity when it comes to the speeches of other characters. Maybe there has been a change in his style shifting from a semi-modernist *Invitation to a Beheading* to (semi-)postmodernist *Lolita*. A good example of such a

transition is identifiable in Humbert's confrontation with Clare Quilty, a manipulator of *Lolita*, asking her to do group sex and pornography:

We are men of the world, in everything—sex, free verse, marksmanship. If you bear me a grudge, I am ready to make unusual amends. Even an old-fashioned rencontre, sword or pistol, in Rio or elsewhere—is not excluded. My memory and my eloquence are not at their best today, but really, my dear Mr. Humbert, you were not an ideal stepfather, and I did not force your little protégé to join me. It was she made me remove her to a happier home... I can offer you...a young lady with three breasts, one a dandy; this is a rare and delightful marvel of nature. (Nabokov, 2011b/1955: 392)

From the descriptions above, another character is given the chance of representing the spirit of the age and this remarkable role is not limited to the protagonist. In fact, from these clashes of ideas (dialogism) a writer can expose the meaning in his mind, especially for Nabokov when he thinks of a hypothetical esthetic otherworld.

As it will be explained in the discussion of the affection theme in section three of chapter three, Nabokov always reckons an aesthetic otherworldly quality in the discourse of his main characters. Therefore, when the speeches of his protagonists are intermingled with other characters', there appears a carnival of different significations, in which the voice of different characters with entirely different thematic features interact with each other. In the above excerpt's case, for instance, what Claire Quilty utters is a polyphonic example which ironically privileges the affections of Humbert when compared with Quilty's pervert passions towards any girls—and specifically *Lolita*. This privilege becomes clear when he tells Humbert that it is easy for him to offer "a young lady" to be with Humbert, meaning that girls—and *Lolita* in specific—are only the means of sexual satisfaction for him. The irony within this statement serves two purposes: firstly, *Lolita* was important to Quilty only to satisfy his sexual needs and secondly, the excerpt privileges the affections of Humbert towards *Lolita* when compared with Quilty's. In this sense, Nabokov appears behind Quilty's voice to foreground the general view of his society on the depiction of female characters, and this can be reckoned as another effect of polyphonism in Nabokov's works in general. But above all, this and many other examples shown above lead to the fact that

Nabokov implements polyphonism to offer diverse significations in his works. As another instance, it could be generally inferred that the main effect Nabokov tries to achieve through carnivalescic speeches is the privileging of the otherworldly characterization of his protagonists.

Another strong part of the novel also deals with the power of the implied readers (or jury members) when a unidirectional discourse is used to shatter the whole philosophy of modern and real world. In the following excerpt, for instance, Humbert touches upon the taken-for-granted and extreme ideological mind of people in general by justifying his deeds delicately:

Ladies and gentlemen of the jury, the majority of sex offenders that hanker for some throbbing, sweet-moaning, physical but not necessarily coital, relation with a girl-child, are innocuous, inadequate, passive, timid strangers who merely ask the community to allow them to pursue their practically harmless, so-called aberrant behavior, their little hot wet private acts of sexual deviation without the police and society cracking down upon them. We are not sex fiends. We do not rape as good soldiers do... no killers are we. Poets never kill. (Nabokov, 2011b/1955: 104)

Humbert, who identifies himself as an eloquent poet and lover, in the above excerpt, compares the Humbertian innocent desires of his with those of others' in relation to their level of intelligence and presence. In this sense, unidirectional polyphony reveals its second effect which is its stylistic power in persuading the jury members that he is not a pure criminal. When he delivers a speech for an implied audience, he uses his sophisticated polemics and inner polyphonies, and at the moments of confronting a typical person, his polyphonic discourses turn to parody in order to show the superiority of his own senses. In other words, in the above excerpt, there are two implied dialogic representations within Humbert's discourse; the common view of people perceiving Humbert as a "sex offender" and Humbert reckoning himself as an eloquent poet. Therefore, the ending of the novel, which carries hidden and open-ending polemics about the common ideology of his age and is an active type of discourse (the third type of double-voiced discourse), is addressed to raise sympathy from Humbert's executioners:

For reasons that may appear more obvious than they really are, I am opposed to capital punishment; this attitude will be, I trust, shared by the sentencing judge. Had I come before myself, I would have given Humbert at least thirty-five years for rape, and dismissed the rest of the charges. (Nabokov, 2011b/1955: 401)

The above quote shows how Humbert as a criminal changes the style of his discourse to release himself from the crimes he has committed. This type of polyphony depicts the fact that when Humbert approaches the final days of his life, he uses the active type of discourse mainly for the strong possibilities it offers him through inner confession to sooth his consciousness. Consequently, it becomes transparent that the fourth effect of the active type of discourse deals with releasing Humbert from the torture of his deeds which affects his conscience. Additionally, what comes into focus is the fact that Nabokov attempts to change the style and tone of his characters according to the carnivalesc—the diverse and contradictory interrelations of people from different social classes and backgrounds (like the participants in carnivals in specific) and their depictions in novels—situations of his characters, as in the above quote when the tone of Humbert turn into more of a humble and sophisticated man of ethics.

As claimed in chapter one, Bakhtin does not think of language as a closed system. For him, language is a becoming or ongoing phenomenon through which many things can be represented. Therefore, what a language implies cannot be limited to a specific referent or an external entity. This view of Bakhtin has things in common with Nabokov's in that both aim at embodying diverse voices from diverse points of view or fields within the structure of novel:

Style [of language] was Nabokov's linguistic personhood because it allowed him to join within one created structure the natural world of precise scientific observation and the abstract world of metaphysics and consciousness, it was his pledge of immortality, his active participation in the patterns of divine mimicry. (Alexandrov, 2014: 696)

It can be deduced from both Bakhtin's theory of language and Nabokov's unique style that language was a means of transcending beyond the limitations of reality. Therefore, both of these literary figures used language to show things differently from the ways other literary figures, such as formalists or Marxists did. For example, in one part of the novel, Humbert mourns in the form of hidden polemics, referring to a work of another artist, Edgar Allan Poe, whose *Annabel Lee* shares the same sorrow of Humbert's story. Like Humbert Humbert, the speaker in Poe's poem depicts a love incident when both the speaker and his lover, Annabel Lee, were children. Despite their age, both of these lovers were mad in their affections towards each other in a way that after the decease of Annabel, the speaker blames the angels for taking her away from him. This allusion to another work is an intense polyphonic technique in which some parallels from both works are called into attention. In this sense, Humbert uses this polyphonic technique to release himself from the crimes he has done by showing another example in which both lovers (the speaker of the poem and Annabel Lee) had almost the same circumstances as Humbert and *Lolita* or her precursor Annabel Leigh have. This potentiality of allusion as a polyphonic literary element clarifies the fact that Humbert has no other tools better than Bakhtinian dialogism to at least come up with an excuse to release himself from the pedophilic action he has committed by showing Edgar Allan Poe's case, which, in fact, was never considered as a serious case of crime. This allusion is an objective example that shows how Humbert escapes from the reality of his story and tries to seek excuses from the world of fiction (Edgar Allan Poe's work).

In addition to intertextual capability within the structure of polyphonism, the way Humbert thinks of the power of language is central in expressing his otherworldly experiments, whereas Cincinnatus, the protagonist in *Invitation to a Beheading*, did not have that capability to use the utmost power of language to reveal his experiences. The power of Nabokov's polyphonic style and the language he uses rests in elevating the nobility of this work despite its gross pedophilic content, as he reveals it in the following inner polyphony: "Quine the Swine. Guilty of killing Quilty. Oh, my Lolita, I have only words to play with" (Nabokov, 2011b/1955: 31). In this sense, the power of language appears as a shelter for Humbert to persuade the readers that his affections

are purely innocent, and this persuasion is in fact a polyphonic act from the side of a writer because he considers at least a verbal reaction from the readers.

Despite Humbert's confession that he has "only words to play with," the writer tries to keep a subjective voice, which is one of the important characteristics of all three types of double-voiced discourse—unidirectional, predominantly vari-directional and active—in order to show Humbert's infatuation with language and consequently the language's power over the consciousness: "Humbert Humbert is also infinitely moved by the little one's slangy speech, by her harsh high voice" (Nabokov, 2011b/1955: 27). This excerpt in the form of an objectified discourse is an objective example of a dialogic representation in which the narrator distances himself from his voice and instead of refereeing to himself with the subject pronoun "I", he utters his own name in a way as if Humbert is someone other than the narrator. This style of narration is more prevalent in *Lolita* compared to *Invitation to a Beheading*, and according to Bakhtin, such a style serves to be more expressive and powerful in order to carry a hidden degree of subjectivity to impose authorial intentions (Bakhtin, 1984: 187).

Taking this style of narration in *Lolita* into consideration, we can infer three important features of the dialogic discourses Nabokov uses in this novel. Firstly, Nabokov does not use objectified type of polyphony commonly in *Lolita* and consequently, he mostly follows vari-directional and active types of discourses or polyphonies. Secondly, and most importantly, the scope of meanings in these polyphonies is not restricted to linguistic aspects of a language, and, therefore, can go beyond the repetitive speeches of others. For instance, a dialogue of a minor character can evoke a unique otherworldly quality in the mind of the protagonist and consequently, lead to other horizons of meanings. However, it should be pointed that the speeches of others are inevitably needed for the unfinalizability of the polyphonies because any meaning in polyphonic novels is in the state-of-becoming, not a fixed state to be objectively interpreted. In the state-of-becoming, meanings are in constant interaction with the words and chronotopes of other subjects, leading to a progressive behavior through which infinite meanings are born. Therefore, considering a fixed meaning in a text, as usually formalists do, is in fact disregarding the real nature of polyphonism through which new meanings emerge, and this phenomenon in literature

is termed unfinalizability by Mikhail Bakhtin. Thirdly, the abundance of the second and third types of polyphonic discourses in *Lolita* point out the literary maturity of Nabokov compared to *Invitation to a Beheading* in which he rarely used these types of polyphonies. Furthermore, without the possibilities Bakhtinian polyphonism offered, Nabokov could have never succeeded in writing his works whereas his literary view on the nonexistence of polyphonism stood contrary to what he actually did.

On a delicate level of analysis, the dialogic game of Humbert goes beyond the logic and reason of common people, and thereby Humbert aims at eluding all possible blames. Words or dialogues of all types stand for him as a powerful fence and he never hesitates to bring in any of the characters' voice at any moment. A good example is where he predicts the convictions of others by using a vari-directional polyphonic discourse when the words or the expectations of the others are parodied within itself:

My Chère Dolores I want to protect you, dear, from all the horrors that happen to little girls in coal sheds and alley ways, and alas, comme vous le savez trop bien, ma gentille, in the blueberry woods during the bluest of summers. Through thick and thin I will still stay your guardian, and if you are good, I hope a court may legalize that guardianship before long. Let us, however, forget, Dolores Haze, so-called legal terminology, terminology that accepts as rational the term 'lewd' and lascivious cohabitation. I am not a criminal sexual psychopath taking indecent liberties with a child. The rapist was Charlie Holmes; I am the therapist—a matter of nice spacing in the way of distinction. I am your daddum, Lo. (Nabokov, 2011b/1955: 98)

The above excerpt signals the fourth effect of vari-directional polyphony through which Humbert predicts the possible reactions of jury members and forms dialogues in relation to their reactions or responses. Therefore, language is not only a weapon for him; indeed, he is highly influenced by others' utterances, especially when it comes to people with a powerful command of language. But above all, this prediction is also polyphonic, for it anticipates the thoughts and judgements of others.

Another example on the power of language appears when Humbert confronts Clare Quilty, and the most dreadful experience for him comes out of Clare's striking use of language because all his delicate clues revealed in one of the notes in a motel

reflect the same level of shrewdness Humbert possessed in terms of eloquent language, because, at one point “With infinite skill, he swayed and staggered, and regained an impossible balance, always leaving me with the sportive hope...that he might give himself away next time. He never did—though coming damn close to it” (Nabokov, 2011b/1955: 165). This excerpt reveals the fact that Humbert infers a message in the actions of Quilty that leads Humbert to the optimism that Quilty may one day leave Lolita. It is worth reminding that as there is no direct disclosure of such an intention by Quilty himself, Humbert infers such a possibility—the possibility that Quilty may leave Lolita—through dialogic representations of the clues Quilty leaves in a note at the hotel he stayed with Lolita. In addition to this, Humbert respects this evil character only in one way and that is because of his intellectual capability: “He mimed and mocked me. His allusions were definitely highbrow. He was well-read. He knew French. He was versed in logodaedaly and logomancy” (Nabokov, 2011b/1955: 165). What Nabokov praises here is, in fact, the vari-directional, parodying representation of Quilty’s deeds, which are aimed at outsmarting Humbert. Thus, what mainly happen throughout the most dramatic points in *Lolita* are the dialogic representations aimed at fulfilling specific goals, including humiliation, denial and etc. And by doing so, Nabokov tries to engage the implied readers in the plays of words behind the utterances of characters to show how his protagonists stand above other common characters, mainly for the reason that protagonists bear some specific otherworldly qualities, one of which is the sophisticated use of language.

Aside from the power of words and reflection of others’ dialogues on his consciousness, Humbert implements the inner polyphonies to illuminate an innocent picture of humanity within himself. This usage of polyphony is parallel with what Bakhtin reckons for the words of others over the consciousness of the protagonist (Bakhtin, 1984: 5). What happens during such hidden polemics in any story is the anticipated reaction of one of the characters or an implied reader. By having these anticipations, the Nabokovian protagonists, Humbert in case of *Lolita*, try to gain the other characters’ or the implied reader’s sympathy in order to show himself innocent or at least victim of an unintentional fallacy in their behaviors. One palpable example of such a hidden polemic polyphony appears as Humbert attempts to hold a degree of objectivity in order to escape from the reality of this world, for instance, when he tries

to illuminate a very innocent picture of himself at the beginning of the novel before entering the core events of his story with Lolita:

But let us be prim and civilized. Humbert Humbert tried hard to be good. Really and truly, he did. He had the utmost respect for ordinary children, with their purity and vulnerability, and under no circumstances would he have interfered with the innocence of a child, if there was the least risk of a row. (Nabokov, 2011b/1955: 12)

Here, Humbert characterizes himself as a person totally different from his current state of being, and all the crimes he is going to reveal seem as if they have not happened at all. In fact, this parodying vari-directional utterance targets both Humbert, and specifically the jury members when he utters the following words: “But let us be prim and civilized. Humbert Humbert tried hard to be good” (Nabokov, 2011b/1955: 12). The utmost version of the hidden polemic variation is made when Humbert addresses the jury and claims that he did not seduce the girl; it was indeed the opposite: “I am going to tell you something very strange: it was she who seduced me” (Nabokov, 2011b/1955: 88). This change of the versions of events is the fifth function of vari-directional discourse through which the protagonist not only releases himself from the crime he has committed, but also blames and accuses Lolita for seducing him. The presence of all these perceptions is another supportive evidence that Nabokov uses Bakhtinian dialogism in relation to the chronotopes of each character to signify his otherworldly themes. Additionally, the correlation between Humbert’s revelation on page eighty-eight of the book and Lolita’s confession on page seventy-four is another instance of postmodern, reflexive dialogism in which the characters disclose what goes on in their minds and later, these relations are linked to other parts in the events of novels. For example, what Humbert confesses on page eighty-eight of the novel is a polyphonic response to his pedophilic deed with Lolita in order to cover the crime:

Lo was a sportive lassie. I felt her eyes on me, and when she uttered at last that beloved chortling note of hers, I knew her eyes had been laughing. She rolled over to my side, and her warm brown hair came against my collarbone. I gave a mediocre imitation of waking up. We lay quietly. I gently caressed her hair, and we gently kissed. Her kiss, to my delirious embarrassment, had some rather comical refinements of flutter and probe which made me conclude she had been

coached at an early age by a little Lesbian. No Charlie boy could have taught her that. (Nabokov, 2011b/1955: 88)

The same reflexive dialogism can be attributed to *Lolita*'s confession on page seventy-four, which polyphonically foreshadows his escape with Quilty in order to have an excuse for such a flight: "Fact I've been revoltingly unfaithful to you, but it does not matter one bit, because you've stopped caring for me, anyway" (Nabokov, 2011b/1955: 74). Eventually, the effect Nabokov achieves through these reflexive polyphonies is the bridge he makes between several parts of the novel, which gives it a postmodernist nature. In Humbert's claim of seduction, one might look for any objective voice of another character; however, it must be taken into consideration that for Bakhtin, any sideward glance at the possible responses of an implied other is an active type of discourse—and in this active type of discourse there is no necessity for the presence of any other external polyphony; it happens all in the mind of Humbert when the implied responses of others overflow in his thoughts. Although these inner polemics emerge from Humbert's mind, the inevitability of Nabokov's intention behind the narration of all parts and polyphonies of the novel is undeniable. However, more important than such a presence is the fact that Nabokov turns out to vary his voice and intentions in relation to every single character in his works, and the price he pays for such polyphonic representations is inevitable; his intentions are in double-directional relation with the chronotopes of characters, meaning that characters also are capable of shaping Nabokov's voice.

As the plot of the novel develops, the power of dialogues is used in different variations, switching from the vari-directional to active type and back again. As the confused mind of Humbert is getting highly affected by Lolita's words, any external dialogic signification is mirrored in the consciousness of the protagonist. The following excerpt from chapter 29 represents a switch of discourses, as stated above, with the difference that the frequency of hidden polemic polyphonies increases when he addresses the audience; consequently, along with these tensions, the feelings get affected by dialogic connotations:

I asked her what was the matter. "Nothing, you brute," she replied. "You what?" I asked. She was silent.... Cold spiders of panic crawled down my back. This was an orphan. This was a lone child, an absolute waif, with whom a

heavy-limbed, foul-smelling adult had had strenuous intercourse three times that very morning. Whether or not the realization of a lifelong dream had surpassed all expectation, it had, in a sense, overshoot its mark and plunged into a nightmare. I had been careless, stupid, and ignoble. And let me be quite frank: somewhere at the bottom of that dark turmoil I felt the writhing of desire again, so monstrous was my appetite for that miserable nymphet. (Nabokov, 2011b/1955: 93)

The above excerpt from the novel depicts the intense hidden polemics or dialogical activities within Humbert's mind when he tries to sympathize with that lonely "orphan" as if he has not committed any crime regarding his pedophilic relation with Lolita. Calling Humbert a "brute" (Nabokov, 2011b/1955: 93), Lolita ignites a hidden polyphony in Humbert's mind, which reveals the power of polyphony in disclosing the way Lolita has been registered in Humbert's mind. In fact, the implied presence of a reader ignites these inner sympathetic reactions within Humbert's conscience. In this case, the hidden polemics appear as a cover for his crime and give him a sense of ease at least because he believes that he can sympathize with her. Later, after his consultation with a French confessor, however, he could not transcend his sympathetic words of human facts, and once more, he gets trapped in the feeling of guilt and sin. The consequences of these clashes make bitter the melancholy and misery of Humbert and at the end, he has no other way out except hiding behind his "art" which is characterized by his eloquence and sophisticated style of polyphonic language. Both the deceased Lolita and his "specter" are finally called into action through internal polemics in chapter thirty-six and there, the utmost implication of others' presences in protagonist dialogic imagination is proven one more time:

Thus, neither of us is alive when the reader opens this book. But while the blood still throbs through my writing hand, you are still as much part of blessed matter as I am, and I can still talk to you from here to Alaska... And do not pity C.Q. One had to choose between him and H.H., and one wanted H.H. to exist at least a couple of months longer, so as to have him make you live in the minds of later generations. I am thinking of aurochs and angels, the secret of durable pigments, prophetic sonnets, the refuge of art. And this is the only immortality you and I may share, my Lolita. (Nabokov, 2011b/1955: 206)

In sum, Nabokov sketches his sophisticated style of narration in *Lolita* by implementing a variety of techniques that separates this novel from his previous work—*Invitation to a Beheading* in the case of this study. Nabokov uses different categories of polyphonic discourses for achieving diverse effects in this work. These effects, ranging from the illumination of an uncanny subject to releasing the protagonist from the committed crime, all are used to signify or pave the way for the signification of the nature of Nabokovian otherworldly aesthetics. As shown and explained in this section, Nabokov tries to bring together the ideological and aesthetic minds to reveal his literary ideas under what he terms the otherworld. These otherworldly qualities can only be detected on the points of dialogic representations because these points turn out to evolve new meanings out of the clash of several concepts or voices. Like the definition of “nymphet” which comes from the combination of several concepts, Nabokov’s otherworld evolves from the combination of several dialogic representations. But all in all, the main dominant types of dialogic utterances in *Lolita* switch between the vari-directional and active types of discourses whereas for the previous work, *Invitation to a Beheading*, it is commonly between the unidirectional and vari-directional polyphonies. After all, all these analyses of *Lolita* bring into attention the contrary views of Nabokov on the philosophy of polyphonism and show us how Bakhtin’s theory of literature helps him to depict his otherworldly qualities.

III. CHAPTER 2. MODERNIST AND POSTMODERNIST POLYPHONIES IN NABOKOV'S ART

C. PALE FIRE

Nabokov's *Pale Fire*, written just fifteen years before his death, can stand as his most successful convoluted literary masterpiece. This novel is eminent among many Nabokovian scholars such as Brian Boyd and Vladimir Alexandrov for its unique stylistic characteristics; however, its fame does not stand behind it: it also encapsulates a high degree of subjectivity in portraying a literary world which is open to different and even contradictory interpretations. One of the unique structural and semantic features of this novel is its polyphonic and dialogic narrative style which stands beyond his previously analyzed novels. This novel is polyphonic at least because it is comprised of four sections: a Foreword note, a 999-line poem in heroic couplets, a section of commentary on the poem, and an index to the poem, all of which are related to one another, negating each other at some dramatic points. In addition to this polyphonic characteristic, there are other remarkable Bakhtinian dialogic interplays within every section of the novel, which, like the previously analyzed works, challenge the Nabokovian idea of the nonexistence of dialogism in any literary work. In this sense, this section will analyze the dialogic structure of *Pale Fire* to identify which types of Bakhtinian dialogic narrative techniques and strategies Nabokov uses to address his otherworldly themes in this novel. In addition to this, this section will identify the functions of each Bakhtinian dialogic discourse in order to depict their effects in revealing Nabokov's otherworldly esthetics.

One of the most important sections of the novel, from the vantage point of dialogic architectonics, is the Foreword note. The Foreword section should apparently appear as an introduction to the second section which is the "Pale Fire" poem, but this introduction turns out to reflect an irrelevant version of events from the plot of the story. Considering even this irrelevant interaction between these two texts, the polyphony between these two sections of the novel which allegedly discuss the same

events emerges. In other words, the first key sections of the novel which generate dialogism through polyphonic architectonics and thematic aspects is the Foreword. The narrator of this part, Charles Kinbote, attempts—as best as he is able to—to illuminate his so-called “faithful” (Nabokov, 1982/1962: 11) relation with the composer of the poem, John Shade, by establishing several dialogic discourses with both Shade and the implied reader of the novel. Whereas Nabokov’s two previous novels have more of objectified discourse and the first and second types of double-voiced discourses, which are unidirectional and vari-directional, in *Pale Fire*, the third classification of double-voiced discourse, which is the active type, prevails in most of the novel. The typical marks of maturity and the phase of transition from modernism to postmodernism are only a few reasons among many others for this change; however, based on Bakhtin’s view of “artistic prose” (Bakhtin, 1984: 199–200), any forms of interrelations exerted indirectly in any artist’s discourse have more artistic values in that they lead to extreme dialogicalities through which a relative separation of Nabokov’s art from social circumstances, as Nabokov wished, is achieved.

Considering the presence and the reactions, or responses, of an implied reader to his interpretational intrusions, Charles Kinbote reflects on canto two of the poem by reckoning it as the “favorite” part of the whole work for them (readers): “your favorite [implied reader’s favorite]” (Nabokov, 1982/1962: 1). This excerpt, which is a vari-directional type of discourse mainly because it carries an ironic tone when the reader knows that the narrator disdains the second section, the ‘Pale Fire’ poem, is uttered by Kinbote without quotation marks, and addresses the implied reader directly. Although there is no response from the side of the reader, any side glance at any possible reactions from them can be reckoned as an external polyphony. Therefore, this illuminates—although not strongly—the first function of vari-directional double-voiced discourse of dialogism by introducing Kinbote to the reader as a legitimate interpreter of Shade’s poem; however, the degree of his objectivity does not seem to be very high, which turns out to bring it to focus the first function of vari-directional discourse, i.e., addressing the reader with low degree of objectivity. This excerpt is also polyphonic in that it responds to the hypothetical “favorite” tastes of the reader as if there is an ongoing dialogue between them. As the Foreword note develops, the

narrator defies other characters' or readers' interpretations by considering their various understanding of the poem as either "nonsense" or "malicious" (Nabokov, 1982/1962: 2), which aim at foregrounding rhetorically the authenticity of his commentary section following the "Pale Fire" poem. In this sense, the second function of the vari-directional type of discourse by parodying and calling other scholars interpretations "nonsense" and "malicious" to reject any skepticism towards Kinbote's Commentary becomes clear.

The hypothetical revelation of other characters, and readers' ideas bear significance mainly because, according to Bakhtin (1984: 198), any "glance at" (Bakhtin, 1984: 199) or reckoning of an absent reader is one of the important characteristics of the formation of a polyphonic discourse. Moreover, it is dialogic because it interacts with the possible reactions of the others and utters or behaves accordingly. Therefore, the utterances of characters, and specifically Kinbote in this section, are in relation with the way they anticipate the possible response of the implied reader. For instance, the narrator of the Foreword note, Kinbote, falsifies the authenticity of the namely "Shadean" (Nabokov, 1982/1962: 5) professionals' ideas by quoting the words of Shade's wife in supporting indirectly his claim that his commentaries as inevitable companions towards the perfection of Shade's poetry played remarkable role without which the so-called "harmonic balance" would be deficient (Nabokov, 1982/1962: 3). This falsification is a dialogic response to the hypothetical judgements of "Shadean" scholars who might blame Kinbote for modifying the original version of the poem. In this sense, Kinbote mischievously attempts to impose his own story of Zembla over Shade's work, which surfaces after a deep understanding of the "Pale Fire" poem, and at the same time, he distorts any interpretation different from his, which could be identified as a Nabokovian style to delude and deceive readers. All these efforts to show different interpretations and Nabokov's style in deluding the readers of the novel as well as Kinbote's responses to the implied understanding of readers are in fact the characteristics of a dialogic novel. Contrary to Nabokov's rejection of dialogism, it is clear that dialogism is implemented as a tool for Nabokov to depict his otherworldly aesthetics. Therefore, Bakhtinian dialogism contributes greatly even from the opening pages of the novel to the

formation of such an aesthetic world through providing diverse functions and effects by classifying different dialogic discourses.

