

URBAN WALKING:
CONFIGURING THE MODERN CITY AS CULTURAL AND SPATIAL PRACTICE

TIANCHI WANG

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO
THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

GRADUATE PROGRAM IN COMMUNICATION AND CULTURE
YORK UNIVERSITY
TORONTO, ONTARIO

November 2020

© Tianchi Wang, 2020

Abstract

This dissertation explores the aesthetics of spatial politics and the politics of spatial aesthetics in urban literature and culture from the early twentieth century to the post-industrial era. It develops a theoretical framework on urban walking by intersecting, among other theories, Walter Benjamin's concept of *flânerie* as a form of perambulating social criticism; Guy Debord's idea of the *dérive* as the drifting journey without an official map; Michel de Certeau's city walking as a rhetorical tactic for creative resistance; as well as the theories of walking by New Urbanists and theories of digital *flânerie* performing urban walking through virtual windows. The dissertation considers urban walking as both a theoretical method and cultural practice to contend that the experience of the city on foot not only replicates but profoundly shapes social relations and identities, helping with the progressive transformation of space and society. This argument is explored with the help of diverse corpus including urban literature, paintings, and artistic self-performances. The dissertation includes the following thematic foci and works: embodiment in Theodore Dreiser's *Sister Carrie* and James Joyce's *Ulysses*; gender in the body sculptures and poetry by Elsa von Freytag-Loringhoven and oil paintings by Florine Stettheimer; temporal shifts in Djuna Barnes' *Nightwood* and Jay McInerney's *Bright Lights, Big City*; and ethnic and cultural alterity in the post-9/11 fiction of Joseph O'Neill and Teju Cole. The dissertation is framed by the author's personal and photographic evocations of walking as a practice of acculturation to Toronto over more than a decade. Ultimately, by pivoting between theory and practice, text and visual, the study advances the field of urban walking as a dynamic and underexplored scholarly space for politically engaged interventions responding to the economic, gender, racial, and ecological urgencies of our era.

Dedication

To my parents, with respect and gratitude

Acknowledgments

This dissertation would not have been possible without the exceptional encouragement and guidance of my supervisor *extraordinaire*, Dr. Irene Gammel. “I’m always here for you” has been her default email signature to me in the course of this journey and I thank her for encouraging me to do my best. Her scholarly accomplishments and depths of insight, as well as her integrity, humanity, and caring have been a true inspiration that I hope to extend into my own mentorship of students. She has truly modelled mentorship at its best! Moreover, she has provided me with a top-flight space at the Modern Literature and Culture Research Centre, a rare institution in the humanities, from which I have benefited.

I thank my committee members, Dr. Janine Marchessault and Dr. Markus Reisenleitner, for their support, queries, and suggestions over the years. Their traces are embedded on many pages of this dissertation, for which I am extremely grateful. My examiners, Concordia University professor Dr. Andre Furlani (external examiner) and Dr. Laam Hae (internal external examiner at York University), have been intellectually generous in sharing their feedback, helping me extend the research beyond the dissertation format. In the Communication and Culture program, I thank Dr. Anne MacLennan for elegantly chairing my dissertation oral defence as well as Dr. Jan Hadlaw and her team for providing timely support when it mattered most.

There are several professors who have left a lasting mark on my work. I thank Dr. Karen Anderson for teaching me how to pursue high academic standards, Dr. Michaela Hynie for teaching me how to translate my values into scholarly inquiry, and Dr. Gill Teiman for helping me hone my writing skills. Dr. Margarete Wolfram emphasized that I learn to develop an academic community, while Dr. Leslie Sanders’s rigorous counselling helped deepen my

research questions and investigation. I thank Dr. Linying Dong, Dr. Catherine Ellis, Dr. Andrea Emberly, Dr. Gerd Hauck, and Dr. Brian Winston for invigorating conversations that have found their way into my work. Professor Karim Bardeesy has taught me to think about my work beyond academia and to infuse my scholarly endeavours with civic responsibility; I thank him for his generous efforts to encourage me to share my ideas with a broad audience.

I thank Dr. Jean-Paul Boudreau for his inspiration, leadership, and kind-heartedness. His gentle guidance and wise words have prompted me to imagine a positive future for my academic work and have instilled in me a belief in the possibilities of positive social change.

I am grateful to the late Wayson Choy (1939-2019) for his generous mentorship and for the faith he placed in me by instructing me: “Read on! Write on! *Your* words matter, too.”

My colleagues at the Modern Literature and Culture Research Centre welcomed me while providing first-rate intellectual support with state-of-the art peer-mentorship fuelled by enthusiasm, which helped me build momentum in my work as a scholar and author. I especially thank Dr. Esther Berry, Dr. Cintia Cristia, Dr. Emma Doran, Sasi Evani, Dr. Anastasiya Lyubas, Cameron MacDonald, Jaclyn Marcus, and Ben Taylor for engaging my work and ideas.

I thank my friends who have been part of my journey and have offered unstinting emotional support and excellent advice along the way. Individually and collectively, they have urged me to move forward. Endless thanks go to my confidant Limo Yang, whose loyal friendship is precious. I am grateful to Michelle Ackerman, Priyana Govindarajah, and Jean-François Obregon, who are kindred spirits. I also thank Shoaib Ahmed, Branda Bi, Emily Brown, Dr. Longbin Chen, Por Heng, Andy Ip, Neda Maki, Yuri Nishikubo, Kanika Phoung, Prasoeur Suon, Dr. Carolyn Steele, Yu Tian, Minghao Xu, and Dr. Yuhang Xu.

Jean Fong Cheng and Chun Cheng as well as Sarah Robbins and Miles Robbins have given me caring and tender sustenance.

Dr. Gail Vanstone has staunchly supported every project that I have worked on, reading the drafts of my publications; she also attended my graduations, hosted my birthday dinners, and included me in family holiday celebrations. Indeed, along with her husband Kevin Karst, daughter Arron Best, son Scott Best, and granddaughters Lily Best and Linnea Best, she has made me a member of her remarkable family, for which I am forever grateful.

My deepest thanks go to my family. My grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins were always there when I needed to reach out; I count myself lucky to have a family that is proud of who I am and encourages me to become a better person every day. My most heartfelt thanks go to my parents, Mingxian Yu and Weizhong Wang, who have never stopped making me believe in humanity. They are my unparalleled cheerleaders, my reliable therapists, my generous ATM, and most importantly: they are my heroes. This dissertation is dedicated to them.

Jason Wang

November 18, 2020

Toronto, Canada

Table of Contents

Abstract.....	ii
Dedication	iii
Acknowledgments	iv
Table of Contents	vii
List of Figures.....	viii
Introduction: Walking as an Urban Practice.....	1
Chapter One: Towards a Theory of Urban Walking	17
Key Concepts: Modernity, the <i>Flâneur</i> , and the <i>Dérive</i>	20
Urban Walking as a Method of Inquiry: From Underground to Gentrification	31
Chapter Two: Wandering Consciousness in the Modernist City: Theodore Dreiser and James Joyce	41
The Commodity Logic of Walking: Theodore Dreiser's <i>Sister Carrie</i>	43
The Street-of-Consciousness: James Joyce's <i>Ulysses</i>	56
Chapter Three: New York Promenades with Elsa von Freytag-Loringhoven and Florine Stettheimer: Refashioning the Modern Flâneuse.....	71
The Self-fashioned Flâneuse: Baroness Elsa von Freytag-Loringhoven.....	76
The Tourist Flâneuse: Florine Stettheimer	94
Chapter Four: Nightwalking: Nocturnal Poetics and Politics of Djuna Barnes' <i>Nightwood</i> and Jay McInerney's <i>Bright Lights, Big City</i>.....	110
Nocturnal Vagrancy: Djuna Barnes' <i>Nightwood</i>	113
“Walk and Don't Walk:” Jay McInerney's <i>Bright Lights, Big City</i>	129
Chapter Five: Walking the Post-9/11 Metropolis: Literary Paradigms of Reconstruction in Joseph O'Neill's <i>Netherland</i> and Teju Cole's <i>Blind Spot</i> and <i>Open City</i>	150
Walking With/Out Purpose: Joseph O'Neill's <i>Netherland</i>	153
“Flânerie is For Whites”: Teju Cole's <i>Blind Spot</i> and <i>Open City</i>	169
Epilogue: Walking Forward	187
Bibliography	196
Appendix.....	222

List of Figures

Frontispiece <i>Leader Lane & Colborne Lane, St. Lawrence Neighbourhood</i> . Photograph by author. 2019.	ix
I. 1 <i>Trinity Street, Distillery District, Toronto</i> . Photograph by the author. 2017..	x
I. 2 <i>Bay Street & Front Street, Toronto</i> . Photograph by the author. 2018.....	xi
3. 1 International News Photography, <i>Elsa von Freytag-Loringhoven in her Greenwich Village Studio</i> . December 7, 1915. Photograph. Bettman/Corbis Magma.	xii
3. 2 Elsa von Freytag-Loringhoven, <i>Limbswish</i> , ca. 1917–1918. Metal spring, curtain tassel and wire mounted on wood block. Height with base: 21 11/16 inches (55.1 cm). Mark Kelman Collection, New York.....	xiii
3. 3 Elsa von Freytag-Loringhoven, <i>Cathedral</i> , ca. 1918. Wood fragment, 10 7/16 inches (26.5 cm) high. Mark Kelman Collection, New York.	xiv
3. 4 Florine Stettheimer, <i>Spring Sale at Bendel's</i> , 1921. Oil on canvas, 50 × 40 inches (127 × 101.6 cm). Philadelphia Museum of Art.	xv
3. 5 Florine Stettheimer. <i>The Cathedrals of Broadway</i> . 1929. Oil on canvas. 60 1/8 × 50 1/8 inches (152.7 × 127.3 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art.....	xvi
3. 6 Florine Stettheimer. <i>The Cathedrals of Fifth Avenue</i> . 1931. Oil on canvas, 60 × 50 inches (152.4 × 127 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art.....	xvii
3. 7 Florine Stettheimer. <i>The Cathedrals of Wall Street</i> . 1939. Oil on canvas, 60 × 50 inches (152.4 × 127 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art.....	xviii
3. 8 Florine Stettheimer. <i>The Cathedrals of Art</i> . 1942. Oil on canvas, 60 1/4 × 50 1/4 inches (153 × 127.6 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art.....	xix
5. 1 Teju Cole, “New York City.” Reproduced in Cole, <i>Blind Spot</i> (New York: Random House, 2017), p. 95.....	xx
5. 2 Teju Cole “New York City.” Reproduced in Cole, <i>Blind Spot</i> (New York: Random House, 2017), p. 173.....	xxi
E. 1 <i>Gooderham Building, Church Street and Wellington Street East, Toronto</i> Photograph by the author. 2020.....	xxii
E. 2 <i>Bay & Adelaide, Toronto</i> . Photograph by the author. 2020.	xxiii



Frontispiece *Leader Lane & Colborne Lane, St. Lawrence Neighbourhood*. Photograph by author. 2019.



I. 1 *Trinity Street, Distillery District, Toronto.* Photograph by the author. 2017.



I. 2 *Bay Street & Front Street, Toronto*. Photograph by the author. 2018.



3.1 International News Photography, *Elsa von Freytag-Loringhoven in her Greenwich Village Studio*. December 7, 1915. Photograph. Bettman/Corbis Magma.



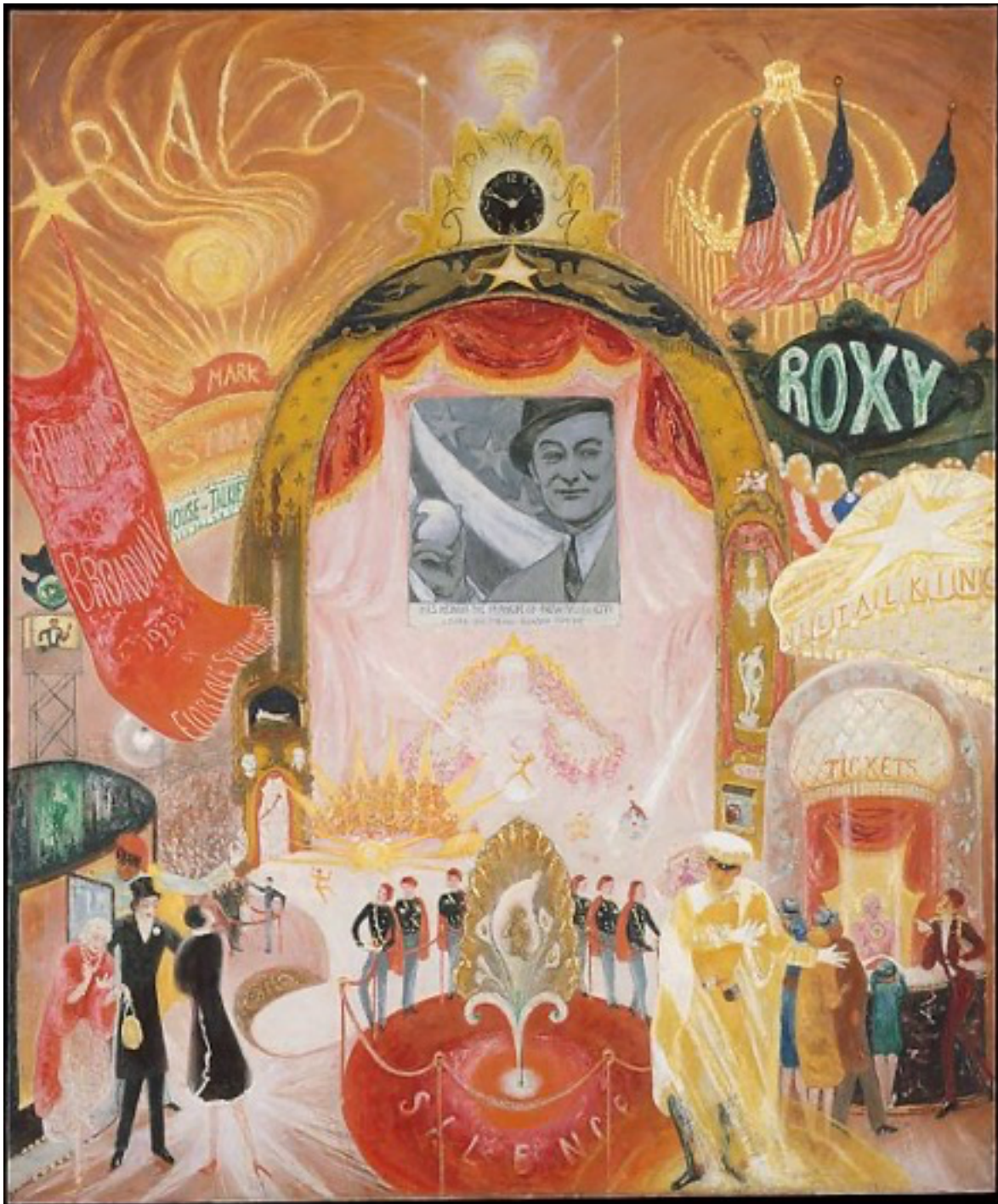
3.2 Elsa von Freytag-Loringhoven, *Limbswish*, ca. 1917–1918. Metal spring, curtain tassel and wire mounted on wood block. Height with base: 21 11/16 inches (55.1 cm). Mark Kelman Collection, New York.



3.3 Elsa von Freytag-Loringhoven, *Cathedral*, ca. 1918. Wood fragment, 10 $\frac{7}{16}$ inches (26.5 cm) high. Mark Kelman Collection, New York.



3.4 Florine Stettheimer, *Spring Sale at Bendel's*, 1921. Oil on canvas, 50 × 40 inches (127 × 101.6 cm). Philadelphia Museum of Art.



3.5 Florine Stettheimer. *The Cathedrals of Broadway*. 1929. Oil on canvas. 60 1/8 × 50 1/8 inches (152.7 × 127.3 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art.



3.6 Florine Stettheimer. *The Cathedrals of Fifth Avenue*. 1931. Oil on canvas, 60 × 50 inches (152.4 × 127 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art.



3.7 Florine Stettheimer. *The Cathedrals of Wall Street*. 1939. Oil on canvas, 60 × 50 inches (152.4 × 127 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art.



3.8 Florine Stettheimer. *The Cathedrals of Art*. 1942. Oil on canvas, 60 1/4 × 50 1/4 inches (153 × 127.6 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art.



5.1 Teju Cole, “New York City.” Reproduced in Cole, *Blind Spot* (New York: Random House, 2017), p. 95.



5.2 Teju Cole “New York City.” Reproduced in Cole, *Blind Spot* (New York: Random House, 2017), p. 173.



E.1 *Gooderham Building, Church Street and Wellington Street East, Toronto. Photograph by the author. 2020.*



E.2 Bay & Adelaide, Toronto. Photograph by the author. 2020.

Introduction:

Walking as an Urban Practice

Walkability is both an end and a means, as well as a measure. While the physical and social rewards of walking are many, walkability is perhaps most useful as it contributes to urban vitality and most meaningful as an indicator of that vitality.

– Jeff Speck, *Walkable City* (4)

In the late fall of 2008, I arrived in Toronto from China to pursue my post-secondary education at York University. Since York was in the middle of a labour disruption, I found myself alone in a city as a stranger with few contacts. For several months, while the strike lasted, I often took the subway from Thornhill,¹ where I had found accommodations, to various neighbourhoods in the downtown core. I spent many hours exploring the grid of Toronto's streets on foot with my point-and-shoot camera in hand. This walking routine quickly became part of my acculturation to the new city and country, a process that has continued to this day. In the beginning, I planned the itineraries for each walk, studying the city's history from tourism websites and its cartography from Google Earth. The very solitude of these outings and the encounter with crowds of people fuelled my appetite for seeing and experiencing the city on foot. After a few weeks of walking the city, Toronto became less foreign and more familiar. When the university courses resumed in early 2009, I continued these walks amid my busy study schedule. I completed my weekly walk

¹ Thornhill lies along the northern border of the North York area of the City of Toronto.

in rain or shine; eventually the sense of being a tourist in Toronto ceased, replaced by a new sense of home—and an evolving sense of self.

On these strolls, I recorded my observations with my mirrorless camera. One of my favourite photographs of downtown Toronto, taken in 2019 and featured as the frontispiece to this dissertation, is a street photograph of P. J. O'Brien's Irish Pub at the cross-section of Leader Lane and Colborne Lane in the St. Lawrence neighborhood. I was drawn to the brilliant blue and yellow colours. The pedestrian in the photograph, hands in his coat pockets, made brief eye contact, aware that I was snapping a picture of a street scene including him at a distance. Many of my encounters had this fleeting moment of connection. Walking in Old Cabbagetown, in the eastern part of downtown Toronto, I studied the architecture of the old Victorian heritage houses and recorded the different styles: the Second Empire style with its large free-standing buildings and neoclassicist details, the Stick style with its characteristic half-timber frames, and some bizarrely mixed yet playful styles. In these walks, I made time for conversations with the residents who were often walking their pets. Also, in Cabbagetown, I walked past Riverdale Farm, an actual working farm in downtown Toronto with cows, goats, and horses. I crossed the Riverdale Park West to Riverdale Park East into Greektown on Danforth Avenue to enjoy *spanakopita* (spinach pie) and *loukoumades* (honey balls). Sometimes I walked along Broadview Avenue south to Gerrard Street, where I made a left turn to the almost forgotten East Chinatown.

At times, I ended up in the Distillery District along with other tourists, where I walked among the largest collection of Victorian-era industrial architecture in North America, popularized by locals and tourists. With its brick-paved streets and lanes, this site has been a pedestrian area since the early 2000s; most of the buildings are occupied with boutiques, art galleries, restaurants, and cafés. The absence of cars instills a sense of reprieve from the busy

streets and compels visitors to slow down and patiently explore without competing for public space with automobiles. This is evident in the photograph (fig. I.1) I took on Trinity Street, showing the Distillery District's public square with a strolling couple walking past my viewfinder from the right, oblivious to my camera. Another walker in the foreground turns his back and rucksack to the camera. Behind him, the building to the left spells out the name "Gristmill Lane," a haven for chocolate, bakeries, beer, oysters, and other food. The photo is reminder that the Distillery District was listed by *National Geographic* magazine as a "top pick" in Canada for travellers,² attracting tourists, photographers, and shoppers. The photograph also reminds that this pedestrian zone is a favourite site for urban escapism for Torontonians. From there, I walked alongside Front Street, passing St. Lawrence Market, Gooderham Building (also known as the Flatiron Building, of which we shall hear more in the Epilogue; see fig. E.1). Behind the landmark building is Berczy Park, site of my favourite fountain featuring twenty-seven live-sized cast iron dogs alongside one scared-looking cat.