As one of the main objectives of Bakhtinian analysis is to detect authorial voices in polyphonic texts (Bakhtin, 1981: 320), which is mainly achieved through the interrelations of narrators with other characters, in Nabokov's *Pale Fire*, the narrator in the Foreword section is unreliable, similar to Humbert Humbert in *Lolita* whose sophisticated style of narration can be considered as a way to change the version of events and delude the readers. For this reason, the authorial intentions rest under several layers of stylistic and dialogic formations. In this regard, another role of dialogism, which is the complication of authorial intentions, becomes transparent. For instance, one palpable example of the narrator's unreliability settles in what Bakhtin calls "contradictory expression[s]" (Bakhtin, 1984: 30). In *Pale Fire*, Kinbote hails the originality and perfection of Shade's poetry (Nabokov, 1982/1962: 12) parallel to the necessity of his edition of the poem without which the artistic lines (would) have no "value" (Nabokov, 1982/1962: 133). Besides the praise of Shade's genuine mind in poesy, Kinbote takes one step further by defying the voice of other nonexistent but implied critics denouncing his noble intention of editing this masterpiece and the so-called "fair copy" by Kinbote (Nabokov, 1982/1962: 14). Taking this defiance of Kinbote into consideration, it is transparent that the reactions of readers form Kinbote's mind in hidden dialogic ways; hidden because they are not uttered objectively. Consequently, these hidden formations lead to the emergence of a complicated dialogic discourse, i.e., active type of discourse.

Active type of dialogism intensifies the subjectivity of inner thoughts or speeches of characters, and by doing so it creates a chance for the characters of Nabokov to address their perceptions directly. In other words, this type of dialogism in *Pale Fire* appears as a tool for revealing the nobility of otherworldly experiences by comparing them with commonsense or taken-for-granted ideas. Consequently, the first function of active type of dialogism in bringing up strong philosophical ideas clarifying the nature of otherworldly experiences becomes evident. For instance, in the same section (the Foreword note), the importance of inner polemics, which is one of the characteristics of the active type of discourse, is highlighted where the narrator confesses the fact that any inner interrelation is more real than any other "transparent"

thing: “but there exist friendships which develop their own inner duration, their own eons of transparent time” (Nabokov, 1982/1962: 15), meaning that the inner pleasure of friendship or anything else in general is more important than the timely measurements of such phenomena. One of the other criteria that makes *Pale Fire* a pure artistic narrative similar to his previously analyzed works from the view or perspective of Bakhtinian theory is the high degree of subjectivity throughout the novel achieved through active type of dialogism, which might entail the use of some iconic words. For instance, even on the level of Kinbote’s consciousness as timely character, the word “subjective” (Nabokov, 1982/1962: 5) makes a very deep impression on him. One relevant example of such an impression is when Kinbote takes in the objectified discourse of another character, and defines and makes it subjective to himself; “You’ll be happy to know... that Professor So—and—so ... has consented to act as our adviser in editing the stuff” (Nabokov, 1982/1962: 5). This objective discourse of one publisher seems so ironical to him that he changes his mind and rushes to another publisher mainly because one word of the former publisher, which is “happy,” signals something odd or even dangerous to him: “Now “happy” is something extremely subjective. One of our sillier Zemblan proverbs says: the lost glove is happy. Promptly I refastened the catch of my briefcase and betook myself to another publisher” (Nabokov, 1982/1962: 5). This proverb which highlights the importance of dissention in terms of intellectual capability brings up the risk of revealing the genuine of Shade’s poem, which might endanger the publication of Kinbote’s irrelevant commentary section.

In addition to the reflexive dialogism in the preceding paragraph, bringing the voice of another person inside his own discourse is a clear example of the existence of dialogism—not only in secondary characters of Nabokov’s works, as Kinbote, but also the protagonists—for achieving another literary goal: being persuasive through the insertion of other characters’ discourses in the active type of discourse of a character. Similarly, it is this second function of active type of discourse which makes Kinbote rush to another publisher because of the power of the dialogue he had with the first one. It is in fact the anticipated reaction of readers that make Nabokov change his style of narration to be more forceful. In addition to the dialogic effect of that publisher’s words over Kinbote’s decision, the word “subjective” (1982/1962: 5) is dialogic

because it represents a powerful dramatic irony as the readers are aware of Kinbote's subjective intention in incorporating his version of the story into John Shade's poem. In this sense, the role of subjectivity in active type of dialogism extends to bearing high degree of persuasiveness, which is important for understanding the Nabokovian otherworld, specifically in John Shade's poem. In this poem, the poet tries to pen his subjective (transcendent) experiences, which, as it will be shown in chapter three of this dissertation, do not have parallels with Kinbote's version of events. It is, in fact, through the forceful ideas which are hinted at by the protagonists of his works via the active type of discourses that one can understand the nature of Nabokov's art.

As Kinbote's unique capability of subjectification does not stop on the border of his speeches with other minor characters or implied readers, the unique otherworldly nature of Shade's consciousness is recognized by him despite his superficiality. Actually, in one instance, this capability extends to Kinbote's recognition of John Shade where the presence of "eminent professors," "the gloomy day" and "stunned and shabby" architecture of the college bear no significance; it is indeed a small speech of Shade which shatters all Kinbote's being: "His laconic suggestion that I 'try the pork' amused me" (Nabokov, 1982/1962: 7). Although we claimed that most of the discourse types in this novel are of the active type in the beginning of this section (171), there exist some occasions where "direct unmediated discourses" (Bakhtin, 1984: 186) come into sight. As a result of the clash of different dialogic discourses, the nature of otherworldly qualities becomes transparent. For instance, as Kinbote is highly "amused" by Shade's suggestion of trying "the pork," this amusement cannot be amusing for a vegetarian like him. In order to find the trace of such an amusement, the dialogic relation of Shade's objectified discourse, which is "try the pork," with Kinbote's refusal to accompany Sybil and Shade for a drink must be analyzed: "I explained I could not stay long as I was about to have a kind of little seminar at home followed by some table tennis, with two charming identical twins and another boy, another boy" (Nabokov, 1982/1962: 9). In this sense, it becomes clear that the author tries subjectively, not objectively, to imply homosexual significations from Kinbote's behaviors, especially when it comes to dialogic confrontations with other characters. In other words, these hidden significations emerge out of intense dialogicalities within Nabokov's works despite Nabokov's claims to the contrary. For

instance, taking the theme of homosexuality in the above excerpt and its dialogic relation with Kinbote's refusal into consideration, there would be no such an understanding if the existence of dialogism is questioned.

In his confrontation with Shade when he is waiting for his wife, Ms. Sybil Shade, to take him home, Kinbote reacts with an unmediated response, which carries out several hidden Nabokovian polemics and puts forward the first function of this type of dialogism, which is the insertion of a direct authorial view on the nature of women. This degrading sexist view that "wives...are forgetful" (Nabokov, 1982/1962: 9) has its roots somewhere around the author's big picture of the novel since this type of oriented discourse on the theme of misogyny appears in several other parts when the core of the debate is about Sybil. For example, this unmediated discourse dialogically foreshadows another instance in the novel in which Sybil is blamed for censoring the story of Zemblan kingdom in Shade's poem:

she made him tone down or remove from his Fair Copy everything connected with the magnificent Zemblan theme with which I kept furnishing him and which, without knowing much about the growing work, I fondly believed would become the main rich thread in its weave! (Nabokov, 1982/1962: 69)

Therefore, if the subject of "forgetfulness of wives" is analyzed dialogically with the discourse of other protagonists in Nabokov's works, such as *Invitation to a Beheading* and *Lolita*, the common picture of women as the destroyers of men's lives becomes transparent through these unmediated discourses. The possibility of such an understanding brings into attention the inevitability of dialogism in Nabokov's works, the loss of which would obscure the understanding of Nabokov's aesthetic otherworld. For instance, in the above example of the theme of misogyny, the depiction of women in *Pale Fire* can be best understood if one compares it dialogically—or intertextually—with the characterization of women in Nabokov's other works.

The most important part of the Foreword note in terms of dialogism starts with descriptions of Shade's personality, which arise from the sarcastic words of a "ferocious lady"—Sybil—whose words target the abasement of Kinbote by calling him "insane" and a man incapable of befriending Shade and Sybil (Nabokov, 1982/1952: 11–2). Nevertheless, the internal polemics of Kinbote in justifying his

rewarding relationship with both of them pinpoints the unquestionable role of noble dialogic combinational essences in Shade's nature. These essences implicate both physical and behavioral dimensions of Shade, which portray him as having a "sublime face," "pudgy fingers," "lusterless eyes," "indeterminate sex," and therefore, "misshapen body". In this sense, the second function of the active type of discourse which is the objective illumination of someone else's unique characteristics; in this novel, it is the way the otherworldly behavior of John Shade stands out. Adding to these, the narrative techniques of active type of dialogism clarifies the fact that "the purified and chiseled" artistic intelligence made Shade "his own cancellation" (Nabokov, 1982/1962:12), meaning his very unique and noble artistic abilities compensated for his physical ugliness. Considering this example, the dialogic representations of inner beauty and physical misshapeness becomes transparent. All these unique dialogic aspects of Shade force Kinbote to remember him with intense emotions, especially when Kinbote recalls his own presence in only one photo with Shade where his hand is in the direction of removing his glasses, which, however, it never reaches: "it never reached in that life, the life of the picture..." (Nabokov, 1982/1962: 12). Considering "a life in a picture" is another dialogic representation in which a layer of signification, (life of photo), exists under another layer, (the fictional world of *Pale Fire*). Regarding this case, the active type of discourse appears as tool to address a dialogic situation, without which the uniqueness of Shade would not be perceivable for Kinbote.

The wonderful life of Shade, according to Kinbote, is embodied in his dialogic capability of "perceiving and transforming the world" (Nabokov, 1982/1962: 12), and producing a spontaneous line of verse forged from "a fusion of image and music" (Nabokov, 1982/1962: 12). For Kinbote, this literary masterpiece is a matter of a "sudden flourish of magic" and therefore, in order to have a thorough understanding of it, his interpretations of those lines ("Pale Fire" the poem) in the commentary section is necessary (Nabokov, 1982/1962: 14). The necessity of his own responses to the poem is a dialogic act which has many things in common with the emphasis of Bakhtin on the "necessity in the acts and consciousness of a man" (Bakhtin, 1984: 62), meaning that no matter how skillful and intelligent one might be, there will always be some areas of consciousness—here, in the poem—that remain untouched and unknown. As

long as Kinbote gives himself the full power of having the “last word” (Nabokov, 1982/1962: 14), Nabokov’s rejection of the theory of dialogism will be under skepticism, while, on the other hand, Bakhtin’s ideas of freedom and unfinalizability in dialogic understanding of any novel gain credits (Bakhtin, 1984: 62). In the case of Kinbote’s understanding, for instance, Nabokov shows an example in which any text, no matter how controlled it is written, is open to multiple (mis)interpretations. Another example can be the direct disclosure of Kinbote’s ideas towards arts through which he claims that without his (Kinbote’s) own (Bakhtinian) understanding, and eventually transcribing the Foreword, the meaning of Shade’s poem would be restricted to the unfulfilled intention of the poet in finishing his art:

Let me state that without my notes Shade’s text simply has no human reality at all since the human reality of such a poem as his (being too skittish and reticent for an autobiographical work), with the omission of many pithy lines carelessly rejected by him, has to depend entirely on the reality of its author and his surroundings, attachments and so forth, a reality that only my notes can provide. (Nabokov, 1982/1962: 14)

Whereas Kinbote, in the Foreword note, believes that he can offer a comprehensive understanding of the poem, at the end of his commentary, even this dramatic idea of his is dialogically challenged by himself:

Yes, better stop. My notes and self are petering out. Gentlemen, I have suffered very much, and more than any of you can imagine. I pray for the Lord’s benediction to rest on my wretched countrymen. My work is finished. My poet is dead.

“And you, what will you be doing with yourself, poor King, poor Kinbote?” a gentle young voice may inquire. (Nabokov, 1982/1962: 283)

These two excerpts above are the most plausible examples of dialogic interactions within one character’s speech which contradict each other. The confession of Kinbote in the final excerpt above reveals the third function of the active discourse by means of which he acknowledges the failure of his literary effort in providing a comprehensive interpretation of the poem; consequently, this confession adds to the dialogicality of the novel.

It is a commonly accepted fact that Bakhtin privileges the novel genre over other genres mainly because of its high possibility in forming polyphonic structures and dialogic significations; however, he also considers some possibilities of dialogic discourses in poetry and drama, though less well-known compared to the novel genre. In his work *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics* Bakhtin reflects on the necessary presence of stylistic and dialogic discourses in order to both create and understand any authentic signification within literary texts (Bakhtin, 1984: 200). In addition to this, he compares different epochs of poetry and sketches out the modern works of poetry as dialogic compared to the classical poetics of monologism. Here, in Nabokov's novel, *Pale Fire*, there stands a section of a 999-line poem which has the same characteristics of Bakhtinian poetry. Therefore, adding to several other evidence remarked above, contrary to Nabokov's literary claims, even his "Pale Fire" the poem is dialogic.

The poem has both polyphonic and dialogic nature in its form and content; however, the latter one prevails in most of the poem. The novel, in terms of its form, develops its discussion through addressing an implied reader or narrator's own consciousness. As analyzed and explained above, any consideration of possible responses and reactions from an implied reader is a dialogic imagination in that the speaker—or the poet in the case of "Pale Fire" the poem— responds to such hypothetical responses. Starting from Canto two, while Shade sketches his past with Sybil, his wife, he has no other technique except orienting some dialogues towards her. For instance, extending from line 248, Shade puts forward his "polemically colored autobiography" (Bakhtin, 1984: 219) in poetry, and expresses his love towards her through her physical "profile" which "has not changed," and the impression of her reflected voice: "It's gone/ It was so small. It might come back" (Nabokov, 1982/1962: line 283). This reflected polyphony in his mind infatuates him more than a physical interaction and highlights the power of dialogism in overwhelming the mind of Shade as an otherworldly character. In addition to this, the active type of dialogism characterized which Shade's autobiography functions as a mean to address his untimely affections towards Sybil when the beauty of her diminishes the value of her physical changes in the course of time. In another delicate manner, Shade mourns the loss of their beloved daughter, Hazel, in the following lines of the poem with regard to the reflection of Sybil's voice in his mind. Consequently, it can be inferred that if

there had been no reflection of Sybil's dialogic signification in Shade's mind, there would have been no stimulus for Shade to mourn the loss of their daughter, Hazel. The ultimate example of a dialogic discourse later surfaces when Shade responds to these words from lines 305–314 in a form of dramatic monologue in order to make create a strong effect of pain:

It was no use, no use. The prizes won
In French and history, no doubt, were fun;
At Christmas parties games were rough, no doubt,
And one shy little guest might be left out;
But let's be fair: while children of her age
Were cast as elves and fairies on the stage
That she'd helped paint for the school pantomime,
My gentle girl appeared as Mother Time,
A bent charwoman with slop pail and broom,
And like a fool I sobbed in the men's room. (Nabokov, 1982/1962: lines 305–314)

The “sobbing” of Shade in the above lines result from the internal dialogisms he establishes with Sybil. The constant shifts in the discourse types of internal and external orientations take place in Canto two of the poem which are referential responses to intertextual insertions from other works of literature. One of these external voices which are reflected in Shade's consciousness is by the French poet Jean de La Fontaine: “Lafontaine was wrong:/ Dead is the mandible, alive the song” (Nabokov, 1982/1962: 24), which ironically signifies the survival of his aunt, Maud, by reversing La Fontaine's story. Ironically, the reader knows that what Shade conceives as the survival of his aunt is entirely false. However, the presence of such an intertextual polyphonism may perhaps shed light on Shade's inner belief that although aunt Maud is dead, her soul or memory is still alive through either the reflection of an inner voice or the remembrance of her by alive people; therefore, she affects the lives of Shade's family. In this case, his following lines are dialogically

settled according to the fallacy of someone else's voice, whose whole philosophy is questioned. Moreover, in this example the fifth function of active type of discourse in privileging the importance of imagination as an otherworldly quality emerges.

The other function of active type of dialogism, which can be reckoned as one of the most eminent ones, is the possibility this type of narrative technique offers in revealing deep subjective emotions Shade as an otherworldly character undergoes. For instance, in another reflected voice of a so-called "anonymous" poet, "life is a message scribbled in the dark" (Nabokov, 1982/1962: line 235), which implies the devastating feeling of a loss, the whole story of Shade's loss of his daughter, Hazel, is built upon; therefore, it underlines the importance of any discourse in the plot of the poem. Similar to this thematic effect, in another part of the poem, the voice of a hypothetical character enters Shade's own internal expression of his obsession of making sense in "aftertime" by asking questions: "What moment in the gradual decay/ Does resurrection choose? What years? What day?" (Nabokov, 1982/1962: lines 209–210) followed by an on-the-spot internal polyphony, parodying the nature of these questions:

... if prior to life we had

Been able to imagine life, what mad,

Impossible, unutterably weird,

Wonderful nonsense it might have appeared!" (Nabokov, 1982/1962: lines 217–20).

The effect these questions create in the plot of the poem brings into attention the other function of active type of dialogism in diminishing the value of the material or ideological world. In sum, all these questions and answers within Shade's mind are internal polemics in the form of Bakhtinian active type of discourse, which aim at clarifying the understanding of what rests beyond this real, material world.

The stream of events in Shade's mind flows by means of remembering either the past events in relation to their dialogic counterparts in the present scenes, or the echo of Sybil's voice which forces him to move forward through the lines of the poem, both of which are internal reflexive polyphonies within active dialogism because they are the reflection of memories or words of other characters in his consciousness. In

one instance, however, as he tries to express his story and grief at the loss of Hazel, he only takes a sideward glance at others' speeches and discloses the secret reason of his daughter's suicide, which was committed because of her depression, by saying "I know. You know" (Nabokov, 1982/1962: line 493). This polyphony is a vari-directional discourse oriented to Sybil's previous concern with Hazel's wellbeing: "Midnight," you said. What's midnight to the young?" (Nabokov, 1982/1962: line 483). Considering this revelation within a vari-directional discourse, the role of this type of narrative technique in admitting the truth behind the superficial rumors of the commonsense foregrounds itself. In fact, on the day of Hazel's suicide, Shade and Sybil both feel something odd is happening by observing some natural significations the dialogic relations of which signify the tragedy of Hazel:

It was a night of thaw, a night of blow,
With great excitement in the air. Black spring
Stood just around the corner, shivering
In the wet starlight and on the wet ground.
The lake lay in the mist, its ice half drowned.
A blurry shape stepped off the reedy bank

Into a crackling, gulping swamp, and sank. (Nabokov, 1982/1962: lines 494–500)

The hidden reflexive dialogic representation of "night of thaw, a night of blow," "great excitement" and "a blurry shape stepped off the reedy bank/ Into a crackling, gulping swamp" (Nabokov, 1982/1962: lines 494–500) epiphanically signify two streams of events happening parallel to each other: the first one deals with the gaze of Shade and Hazel at the sublime darkness of night, and the second one implying the suicide of Hazel. These two perceptions of reality are called dialogism in that they signify two important perceptions of reality (Booker, 1995: 477).

The Canto three starts with more philosophical premises and allusions to many other works: as Shade expresses his abstract experiences of life, sorrow and meaning, he uses more of the active type, as in the following inner polyphonic—and polemic as well—line in which life has been metaphorically symbolized as a "lifeless tree": "L'if,

lifeless tree!” (Nabokov, 1982/1962: line 501), functioning as a tool to point to the inferiority of the material world, and in a few points vari-directional discourses, as in the following line in which he parodies the Institute (I) of Preparation (P) for the Hereafter (H)’s—IPH—view of disregarding the existence of heaven—for Shade, heaven may be equal to a perception of beauty and the sublime—in their lectures:

The Institute assumed it might be wise

Not to expect too much of paradise:

What if there’s nobody to say hullo

To the newcomer, no reception, no

Indoctrination? What if you are tossed

Into a boundless void, your bearings lost,

Your spirit stripped and utterly alone... (Nabokov, 1982/1962: lines 536–42)

In the above lines, any question from or possible illusion to the subjects discussed in the Institute of Preparation for the Hereafter (IPH) can be labeled under complicated structure of polyphonism in order to create contexts for intricate polemics to lead to the privileging qualities of Nabokov’s otherworld. Contrary to Nabokov’s denial of dialogism, it is in fact the remarkable role of dialogic effects in fulfilling the characteristics of being good readers, which requires them to be dialogically active to identify the hidden meanings of any text. The initial lines of canto three are a concurrent allusion to the sixteenth century scholar François Rabelais, which is called a carnivalesque feature by Bakhtin, and a parody of his (Rabelais’s) idea of “finding the Great” while he was close to death:

L’if, lifeless tree! Your great Maybe, Rabelais: The grand potato.

I.P.H., a lay

Institute (I) of Preparation (P) For the Hereafter (H), or If, as we

Called it—big if!—engaged me for one term

To speak on death (“to lecture on the Worm,”

Wrote President McAber) (Nabokov, 1982/1962: lines 501–6)

From there, he parodies his colleagues while he was working in the Institute (I) of Preparation (P) for the Hereafter (H), merges the first letters of each word, coins the word 'If' and parodies the IPH, which characterizes most of the themes of the poetry. He blames the scholars in IPH for being very superficial and even unresponsive to some of the essential questions on death and life after death in a way that the main philosophies of IPH seem like conditioned cases under the sound "if," reflecting the pronunciation of "IPH" (Nabokov, 1982/1962: line 515). He, however, has an inclination: "And I'll turn down eternity" (Nabokov, 1982/1962: line 525), which is achieved in relation to parodying the other members' mindsets: "The Institute assumed it might be wise/ Not to expect too much of paradise" (Nabokov, 1982/1962: lines 536–7).

As shown above, all these reactions are put forward based on implied voices of the members in IPH. Without reckoning such dialogic presences, it is not possible to develop a philosophical concept for Shade. One another example of such an implied dialogic encounter is depicted or revealed by Shade who addresses Sybil about the incapability of IPH, and people in general, in sympathizing with Sybil and him about the suicide of their daughter though they (IPH members) comment on everything, including afterlife. In this sense, the reactions and responses of all parties are reflected dialogically in the consciousness of Shade:

For as we know from dreams it is so hard

To speak to our dear dead!

They disregard Our apprehension, queaziness and shame

The awful sense that they're not quite the same." (Nabokov, 1982/1962: lines 589–92)

This incapability of IPH members in understanding the couples' loss can be signified only if there exists a dialogic representation of IPH members' philosophy in Shade's mind. Even their incapability in understanding Shade and Sybil is implied through dialogic presences.

The dialogic disapproval of Shade with other members of his university is another instance that arises from the contradictory perceptions of time by those

members. In this regard, the active type of dialogism provides the ground for another function to point to the concept of time from the vantage point of Shade as an otherworldly character. Shade defines time as “succession, and succession, change” (Nabokov, 1982/1962: line 567), and by explaining this concept and relating it to their ideas of hereafter, he parodies the members of IPH’s fundamentals of afterlife: “Time means growth. /And growth means nothing in Elysian life” (Nabokov, 1982/1962: lines 572–3), addressing the fallacy of the commonsense in realizing the definition and role of time. The absurdity of world and the commonsense people has no end, as they try to comment (foolishly) on everything, from Chinese etiquette to Poe’s work:

A Chinese

Discanted on the etiquette at teas

With ancestors, and how far up to go.

I tore apart the fantasies of Poe,

And dealt with childhood memories of strange

Nacreous gleams beyond the adults’ range” (Nabokov, 1982/1962: lines 629–634).

This example is similar to Bakhtin’s concept of carnivalesque in which individuals with different mindsets come together and reveal their thoughts on a specific subject. Once more, this fact that people “comment” on everything is another dialogic act which paves the way for clear revelation of Nabokovian otherworldly qualities.

Another dramatic point during Shade’s lecture on the meaning of poetry to American scholars in the Crashaw club occurs when he suddenly faints, and later he confesses to an incapability in explaining what exactly happened: “I can’t tell you how” (Nabokov, 1982/1962: line 699), but he later explains that extraordinary experience through dialogic representations: “And dreadfully distinct/ Against the dark, a tall white fountain played” (Nabokov, 1982/1962: lines 706–7), meaning that he himself, after a sudden collapse and revival, felt the “dark” experience of death and epiphanically experienced the possibility of afterlife signified in the form of a “white fountain”. This incident portrays a dialogic process through which a layer of (worldly)

signification during a subconscious state of mind signifies an (otherworldly) epiphany which would be impossible to be perceived in a normal condition of consciousness. In addition to this dialogic process, the dialogism in the above lines which encompasses this signification of afterlife brings forth the other function of active type of discourse: the possibility of immortality as an otherworldly quality. Therefore, these two opposite images of dark and white significations represent intense dialogical presences within Nabokov's work contrary to his literary claims. This is, once more, Nabokov that forms discourses according to the chronotopic and carnivalescic features of two different groups of people: worldly as the members of IPH or common people in general and the otherworldly as Shade. In a very unique manner, when Shade finds it impossible to signify the strange feelings during his fainting moment, all other attributions to those bizarre feelings are described through the dialogic comparison of worldly (odd) experiences with those which stand above all peculiarities. For example, he characterizes the picture of a white fountain in his otherworld by drawing its basis through a null comparison: "it was made/ Not of our atoms; that the sense behind/ The scene was not our sense" (Nabokov, 1982/1962: lines 708–710). In this case, the rejection of the dialogic representation of worldly perceptions proves reversely the characteristics of otherworldly experiences. Therefore, without this functionality of dialogic representations the illumination of such otherworldly qualities would be implausible.

After his recovery, Shade contemplates on the visions he had, and later comes to the conclusion that that vision was, in fact, real. Actually, the main reason for reckoning this experience as real was shaped by the voice of the doctor who replies to Shades idea of his momentary death as "Not quite: just half a shade" (Nabokov, 1982/1962: line 728). The reflection of this objectified discourse gives birth to that inward experience of afterlife possibility. In addition to this, he makes use of such dialogic processes the moments he is troubled (line 728), and later he realizes that only in this way can the world make sense for him. For Shade, the ideal place for his unique experience is rooted in dialogism of his inner perceptions. He extends this inner dialogic interpretation to the existence of a "robust truth" (Nabokov, 1982/1962: line 766), impossible for others to understand, specifically the character namely Mrs. Z who has a similar dream of a white mountain; however, she is not capable of discerning

anything noble or otherworldly. The Shadean (Nabokovian) truth can only be created through the interaction of voices (heteroglossia) and concepts, which are the most favorable part of Bakhtinian studies as well. Moreover, the truth Shade has reached is entirely different from how others reckon it. Although Mrs. Z remarks the misprint of the intended word “mountain” as “fountain” he still contemplates over his own perception and claims:

Life Everlasting—based on a misprint!
But all at once it dawned on me that this
Was the real point, the contrapuntal theme;
Just this: not text, but texture; not the dream
But a topsy-turvical coincidence,
Not flimsy nonsense, but a web of sense.
Yes! It sufficed that I in life could find
Some kind of link—and-bobolink, some kind
Of correlated pattern in the game,
Plexed artistry, and something of the same
Pleasure in it as they who played it found. (Nabokov, 1982/1962: lines 803–815)

The above lines prove the fact that only Shade who is capable of identifying mental dialogic representations can be exposed to Nabokovian otherworldly experiences. In other words, Shade would not be able to address his otherworld without the presences of dialogic imaginations.

The final canto of the poem deals mainly with his novel idea of beauty and its perception. In order to explain his philosophy of a real artistic production, he draws parallel comparisons in which the meaning exists in their dialogic relations. The first dialogic formation comes up with an example more or less like the deconstructive concept of binary relations of privileged speech over unprivileged writing. In the initial lines of the poem where Shade classifies two types of composing, he highlights the fact that since the poem in the artist’s mind (A) stands all alone, it can be interrupted

or is susceptible to poetic and prosaic errors. However, the B type which flourishes from the mind, passes through the hand and finally finds its destination on paper is of high artistic value. This idea of Shade has many things in common with what Bakhtin puts forward in his theory of dialogism. The dialogic (vari-directional) affinity among mind, hand and paper and their support of each other are the most tangible examples of dialogic relationship in the architectonics of literary works. As an objective example, Shade turns down the perennial concept of the relation between mind and hand, and claims that "... the hand supports the thought" (Nabokov, 1982/1962, line 847). For Shade, any one-directional relation is but "agony" (line 847), like the common taken-for-granted fact that everything originates from the full control mind or the consciousness. In this regard, the effect that Bakhtinian vari-directional discourse creates in the above lines is the clarification of the presence of dialogic narrative techniques in any artistic work.

The polyphonic and dialogic comparisons dominate the text intensely as Shade reaches the final lines of his poetry and these inner polyphonies of mind make him come to novel experiences of his existence as well as the possibility of afterlife. Therefore, all the dialogic relations among these experiences make his existence unique among other people, as if Shade was apparently aware of this dialogic fact whereas the writer of the book denies the existence of such a phenomenon. The dialogism of inner polyphony extends to an external one when Shade foreshadows the possible explanations of his commentator for his poetry:

Since my biographer may be too staid

Or know too little to affirm that Shade

Shaved in his bath, here goes:

"He'd fixed a sort Of hinge-and-screw affair, a steel support

Running across the tub to hold in place

The shaving mirror right before his face

And with his toe renewing tap-warmth, he'd

Sit like a king there, and like Marat bleed." (Nabokov, 1982/1962: lines 887
94)

Regardless of the context of the above line from the poem, the anticipation of Kinbote as the commentator of Shade's poem is a dialogic imagination which, once more, highlights the intensity of dialogic representations in Nabokov's works. While revealing his doubts, Shade does not address his direct voice about any other possibilities that might be of relevance or importance for him; he just mirrors the voice and deeds of others in order to convey his message. In a similar way, he does not raise his voice to disclose his joys at what other people do. He finds it sufficient to enumerate his disdain for others' taken-for-granted interests and voices starting from "Jazz", to established formal institutes, to modern philosophers (Marx and Freud) and finally to "frauds and sharks" (line 930), all of which are intertextual polyphonic features. However, the most dramatic and fundamental point of poetry is over the inner polyphony (Nabokov, 1982/1962: lines 939–40), which gives the impression of a(n) (autonomous) foreshadowing, and this polyphony bears significance because of two discourse characteristics. Firstly, inner polyphonies are important for Bakhtin mainly because they are the hubs of authorial intentions, and through these polyphonies and their interactions with other voices, one might be able to find the traces of authorial intention. The other reason which makes that inner polyphony significant is the feature that it is oriented toward a possible intrusion by the commentator of Shade's poem, which aims at protecting the originality of the work from Kinbote's intrusions.

Other examples of heteroglossia which are also types of polyphony appear in lines 957–968 in the form of references to other literary artist's works. Allusions to "Dim Gulf" in Edgar Allan Poe's poem "To One in Paradise," 'Hebe's cup' in Richard Crashaw's poem "Music's Duel," "Pale Fire" in William Butler Yeats's "A Poet to His Beloved" are only some of the polyphonic intrusions in the poem which add further depth to the structure and content of this work. For instance, in lines 961–2, the internal voice of Shade is directed toward his will by asking himself to title his poem. Consequently, as an echo oriented towards the poet, the other's voice is reflected as a response to his demand: "Pale Fire" (Nabokov, 1982/1962: line 962). This example clarifies the remarkable role of polyphonism in Shade's poem, as here when a polyphony appears epiphanically and names the poem; at the same time, it also implicitly signals the most important function of the active type of double-voiced discourse as a narrative technique to address the all-dialogic nature of the poem.

The last archetype of a dialogic interplay concludes the poem by disclosing an artistic phenomenon which characterizes the nature of arts. The physical existence of poet and inevitability of his mortality and art within its eternal survival are brought as binaries which are in dialogic relation in order to reach a sensible conclusion. Although portrayed as “combinational delight” (line 973), the strength of art and its undying signification stands as the sole fact which will “survive” (line 977), and through this survival, “a minute part/ Of... existence” (lines 971–72) stands beyond any flash of consciousness.

In sum, *Pale Fire* bears diverse layers of signification, and one of the characteristics that leads to such multiplicity of meanings is definitely the polyphonic and dialogic nature of this work of art. Compared to *Invitation to a Beheading* and *Lolita*, *Pale Fire* has more of the third type of dialogic discourses (active types), the roots of which can be traced to the postmodernist literature with a high degree of subjectivity and openness to interpretation. This transition in the nature of literature can also be attributed to Nabokov’s maturation in composing and illumination of his philosophy of art. In addition to this, Nabokov implements different dialogic techniques of narratology in order to evolve his main otherworldly themes. As shown in this section, he uses each dialogic technique to achieve specific effects in his novels and therefore, disregarding such dialogic presences would trouble the representation of his hypothetical aesthetic qualities.

In general, chapter two of this study delineated the ways the dialogic techniques identified and explained help Nabokov express his literary intentions partially. In other words, without the functions of Bakhtinian theory of dialogism Nabokov could not have even addressed the very general otherworldly aesthetic qualities of his art. Looking awry, it can also be inferred that Nabokov was one of the experimentalists in carrying this movement from modernism to postmodernism by augmenting its depth through adding dialogic elements. Moreover, in opposition to Nabokov’s literary claims on the existence of dialogism, it is shown in this chapter that he vigorously uses different dialogic techniques in relation to the chronotopic relations of each work. For instance, Nabokov left a huge impact on the transitional phase of dialogism from modernism to postmodernism, creating *Pale Fire* as an ultimate example of postmodern dialogic literary work.



IV. CHAPTER 3. NABOKOV AND THE OTHERWORLD EXPERIENCE

A. INVITATION TO A BEHEADING

Although there exist several other works of Vladimir Nabokov during the Russian period of his literary career, *Invitation to a Beheading* can be considered as his foremost as well as primary success not only because of his own acknowledgement (Nabokov, 1990a: 92), but also because of the unique effects it leaves on its readers. These effects may range from misunderstanding to confusion to excitement to praise or even to complete disappointment; however, what rests behind all these is the distinct nature of this work which makes it capable of holding these diverse and contradictory reactions within itself, ranging from the question of the fictional authorship to (mis)representation of an exiled professor. In all, this masterful feature of holding different views within the architectonics of *Pale Fire* is one of the Bakhtinian features which elicits diverse polyphonic interpretations from its readers, especially when it comes to the signification of Nabokovian otherworldly themes. Consequently, this section will identify how Nabokov's main otherworldly qualities, such as the remarkable role of imagination and memory, are depicted. In addition to this, this study will identify the ways these main Nabokovian otherworldly qualities contribute to the formation of intense dialogicalities in *Invitation to a Beheading* for the purpose of disintegrating this work of art from sociopolitical texts. In order to identify these literary features in Nabokov's works, it is firstly needed to start the analysis from his conception of metaphysics because the signification of Nabokov's otherworldly qualities is tied to his perception of metaphysics.

As discussed in section four of chapter one, Nabokov's definition of metaphysics has direct relation with his concepts of imagination, timelessness and (ontological) aesthetic experience, and in order to understand his metaphysics, the nature of these concepts must be known. Imagination in *Invitation to a Beheading* stands as a very crucial means of both political and aesthetic significations, but its main

role cannot be understood without inferring what Nabokov intends to imply by rejecting the definition and concept of reality. As Robert Alter (1997b: 50–1) claims, the key to understanding the meaning and role of reality in Nabokov's art is the way human commonsense perceives it. Human consciousness always tends to find order out of the chaotic nature of the world, and after finding a relatively apparent pattern out of this chaos, commonsense agrees on the presence of such a phenomenon without knowing what goes under the superficial understanding of such a world. This normalization—the process of fitting, or trying to fit, everything in certain frames of normal, commonsense understanding—process overwhelms the minds of people, commonsense names it reality and tries to measure everything according to its limited definitions. Later in a dialogic behavior with the other chaotic and irrational phenomena of the world, individuals attempt to extend the scope of reality to other unknown spheres when human intelligence cannot fully grasp it at first sight; “consciousness achieves a condition of acrobatic poise and elastic strength, integrating more and more into meaningful patterns, it encounters more reality, or rather makes the world around it at last real” (Connolly, 1997b: 50–1). Strikingly, this type of reality, which is problematic for Nabokov, does not work out well for the protagonists of Nabokov's works as they turn out to disdain whatever comes out of this perception of reality. For instance, this problematic aspect of reality makes the protagonist of *Invitation to a Beheading* escape into the realm of an aesthetic experience which has its unique features:

I am surrounded by some sort of wretched specters, not by people. They torment me as can torment only senseless visions, bad dreams, dregs of delirium, the drivel of nightmares and everything that passes down here for real life. In theory one would wish to wake up. But wake up I cannot without outside help, and yet I fear this help terribly, and my very soul has grown lazy and accustomed to its snug swaddling clothes. (Nabokov, 2011: 32)

The “wretched specters” in the above quote imply the commonsense in Nabokov's works, which is also referred to as average people with an average sense of reality. In the course of Nabokov's literary works, these average people, who are always the sources of irritation for the protagonists of Nabokov's works, act as mechanical agents, seeming more or less like torturers in general, and executioners in

Invitation to a Beheading in specific. In another instance, the jailer, Rodion, approaches Cincinnatus on different occasions in order to inform him about several incidences in the jail, but the way he approaches him is rather a torturer's: his presence bothers the protagonist. In this sense, the way Rodion affects Cincinnatus is through inviting him to behave properly with other people in the prison while he himself is unable to understand Cincinnatus's feelings and experiences. Rordig Ivanovich, the director of the prison, and Rodion, whose behavior tortures Cincinnatus, are described as "mechanical" agents in the novel (Nabokov, 2011: 161).

The mechanical agents, in Nabokov's works, have one important task and that is to oppose what humans and Nabokov term as imagination; for Nabokov himself this term is of high importance because the basis of his novel *Invitation to a Beheading* is built upon Nabokovian imagination. Imagination, in Nabokovian terms, is the personal inferences of an individual when they face with a sublime scene or some apparently meaningless coincidences, which are meaningless for common people, but they are the sources of eternal joy for Nabokov's otherworldly protagonists. In this sense, these coincidences are called irrational by the commonsense mainly because they do not match the reality of these people. As the result of this relation, the presence of irrationality in Nabokov's works is very similar to Nabokovian imagination—"....spiritual freedom, a meaningful existence through the development of individuality and life purpose, and immortality happen (Saraci, 2021)."—since they have many things in common. One of the common things between these two states of mind and logic in Nabokov's works is their potentiality in opening new horizons to other otherworldly or aesthetic meanings which cannot be expressed or inferred within the restraints of commonsense mentality and reality. Therefore, these irrationalities which emerge from the coincidences and their significations within the literary works (of Nabokov) give birth to Nabokovian otherworld experience. In order to understand Nabokov's aesthetic otherworld, one has to also consider how Nabokov firstly perceives this material world and then make out the meaning of his target otherworld through the analysis of dialogic interrelations between them. This (real, physical) world, as presented in *Invitation to a Beheading*, is in fact—and paradoxically—a lifeless universe which devastates, or beheads, imagination, power, and freedom, as Julian Moynahan admits:

...the unspoken, vile, dehumanizing assumption that the guiltless victim must collaborate in his own torture and death, must enter into the corruption of his tormentors and depart this world robbed of life, integrity and individuality alike. Cincinnatus does not surrender the latter two, or the freedom of his far-ranging thoughts and feeling. (Moynahan, 1967: 16)

As revealed in the above excerpt, Cincinnatus's love of freedom and original individuality does not allow him to surrender to Russian totalitarianism, which implicitly signals the October Revolution, led by the reign of Vladimir Lenin. This catastrophic event in the life of Nabokov shows itself in many of his writings. In accordance with Nabokov's literary aims, the primary reactions in Nabokovian aesthetics are the formation of a fictional world in which the literary world is privileged over the ideological world—though Nabokov's aesthetic world is not purely aesthetic—without any external relations with its context. This bridge between the material world and Nabokov's aesthetic world is best described by Bouchet:

The Nabokov scholar Alexandrov contends that Nabokov's textual patterns and inclusion of fictional texts are not gratuitous; they imitate the interaction between man, nature, and otherworld: "the metaliterary is camouflage for and a model of the metaphysical" (Alexandrov 1995, 554). But the metaphysical in Nabokov's world can only be communicated in language and through senses. (Bouchet et al., 2020: 81)

What is meant in the above excerpt has direct relation with the previously discussed idea of coincidences which are mostly signified through specific natural scenes. In addition to these natural scenes as the sources to bridge his otherworld, it should also be reminded that Nabokov's otherworld is aesthetic in that the perception of those qualities of his otherworldliness is dependent on the five senses, dealing mainly with personal recognition of beauty. This beauty, according to Nabokov, has nothing to do with ideology or the spirit of the age. Accordingly, as stated previously, Nabokov had the intention of creating literary works which would have the minimum relation with their contexts and even he analyzes the major works of European and Russian writers in relation to this literary goal. Therefore, Nabokov's world is a world where everything runs in the opposite direction to the things in the material world:

There, tarn, là-bas, the gaze of men glows with inimitable understanding; there the freaks that are tortured here walk unmolested; there time takes shape according to one's pleasure, like a figured rug whose folds can be gathered in such a way that two designs will meet—and the rug is once again smoothed out, and you live on, or else superimpose the next image on the last, endlessly, endlessly, with the leisurely concentration of a woman selecting a belt to go with her dress... There, there are the originals of those gardens where we used to roam and hide in this world; there everything strikes one by its bewitching evidence, by the simplicity of perfect good; there everything pleases one's soul, everything is filled with the kind of fun that children know; there shines the mirror that now and then sends a chance reflection here ... (Nabokov, 2011: 75–6)

Another tangible example of Nabokov's contribution to intense dialogicalities can be the following example in the form of unidirectional dialogic discourse:

... as there is in the world not a single human who can speak my language; or, more simply, not a single human who can speak; or, even more simply, not a single human; I must think only of myself, of that force which urges me to express myself. I am cold, weakened, afraid, the back of my head blinks and cringes, and once again gazes with insane intensity, but, in spite of everything, I am chained to this table like a cup to a drinking fountain, and will not rise till I have said what I want. I repeat (gathering new momentum in the rhythm of repetitive incantations), I repeat: there is something I know, there is something I know, there is something... (Nabokov, 2011: 76)

In the preceding excerpt, Cincinnatus intends to express the inexpressible experience; however, the restrictions on his physical body and mind do not let him utter his words in an objectified type of discourse mainly because if they had been revealed in this type of discourse, the other worldly characters could not have understood or even sympathized with him. In addition to this, as defined in section one of chapter one, objectified discourse is a type of discourse through which authors force their characters to utter directly the authorial intentions. Instead of implementing such a discourse throughout his narrative, in the above excerpt, Nabokov gives the protagonist a chance to put forth his own intentions and thoughts in relation to their

surrounding context, which is a kind of dialogic formation in terms of Bakhtinian approach. In addition to the direct insertion of authorial voice in the “objectified discourse”, there is always a strong overflow of ideological and individual factors in this type of discourse—mostly ideological—which Nabokov always tries to avoid. Therefore, Cincinnatus’s way of introducing his otherworldliness is exerted through unidirectional double-voiced discourse which entails reduction in objectification of authorial intention, unique stylization—as in the above excerpt where the comparison between the language of others is fundamentally questioned and Cincinnatus’s own inexpressible experience is addressed—and finally, the Ich-Erzählung mode in the form of self-confession. In this sense, by implementing all these features of unidirectional discourse, the protagonist tries (dialogically) to show the superficiality of this material world in order to imply rhetorically the otherworldly aesthetic experience. Later, in another, this experience urges him to show—not to tell—the sublimity he feels during specific moments, such as the moment when he is prevented by his guardian, but he hardly tries to be exposed to the unique light shining inside his cell:

Cincinnatus was standing on tiptoe, holding the iron bars with his small hands, which were all white from the strain, and half of his face was covered with a sunny grating, and the gold of his left mustache shone, and there was a tiny golden cage in each of his mirrorlike pupils... Tears gushed from the eyes of Cincinnatus. (Nabokov, 2011: 27–28)

Following the lines of the above excerpt, Rodion tries to grab Cincinnatus and bring him down from the chair; however, there he sees resistance from Cincinnatus. The rejection of what his captor orders in is not only the rejection of ideology. On the other hand, what a reader of Nabokov’s *Invitation to a Beheading* can firstly infer is that the otherworld qualities of Nabokov cannot be expressed directly since it has got nothing to do with the logical system of real-life humans; in order to understand it, one has to pay attention to the ways dialogic interplays appear within the architectonics of the novel. In the case of the above example, Nabokov hints at the very trivial revelation of the sublimity of sunshine as an otherworldly quality through the combination of the dark implication of the material world behind the “bars” and the sensory connotations of the golden color in his “mustache” and “mirrorlike pupils,”

which results in the gush of tears from Cincinnatus's eyes. This combinational style, which is comprised of an analogy of an object and the unique feelings emerging from the reflection of light from that object, is another contribution of Nabokov to the theory of dialogism: to address metaphysical themes whereas the significations in Bakhtin's theory deal mainly with sociopolitical texts. Therefore, understanding Nabokov's works can be difficult for a typical reader who is accustomed to reading other genres of novel. However, as Iris Murdoch remarks, the taste of commonsense and even the grip of literature needs to reconsider their values, because it has been proven that they (actual readers) have never welcomed experimentalism in the spheres of literary creations, especially when it comes to the works which have few ideological layers of messages. This does not mean that works abundant in ideological significations are not literary valuable; actually she (Murdoch) acknowledges the fact that the literary texts with political messages make us aware of "the density of our lives" (Murdoch, 1961: 20). However, there should also be given room for the literary works different from the traditional narratives of nineteenth century since:

Our sense of form ... can be a danger to our sense of reality Against the consolations of form, the clean crystalline work, the simplified fantasy-myth, we must pit the destructive power of the now so unfashionable naturalistic idea of character. Real people are destructive of myth, contingency is destructive of fantasy. (Murdoch, 1961: 20)

What Murdoch suggests in the above quote is the lack of appreciation by majority of common readers for the experimental writings in literature, and in this sense, the novel literary depiction of Nabokov may seem unworthy of delicate analysis. Consequently, for Murdoch, Nabokov is one of the most successful writers in terms of foregrounding the fantasy he discusses in the above excerpt in his writings. The first characteristic of Nabokov's ontological otherworldly experience in *Invitation to a Beading* is its inexpressible nature which makes it difficult to address through words; however, in the course of his literary maturation, Nabokov turns out to be more expressible when it comes to the representation of such aesthetic experiences, as in "Could, Castle, Lake," *Lolita*, and *Pale Fire*, which will be elaborated in the following sections of this chapter; however a short hint at the reason of the inexpressibility of these qualities is needed. Nabokov at one point in his novel *The Gift* (1938) gives some

indications of the nature of the otherworldly qualities, the inexpressibility of which in *Invitation to Beheading* can be grasped properly:

For our stay-at-home senses the most accessible image of our future comprehension of those surroundings which are due to be revealed to us with the disintegration of the body is the liberation of the soul from the eye-sockets of the flesh and our transformation into one complete and free eye, which can simultaneously see in all directions, or to put it differently a supersensory insight into the world accompanied by our inner participation. (Nabokov, 1991: 322)

The “supersensory insight” Nabokov remarks above is the ultimate literary goal of his which is uttered sixteen years after the publication of *Invitation to a Beheading*. It is probable that Nabokov, at the beginning of his literary career, was not able to carry out the literary task of the separation of ideology from his so-called pure aestheticism, which aimed at dealing with Nabokovian metaphysics, and this incapability led to the inexpressibility of such mental qualities. In addition to this, the prerequisite Nabokov mentions in the elaboration of this “insight” that is accompanied by “inner” perceptions or intuitions, which require separation from worldly circumstances, is obviously a difficult combinational quality, from which the otherworldly significations could be hardly inferred.

The second feature of that unique inexpressible otherworld experience in this novel is its amicable feeling which imposes on the protagonist of the story when he confronts that world: “in my dreams the world would come alive, becoming so captivatingly majestic, free and ethereal, that afterwards it would be oppressive to breathe the dust of this painted life” (Nabokov, 2011: 74). The “painted life” in the novel signals the other important quality of the otherworld, similar to the combinational qualities discussed above. Contrary to the theory and philosophy of most literary schools and also pinpointed preciously, the ontological aspect of Nabokovian otherworld is more realistic in the sense that it is in a double-directional dialogic relation with the real (material) world; it affects and constructs the extensive part of the commonsense reality and the things happening within this material world while, in the meantime, it is influenced by the same material world, as shown in the following excerpt by Cincinnatus in the form of inner polyphony:

In my dreams the world was ennobled, spiritualized; people whom in the waking state I feared so much appeared there in a shimmering refraction, just as if they were imbued with and enveloped by that vibration of light which in sultry weather inspires the very outlines of objects with life; their voices, their step, the expressions of their eyes and even of their clothes—acquired an exciting significance.... But then I have long since grown accustomed to the thought that what we call dreams is semi-reality, the promise of reality, a foreglimpse and a whiff of it; that is, they contain, in a very vague, diluted state, more genuine reality than our vaunted waking life which, in its turn, is semi-sleep, an evil drowsiness into which penetrate in grotesque disguise the sounds and sights of the real world, flowing beyond the periphery of the mind—as when you hear during sleep a dreadful insidious tale because a branch is scraping on the pane, or see yourself sinking into snow because your blanket is sliding off. (Nabokov, 2011: 73–4)

In the above inner polyphony, Cincinnatus reverses the age-old idea that dreams are the reflections of the events in the material world. According to him, the otherworld he conceives affects the events in the objective world, as when “the sounds and sights” of that otherworld is reflected in the natural events of the material world. In addition to this, what Cincinnatus implies by pinpointing his “fear” after waking up from his more real-like dream has closed affinities with the concept of timelessness discussed in section four of chapter one. The material world, according to and for Nabokov, is the devastator of pleasure by the means of time, as Cincinnatus reveals again in the form of inner polyphony: “For life has worn me down: continual uneasiness, concealment of my knowledge, pretense, fear, a painful straining of all my nerves...” (Nabokov, 2011: 76–7). However, the ontology of the otherworld makes the ultimate form of pleasure both possible and enduring (eternal). The pleasure “there” is no longer susceptible to the deeds of common people; it is in fact in its original source, i.e., the otherworld. This otherworld, also referred to as the Nabokovian metaphysical world, is characterized with what seems to be one of the central themes in *Invitation to a Beheading* and that is Gnosticism. Gnosticism is a very broad term to go through the details of its definition in this work; therefore, only two main characteristics of this school of thought will be explained here in relation to

our purpose. The first definition of the term remarks the dualistic philosophy in which this world is only the illusion of the other, authentic world (Pearson, 2007: 15). This world is very similar to Plato's world of Forms, but in the gnostic dualism, the otherworld does not precede the material world; in fact, both worlds exist parallel to each other and there is a dialogic relationship between them in that they influence each other at dramatic points, and in order for one to understand the other, they need to look for the dialogic textual and metalinguistic—in the world of literature—significations in the texts:

The horrible 'here,' the dark dungeon, in which a relentlessly howling heart is incarcerated, this 'here' holds and constricts me. But what gleams shine through at night, and what—. It exists, my dream world, it must exist, since, surely there must be an original of the clumsy copy. Dreamy, round, and blue, it turns slowly toward me. It is as if you are lying supine, with eyes closed, on an overcast day, and suddenly the gloom stirs under your eyelids, and slowly becomes first a languorous smile, then a warm feeling of contentment, and you know that the sun has come out from behind the clouds. With just such a feeling my world begins: the misty air gradually clears, and it is suffused with such radiant, tremulous kindness, and my soul expands so freely in its native realm.— But then what, then what? Yes, that is the line beyond which I lose control. (Nabokov, 2011: 75)

In the inner polyphony above, for instance, a small “gleam” of light in the darkness of the night in the material world resonates the feeling of pure “contentment,” which is associated with the otherworldly experience. Following the perception of otherworldly pleasure, there comes a clear air changing the mood of the protagonist in the “misty” atmosphere of the real world. Therefore, it is obvious that in the world of Gnosticism—and Cincinnatus is specific—the two worlds affect one another in different ways. Consequently, these delicate reflections of the otherworldly images throw light on the third contribution of Nabokov's art: to create intense dialogicalities through depiction of the correlative relations of the world and the otherworld which affect each other at several dramatic points. In other words, the abstract qualities of the otherworld enter into dialogic correspondence with the events of the material world

through dialogic representations Nabokov develops in the depiction of Nabokovian metaphysical (other)world.