On Bay Street and Front Street, I used the fisheye lens to capture the salient pedestrian and motorized mobility during the dusk. Taken on the evening of October 20, 2018, the photograph (fig. I.2) marks the ten-year anniversary of my arrival in Toronto. I chose to underexpose the image to emphasize the anonymity of the pedestrians—most of them commuters on their way home. To the left is Union Station, the city's intermodal transportation hub, attracting the never-ending flow of the city's comers and goers. To the right rises the concrete and glass skyscraper of the South Tower Royal Bank Plaza, its geometrical lines distorted by my fisheye lens, making the operational headquarters of the Royal Bank of Canada less harsh and

² "10 Insider Tips for Your Trip to Toronto." *National Geographic*. N.p., 1 July 2018. Web.
<https://www.nationalgeographic.com/>

more playful after business hours. As the dusk fades into darkness after a busy workday, in the background, the iconic CN Tower continues to provide walkers with a brightly lit orientation point for their night city walking.

Through walking, I have become an avid observer of the city, often infusing my own memories and stories into its streets and, over time, forging a connection with them. At the same time, the city's anonymity also makes me a nameless pedestrian who shares this anonymity with the 2.93 million city dwellers of Toronto. My own identity has been changing during this past decade alongside the city's streetscapes. With over 10,000 photographs recorded, for me the city has become a rapidly changing kaleidoscope. Meanwhile, city walking has immersed me in a more than a decade-long journey of learning and acculturating in a new environment. In this process, walking has helped crystalize some of the research questions for this dissertation. Can urban walking help us understand the city in a global community? How should we conceptualize urban walking in the twenty-first century? How does the political economy of urban walking shape the everyday dwelling experience? What kinds of spatial politics, ethics and moralities are involved? Is there a difference between walking in the modernist city and the contemporary city as represented in cultural products? These are some of the questions I propose to tackle in this doctoral dissertation, drawing on relevant theories and literatures in search of answers.

In his novel *Open City* (2011), Nigerian-American writer and photographer Teju Cole provides insight as he takes on the twenty-first-century city as a pivotal site of spatial documentation and self-exploration. As the first-person narrator Julius remarks, “[the city] worked itself into my life as walking space” (3). A Nigerian-German medical resident in New York, Julius tells a spatial story about post-industrial and multi-racial New York City, using walking to call for a reconsideration of the city's history, ideology, and landscape. Cole's

complex post-industrial city and its perambulating subject finds its corollary in early-twentieth-century evocations of urban modernity with the figure of the flâneur, a figure particularly relevant in the literatures of the 1920s. “Walking slowly down bustling streets is a particular pleasure,” notes German writer and translator Franz Hessel in his book, *Walking in Berlin* (1929 in German; 2017 in English; 2), depicting his *spazieren* or promenading on the streets of the German capital while recording the rapid and dramatic shifts of the Weimar Republic. Hessel’s guise of both flâneur and guide created a template for his friend and collaborator Walter Benjamin, who would develop theories of the flâneur, and for the “psychogeography” of the Situationists International, a group of European avant-garde artists and thinkers during the 1960s and early 1970s.

The link between walking and the perambulations of the mind takes an experimental and literary turn in James Joyce’s *Ulysses* (1922), creating powerful correspondences and shaping the stream of consciousness literary technique. “He walked along the curbstone. Stream of life” (155), as Joyce notes about the novel’s protagonist, Leopold Bloom. For Bloom, walking the streets of Dublin is a way of connecting the fragmented elements of the modernist city and its psyche, or as cultural critic Raymond Williams writes about this Joycean experience of space: “in a way there is no longer a city, there is only a man walking through it” (243). Likewise, modern novelists and poets on both sides of the Atlantic, from Virginia Woolf to Jean Rhys, from T.S. Eliot to, more recently, John Ashbery, all immersed themselves in modern urban streets. These literary walkers reveal the power of urban walking in shaping, while being shaped by, the creative and intellectual imagination. These literatures suggest that urban walking helps its characters perceive the modern city, as well as conceive themselves and their relationships with the city and with each other. These writings reveal that different kinds of agencies, myths,

images and identities develop out of walking in the city. Therefore, critical engagement of this topic requires a theoretical, cultural and spatial framework for identifying the political, economic, and aesthetic dimensions of walking the modern city.

The overarching goal of my dissertation is to advance a scholarly understanding of urban walking as a cultural and spatial practice of modernity. Studies of urban walking include a wide range of disciplines, as literary critics, cultural geographers, political scientists, philosophers, urban planners and others use urban walking as a conceptual field to engage issues as disparate as space aesthetics, leisure activities, and social relationships within the scholarship of urban cultural criticism. While respecting the deep philosophical roots in conceptualizing walking, my study aims to explore cultural and creative expressions including fictional and artistic narratives that develop and thematize urban walking within a modern and postmodern context and that do so by performing a social critique. Urban walking can be adapted for various political enterprises, as can urban agency. Responding to and engaging with the experience of modernity, urban walking associates with not only the material conditions and the changing dynamics of the city, but also with the consciousness of modernity. Michel Foucault writes of the consciousness of modernity as “a type of philosophical interrogation—one that simultaneously problematizes man’s relation to the present, man’s historical mode of being, and the constitution of the self as an autonomous subject” (42). At the same time, as I contend, urban walking should be understood as a method of experiential questioning and sensorial examining of the lived city. While querying the Enlightenment concept of the autonomous subject, I broadly argue that in the context of the modern city, walking embodies the consciousness of modernity and harbours modern subjectivity as a phenomenological experience. In doing so, I show the processes through which urban walking integrates the subject into the city’s spatial, aesthetic, and political

engagement while also revealing how it is a site for powerful moments of resistance in literary and artistic representations.

Urban walking has been studied in literary, cultural, and social criticisms since at least the turn of the twentieth century, providing a plethora of approaches from which I build a theoretical framework. I conceive of the method and practice of walking as a way of performing a literary and social criticism on the modern city as a space and as a text. German sociologist Georg Simmel analyzed the *fin-de-siècle* metropolis in relation to fashion, identity, and psychology. Walter Benjamin critically reflected on Charles Baudelaire's writings through the figuration of the flâneur. The Situationist International thinkers developed an avant-garde technique of psychogeography with a deliberate focus on subversive and ludic tactics toward an exploration of the environment against dominating urban spectacles. Henri Lefebvre pioneered work on the (re-)production of social space and the right to the city, while Michel de Certeau broke new ground in "Walking in the City," arguing for an understanding of walking as a rhetorical practice. These approaches present a fertile research ground cultivating intellectual initiatives that directly or indirectly speak to the subject of (urban) walking and have made it an important field of intersection of cultural and urban studies. In this intersecting field, the politics of urbanization and the poetics of walking speak to each other. Susan Buck-Morss and Elizabeth Wilson, for example, have made a case for considering the flâneuse as an underexplored figure in modern literature and culture, generating a revisionist gender account of the female flâneur. Critically engaging these and other cultural approaches to city walking, I develop a theoretical framework of analysis that conceptualizes urban walking as a practice that shapes modern consciousness, identity, and aesthetics.

In particular, this dissertation scrutinizes the concept of urban walking and its relationship to the cultural and spatial constructions of urban literature and culture in the modern and postmodern periods across the long twentieth century. Urban walking, I contend, carries significant conceptual and practical weight of embodying the city. Moreover, urban walking designates a lively, experienced consciousness which creates a liminal possibility for endurance and resistance. As a shifting and unstable concept across time and space, I argue, urban walking is an experiential and representational channel configuring the modern city as a mobile and embodied cultural practice. My study accentuates the reciprocal values of interdisciplinary and comparative approaches in comprehending the concept of urban walking. The study of urban walking requires consideration of diverse disciplinary paradigms across the humanities and social sciences. This also includes New Urbanism, a design movement active from 1990s on, advocating manifesto-like for a walkable city as opposed to an automotive one (Speck 2013), as seen in the epigraph to this introduction. Bridging the literary and cultural criticism to urban studies, this dissertation is located at the intersection of urban studies, aesthetics, and phenomenology to offer a novel account of the role of walking in the modern city.

Before I introduce the chapters individually, a brief note regarding the selection of the corpus of works I propose to analyze herein is required. I focus mostly on literature, specifically fiction (and some poetry and personal essays), but also include visual and performative art thus contributing to scholarship at the intersection of communication studies, the humanities, and the arts in their respective concern with the city. My focus on the long twentieth century and on Euro-American examples arises from my concern with the studies of the modern city and its walkers; I consider the dimensions of modernity and postmodernity in order to address urban walking in relation to its significance today. The long twentieth century witnessed the unique

spatial transformations of urbanism and everyday life in the city where new spaces and new identities are fashioned and refashioned, and modern science and technology becomes an overriding means in reordering the social (and natural) world. Consequently, I have chosen a corpus of texts to help illuminate the central themes of this dissertation, namely, the cultural forms and arenas of urban walking that engage with the politics of aesthetics, cosmopolitan imagination, and (post-)industrial migration as relevant social concerns within modernist and contemporary discourses. In each chapter, my method is to create new encounters between unexpected texts; this comparative method has involved juxtaposing sometimes unanticipated texts and artists in each of the four chapters to explore the arising tensions.

Further, while the dissertation argues for a comprehensive body of theorization of urban walking in major cities, real and imagined, my selected texts privilege New York as an imposing twentieth-century capital of the literary imagination. As a canonized literary city and the global capital, New York is arguably a dominant city in the twentieth-century imagination. In a riffing on Benjamin's assertion of "Paris, the Capital of the Nineteenth Century," New York serves as a resonating urban template for other cities across the twentieth century and beyond. Thus, among the cities discussed herein, New York assumes a central role in helping us understand the relationship between the practice of walking and the city. I am also mindful that many neighbourhood "walkability" monitoring websites consistently rank New York as one of the

most walkable cities on the planet.³ In addition, the theories and phenomena converging from New York have implications in grasping urban issues in other cities. Structured thematically and chronologically, these case study chapters engage some of the main debates that have shaped the field.

In setting forth the investigations and arguments, CHAPTER ONE: “Toward a Theory of Urban Walking,” develops an analytical framework of urban walking by intersecting theories by Walter Benjamin, Michel de Certeau, Guy Debord, and others. Through the lens of their theories, I conceptualize walking in the city as a cultural practice that shapes identities, bodies, and aesthetics, constructing social and spatial relationships. By considering the theoretical trajectory from the modernist era to the post-industrial era, an important objective is to theorize and explore the practice of urban walking at the intersection of literary criticism, philosophy, sociology, and aesthetics. Specifically, the dissertation identifies and (re)configures conceptual key terms such as the flâneur by building on the rich literature on this concept, and by also considering self-conscious twenty-first century phenomena such as field researchers who propose walking London and New York as a documentary method,⁴ involving geographical analysis that is both highly local and highly cosmopolitan. Exploring the cosmopolitan crossing of national,

³ Some institutions and news media have conducted surveys and reports of urban walkability, with New York regularly ranked at the top tier. For instance, the neighbourhood walkability monitor website www.walkscore.com presents that New York is the most walkable city among the cities in the United States, Canada, and Australia. In 2015, Richard Florida published his research finding of walkable cities in *The Atlantic (CityLab)*, which shows that New York received the highest score among the American cities. The 2016 study of walkable urbanism in the US, done by researchers Christopher B. Leinberger and Michael Rodriguez from the George Washington University, shows that New York is ranked the most walkable urban space, followed by Washington, DC, Boston, Chicago, San Francisco, and Seattle (4). Finally, in his book *Walkable City: How Downtown Can Save America, One Step at a Time*, Jeff Speck also asserts that New York offers the best example of walking space in “the urban century” (5).

⁴ See, for example, Bradley Garrett, author of *Explore Everything: Place-Hacking the City* (2014) and William Helmreich, author of *The New York Nobody Knows: Walking 6,000 Miles in the City* (2015), both introduced more fully in Chapter One.

linguistic, racial and other boundaries, this dissertation takes inspiration from the literary technique that establishes correspondences between walking the city and the evolving consciousness and aesthetic. Earlier studies have looked at walking as a form of urban leisure activity in relation to modern capitalism, a practice that reflects and responds urban transformations. Other models have taken a sociological approach to decipher the power dynamics of the landscape. While building on these earlier models, my approach significantly expands on them to consider, more specifically, urban walking's aesthetic connection and political engagement with the city's relationship with its walkers. In developing this framework, my overarching goal is to advance an epistemology of urban walking that illuminates the practice through the critical themes of identity, temporality, and spatiality to illustrate the interplay between walking and the modern city in the Euro-American cultural tradition.

CHAPTER TWO, "Wandering Consciousness in the Modernist City: Theodore Dreiser and James Joyce," is concerned with how processes of modernization are intertwined with the development of cityscape addressing how the modernist narratives of the city are articulated through the realist and modernist techniques including narrative irony, interior monologue, and multiple points of view. Juxtaposing Theodore Dreiser's Chicago and New York of the late nineteenth century with James Joyce's Dublin of 1904 may seem counterintuitive at first but allows me to explore the authors' use of literary walkers' sensations and perceptions to build effects of modernity and modernist styles that emanate from urban walks and are the products of western modernity. This juxtaposition helps tease out the interplay between the interior and exterior, between the wandering consciousness and its environmental affordance, which constructs, and at times determines, the walkers' trajectories in the modernist city. This perambulating between the two texts creates novel insights at the intersection of the two texts.

Specifically, the chapter is concerned with the cognitive impact of walking and the relationship of the evolving cityscape on the human subject. How do the modern streets inspire walking through changes in city design? What kinds of walkable conditions does the modernist city provide? And what subjects does city walking construct? Through Walter Benjamin's conceptualization of *flânerie* and the rag-picker, the latter revealing the rags and refuse of life, this chapter contends that urban walking provides an understanding of the experience of modern life through an aesthetic construction of the emergent city. Ultimately, this chapter is concerned with the embodied consciousness that calibrates the success and failure of walkers' self-transformations, revealing their evolving urban subjectivities and elucidating opportunities and limits.

CHAPTER THREE, "New York Promenades with Elsa von Freytag-Loringhoven and Florine Stettheimer: Refashioning the Modern Flâneuse," is concerned with the gender dimensions of urban walking, arguing that the city streets present a space for women to develop an aesthetic of resistance in the public sphere. Specifically, I focus on two female experimental poets and multimodal visual artists—Elsa von Freytag-Loringhoven (1874-1927) and Florine Stettheimer (1874-1944)—to explore both radical and subversive styles and techniques developed in their respective engagement of the metropolis during World War I and the interwar years. By engaging with intersectional theories of marginalization, I interweave Susan Buck-Morss' understanding of the modern streetwalker with Elizabeth Wilson's concept of fashion, and Amelia Jones's (via Michel de Certeau) understanding of city walking as a rhetoric as a template to explore women's creativity and resilience. I consider Freytag-Loringhoven's radical performative self-fashioning for the city streets enabling her body to become a gendered physical configuration that is both astonishing performance and politicized embodiment. Locating

Stettheimer's street paintings within the cultural tradition of urban tourism, I contend that Stettheimer projected an overly feminine style of resistance in the modernist city and reclaimed women's participatory roles in public and civic engagement.. Moving beyond the domestic space in her late work, I argue, Stettheimer experimented with constructions of the role of flâneuse in her paintings of street scenes that often include herself on a promenade on Fifth Avenue, Wall Street, and Broadway with daring self-referential elements, inserting female flânerie in a male-dominated tradition. Ultimately, the pairing of these two artists both challenges and revises our understanding of the street as a place of invisibility for women, affirming their literary and artistic agency.

CHAPTER FOUR, "Nightwalking: Nocturnal Poetics and Politics of Djuna Barnes' *Nightwood* and Jay McInerney's *Bright Lights, Big City*," explores the temporal dimensions of urban walking. In particular, it posits a new study on nightwalking as a temporal criticism of urban space. It examines how the nocturnal city, with its poetics and politics, structures the walking experience, studying nightwalking as a distinctive form of urban life and living. In order to illustrate the city's nocturnal dynamism by distinguishing between the nightlife and the night of the city, I pair—and compare—a modernist novel, Djuna Barnes' *Nightwood* (1936), with a postmodern one, Jay McInerney's *Bright Lights, Big City* (1984). How is nightwalking (de)regulated by the urban political economy? What kinds of urban subjects does the nocturnal city produce? What forms of nightlife does the city authenticate and disqualify? The pairing of Barnes' and McInerney's novels helps to reveal the shift from underground nightlife in the modernist city to cultural and spatial gentrification of the night in the postmodern one. This chapter uses Guy Debord's theory of psychogeography alongside the theories of the urban night as proposed by Matthew Beaumont, the co-director of the University College London Urban

Laboratory, who studies the city's imaginaries at nighttime. I also engage theories of neoliberal urbanism including those by American urban geographer David Harvey, and by American urban sociologist Sharon Zukin, who both take neo-Marxist economic perspectives to shed insight into the economics that structure the diurnal patterns of day- and nightwalking. Thus, this chapter suggests that nightwalking, however pathological or obsessive, shapes the protagonists as nocturnal subjects in order to survive individual grief resulting from failure, loss and absence. Ultimately, by focussing on the nocturnal city, this study shifts our understanding with respect to the relationship between the politics of urban night(life) and night walkers' inner lives.

CHAPTER FIVE, "Walking the Post-9/11 Metropolis: Literary Paradigms of Reconstruction in Joseph O'Neill's *Netherland* and Teju Cole's *Blind Spot* and *Open City*," explores the racial dimensions of urban walking especially under the post-9/11 re-imagining of cosmopolitan urbanism. Specifically, the chapter considers themes of identity, belonging, and trauma, reading these themes through the immigrant city of New York in Joseph O'Neill's novel *Netherland* (2008) and Teju Cole's photography album *Blind Spot* (2017) and novel *Open City* (2011). Alongside critical scrutiny of urban experience and cosmopolitan projects, and by engaging Michel de Certeau's conceptualization of spatial stories in the city and Kwame Anthony Appiah's cosmopolitan ethics, this chapter considers urban walking as a conceptual tool to render moments of identity reconstruction as well as explore their political implications. By addressing the twenty-first century neoliberal alienation and precarity related to topics of immigration and global citizenship, I suggest that walking and cosmopolitanism intersect to conjure a novel way of understanding the city's political reality and identity in a global community and meanwhile render a critique of the ethics of cosmopolitanism observed and practiced in the post-9/11 city.

THE EPILOGUE that follows concludes that the aesthetic of walkers—often imagined as timeless—has shifted continuously and reciprocally both to reflect and imaginatively shape the urban space, politics, and ethics. Specifically, I invoke the COVID-19 city, the moment when the bustling metropolises around the globe—from Delhi to Rome to Tokyo—came to a halt almost overnight. I return to my own immersion in the city of Toronto during the pandemic to explore how the crisis challenges standards of traditional *flânerie*, impeding the leisurely stroll with complex regulations from wearing face masks to maintaining two-meter distances from fellow pedestrians. At the same time, walking during the pandemic has been a daily escape from the confinement inside, especially for those living in high-rise buildings. Many have turned to the practice of the digital *flânerie* to cope with the isolation and boredom of lockdown.

While this dissertation focusses on Euro-American cities, notably New York, Chicago, Paris, and Dublin, I would be remiss if I did not acknowledge in this introduction the growing and important body of literature and artistic expressions on Canadian, Asian, South American, and African cities.⁵ These diverse cultural traditions have created literatures and artistic expression in which walking is equally important, requiring a separate study that is beyond the scope of this dissertation. Moreover, my focus on literary and artistic expressions from the modernist to post-industrial periods does not suggest that urban walking is a recognizable subject

⁵ For instance, Canadian writers such as Dionne Brand, Wayson Choy, David Bezmozgis, and David Chariandy have offered literary accounts exploring Toronto, Montreal, and Vancouver through walking as a site for (im)migrant experiences and ethnic history. Chinese writer Wang Anyi's *The Song of Everlasting Sorrow* (1995) and Indo-Australian writer Aravind Adiga's *The White Tiger* (2008) thematize walking experiences in Asian cities. Meanwhile, Belgian-born, Mexico-based artist Francis Alÿs incorporates the idea of the *flâneur* in his video art, such as *Railings* (2007), showing a man tapping a drumstick on railings on his walk through London; or in *Something Making Something Leads to Nothing* (1997), in which a man pushes a large ice cube for nine hours through the streets of Mexico City, reconfiguring narration time to the speed of a walk in Mexico City while also reflecting on transience with the melting ice-cube in front of him. Last but not least, Teju Cole's *Every Day Is for the Thief* (published in Nigeria in 2007; in United States in 2014) depicts an unnamed protagonist, who returns to Nigeria after fifteen years in New York City, walks through Lagos to find himself changed by living abroad and confused by the new image of the city.

matter only in literary and cultural forms since the beginning of the twentieth century; in fact, walking in the city (town) has a long tradition in literary representations since the ancient, medieval and early modern eras. For example, Timothy M. O'Sullivan's *Walking in Roman Culture* (2014) explores Roman citizens' strolling past the colonnades and villas of ancient Rome as his study parses themes such as the art of walking and walking to document social status in ancient Rome. Matthew Beaumont's exploration of walking in London goes back to John Milton's seventeenth century city, revealing it to be steeped in moral concepts. Other scholars have looked at the twentieth century city, Roger Gilbert, for example, focussing on city walking in Modern American Poetry and Anke Gleber exploring the city in Weimar films. Canonical works from nineteenth-century authors such as Charles Dickens and Edgar Allan Poe as well as the rise of urban popular journalism during the Victorian era are all important in the studies of urban walking as they contribute to the discussion about the interactive space between the actual and imagined cities, and give an account on the relationship between walking and the early versions of urban spectacles in a capitalist society.