The second fundamental characteristic of agnosticism is its philosophy of knowledge regarding the otherworld. The perception of the transcendent knowledge is drastically different from the classical definitions of the term in that by knowledge, agnostics imply not an objective, measurable understanding of an existing entity; knowledge for them is a personal experience when an individual is confronted with an otherworldly (transcendent) experience, and therefore, this type of understanding is in fact an inner epiphany which can be and is distinct from one individual to another. In Cincinnatus's case, the expression of the knowledge of the otherworld is doomed to failure, but the existence of such transcendent qualities is inevitable, as in the following instance where Cincinnatus expresses the power of such epiphanies as he sits in the ultimate darkness of his gloomy prison:

I know something. I know something. But expression of it comes so hard! No, I cannot ... I would like to give up—yet I have the feeling of boiling and rising, a tickling, which may drive you mad if you do not express it somehow. Oh no, I do not gloat over my own person, I do not get all hot wrestling with my soul in a darkened room; I have no desires, save the desire to express myself—in defiance of all the world's muteness... I am here through an error—not in this prison, specifically—but in this whole terrible, striped world; a world which seems not a bad example of amateur craftsmanship, but is in reality calamity, horror, madness, error—and look, the curio slays the tourist, the gigantic carved bear brings its wooden mallet down upon me. (Nabokov, 2011: 73)

Like other remarked otherworldly qualities in this novel, what Cincinnatus tries to address about the nature or knowledge of the otherworld is inexpressible; however, the only implication which is transparent from his inner polyphony is the fact that if those qualities are revealed to worldly people, they will appear as “calamity, horror, madness” (Nabokov, 2011: 73).

The references to the transcendent otherworld become abundant when the story develops, but the opening of the novel which is considered as a polyphonic utterance is the most outstanding example of an otherworldly signification. This polyphonic

utterance—"Comme un fou se croit Dieu, nous nous croyons mortels" (As a madman believes himself to be God, we believe ourselves to be mortal)—foreshadows the final scene of the novel in which Cincinnatus, after being executed, does spiritually survive. This survival represents the possibility of otherworldly experiences which do not perish with death; however, Nabokov is not very clear or maybe at the time of writing he was not literarily mature enough to give specific qualities to his otherworldly experience in his art. This duality of mortality and survival appears once more in another form in the final scene of the novel, as Vladimir Alexandrov remarks, when Nabokov treats the protagonist of the story as if there are two (dialogic) Cincinnatus(es) in the novel (Alexandrov, 1991: 86). These two characters stand in two dialogic situations: one counting to ten to reach his physical death; the other, the otherworldly Cincinnatus, hears another counting sound coming from a distance, and antithetically, this sound gives him an extraordinary experience he never had before:

...but the other Cincinnatus had already stopped heeding the sound of the unnecessary count which was fading away in the distance; and, with a clarity he had never experienced before—at first almost painful, so suddenly did it come, but then suffusing him with joy, he reflected: why am I here? Why am I lying like this? And, having asked himself these simple questions, he answered them by getting up and looking around." (Nabokov, 1997: 172-3)

The "getting up and looking around" phrases can be treated as the irony of situation where after the physical death of the protagonist, the otherworldly experiences survive and this survival, according to Alexandrov, is in fact a return for Cincinnatus to "a preexisting, ... intelligible and familiar transcendent realm" (Alexandrov, 1991: 86). Whereas at the end of the novel Cincinnatus enters the otherworld, the beginning and the course of the events in the novel are characterized by the presence of imagination, and this imagination can be the most transparent element as well as theme that leads to the transcendent otherworld. In other words, imagination, in *Invitation to a Beheading*, is perhaps the sole element which has semi-identical otherworldly qualities, but this imagination must be dialogically associated with some worldly phenomena in order to go beyond the boundaries of this material world. For instance, when M'sieur Pierre, the other captor of Cincinnatus, asks him

for the source of his high ambitions of emancipation, Cincinnatus points to imagination as his savior from the tremors of the material world, specifically from his prison (90).

There can be another interpretation from the role of imagination in the material world which might seem bizarre, but when analyzed and compared with other themes of Nabokov's works—to be explained in the following sections of this chapter,—it would seem acceptable. In *Invitation to a Beheading*, the material world is treated as an artificial and “flawed” (166) illusion, but the existence of imagination among other illusionary elements in this world works as both a necessary element of the material world as well as a loophole through which one can transcend and enter the otherworld. In this sense, the final contribution of Nabokov's poetics to the formation of intense dialogicalities in Bakhtin's theory of literature surfaces is the use of imagination as a dialogic mean to signify the eternity of Nabokovian otherworldly life.

Invitation to a Beheading, in sum, can be considered as one of Nabokov's first literary experiments in showing his unique transcendent world. This world, as explained in this section, is characterized with pleasure and a sense of contentment, the examples of which cannot be found in the material world. In addition to this, although Nabokov was not clear enough to show all the characteristics of this transcendent world, he built the overall structure of the otherworldly significations in this work, and later, through his literary development, specifically in *Lolita* and *Pale Fire*, he finally could depict that world, though partially, through different dialogics narrative technique and thematic elements, like the role of imagination in *Invitation to a Beheading*, each of which serve different functions and create different effects in the story. More important that these depictions—the four main contributions of Nabokov to the creation of intense dialogicalities in the novel—pinpoint the fact that the illumination of his otherworldly qualities has intricate relations with the presence of dialogic narrative skills. But it should also be noted that in order to have a grasp of Nabokov's otherworld, one has to also go through one of Nabokov's very important short stories “Cloud, Castle, Lake” (1937). This work, which follows *Invitation to a Beheading*, stands as a remarkable work contributing greatly not only to the literary works preceding it, but also to the works written after 1937, which are of high importance in terms of literary value and otherworldly ontological significations.



IV. CHAPTER 3. NABOKOV AND THE OTHERWORLD EXPERIENCE

II. “CLOUD, CASTLE, LAKE”

Nabokov's "Cloud, Castle, Lake" (1937) has many things in common with his novel *Invitation to a Beheading*. One of the commonalities is the period when these works were written, during which Nabokov suffered from the political occurrences in Soviet Russia, resulting in his exile to Germany. Even during his fifteen-year dwelling in Nazi Germany, he faced serious issues with the antisemitic environment. Therefore, both works have indirect references to their political settings. In "Cloud, Castle, Lake," (1938) the pressure of the Nazi German society on the consciousness of the protagonist, Vasiliy Ivanovich, characterizes the overall atmosphere of the novel, similar to the way Soviet dictatorship shaped the world of Cincinnatus C. But what unites these two works, in one sense, is the exile period of Nabokov which alienated him from both societies. In addition to the contextual similarities, these works have shared thematic features in that they both have the transcendent otherworldly connotations as well as similarity in their plots. For this reason, this section will identify how some important Nabokovian otherworldly qualities, such as coincidental patterns as the intruders of the otherworld, resulting in the epiphanies in the protagonist's mind, and memory as a timeless phenomenon which appears as the source of pleasure for Vasiliy, evolve out of the implementation of specific dialogic narrative techniques and strategies. Likewise, this section will identify the ways the signification of main otherworldly qualities in this favorite short story of Nabokov contributes to the genesis of intense dialogicalities, which help him to achieve a partial distinction of his work from other ideological and social works of literature.

On the level of similarities in plot, Nabokov illuminates a German society in "Cloud, Castle Lake" in which the protagonist of the story, Vasiliy, earns a pleasure excursion trip accompanied by some vulgar German passengers. During his trip, Vasiliy is first alienated from the other passengers which is later followed by

humiliation and finally by the same passengers beating him. Among all these bitter events of the short story, there emerges a remarkable scene during which he is exposed to a sublime feeling of a view of a cloud and a castle, which is located next to a lake. Although this scene turns out to be a magnificent scene, appearing coincidentally, it is the only source of pleasure for the entire world of Vasiliy; however, his companions on his trip do not let him escape there, and therefore, force him to return to Berlin:

But suddenly at some station all climbed out, and it was already dark, although in the west there still hung a very long, very pink cloud, and farther along the track, with a soul-piercing light, the star of a lamp trembled through the slow smoke of the engine, and crickets chirped in the dark, and from somewhere there came the odor of jasmine and hay, my love. (Nabokov, 2005: 4)

This sublime scenery is similar to the utmost pleasure Cincinnatus feels when he is exposed to the light coming from the window of his cell. In addition to this, this remarkable scenery in the story foreshadows the otherworldly significations in the American literary period of Nabokov, as explained below.

One of the main otherworldly implications in the story is the outstanding role of imagination in characterizing the moments of pleasure when the protagonist is exposed to a transcendent realm. Before his trip, everything seems odd and unattractive for Vasiliy except some interval moments when he imagines—in the form of epiphany—“some wonderful, tremulous happiness” (Nabokov, 2005, p. 1) would be awaiting him. Although Vasiliy’s society and his trip are filled with “drowsy beings” as well as oppressive forces, the sole source of hope for a life filled with eternal pleasure, which only resonates in his mind, convinces him to take this trip. This pleasure, as stated in the story, is indicated in the form of a “feminine fate” having relations with childhood memories. This childhood memory can be interpreted as the eternal—or immortal as stated in *Invitation to a Beheading*—symbolization of a transcendent world while the feminine fate can be accepted as an unconditional way of loving someone mainly because the married life of his beloved did not stop him from loving her (Nabokov, 2005: 1). As a result, it could be inferred that in addition to the eternity of Nabokov’s otherworld experience, this transcendent world has many things to do with his feelings towards women. In this sense, Nabokov creates a unique otherworldly representation through the dialogic combination of “drowsy beings” and

on the spot “wonderful, tremulous happiness” (Nabokov, 2005: 1). For instance, the night before his departure, Vasilii epiphanically imagines that his trip will bring him some sort of *jouissance*, the examples of which are only experienced by him when he was a child, reminding him of the Russian lyrical ballads he used to read and a dream he saw which epiphanically foreshadowed the love of a woman, who turns out later to be a married wife. However, on the day of departure he comes across a group of Nazi passengers that without having a word of dialogue with them, an epiphany within his imaginations sparks the primary roots of tension, which is going to characterize the rest of the story. Comparing this case in “Cloud, Castle, Lake” and *Invitation to a Beheading*, this becomes evident that Nabokov creates these types of intense dialogical representation in a way that the imagination of a such a happiness or misery appear without having an external stimulus as the direct source of epiphanies. In other words, this signification of imagination as a unique phenomenon which is not influenced by the external world and is formed according to on-the-spot epiphanies and dreams is Nabokov’s contribution to creation of new forms of dialogicalities. These intense dialogicalities represent the influence of the otherworld, characterized by coincidences and meaningless—at the first sight—epiphanies which gain implication in the course of events. In this sense, imagination can be reckoned as an otherworldly experience which does not necessarily evolve out of the clash of two opposite significations or experiences, as in the example of the above excerpt.

Other most noteworthy reference to another otherworldly experience in the story is made through the inner polyphony of the narrator when he claims that a good quality of life “must be oriented toward something or someone” (Nabokov, 2005: 1). This attribution of goodness to something at the opening of the story can be interpreted through its dialogic relations with its counterfeit significations in the material world. According to the narrator of the story, the “absurdity and horror of” his situation in the ideological world signify in reverse the qualities of the otherworld in which the pure and enduring sensation of love and happiness prevails. The dialogic relations of these worlds can also be interpreted through the depiction of a meadow which hides “a memory of love” and cloud symbolizing “greyhound of heaven,” meaning the otherworldly pleasures are eternal in the sense that they are not bound to worldly, temporal conditions. The “memory of love” under the guise of meadow can be

interpreted in two ways. The primary signification can be understood through the dialogic references to other texts. Very similar to Nabokov in terms of turning abstract ideas into concrete images, Gaston Bachelard describes his perception of fields and meadows in a way that is close to Nabokov's conception of the otherworld:

.... for fields and meadows, my dreams and recollections accompany all the different phases of tilling and harvesting. When the dialectics of the I and the non-I grow more flexible, I feel that fields and meadows are with me, in the with-me, with-us. But forests reign in the past. I know, for instance, that my grandfather got lost in a certain wood. I was told this, and I have not forgotten it. It happened in a past before I was born. My oldest memories, therefore, are a hundred years old, or perhaps a bit more... When such daydreams as these take hold of meditating man, details grow dim and all picturesqueness fades. The very hours pass unnoticed and space stretches out interminably. Indeed, daydreams of this kind may well be called daydreams of infinity. (Bachelard, 1994: 188–89)

As it can be inferred from the impression of the meadow in the above excerpt, the effect this scene ignites in the mind is that of sadness which overwhelms the subject and, in this story, this is the disappointment of Vasiliy who desperately loved a married woman for many years. This definition is also in parallel with the general symbolization of meadow which signifies an endless melancholy and hopelessness: “the meadow, being nourished by the waters of a river, is in itself a subject of sadness and that, in the true meadow of the soul, only asphodels grow. The winds find no melodious trees in the meadow—only the silent waves of uniform grass” (Ciriot, 1993: 206). The memory of love can also be inferred according to the way memories signify the pleasant Nabokovian pre-existing mode of otherworldly experience both before the birth and death, similar to the way Nabokov claims that his life is surrounded by two ends (1965: 15–6). In this regard, the abstract quality of love or extreme form of pleasure as an otherworldly quality emerges from its dialogic representation with a worldly entity, which can be another Nabokovian contribution to Bakhtin's theory of dialogism.

During his second exposure to the otherworldly experience when he sees the same scene again while he is on the train, Vasiliy points to a unique feature of that

transcendent perception in which the otherworldly significations have two distinct characteristics simultaneously. The otherworldly implications through different worldly objectifications are, at first sight, anonymous in that they may seem very strange and even irrational, but at the deeper levels of such significations, there stands a delicate pattern, which could be identified by a “deathless precision,” among the objects imposing transcendent experiences. For instance, the privilege of so-called “insignificant” objects, like “a smear on the platform, a cherry stone, a cigarette butt,” signify the individual experience over the collective uniformity in that these objects are not considered valuable by the passengers accompanying Vasiliy; however, these objects grab the attention of the protagonist mainly because they employ a dialogic relation with another class of phenomena. In fact, these objects characterize the other important feature of Nabokov’s otherworld, especially when such “artificial” objects enter into dialogic interplays with the “natural” objects, as in the following excerpt where the smoke of the engine is accompanied by the pleasant odor of jasmine:

But suddenly at some station all climbed out, and it was already dark, although in the west there still hung a very long, very pink cloud, and farther along the track, with a soul-piercing light, the star of a lamp trembled through the slow smoke of the engine, and crickets chirped in the dark, and from somewhere there came the odor of jasmine and hay, my love. (Nabokov, 2005: 4)

Despite common misconceptions, smoke in literature stands as a powerful dialogic mean to connect earth with air, which itself usually connotes the meaning of heaven:

The antithesis of mud, since mud combines the Elements of earth and water, whereas smoke corresponds to air and fire. There are some folklore traditions which attribute a beneficent power to smoke, which is supposed to possess the magic ability to ward off the misfortunes that beset men, animals and plants. On the other hand, the column of smoke is a symbol of the valley–mountain antithesis, that is, of the relationship between earth and heaven, pointing out the path through fire to salvation. According to Geber, the alchemist, smoke symbolizes the soul leaving the body. (Cirilot, 1993: 299–300)

In addition to the role of smoke as a savior as stated in the above excerpt, smoke can signify the ward off worldly pains, which is closer to Nabokov’s concept of

material world as the torturer of otherworldly people. In addition to this, according to Karl P. Wendersdorf, jasmine appeared late as a symbol in English literature, but even within its short history it has always stood as a representation of love, especially sexual life (Wendersdorf, 1980: 506–12). Taking into consideration the dialogic representation of these symbols, it becomes evident that love stands as an otherworldly quality for Nabokov, representing immortality through sexual discourses and relating it to his concept of life being trapped between two ends, similar to the way Freud defined the role of love or sex. Consequently, this novel signification of an otherworldly quality by depicting different symbols and establishing a relation between them is another contribution of Nabokov to the creation of intense dialogicalities.

The other fundamental characteristic of the otherworldly experience in “Cloud, Castle, Lake” which is very similar to the one in *Invitation to a Beheading* is still the partial inexpressible quality of such a transcendent perception. In the description of the black castle in the story, for example, Vasiliy uses inner polyphony and addresses his beloved to reveal the chronotopic experience when he beholds the view:

It was a pure, blue lake, with an unusual expression of its water... On the other side, on a hill thickly covered with verdure (and the darker the verdure, the more poetic it is), towered, arising from dactyl to dactyl, an ancient black castle. Of course, there are plenty of such views in Central Europe, but just this one—in the inexpressible and unique harmoniousness of its three principal parts, in its smile, in some mysterious innocence it had, my love! my obedient one!—was something so unique, and so familiar, and so long—promised, and it so understood the beholder that Vasiliy Ivanovich even pressed his hand to his heart, as if to see whether his heart was there in order to give it away. (Nabokov, 2005: 4)

In addition to the inexpressibility and harmonious qualities of such a unique experience in the above excerpt, the result of the signification and objectification of this experience unveils in the form of an ecstasy accompanied by a “smile,” similar to the way the perception of the otherworldly pleasure showed itself in *The Invitation to a Beheading*. When the protagonist is forced by his companions to leave the place, he utters an intertextual reference, which can be considered as an intertextual polyphony,

to his other work by means of drawing the simile of moving away from the otherworldly experience of the “Cloud, Castle, Lake” was like “nothing less than an invitation to a beheading” (Nabokov, 2005: 5).

The similarities between these two works of Nabokov do not remain in the intertextual references; the prominence of imagination, the implication of the otherworld experience through the dialogism of the material world and the otherworld, and finally the way—through smiling—unveiling the otherworldly experience of both protagonists of the stories signifies are the other major common qualities of the ontological otherworldly experiences. However, there is also a kind of delicate fact when the behavior of each protagonist in these two stories is exposed to that ontological existence. In *Invitation to a Beheading*, the protagonist, Cincinnatus, does not have any chance to enter the otherworldly realm through being exposed to the combinational delight of the dialogism between the natural and artificial objects; he is, in fact, imprisoned within the walls of a prison and observes the external sublime beauty from a distance. However, in “Cloud, Castle, Lake,” there are some moments when the protagonist enters that otherworldly state when he escapes to the sublime greenery encapsulating the castle and lake and the cloud above them. However, he fails to stay and experience the ultimate jouissance of the otherworldly experience the moment the Germans catch and bring him back to the train while they constantly humiliate and beat him. In the course of Nabokov’s literary development, as it is to be shown in the following sections, the behavior of each protagonist in *Lolita* and *Pale Fire* differs dramatically from the analyzed works in sections one and two of this chapter in terms of the perception and representation of Nabokov otherworldly qualities.



IV. CHAPTER 3. NABOKOV AND THE OTHERWORLD EXPERIENCE

III. LOLITA

If the readers of Nabokov's *Invitation to a Beheading* and "Cloud, Castle, Lake" find these works of literature vague in terms of their thematic planes, the readers of *Lolita* will find this work of art controversial mainly due to its sensitive depiction of a pedophilic case. On a very general level of reading *Lolita*, readers will perceive it with a very disputed and even offensive content not appropriate for a commonsense taste of literature; however, the main messages behind this literary masterpiece are entirely different for Nabokov. This bitter controversy, in its extreme phases, affected the writer himself more than the readers of his works when several publishers refused to undergo the risky publication of this work of art. At the very first reception of the novel, disappointment overwhelmed the readers, and many of these readers described the work as a work of pornography in the grip of literature which would poison the minds of readers, especially teenagers and young individuals. But for Nabokov, all these negative reactions from both readers and scholars provided a firm ground to discuss his main literary intentions behind the events of the book because this novel does not reveal all its otherworldly qualities—the literary illumination of what he really intended to show by putting forth the aesthetics of the otherworld in literature—in a direct way. Therefore, this section of the study will identify the ways the central Nabokovian otherworldly qualities, such as imagination as the source of productive pleasure, love as a timeless experience, reminding him of the childhood memories, and coincidences which result in meaningful coincidences, emerge from the implementation of specific dialogic narrative techniques. Moreover, this section will shed light on the contributions of Nabokov on the creation of intense dialogicalities, such as the role of fate as an otherworldly quality in relation with the concrete events of the material world. In this sense, Nabokov develops Bakhtin's theory of literature, especially on metaphysical texts, and this development finally leads to Nabokov's

long-lived goal of the separation of his works from social and ideological texts, which actually starts from *Lolita*.

As stated above, the publication of the novel faced many controversies; thus, the strongest defense of Nabokov against all those rejections was that what his art represented was the product of imagination, not reality (Connolly, 2005: 187); however, in order to understand Nabokov's imagination in this work, one has to analyze the unreliability of the narrator of the novel, Humbert Humbert. Bakhtin's theory of literature and his approach to texts can be one of the best options for the dialogic analysis of Humbert's narration mainly for the reason that throughout his storytelling, the narrator uses different forms of dialogic literary elements and narrative skills to convince the readers that his version of events has diverse layers of meanings. Among these meanings, the clash of the worldly (contextual and ideological) and otherworldly (aesthetic or metatextual) significations, and consequently, the privilege of the latter are the focus of this study. The clash of these meanings, in contrast with Nabokov's wish, appears in the form of dialogic formations, which bring together two concepts or experiences and illuminate diverse possible significations at the same time. For instance, at the opening of the novel, where Humbert starts his own narration after the Foreword note, he addresses himself as a murderer, but at the same time, he points out the extraordinary power of his style in narrating, which reiterates a hidden possibility behind and beyond the literary techniques he uses (Nabokov, 2011b/1955: 5). By calling himself a murderer, for instance, Humbert addresses the ideological and biased ethical readers to make them believe that he is aware of his crimes; however, when he hints at his noble skills in narrating his story, he indirectly gives some clues on the secondary and covert meanings which are behind his mastery of style. Therefore, from the beginning of the novel, it is necessary to interpret Humbert's narrative in relation to two important dialogic factors: the disruption of socially accepted norms and the otherworldly aesthetic counterparts. Humbert urges the readers of *Lolita* to reach at some specific points in the text, which lead to the creation of complex dialogical representations.

The most prominent and prevalent conflicting dichotomy is the dichotomy of imagination and reality in *Lolita* which deals with the physical characteristics of the character Lolita in the story: "Lolita, light of my life, fire of my loins" (Nabokov,

2011b/1955: 5). The word “loins” in this excerpt signals a very strong sexual connotation which arises in reaction to Lolita’s physical appearance and is in a hidden dialogic relation with what he later utters as being a murderer who has committed pedophilia. But at the same time, the addressing of “light of my life” and the importance of the word “light” in Nabokov’s works when it is analyzed in comparison with the role of light in *Invitation to a Beheading*, it turns out to be a kind of hidden dialogic meaning in the form of microdialogue. Light in *Invitation to a Beheading* appears as a means of the signification of the intrusion of the otherworld and in the case of *Lolita*, it hints at the necessity of interpreting this novel in terms of otherworldly significations. This necessity is also hiddenly implied through inviting the jury members to “Look at this tangle of thorns,” implying the complicated affection of Humbert towards Lolita which is going to be explained by a sophisticated style, bearing complex otherworldly qualities: “Ladies and gentlemen of the jury, exhibit number one is what the seraphs, the misinformed, simple, noble–winged seraphs, envied. Look at this tangle of thorns” (Nabokov, 2011b/1955: 5).

Parallel to the surfacing of the otherworldly significations, the very few (sexual) connotations arisen from Lolita’s physical appearance, as reflected in the phrase “fire of loins,” are lost sight of and, instead, give way to the narrator’s impression of such beauties, which are uttered in the form of confessions:

... for a second it seemed to me her face was less pretty than the mental imprint I had cherished for more than a month: her cheeks looked hollowed and too much lentigo camouflaged her rosy rustic features; and that first impression (a very narrow human interval between two tiger heartbeats) carried the clear implication that all widower Humbert had to do, wanted to do, or would do, was to give this wan–looking though sun–colored little orphan au yeux battus (and even those plumbaceous umbrae under her eyes bore freckles) a sound education, a healthy and happy girlhood, a clean home, nice girl–friends of her age among whom (if the fates deigned to repay me) I might find, perhaps, a pretty little Mägdlein for Herr Doktor Humbert alone. (Nabokov, 2011b/1955: 73)

In the above excerpt, for instance, Humbert’s confession in the form of an inner polyphony signifies the fact that it was not only Lolita’s physicality which grabbed his

attention and provoked his senses of affection for her; it was, in fact, the dialogic imagination of Lolita within his consciousness that transcended her in Humbert's mind and, consequently, Humbert himself to recognize such unworldly, immortal experience of having that affection. This otherworldly affection was dialogic because of the combinational qualities of diverse worldly characteristics with the otherworldly, aesthetic pleasures which are uttered through different dialogic narrative techniques and elements such as irony, symbolism, imagery, etc. The embodiment of one of the most decisive and controversial examples of such a combinational quality can be found within the definitions of the word "nymphet" by Humbert, which can be interpreted on two levels: firstly, as a source of problematic moral and ideological interpretation, and secondly as a Nabokovian otherworldly aesthetics, independent from any ethical significations, as Alexandrov claims:

One path through this tangle is provided by Humbert's attempt to define nymphets, which clearly lies at the heart of his compulsion to explain his life to himself as well as his readers. What has not been realized by commentators is that his formulations recall the specific terms of Nabokov's descriptions of cosmic synchronization and artistic inspiration in his earlier novels... Humbert's theories confront pragmatics when he meets Lolita; and as his experiences with her prove, there are disastrous consequences to confusing love and erotics with aesthetics when the object of one's attention is an independent being and refuses to be malleable. Put more simply, Humbert's desire "to fix once for all the perilous magic of nymphets" (136) proves to be realizable in words, but not in the flesh. (Alexandrov, 1991: 162)

The word "nymphet," which was given a kind of new meaning by Nabokov in *Lolita*, attributed specific qualities to a specific group of girls. Before revealing this novel definition of nymphet, it should be made clear that Humbert tries to divulge the meaning of the word by establishing an internal dialogism with the implied reader of the novel in order to make them move beyond the boundaries of the same definitions so that they may make out his otherworldly experience of his affection towards Lolita. Nymphets, Humbert admits, have "...certain mysterious characteristics, the fey grace, the elusive, shifty, soul-shattering, insidious charm that separates the nymphet from

such coevals of hers as are incomparably more dependent on the spatial world of synchronous phenomena...” (Nabokov, 2011b/1955:10).

The otherworldly “elusive, shifty” qualities of nymphets which are “incomparably ... dependent on the spatial world of synchronous phenomena” cannot be made more transparent than establishing a dialogic corresponding relation with the commonly accepted worldly qualities of the ordinary girls. These (worldly) girls, who stand in the majority compared to nymphets, are “provisionally plain, or just nice, or ‘cute,’ or even ‘sweet’ and ‘attractive,’ ordinary, plumpish, formless, cold-skinned, essentially human little girls, with tummies and pigtails, who may or may not turn into adults of great beauty...” (Nabokov, 2011b/1955: 10). This description of a specific group of people appears in the form of an internal microdialogism—voices or significations which complement each other within the discourse of a single character—which aims at creating a kind of third world experience for the readers to understand the transcendent experience of not a normal ideological individual, but a third or otherworldly artist or madman, who, in fact, will be considered mad by the worldly people as explained in the following excerpt from the novel:

You have to be an artist and a madman, a creature of infinite melancholy, with a bubble of hot poison in your loins and a super-voluptuous flame permanently aglow in your subtle spine (oh, how you have to cringe and hide!), in order to discern at once, by ineffable signs—the slightly feline outline of a cheekbone, the slenderness of a downy limb, and other indices which despair and shame and tears of tenderness forbid me to tabulate—the little deadly demon among the wholesome children; she stands unrecognized by them and unconscious herself of her fantastic power. (Nabokov, 2011b/1955: 11)

Taking the descriptions of both ordinary teenage girls and nymphets into consideration, the importance and main role of imaginary experience in Humbert’s affection towards Lolita privileges a sort of interpretation which eludes mostly common ideological and moral readings of the novel. The defamation of the moral reading is made clear in the novel by drawing an analogy of the representation of (teenage) girls in the form of “angelic” creatures (Nabokov, 2011b/1955: 73) which is

tremendously disdained by Humbert. In a deeper analysis of Nabokov's works, specifically *Lolita* and *Pale Fire*, this hatred of the commonsense interpretation—misinterpretation according to Nabokov—involves another Nabokovian literary characteristic which draws a comparison of ideology and matter. As Nabokov insists on the role of pure aestheticism and its privilege over ideological hermeneutics in literary representations, ideology and the representation of it in literature are like a matter without spirit(uality)—spirituality not in terms of morality, but consciousness. Similar to the fact that matter without any mental understanding is but a void, diminishing the noble role of literature to that one-dimensional representation of ideology would have no fate other than the sole, mortal matter within the world of illusory reality.

What stands as an authentic reality for Nabokov regarding his affections towards *Lolita* is the aesthetic mental perception of her, and this perception encompasses both worldly and otherworldly qualities harmoniously. It is also possible to understand Nabokov's excessive and revolutionary Agnostic view that in fact the imagination of Lolita creates a type of reality for Humbert, however his tragic flaw and recklessness in keeping that harmony untouched leads to the devastation of his affection to Lolita. One of the reasons that made Humbert fail to experience the *jouissance* of the imagination of Lolita as an otherworldly quality is his indulgence in the worldly qualities of Lolita which resulted in his downfall. For instance, on one occasion, Humbert confesses that he loved her the moment he first saw her, but it was, in fact, the aesthetic otherworldly qualities of Lolita which made him love her forever: "I loved her. It was love at first sight, at last sight, at ever and ever sight" (Nabokov, 2011b/1955: 179). The perception of these transcendent qualities is also referred to "aesthetic bliss" (Goddard, 2001: 24), the sheer view of which is the matter of otherworldly pleasure. However, this was not right for Humbert as he trespassed the boundaries between experiencing that sublime beauty and making a tragic flaw by committing pedophilia, as expressed by Lolita herself: "You merely broke my life" (Nabokov, 2011b/1955: 186). Consequently, the sublime quality of any Nabokovian otherworldly imagination is a phenomenal state which must not be interfered with worldly noumenal deed, as that of Humbert's pedophilia. Taking these events of the novel into consideration, it becomes evident that not only Nabokov uses different

dialogic narrative techniques and elements, he also creates new dialogicalities by adding new meanings to words words like nymphet, which hold two entirely diverse characteristics within themselves, leading to the privilege of the abstract, imaginative perceptions of the protagonist of the novel.

Tied to this characteristic of literature, another necessary quality of Nabokovian art, i.e., knowledge, appears at the center of Nabokov's poetics. Knowledge plays a very important part in the architectonics of Nabokov's art. As works of art, specifically in the postmodern period, use imagination to transcend and go beyond the boundaries of commonsense reality, there should be a kind of noble quality, or as Nabokov calls it "branches of knowledge" (Nabokov et al, 1982: 32) within the prisms of such works, but there still stands the question of the nature of knowledge in Nabokov's works. Nabokov reckons knowledge very similar to the way Martin Heidegger does. Humans, or as Heidegger calls it Dasein, are types of creatures which/who are aware of both their existence and other existences. This awareness or knowledge is divided into two important categories of historical and timeless recognitions. At first glance, these two types might seem contradictory and entirely different, but Heidegger identifies each one's characteristics and correlates them at the end of his theory.

For Heidegger, knowing something does not firstly entail going after the historical source of an object and identifying its episteme. It is exactly the opposite: humans, before being exposed to history, are involved in everyday-life experiences, and everyday experiences might have some unprecedented behaviors and qualities, and that is when Heidegger's metaphysics comes in. Metaphysics, on the literary level, means beyond physics, which can only make sense if they are applied to Dasein. Humans, according to Heidegger, as previously stated, are aware of the being of other existences, and this awareness leads to understanding the world around/before them differently. In addition to this capability of Dasein, they are able to identify themselves as beings who are aware of their own existence and awareness. The former awareness—being aware of other existences—falls into the domain of history and physics, but the latter category belongs to a metaphysical domain in which an individual appears anxious regarding its existence in the world because they are still aware of the difference between them and the other existences, the present, and finally

the mortality of themselves within this chaotic world. In their present status, Dasein is not only open to the historicity of other existences and themselves; they are also open to any unprecedented experiences never seen or felt before, since had they been identified before, there would not have been a metaphysical experience at all. Therefore, all these metaphysical experiences add up to the qualities of humans as different and conscious beings in the world, which will later contribute to an infinite number of qualities each human being will identify, and eventually these qualities will transcend them. These metaphysical experiences, as stated above, show itself within the specific prism of time and space, similar to the way in which Nabokov's otherworldly experiences are set within specific chronotopic frames. As a result of the similarity between Nabokov and Heidegger in their conceptions of momentary epiphanic knowledge, the key role of otherworldly experiences in the form of imagination and timeless epiphanies becomes more inevitable in that the protagonists of Nabokov's works are exposed to unique understandings through their imaginations, the examples of which cannot be found in their common life experiences. Viewing Nabokov's works from the vantage point of these unique experiences and disregarding the pedophilic crime, the unique affection of Humbert would be more sensible to readers, especially for those who devalue *Lolita* for having controversial themes within its plot structure. This affection is entirely spiritual for Humbert because it is in fact the imagination of Lolita in his mind, which dialectically gets vigorous as it is not bound to material space and time; its timeless and does not fade away even when she is far from Humbert. In this sense, it is also possible to consider the imagination of Lolita as a form of knowledge which Humbert perceives as a timeless epiphany to be explained below.

In this work of Nabokov, imagination, in the course of the plot, leads to some timeless ontological experiences which have drastically different significations when they are compared to their dialogic counterparts in the real or ideological world. One good example of such a timeless experience—timeless because it does not change at all in the course of events in the novel—can be the affection Humbert has towards Lolita, whereas it would be a big disappointment for a normal reader unaware of the role of timeless experiences. One ideal example to show such a timeless experience of Humbert's affection for Lolita can be from the vari-directional dialogic discourse

Humbert uses to make the normal (ideological and biased) readers understand this noble otherworldly experience of his:

Oh, do not scowl at me, reader, I do not intend to convey the impression that I did not manage to be happy. Reader must understand that in the possession and thrall of a nymph the enchanted traveler stands, as it were, beyond happiness. For there is no other bliss on earth comparable to that of fondling a nymph. It is hors concours, that bliss, it belongs to another class, another plane of sensitivity. Despite our tiffs, despite her nastiness, despite all the fuss and faces she made, and the vulgarity, and the danger, and the horrible hopelessness of it all, I still dwelled deep in my elected paradise—a paradise whose skies were the color of hell—flames—but still a paradise. (Nabokov, 2011b/1955: 109)

As it is obvious from the above excerpt, Humbert is highly influenced by the timeless experience of his affection towards Lolita despite the unpleasant characteristics of the nastiness of his relationship with her, which occurs only at one scene, as explained above. In this sense, Nabokov highlights the importance of timelessness as an otherworldly and metaphysical quality through the analogy of the perception of Lolita with her physical appearance, which privilege the former over the latter. This illumination of another otherworldly quality through the immortality or eternity of abstract perceptions through dialogical analogies with the mortal worldly characteristics of a same person is a novel Nabokovian contribution to the creation of intense dialogicalities in this novel which leads to the revelation and authentication of specific qualities, the examples of which are rare to be found.

In addition to the authentication of timeless experiences on the personal level for Humbert, there is also a never-seriously-taken caution which leads to consequential blamings of the novel in that this novel titillated pedophilia, or in its extreme ends, pornography. The above quote and many other excerpts from the novel reverberate the necessity of a timeless interpretation of the novel in order to get to the core of the work. There is no doubt that what Humbert did with Lolita was a pure act of crime which cannot be covered by any Nabokovian style of language. However, disregarding his pedophilic acts, the unique affections Humbert had for Lolita can be analyzed separately; consequently, the sublimity of this experience—having unique

and powerful affections—would be made clearer not to equate it with pornography. In addition to that, there is a sharp difference between pornography and the timeless experiences shown in this text, which are clearly revealed in the novel as if they are the direct voice of the writer of the story, predicting the future reactions of the readers of *Lolita* and accusing him of corrupting the minds of teenage reading audience:

While it is true that in ancient Europe, and well into the eighteenth century ... deliberate lewdness was not inconsistent with flashes of comedy, or vigorous satire, or even the verve of a fine poet in a wanton mood, it is also true that in modern times the term “pornography” connotes mediocrity, commercialism, and certain strict rules of narration. Obscenity must be mated with banality because every kind of aesthetic enjoyment has to be entirely replaced by simple sexual stimulation [in pornography]. (*italics added*, Nabokov, 2011b/1955: 208)

Parallel to the above-described characteristics of pornography, there exist some misinterpretations regarding the nature of the relation between Humbert and Lolita in the novel, as the following excerpt from Ashleigh Butler’s analysis of *Lolita* demonstrates:

Humbert Humbert is more than a criminal, he is a human being. His obsession is not a disease, it is not logical, but a corruption of the soul. It exposes and exploits; it grows and churns and manifests in his Lolita. It takes seed in her vision, and blooms into something more. (Butler, 2013: 4).

However, Nabokov in his afternote anticipates such interpretations from several critics and points to the unique features of his novel which represent timeless experiences, not a sexual scene to the readers of *Lolita*, especially by pointing to the word “lewd” both in the above excerpt from *Lolita* on the nature of pornography and the following excerpt which acts as a response to such diminutive readings:

Certain techniques in the beginning of *Lolita* (Humbert’s Journal, for example) misled some of my first readers into assuming that this was going to be a lewd book. They expected the rising succession of erotic scenes; when these stopped, the readers stopped, too, and felt bored and let down. (*Italics added*, Nabokov, 2011b/1955: 209)

The above excerpt, which is taken from the appendix to *Lolita* written by Nabokov, is obviously presenting an excuse to deprive Humbert or even himself (Nabokov) of the crimes Humbert has done, but the real otherworldly mental sublime moments Humbert experienced cannot be diminished just for the sake of his crime. For instance, one eminent Nabokovian scholar who finds Humbert's feelings and affections different in the way Nabokov welcomes them (Affections and feelings) is Vladimir E. Alexandrov who states the following:

In terms of the hierarchy of values Humbert establishes in the novel, his love for Annabel raises him to her level—to “that same enchanted island of time” she occupies. Humbert's search for nymphets is thus a (futile) attempt to reexperience what he knew through Annabel, which appears to have been an authentic spiritual affinity for a specific girl, marked by a plane of being transcending the earthly. (Alexandrov, 1991: 175)

Unlike privileging timelessness as an otherworldly quality, the destructive effect of time is depicted in the course of the novel throughout *Lolita*'s coming of age where the eternal, inner pleasure of the otherworldly experience of affection changes into disappointment, treachery and consequently, the death of *Lolita*. As explained in section four of chapter one, Nabokov's hatred of time and the things time brings with itself include the erosion of the peace and ultimate pleasures he periodically experienced in his life. Similarly, Humbert suffers from the flight of pleasures throughout the novel; therefore, love or affection was only one of these pleasures which was taken away from him. Similarly, all other otherworldly experiences are spontaneous inner feelings in that they apparently do not turn out to have any social, ideological, or contextual qualities.

Another otherworldly experience which is detectable in the novel is the coincidental, patterned images or events which elicit inner pleasures. The very primary and transparent example of such a pattern is the (dialogic) intertextual name resemblance of Humbert's childhood lover Annabelle Leigh to Edgar Allan Poe's lover, Annabel Lee. In addition to the similarities in their names, the thematic features of Poe's work foreshadow the following events of the novel and the narrator's (Humbert's) misery which results in the unfulfillment of the *jouissance* of his affection towards Annabelle Leigh. Similar to Poe's narrator who is haunted by the death of his

lover, Humbert has the same obsessions of loss and mortality which characterize most of his deeds in the novel. But the main dividing line between these two lovers rests upon the incarnation of Humbert's obsessions in another teenage girl, Lolita. Considering such a dialogic intertextuality, the importance of fate in one's work of art—Annabel Lee in this case—comes into being in the form of Aubrey McFate in the other's plot—*Lolita*—which leads to the surfacing of other meaningful coincidental patterns in the novel, as in incarnation of Humbert's obsessional affections in Lolita and the reckless crimes he commits, leading fatefully to the destruction of her life.

The prominence of coincidences and identification of patterns out of these coincidences in the novel cannot be limited to similar or shared essential thematic features. These two important features pave the way for the understanding of Nabokov's otherworld by shedding light upon the fact that spontaneous or momentary epiphanies which might seem irrational and chaotic due to the misconception that they are logically inexpressible might, in fact, have enormous potential to create new types of experiences. In other words, we come to the point that the very core characteristic of the otherworld is its revelation through superficial signs which are deemed meaningless at first sight, but when their dialogic relations are analyzed deeply and the worldly coincidental representation are taken into intricate considerations, the centrality of such irrational and chaotic elements becomes the backbone of these type of works. In this sense, the role of both good readers and good writers is to illuminate and interpret sublime elements in such moments of irrationality in literary works. In this regard, it is possible to interpret the story, for example, in the way that the ghost of Poe's Annabel somehow, someday found its way in the incarnation of Humbert's Annabel. This example of coincidence, according to Hilary P. Dannenberg, is called postmodernist coincidence in which intertextual references as well as resemblances signal different ontological worlds:

Postmodernist coincidence creates networks of relationships between characters across narrative time, but, unlike the traditional coincidence plot (which also occurs in postmodernist fiction), it does not do this by giving these characters a previous relationship in the form of spatial and temporal contiguity but by creating networks of uncanny correspondences between characters who

are distributed across more than one temporal or ontological level.
(Dannenberg, 2008: 106)

Combining the qualities of coincidence with patterning in naming specific places, another important signification appears through the name of the hotel where Humbert and Lolita stayed for a few days. This name, “The Enchanted Hunters” (Nabokov, 2011b/1955: 72) signifies the meanings the narrator is unable to identify, and instead, he asks the readers to look for the details of the novel to identify them. The “Enchanted Hunters” hotel does delicately contain two important symbols within itself. The first one, “the enchanted”, targets both Humbert and Clare Quilty, but specifically Humbert. Whereas Humbert is tremendously enchanted by the otherworldly qualities of the nymphet Lolita, Quilty is only sexually obsessed with the teenage Lolita. The second symbol targets both Humbert and Quilty while holding two ironies which act in the form of dialogic imagination. The word “hunters,” in fact, represents both Humbert and Quilty in that both of them seek to possess Lolita, but at the same time, two ironies of situation change the course of events in the story as if it had been patterned delicately. While residing in the hotel with Lolita, Humbert is approached by Quilty, who, at first, targeted possessing Lolita, but later he plots to eliminate—or, hunt in a literary sense—Humbert. This first irony is later accompanied by another irony of situation in which the hunter becomes the prey; Humbert shoots at this “Gray-faced, baggy-eyed” (Nabokov, 2011b/1955: 196) person at the end of the novel. Therefore, as seen from this aspect, some coincidental patterns might seem meaningless at first sight, but the same patterns encapsulate all the past, present and future events which show themselves dialogically. Another interpretation, though very bizarre it might seem, can be the fact that coincidental, meaningless patterns overcome the humans’ fate more than the worldly, logical patterns in life and apparently in nature. Consequently, the role of fate and meaningful coincidences, whether intertextual or inside the novel, in the course of events in *Lolita* which act as bridges to hint at specific meanings elucidates the way Nabokov contributes to the creation of representational dialogicalities, relating the events of the story to each other. In addition to establish these dialogic relations, Nabokov uses these relations to show coincidences as otherworldly metaphysical qualities affecting the occurrences in the material world.

One other controversial characteristic of the novel which is in connection with Nabokov's otherworldly aesthetics is its emphasis on experience and the degradation of innocence which appears as innocence/experience binary. There is no doubt that there is a sacred, unanimous agreement between the majority of readers and scholars of *Lolita* on the concept of innocence and its role in quenching the ideological thirst of readers. For instance, at one point, Ellen Pifer conceives Humbert's feelings towards Lolita as "vampirish":

The flagrant contradiction between Humbert's adopted role as Lolita's guardian and his demands as vampirish lover undermines the appeals he makes to the reader's sympathy. With unwitting explicitness, he exposes the gruesome reality operating beneath his pose as concerned parent when he describes having to take the sick child to a local hospital... Humbert's casual reference to his "hope" of having for intercourse explodes his pretensions to fatherly "concern" and brings home to the reader, yet again, the dreadful incongruity between the child's fragile innocence and the adult's fierce appetite. (Connolly, 2005: 194)

Lolita's so called "fragile innocence" in the above excerpt is only one example from numerous books and articles viewing her as the victim of Humbert's sexual perversion or what they mostly label as Humbert's crime or pedophilic act. However, when the concept of innocence is analyzed from the perspective of Nabokov's otherworldly phenomenon or even postmodernism, the very traditional definitions of the term are brought into question. According to postmodern fiction, the will to experience the inner emotions and desires has been neglected throughout history and the function of literature has been limited to the rationalization of those emotions and desires (Hoffman, 2010: 99), and the same fact can be applicable to *Lolita*'s case as well. For instance, what Humbert tragically does with Lolita is a precipitous will to experience the abstract qualities of nymphets he finds in Lolita without taking the circumstances of her teenagerhood into consideration. What makes Humbert approach Lolita is mainly the reckless response to the same will to experience the sublime otherworldly emotions arisen only when he encounters Lolita, regardless of her age and consent, the comparison of which with the villain of the novel might enlighten further insights into the concept of innocence and Nabokovian otherworldliness.

The other evil character in the novel who carries the reckless deeds of Humbert to extremes is Clare Quilty who abuses Lolita in several instances and asks her to get involved in a group sex. One of the main arguments of this study on the concept of innocence brings into focus the sublime—though immoral when it comes to its performance—otherworldly feelings Humbert had towards Lolita. Although for the common readers the feelings could have been sublime had Humbert not committed pedophilia, the same criminal feelings transcend him above other evil criminals like Quilty mainly because the nature of Humbert's feelings is different from Quilty's and can be labeled as sublime. One ideal example of the sublimity of Humbert experiences—not commitments—shows itself when he sits at the tennis court and watches the girls playing. In this scene, he addresses the readers to sympathize with him in the form of an external polyphony:

Reader! What I heard was but the melody of children at play, nothing but that, and so limpid was the air that within this vapor of blended voices, majestic and minute, remote and magically near, frank and divinely enigmatic... I stood listening to that musical vibration from my lofty slope, to those flashes of separate cries with a kind of demure murmur for background, and then I knew that the hopelessly poignant thing was not Lolita's absence from my side, but the absence of her voice from that concord. (Nabokov, 2011b/1955: 205)

The final part of the preceding excerpt can be the evidence to come to the point that Lolita occupied Humbert's mind mainly because of the otherworldly qualities Humbert found in her even when she was not there in person. In other words, Lolita was, in fact, the incarnation of otherworldly qualities which urged Humbert to experience them regardless of the ways and meanings of their reflections in social, ethical and ideological levels. When the existence of Humbert's strong emotions towards Lolita and the fact that he is highly influenced by her from the first encounter until Lolita's death are simultaneously taken into account, the sharp distinctness of such an affection would become clearer especially when compared with Quilty's short-lived, abusive intentions. In this regard, Nabokov brings together the two concepts of innocence and experience and settles them in a dialogical relation, the former one representing ideology and the latter one the experience of intense emotions, regardless of ideological constraints. However, it should be reminded that the sexual

intercourse of Humbert with the underaged Lolita cannot be equated with the definition of experience in postmodern art, at least because it does not shatter the boundaries of other individuals. This experience, as Hoffmann claims, stays at a personal level, revealing the nature of the very experiences to the readers of postmodern literature and is definable only in the fictional world:

“Experience” is actually an unsatisfying notion, yet it is an open term that is not narrowly circumscribable, not readily subjectable to a summary, a hierarchy, and ideology. It does not separate language and world; in fact it fuses the linguistic process and the Dynamics of the imaginary world. And it includes the other facets of narrative, simultaneity, plurality and empty spaces in-between. In addition, experience is able to describe in one term the mental activity that is happening on all three levels of the communication— process text: the author, the artifact, and the reader. (Hoffmann, 2005: 98)

The final polyphonic feature of Nabokov’s *Lolita* which can also be reckoned as an otherworldly quality is Nabokov’s perception of art, or aesthetics in general, which has a very delicate relation with the ethical problems discussed in the preceding paragraphs. In his afternote to *Lolita*, titled “On a Book Entitled *Lolita*,” Nabokov claims that his book should never be considered as a book of moral or ethical circumstances (314). Instead, he wishes to describe his book as the representation of “aesthetic bliss.” Before describing the qualities of the term, it is necessary to illuminate the relation of this view of Nabokov which rejects the presence of any moral codes in *Lolita* with the ideas of the imaginary psychologist Dr. John Ray, who considers Humbert’s story not only a “factual” event, but also a pure ethical writing:

As a work of art, it transcends its expiatory aspects; and still more important to us than scientific significance and literary worth, is the ethical impact the book should have on the serious reader; for in this poignant personal study there lurks a general lesson; the wayward child, the egotistic mother, the panting maniac—these are not only vivid characters in a unique story: they warn us of dangerous trends; they point out potent evils. “*Lolita*” should make all of us—parents, social workers, educators—apply ourselves with still greater vigilance and vision to the task of bringing up a better generation in a safer world. (Nabokov, 2011b/1955: 4)

This claim of John Ray is in sharp contrast with what Nabokov mentions in his essay. Regardless of which one of these two characters are right, one important fact emerges out of these arguments and that is the inevitable existence of polyphonism between Nabokov and John Ray, which acts as a mean to privilege the story of Humbert. Going back to the definition of aesthetic bliss, Nabokov defines the term as “a sense of being somehow, somewhere, connected with other states of being where art (curiosity, tenderness, kindness, ecstasy) is the norm” (Nabokov, 2011b/1955: 210). This definition of the term encapsulates two important literary features within itself. The first important characteristic of this definition is the addressing of the phrases and words “a sense of being somehow,” “somewhere,” and “connected with other states of being,” all of which signify different types of states which do not belong to worldly qualities; they, in fact, belong to Nabokovian otherworldly plausible experiences identified and explained previously. The second feature of the definition, on the other hand, discloses one important feature of Nabokov’s writings. This second decisive peculiarity within the definition of aesthetic bliss identifies the role of the arts inside the novel and its function for Humbert and Nabokov.