Affording a critique on urban walking, this dissertation aims not only to show some of the ways in which walking is rendered and translated into the urban imagination or how the city is interpreted and embodied in the practical experience of walking. The chapters that follow point the direction for understanding urban walking in relation to everyday life and for considering urban walking as a dynamic concept that allows us to think through key urban issues and animate urban phenomena that are of central importance then and now.

Chapter One:

Towards a Theory of Urban Walking

Only ideas won by walking have any value.

– Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Twilight of the Idols and the Anti-Christ* (36)

I have walked myself into my best thoughts....

– Søren Kierkegaard, *Kierkegaard's Writings* (214)

Walking has a long relationship with the history of ideas and philosophy. Not only does walking inform, and is informed by, philosophical explorations, but there are many influential social and political thinkers who are avid walkers themselves as reflected in their writings. As seen in the first epigraph to this chapter, drawn from his 1889 *Twilight of the Idols* treatise, German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900) saw walking as a crucial part in his philosophical investigation not only of the environment but of culture more generally. As he observed further in *Ecce Homo: How One Becomes What One Is* (1908), “Sit as little as possible; give credence to no thought that is not born in the open air and accompanied by free movement — in which the muscles do not also celebrate a feast. All prejudices come from the intestines. — Sitting still — I have said it once already — the real sin against the holy spirit” (25-26). Nietzsche sees “sitting still” as anti-intellectual and against creativity. Nietzsche’s eulogy of walking was preceded by the nature philosophy of eighteenth-century French writer Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778), as well as nineteenth-century American transcendentalist writer and environmental scientist

Henry David Thoreau (1817-1862) whose walking experience was linked to the seclusion of Walden Pond. Fuelled by Romantic philosophy, their approach conjoins the idea of walking with the power of the imagination and inspiration, as well as with pleasure and health. Indeed, these nature writers, poets, and philosophers were typically focussed on the simple living, in which the city is often configured as a space of decadence and alienation; the idealized wandering life of the mind was typically located in the unhurried countryside, where the mind was at ease to explore new moral and aesthetic and even revolutionary thoughts. As Rousseau describes in *The Confessions* (1782): “I like to walk at my ease, and to stop when I like. A wandering life is what I want” (166-167); as he explains further: “I can only meditate when I am walking. When I stop, I cease to think; my mind works only with my legs.” This Romantic tradition is concerned with the embodied perception and the imbrication of mind and body in the human ontology.

In his book, *A Philosophy of Walking* (2009 in French; 2014 in English), French philosopher Frédéric Gros draws attention to the consistent philosophical linking of the idea of walking with concepts not only of health and physiology but of freedom, emancipation, and solidarity. Thus, while walking is ostensibly a sport in a kinesiological sense, walking is more than that. Sport is, as Gros explains, “a matter of techniques and rules, scores and competition, necessitating lengthy training: knowing the postures, learning the right movements” (1). In contrast to sport’s focus on scores and rankings, walking defies the purely functionalist purpose, representing a special category of human activity and movement that has an enlightening effect on the everyday life. As a counter to modern capitalist conceptualization of time and space, walking is slow in speed, and it can be as slow as possible when it is compared to other forms of movements, such as cycling and driving. In a romanticist sense, walking is an act of resistance, using the physical body to defy the modern industrial inventions from cars to hypersonic

airplanes. The Romantic tradition theoretically and poetically propels walking as the domain that activates individual freedom, passion, and creativity and helps bridge the connection between the practice of walking and the imagination of the mind. This tradition gestures toward a phenomenological epistemology of embodied cognition that highlights the interrelation of the body, the mind, and natural environment. Gros writes, “Walking is a matter not just of truth, but also of reality. To walk is to experience the real. Not reality as pure physical exteriority or as what might count as a subject, but reality as what holds good: the principle of solidity, of resistance” (94).

Gleaned from the Romantic tradition, these insights are corroborated by kinesiological studies. Behavioral scientists Marilyn Oppezzo and Daniel L. Schwartz have tested the effect of walking on creative ideation. By conducting a series of experiments, in which they isolated other influential elements such as environment and adopted established psychological tests of human creativity and associative memory, Oppezzo and Schwartz documented that in the case of human subjects, walking not only has a dramatic impact on the quality of creativity, but also quantitatively increases people’s creative production. They conclude: “walking opens up the free flow of ideas, and it is a simple and robust solution to the goals of increasing creativity and increasing physical activity” (1142). As a basic bodily movement, then, walking is a fundamental form of transportation in everyday life. In this, walking is the privilege of able-bodied humans, but it can also be mundane: we walk to the office, walk back home, and stroll through shopping malls, parks and tourist places. From a kinesiological perspective, walking is “a rhythmic, dynamic, aerobic activity of large skeletal muscles that confers the multifarious benefits of this with minimal adverse effects” (Morris and Hardman 307). Health science research demonstrates that human subjects benefit from the exercises of walking, including the health-related fitness

and selected indices of metabolic health (Oja, Vuori & Paronen); body pressure and mental health (Davison & Grant); social well-being (Morris & Hardman); public health and obesity (Pucher, et al; Pucher and Dijkstra); and task productivity (Gilson, et al).

Thus, an exploration of walking as a cultural practice requires an understanding of how it offers different kinds of meanings. In his study of walking in Roman culture, Timothy M. O’Sullivan argues that understanding the concept of walking requires a movement beyond the body, and this basic human body movement reflects “the movement of the mind” and demonstrates intellectual associations with literature and history (8). Therefore, a study of walking demands an interrogation of both the practical and theoretical aspects. Within the Romantic tradition, as we have already seen, idealized concepts of the rural and nature act as the quintessential space of body-and-mind integration, and by extension, walking acts as the key Romantic propulsion to achieve this idealized integration. But how do these Romantic and neo-Romantic traditions, which advance idealized concepts of “nature,” apply to the modern cityscape, which this tradition typically conceptualizes as the space of modernity, alienation, and fragmentation from self and other? What ultimately is at stake—philosophically, ontologically, kinesiology, and aesthetically—when we turn to explore walking in the city?

Key Concepts: Modernity, the *Flâneur*, and the *Dérive*

Conceptualizing walking in the countryside, the woods or the mountains as spaces of solitude is fundamentally different from walking the streets of metropolises such as Paris, Berlin, or New York. The latter experience implies immersing one’s body in the modern crowd, which involves seeing and being seen by others; it postulates opportunities for strange encounters while raising questions of how citizens in the city live together and interact with each other. The modern city’s

geographical maps and metaphors differ from the rural environment of Walden Pond or even a walk through a small village. The materiality and imaginary of city walking includes busy streets and crowded sidewalks, complex architecture and styles. It also includes endemic politics, histories, and cultures, as well as traffic, crowds, and diverse neighbourhoods. With this increased complexity, an exploration of urban walking requires a cultural study of the city as a domain for walking.

Thus, in this study on urban walking, a key concept (and methodology) is modernity, which has its own spatial and temporal anatomy. Discussed by many social and political theorists as well as literary critics, modernity is an expansive topic, comprising a multitude of ideological, economic, political, and ethical dimensions. The concept of modernity has been directly and indirectly explored by earlier philosophers such as Immanuel Kant, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, and Karl Marx, whose writings provide insight into the relationship between the past and the evolving present. Kant, for example, articulates Enlightenment ideas of progress, while Hegel offers a new dialectical understanding of historical time, and Marx translates Hegel's dialectics into political analysis considering revolution as a response to the social changes prompted by modernization. In *The Consequences of Modernity* (1990), British sociologist Anthony Giddens argues that modernity refers to "modes of social life or organisation which emerged in Europe from about the seventeenth century onwards and which subsequently became more or less worldwide in their influence" (1). In a similar vein, British sociologist Krishan Kumar writes in *The Rise of Modern Society* (1988): "Modern society is industrial society. To modernize is to industrialize. It might be possible to give some other meaning to modernity, but to do so would be perverse and misleading. Historically, the rise of modern society is intrinsically connected to the rise of industrial society" (3). The concept of modernity is also related to social, aesthetical,

and political dimension of history, literature and society at large. For instance, literary critic Fredric Jameson calls “a modernity for other peoples, an optical illusion nourished by envy and hope, by inferiority feelings and the need for emulation” (211). Calling modernity a “strange concept,” Jameson writes: “modernity is always a concept of otherness” (211). Likewise, in his study “Eurocentrism and Modernity,” Argentine-Mexican philosopher Enrique Dussel has pointed out that modernity has long been perceived an “exclusively European phenomenon,” but is also “constituted in a dialectical relation with a non-European alterity that is its ultimate content” (65). Indeed, the very idea of modernity is often self-contradictory.

While the concept of modernity has been elaborated on in cultural criticism and social and political theory, I refer less to processes of modernity as causal agents as the former theories do than to modernity as a set of ideas or a state of mind used to explain urban changes and characterization. In this dissertation, I emphasize modernity as a human experience in the sense developed by American philosopher Marshall Berman: a cultural environment used to host social changes, through which other activities and identities are changed alongside. In his influential book, *All That Is Solid Melts into Air* (1982), Berman asserts: “To be modern is to find ourselves in an environment that promises us adventure, power, joy, growth, transformation of ourselves and the world – and, at the same time, that threatens to destroy everything we have, everything we know, everything we are” (15). Berman is concerned with the way in which the sense of the self is influenced and transformed by “an environment” which concomitantly provides and confines the joy and freedom. In other words, the modernity here is a state of mind and a matter of process. The study of urban culture over the twentieth century has been concerned with themes of urban modernity.

In his book, *What is Urban History?* (2016), cultural historian Shane Ewen argues that modernity is a force that both shapes the city and is in turn reshaped by the city. Thus, urban culture as a product of modernity becomes imbricated with the experience of walking the streets which conveys this very modernity to the individual (108). In other words, walking is a human experience of the city and in turn the city embodies the experience of walking. As a specifically modern spectacle offered in this process of walking, the metropolis never lacks a grand narrative about itself especially in the modernist period, referring to the period from the 1880s to 1940s marked by a flourishing of experimentations, fragmentations, and technological advances, and the postmodernist period that follows in the wake of World War II with its focus on hyperreality, pastiche, and questioning of universal truths. A panoramic image of the city creates a myth about the city, which is abstracted into an institutionalized conception of the urban space. Walking offers an alternative space to create an intimate relation between experience, the body, and the self, between the actual and imagined cities, and between the changing environment and its subjectivity.

Among those who assert the importance of the city in the experience of modernity is sociologist of the city Georg Simmel, for whom modernity offers possibilities of freedom. The city fashions modern subjects by creating the material and psychological conditions for individual urban dwellers, and those conditions intensify the emotional relations between city dwellers' individuality and their attachment to others. Simmel argues that the modern city "creates in the sensory foundations of mental life, and in the degree of awareness necessitated by our organization as creatures dependent on differences, a deep contrast with the slower, more habitual, more smoothly flowing rhythm of the sensory-mental phase of small town and rural existence" (12). Simmel's understanding of the city involves the politics of modernist space, in

which the city itself becomes a lived and living figure to enable the control and influence on human psychology and experience. The city expresses the modern city dwellers' consciousness and observation; it articulates the psychological dissonance between what these city dwellers could see, experience and imagine. A blasé attitude for self-protection is the tactic that allows city dwellers to cope with the stress of living in the modern city. More specifically, the blasé walkers protect themselves from what may strike them as foreign.

First defined by French poet and art critic Charles Baudelaire in his 1863 essay "The Painter of Modern Life," the flâneur embodies the essential qualities of urban modernity: "the ephemeral, the fugitive, the contingent" (13). Baudelaire depicts the flâneur in relation to the crowd, as he writes: "His passion and his profession are to become one flesh with the crowd" (9). Thus, the flâneur represents the complex relationship between the embodied self and the space the body occupies. Extending Baudelaire's concept in the early twentieth century, and influenced also by his reading of Franz Hessel, German cultural critic Walter Benjamin illustrates how the flâneur's urban walking is central to the performance of subjectification and the negotiation of spatial occupation in the modern city. Benjamin's flâneur reveals an urban walker engaged with modern industrial society through the continuous seesaw of observing and being observed in the consumerism-saturated streets of Paris. With his self-consciousness and aimless walks, the flâneur takes a bohemian approach to decipher the city streets by evoking the historical memories and the practical experience of walking.

In his posthumously published and unfinished *Arcades Project* (1982; *Passagenwerk*), Benjamin writes about the intoxication with which the flâneur goes about the city: "feed[ing on] the sensory data taking shape before his eyes" (417). As the observer of the marketplace, he is "a spy for the capitalists, on assignment in the realm of consumers" (427). For Benjamin, the

flâneur is the hero of the modern city because he dares to defy not only the car traffic by walking the streets but the modern entrepreneurial ethos which aims to essentialize the self as a busy and efficient one. Thus, he mocks the capitalist commodity culture by walking past shopwindows and advertisements; the fact that he does so slowly and aimlessly represents a poetic and bohemian resistance to the modern urban environment, which nonetheless fuels his motivation for walking. British fashion studies scholar Elizabeth Wilson and American political scientist Susan Buck-Morss see the flâneur as an earlier incarnation of the journalist or the society columnist (of a newspaper), who developed into someone who wrote for the feuilleton section of the newspaper. Therefore, the flâneur's aimless walking, as poetic and political engagements with the city streets, is rife with the textual documentation of the city.

In his essay, "Memory of a Paris Street" (first published in 1930 in German, *Straßen in Berlin und anderswo*), German cultural critic Siegfried Kracauer shares his personal experience of aimless wandering in the labyrinthine streets of Paris in the early twentieth century. Theorizing the aimlessness and purposelessness of urban walking, Kracauer sees the city as a character rather than an inanimate place. Walking several hours each day, he discovers that the streets of Paris are coherently and organically united to assemble the whole city, and this experience inspires self-exploration and self-reflexivity. Kracauer writes,

I roamed about on these routes and must have awakened in every passerby the impression of an aimless stroller. And yet, strictly speaking, I was not aimless. I believed that I had a destination, but to my misfortune I'd forgotten it. I felt like someone who searches his memory for a word that burns on his lips, but he cannot find it. Filled with the longing to finally reach the place where what I'd

forgotten would come back to me, I could not pass the smallest side street
without entering it and turning the corner at its end. (n.p.)

Walking on the streets of Paris is described in terms of freedom of movement. Like Benjamin's flâneur, Kracauer brings personalized memory to the street while walking in the city. As he concludes in his essay, "Even as one strolls through the physical streets, they are already distant like memories in which reality mingles with the multistoried dream of it, and trash and constellations meet" (n.p.). Kracauer's walking resonates with the flâneur's aimless and leisurely wandering, representing a solitary experience of the city at a street level.

Similar to the flâneur's walking in the modern city, in his book, *The Practice of Everyday Life* (1980), French cultural theorist Michel de Certeau initiates a new cultural analysis of the relationship between the cityscape and those who dwell in it by focusing on urban walking. De Certeau sees the city as the producer and the urban dwellers as the consumer, and advocates for a critical shift in the consideration of the city from the viewpoint of the consumer rather the producer. The city produces an official narrative about how everyday urban culture is structured. These grand narratives produce and shape the official and universalized experience and stories of the city. In this case, the city is mythicized as a product generated by the operational strategies of institutions, such as governments and corporations. At the same time, the spatial practice helps liberate the consumer who can tell non-official and individualized stories of the city; this freedom is achieved by "walking in the city" (91). Walking is a "tactic" to generate the understanding of the city; and a walker is truly the consumer who embodied the unchartered experience of the city. De Certeau writes:

The act of walking is to the urban system what the speech act is to language or to the statements utter. At the most elementary level, it has a triple 'enunciative'

function: it is a process of appropriation of the topographical system on the part of the pedestrian just as the speaker appropriates and takes on the language); it is a spatial acting-out of the place (just as the speech act is an acoustic acting-out of language); and it implies relations among differentiate positions, that is, among pragmatic “contracts” in the form of movements (just a verbal enunciation is an “allocution,” “posits another opposite” the speaker and puts contracts between interlocutors into action). It thus seems possible to give a preliminary definition of walking as a space of enunciation. (97-98)

Pedestrians, for de Certeau, are like the readers of a book. Indeed, de Certeau compares “pedestrian processes [of walking in the city]” with “linguistic formations [in language],” asserting that there is an interplay between the act of walking and the linguistic configurations of language and discourse (103). He writes: “The walking of passers-by offers a series of turns (*tours*) and detours that can be compared to ‘turns of phrase’ or ‘stylistic figures.’ There is a rhetoric of walking. The art of ‘turning’ phrases finds an equivalent in an art of composing a path (*tourner un parcours*). Like ordinary language, this art implies styles and uses” (100). They can interpret the meanings of the city and its streets by incorporating their own experience and stories.

According to de Certeau, the city becomes the metanarrative of everyday urban culture, and de-mythologizes the city as a unified totality. As he writes: “The ordinary practitioners of the city live ‘down below,’ below the thresholds at which visibility begins. They walk – an elementary form of this experience of the city; they are walkers, *Wandersmänner*, whose bodies follow the thicks and thins of an urban ‘text’ they write without being able to read it” (93; italic in the original). In addition, de Certeau scrutinizes the metropolitan crowd by arguing that

pedestrians bring the city to life. Metaphorically, de Certeau sees walking as a process of writing a story, and thus walking ultimately transforms the city to concretize a spatial story. Creating the spatial story is a process of transforming a place into space, de Certeau arguing that “to walk is to lack a place” (103). This theory of walking reveals how stories defining space disperse and disintegrate as the pedestrian moves away from that place. The stories and legends allow people to move freely within city space, but without them, there can be no space to move within at all, for space ceases to exist. From this point of view, therefore, there is no such thing called city space without the walker. Whenever there is a city space, there is a spatial story and a storyteller who is a walker. De Certeau’s city as a text emphasizes the labyrinthine reality of people’s living experience. This concept of city walking contrasts with any conceptualized idea of the urban existence, what he calls “utopian and urbanistic discourse” that transform the city into just an object, an object that is created by urban planners and reformers (94). The latter kind of city is vulnerable to spatial regulations and surveillance as institutions such as governments, schools and hospitals create their own objects. In contrast, de Certeau’s pedestrians invest their own meanings, memories and possible political positions through their act of walking to reconfigure the space into their own individualized stories. His approach emphasizes the human relationship with the space and asks us to be attuned to pedestrians’ making of the space instead of the city’s effects on its dwellers.