The concept and function of arts bear far-reaching significance in postmodernist works, especially in Nabokov’s writings. For Nabokov, the act of writing reflects its significance in two important ways. At the primary level, the main stream of events in some of Nabokov’s works serve as the original version of plots which are commented on or judged by an outsider. For instance, in *Lolita*’s case, the story of Humbert Humbert is preceded by the comments of the psychologist Dr. John Ray; in *Pale Fire*, this is Charles Kinbote who comments on John Francis Shade’s poem in the commentary section following the poem. This characteristic of Nabokov’s works, as explained in chapter two of this study, is a sheer example of the presence of polyphonism which contributes to the existence of several layers of meanings within the texts. In addition to the polyphonic features of these works, if these sections of each novel are analyzed comparatively, the clash of two important forces of ideology and aesthetics becomes once more transparent to the readers. The original manuscripts in each work (Humbert’s narrative in *Lolita* and the poem in the *Pale Fire*) reflect aesthetic features which include some of the discussed otherworldly qualities and significations. Contrary to these mostly controversial otherworldly themes, the

Foreword section of *Lolita* presents ideological and ethical messages, as John Ray remarks: “No doubt, he [Humbert] is horrible, he is abject, he is a shining example of moral leprosy, a mixture of ferocity and jocularly that betrays supreme misery” (Nabokov, 2011b/1955: 4). Therefore, this secondary manuscript can also be reckoned as an ideological (biased) reading of the original text which lacks the foremost idiosyncrasy of Humbert’s narrative, which is its nobility in being immortal to live in the minds of coming generations. But above all, Nabokov achieves another goal by implementing and developing dialogic narrative skills in that he takes the main otherworldly themes of Humbert’s section to aesthetic areas in order to make them both eternal and purely otherworldly. It should also be pointed that he does so by bringing together two different sections within a novel, one of which—Dr. Ray’s manuscript—defames the themes of the other. In this sense, Nabokov uses the first section of the novel to represent an ideological understanding of Humbert’s story, and later uses dialogic techniques to separate these two sections, transcending the second section of the novel to otherworldly aesthetic planes of signification, and consequently, make it immortal.

Immortality is both another otherworldly quality which has close ties with the theme of timelessness discussed above and an aesthetic quality which foregrounds Humbert’s narrative. Humbert makes this fact clear by comparing himself to Quilty where he (Humbert) is intended to live longer than him to “live in the minds of later generations. I am thinking of aurochs and angels, the secret of durable pigments, prophetic sonnets, the refuge of art” (2011b/1955: 206). Humbert cannot achieve this goal except by shaping his otherworldly experience into an aesthetic work of art in a way that can be both pinned into the mind of coming generation of readers and reserved from the intrusions of ideology and ethics. In other words, ideology and ethics, in Nabokov’s views, have a shorter life as they are bound to the mortality of the commentator whereas the beauty of transcendent (otherworldly) aesthetics will be immortal by being read by numerous readers of *Lolita*. This eternity of the aesthetic work of art is very similar to John Keats view of the immortality of arts and beauty in his poem “Ode on a Grecian Urn” (1819):

O Attic shape! Fair attitude! with brede

Of marble men and maidens overwrought,

With forest branches and the trodden weed;
Thou, silent form, dost tease us out of thought
As doth eternity: Cold Pastoral!
When old age shall this generation waste,
Thou shalt remain, in midst of other woe
Than ours, a friend to man, to whom thou say'st,
"Beauty is truth, truth beauty,"—that is all

Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know. (Keats, 1820: lines 41–50)

This unprecedented quality of aesthetics in relation with Nabokov's conception of metaphysics (timelessness and imagination) is also best explained by Alexandrov:

This conclusion [to live in the minds of later generations] inevitably draws the reader into the novel's, and Nabokov's, value system: if beauty is a function of accurate perception, then the careless reader is immoral. The final implication of the novel's conclusion has to do with metaphysics. Humbert speaks of the "refuge of art" being the "only immortality" that he can share with Lolita. (Alexandrov, 1991: 185–6)

In general, this section analyzed and explained the ways the main otherworldly qualities in *Lolita* are signified through Bakhtinian dialogic signification. In addition to this, this section shed light on the way Nabokov contributed to the creation of novel dialogicalities in order to foreground and privilege his otherworldly realm. By doing so, it elucidated the fact that the otherworldly qualities are presented in indirect ways mainly because the central themes of the story would, and actually did, cause controversy among the readers of Nabokov's works. In order to signify the otherworldly themes, Nabokov makes use of dialogism in creating several dichotomies among which worldly/otherworldly qualities appear in the form of contextual and ideological/aesthetic and metatextual dichotomies. By unprivileging the first class of dichotomies (worldly, contextual and ideological), Nabokov tried to foreground his literary work in order to be faithful to his definition of art in which arts does not stand to show commonsense reality, but the sublime imagination which transcends the reader

to experience the otherworldly, ontological qualities the narrator or the protagonist experiences.

These hypothetical, ontological otherworldly qualities might be in opposition with what humans have taken for granted as ethics, morality or even a set of accepted rules, traditions and ways of life. One of the very problematic qualities in the novel is the definition and representation of the word “nymphet” with a new meaning infused by Nabokov himself. The very definition of the term, as explained and shown in this section, is characterized by some hypothetical perceptions of Lolita by Humbert, unlike the view of many readers who characterized Humbert’s affections towards Lolita as purely pedophilic, sexual and abusive.

Although what Humbert did was an unforgivable reckless act and crime, demolishing the childhood and life of Lolita, if one pays attention to the otherworldly qualities shown in the novel and identifies their effects on Humbert, they can understand that the transcendent experiences—not the pedophilic act—Humbert epiphanically felt were not the result of sole physical or worldly qualities of Lolita; it was in fact the noble imagination or imaginary otherworldly qualities that Humbert experienced from Lolita’s existence.

Another aspect of Nabokov’s *Lolita* which was analyzed in this section is the type of knowledge the otherworldly qualities revealed in this work. The relation of Martin Heidegger’s concept of knowledge humans as Dasein have is linked to the themes of timelessness as well as coincidence and coincidental pattern in *Lolita*. In this regard, the experiences—or knowledge in Heideggerian sense—Humbert gained by being exposed to otherworldly qualities of Lolita shatter the dogma of many ethical and ideological codes. Finally, the nobility of the work of art was introduced under the definition of Nabokovian aesthetics so that the role of the other conflicting forces such as ideology and ethics would become clear, and consequently, diminish when they are compared to the otherworldly qualities of arts. In fact, it is through aestheticism that Humbert, and consequently Nabokov, wants to make the old-age desire of becoming immortal come true. All these literary aims in Nabokov’s mind are achieved both through implementation and development of Bakhtin’s theory of literature, appearing as different contributions of Nabokov to dialogic analysis of metaphysical texts, which

finally lead to a partial separation of his writing from social and ideological significations.





IV. CHAPTER 3. NABOKOV AND THE OTHERWORLD EXPERIENCE

C. PALE FIRE

Among all Nabokov's works, *Pale Fire* is the most convoluted work of art in terms of its form and content. Written in four sections, this novel of Nabokov is the utmost example of Bakhtinian polyphonic genre of literature. In addition to the structure of the novel, its content pushes the main themes of his previous works, *Invitation to a Beheading* and *Lolita*, to the limits of literary incarnations in terms of the representation of otherworldly themes. However, what foregrounds *Pale Fire* from his other works is the successful application of his theory of the otherworldliness of literature and major themes of literature in a way that it bears the lowest degree of relevance with the social and ideological background of the novel. Moreover, this novel can be reckoned as not only one of his works mirroring the highest possible success of his otherworldly aestheticism, but also a representative work of both 'art for art's sake' movement and postmodernism in respect of Nabokov's main concerns of metaphysics and ontological otherworldly qualities of experience. Above all, it should be taken into consideration that these representations of experience epitomize in more subtle and objective ways. For this reason, this section identifies the ways Nabokov's major otherworldly themes, including imagination and memory as timeless phenomena opposing the destruction timeliness brings with itself, coincidences as meaningful events changing the course of occurrences and strong passions as eternal sources of timeless devotions, surface in *Pale Fire*. Furthermore, this section will illustrate the examples through which Nabokov's poetics contributes to the creation of intense dialogic representations, which result in the successful separation of his art from sociopolitical works of art. Finally, this section will show how this separation, though not completely independent from social and ideological significations, finds its utmost form in the creation of the "Pale Fire" poem.

Tracing the roots of Nabokov's conception of metaphysics and its qualities, one of the important characteristics of his works deals with the significance of imagination and its delicate relation with the otherworldly quality of timelessness in influencing human consciousness. However, before analyzing these significations in *Pale Fire*, it is worth remembering the unreliability of Charles Kinbote's version of events in the novel. Considering the structure of *Pale Fire* and its elaborations in section three of chapter two, it is obvious that Kinbote's interpretation of John Shade's poem, "Pale Fire", is misleading, especially when Kinbote tries to enforce his story of Zemblan kingdom on the poem whereas there are no real references in the poem on Zembla. As Kinbote's role in narrating the background facts in all three sections of the novel is fundamental, the unreliability of his narration necessitates a surplus endeavor on the side of readers in order to go beyond the interpretational fallacies of Shade's poem by Kinbote. This surplus burden requires the readers to grasp the nature of Shadean/Nabokovian imagination and timelessness in *Pale Fire*.

Imagination in *Pale Fire* bears different characteristics and, consequently, literary representations. The first remarkable quality of imagination is the fact that readers are left confused whether the events of the whole novel are based upon any factual evidence, or, as Kinbote remarks (Nabokov, 1982: 196), according to the firsthand experience of Kinbote as a Zemblan king, or a reader-oriented interpretation of the novel which requires a comparative study of Nabokovian aesthetics of imagination. There is no room to accept any understanding of the novel according to factual identifications at least because there do not exist outside-the-novel facts to correlate or even partially authenticate the literary rendition of the events Kinbote narrates. Therefore, basing the comprehension of the novel on Kinbote's claims and assimilations would not be accurate, as David Lodge admits, because:

Kinbote is mad, believing himself to be the exiled king... He has convinced himself that Shade was writing a poem about his own history, and that he was shot in error by an assassin sent to murder Kinbote himself. The purpose of his commentary is to establish Kinbote's bizarre interpretation of the facts. (Lodge, 2012: 119)

As a result, one of the authentic ways of understanding the novel can be made based on the active participation of readers by approaching the poem "Pale Fire" as an

imaginary experience of an ontological otherworld (Seidel, 1984: 842). The existence of two *Pale Fire* versions of events as well as the deconstruction of the “Pale Fire” poem by Kinbote in the Commentary section, necessitate the understanding of the role of imagination as an otherworldly experience by readers, especially after they make out the irrelevant version of Kinbote’s Commentary. Strikingly, in order to understand the nature of imagination in the “Pale Fire” poem, firstly, the representation of imagination should be identified in this work of art; secondly, the insights imagination leads to should be delineated.

In Shade’s metaphor of an otherworldly experience, he imagines himself as a “bird” that hits the window, but later dives into the imaginary sky that gives him insight not only into the experiences of an ontological imagination, but also unique patterns in the real world, which are not identical for common people, as illuminated in the following lines of the poem. In these lines, the imagination of being the bird results in the identification of the sublime beauty or the combinational delight of the dialogic interrelations among worldly objects—“lawn, chair, bed, snow” even in the “darkness of night,”—the impressions and associations of which leave remarkable impacts on Shade:

Uncurtaining the night, I’d let dark glass
Hang all the furniture above the grass,
And how delightful when a fall of snow
Covered my glimpse of lawn and reached up so
As to make chair and bed exactly stand

Upon that snow, out in that crystal land! (Nabokov, 1982/1962: lines 7–12)

In this sense, imagination acts as a mean for Shade to reckon himself as a bird to reach some unique knowledge on the relations of worldly entities. In order to make the pleasure of this imagination eternal, Shade needs to transcend the commonsense and worldly ideas and significations, which are timely in the sense that they are temporary and the passage of time demolishes the eternity of these pleasures. This destructive effect of time as a worldly phenomenon on the experience of pleasures can be seen in Shade’s vision in which, in order to evade the destructive role of time, he tries to keep

the pleasure of the otherworldly experience of harmony in “An indoor scene, hickory leaves, the svelte/ Stilettos of a frozen stillicide” (Nabokov, 1982/1962: lines 34–5) by closing his eyes and implementing the power of imagination to make them eternal: “all I had to do/ Was close my eyes to reproduce the leaves,/ Or indoor scene, or trophies of the eaves” (Nabokov, 1982/1962: lines 38–40). In this regard, in addition to the eternity of such pleasures in Shade’s mind, these lines shed light upon the Nabokovian aesthetic that the “reproduction” of such images in his consciousness highlight the sublime impression of such mental images more than their actual entities in the material world.

After the reproduction of the pleasant images in the imagination, the pleasures break their bounds from any worldly entities and the value of pleasures gains significance not according to worldly ethical and ideological codes, but based on the strength of the passions and emotions, which result in the detachment of the protagonist from worldly concerns. In a similar manner, the mental images of the material objects are more pleasant to Shade as a Nabokovian otherworldly protagonist mainly because they force him to forget his worldly catastrophes, such as the death of Hazel and the superficiality of humans surrounding him. In the course of the poem, the idea and embodiment of the timelessness of imagination emerges as a state of being by which Shade’s existence is characterized, and this experience of his is named “preterist.” The connotation of preterist in the poem as someone who “collects cold nest” (Nabokov, 1982/1962: line 79) signifies the fact that Shade is highly obsessed with the experience of timelessness resulting from imagination, because the “nest” Shade addresses is the house, which was used formerly by his parents who are dead. This timelessness, on the one hand, gives him the opportunity of remembering his parents and deceased daughter, Hazel, who committed suicide. Although his daughter’s physical appearance is described by other worldly people as unpretty and unattractive (lines 296–304), she was always remarkable for Shade for several reasons. Firstly, for Shade, the physical appearance is not a matter of nobleness mainly because in his eyes any worldly obsessions, including obsessive views on the appearance of things and humans, act as barriers to have insights to the inner perceptions of such beauties, which are intensified by and experienced through imagination. The

unimportance of physical beauty is explicitly revealed in the following lines of the poem:

And again your voice:

“But this is prejudice! You should rejoice

That she is innocent. Why overstress

The physical? She wants to look a mess.

Virgins have written some resplendent books.

Lovemaking is not everything. Good looks

Are not that indispensable!” (Nabokov, 1982/1962: lines 319–23)

More strikingly, the second reason of Hazel’s nobility in the eyes of Shade, which results from her unattractiveness, is her search for shelter in books, which signifies her attempts to indulge in arts as an eternal otherworldly experience, as her father does (Nabokov, 1982/1962: lines 338–48). Both these reasons break down the second nature of imagination in Nabokov’s aesthetics as a state of mind which appears as a fence to prevent the intrusion of tragic and fatal events in the material world. In this regard, Nabokov signifies these roles of imagination through creating dialogic relations with the meaningless of specific worldly objects and the reproductive pleasures of the images of these objects in the mind of Shade. In other words, this novel representation of two different perceptions of reality through imagination is the first Nabokovian contribution to the theory of dialogism, without the existence of which such a signification would be impossible in “Pale Fire” the poem, and this can be clearly shown in the following lines when Shade remembers the bafflement of Hazel.

The memory of Hazel as a timeless experience signifies, on the other hand, the destruction timeliness carries with itself, and this signification is foreshadowed at the beginning of the poem where Shade attempts to transcend mortality and “fly on, in the reflected sky” (line4). The fear of mortality and death characterizes the course of the poem, but this obsession cannot be equated with the literal meaning of death; this fear, in fact, is the death of imagination. Eventually, the timeless, pleasant experience of immortality is represented in the form of an artistic production, i.e., the “Pale Fire”

poem. The artistic production in the world of Nabokov and, consequently, Shade is not the representation of the real world; it is the identification of the unique patterns within the seemingly irrational world of otherworldly imagination. For instance, the example of Hazel's failure to capture the patterns in the unique world of epiphanic words within the books she reads, and the way those words overwhelm her mind are in contrast with Shade's successful identifications of coincidental patterns and transformation of those patterns into a work of art. This failure of Hazel is actually the failure of grasping what may exist beyond the timeliness of this world which can be also reckoned as her incapability of identifying the sublimity of otherworldly qualities. All these failures lead to her isolation, depression and finally suicide. On the other hand, Shade was almost in the same situation as Hazel; however, his genius mind in experiencing those aesthetic, otherworldly qualities and molding them into a meaningful shape in the form of a poem transcend Shade to stand above mortality and timeliness by making his art and otherworldly experiences eternal to be remembered by the readers of his work. The following lines from the poem hint at Hazel's feelings when she comes across odd experiences:

She had strange fears, strange fantasies, strange force
Of character—as when she spent three nights
Investigating certain sounds and lights
In an old barn. She twisted words: pot, top,
Spider, redips. And “powder” was “red wop.”

She called you a didactic katydid. (Nabokov, 1982/1962: lines 344–9)

For instance, in the above lines from the poem, Shade points to Hazel's inability to find the relation of those “dreadful words”—dreadful for Hazel because she is not capable of identifying meaning out of the seemingly disordered words. The absurdity deriving from her incapability in experiencing the otherworldly qualities overwhelms her mind, and this obsession is later carried to the levels of chronic depression, resulting in expressionless eyes, “swollen feet, scratching her head With psoriatic fingernails, and moan,/ Murmuring dreadful words in monotone” (Nabokov, 1982/1962: lines 354–5) and, eventually, suicide. However, the grip of the other forms

of worldly epiphanies for Shade and his capability in spotting the patterns by answering to the dilemma of those words result in the timelessness of otherworldly experience, which are finally transformed into a work of art, i.e., the “Pale Fire” poem. For instance, in the following line, Shade’s wife comes up with answers to Hazel’s obsessional questions; however, it is Shade who—in the end—is brimming with the otherworldly experiences to respond to the otherworldly question of the nature of “Sempiternal”, meaning the rejection of natural time through experiencing otherworldly qualities:

... You remember those

Almost unruffled evenings when we played

Mah-jongg, or she tried on your furs, which made

Her almost fetching; and the mirrors smiled,

The lights were merciful, the shadows mild,

Sometimes I’d help her with a Latin text,

Or she’d be reading in her bedroom, next

To my fluorescent lair, and you would be

In your own study, twice removed from me,

And I would hear both voices now and then:

“Mother, what’s grimpen?” “What is what?” “Grim Pen.”

Pause, and your guarded scholium.

Then again: “Mother, what’s chtonic?”

That, too, you’d explain, Appending.

“Would you like a tangerine?”

“No. Yes. And what does sempiternal mean?”

You’d hesitate. And lustily I’d roar

The answer from my desk through the closed door. (Nabokov, 1982/1962: lines 358–77)

This timeless experience has also a dialogic feature in which it alludes to T. S. Eliot's work *Four Quartets* (1941). Similar to Shade—and of course Nabokov on a larger scale—Eliot's poem is obsessed with the idea of time and memory. In both writers' works, memory is treated as the capability of mind in uniting the events of the timely past with the experiences of the present in order to make these events, specifically pleasant ones, timeless or eternal. Similar to Eliot, the fabrication of these otherworldly qualities comes into being in the form of a poem for Shade. In other words, timelessness and memory incarnate in the form of the "Pale Fire" poem and gain immortality by being able to live in the minds of the later generations; however, tragically, that is not the same for Hazel since she, unlike Eliot and Shade, cannot transcribe such an experience into literary forms. The illumination of this poem as an aesthetic work of art, which is consisted of different intertextual references as worldly phenomena intermixed with the abundance of unclear otherworldly qualities, can be reckoned as a Nabokovian contribution to dialogic representations in order to make this work timeless by being remembered, as he remembers Hazel, by the readers of coming generations. In this sense, every time the readers of different epochs read the novel, they establish dialogic interpretations in the reading act of a poem which is entirely dialogic in its nature, brimmed with diverse timeless images.

In addition to his capability of transforming otherworldly qualities into art, Shade has other intellectual abilities, none of other characters, especially Kinbote, possesses. One of the outstanding mental abilities of Shade is the way he experiences the otherworldly qualities through the "delightful combination" of distinct worldly phenomena and, consequently, establishes a connection (coincidental patterns) among them. For instance, "Great Mountains," "the iron gate of the ramshackle house" and "a snowy form" (Nabokov, 1982/1962: lines 510–12) around these images elicit a unique, joyful mental experience through unique patternings identified by a cautious observer, the examples of which cannot be found in any worldly, independent phenomena without having the capability of finding any relations among them. Characterizing the mountains as symbols "associated with the idea of meditation, spiritual elevation and the communion of the blessed" (Cirlot, 2020: 221), Shade implies the connection he feels during his observation of the sublime, which signifies the unconditional and untimely pleasures of otherworldly experiences. This

signification becomes more identical when its dialogic representation is contrasted with the “the iron gate of the ramshackle house”, denoting the Nabokovian concept of the material world which acts as a prison, impeding Shade from reaching out that spirituality. In addition to this symbolization of mountain, the color white implies purity and intelligence (Cirlot, 2020: 222), which can be associated with the nature of otherworldly experiences and the knowledge Shade gains through his exposures to the realm of the otherworld. Following these lines, Shade acknowledges that forgetting these images, which appear in his memory of a once glorious past, would be a big failure for him and his life; therefore, there is an internal urge on his side to make these images immortal. One another transparent example of making the otherworldly experiences immortal is taken into its utmost phase in another part of the poem when Shade begins identifying other sets of patterns among worldly events and compares them to the religious pleasure of heavenly rewards, and eventually degrades the latter ones:

And I'll turn down eternity unless
The melancholy and the tenderness
Of mortal life; the passion and the pain;
The claret taillight of that dwindling plane
Off Hesperus; your gesture of dismay
On running out of cigarettes; the way
You smile at dogs; the trail of silver slime
Snails leave on flagstones; this good ink, this rhyme,
This index card, this slender rubber band
Which always forms, when dropped, an ampersand,
Are found in Heaven by the newlydead
Stored in its strongholds through the years. (Nabokov, 1982/1962: lines 525–36)

What Shade signifies by “this good ink, this rhyme” is the immortality of aesthetic representation which turns out to be the “Pale Fire” poem for him. Looking

from another perspective, it is clear that one of the fundamental roles of aesthetics is the artistic depiction of the association of timeliness with mortality. Whereas timelessness gives life to Shade's poem and immortality to Shade himself, timeliness deprives him of the sense of freedom and imprisons him by not allowing him to see the otherworldly patterns around himself when he was a little child, believing in God and theology (Nabokov, 1982/1962: lines 99–114). In this sense, Nabokov tries to imply several important points regarding the nature of the material world and his otherworld in relation to religion. Nabokov's first intention by calling the teachings of theology "Degrading, and its premises, unsound" (Nabokov, 1982/1962: line 100), is to reject any relation of his metaphysical otherworld to the religious doctrines on afterlife. The second implication behind his references to theology during his childhood sheds light on the fact that the otherworldly realm has close bonds with childhood period (Nabokov, 1982/1962: lines 102–14) when the subject is closer to the first end, which is the moment of birth (Nabokov et al., 1982: 15–6). The other connotation rests behind Nabokov's disdain from ideology and religion, which are considered as worldly phenomena by him, similar to the existence of Kinbote who bothers Shade by trying to impose an ideological meaning to his work. This ideology is, in fact, a destructive worldly quality whose inexistence in the "Pale Fire" poem gives an otherworldly sense to the nature of the work, and thus makes the work a pure aesthetic creation. Regarding this depiction of religion and the dialogical comparison of its absurd premises with the qualities of his otherworldly realm, we come to another contribution of Nabokov to the creation of a new form of dialogicalities through which the otherworldly significations impede the surmounting of religious doctrines. In this regard, Nabokov not only separates his art from ideological signification, but also from very fundamental religious planes of implication.

The most groundbreaking turning-point in Shade's poem emerges from the revolutionary idea that nature is not the origin of beauty; according to Shade, in nature there are elements of otherworldly implications that need to be recognized by an aware observer and thinker:

In life, the mind

Of any man is quick to recognize

Natural shams, and then before his eyes

The reed becomes a bird...” (Nabokov, 1982/1962: lines 710–3).

In other words, in Nabokovian aesthetics, the otherworldly ontology gives meaning to the so-called real life, and one has to be aware of the centrality of art in nature. Despite many instances of natural things in the material world which seem absurd to Shade, there appears one image which highlights the importance of coincidental patterns and “cosmic synchronization” to him. For example, Shade as a character, who does not belong to any common worldly humans, infers, at some points, some strange epiphanies, the revelations of which turn out to be impossible for him. In one instance, he successfully enters the otherworld realm, and whereas whatever he has loved and possessed is lost, he still has the sublime feeling of belonging to that otherworld, that ontological, aesthetic world. For instance, as it is shown in the following lines of the poem, out of complete darkness of his fate and worldly life, there comes into his sense a “tall white fountain”:

I realized, of course, that it was made
Not of our atoms; that the sense behind
The scene was not our sense..... But in the case
Of my white fountain what it did replace
Perceptually was something that, I felt,
Could be grasped only by whoever dwelt
In the strange world where I was a mere stray.
And presently I saw it melt away:

Though still unconscious I was back on earth. (Nabokov, 1982/1962: lines 708–21)

The centrality of the fountain in the above lines brings into focus the idea of “cosmic synchronization” in almost all works of Nabokov. Cosmic synchronization—“a ubiquitous echoing of interconnected things and events” (Lyaskovets, 2013: 110)—characterizes the main features of otherworldly qualities in Nabokov’s writings, but what makes this idea remarkable in *Pale Fire* is that the work does not represent such

an idea; it is, in fact, the cosmic synchronization that creates the poem itself, and the stanzas which include imageries (mostly of nature) insist heavily on the dominance of otherworldly qualities. For example, the following lines illuminate a dark background view which entails some unique experiences for Shade only if they are considered deeply:

A sun of rubber was convulsed and set;

And blood–black nothingness began to spin

A system of cells interlinked within

Cells interlinked within cells interlinked

Within one stem. And dreadfully distinct

Against the dark, a tall white fountain played. (Nabokov, 1982/1962: lines 702–7)

The “fountain” in these lines, as Vladimir E. Alexandrov claims, understates the background imagery when it comes to the representation of the otherworldly experience:

... the fountain stands in relation to otherworldly truth as the mimic does to its model in nature, and that neither he nor other mortals are capable of fathoming the otherworldly vision's true significance...this radical separation of mundane existence from the otherworld is one of the constants of Nabokov's own beliefs. (Alexandrov, 1991: 194–5)

As Alexandrov remarks in the above excerpt, the moments of separation for Shade are even, at some very rare points, discernible for Kinbote, who tries to impose his version of events and story of Zemblan king; however, the real deep experiences Shade undergoes during these moments are still unknown to him (Kinbote). In his Commentary section, for instance, when Kinbote finds a few lines of the poem in the draft, he realizes that these lines have not been inserted in the final version of the poem, and later he blames Shade's wife for eradicating those lines. Although the main message of these lines is about the flight of the king Charles the Beloved from Zembla, which might be the literary intrusion of Kinbote, the lines preceding the act of escape

bear more significance since they firstly have the characteristics of Shade's poem and secondly address the moment of separation for Shade:

There are events, strange happenings, that strike

The mind as emblematic. They are like

Lost similes adrift without a string,

Attached to nothing" (Nabokov, 1982/1962: lines 1–4).