French urban theorist and sociologist Henri Lefebvre (1901-1991) takes a similar approach to the city by looking at the relationship between the production of city space and urban dwellers’ everyday experience. Echoing de Certeau’s focus on the pedestrian’s intervention in the city, Lefebvre considers the city as “a space which is fashioned, shaped and invested by social activities during a finite historical period” (73). Lefebvre suggests considering

the city beyond its materiality and proposes a concept of “social space” of the city, which “combines the city’s reality with its ideality, embracing the practical, the symbolic and the imaginary” (74). In the modernist discourses of the city under the capitalist mode, Lefebvre sees a problem of the generalized image of urban space, what he terms “abstract space” (49). The problem with “abstract space” is that it represents space selected or created by institutions rather than being concretized through the inhabitants’ experience (specifically, their walking experience). In such abstract space, the dominant form would (re)produce the space which it has dominated, and “reduce the obstacles and resistance it encounters there” (49). Lefebvre writes,

Wherever there is illusion, the optical and visual world plays an integral and integrative, active and passive, part in it. It fetishizes abstraction and imposes it as the norm. It detaches the pure form from its impure content— from lived time, everyday time, and from bodies with their opacity and solidity, their warmth, their life and their death. After its fashion, the image kills. In this it is like all signs. (97)

Like Simmel, Lefebvre is deeply concerned with the relationship between modern urban space and the metropolitan citizens’ mental life. Like de Certeau, Lefebvre looks at the spatial consequences of the living experience as the urban space people live in and experience is the material embodiment of both social relations between individuals and the history of the city and its relations to citizens. De Certeau’s approach to urban walking, along with Lefebvre’s critical scrutiny of fabricating urban social space, has been extended in recent cultural criticism, including that of James Donald, who applies de Certeau’s work to his own exploration of the modern city as imagined in cinema; and Steven Pile, whose book *The Body and the City: Psychoanalysis, Space and Subjectivity* (1996) draws on Lefebvre and psychoanalytic theory to

explore the mental maps walkers create of the city, and the emotions connected with key spaces. These urban theorists together explore the modern city, real and imagined, in a critical conversation with western modernity, directing the reader's attention to the living and lived experience of citizens who come together and make the city possible. Consequently, these urban theorists offer a sound basis for studying the urban space and activities (in my case, urban walking) not just as a passive unit of analysis or as static material existence but as a manifestation of dynamic human relationships.

In addition to Baudelaire's flâneur and de Certeau's "walking in the city," Situationists International (1957-1972), a group of French avant-garde artists and intellectuals, joined the the critique of functionalism and modernization in relation to the practice of urban wandering. In the introduction to his edited volume of essays, *The Situationists and the City: A Reader* (2010), art historian Tom McDonough argues that Situationists International's writing reflects "a desire to rediscover and reconnect with that history, and specifically with the revolutionary legacy of the city in its most radical guises" (11). In his essay in the same volume, "Theory of the Dérive," Situationist theorist Guy Debord conceptualizes the *dérive*, by which he means the drifting, conceptualizing a journey without an official map or planning. In line with the flâneur's walking, and yet different, the Situationist's drifting is an urban adventure that explores the unknown and uncharted. According to Debord, drifting can stimulate a new awareness of the urban landscape. Drifting can also have politically transformative effects, opening diverse possibilities of walking urban environments by deliberately eschewing the planned streets in the city, thereby challenging the city's hegemonic myths. Debord eloquently argues for the city walker to embrace the inconveniences of this process, which include:

The abrupt change of environment in a street, within the space of a few meters; the obvious division of a city into zones of distinct psychic atmospheres; the strongly sloping contour (with no relation to the unevenness of the terrain) that aimless walks must follow; the appealing or repellent nature of certain places – all this seems to be neglected. In any case, it is never envisaged as depending on causes that can be revealed by a thorough analysis turned to account. (61)

A perspective on how walking interacts with the urban space, the Situationist's drifting is a politicized way of walking in the city. The modern city consists of the fragments of bourgeois culture or represents the "ruins of the bourgeoisie," to apply Benjamin's words (*Arcades Project*, 13).

The *dérive* describes an urban exploration to unlock the city's imagination and unmask the city's secrets – it is a way of seeking an ideal image of the city, with a utopian intent. By attempting to expose the city's secrets which are its "own supersession" (McDonough *The Situationists*, 12), the technique of the *dérive* is a method to unfold the untold and the unknown in the modern city infiltrated with capitalist modes of production and commodity logic. Like the flâneur's wandering and de Certeau's walking, which constitute a tactic, so too drifting is an act of resisting the authorized version of the city scripted for the urban walker. It is also a political challenge for city walkers to envision a future city, possibly even a utopian imagining of the city through a new practice of urban walking.

Urban Walking as a Method of Inquiry: From Underground to Gentrification

By considering the walking subject, a key focus is on the body as a sensory unit that mediates between the subject and the outside world. Underpinning this relationship is French philosopher

Maurice Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology, -as articulated in his book *Phenomenology and Perception* (1945) specifically, his theories concerning embodied cognition as a focus for understanding "the relationship between the mind and the body as well as the objective world and the experienced world" ("Maurice Merleau-Ponty," n.p.). In other words, just as the experience of the body has a direct impact on shaping thought, language, and art, so there are correspondences between the wandering subject and the stylistic forms of expression of walking narratives.

Methodologically guided by ethnography, cultural geographer Bradley Garrett's book *Exploring Everything: Place-Hacking the City* (2013) delves into the interwoven relationship between spatial exploration, resistance, and capitalism. Joining the London Consolidation Crew (LCC), "a collection of urban explorers who had systematically cracked dozens of closed areas owned by Transport for London (TfL)" (xiii), Garrett was involved in urban exploration by walking to and in various abandoned urban spaces and places. Radically defying the regulations (such as the rules against trespassing) and modern surveillance technologies (such as the closed-circuit television), Garrett and his colleagues demystify the phenomenon of trespassing in the city. Born in Toronto, Canada, as Garrett argues, the modern urban exploration movement contests the material usage and literary imagination of the city. Similar to the technique of the *dérive*, urban exploration recodes the normalized relationships within the city. Instead, Garrett queries what has been forgotten and what has been invisible to the general public; moreover, he critiques the very notions of the public sphere and spatial ethics. "[By] temporarily occupying and reimagining the spaces of the city" (6), Garrett's explorers undercover the hidden places in the city, such as ruins and underpasses. By photographing off-limits urban spaces, these underground explorers reveal different perspective of an urban narrative. Garrett writes.

Going beyond normally circumscribed boundaries forces one to rethink not just one's own identity but also the relationship between power and urban space. It is at the same time a subversive response to the imperatives of late capitalism that encourage spectatorship over participation. (8)

Garrett's words suggest that urban exploration, by its nature, has a political impact on both physical and aesthetical dimensions of the city. By reclaiming the places deliberately hidden from the public's eyes, urban elopers use walking as a practice to re-tell the story about the city. Many characteristics in urban exploration share the merit with the "resistant traits" of the flâneur, de Certeau's tactics, and the technique of *dérive*, all of which wield the unseen to be seen and generate an alternative to the grand narrative of the city through walking.

Dubbed as "a modern-day flâneur" by the *New York Times*, American sociologist William B. Helmreich is an urban ethnographer who documents the lives and spaces of the city through walking. In his book, *The New York Nobody Knows: Walking 6000 Miles in the City* (2013), Helmreich uses an experiential approach in which walking represents the fieldwork to document, understand, and interpret the city. In other words, urban walking is used as a documentary method to study New York and the social issues within it such as inner city and ghettoization, gentrification and infrastructure, public sphere and social exclusion, (un)employment and urban creativity, and neighborhood and the rhythm of everyday living. Helmreich uses urban walking as a research method (at times, a conceptual methodology) to illustrate the contemporary urban issues revolving around gentrification, transportation, housing, immigration, public facilities, criminal rate, neighborhood amenities, and social transformation. He spent four years conducting this field research by walking almost every day in Manhattan, Brooklyn, Queens, the Bronx, and Staten Island. On foot, Helmreich makes readers experience

the city at street level to provide an ethnographical documentary for and investigation of the city. For Helmreich, urban space is a pedagogical instrument teaching readers about the history, ideology and culture of the city. His embodied method, walking through a city in order to know it, is simple as it is effective. He writes, “Walking the city’s streets allowed me to see its buildings, sidewalks, walls monuments, and signs as a patchwork of spaces. Systematic walking of every street led to the realization that people’s perceptions of their neighborhood’s spatial boundaries (or others they visit) are limited” (361). The cultural and economic success of New York which Helmreich detects through walking stems from two groups of people: the immigrants and the gentrifiers. The former brought their drive and ambition, reinvigorating the city through diversity and international connections; the latter brought their talents for innovation and transformation, turning it into a fashionable and exciting place of new ideas and commercial potential.

Within this context of gentrification, urban economist Richard Florida’s book *The Rise of the Creative Class* (2002; revised and expanded edition in 2012) also requires a brief introduction, as he shifts the focus to the human capital in the post-industrial city and society. The latter are the result of the rise of technology in the twenty-first century, and the shift to technology companies with their requirements for human talent. Thus, Florida conceptualizes what he terms the creative class, a group comprising a wide array of creative professionals in business, health care, education, finance, culture and the arts. The creative class in the post-industrial city is “the key force that is reshaping our geography, spearheading the movement back from outlying areas to urban centers and close-in, walkable suburbs” (11). With cities fuelling economic renewal, the cities consequently become more divided along class lines, as reflected by the areas in which members of each class live with gentrification spurring renewal

and clustering of wealthy people in areas both attractive and convenient. Even as cities are becoming more diverse ethnically and culturally, Florida flags a mounting divide, raising questions about the extent to which urban walking can present an intervention to make this divided post-industrial city more inclusive and the experience of the city more creative.

Drawing upon walking as a method of enquiry, British cultural geographer Jennie Middleton explores the urban policies concerned with pedestrianism, local transportation, urban mobility, and the embodiment process of walking in the city. Seeing walking as a critical lens to deciphering the city (which echoes some key theorists' writings on urban walking), within the discourses of urban design and planning, Middleton's social science approach differs from many humanists' methodologies of understanding the issues revolving around "walking in the city." She argues that many urban theorists' works, such as de Certeau and Zygmunt Bauman, lack "an engagement with the routine, habitual and everyday experiences of those people who actually walk in the city" ("Walking in the City," 94). In other words, Middleton advocates for a concept of walking as a functional activity in the city. Her argument positions walking as an everyday practice, which does not have to be eccentric, queer or against the mainstream, such as the flâneur or urban hackers. Middleton's approach to the everyday practice also differs from de Certeau's as she does not focus on how walking generates new urban narratives or personal stories. As a day-to-day routine, as Middleton asserts, walking renders many possibilities that other forms of urban motilities cannot offer ("Stepping in Time'," 1958), contributes to the democratic possibilities in sharing and contesting urban public sphere ("Walking in the City," 93-95), and provides an embodied experience of the urban narratives as well as a reflection on urban policies ("Sense and the City," 576). Middleton's research calls for a reconsideration of developing "enhanced understandings of pedestrian practices" ("Walking in the City," 102).

Thus, the walkable city is the future of urban vision, and managing the spatial and temporal structures is imperative to a more democratic and inclusive images and practices of urban streets.¹

Whereas these theories have so far addressed the idea of urban walking and its relation to the shaping of urban subjects, there are additional theories and concepts relevant to my study. The latter concern themselves with urban walking's relationship to temporality, spatiality, and technology. In *Nightwalking: A Nocturnal History of London* (2015), Matthew Beaumont deals with a literary and cultural history of London by providing a perspective of walking the city at nighttime. Through an investigation of legal and literary discourses in England, Beaumont uses theories of the urban night and everyday modernity to unmask the enigmas of the nocturnal city. For Beaumont, night walkers, who are "those who wander purposelessly, illegitimately, at night" (7), provide a historical insight into the lives of urban dwellers and a platform to explore the sensation and perception of evoked by walking in nighttime city. Reverberating with the eccentricity and queering of other walkers, such as the flâneur, night walkers have interweaving relationship with urban modernity. Beaumont writes,

In its affirmation of aimlessness and idleness, and its association with the nomadic activities of masterless men and women, nightwalking has functioned historically as a refusal, conscious or unconscious, active or passive, of the physical and spiritual discipline imposed by feudal and capitalist societies. (42).

By studying nightwalking in literature from the end of sixteenth century to the nineteenth century, Beaumont not only suggests a new temporal methodology of studying urban walking

¹ Christopher B. Leinberger shares the similar impression on the importance of "walkability" in contemporary urban development. He argues, "Walkable urban development calls for radically different approaches to urban design and planning, regulation, financing and construction. Most importantly, it also requires the introduction a new industry: place management" (34).

but documents that London offers an alternate image when considered during the night. While research on nightwalking has only begun, several studies are relevant. They include Jonathan Crary's study on the idea of sleeplessness and the political economy of the urban night, Laam Hae's geographical exploration of urban nightlife and neoliberal gentrification, and Will Straw's pioneering work on the urban sensibilities during nighttime.

Canadian communication scholar Will Straw's project on the urban night acquires special relevancy as it focuses on the filmic narratives of the nighttime cityscape and the role the night plays in the process of spatialization of the city. Borrowing French geographer Luc Gwiazdzinski's concept of chrono-urbanism, which claims that "city life is shaped by the 24-hour cycles of day and night," Straw looks at how the filmic narratives interact with "the temporal rhythms of urban life" (46). He uses the single-night narrative films as the corpus to confirm the importance and legitimacy of urban night studies in cinematic space. Straw finds that there are two ways of displaying the manner of knowing the city through the single-night narrative films. It is either "panoramic" or "labyrinthine" (52). The former is to see the city from above, give the city a grand narrative, and the city reveals itself as a whole entity. The latter is to set up itineraries, navigate the seeing, and unfold the purpose of city places. Thus, for Straw, the urban night is an alternative way of seeing and consuming the city, providing a heuristic understanding of the neglected side of the city. The day represents the order and justice, and the night represents the irrationality and possibilities for transgression. In addition, Straw argues that temporal communities are created temporarily during the night as the night "has its own populations, personality types and distinctive forms of behaviour" (54). Therefore, the urban night mobilizes the identity of or the walker's identification with urban spaces.

Walkability has been a vital component in the discourse of urban design and planning especially since the New Urbanism movement, which favours the design of compact, completed and highly connected communities and emphasizes the idea of walkability in building neighbourhoods and public spaces (e.g. Marshall 2003). Founded in 1993 with the help of Duany Plater-Zyberk and Company (DPZ), the Congress for New Urbanism has promoted the ideas that built environments have a direct influence on residents' affective, cultural, and economic lives. One of the most influential endeavours stemming from the New Urbanism movement is the work of DPZ CoDesign, whose planning ideas and projects promote traditional downtown neighbourhood planning. This initiative is a strategic response to curtail the mass suburbanization after the Second World War. In their book, *Suburban Nation: The Rise of Sprawl and the Decline of the American Dream* (2010), DPZ New Urbanists Andres Duany, Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk, and Jeff Speck argue that the Post-WWII suburban sprawl “ignores historical precedent and human experience” and is “essentially self-destructive” as it has resulted in “insurmountable traffic problems and exacerbating social inequity and isolation” (4). Whereas the traditional walkable city encourages “mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly communities of varied population” (4), the suburban sprawl model eliminates pedestrian connections in favour of a car-dominated street.² Thus, New Urbanism aims to transform automobile-dependent culture into pedestrian-friendly culture which embraces mixed-use public space.

Speck's book *Walkable City: How Downtown Can Save America, One Step at a Time* (2013) is a manifesto for walkability, urging for an architectural and spatial reconfiguration. Speck also argues for public policy to improve built conditions for urban dwellers on foot. As

² New Urbanists took inspiration from the earlier ideas of “anti-urban” development in post-WWII United States as well as the criticism of single-use housing and segregated commercial centres, discussed by historian Lewis Mumford in his book, *The City in History* (1961) and urban activist Jane Jacobs in her book, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* (1961).

Speck proclaims: “Get walkability right and so much of the rest will follow” (4). These principles of New Urbanism have influenced city planning and public policies. Positioning itself against the modernist paradigms of bureaucratic planning and the garden city in the twentieth century, the New Urbanism movement aims to promote a new set of paradigms of designing an urban centre that highlights and accentuates democratic values. Nevertheless, as Canadian urban planning scholar Jill Grant has pointed out in her essay “The Ironies of New Urbanism,” such New Urbanism principles have suffered “contradictions between theory and practice” (158). Indeed, while New Urbanism promotes pedestrian-friendly environments, it does not necessary transcend the modernist approaches in practice and could potentially turn the public realm into serving private interests. Neither does it guarantee the interests or benefits for those who have less economic advantage in the city. In other words, the 5-minute-walk city may be difficult to realize without a fully supported social infrastructure and cultural amenity. As Grant summarizes, “The urban lifestyle that new urbanism idealizes through its principles proves almost impossible to realize through the application of those principles, except for a small urban elite in a few choice locations” (169). Hence, the idea and practice of walkability in urban planning and design still demand a bold (re-)imagination aligning a democratic and equally accessible value.

In her book, *Landscapes of Power* (1993), urban sociologist Sharon Zukin has pointed out that the neoliberal forces of market economy detach people from social institutions and overpower their attachment to place, especially in the space designated by high economic values (8-16). In the case of New York, as urban geographer David Harvey argues, the city has been reshaped in favour of “the developers ... Wall Street and transnational capitalist class elements” (*Rebel Cities*, 23; ellipsis added). The neoliberal city thus becomes nothing more than “an

optimal location for high-value businesses and a fantastic destination for tourists... [and a] vast gated community for the rich” (Harvey *Rebel Cities*, 23; ellipsis added). In this way, cultures of places are forced to conform to private and market values rather than to public vernacular ones. The neoliberal city renounces human experience; hence, it becomes transitional space. However, there is paucity in scholarly approaches to walking in the neoliberalization of urban space. And last, but certainly not least, in his book *Concrete Reveries: Consciousness and the City* (2008), philosopher Mark Kingwell encourages readers to consider and nuance the historical differences of urban walking between industrial Paris a century ago and contemporary post-industrial New York of today. What kinds of urban subjects does the post-industrial city produce? What forms of walking does the city authenticate and disqualify? In other words, how do the neoliberal forces re-shaping models and approaches to the cityscape influence the experience of urban dwellers to structure, organize and control their dwelling spaces?

To the abundant body of existing work on walking and the city, my own scholarship in theorizing urban walking seeks to add a crucial dimension in how urban walking has been experienced in the changing images of the city. By intersecting urban, aesthetic and sociological theories, this urban walking framework provides a flexible tool that will now allow a parsing of the corpus that follows in the upcoming chapters. With these theories as a guide, the next chapter turns to explore the relationship between urban walking and the modernist city through the lens of two authors keenly interested in their respective cityscapes yet rarely paired or read together: Theodore Dreiser and James Joyce.

Chapter Two:

Wandering Consciousness in the Modernist City: Theodore Dreiser and James Joyce

I was never weary of walking and contemplating the great streets, not only Fifth Avenue and Broadway, but the meaner ones also, such as the Bowery, Third Avenue, Second Avenue, Elizabeth Street in the lower Italian section and East Broadway.

– Theodore Dreiser, *The Color of a Great City* (xi)

Cityful passing away, other cityful coming, passing away too: other coming on, passing on. Houses, lines of houses, streets, miles of pavements, piledup bricks, stones. Changing hands.

– James Joyce, *Ulysses* (164)

If modernity prompts the realization of living in an era that is radically different from any other time, the metropolis embodies such a modern age. The metropolis also epitomizes the crisis in art, technology, and social relationships that are ultimately translated into altered consciousness. Encompassing literary and artistic strategies and tactics in response to the condition and experience of modernity, modernism, as an aesthetic project, evolved from the turn of the century into the early twentieth century. One of the most ambitious endeavours of modernism was to capture changing environments through the individual body and psyche—human consciousness and embodied cognition. The material body and the human psyche are in the foreground of the two modernist novels, Theodore Dreiser's *Sister Carrie* (1900) and James Joyce's *Ulysses* (1922), as both novels operate through the framework of the flaneural tension

which places the characters' walking of the city in the foreground illustrating their successes and failings. I suggest that both novels use the method and practice of urban walking as a focal point to illustrate the complexity as well as self-contradiction of the metropolis. Walking, thus, is an act of becoming modern, as well as the painful elucidation of its unravelling.

In *How Fiction Works* (2008), American literary critic James Wood invokes the flâneur as “the author’s porous scout, helplessly inundated with impressions” (46). In other words, the flaneural realism in fiction offers an authorial eye in navigating the emotionally and materially entangled complexity of the modern world. Echoing the freedom, glamour, desire and aspiration of modernity, flânerie is a literary device to depict the modernist consciousness of the city and its dwellers as a form of reporting and intellectual expedition. Wood writes: “In the aesthetic or literary real, the flaneural tension is between what you helplessly record and what you choose to represent (between the cinematic and the painterly). In the moral and political realm, that tension manifests itself thus: what *should* we notice, and how do we then do about what we notice?” (56; italics in original).