These events which strike the mind are all momentary pleasant experiences that result from some ostensibly meaningless coincidences; however, Shade is capable of enjoying these moments even when they are attached to this world, addressed as "nothing." In addition to this, all the similes and metaphors present in the above lines illuminate an objective example of how otherworldly significations are misunderstood even by a worldly literature professor who is supposed to be sophisticated enough to read between the lines of this aesthetic work.

Accepting the possibility that Shade was the original source of the above lines, it becomes evident that the act of fleeing overwhelms Shade's mind more than the events leading to that escape mainly because it mirrors another possibility for him which can be the signification of the moment of escape from the real world and transcendence to the otherworld. In addition to this signifying possibility, the attachment of the escaping act to nothing(ness) highlights, once again, the importance of coincidences which might seem meaningless at first sight, but at a deeper level, they represent some patterns which intensify the very existence of such otherworldly experiences. This and many other examples of coincidences characterize his art, which he himself indirectly confesses in the final polyphonic—at least because it brings words or phrases from other languages—stanzas of the poem:

Maybe my sensual love for the consonne

D'appui, Echo's fey child, is based upon

A feeling of fantastically planned,

Richly rhymed life. I feel I understand

Existence, or at least a minute part

Of my existence, only through my art,
In terms of combinational delight;
And if my private universe scans right,
So does the verse of galaxies divine
Which I suspect is an iambic line. (Nabokov, 1982/1962: lines 967–77)

As Shade remarks in his poem, he now “understands” the ontological otherworldly qualities of his existence. This understanding opens up the nature of knowledge which unfolds itself, and later leads to the metamorphosis of the “Pale Fire” poem. As explained in chapter three, section one, the definition of the nature of knowledge in Nabokov’s writings has intricate relations with the way agnostics reckon the role of personal experiences in the recognition of the transcendent world. One of the key factors of these experiences is the role of fate in the creation of aesthetic experience and, consequently, arts. The “Pale Fire” poem is born out of the destructive role of fate which shows itself on diverse levels. These levels appear through two different streams of events: natural imageries which have intricate (coincidental) patterns, and secondly, through Shade’s confrontations with the worldly characters in the novel as Kinbote or Goldsworth (Gradus), who assassinates him mistakenly.

In terms of the depiction of the role of fate, two important incidents change the mood of the poet and the course of events in the “Pale Fire” poem. The primary fateful event, as discussed before, is the suicide of Hazel which is preceded by some fateful foreshadowing events in the form of imageries. Hazel’s fate is accompanied by the fling of “a festive blaze” on:

a night of thaw, a night of blow,
With great excitement in the air. Black spring
Stood just around the corner, shivering
In the wet starlight and on the wet ground. (Nabokov, 1982/1962: lines 494–7)

These dark images all denote the death of Hazel, but more importantly, they illuminate such a tragic event through specific worldly objects which imply something gloomy: the death of a loved one. In other words, in the “Pale Fire” poem, the

occurrence of death is represented through dark imageries of specific objects. Hazel's death creates a turning point in Shade's life through which he escapes from the sorrow of worldly death—worldly because for Shade the real source of immortality for the deceased occurs in memory—to the pleasant world of memory. Therefore, in the "Pale Fire" poem, memory stands as the counterpart of death mainly because it represents the untimely version of an individual incarnated within the mind of a person. In addition to this survival of a deceased person in an otherworldly person's mind, memory has the power of producing new states of beings which might be entirely different from the ones in real life. For instance, the only reason that gives Shade inspiration to overcome the loss of his daughter is the blissful image of Hazel which overwhelms his memory and reminds him of very few instances when Hazel was happy.

The catastrophes fate brings are not limited to the mental complexities of Shade about Hazel. The role fate plays within the poem is also revealed by the means of momentary epiphanies which, at the first hand, are unknown to Shade, but later in the course of events in the poem, they turn out to show their fatal nature. In line 29, Shade claims that all colors made him happy, but he emphasizes on the color gray. The fateful role of that gray color is not recognizable for Shade until lines 475–8 through which a good Nabokovian reader can identify the connection of the color to the forthcoming tragedy of the poem:

Out of his lakeside shack

A watchman, Father Time, all gray and bent,

Emerged with his uneasy dog and went

Along the reedy bank. He came too late. (Nabokov, 1982/1962: lines 474–7)

The connection of fatefulness of gray can only be made through the dialogic relation of the phrase preceding it, "Father Time," with the same catastrophe implied in lines 312 to 314 by the phrase "Mother Time" when Hazel enrolled in the school pantomime: "My gentle girl appeared as Mother Time, /A bent charwoman with slop pail and broom, /And like a fool I sobbed in the men's room" (Nabokov, 1982/1962: lines 312–4). However, the clearest revelation of the relation of the color "gray" is made by Kinbote in his commentary when he describes the alias of the murderer,

Gradus, who, apparently, was supposed to kill Kinbote, but mistakenly murders Shade: “Jakob Gradus called himself variously Jack Degree or Jacques de Grey, or James de Gray, and also appears in police records as Ravus, Ravenstone, and d’Argus” (Nabokov, 1982/1962: 54). These aliases all are dialogically related to one another throughout the poem, signifying hidden meanings the disclosure of which can be known only by finding their dialogical plays. These types of plays are a Nabokovian novel contribution to the creation of intense dialogicalities through formation of different meanings out of aliases in the novel.

The second way fate imposes its presence in the novel is mainly through the clashes that happen between Shade and Kinbote, and these clashes lead to a distinct interpretational division in the novel. On the first side of the clashes, there stands the poem “Pale Fire” which represents Shade’s version of events and experiences. However, on the other side, there appears Kinbote with three different sections: the Foreword, Commentary and Index. The Commentary section of the novel imposes a fateful reflection over “Pale Fire,” and by doing so, Kinbote attempts to degrade the origin of Shade’s art, which, in itself, can stand as a unique incarnation of otherworldly experience in the form of the poem “Pale Fire.” The main intention of the Commentary can be narrowed down to Kinbote’s complexity of Zemblan Kingdom, and through Zemblan story to his representation of the very common theme of good versus evil, Kinbote or Charles the Beloved as the advocate of the former, and the Zemblan people symbolizing the latter group. But the most important part which plainly opens up the fateful arguments of Kinbote’s worldly intentions with Shade’s otherworldly experiences is the Foreword section.

Before explaining the role of Kinbote in different section of the novel, the overall nature of fate in Shade’s poem must be made transparent. Although usually the concept of fate is considered as a supernatural power which affects the lives of humans, in Shade’s “Pale Fire” fate is treated as the result of human actions which leads to catastrophic consequences. Therefore, fate is no longer a supernatural power, but a worldly phenomenon which has its roots in common people’s deeds. In this sense, Nabokov assigns a worldly, destructive role to fate which results from either the dialogues or actions of worldly people, aiming at demolishing the lives of otherworldly

people like Hazel. This literary style is another Nabokovian innovation in forming intense dialogic presences.

If one tries to identify the objective of the Foreword, they will clearly come across the fact that this section does not add anything to the literary value of “Pale Fire” the poem. This section, in fact, is a degrading overture to the poem in order to justify the Commentary section of the novel, both of which are apparently written by Charles Kinbote. Although Kinbote acknowledges the fact that Shade possessed a “combinational turn of mind and subtle sense of harmonic balance,” he still directly and stubbornly claims that the final version of the poem was seemingly supposed to be in accordance with his (Kinbote’s) “advice” (3). This type of conditioning of Shade’s work foreshadows the biased comments by Kinbote in all three sections of the novel. Later in the course of the Foreword, Kinbote implies, despite Shade’s unique literary intelligence, that he (might have) replaced the original manuscripts or ironically so— called “Faire Copy”—it is called “fair” by Kinbote because in that manuscript there putatively existed the story of Kinbote’s Zembla—of his poem with current version:

.... with some of the lovely rejections in his files, or, more probably, a sneaking fondness for this or that vignette, suppressed out of architectonic considerations, or because it had annoyed Mrs. S., urged him to put off its disposal till the time when the marble finality of an immaculate typescript would have confirmed it or made the most delightful variant seem cumbersome and impure. (Nabokov, 1982/1962: 3)

This except from the Foreword illuminates Kinbote’s one-sided view that the real plot of “Pale Fire” the poem was suspended because of Sybil’s demand, and instead, the story of their daughter’s suicide was replaced. This and many other examples from the Foreword denote two important features of Shade and Kinbote’s friendship; this friendship, firstly, exemplifies the very unique manner of Shade in having a relationship with such a stubborn, selfish and narrow-minded character as Kinbote. Despite Kinbote’s numerous devastating mental pressures over

Shade, the latter never ceases to lose his patience throughout their entire cohabitation with Kinbote in New Wye, and this leads to the fact that Shade possessed

unique qualities, one of which is his indifference to superficial, worldly characters. The second interpretation which can be elucidated from their relation is Shade's strong shrewdness and taste in literature in a way that is never influenced by worldly intentions of Kinbote (including fame as a once-in-power king as well as literary obsessions), which, in a sense, can be reckoned as a misery for Shade, but he himself never appeared to evade Kinbote's companionship. The originality of Shade's representation of otherworldly experiences in his poem never gets molded by Kinbote's very strong insistences even when Kinbote directly claims that in his Commentary, one can find the "canceled readings" (suggestions) of him (Kinbote) in detail (Nabokov, 1982/1962: 3). Therefore, the role of fate in *Pale Fire* occurs at two different levels of mental complexities regarding the death of Hazel, and environmental (worldly) confrontations with inferior characters such as Kinbote. Despite all Kinbote's vexatious presence, there appears a quote by him on the superiority of Shade when it comes to his intellectual (otherworldly) abilities:

I am looking at him, I am witnessing a unique physiological phenomenon: John Shade perceiving and transforming the world, taking it in and taking it apart, recombining its elements in the very process of storing them up so as to produce at some unspecified date an organic miracle, a fusion of image and music, a line of verse. (Nabokov, 1982/1962: 13)

This quote may be the only occasion in the novel where Kinbote unknowingly confesses the unique experiences depicted in Shade's poem, but the confession seems to be entirely disregarded in the Commentary section as he tries to add irrelevant versions of events to this poem.

The novel *Pale Fire* can, in summary, be addressed as a dialogic work of art which has at least two different layers of representation. The Foreword, Commentary and Index section are all written by Charles Kinbote, and the main intention of all sections is a vain attempt at reflecting the story of Kinbote's Zembla and, consequently, degrading the artistic value of John Shade's work. Basing the main grounds of this section's argument on the nature of ontological otherworldly representation through the formation of intense dialogicalities by Nabokov, the analysis delineated the fact that the "Pale Fire" poem is in fact the incarnation of Nabokov's philosophy of metaphysics and otherworldly qualities. In the explanation

of his metaphysics, the importance of imagination and its consequent reflection through memory were clarified and their role in building the architectonics of the poem were made transparent. In addition to this clarification, through the illumination of the sublime role of memory and its timelessness, one comes across the fact that the poem is the pure example of the emergence of pleasant, eternal experiences, as Shade's moments with Hazel avoid all the bitterness of Shade's life and the tragic fact that he is surrounded by a group of people concerned with worldly and ideological themes. What foregrounds Shade's poem, in addition to the timeless experiences, is the way coincidental patterns shape both Shade's mind and the metamorphosis of his otherworldly experiences in the form of poem. The sublimity of the coincidental patterns is later accompanied by the elucidation of the role of fate in characterizing the course of events in the poem, and eventually the novel. The representation of fate, as shown in this section, emerges either through natural imageries which lead to bitter incidents such as the decease of Hazel Shade or through the confrontations Shade has with other (worldly) characters. Consequently, all these otherworldly qualities appear in the form of poem, rejecting the intrusion of worldly matters. In this sense, this work of Nabokov stands as the most notable, original example of otherworldly incarnations compared to the previously analyzed work, in which the otherworldly qualities intrude the worldly events in their plots.



V. CONCLUSION

This section of the study will summarize the key analyses and findings in order to have clear answers and support to the argument of the thesis: taking into consideration the analysis of some preeminent works of Vladimir Nabokov—namely *Invitation to a Beheading*, *Lolita*, and *Pale Fire*—through the Bakhtinian theory of dialogism, this study showed the main functions and effects Bakhtin's theory of novel provided Nabokov to reveal his otherworldly qualities. Finally, this study identified the ways the significations of Nabokov's otherworldly themes contributed to the formation of intense dialogicality, which ultimately helped the writer achieve the separation—although relatively—of his art, specifically *Pale Fire*, from sociopolitical texts.

As explained in this study, the main literary aim of Nabokov was to separate his art from any social and ideological texts, which acted as the reflection of political realities of their age. By what Nabokov mentioned as the separation of his art, he intended to create artistic works which could be purely aesthetic, and in order to get to the core of his arts, this study went through the characteristics of his poetics and definition of metaphysics, which is also referred to as the otherworld. In the elaboration of his metaphysics in section four of chapter one, this thesis explained the relation of the transcendent otherworld with Nabokov's perception of imagination, timelessness and also aesthetics in the sense of artistic productions in relation to society. In order to achieve this literary goal of depicting a work of art independent from sociopolitical meaning, Nabokov uses different literary narrative techniques, among which the Bakhtinian dialogic literary elements and discourses is the most prominent one. It was also remarked in the introduction that whereas Bakhtin's theory of dialogism was mainly applied to sociopolitical texts, it turns out to be an ideal tool for Nabokov to represent his otherworld.

Introducing his theory of art, Nabokov primarily built his poetics by commenting on the thematic and syntactic features of some canonical writers.

Believing that writers always have the dominant control on the behavior and discourse of their characters, Nabokov devalued the works of Fyodor Dostoevsky mainly for the reason that his characters did not develop throughout the course of events in his works, and they merely represented the authorial intention of their writer. Writers like Dostoevsky, according to Nabokov, were mainly influenced by the spirit of their age, and eventually, their writings, no matter how indirectly they tried, always represented the ideology of their era. Contrary to Dostoevsky's poetics, Nabokov admired Leo Tolstoy's works for the abundance of what Bakhtin calls the polyphonic features, the existence of which he (Nabokov) denied. In the elaboration of Tolstoy's works, Nabokov pointed to the capability of the writer in forming contexts for his characters which made them act independently from any authorial intention. As explained in the introduction, what attracted the attention of Nabokov the most in Tolstoy's works is precisely the Bakhtinian chronotope through which the characters' "speech and motion produce their own reaction in the [fictional] world" (Nabokov, 2002: 104) the writer has created for them. Although the separation Bakhtin emphasized through his theory of dialogism targeted the deconstruction of ideology and monotony, which were shown through monologic representations, Nabokov used the idea of this separation for different purposes and implemented Bakhtinian dialogic narrative techniques and strategies to achieve different functions so that his literary goal of creating a work of art partially distinct from any sociopolitical could come into existence, which is also reflected in the argument of the dissertation. For this reason, the chapter two of this study analyzed the dialogic narrative elements, techniques and strategies in *Invitation to a Beheading*, *Lolita* and *Pale Fire* to identify what functions these dialogic presences provide Nabokov to reveal the general sketch of his otherworldly experiences in his art.

In the elaboration of the structure of *Invitation to a Beheading*, which belongs to his Russian literary period, it is made clear that this novel has modernist dialogic characteristics, and these characteristics have intricate and parallel affinity with the context of each work, which, once more, validates the theory of Bakhtin's carnivalesque. In this work, the types of discourses Nabokov uses are mostly the second type of discourse, namely objectified discourse and the first subtype of double-voiced discourse, termed unidirectional double-voiced discourse by Bakhtin. Whereas

the objectified discourse acts as the representation of the authorial voice in accordance with socio-typical and individual characteristics of characters mostly in social novels, Nabokov used this type of dialogic discourse to achieve specific effects in *Invitation to a Beheading*.

As shown and explained in section one of chapter two, the primary functions of this dialogic narrative technique were foreshadowing the clamorous events of the story from the opening pages of the novel through the usage of silent words and setting up the gloomy surrounding of the protagonist of the novel, Cincinnatus. The second function of Bakhtinian objectified discourse in the novel was the objective depiction of the calm and tranquil inner world of Cincinnatus in a way that made him indifferent to the humiliating behavior of the people in the prison. Other effect Nabokov achieved through the usage of this type of discourse was the objective illumination of the fact that some on the spot unique experiences Cincinnatus underwent were not the result of any hallucination; they were actually more realistic in the sense that he lived with those experiences as if they are his only hopes to survive in the world of puppet-like humans. Finally, Nabokov attempted to use objectified descriptions to hint at an odd (otherworldly) experience in the mind of Cincinnatus which are interrupted by the objectified speeches of other characters. In this sense, the speeches of other characters acted as an obstacle for the protagonist to be fully exposed to unique otherworldly qualities, which were inexpressible in this novel, and this inexpressibility can be attributed to the primary experiments of Nabokov when he was not literarily mature enough.

It was also explained that although the point of view in this novel is third-person omniscient; the focus of the narrator is on the inner voice of Cincinnatus as he is often left alone in his cell, contemplating on the meaning of life. In accordance with this loneliness, the objectivity of narration decreases and the type of dialogic discourses changes into unidirectional. Although this type of discourse was not used abundantly, it provided different functions for Nabokov's novel to depict his otherworldly aesthetics. The primary function of this type of discourse was the revelation of some universal themes of the writer in relation to two important factors: the inferiority of worldly people, like the jailers, and the superiority of Cincinnatus through the use of unique style of language in which he (Cincinnatus) humiliated the

commonsense. The other function of this double-voiced discourse was preparing the grounds for the reflection of someone else's voice or an ideological code to hint at some otherworldly experiences which were not expressible; however, this inexpressibility was different from the ones in the objectified discourse in that it was directly uttered by the protagonist and therefore, bore a high degree of subjectivity, which showed its ultimate form in *Lolita* and *Pale Fire*.

Vari-directional dialogic discourse in *Invitation to a Beheading* appears in very few instances and provides Nabokov with specific literary elements to privilege a few otherworldly ideas of Cincinnatus as by parodying either very fundamental ideas of the age or other characters' thoughts. Although the third category of Bakhtinian double-voiced discourse, active type, was only used in chapter eight of the novel, it opened the way for its ample and complicated uses in the following works of Nabokov. In *Invitation to a Beheading*, as active type of dialogic discourse addresses the inner thoughts of characters directly, it appeared as a tool to reveal specific otherworldly experiences directly and compare them with worldly qualities, which finally resulted in privileging the former. Moreover, it openly addresses the inefficiency of common language in revealing the entire nature of otherworldly experiences Cincinnatus underwent, which were entirely missed by other characters in the novel.

As explained in detail in chapter two of this study, the dialogic discourse variations in Nabokov's *Lolita* had quite different functions compared to *Invitation to a Beheading*. In this novel, the dialogic representations turned out to be more subjective for several reasons, but the most important stylistic rationale was the first-person point of view which characterized the narration of the novel. This subjectivity was a turning point for Nabokov to shed light on the fact that his themes were majorly subjective and relatively independent from the ideological and ethical events of the world. Observing the events from the eyes of Humbert Humbert, the readers of *Lolita* were exposed to the feelings of the protagonist, which seemed to be more obsessive. In order to reveal these thoughts, Humbert used sentences which were mostly vari-directional with some intervals of active type of discourse. Strikingly, there were only very few instances of objectified discourses in this novel and almost all narrative techniques and strategies were in double-voiced dialogic discourse styles.

The first category of double voiced discourse, i.e., unidirectional double-voiced dialogic polyphony, was used very rarely by Nabokov and functioned as defense mechanism when it addressed the jury members or readers. The first function appeared as a defense against the crimes Humbert had committed by reminding the jury members and readers about his sophisticated use of language. The other usage of unidirectional dialogic discourse appeared at the opening pages of the novel to convince the jury and readers that he was not a pure evil, and what he really did with *Lolita* was out of the strong affections he had towards her. Contrary to the unidirectional double-voiced discourse, the vari-directional one provided Nabokov with diverse literary elements and narrative techniques in order to address his themes of literature more effectively. The first effect Nabokov achieved through using this type of double-voiced discourse was to present an uncanny subject, i.e., the love of a mature man towards a teenage girl. In this sense, he parodied several common ideas the commonsense people used to believe, and by doing so, he reversely tried to privilege his affections towards *Lolita* not as worldly, but unique untimely passions. The second effect Nabokov achieved by using this type of dialogic discourse was the establishment of bridges between this uncanny affection and ethics of such a relationship in order to keep all types of readers engaged during the reading act. The other function of vari-directional discourse in this novel was the depiction of the nobility of Humbert' mental capabilities as an otherworldly character through the use of parodistic elements, which aimed at degrading the other characters, jury members and readers' thoughts. This function led to the predicting effect of this discourse in forming any hypothetical reaction from the jury and readers. In this sense, Nabokov used this function of vari-directional dialogic discourse to convince the readers that his affections originated from pure senses of love towards Lolita.

Finally, in section two of chapter two it was illuminated that the active type of dialogic discourse was used by Nabokov and functioned as tool to reveal his (otherworldly) themes. The first effect Nabokov achieved by using this type of discourse was placing Humbert in a situation that he tried to confess his inner thoughts without the enforcement of any external stimulus.

These confessions targeted revealing the protagonist's viewpoints on specific subjects, especially his emotions towards Lolita in the form of inner polyphony. The

third function Nabokov achieved was related to the revelation of these strong emotions to convince the readers that his passions were not entirely sexual or what many critics call pedophilic. These inner polemics address the readers without the intrusion of any other character's speech and therefore, have strong impacts on the readers. The most important function of this discourse enabled Nabokov to merge the language of prose with poetry in order to express his feelings strongly.

In chapter two of this study, by analyzing and comparing the dialogic architectonics of *Invitation to a Beheading* and *Lolita*, it became evident that the latter work acts as a bridge between modernism and postmodernism, carrying the characteristics of both within its structure. In addition to that, *Lolita* bore a high degree of subjectivity, which can be reckoned as an overture to more complicated and masterful dialogic creations in his other work, *Pale Fire*. It was also shown that *Pale Fire* can be considered as the most successful work of Nabokov in the sense that the dialogic behaviors and abundance of self-reflexivity epitomized in the form of the "Pale Fire" poem.

In the third section of chapter two it was explained and shown that the overall dialogic structure *Pale Fire* is very complicated in the sense that Nabokov used the most complex discourse types of Bakhtinian theory in that the "Pale Fire" poem was constituted in the form of vari-directional and active types of double-voiced discourse; in return, these discourses provided Nabokov with diverse functions and effects to disclose his otherworldly aesthetics. Vari-directional dialogic discourse in this novel was implemented to address the readers with low degree of objectivity in order to leave them in utmost confusion regarding the reality of the novel and the poem within it; as Nabokov attempted several times to use this type of discourse, his main intention was to convince the readers that he is the only legitimate commentator to Shade's poem. As explained in detail, this was done intentionally by the writer to cast doubt on the very concept of the existence of reality. Later Nabokov used this discourse in Shade's poem to parody the commonsense' ideas; consequently, he used this dialogic discourse to reveal the truth behind Hazel's suicide. The final usage of this type of dialogic discourse was implemented to relate the different parts of body to each other and show how in all artistic works there stand dialogic presences. However, the

most sophisticated level of dialogic usages appeared in the “Pale Fire” poem in the form of active type of double–voiced discourse.

It was also shown that active type of discourse overwhelmed the entire work, especially the poem, which could be reckoned as a Nabokovian contribution to the usage of dialogic narrative techniques in the poem genre. All these usages provided Nabokov with different effects and functions to address his literary themes. The primary functions of active discourse were the depiction of Shade as a unique character mainly because of his capabilities in transforming his emotions into a work of art while, at the same time, privileging the role of personal perceptions over collective ideas. The other effects created by active type is the direct confessions of Shade on the importance of imagination and memory in dominating the life of humans. These confessions later shifted to the direct revelation of the possibility of immortality and timeless experiences, which were not figured out by Kinbote. The narrative techniques of active type of dialogic discourse enabled Shade to disclose his ideas and perceptions of time, loss, pain and decadence, and in this way, he privileged the unique experiences of timelessness, eternal belonging, pleasure and immortality.

In summary, the analysis of dialogic narrative techniques and strategies in all three works of Nabokov, *Invitation to a Beheading*, *Lolita* and *Pale Fire* led us to the very clear conclusion that dialogism characterized Nabokov’s works and provided him with several functions and effects to reveal, though partially, his otherworldly themes of literature. Therefore, it could be claimed that Nabokov’s primary works had the primary categories of Bakhtinian discourse whereas, throughout his literary development, he used the latter categories of double–voiced discourses. Moreover, as the behavior of dialogic narrative techniques in each work become complicated, Nabokov approaches his ideal and sublime goal of disentangling art from sociopolitical representations, which finds its ultimate form in the “Pale Fire” poem.

As the other purpose of this study was to identify the ways the signification of Nabokov’s main otherworldly themes contribute to the formation of intense dialogicality in *Invitation to a Beheading*, *Lolita*, and *Pale Fire*, chapter three analyzed and delineated the ways Nabokov developed Bakhtin’s theory of dialogism to apply it to his metaphysical aesthetics, or what he called the otherworldliness, the final aim of which is the separation of his art from ideological and social planes of depiction. For

this reason, this study analyzed three works Vladimir Nabokov through their dialogic structures to firstly identify the nature of their otherworldly qualities and secondly to identify Nabokovian contribution to the creation of intense dialogicalities within these works. In addition to the three analyzed novels of Nabokov in chapter two, in chapter three one short story of Nabokov, “Cloud, Castle, Lake,” was added to the study of his otherworldly qualities because this work was his most favorite work in terms of the otherworldly representation (Shrayer, 1994: 131–151).