The novels examined herein illustrate that walking is central to the experience of modernity in the metropolis, but walking is also counterintuitive to the increasing speed and heightened productivity of the metropolis. Of course, the novels also greatly differ from each other, formally and stylistically. Dreiser’s *Sister Carrie* is an exemplar of American naturalist fiction portraying the rise of the industrial city through the examples of Chicago and New York City in late 1889 and beginning of the 1890s; set in Dublin more than a decade later, in 1904, Joyce’s *Ulysses* is known for its realism to evoke the banal everydayness. Realism aims to portray things as they are, contrasting with the then dominant aesthetic of Victorianism and Romanticism, which favoured chivalrous narratives and heroic stories. Naturalism also

emphasizes the idea of determinism, concretized in the characters' inability effectively to contest their circumstances or built environments. As the rhetoric of walking determines the success and failure of self-transformation, Dreiser adopts the pose of a journalist flâneur to exhume the industrial city's human entanglement in relation to the logic beneath the modern commodity culture. In contrast, Joyce's *Ulysses* aims to attain a new form of mental or psychological realism by rendering the thoughts and actions of its main characters. In its fragmented and mobilized form, assimilating the way thoughts, memories, and perceptions emerge in the mind, Joyce's *chef-d'oeuvre*, with its ironically heroic *Odyssey* parallel, captures trivial and dispersed modern city life through the endless stream of consciousness—assembling the practice of city walking through an internal process that matches the protagonist's physical journey on foot. Ultimately, the pairing of *Sister Carrie* and *Ulysses* unravels flânerie's multifaceted wandering consciousness in the modernist city in the early twentieth century.

The Commodity Logic of Walking: Theodore Dreiser's *Sister Carrie*

From the novel's opening chapters, Theodore Dreiser (1871 – 1945) takes on the role of the urban journalist and documentary novelist. Thus, he takes readers on extensive walks and streetcar rides to explore the quickly expanding western city of Chicago in late 1889, when eighteen-year old Caroline (Carrie) Meeber arrives there with hopes to find a job as a salesclerk in a department store, yet all she can find is a menial job in a shoe factory. She soon abandons this position to become the mistress of travelling salesman Charles Drouet. Later she moves to New York to become the common-law wife to a more sophisticated man, George Hurstwood, who is separated from his wife. By the novel's end, she becomes a successful Broadway actress, and leaves Hurstwood, whose downward spiral leads to his suicide in the Bowery after

wandering the streets of New York, unable to regain his bearing. With these two complementary characters, and within the diverse practices of urban walking that are my focus here, I suggest that Dreiser generates a distinctly realist walking experience for his readers through his fictional naturalism. As a mix of fact and fiction, the novel constructs identity in close interaction with the social order,¹ in which Carrie Meeber's social rise is contrasted by the downfall of George Hurstwood. Concretely, Dreiser uses the city streets and urban walking to inscribe a social agenda, and reveal the fluid constructions of characters in their interactions with the city through walking. A card-carrying member of the American communist party later in life, Dreiser also articulated his critique of unbridled American capitalism in his first novel by staging the human drama of survival on the streets of the metropolis. While earlier scholarly studies have revealed the role of desire and power in *Sister Carrie* and Dreiser's work more generally,² the importance of walking the city as central to Dreiser's imaginary remains to be explored.

In one of the early scenes, Dreiser introduces the reader to the city of Chicago, evoking its recent changes and history through its material reality: "It was a city of over 500,000, with the ambition, the daring, the activity of a metropolis of a million. Its streets and houses were already scattered over an area of seventy-five square miles" (14). Miles and miles of streets extend in

¹ See Shelley Fisher Fishkin, *From Fact to Fiction* (1985), who argues that modernist writers such as Dreiser, Ernest Hemingway, and John Dos Passos turned to fiction to accomplish social responsibilities that conventional journalism, a profession in which they all started their careers, was unable to achieve.

² Irene Gammel's *Sexualizing Power in Naturalism* (1992) presents a Foucaultian reading of Dreiser's representation of social structure and its disciplinary power in constructing characters' identities along gender, class, and especially sexual lines. For more recent studies extending these issues, see Tracy Lemaster's feminist readings of material objects in Dreiser's novel; Lemaster uses "thing theory" to show how the narrative animates materials objects, revealing them to be integral to the construction of identity. Charles Harmon's "Cuteness and Capitalism in *Sister Carrie*," discusses Carrie's "wistful, self-involved beauty," her "girlishness" and "cuteness," which he argues makes her a mere representation or plaything of capitalism; while Paula E. Geyh reads of *Sister Carrie* as a semiotic space that is "complex and uneven," a space for transformation in the capitalist economic in the metropolis (414).

anticipation of the growing masses of city dwellers moving from the country to the city:

“[s]treet-car lines had been extended far out into the open country in anticipation of rapid growth” (14). Dreiser’s literary approach entails the hermeneutic of seeing the city in constant change, which produces the spectatorship of the ephemeral sensations in modernity. Dreiser’s city is materially alluring—filled with lightened streets, glorious department stores, and attractive cinemas and theatres. This cultural infrastructure attracts newcomers like Carrie Meeber from the rural areas, drawn by the vision of a space where there is not only material to be produced in the factory but to be consumed in the shops. In the rise of American capitalism, Dreiser vividly depicts the street-level city in its unfolding material infrastructure. This city is a magnet for newcomers, but it is also ruthless and amoral: a place where success and failure coexist. Carrie Meeber, shy and fearful at first, is soon walking the commercial centre of the city looking for jobs. A representative of the thousands of job seekers then arriving in Chicago, “[t]he great streets were wall-lined mysteries to her; the vast offices, strange mazes which concerned far-off individuals of importance” (15). Dreiser continues:

She walked east along Van Buren Street through a region of lessening importance, until it deteriorated into a mass of shanties and coal-yards, and finally verged upon the river. She walked bravely forward, led by an honest desire to find employment and delayed at everyday step by the interest of the unfolding scene, and a sense of helplessness amid so much evidence of power and force which she did not understand. These vast buildings, what were they? These strange energies and huge interests, for what purposes were they there? (15)

For the flâneur, walking is a declaration of independence and an expression of individuality, but Carrie’s first city walks are never intentional promenades, confirming the point made by feminist

theorists of the city: that women do not have access to enjoyable and free sauntering and that the flâneuse is absent in cultural history. Far from enjoying an idle walk, Carrie is busy hunting for jobs, a truly daunting task for an unskilled worker in a surplus labour market: “she walked quite aimlessly for a time, turning here and there, seeing one great company after another, but finding no courage to prosecute her single [job] inquiry” (18).

Nevertheless, Dreiser grants his protagonist a few of the male privileges of flânerie, accentuating the act of strolling in the public space. Even as we see Carrie at her most vulnerable, she is keenly interested in observing and taken note of the city’s spectacles. For example, Carrie observes the surroundings and the environment at large, consuming the city visually amid the urban rush which enticing to her. The sensations of the urban streets become familiar as she becomes absorbed by the city: “[Carrie] wandered on, feeling a certain safety and relief in mingling with the crowd” (22). In her acculturation to Chicago, while becoming a city dweller, the street assumes a pedagogical role for the rural novice: “The life of the streets continued for a long time to interest Carrie” (48). As Dreiser’s narrator asserts on the novel’s first page: “When a girl leaves her home at eighteen, she does one of two things. Either she falls into saving hands and becomes better, or she rapidly assumes the cosmopolitan standard of virtue and becomes worse” (1). The “cosmopolitan standard of virtue” is precisely what the novel encourages Carrie to adopt.

Literary critic Lee Clark Mitchell argues that Dreiser’s descriptive technique makes the literary city become an important part of social history. Dreiser had a social agenda—and a social justice agenda—in situating human experience and subjectivities in the industrial city, and he succeeded in offering the literary truth of the dwelling experience in the city. As Mitchell contends, in Dreiser’s city, “the self is now defined by its adaptability to changing environments”

(xvii). In short, the city is limned as an environment where its dwellers live together and must negotiate and contest their identities, experience, and existence. The characters' transformations are reflected in their practice of walking. Thus, the characters' urban walking experiences are not simply subjective, but they expose the shifting social and historical reality conditioned by the inescapable existence of material and ideological apparatuses.

Dreiser considers the city as a second nature for humans, its streets becoming extensions of their bodies. In other words, the city is no longer a built environment in contrast with nature (as the Romanticist writers and thinkers conceptualized), but the streets act as natural extensions of the newcomers' bodies and identities. The city is not only a part of human civilization but also an integral component of human nature and human cooperation—namely, living together. Dreiser's characters are shaped by the changing environments and often seek for the self-autonomy in the “shocking” industrial city. The self is unsettled and precarious as it is often defined by the process of urban adaptability. As she rises from a country girl from rural Wisconsin to a successful actress on Broadway, Carrie not only embodies the idea of social mobility promised by the American dream, but also the rise of urban modernity in the American history. As literary critic Christophe Den Tandt observes, characters in naturalist fiction often “feel that the urban landscape outreaches their powers of perception” (3). Dreiser's naturalist writing incorporates the city as part of human nature and reveals that the city has the agency to shape and reshape its dwellers. Not only does Dreiser's journalistic and sociological style, replete with statistics, and ample city detail, expose the city's power behind its landscape, but he explores the unseen facets of experience which phenomenologically inspire the protagonist's dread and wonder in the metropolis.

The modernist city produces particular types of subjectivities that are closely connected with the street. When Charles Drouet, a travelling salesman who would become Carrie's first lover in Chicago, takes her for dinner, he chooses "a table close by the window, where the busy route of the street could be seen. He loved the changing panorama of the street—to see and be seen as he dined" (54). Notably, from his window seat, he can be seen from the outside in the company of a pretty woman, arousing the desire of those who walk by outside. In this case, the argument of Susan Buck-Morss applies in that, as she writes in her seminal essay "The Flâneur," "in commodity society all of us are prostitutes, selling ourselves to strangers; all of us are collectors of things" (104). Through the flâneur's act, Buck-Morss writes, "we recognize our own consumerist mode of being-in-the-world" (105). Cultural historian David E. Shi argues that the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries witnessed the striking rise of consumer culture in the age of new urbanism. One of the most remarkable elements in American realist discourse of the city was "the sight of fashionable women on shopping expeditions" (87). In the first half of the novel, Carrie gradually becomes such a fashionable woman, as she not only possesses fashion awareness, but even more importantly, a self-consciousness of her own body on the streets. This makes her all the more desirable, and catches the attention of Hurstwood, who lives in a world of finery and manners as the manager of an upper-class saloon.

In addition to the psychometric dimension of the modern metropolis, fashion also follows a commodity logic in the city. In his essay "Fashion," Georg Simmel viewed fashion both as an abstract concept that generates and influences cultural perception and as a defining factor in social and interpersonal relations. Desires are materially manifested through walking on the streets. Carrie's original intention to live in Chicago is to find a job and support herself, her material need haunting the entire novel. However, she also craves pretty clothes, yearning fulfill

her material desires. In the second half of the novel, in her farewell note to her would-be husband Charles Hurstwood, Carrie makes this explicit when she explains why she *has to* leave him after he has lost his job: “I need what little I make to pay for my clothes” (400), refusing to support Hurstwood. Fashion becomes the object manifesting her desire in the city. There is a consistent commodity logic in her city walking, finding jobs, and even showing off her new outfits and garments.

In his book *A Singular Modernity* (2002), Fredric Jameson argues that the aesthetic term of modernism “corresponds to a situation of incomplete modernization” and “the powerful and central presiding value of the New as such, has always seemed to constitute the fundamental logic of modernism” (141; 151). Dreiser’s literary imagination echoes Jameson’s argument that at the turn of the century, when the industrial capitalism informed a logic for urban experience, literary modernism reflects the sociological temporalities by juxtaposing “the new industrial big city” and “the peasant countryside” (142). In his 1896 essay in the periodical *Ev’ry Month*, Dreiser writes: “To go to the city is the changeless desire of the mind... To join the great, hurrying throng; to see the endless lights, the great shops and stores, the towering structures and palatial mansions, becomes a desire which the mind can scarcely resist” (qtd. in Shi 83; ellipsis added). Most of the places in Dreiser’s literary cities are connected to the capitalist logic of desire.³ For Dreiser, the streets are more than the building blocks of the urban landscape; they symbolically reveal and conceal various identities and assorted social statuses. For instance, in New York, as Dreiser writes in *Sister Carrie* about Carrie’s loneliness during the summer: “Fifth Avenue was boarded up where the rich had deserted their mansions. Madison Avenue was little

³ This is also evident in the subtitle of Dreiser’s *Trilogy of Desire*, his fictionalized story of Charles Yerkes, a Chicago builder of street railways, who was also a womanizer and art collector; the trilogy was Dreiser’s exploration of desire as the main human driving force; for more, see Gammel’s *Sexualizing Power in Naturalism*, Chapter Four, pp. 59-82.

better. Broadway was full of loafing thespians in search of next season engagements” (418). Hence, the streets entail more than the representational significance of the city; more than satisfying material desires of city dwellers, here they echo Carrie’s status as an outsider even as she has become a success as a Broadway star. The streets become what Henri Lefebvre, in *The Production of Space*, calls “abstract space:” produced by capitalism and its commodity logic (49-57). In the abstract space, citizens lose the agency in controlling the space, as they become users rather producers of the space. Dreiser’s novel shows that Fifth Avenue belongs to the rich excluding anyone who is economically underprivileged. Entering the abstract space of Fifth Avenue thus requires a calibre of this particular economic status. Lefebvre claims that abstract space “presupposes the existence of a ‘spatial economy’... [which] valorizes certain relationships between people in particular places (shops, cafés, cinemas, etc.), and thus gives rise to connotative discourses concerning these places” (56; ellipsis added).

The novel pivots between Chicago, where Carrie first gets a starts, and New York, where she rises to fame as a vaudeville actress. Throughout the novel, Dreiser sets up the city of New York through the metaphor of the theatre depicting a city that invites its spectators to enjoy the performed dramatic plays. The streets function as a stage, where the dramatic performance happens. Dreiser’s characters walk in the city propelled by the persistent idea of success and failure in an economic sense. The more success, the less walking. Thus, walking becomes the margin under the capitalist mode of urbanism. Through the lens of walking, readers can see that money and desire both nurture and corrupt human subjectivities in the city. Carrie launches her career in New York on the same streets where Hurstwood experiences his downfall.

Dreiser’s urban imagination pivots on this interplay between success and failure through a naturalist approach. As an avid urban walker himself, Dreiser exposes the different elements of

the city and assembles them into a constellation, as he describes in the epigraph to this chapter, which he walks “not only Fifth Avenue and Broadway, but the meaner [streets] also, such as the Bowery, Third Avenue, Second Avenue, Elizabeth Street in the lower Italian section and East Broadway” (qtd. in Miller, 140). Here, New York’s streets have a pedagogical purpose.

Wandering around the city was Dreiser’s way to study and learn about the city. Hence, Dreiser was an urban savant who deciphered the city by walking on the street. In *Sister Carrie*, Dreiser creatively embeds the ideas of sexual desire, performative imitation, and consumer drive in the frenzy of the urban culture through the act of walking. In New York, Carrie gradually adapts the metropolitan culture and forges her own subjectivity in the city. For Hurstwood, New York’s streets become filled with danger and humiliation. Not only does he worry about being caught by police for having stolen money from his Chicago employer to elope with Carrie, but he fears the shameful encounter with people from his previous life, the ones from Chicago. As Dreiser puts it: “he has the disagreeable fear of meeting old-time friends, even since one such encounter which he made shortly after his arrival in the city” (276). Dreiser continues to place Hurstwood in New York streets to signal his fall:

He [Hurstwood] walked several blocks up the street. His watch only registered 1:30. He tried to think of some place to go or something to do... This took him to Fifty-ninth Street, which was as good as anywhere else. Landed here, he turned to walk back along Seventh Avenue, but the slush was too much. The misery of lounging about with nowhere to go became intolerable. He felt as if he were catching cold. (323; ellipsis added)

There is real pathos in Hurstwood’s aimless walking, as the impoverished streets and neighbourhoods of New York reflect to Hurstwood the shattering of his former identity. Used to

a glamorous life in Chicago, the increasingly desperate Hurstwood becomes the marginalized outsider as he walks on the streets in his old coat, a figure who no longer has ownership of the city. Dreiser writes,

He went out into the streets and tramped north, along Seventh Avenue, idly fixing upon the Harlem River as an objective point.... Passing Fifty-Ninth Street, he took the west side of Central Park, which he followed to Seventy-eight Street.... Coming back, he kept to the Park until 100th Street, and then turned into Seventh Avenue again, reaching the pretty river by one o'clock. (399)

In these circular urban wanderings, Hurstwood endeavours to be a “ragpicker” of the city’s spatial components. Not only does he walk the streets to beg for money and food, but he scavenges for the fragments of his lost identity. “For weeks he wandered about the city, begging, while the fire sign, announcing [Carrie’s theatrical] engagement, blazed nightly upon the crowded street of amusements” (440). Hurstwood finally becomes, as the text describes poignantly, “wandering propensity” (450).

The concept of the “ragpicker” is used by Walter Benjamin in his exploration of Baudelaire’s poetry. Benjamin argues that the ragpicker and poet share the same spirit of “the refuse of society” (*Selected Writings* 48). Whereas Baudelaire’s nineteenth-century ragpicker sieves rubbish on Europe’s industrial streets, the poet fashions the “heroic subject” in the refuse of the city. Thus, for Benjamin, through *flânerie*, the ragpicker embodies the archaeology of the city. Philosopher Irving Wohlfarth further suggests that the figure of the “ragpicker” is a unique historian of our world, picking up the fragments of experiences and materials to reconstitute cultural history (142-162). Buck-Morss looks at the dialectical relation between the city, on one hand, and the *flâneur* and the ragpicker, on the other. She argues that in contrast to what

Baudelaire calls the “soul of the commodity” (qtd. in Buck-Morss *The Dialectics* 186), the flâneur and the ragpicker represent a sense of “self-alienation” (*The Dialectics* 188). Indeed, Hurstwood’s ragpicking is unsuccessful and futile. He fails as a poetic ragpicker, who reconfigures the entity from fragments, as he is unable to re-assemble his own identity in the urban detritus. While he idles through streets of mercantile New York, Hurstwood is neither a historian nor an archaeologist of the city. His walks do not exemplify the qualities of the flâneur, and he is not the heroic character of urban modernity, which is the object of inquiry from the flâneur’s point of view. Unlike Carrie, who learns from the streets step-by-step, observing and imitating others,⁴ Hurstwood walks down Broadway without lingering or studying the crowd. Unlike the flâneur, who has a playful relationship with commodities, converting the urban “sensory data” into “abstract knowledge,” as Benjamin writes in *The Arcades Project* (417), Hurstwood is an ultimate failure of the commodity culture and his attempted ragpicking does not reverse his failure. In his role in the city, revisiting Lefebvre’s argument, Hurstwood is just a “user” of the space, where his loitering lacks an agency in producing social space of the city. Hurstwood’s final death by suicide in a Bowery flophouse therefore signifies Dreiser’s pessimistic attitude behind modern consumerism and the malice of American capitalism in everyday life of impersonal metropolis.

My point on Hurstwood’s failure as a flâneur in the city is amplified by Irene Gammel Foucauldian reading of Dreiser’s city. In her book *Sexualizing Power in Naturalism* (1992), Gammel argues that “Dreiser’s city is a deeply sexualized space that takes hold of the individual’s material body, seducing him or her into pleasurable submission in an expanding

⁴ For instance, after Carrie attends an evening show with Mr. and Mrs. Vance, her ideal of New York high life is learnt through the Vances who eat dinners in fine restaurants and who are always well-dressed and present themselves with the highly educated tastes as well as charming personalities.

economy of consumer goods” (61). Living in the city involves the Foucauldian panopticism, which governs and polices the self and the body under the power of anonymous gaze in the modern crowd. As a corporal movement, walking the street prompts “the individual’s material body” as a visual code for judgment and as a statement for the self in public. Throughout the novel, Carrie walks on the streets to locate her dissatisfactions, practice imitations, and fulfill her desires, as she unapologetically and unflinchingly rejects the Victorian emphasis on morality and sexual virtue. By contrast, Hurstwood walks towards his failure and final decline. Through the sexualized space, activated by the characters’ walking the street, New York is depicted as what Dreiser calls “walled city” (302), which opens its gate to Carrie at the same time that it locks out Hurstwood. Gammel maintains that “New York connotes a momentary, fleeting life, without any attachments to the past, without any loyalties to past friends and family” (“The City’s Eye of Power” 225). Still, once Carrie is a star, she turns away from her *flânerie*, retreating to the loneliness of her hotel room and rarely going out.