According to the analyses of chapter three, in *Invitation to a Beheading*, the otherworldly qualities could be reckoned as the representation of Nabokovian perception of imagination, timelessness, aestheticism and love. How Nabokov depicted the world of his aesthetic otherworld were through the negation of some specific worldly qualities which are commonly valued by the commonsense. This way, he rhetorically privileged the qualities of his aesthetic otherworld which are in sharp contrast with the qualities prevalent in the material world. In this sense, Nabokov extends the theory of Bakhtin’s dialogism from reflecting the voices of the suppressed ideological characters to rhetorical addressing of a metaphysical aesthetic world. The second novel dialogic representation of Nabokov was the signification of the sublimity of some natural scenes or occurrences which resulted in the experience of a momentary pleasure. These momentary pleasures were usually driven from the combination of an object and a coincidental natural occurrence.

Although it was mentioned that in *Invitation to a Beheading* Nabokov was not transparent defining the nature of his otherworldly aesthetics, he sketched out the general behavior of such a world, and the third contribution of Nabokov to dialogism was also related to this behavior. What Nabokov formulated in this novel was the illumination of the double– directional effects of significations, or qualities, of the material world and aesthetic otherworld. This was a new representational dialogism and it showed how some perceptions of realities intermingled with each other. The other novel dialogic behavior which was implemented by Nabokov was considering imagination as a mental capability which, firstly, gives insight to new experiences by holding the qualities of both the material world and otherworld, and finally privileges the latter, which resulted in upturning the long–lasting idea that the material world is the real world and any other interpretation of possibility is just a hallucination. With

this final contribution, in addition to the interaction of qualities of both worlds, the aesthetic otherworld affected the perceptions, experiences and deeds of Cincinnatus drastically.

The second work of art in the analysis of the otherworldly qualities in section two of chapter three was Nabokov's short story "Cloud, Castle, Lake." It was claimed that this story was similar to *Invitation to a Beheading* in that Nabokov wrote them during his residence in Germany. The other common ground in these two works was the universal theme of oppression versus tolerance, which prevailed in both stories. In addition to this similarity, it could be inferred that, in writing these two works, Nabokov was not as successful as he intended to create literary works entirely separate from ideological and contextual meanings. Therefore, in these two works it was attempted to address otherworldly significations as much as they bore political meanings. However, the striking difference between these two works from the eyes of Nabokovian otherworldliness was the partial success of the protagonist, Vasiliy Ivanovich, in entering the aesthetic otherworld and experiencing some of its qualities, though this exposure was very restricted and later interrupted by other worldly people. The only worldly scenes which elicited the partial experience of Nabokovian otherworld were three important sights of a cloud, a castle and a lake. The interconnection of these three natural scenes signified the Nabokovian term cosmic synchronization and the importance of this term in changing the moods of the protagonists in Nabokov's works.

Like Cincinnatus in *Invitation to a Beheading*, Vasiliy is tormented by the other passengers heading to destination of their trip. However, Vasiliy found shelter and peace in his strong sense of imagination, which acts as a shelter protecting him from the surrounding people. In this (Nabokovian) imagination, he was free to indulge in the pleasure of fantasy of a woman he once loved and who was married to another man. In this sense, imagination makes possible the impossibility—impossible in terms of ethics—of loving a married woman in real life, and in this case, this imagination was one of the few sources for Vasiliy to tolerate "drowsy beings" (2001: 1). But what made imagination remarkable was its epiphanic and reflexive feature, foreshadowing the following events of the story. Imagination in this sense was dialogic in that diverse meanings, and perceptions came into his mind without the influence of

an external stimulus; this reckoning of imagination without the influence of active participants could be the contribution of Nabokov to Bakhtinian dialogism on the level of metaphysical planes of representation. The Second contribution of Nabokov could be reckoned as the most important and advanced one, as he tried to signify an abstract otherworldly theme out of the dialogism of two distinct perceptions of a natural scenes. This abstract theme—love—shapes the entire philosophy of Nabokov's otherworldly aesthetics, which came out as the result of two dialogic interpretations from a worldly entity, i.e., meadow. The final Nabokovian dialogic creation in this story was the elicitation of a theme out of the dialogic relations of several symbols in the story. The implied meanings of these symbols correlated with each other and the effect of such an amalgam was the appearance of new meanings and significations.

In the analysis of *Lolita*'s otherworldly qualities in section three of chapter three, the dualism of reality/imagination was highlighted because of the importance of imagination in Nabokov's arts as an otherworldly experience, which leads to novels perceptions of world and states of mind. In addition to imagination, the possibility of timeless experiences such as memory and art as the forms of timeless—both worldly entity and otherworldly means of representation, which,—represent the immortal emotions of mortals, were identified as Nabokov's main otherworldly themes. However, above all, it was the noble role of affections or love as the most eminent Nabokovian otherworldly theme which stands in different versions of signification in Nabokov's works. In order to show these themes and qualities, Nabokov had four major contributions to Nabokov's theory of dialogism, which turned out to signify these otherworldly themes in more palpable ways. The first Nabokovian contribution to dialogic representation of otherworldly themes appeared by adding a new meaning to the word "nymphet" which had both worldly sexual and pure otherworldly affectional connotations. In this sense, Nabokov approached one of his ultimate goals, which was the depiction of animosity of otherworldly qualities with ideological codes within a single word.

The other novel literary experiments on the level of creating intense dialogicalities was the elicitation of otherworldly qualities through the analogy of mental and physical characteristics of an object or a person, which reflects opposite perceptions. In this sense, for instance, *Lolita*'s physical appearance led to timely and

worldly significations which stood against the untimely and otherworldly mental perceptions of *Lolita* in Humbert's mind. This illumination of two completely diverse perceptions of a reality is a rare dialogic representation which playfully privileged the otherworldly signification as a quality entirely separate from worldly, timely characteristics.

The final contributions of Nabokov to the development of Bakhtinian theory of dialogism in *Lolita*, as identified and explained in section three of chapter three, turned out to have intricate functions. Nabokov extended the use of dialogism as a bridge to foreshadow or flashback to carry a level of meaning from different parts of the novel, very similar to the case in *Invitation to a Beheading*, however in *Lolita*, this type of dialogic representation was implemented to show the outstanding role of coincidences as otherworldly qualities, which, in fact, coincided with the role of fate as a worldly phenomenon, affecting the life of Humbert.

The clearest and most transparent significations of Nabokov's otherworldly themes and qualities, as explained in section four of chapter three, appeared in Nabokov's most convoluted novel *Pale Fire*. Although Nabokov tried to signify his own universal themes of imagination and subsequently the knowledge deriving from imagination, timeless experiences such as memory, poetry as an untimely, immortal artistic creation as well as the representation of aesthetics which resists timely intrusions, and above all the love through the use of Bakhtinian dialogic narrative techniques and strategies, he developed Bakhtin's theory to represent the ultimate form of those themes in the "Pale Fire" poem. In this regard, Nabokov contributed greatly to Bakhtin's theory of dialogism to separate his art from any ideological texts.

The first and maybe the most important contribution of Nabokov to the theory of dialogism came with the "Pale Fire" poem, which resulted in the creation of a such an otherworldly art to be (mis)interpreted by an apparently eminent literature professor, Charles Kinbote, as well as the different comprehensions by readers. In addition to this, the poem itself was reckoned as an objective example of timeless dialogic phenomenon which did not represent directly whatsoever was ideological or social. Therefore, it could be claimed that this work was successful in achieving Nabokov's main goal of art as separate creations from ideological planes of significance. The other important signification Nabokov tried to shed light on was the

fact his otherworldly realm and its qualities are entirely different from the religious doctrines which promise a world beyond the material world. In fact, Nabokov brings the so-called “premises” of religion “degrading” and “unsound” (Nabokov, 1982/1962: line 100). In this sense, within his active type of discourse, Nabokov contrasted his aesthetic otherworld with the world religions promise, and for the first time, he used dialogism to represent the qualities of two metaphysical realms, which could be reckoned as an ultimate form of dialogism to detach Nabokov’s otherworld not only from ideology and social planes of significations, but also from religious preaching. The final Nabokovian contribution to Bakhtin’s theory of dialogism appeared with the diverse meanings of aliases made in this novel. For instance, as Sasha Blakeley remarks, the gray color symbolizes lack of imagination which fitted the commonsense people in Shade’s world; however, this, color also signified death, which was one of the Nabokovian otherworldly themes, signifying the death of the things which are mortal. However, for Shade, who believed in the eternity of himself, his feelings and his art, death was a mean to prove his immortality. In this regard, when Shade claimed that he liked the color gray, he epiphanically knew that the death which was going to be brought by Gradus was not going to demolish the otherworldly qualities he always advocated.

In sum, it could be easily identified that Nabokov’s themes of literature were pretty different from any of his peers, specifically with his emphasis on creation of art deprived of any social and ideological planes of signification. In order to introduce this new trend in literature, Nabokov used the term otherworld to refer to his themes of literature. As analyzed and explained in different chapters and sections of this study, the otherworldly themes of Nabokov’s poetics are very limited in numbers; however, the nature of such themes and qualities is very complicated to comprehend. As explained in detail in chapter two, in order to depict these themes, Nabokov used Bakhtinian dialogic narrative techniques and strategies the diverse monologic and predominantly double-voiced discourses provided him. It was also noted that Nabokov’s writing, at the primary strides of his writing career, was not expressive enough to reveal directly the main themes of his art. However, as he moved forward to be more effective in expressing his ideas as it usually occurs during every writer’s literary maturity, he (unintentionally) developed Bakhtin’s theory of dialogism to hint

at his otherworldly themes, such as timelessness, imagination and memory, knowledge which is related to epiphanies resulting from seemingly meaningless coincidences and, above all, love as a pure otherworldly experience. Similar to Bakhtin who tried to implement dialogic approach to unbind it from dogmatic, one-directional ideological chains of imposed meanings, Nabokov used dialogic narrative techniques and elements to show how his thematic qualities were separate from any ideological and social planes of meanings. Consequently, dialogic elements were used as means to separate and eventually foreground his otherworldly themes.

The separation of these otherworldly themes has a linear behavior starting from *Invitation to a Beheading*, to “Cloud, Castle, Lake,” to *Lolita* and, finally, finding its full-fledged form in *Pale Fire* even in the depiction of the protagonists’ lives. In *Invitation to a Beheading*, Cincinnatus tries hard to separate himself from the ideological world of puppet-like human in the prison and transcend to otherworldly ontological aesthetic world; however, he cannot achieve this until his death, which explicitly conveys the mortality of worldly values and, in the meantime, signifies implicitly the immortality of imagination as an otherworldly quality. This imagination, as explained in section one of chapter two, was the imagination of the naked body of Cincinnatus’s wife whom, despite her unfaithfulness, he adored. In this sense, Nabokov tried to reveal his themes of otherworld by bringing up a controversial, sexual depiction of a woman. Therefore, it can be inferred that Cincinnatus’s misogynist sexual references appear as a tool to highlight both the role of strong affections and the power of imagination which intensifies the pleasures of such affection far from any ideological constraints.

The same application of separation occurred in “Cloud, Castle, Lake” when imagination spikes the pleasure of remembering the married woman whom Vasiliy, the protagonist of the story, loved for seven years. In this sense, Nabokov separated the inner value of love from the constraints of religious doctrines, which aim at constitutionalizing ways of life to serve the state and ideology. Regarding this case, in addition to the pleasures of some coincidences in the story, the pure otherworldly affections of Vasiliy stand against the commonsense values of people which originate from religious teachings. Therefore, considering the cases of Cincinnatus and Vasiliy, the nature of strong affections of each protagonist belongs to neither ideological nor

religious doctrines. With *Lolita*, Nabokov takes one step further in shattering the expectations of actual readers and provides them with a very controversial subject of what many readers called a work of pedophile. In this regard, Nabokov reveals his animosity towards commonsense values and socially accepted norms by depicting Humbert's affections towards Lolita, a thirteen-year-old girl. The depiction of the relation of Humbert with Lolita signifies another separation for Nabokov art despite the nastiness of their relation. What Nabokov mainly wanted to show was the strength of individual affections—specifically love—as otherworldly qualities which might enter into intense conflict with morality and social codes of proper behavior. For Nabokov, the meaning and perception of love were so noble; therefore, he never intended to assess their mental value in relation to any ideological, religious and moral compliances.

Nabokov's most successful art in terms of the bearing the highest possible detachment from any social, religious and moral planes of signification came out with *Pale Fire*. Although this work is not entirely independent from references to such meanings, its structure still bears two important features that resists any strong ideological, religious and moral interpretations.

The primary reason that this work evades intentional intrusions or even interpretations is the fact that Charles Kinbote's incessant attempts to reflect a sociopolitical interpretation from John Shade's poem are doomed to failure. There are no real traces of whatever Kinbote mentions on the subject of Zemblan Kingdom or Charles Kinbote as the king of Zembla. The second evidence that the "Pale Fire" poem can stand as a distinguished work of art is its content which negates all philosophical, religious and ideological discussions taking part in the events of the poem as well as the disdain of Shade from IPH and the ideas of its members on the meaning of life and the possibility of afterlife. For Shade, only three things matter: the love of Sybil and Hazel as his family members, nature, and above all poetry. As Hazel has committed suicide, through memory and imagination, Shade remembers the past with her and does not feel the lack of her presence mainly because in his poem he has made their life immortal. In addition to this, when Shade claims that "Man's life as commentary to abstruse/ Unfinished poem. Note for further use." (1982/1962: lines 939–40), he indirectly hints at the survival of his poem as the depiction of a pure love since the last

line of the poem was left unwritten, and requires the forthcoming interpretations of readers, which is also a dialogic imagination in the Bakhtinian sense. Thus, any attempt on the side of any reader to find the last line of the poem proves the immortality of the work as well as the presence of intense dialogicality as an everlasting process present in the architectonics of the “Pale Fire” poem.

Taking the analyses of chapters two and three into consideration as well as the depiction of love in all three analyzed works of Nabokov, it could be strongly claimed that Nabokov’s works are about different versions and perceptions of love as the most remarkable otherworldly quality in a way that other otherworldly qualities, such as imagination and memory, meaningful coincidences, timeless experiences, and aesthetics as the representation of these qualities help love to foreground itself. For instance, in *Invitation to a Beheading*, this is the love of Cincinnatus’s wife and nature which are in the center of novel’s architectonics. Similarly, in “Cloud, Castle, Lake,” the love of a married woman and the sublime scenes, and in *Lolita*, the love of so-called “nymphet” are the focal points of the novel, while other sublime scenes or otherworldly qualities just highlight the role of love. After producing these works of art with controversial subjects matters, Nabokov created *Pale Fire* novel within which the “Pale Fire” poem, which can also be reckoned as a work of pure imagination, brings forth the subject of love of family and specifically Shade’s daughter, Hazel. However, this smart depiction of a nuclear subject proves the fact that as ideological and biased minds are not capable of understanding a typical family relation, and commonsense readers always try to elicit irrelevant interpretations from such themes.

In addition to this centrality of love as the most remarkable otherworldly quality, this study shed light upon the characterization of each protagonist in relation to the strength of their affections. For instance, in *Invitation to a Beheading*, Cincinnatus, as stated in section one of chapter three, was not able to reveal his love towards his wife and only in one occasion he tried to reveal his inner feelings about her. Similarly, he was too often interrupted by the jailers to enjoy the pleasures of some coincidental events which reflected otherworldly epiphanies, and the result of such interruptions was the very short moment of exposure to otherworld realm only after his execution. Unlike Cincinnatus, who was unable to fully enter the sphere of ontological otherworld, Vasiliy in some occasions was successful in that he escaped

to the source of such otherworldly scenes, though he later got caught and physically beaten by other passengers. However, this short flight signifies something important when it is compared to the utmost miserable case of Cincinnatus; Vasiliy, at some point, though very shortly, was exposed to the source of otherworldly representations when he was alive. This escape from worldly settings in the following works of Nabokov is depicted more objectively in that these pleasant moments of ultimate joys which are inexpressible in *Invitation to a Beheading* and “Cloud, Castle Lake,” turn out to have a different behavior when it comes to *Lolita* and *Pale Fire*.

When Humbert was highly overwhelmed by both worldly and otherworldly qualities of *Lolita*, the knowledge he gained while he was exposed to the otherworldly qualities can be divided into two Heideggerian domains: historical and timeless knowledge. In the former domain of knowledge, Humbert became aware of not only *Lolita* as a unique creature characterized by the combinational qualities of worldly and otherworldly experiences, but also the inner characteristics of other humans and even himself. The main reason that Humbert is driven into the obsession with *Lolita* is mainly his familiarity with other normal girls, to whom he could never find unique affections. Excluding the case of Annabel, the presence of several women within Humbert’s life and loss of the unique inner feelings he only felt when he was with *Lolita* during his other relationships led Humbert to a state of mind through which he became aware of the common historical—timely in this sense—qualities of people in general. On the level of knowing himself, Humbert also identified himself with specific qualities he never knew before he came across *Lolita*. For instance, one of the very outstanding qualities of Humbert’s narration was his eloquent style of language through which he tried to illuminate his feelings and, in several instances, release himself from the crimes he had committed by raising the sympathy of jury members and readers. For instance, in the opening pages of his narration, Humbert addresses the jury members and identifies himself rhetorically both as an artist and a madman (Nabokov, 2011b/1955: 11), in addition to being publicly known as a pedophile. In fact, the exposure to *Lolita* made him become aware of these discernable qualities of himself. Therefore, unlike Cincinnatus and Vasiliy, Humbert experienced the pleasure of what the commonsense readers call pedophilic disorder or Nabokovian otherworldly affections or love. In this sense, it could be inferred that *Lolita* is Nabokov’s ultimate

work in terms of introducing the uncanny nature of his aesthetics through the depiction of the conflict between ideological, religious, and moral connotations on the one hand and otherworldly significations on the other hand. This conflict is entirely reflected in the new definition of the word “nymphet,” in which two different perceptions and depictions of reality are mingled. After this rendering of the inevitable contentious nature of significations between the realms of worldly and otherworldly, Nabokov comes up with an objective literary creation in which the otherworldly realm is depicted in relation to its own characteristics, and that is the novel *Pale Fire*.

Unlike Nabokov’s other works analyzed in this study, the ones which tried to show the separation of otherworldly aesthetics from the sociopolitical significations through the depiction of direct conflicts, *Pale Fire* is a work of art that illuminates the separation of the otherworld objectively in that the “Pale Fire” poem can stand as the detached incarnation of otherworldly qualities. These qualities in the poem stand in an antithetical point with other sections of the novel. Similar to Nabokov’s previous works, the main theme of the poem is love; however, the versions of love and affections in the poem were not as controversial as his earlier works. The versions of love, as stated previously, were mainly the depiction of love John Shade had towards his late daughter, nature, and, finally, art and poetry. All other otherworldly qualities foregrounded the centrality of love in order to show how individual emotions, like strong affections, are invulnerable. The reason behinds the depiction of such common renditions of love in the “Pale Fire” poem might be the literary maturity of Nabokov which, at the first sight, could establish his status as an eminent writer after the successful publications of his controversial works and, secondly, enabled him to write a poem which could be the representative of his otherworldly aesthetics. This representation was remarkable in that it completely resisted the mischievous intrusions of an obsessed and, in the meantime, apparently intellectual literature professor Charles Kinbote even after his death when the poem was left to the latter to add a commentary. This illumination of love in the poem is the most successful case through which Nabokov could show how an otherworldly representation can be separated from sociopolitical significations.

In addition to the representation of love as an otherworldly quality through employing intense dialogic narrative strategies which aim at separating Nabokov’s

poetics from other texts, the writer hints at the separation of his art through sophisticated characterization of his protagonists in his stories as well. What unites all Nabokov's main characters in *Invitation to a Beheading*, "Cloud, Castle, Lake," *Lolita* and *Pale Fire* is the unique behavior of the protagonists in staying indifferent to their environments and social circumstances although the degree of this indifference increases from *Invitation to Beheading* to *Pale Fire*. This indifference can also be taken into consideration as the feature of otherworldly characters alienated or separated from other common humans. For instance, Cincinnatus's indifference to his guardian's humiliating and inferior speeches, Vasilii's disdain of other excursionists, Humbert's strong affections and attachments to *Lolita* despite the strong implied accusations of the readers and jury members, alleging him a pure criminal and, finally, Shade who still enjoys his life despite the absurdity of his university colleagues, Charles Kinbote and above all the decease of his beloved daughter. All these four protagonists enjoy the life not due to commonsense value, but inner pleasures which make an otherworld within their minds and, consequently, separates them from their surroundings.

The other important result of the separation of Nabokov's protagonists can be the formation of their unique and uncanny (for commonsense readers) thoughts mostly in inner dialogisms. The first reason for such creation of inner dialogisms, which usually appear in the form of hidden polemics and confessional form of dialogues reflected in the minds of the protagonists, is the aggressive reception of the otherworldly qualities by both other common characters in the novels and the readers of these works. Although there is a linear surge in the usage of inner dialogisms from the primary works analyzed in this study apart from *Pale Fire*, the presence of intense dialogicalities within their architectonics cannot be disregarded. The second important reason behind the disclosure of otherworldly qualities in the form of inner dialogisms is the direct way of addressing the qualities Nabokov strived hard to depict, which can be objectively viewed from the comparison of inner dialogism in *Invitation to a Beheading* and *Pale Fire*. As Cincinnatus is strictly surrounded by his jailers and their dialogues interrupt the perception and revelation of otherworldly qualities the protagonist experiences, this novel is not transparent enough in detailing the nature of otherworldly themes. However, the "Pale Fire" poem is an ultimate example of an

inner form of dialogism through which the otherworldly qualities are addressed without any serious interruption of other characters. All these perceptions and experiences happen within the minds of the protagonists, which originate from dialogic reflection or representation of an external phenomenon and reveal their full meanings when they enter into dialogic interrelations with characters' personal feelings and emotions. Finally, the inner form of dialogic formations and representations, specifically in the "Pale Fire" poem, is both a defense mechanism in that it resists the intrusions of the others and a reactionary mechanism in that it subdues the intentional intrusions and imposing elicitations. In sum, it could be inferred that from the aggressive and controversial techniques of illuminating the otherworldly qualities, Nabokov comes to an objective example of a dialogic otherworldly work of art that has innate power to reveal the qualities it bears.

In general, as Nabokov's main intention was to create art separate from ideological, social, religious and moral writings, any formalist, Marxist and even (New)Historic approaches would not add any insights into his poetics as his art is usually defined in relation to his definition of metaphysics. This metaphysics' main concern is the formation of what he called otherworldly aesthetics, which, as stated above, is both dialogic in nature in that they are formed in relation to external events in combination to the protagonists' individual and momentary perceptions and experiences, and represented through dialogic literary techniques and narrative strategies. In other words, Nabokov develops Bakhtin's theory of dialogism to use it as a tool to signify his otherworldly aesthetics which is dialogic in its nature. Consequently, this is, in fact, the developed version of dialogism by Nabokov which helps him separate his art from sociopolitical and moral writings. Therefore, it could be understood that otherworldly qualities of Nabokov's art are revealed through intense dialogicalities implemented by the writer, and it would not be a fallacy at all to claim that the Nabokovian otherworldly realm is a developed example of the dialogic imagination Bakhtin elaborated in his works.



VI. DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

The first important term is Carnivalism. Based on the definition of *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms*, the term is:

...the liberating and subversive influence of popular humor on the literary tradition, according to the theory propounded by the Russian linguist Mikhail Bakhtin in his works *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics* (1984) and *Rabelais and His World* (1965). Bakhtin argued that the overturning of hierarchies in popular carnival—its mingling of the sacred with the profane, the sublime with the ridiculous—lies behind the most 'open' (DIALOGIC or POLYPHONIC) literary GENRES, notably MENIPPEAN SATIRE and the NOVEL, especially since the RENAISSANCE. Carnivalized literary forms allow alternative voices to dethrone the authority of official culture: Rabelais, for example, subverts the asceticism of the medieval Church by giving free rein to the bodily profanity of folk festivities. Adjective: carnivalistic or carnivalesque. (Baldick, 2006, 33–34)

Another term is Dialogism (Dialogic). According to *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms*, the terms:

...dialogic or dialogical, (are) characterized or constituted by the interactive, responsive nature of dialogue rather than by the single-mindedness of monologue. The term is important in the writings of the Russian theorist Mikhail Bakhtin, whose book *Problems of Dostoevski's Poetics* (1984) contrasts the dialogic or polyphonic interplay of various characters' voices in Dostoevsky's novels with the monological subordination of characters to the single viewpoint of the author in Tolstoy's. In the same year, *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language* (probably by Bakhtin, although published under the name of V. N. Voloshinov) argued, against Saussure's theory of language, that actual utterances are 'dialogic' in that they are embedded in a context of

dialogue and thus respond to an interlocutor's previous utterances and/or try to draw a particular response from a specific auditor. (Baldick, 2006: 65)

The examples of these dialogic utterances can be the literary technique of stream of consciousness. In this technique, when a prior utterance of any signification is reflected in the consciousness of a character, the new strings of utterances overwhelm the mind of the character. In other words, any utterance or dialogue is a response to a prior one, and it is impossible to have a voice without considering any external stimulus.

Heteroglossia is the other remarkable term in Bakhtinian analysis. Literarily interpreted as “other or different tongues” from the Russian word *raznorecie*, this term was coined by Mikhail Bakhtin to demonstrate the multiple languages that operate in any given culture. For Bakhtin, all forms of social speech that people use in their daily activities constitute heteroglossia (Bressler, 2011: 345).

Another important Bakhtinian term is chronotope which contributed greatly to other theories of literature as well. Literarily translated as “time–space” characteristics of a work of literature, Bakhtin defines it as “the intrinsic connectedness of temporal and spatial relationships that are artistically expressed in literature” (Bakhtin, 1982: 84). By coining this term, Bakhtin highlights the ever–changing concept of meaning within a text as it is written and read in and by different epochs.

The Final term is polyphonism (interchangeable with Dialogism according to Abrams). Based on *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms* (1990) the term means:

...literally ‘many–voiced’, a term found in the writings of the Russian literary theorist Mikhail Bakhtin, where it is equivalent to dialogic. Thus, a polyphonic novel is one in which several different voices or points of view interact on more or less equal terms. The term polyphonic prose has been applied to a kind of free verse printed as if it were prose” (Baldick, 1990: 199).

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