Carrie Meeber’s status as a *flâneuse* is severely curtailed given that her urban mobility is significantly limited by her economic status and gender anxiety. Despite Carrie’s impressive career-building in the course of the novel, her *flânerie* is precarious. Reading her resilient urban walking as a path of feminine empowerment is politically fraught since her practice of walking is ascribed a commodity logic in coping with capitalist urbanism. Thus, her walking is not ultimately transformative of deeper social structures and Carrie’s urban promenades remain aligned with that of other figures in late nineteenth- and early-twentieth- century works including Émile Zola’s *The Ladies’ Paradise* (1883), where women assert their public mobility in the new department stores, and Zola’s *Nana*, the story of a prostitute.⁵ Therefore, Dreiser aims to make

⁵ For more on this point, see Lauren Elkin’s book of memoir and cultural criticism, *Flâneuse* (2017); Elkin who casts herself as a *flâneuse* in this memoir, wrote a senior thesis on Zola’s *Nana* and Dreiser’s *Sister Carrie*, the

readers see the perceptual norms that keep city walking grounded in the commodity logic and the anonymous modern crowd, exposing the economics of desire and body engendered by modern consumerism.

In his celebrated essay “The Metropolis and Mental Life,” Georg Simmel states that “the psychological basis of the metropolitan type of individuality consists in the *intensification of nervous stimulation* which results from the swift and uninterrupted change of outer and inner stimuli” (13). Simmel’s turn-of-the-century city is filled with sensory life, in which human psychological responses are disturbed by the industrial city’s increasing stimuli, such as the “rapid crowding,” “single glance,” and “onrushing impressions” while walking on the streets. Dreiser’s *Sister Carrie* captures these stimuli through material images of the modern city life by walking on the street, creating a fictional vision of “the intensification of nervous stimulation.” Raymond Williams reminds readers that “the metropolis of the second half of the nineteenth century and of the first half of the twentieth century moved into a quite new cultural dimension” (“The Metropolis” 90). While several modernist writers and poets have addressed the economics and aesthetics of industrial urban transformation during the early twentieth century, none has extended his or her style as flexibly as James Joyce in following the meandering flow of the streets. As we shall see now, his *Ulysses* features extensive scenes on walking street in a modernist city, where the “uninterrupted change of outer and inner stimuli” and “new cultural dimension” is experienced in everyday life. While both Joyce and Dreiser use urban walking as a central theme, Joyce’s way of coping with modernity’s stimuli differs from Dreiser’s outward focus—concentrating instead on the inner dynamics of individual walking experience.

juxtaposition deliberate as many women walking the street would be a “Nana,” or prostitute, whose steps were clearly regulated in nineteenth-century Paris.

The Street-of-Consciousness: James Joyce's *Ulysses*

Whereas Dreiser searched for embodied sensations and dramas on the streets, exploring them through his naturalist approach that provides a commodity logic for urban walking, James Joyce (1882 – 1941) renders a wandering consciousness in the city within a decidedly modernist landscape. Where the characters in *Sister Carrie* are constructed through the materiality of their surroundings, the characters in *Ulysses* are focussed on and shaped by their interior lives. They move through Dublin by invoking their inner voices and lives in a way that connect the feet with the brain, making urban walking an act that fuels psychological action and reaction. *Ulysses*, as an exemplar of modern fiction, as Virginia Woolf writes, “examine[s] for a moment an ordinary mind on an ordinary day” (qtd. in Sim 10). The novel’s hero Leopold Bloom, though ostensibly referencing Homer’s epic poem,⁶ is an everyman who deals with the complexity of the life by moving through labyrinthine city; walking becomes the metaphor for the boundlessness of experience and the flow of ideas in the human mind.

The experimental novel was first published serially in twenty-three installments in Margaret Anderson and Jane Heap’s American avant-garde journal *The Little Review*, from 1918 to 1920,⁷ and then as a book in Paris on 2 February 1922, Joyce’s fortieth birthday. The novel captures the sequence of events that make up a single day, 4 June 1904, involving Leopold Bloom and many city dwellers whom Bloom meets on his journey through Dublin. A landmark

⁶ *Ulysses* is the Latin name of Greek Odysseus, the hero of Homer’s epic post-war poem *The Odyssey*; and Joyce establishes a series of parallels between Homer’s epic poem and his novel: for example, Leopold Bloom figures as Odysseus, his wife Molly Bloom as Penelope, and Stephen Dedalus as Telemachus.

⁷ For the details of the history of publication of *Ulysses* on *The Little Review*, see Clare Hutton’s *Serial Encounters: Ulysses and the Little Review* (2019). In her book, Hutton details the roles of individuals such as Margaret Anderson, Jane Heap and Ezra Pound, illuminating the behind-the-scenes in this high-risk serial publication of Joyce’s controversial work within the context of America’s obscenity laws that involved the censorship of many publications.

of modernism, as controversial as Dreiser's *Sister Carrie*,⁸ *Ulysses* exhibits a dynamic and radical method of breaking with the literary tradition by deconstructing the epic hero and heroic action.⁹ Moreover, the city is neither comic nor tragic, but a space where walking functions as a quintessential method of ontological discovery. Joyce integrates the detailed geography of the city to create a feeling of the city. Many episodes narrate the imprinting of the city on the characters' sensory perceptions, immersing readers in characters' cognitive as well as bodily interactions with the street environment. This in turn creates a specific reading experience. "*Ulysses* demonstrates that a great novel can be boring. And 'profoundly' boring" (27), Henri Lefebvre asserts in *Critique of Everyday Life*, alluding to the fact that *Ulysses* makes heavy demands on readers who are denied a traditionally accessible or passively entertaining reading experience. Readers must actively navigate the novel's meandering structure and grapple with its insistent focus on the seeming triviality of quotidian life. There are other difficulties for the reader-cum-flâneur, as narrative linearity is often undercut through the circularity of routine actions, events, and movements. The text both compresses time into just eighteen hours and extends or stretches time with its focus on the minutiae of a single day. Jibu Mathew George describes the novel's remarkable "temporal reach ... to incredibly remote events of personal, historical, and mythical pasts" (8; ellipsis added), at the same time that the commonplace becomes suddenly amplified: "Epiphanies dwell in expanded units of time on what is unconsciously dismissed as unimportant" (11). These insights are particularly pertinent with respect to the epiphanic moments connected with the street.

⁸ For instance, due to its obscenity and indecency, *Ulysses* was banned in the United States until 1933. For details, see Leo M. Alpert's article "Judicial Censorship of Obscene Literature" 40–76; and Paul Vanderham, *James Joyce and Censorship: The Trials of Ulysses* (1997).

⁹ *Ulysses* is the Latin name of Greek Odysseus, the hero of Homer's epic post-war poem *The Odyssey*; and Joyce establishes a series of parallels between Homer's epic poem and his novel: for example, Leopold Bloom as Odysseus, Molly Bloom as Penelope, and Stephen Dedalus as Telemachus.

Such an epiphany marks the novel's opening episode, when Malachi (Buck) Mulligan, a medical student and the first character to appear in the novel, talks to an old farm woman, "a wandering crone" (14). When she offers him a taste of the milk from her cow, this commonplace event prompts a sudden awareness that also introduces a startlingly new image of the street: "If we could live on good food like that, [Mulligan] said to her somewhat loudly, we wouldn't have the country full of rotten teeth and rotten guts. Living in a bogswamp, eating cheap food and *the streets* paved with dust, horsedung and consumptives' spits" (14; italics added). Here, Mulligan's epiphany immerses readers in a highly personal and embodied street-landscape that unfolds the taboo realm of the lower body, where consumption of food and expulsion of dung mix and comeingle in the same space and sentence. In Mulligan's epiphanic moment, the street is amplified to become a highly personal imaginative landscape unfolding Joyce's infamous scatological and sexual modernism. Likewise, the second time the street is invoked—this time through the lens of Stephen Dedalus, a young history teacher and artist—the event is an entirely mental experience, mediated through a quote by poet William Blake that crosses Stephen's mind: "*The harlot's cry from street to street/ Shall weave Old England's windingheet*" (33; italic in the original; emphasis added). Here, the street echoing with the harlot's cry is Stephen's mental, literature-fuelled reality.

No longer the background of activity, no longer ephemeral or inconsequential—urban walking is instead a foundation for all else: it spawns mental wandering and the consciousness of all other activities that take place on the street. Unlike other modernist texts evoking modern mobility through technology and automobile culture, as exemplified in F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby* (1925), *Ulysses* highlights walking—a basic mobility within the city—as the pivotal consideration and exploration of character and mode of perception of the complexity of

the modern world. This focus has largely escaped earlier critics, though several related studies are relevant to my own. Michael Seidel has explored the geo-spatial dimensions of the literary representation of Dublin and Jon Hegglund has documented the novel's topographical precision and its rhetoric of cartography, while Rebecca L. Walkowitz has parsed the novel's concern with cosmopolitanism.¹⁰ In his book *The Aesthetics of Chaosmos: The Middle Ages of James Joyce* (1989), Italian semiotician and novelist Umberto Eco associates the novel's focus on walking with the flow of individual consciousness. In probing Bloom's walk and his flow of perceptions during his walk through the streets of Dublin, as Eco writes, "the boundaries between 'inside' and 'outside' becomes extremely vague. Since individual consciousness is reduced to an anonymous screen that registers the stimuli that bombard it from all directions ... in the open sea of the stream of consciousness one finds no individual minds that think the events, but only events flowing in uniform distribution which are gradually thought by someone" (42-43; ellipsis added). These scholars have recognized that Joyce conjoins the inner and external worlds together through the walking narratives.

However, the focus on urban walking as a cultural practice in *Ulysses* remains to be explored as a theme that helps structure the novel in both linear and circular ways. On some level, I suggest, *Ulysses* invites readers to be tourists following the footprints of its characters, as they navigate Dublin. Tourism theorist John Urry (whose work will be introduced more fully in chapter three), reminds readers that "the strolling flâneur was a forerunner of the twentieth-century tourist" (128). Walking alongside the characters, readers of *Ulysses* see what they see,

¹⁰ Other Scholars have studied the novel's focus on the everyday city life through the lens of humanist methods. For example, in their respective articles, Declan Kiberd and Johanna X. K. Garvey have each studied *Ulysses* as a gendered space, while Michael H. Begnal has explored Dublin's urban imagination in relationship to language. Leonard Orr has argued for a postcolonial consideration in *Ulysses* in understanding the relationship between Irish subjectivity and political transformation.

listen to their conversations, and discern what is going on in their minds. Joining in the characters' unceasing walking in the city and resting their gazes upon the city and its dwellers, readers become distant flâneurs in the 1904 Dublin.

The protagonist Bloom, a thirty-eight-year-old advertising canvasser, makes his first appearance in episode 4: "Calypso," from where Homer's Odysseus started his journey home. After Bloom has made breakfast and delivered it to his wife in bed along with the mail, Joyce quickly puts Bloom on the street and makes him move around the city. As a modern-day Odysseus, he embarks on adventures located simultaneously on the street and in his mind. While picking up a letter in the post office, attending a funeral, visiting a newspaper office, the National Library, and the National Museum, Bloom encounters various individuals on the streets, in a bar, pub, hospital and so on. As Bloom takes readers on a tour of Dublin, his walking on the streets also invites readers to understand his inner wandering life. In the following scene, Bloom takes on the role of a cross-cultural dandy travelling through the streets of Dublin, as Joyce writes:

Walk along a strand, strange land, come to a city gate, sentry there, old ranker too, old Tweedy's big moustaches leaning on a long kind of a spear. Wander through waned streets. Turbaned faces going by. Dark caves of carpet shops, big man, Turko the terrible, seated crosslegged smoking a coiled pipe. Cries of sellers in the streets. Drink water scented with fennel, sherbet. Wander along all day. Might meet a bobber or two. Well, meet him. Getting on to sundown, the shadows of the mosques along the pillars: priest with a scroll rolled up. A shiver of the trees, signal, the evening wind. I pass on fading gold sky. (57)

During this leisurely stroll, Bloom's internal rhetoric is that of a western tourist to eastern lands. He imaginatively crosses "a city gate," walks past "carpet shops," and consumes the popular

pantomime “Turko the terrible.” On one hand, the reader is reminded of Bloom’s cultural otherness in the city: a Jewish man in a largely Catholic city (with a few Protestants mixed in). The alliterative words “a strange, strange land” further heighten this intense feeling of Bloom exteriority and provide a questioning about his positionality in the city. Thus, Bloom is not only seeing what Dubliners see, but he also consumes the city from the eyes of a cultural outsider. On the other hand, however, the passage invokes the western consumption of the east (as the Orient) in colonial travel narratives. The passage reads as a parody of a western colonial travelogue to eastern countries, where “Turbaned faces” and “mosques” become the target for the western gaze to fix upon.

Bloom’s walking is a catalyst for reflecting on the colonial implications of walking within the structure of modernist cityscape. With the consciousness of finding colonial aspects, Bloom’s street wandering shows his cosmopolitan exoticism, the tropes of Orientalism embedded in the mapping of the early twentieth century streetscape of Dublin. “Joyce, the Irish writer colonized by the British,” Edward Said writes, “re-experiences the quest-voyage motif from which he had been banished by means of the same trope carried over from the imperial into the new culture and adopted, reused, relived” (211). By developing a parody of a western colonial travelogue to eastern countries, Joyce associates Bloom’s urban wandering with a form of resistance. Irish literary critic Declan Kiberd writes of Dublin’s labyrinthine streets in *Ulysses*: “The streets are the dwelling-place of the collective: and the street people, many of whom are unhappy at home, are enthusiastic users of public space” (161). Walkowitz reminds readers that “those who belong to the same community, or the same nation, do not necessarily share the same values, or even the same definition of community and nature and ‘same’” (77).

On one level, Bloom's wandering recalls the figure of the flâneur, who strolls through the streets of Paris and for whom, as Charles Baudelaire says, "curiosity has become a fatal, irresistible passion" (qtd. in Benjamin *Arcades Project*, 442). As a traveller-flâneur, Bloom immerses himself in the modern street crowd with the same "curiosity," "passion," and "sensibility," even as the narrative parodies a western traveler's log to an exotic eastern country, populated by turbaned people and men smoking coiled pipes. Being part of the crowd, Bloom is also an avid observer of otherness, as he generates keen-sighted images on the street-level experience. Walking becomes a practice of embodied, situated cognition; in other words, urban walking is a kinesthetic action—more than physical movement, it is a somatic practice that incorporates sensory modalities, such as sight, hearing, smell and taste. His unfailing movement deconstructs the city's spatial ensemble by imparting a flow of splinters.

According to Hegglund, Bloom is not only participating in a spatial mapping of the city but also seeking to realize the complex urban landscape and cartography. Less explored is the fact that Joyce develops the story following the rhythm of his walking, which renders a sense of movement, shaping the experience of the city. By doing so, Joyce delegates Bloom's walking to develop an act of seeing the city, as in this scene in episode 5, "The Lotus Eaters": "Mr Bloom, strolling towards Brunswick street, smiled. My missus has just got an. Reedy freckled soprano. Cheeseparing nose. Nice enough in its way: for a little ballad. No guts in it. You and me, don't you know: in the same boat" (76). The scene of strolling toward (Great) Brunswick Street (near Trinity College; today Pearse Street), one of the longest streets in Dublin, exemplifies the stream of consciousness prompted by the physical forward propulsion that takes almost the rhythm of the footwork, the syntax mimicking the step by step rhythm of corporeal activity, with the prompting of an auditory spark: "My missus has just got an. Reedy Freckled soprano." Ordinary

incidents and everyday triviality, or the “stream of life” in Joyce’s words (155), take mental and linguistic and lyrical shape while Bloom is walking on the street.

The walking movement spawns narrative as Joyce continues:

Mr Bloom stood at the corner, his eyes wandering over the multicoloured hoardings. Cantrell and Cochrane’s Ginger Ale (Aromatic). Clery’s Summer Sale. No, he’s going on straight. Hello. *Leah* tonight. Mrs Bandmann Palmer. Like to see her again in that. *Hamlet* she played last night. Male impersonator. Perhaps he was a woman. Why Ophelia committed suicide. (76)

At the corner of Great Brunswick Street, Bloom stops to behold the details of the street: the advertisements for Chantrell and Cochrane, one of the world’s largest manufacturers of soft drinks, and the iconic department store Clery’s (still operating today) in the heart of Dublin. Through the novel’s stream-of-consciousness technique, Bloom internalizes the branding of modern commodity culture, which resonates with his professional identity as an advertising canvasser whose special expertise is selling commodity branding. As a cultural dandy, Bloom next consumes the advertisement of the show *Leah*, a popular play entitled *Leah the Forsaken* which was performed at the Gaiety Theatre in Dublin in 1904; its plot centered around anti-Semitism with the persecution of Leah, a Jewish woman in love with a Christian farmer (Gifford & Seidman 88). Bloom invokes Shakespeare’s play *Hamlet*, where Palmer assumed the gender-reversed appearance of Hamlet; Bloom’s deliberation of identity ambiguity in the city is triggered by his wandering (“Perhaps he was a woman”). In this he alludes to the long theatre tradition to have the role of Hamlet performed by female actresses in the nineteenth century (Gifford & Seidman 88), and the first filmic representation of Hamlet was acted by Sarah Bernhardt in 1900.

In this way, Bloom's approach resembles that of the flâneur as he allows his body and mind to become a means of connecting with the world. Bloom's urban walking conjoins the bodily movement and the intellectual expedition. Bloom has the agency in deciding what he wants to capture in this city composition. His walking comes with a self-scripted mindset to itemize his discoveries and judgments. A day in the life of this urban walker requires active bodily experiences and perceptions. James Joyce pioneered the literary stream-of-consciousness technique, which captures the workings of the mind, and which William Faulkner, Malcolm Lowry, Virginia Woolf, and others would continue to experiment with and develop. Rebecca Solnit remarks that in *Ulysses*, "the jumble of thoughts and recollections of [the] protagonists unfolds best during walks" (21). The novel lacks a conventional hero and plot to chart the flow of the storyline but Joyce evokes the idea of heroism of modern mental and cognitive life that is simultaneously corporeal, articulated in the embodied cognition of the prose stream and the walking motion, which is neither entirely teleological nor entirely aimless. Moreover, Bloom's walking, punctuated by the verbalizing of his mental movement, raises questions about whether walking the city can garner mythic and literary significance in the modern world. His wandering life in Dublin, I suggest, evokes Benjamin's understanding of the city, as "a refuge for the hero among the masses of the big city" (*The Writer*, 96) and that Baudelaire sought through his figuration of the flâneur.

As a flâneur, Bloom also reveals his intimate knowledge of the city and its history, geography, and politics. In episode 8 "Lestrygonians," Joyce writes,

Cityful passing away, other cityful coming, passing away too: other coming on, passing on. Houses, lines of houses, streets, miles of pavements, piledup bricks, stones. Changing hands. (164)

Grafton street gay with housed awnings lured his senses. Muslin prints, silk,
 dames and dowager, jingle of harnesses, hoofthuds lowringing in the baking
 causeway... He passed, dallying, the windows of Brown Thomas, silk mercers.
 Cascades of ribbons. Flimsy China silks. A titled urn poured from its mouth a
 flood of bloodhued poplin: lustrous blood. (168; ellipsis added)

This passage reveals his spatial consciousness, as well as his awareness of the city's transience in the insistence on "passing away," with its double entendre of death: "Cityful passing away, other cityful coming, passing away too: other coming on, passing on." Just as the process of walking denotes a continuous "coming on, passing on," so the narrative flow of Bloom's inner wandering is forever changing, coming on and passing away in forgetfulness about scenes observed and canvassed. In detecting the radical blurring of boundaries in this comingling of walking and mind-wandering, the merging of body and mind in the process of strolling, I contend that Joyce's style shapes his street-of-consciousness style as one marked by staccato rhythm of its syntax.

In this, *Ulysses* echoes the ideas of Benjamin's *One-Way Street*, as Benjamin writes: "Only images in the mind vitalize the will. The mere word, by contrast, at most inflames it, to leave it smoldering, blasted. There is no intact will without exact pictorial imagination. No imagination without innervation" (39). Through this, readers are invited to imagine and experience the world with the writer and the protagonists together. Bloom fuels his "pictorial imagination" through his walking, and the phenomenological experience is registered by it. A wide range of images of Dublin become visible through Bloom's physical and mental mobility, the fragments reveal the whole. As the flâneur is the "ragpicker" of modernity's fragments, Bloom's walking constellates the idea of Dublin, and re-imagine the image of Dublin at its present.

For the flâneur, walking involves the aesthetic of cultural practices in configuring the urban space; it is also a method of anthropological observation on streets. Although walking can be seen as an everyday activity for travel or commute in the industrial city, it implies a relationship between walking bodies and the external environment. As walking bridges the inside and outside of nature in Romanticist discourses, in the modern industrial city the practice relates the consciousness of the self and the built environment that the walker both experiences and consumes. The practice of walking has become a culturally mediated pursuit in the industrial city. Thus, urban walking has a social and cultural significance in rewiring the inner and outer self. Bloom epitomizes city walking as cultural practice as his thought is invoked by his walking and his walking is maintained by his thinking.

In *Modern Epic: The World System from Goethe to Garcia Marquez* (1996), Franco Moretti argues that the stream of consciousness in *Ulysses* is Joyce's way to cope with the novel living experience of urban modernity. This point of view is echoed by Walkowitz, who writes about Joyce's focus on triviality as central in creating "interior monologue and infiltrated observation; the unusual range and focus of narrative attention; and the rigorous inclusion of different social, cultural, and aesthetical registers" (58). Still, there is a tension between Bloom's experience and his thinking, a tension that gestures toward an ontological doubleness, or bidirectionality, in the act of walking itself. As Bloom strolls through the streets of Dublin and observes others, he in turn is also observed both by the characters in the novel and by readers. In this way, Bloom not only performs agency and subjectivity through walking, but he also performs the role of an object-commodity, a contradiction explored by Terry Eagleton in his study of Walter Benjamin's revolutionary criticism on history, tradition, and commodity culture. Querying Benjamin's exploration of the Baudelairean flâneur, Eagleton argues that being a

flâneur inevitably embodies “the commodity’s self-contradictory form” (25). In Eagleton’s understanding, the flâneur pre-dates the production of commodity and disregards the capitalist mode of commodity logic, but his living motion of aimless strolling in the city makes him “the prototypical commodity” just as shoppers wander around commercial districts or department stores. Something of the flâneur’s ambiguity, then, the “self-contradictory form,” is reflected via Bloom’s wandering in Dublin (26).

Nowhere is this point better illustrated than in episode 10, entitled “The Wandering Rocks,” which I suggest encompasses an irreplaceable structural and aesthetical resemblance with urban walking in the metropolis. It consists of nineteen vignettes, each of which features some major and minor characters from the novel, performing the flow of a crowd, where people bump into each other only to move on a moment later. Just as “the reverend John Conmee S. J. comes down the steps,” his path intersects with “a onelegged sailor, swinging himself onward by lazy jerks of his crutches” (219), begging for and receiving money from Conmee, who continues on. Recognizing and greeting the wife of “Mr, David Sheehy M.P.,” Conmee pauses just long enough to beg her to be remembered to her husband, before moving on and saluting silver-haired Mrs M’Guinness. The entire episode continues in this manner of seemingly non-consequential and fleeting encounters on the street. As readers, we enjoy quick glimpses of each character as they pass by. Indeed, reading “The Wandering Rocks” generates a sensory feeling of walking on the street and encountering those known and unknown faces of strangers, acquaintances, and occasional friends. These quick connections on the street reinforce readers’ craving for knowing more, but also helps readers hide in the crowd. Joyce suggests that the modern city life is a wandering life. When we look at this episode as a whole entity, we grasp a quasi-panorama of the city. But each experience is also registered in the labyrinthine streets. Thus, “The Wandering

Rocks” provides a filmic method to zoom in and out of each walk of life and interpolate actions which share the same temporal frame but within different spaces.

In these examples, the focus on walking is ostensibly to create social connection, through saluting and remembering, giving and receiving. Walking becomes a social practice that activates a sense of community. The nineteen sections of “The Wandering Rocks” constellate the image of busy modern city life. Almost everyone in this episode whose walk intersects with Bloom’s is walking in the city with something to do. Walking from St. Francis Xavier’s Church at Upper Gardiner Street to the O’Brien Institute for Destitute Children in Donnyrne, Father John Conmee travels across Dublin to help Patrick Dignam’s son get admitted in a local Jesuit school for free admission. On the street close to Trinity College, Stephen runs into Almidano Artifoni, his voice teacher, who encourages him to work in the music industry. In a café, Buck Mulligan and Haines gossip about Stephen, whose father, Simon, wanders on the street and gets drunk. Meanwhile, Bloom also has a purpose being on his way to the bookstore.

Kiberd argues that Bloom’s tireless walking in Dublin is a way to engage with civil life. Walking is locating a person in the public sphere, where modern democracy requires participatory involvement. For Bloom, Kiberd contends, “It was the public zone which was warm, nurturing and affirmative. It was there that the random encounters which propel *Ulysses* kept on happening, before the rise of shopping mall put a brake on such unexpected meetings and an end for the idea of a neighbourhood” (25). Differing from Dreiser’s city, whose streets are conceived as ruthless and intimidating places for identifying success and failure without leaving much space for moral value, Joyce uses Bloom’s walking on the street to encourage a way of thinking not only about how citizens live in the city but also how they live *together* in the city.

In his study of the city transformation throughout the modernist period, Marshall Berman writes that the everyday life on the modern streets constitutes what he calls “the urban montage” (315). Berman’s concept of “montage” vividly describes the everyday experience of urban dwellers in the modernist city, where various fragments—textual, visual, and material— are shaped and reshaped to constellate the novel composite whole. Thus, walking on the streets is a process of collecting the fragments for inspiration and meaning-making. Throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Berman argues “the street was experienced as the medium in which the totality of modern material and spiritual forces could meet, clash, interfuse and work out their ultimate meanings and fates” (316). As we have seen, “The Wandering Rocks” episode provides a narrative assemblage of nineteenth sections and characters, each running their own quotidian errand, concretizes as “the urban montage” in which the whole is only meaningful when each character and each experience is registered. Readers are bound to experience a sense of fragmentations and differentiations, just as montage, a technique in film editing, enables different and diverse short shots to compile into one sequence. Joyce’s filmic method of writing this episode also shines a light on Stephen’s family relations. Not only does Stephen not live with his family, but his siblings are all struggling with making a living and hope for monetary support from him. The encounter with his family on the street gives readers insight into why Stephen is physically and emotionally exiled from his family whom he dismisses as “an insolent pack of little bitches” (214). Walking makes him see things close up and makes him accessible and even vulnerable to local people and places. In *Ulysses*, the streets of Dublin prompt emotional investment and the potential for social connection. As the characters wander through the Dublin’s streets, their inner voices suggest that they are simultaneously wandering emotionally. Thus, the streets are more than corridors between places. In many ways, the streets

provide a sense of liminal space for emotional investment. Overall, Joyce aims to deliver a message to his readers that the Dubliners, or every city inhabitant, are all “wandering rocks.”

Registering the experience of seeing in writings, the literary *flânerie* encourages readers to rejuvenate their passions for the industrial city by bringing an intoxicating view of the streets packed with stimuli and cultural novelties. Both Dreiser and Joyce embrace the practice of *flânerie*, efficaciously reviving the intellectual attachment to the urban transition. Whereas Dreiser associates urban walking with the idea of success and failure in a capitalist commodity logic, Joyce unites the bodily movement and interior dynamics for unfolding a complex everyday reality. Whereas Dreiser dramatizes a finely calibrated social stratum of American society, Joyce assembles the fluid, fragmented, and comic urban materials into an epic interrogation of the modern hero. Whereas Dreiser is a documentary *flâneur*, Joyce is an observant *flâneur*.

Indebted to the efforts that modernist writers and artists have made in response to the social and cultural transformation at their time, we can see that the central theme of urban walking contributes to understanding the experience of modern life, which itself, in modernist discourses, is the manipulated product. The juxtaposition of these texts prompts a hermeneutic phenomenology of the metropolis. While Dreiser has highlighted the construction of identity through the materiality of walking, and Joyce connects mobility to mental life, the next chapter turns, more specifically, to considering the role of gender in the claiming of the city as a space for women and women’s creativity. I now turn to two women avant-gardists, Elsa von Freytag-Loringhoven and Florine Stettheimer, whose literary and artistic works reconceptualize the practice of city walking through rendering women’s aesthetic resistance and reclaiming their participatory roles in public sphere.

Chapter Three:

New York Promenades with Elsa von Freytag-Loringhoven and Florine

Stettheimer: Refashioning the Modern Flâneuse

The female flâneur, the flâneuse, was not possible until she was free to roam the city on her own.

– Anne Friedberg (36)

Paris—Living in the Latin Quarter
And flanéing in the Bois

– Florine Stettheimer, “Paris—Living in the Latin Quarter” (128)

In contrast to Theodore Dreiser’s Carrie Meeber who camouflages her gender identities to achieve invisibility and avoid public scrutiny while moving through the city, the women artists under investigation now do the opposite: they fashion an engagement with public spaces, provocatively emphasizing the construction of their gendered identities in the modern city. This chapter explores two complementary female experimental poets and multimodal visual artists who helped refashion female flânerie as a cultural practice in New York City during the World War I and interwar years: German expatriate Baroness Elsa von Freytag-Loringhoven (1874-1927), a poet, sculptor, and performance artist who resided in the city from 1913 to 1923 before returning to Germany; and Florine Stettheimer (1874-1944), a painter, poet, and set designer who returned to New York City in 1914 and would live here until her death. In this chapter, I engage what I see as the Baroness’ radical fashion narratives as a key function of her urban promenades,

to show that she used her promenades through the streets of New York City to shape a radical aesthetic of self-performativity, which became her key contribution to the New York Dada movement. I see her self-fashioning as a politicized embodiment, and her anti-chic fashion as a revolutionary artwork. Through her promenading on New York City streets, publicly and visibly, the Baroness reified the embodiment of self-fashioned identity, exploring the possibilities of fashion as a form of aesthetic resistance.

Whereas the Baroness flaunted a masculine androgyny, Florine Stettheimer, in contrast, exhibited an overtly feminine style but like the Baroness, she too used the street as a space of subversion. This is evident in Stettheimer's oil paintings, notably her late works of the 1930s and 1940s, the so-called *Cathedral* series which is set on Broadway, Fifth Avenue, and Wall Street as well as in Stettheimer's poems such as "New York." Stettheimer foregrounds extravagant street scenes, including scenes of nighttime entertainment and high-fashion shopping to explore the production and consumption of urban spectacles. While scholars have examined Stettheimer's work through the lens of domestic art,¹ my focus is different in that I consider Stettheimer in the public space. By juxtaposing her with the Baroness, I read her oeuvre through cultural theories of flânerie and urban walking to reveal her experimentations in constructing urban spectacles through the written and painted work. Specifically, as I argue in this chapter, both artists use their unique and complementary styles to create an aesthetic of resistance through the spatial and cultural practice of urban walking. First, as New York residents, they were engaged with the development of the urban landscape, and their respective visual art and poetry directly addresses women's participatory roles in urban public life. Second, they represent fringe individuals, albeit

¹ For the investigation of Stettheimer's association with domestic space, see for example, Cecile Whiting, "Decorating with Stettheimer and the Boys," pp. 25-49; and Linda Nochlin, "Florine Stettheimer: Rococo Subversive," pp. 64-83.

in very different ways, the German expatriate Baroness struggling with poverty on the margins even of the avant-garde, and the American secular Jew, Stettheimer, who was financially well to do but was nonetheless marginalized in an anti-Semitic society. The pairing of these two complementary cases diversifies the theorization of the *flâneuse*, revealing how an aesthetics of resistance can co-develop alongside walking as a cultural practice. This in turn reorients the discussion of modernist avant-gardes and gender (at times, queer) consciousness through a consideration of walking as a specifically subversive cultural practice. These subversions, which will be discussed in the pages that follow, also help reconfigure the traditional theoretical frameworks surrounded the discussion about the concept of the *flâneuse*, which has long been a contested one.

In 1985, sociologist Janet Wolff published her seminal article, “The Invisible Flâneuse. Women and the Literature of Modernity,” on the ontological difficulties concerning the female flâneur. She provocatively asserted: “The dandy, the flâneur, the hero, the stranger – all figures invoked to epitomise the experience of modern life – are invariably male figures” (41). The sexual division of the city, according to Wolff’s sociological model, renders a female flâneur invisible and nonexistent in the literature of modernity, a view shared by art historian Griselda Pollock, who notes that Euro-American women were historically denied the freedom to walk the streets alone (50-90). More recent feminist scholars have opposed this earlier view, Susan Buck-Morss arguing with more nuance that there are alternative, vicarious ways for women to claim the street and practise flânerie. As she explains, reading fashion magazines and listening to radios constitute metaphorical ways of walking the city, while the long-established tradition of prostitution also functions as “the female version of flânerie” (“The Flâneur,” 105; 119). Buck-Morss writes:

The flâneur was simply the name of a man who loitered; but all women who loitered risked being seen as whores, as the term “street-walker,” or “tramp” applied to women makes clear.... The politics of this close connection between the debasement of women sexually and their presence in public space, the fact that it functioned to deny women power, is clear, at least to us. (“The Flâneur,” 119; ellipsis added)

Unlike the male flâneur’s romanticized urban promenades, women’s public loitering is not only constrained by the sexual division of public space but also by the commodity logic that regulates the city streets. The very identity of “streetwalker” has long been attached to a gendered, pejorative connotation—namely, a prostitute who solicits customers on the streets. However, as Buck-Morss writes, “In commodity society all of us are prostitutes, selling ourselves to strangers; all of us are collectors of things” 104). To bring these inequalities in the positioning of male and female in public is essential as is the reorientation of the idea of streetwalking as a fundamental citizen’s right.

Like Buck-Morss, Elizabeth Wilson, in her book *The Contradictions of Culture* (2000), reminds readers that it is critical to recognize the limitations imposed on women inhabiting/taking space on the urban street and asserting public identities, but to deny the material history of women’s presence on the street and their participation in the tradition of city walking, as the sociological literature dedicated to the flâneur has done, is theoretically and practically unproductive. Indeed, the fashion scholarship advanced by Wilson (*Adorned*, 179-180), Buck-Morss (*Dialectics*, 97-99), Joanne Entwistle (*Fashioned Body*, 120) and Ulrich Lehmann (20-21) has established the strong connection between the identity construction of the flâneur and the metropolis’ forces and limitations in shaping fashion aesthetics. Wilson writes in

her book *Adorned in Dreams: Fashion and Modernity* (1985): “Modern fashion plays endlessly with the distinction between masculinity and femininity. With it we express our shifting ideas about what masculinity and femininity are. Fashion permits us to flirt with transvestism, precisely to divest it of all its danger and power” (122). Since the *fin-de-siècle*, fashion has been marked by the ready-to-wear industry thanks to capitalist mass production. In *Couture Culture: A Study in Modern Art and Culture* (2003), art historian Nancy J. Troy writes: “by the late nineteenth century clothing was losing its ability to provide a readily available guide to rank or social standing; therefore, it became correspondingly difficult for urban dwellers to secure their respectability in the public sphere” (13). Indeed, compared to the *haute couture*, which creates exclusive custom-fitted clothing, the ready-to-wear culture has democratized the fashion aesthetics and made fashionable garments more accessible through the rise of department stores.

Nevertheless, mass-market fashion also enabled a chic culture to celebrate urban capitalism and commodity consumerism, which particularly subjugates women. Or as Wilson puts it in *Adorned in Dreams*: mass-market fashions are “merely the uniforms of a society in which democracy is just a buzz word, and serve only to mask gross inequalities of wealth and opportunity” (178). Against this historical backdrop of the fashion industry, some women artists reclaimed their artistic autonomy and agency through creating or renovating fashion aesthetics. They performed a dissidence towards “the uniforms of a society,” practicing what Wilson calls an “oppositional style” which is “hostile to the conformist majority” (184). This “oppositional style” precisely has great relevance in my analysis of both the Baroness and Stettheimer. Within the paradigm of the *flânerie*, their respective case studies, as I argue below, address how the flâneuse negotiates her own identity in public through sartorial innovation and artistic bravura. Where Stettheimer overperforms the feminine, as we shall see, the Baroness takes a radical turn

in self-fashioning her queer identity. Together, this pairing provides a case for the diversity of women's city walking through their creative and artistic expressions to challenge a male concept of the flâneur.

The Self-fashioned Flâneuse: Baroness Elsa von Freytag-Loringhoven

Elsa von Freytag-Loringhoven (née Elsa Plötz) adopted the Baroness title from her third husband, Baron Leopold von Freytag-Loringhoven. Even after they separated, she performed herself as the Baroness, as she was known in Greenwich Village from 1915 to 1923. During her life, she was notorious among avant-garde painters, poets, and editors, but was quickly forgotten after she died at the age of 52 in Paris, and was long missing from the modernist and avantgarde scholarship. However, this has recently changed, and scholarship since 2000 has established her radicalizing agency as a site of social and aesthetic engagement that adopts an antagonistic stance against the industrialization and mass consumerism in the early twentieth century. In her book *Baroness Elsa: Gender, Dada and Everyday Modernity* (2002), Irene Gammel makes a case for considering the Baroness' work as performance art, arguing that Freytag-Loringhoven deliberately crafted her body to artistic effects. With wearable sculpture, made from objects found or recycled, she confronted her street audience in often controversial self-performances that make her both part of the New York avant-garde but also an outcast of it (160).² Using Michel de Certeau's notion of "practicing space," art theorist and historian Amelia Jones has

² Gammel makes a case that Freytag-Loringhoven may have been involved in Marcel Duchamp's *Fountain* (1917)—the most notorious readymade in twentieth-century Western art history. She bases this case on the evidence of Duchamp's 1917 correspondence with his sister, indicating that a female friend was involved, the friendship and artistic collaboration between Duchamp and the Baroness as European expatriates in New York, and the stylistic parallels between *Fountain* and her collaborative (with Morton Schamberg) plumbing sculpture *God* (1917). However, Gammel carefully refrains from making a reattribution, focussing instead on the collaborative dimensions of the *Fountain*. Since then, others have used her evidence to argue for a reattribution, creating controversy. For more, see Gammel, *Baroness Elsa*, 223-228, 340.

argued that the Baroness' streetwalking represents a rhetoric, through which the Baroness recasts the typography and aesthetical experience of the metropolis as an urban wanderer.³ De Certeau's idea about walking as a form of art allows Jones to consider the Baroness' creative works and bodily performance a way of being against modern rationalism and materialism in the modernist period. She suggests further that the Baroness' practices of art and performance constitute what Jones terms "irrational modernism," as the artist "perfected a rhetoric of walking" on New York City streets as a way of acting out (201). Even though Jones' recognition of the Freytag-Loringhoven's street-walking aesthetic is a helpful springboard for my own argument, I critically question the focus on irrationality as a tactic to break new artistic boundaries and open a new space for artistic expression within the context of western modernity. Consequently, I both extend Jones' argument but also depart from it. I argue that the Baroness went beyond re-conceptualizing the female experience through a male concept (namely, the *flâneur*). As I document, the Baroness strolled through the New York streets on foot as the *flâneur* did in Paris, but her New York promenade does not reproduce or imitate the *flâneur*'s self-contradictory way of being in the modern crowd as a mere observer or a passive consumer. Instead, the Baroness, as a self-fashioned *flâneuse*, unleashed her aesthetics of resistance against the hegemonic cityscape defined by masculine and consumerist principles. In this, her innovative engagement of

³ Amelia Jones had developed a model of urban wandering to conceptualize the irrationality lurking underneath modernism's rationality. To do so, Jones uses as her case study of Elsa von Freytag-Loringhoven as an urban wanderer. Drawing also on Lefebvre, Jones argues, the Baroness de-abstracts and re-appropriates the urban space by her radical and outrageous presence on the streets "to stage her 'everyday' practice of an irrational subjective intervention into the rationalized spaces of modernity" (200-201). By contrast, as I argue, the Baroness' practice of street walking not only critiques the historically denied women's walking in public but also yields a reconsideration of women's relationship with the modern city through her radical aesthetics. Here, to build on Jones' argument of the Baroness as an urban wanderer through her body her street performance, I am more interested in her self-fashioned agency through fashion and poetic narratives as a *flâneuse* to revolt against a male concept and reconstruct the experience of urban street.

textiles and fashion with the street as a public art performance space was truly ground-breaking, and that intersection of radical fashion aesthetic and walking remains to be discussed.

A living legend in Greenwich Village, the Baroness shocked her fellow New Yorkers through her eccentric use of fashion and body performance. She was often in public space with unconventional, self-made fashion creations, including homemade trousers “with pictures and ornaments on them” as Berenice Abbott recalled years later (qtd. in Gammel, *Baroness Elsa*, 394). She walked up and down Fifth Avenue with her five dogs on a gilded leash. During her visit to the offices of the *Little Review*, as Margaret Anderson reports, she wore yellow powder and black lipstick on her face. On another occasion, she wore ice cream spoon as earrings and a jacket made from mixed fabrics and colours. More than mere shenanigans, these expressions were part of what she considered her art—her outspoken desire to create beauty from the refuse of the city.

In a 1915 photograph (fig. 3.1), posing for a news agency, the Baroness expresses her remarkable avantgarde aesthetic in self-costuming, wearing a self-made tank top in a deconstructed style with different patterned fabrics and decorative objects. It is a typical Dada assemblage from miscellaneous objects.⁴ Wearing this undergarment directly attached to her skin as an outerwear was unconventional for the era. Even in the early twentieth century, as cultural historian Michel Pastoureau writes, “western sensibility had no tolerance for clothes and fabrics that touched the body directly being any colour but white or ecru” (64). By blurring the boundary of the skin and clothes, the Baroness’ execution of this garment, its design and use as public attire, evokes women’s eroticism as a protest against the Victorian suppressed sexuality.

⁴ Formally, Dada art was anarchic, using copy and paste techniques, found objects, readymades, collages and assemblages to strike against traditional art. For more, see Francis M. Naumann, *New York Dada, 1915-1923*; Jones, *Irrational Modernism*; Gammel, *Baroness Elsa*.

Historically, sleeveless shirts were used as men's sportswear especially in track and field. The Baroness' fashion evokes the gendered concerns revolving around women's participatory role in public space and events. Revivified in 1894, the Olympic Games were reserved for male athletes only. Even though women were admitted by 1900, they had not been allowed to participate in the showpiece events of track and field as female athletes were associated with the stereotypes of femininity and fragility compared to their male counterparts. However, the Baroness declares a new way of wearing a tank top as a fashion statement against the mainstream dress code and against the gender segregation in public culture, such as sports events.

While mainstream fashion pressured women into shaving their armpits (as seen in popular media campaigns about the removal of underarm hair in the early 1900s), the Baroness unapologetically shows her armpits while wearing a self-made tank top in the manner of a male athlete, exposing bare arms and torso like a flying bird with autonomy and freedom. Further, her headwear is made from a tightly fitted cap with strap similar to the rubber swimming and divers caps advertised by 1922.⁵ She had adorned this cap with a disproportionally long bird feather. Gammel has suggested that her headwear in this photograph may be an aviator hat created in response to the 1915 bombing of Britain by German zeppelins (*Baroness Elsa*, 166). Gammel's reading demonstrates the Baroness' political engagement with the WWI through her fashion aesthetic; I suggest that the Baroness deliberately creates a pastiche of an aviator hat by using a swimming cap to expose gendered imbalance in both the sports and the aviation industries.⁶ With such a self-costuming imbued with a considerably individualist and expressive statement, the Baroness performs her androgynous body as a feminist quest for gender equality and justice.

⁵ See, for example, Carson Pirie Scott & Co, "Just-Rite Caps—Plain and Fancy Divers," 1922.

⁶ The first female pilot was Amelia Mary Earhart who fled across the Atlantic Ocean in 1928, one year after the death of the Baroness.

Although women started wearing pant-like garments while playing sports in the nineteenth century, trousers were an unacceptable everyday attire for women until the mid-twentieth century. In the photograph, the Baroness wears a pair of self-made trousers, whose erotic skin-tight breeches echo the self-loving urban dandy who pursues beauty as a lifestyle. Subversively, the Baroness adopts a masculine aesthetic to claim women's agency in both recasting and revolting against such a male concept. Through her radical Dada attire, she queers the garments that are culturally and historically associated with men and adds her own creativity in elevating the avant-garde novelty to refashion the look and style that posit an irony about the gendered division of living in the city. And she does it in an open and unapologetic way: the high contrast zebra pattern and the little bells attached to the bottom of her trousers—visually and sonically—announce her presence while she moves her body or moves around the city.⁷ The lace-up beach shoes put her firmly on the ground.

The Baroness' self-costuming was anti-bourgeois, epitomizing the cultural upheaval and Dada critique of the mainstream fashion industry, the urban chic aesthetic, and the standardized beauty for women in the early twentieth century. Her deliberate self-presentation in dressing and performance develops an oppositional style that takes appearance beyond the chic culture as urban normality. Indeed, the Baroness dramatized her own body in a bravura fashion style that was an anti-fashion. She created a visual sensation in the ordinary city life; she worked to stand

⁷ The Baroness' self-made attire evokes elements of African culture. Jones writes: "The artist who fetishizes a 'primitive' culture does so in order simultaneously to borrow from its supposedly freeing cultural difference and to suppress the terrifying effects of such difference; the Baroness, conversely, provides an opening into ethnic, sexual, and class otherness (albeit of a still European variety), pointing to the limits of the rationalizing strategies of a male-dominated avant-garde whose whiteness yearns to be ethnicity-free in its global dominance" (24). Nevertheless, the Baroness is a complicated case study from the perspective of social justice as she was, on one hand, a feminist advocate for gender equality and social class fairness, but on the other hand, her Dada expressions which were always extreme included anti-Semitic expressions (Gammel 298, 308-309; Jones 24, 250-251).

out in the modern crowd and make her own bodily statements from the margins of the cityscape,⁸ subverting gendered and sexual stereotypes through non-conforming fashion creations and corporal performance. As illustrated by the photograph above, a do-it-yourself (DIY) method underpinned her fashion creations (and poetry writing below) as a self-sustaining counterculture to industrial mass production; and this DIY ethic and aesthetic later became largely adopted by the punk subculture in the middle twentieth century.⁹

Nevertheless, more than just countercultural, her oppositional style creates its own avant-garde aesthetics, as the Baroness took her self-costuming into the public space. Fashion was her everyday practice of Dada when she promenaded in New York City. She wore Dada readymades, such as a lit birthday cake atop her head, or a halo of dangling spoons. During the summer, she also donned a birdcage necklace, complete with a live canary (Reilly 26; Goody “‘Consider Your Grandmothers’,” 48); in more inclement weather, she preferred the lid of a coal scuttle, as reported by Alex Goody (*Modernist Articulations*, 115), strapped under her chin like a helmet. Her friend Berenice Abbott, a modernist photographer, recalls: “She invented and introduced trousers with pictures and ornaments painted on them.... Elsa possessed a wonderful figure, statuesque and boyishly lean. I remember her wonderful stride, as she walks up the street toward my house” (qtd. in Gammel’s *Baroness Elsa*, 394; ellipsis added). The Baroness saw the streets as a quasi-battlefield in her defiance of the urban establishments; her body was often ornamented with objects—refuse, in particular—that were decontextualized from their proper places or stripped from their proper usages. With an unpredictable relationship to the

⁸ The Baroness’ method of dealing with urban modernity did not confirm what Georg Simmel proposed that city dwellers individually negotiate the balance between “stand out” and “merge in.”

⁹ While there is a paucity in scholarship focussing on the Baroness’ influence on the punk movement, the case of the Baroness’ fashion aesthetic provides a groundwork for the ideas that were pervasive in the punk counterculture, including the DIY ethic and aesthetic, gender and social non-conformity, anti-authoritarianism, and anti-consumerism that we can observe from the Baroness’ self-costuming and poetry writing.

commodities and other industrial products that were produced, consumed, and ultimately discarded, the Baroness positioned her self-fashioned body as porous to the discourse of the industrial city, whose regulatory laws and sanitized narratives constitute the standardized and uniformed body that she detested.

The Baroness walked on the streets, wearing her self-made garments and performing her accessorized body as the self-fashioned identity. She created Dada shock—or rather, she herself embodied the shock—in the modern urban environment. She refused to be embarrassed; she transformed the bodily, the wearable, and the visceral into the political in an unforgettable urban practice. Gammel writes: “Her outrageous consumes made her a New York landmark at subway stations, in public offices, in museums, at exhibitions, in department stores, and on the major thoroughfares” (*Baroness Elsa*, 183). The artist’s radical walking in public space implies an act of resistance to the dominant urban ethic and aesthetic as well as capitalist cityscape, in which mainstream chic fashion is the sole calibre for modernity’s proper subject on the streets. She rag-picked rubbish and abandoned objects on the streets and transformed them into accessories. Such unorthodox fashion consciousness—contrasting the urban chic that caters to industrial rationality and normative women’s elegance—expresses a rebellious taste that evokes the bohemian style, as discussed by Elizabeth Wilson in her essay “Bohemian Dress and The Heroism of Everyday Life.” Wilson describes the bohemian style as a subculture that used a “theatrical attitude” to critique inauthenticity, arguing that the bohemian dress demonstrates the artistic wearer’s “inner authenticity and theatrical display simultaneously.” She writes:

To be a bohemian was to find an aesthetic expression for a sincerely felt alienation from the world of industrial capitalism; but that did not prevent the role from being a performance on the urban stage. This accounts for the

ambivalence of the bohemians and equally of the attitude of their audience

towards them: they made of authenticity itself a performance and a pose. (239)

Attired in bohemian garments on her urban wanderings, the Baroness not only shocked her Dada companions, but also extended her eccentric presence into New York City. Thus, the Baroness' anti-chic fashion—highly expressive, spontaneous and individualistic—is the costuming of alienation, deviancy and rebellion through oppositional styles.

For the Baroness, the city was both a capitalist wasteland, alienating and isolating, as well as an artistic cradle, aspiring and inspiring. Like the poet Charles Baudelaire, who both enjoyed and denounced the modern city, she looked for inspirations on the commercial streets. Buck-Morss writes that in modern fashion, “the phantasmagoria of commodities presses closest to the skin” (*Dialects*, 97). The Baroness intellectually mocked consumer culture by playfully converting commodity wastes into bodily products, on one occasion transforming tomato cans into bra. In doing so, her anti-chic Dada compellingly defied the “phantasmagoria” in capitalist consumer culture. In this her practice of anti-chic Dada intensely configured a corporal resistance towards the cityscape that excluded women's bodies and participation.¹⁰ Adopting Donna Haraway's feminist model of the cyborg in relation to western modernity, Goody explores the Baroness' artistic practices through a techno-feminist perspective, arguing that the Baroness assembled the “technological detritus of the New York street” (*Modernist Articulations*, 92). In her *Manifesto for Cyborgs*, Haraway asks a rhetorical question: “Why should our bodies end at the skin, or include at best other beings encapsulated by skin?” (220). Indeed, the Baroness offers a strong case about what Haraway calls “cyborg unities”, which are “monstrous and

¹⁰ In her book, *Feminist City: Claiming Space in a Man-Made World* (2020), feminist geographer Leslie Kern has argued that the Industrial Revolution and the Victorian social norms have largely shaped the western cities in favour of men's body by excluding women's body. She writes: “women's bodies are still often seen as the source or sign of urban problems” (5).

illegitimate,” present “a crisis in political identity,” and offer a “hybrid oppositional identity” (196-197). In the Village, she carried a symbol of the male sexual organ—the “plaster cast of a penis,” as Djuna Barnes reports about the Baroness (qtd. in Goody *Modernist Articulations*, 93);¹¹ as a biomechatronic body part made of the material that is used in both building construction and art marking, the plaster cast penis showcase a mobilized, androgynous body, which ultimately queers the cityscape under capitalist modernity and disputes the notion of sexual identity as a regulatory practice for one’s body.

The skylines of the early twentieth century American metropolis, particularly of Chicago and New York City, exhibited the construction of skyscrapers. In New York City, iconic high-rise buildings incorporated the architectural phallic symbol—for example, the Singer Building, completed in 1908, the Metropolitan Life Tower in 1909, and the Woolworth Building in 1913; the ostentatious verticality of the design is also representative of political and economic capital. Those titanic skyscrapers beckon the ideologies of male supremacy as well as economic and political titans (as seen even in the title of Theodore Dreiser’s 1914 novel *The Titan*, a fictionalized portrait of ruthless streetcar developer Charles Yerkes). The phallic shape of architectural (re-)production in the city, as Henri Lefebvre argues in *The Production of Space*, “symbolizes force, male fertility, masculine violence” (187). The verticality of the building contour entails the visibility and celebration of the phallus as a symbol in the metropolis, whereas the female counterpart’s sexual organs remain hidden, unseen and profoundly suppressed, reduced to pure functionality in the domestic space: the reproduction of the species. Thus, the modernist city, on both ideological and structural levels, is a masculine space, where

¹¹ Likewise, Eliza Jane Reilly writes: the Baroness “walked the streets of the Village wearing nothing but an Indian blanket, a gesture that often resulted in her arrest, and carried a plaster cast of a penis with which to shock “old maids” that she encountered (26).

power is enacted, as well as displayed and commemorated in architectural symbols.¹² The Baroness defies this design of urban space—or the masculine subjectivity in architectural representation; and she used her creative and intellectual outputs as well as corporal performances, especially fashion and walking, to reconfigure and reimagine the cityscape on the street level. As the phallic design abstracts the idea of male domination in the city, the Baroness’ penis tool not only de-masculinized the space with a self-fashioned androgynous identity, but also queered the street experience. In this way, her case provides alternative ways of navigating and interacting with her environment, aesthetically and politically. Therefore, her street walking is a phenomenal enabler, which is a reliable practice of aesthetic disruption, condemning the alienation of urban normalcy and ultimately redefining the process of subjectification in the metropolis.

As a phallic assemblage sculpture, *Limbswish* (fig. 3.2) is made from metal spring and curtain tassel (later wire-mounted on a wood block); and it is a sartorial ornament that the Baroness attached it to her hip belt when she promenaded on New York streets (Gammel, *Baroness Elsa*, 190). However, unlike the skyscrapers made from concrete, which are firm, hard, and masculine, this kinetic object consists of domestic materials and destabilizes its own shape with physical movements, an extended body which consistently deconstructed its own contour. She titivated her own body to invite the fellow pedestrians “to decipher its kinesthetic symbols and read the corporeal story of perpetual movement” (Gammel *Baroness Elsa*, 190). I suggest further that the Baroness’ performed body, enabled by the act of walking, lampoons the instability of the power afforded by gender inequality, political establishment, and economic

¹² For more on this topic, see Dolores Hayden and Gwendolyn Wright who argue that the phallic form of buildings, as an oppressive design to women, derives from the history architecture which has been “traditionally a gentleman’s profession” (923).

force; moreover, *Limbswish* enacts a Dada critique of modern consumerism, in which women are passively subjected to the exploitation of commodity culture and sexualized labour. The sculpture presents a Dada appropriation of mass-produced objects through her assemblage, which is turned into an ornamental aesthetic object to revolt against gender conventions in New York's consumer culture. The practice of walking, thus, galvanizes the corporal movement to re-create the imagination of cityscape, recast the communication between modern pedestrians (and their gazes) in public space, and render a political possibility to problematize the masculine cityscape through an androgynous body against phallic architecture.¹³

Likewise, her found object titled *Cathedral* (circa 1918; fig. 3.3) strategically challenges the vertical architecture design in a soulless industrial city made of concrete and glass. *Cathedral* is made of a piece of irregular, fractured wood mounted on another piece of a rectangular piece of raw wood—a combination of organic material and industrial refuse. The material demonstrates the Baroness' commitment to Dada style, which recycles weathered materials, giving them a second, and radically new life. In one of her poems, titled under the same name "Cathedral" (1920), the speaker says: "mine gothic cathedrál – is that upbuild in vain" (61). The title of both the sculpture and the poem, *Cathedral*, openly suggests its counter position of the Woolworth Building in Manhattan (finished in 1912). Since the building's design resonates with European Gothic cathedrals, it was famously called the Cathedral of Commerce by clergyman S. Parkes Cadman.¹⁴ Thus, alongside *Limbswish*, *Cathedral* provides an ecocriticism of the

¹³ Gammel, *Baroness Elsa*, pp. 188-189 and subsequently Jones, *Irrational*, pp. 198-228, have both pointed out that *Limbswish* is also an artistic product of the Baroness' revolt against the masculine circle of Dada movement. Thus, her performed body with this kinetic object countered the gender norms of male homosocial community of modernist artists.

¹⁴ Philip Sutton details the history of the building and its role in shaping the development of cityscape in his article "The Woolworth Building: The Cathedral of Commerce" on the website of New York Public Library. <https://www.nypl.org/blog/2013/04/22/woolworth-building-cathedral-commerce>

modernist city that honours phallus-shaped high-rises and the power of commerce. By framing the idea of metropolis within a vertical shape (which phallic architecture represents) but rejecting refined materials from modern industrial invention (e.g., concretes and glasses), *Cathedral* imparts an androgynous account on urban imagery by subverting the prefabricated understanding of the aesthetic experience in the city.

Through her objects, *Limbswish* and *Cathedral*, the Baroness presents a street level view of the city as a flâneuse contemplates the changing dynamics of the landscape coded by urban capitalism. However, the Baroness stages the city that is less the shimmering metropolis of the modernist urban imaginary than brick-and-mortar wilderness which contrasts with Florine Stettheimer's creative works below. *Limbswish* and *Cathedral* emblemize the Baroness' critique of the myth of commodity culture but also point out the gender segregation in the modernist city.

In her 1921 prose poem "The Modest Woman," the Baroness composes a manifesto for modern female sexuality by personifying herself (or the speaker of the prose poem) as an elite woman, contrasting with her own poverty and fringe status. As a European expatriate, she presents herself as an alternative to American materialism, sarcastically attacking consumer vanity and hegemonic sexual mores. She writes:

Your skirts are too long — out of 'modesty,' not decoration
— when you lift them you do not do it elegantly — proudly.

Why should I — proud engineer — be ashamed of my
machinery — part of it?

Is there any engineer of settle machinery who is? unless he
runs ramshackle one?

The strong she works – the prouder he is! (286)

The Baroness uses the “machinery” as a symbol for the female sexual organs and declares herself as a “proud engineer” in a gesture to emancipate women’s sexuality and sexual pleasure hampered by boundaries and expectations of gender norms. Her view of sexual liberation affronts the mainstream American society; but she allies herself with James Joyce, a fellow European writer whom she describes in the poem: “Joyce is engineer! one of the boldest—most adventurous—” (286). The reference to Joyce is particularly interesting as his *Ulysses* series on *The Little Review* was censored by the U.S. Post Office for its obscene material and the Baroness’s manifesto was published as a defiant and provocative defense of Joyce, openly applauding Joyce’s evocations of Leopold Bloom’s erotic onanism and sexual fantasy. That same year, in 1921, the magazine’s founders Margaret Anderson and Jane Heap went to the obscenity trial over *Ulysses*’ content.¹⁵ As Gammel reports, the Baroness goes beyond Joyce’s metaphorical language through a confrontational feminist request to dismantle the regulative matters of moral law that controls and reigns the gendered body and sexual identity. As a radical flâneuse, who refashions the experience of urban streets through her public promenades, the Baroness uses the poetic narrative as a discursive performance, enabling an observance to a rigid structure of operating but also a strong force of resisting in the modernist city.

Likewise, as an experimental poet, the Baroness has her poetic speaker scavenge and rag-pick on New York streets to assemble a novel image of and feeling about the city. In the 1920 poem, “Appalling Heart,” she writes:

¹⁵ On October 4th, 1920, Anderson and Heap were arrested and charged with obscenity for publishing Joyce’s “Nausicaa” episode in *The Little Review* (April 1920 issue). The trial started in February 1921 and resulted in the editors’ conviction and the halting of their serialization of *Ulysses*.

City stir – wind on eardrum –

dancewind: herbstained –

flowerstained – skilken – rustling –

tripping – swishing – frolicking – / courtesing – careening – brushing – / flowing – lying

down – bending – / teasing – kissing: treearms – grass – / limbs – lips. / City stir on
eardrum –.

In night lonely

peers –:

moon – riding!

pale – with beauty aghast –

too exalted to share!

in space blue – rides she away from mine chest –

illuminated strangely –

appalling sister!

Herbstained – flowerstained –

shellscented – seafaring –

foresthunting – junglewise –

desert gazing – rides heart from chest –

lashing with beauty –

afleet – a

cross chimney –

tinfoil river

to meet

another's dark heart!

Bless mine feet!

(103 – 104).

In the poem, the Baroness adopts the mode of assemblage, collecting elements from the streets to conceive her experimental poetic form. Blending the city views, sounds, and other sensational experiences, the poem creates a fast-paced city song, urging readers to pass quickly and glimpse what is in front of them. Whereas the Baroness' art making was unconventional and eccentric in the manner of many Dada works, her poetry writing negated the specificity and created meanings from her assemblage method. In other words, she personifies a poetic ragpicker who hunts the fragments on the public streets in order to lump together a poetic city as a body of resistance, which critiques the urban space where the fragments come from. Whereas her fashion refuses to accept normative standards of beauty and sexuality, her poem further underscores the body as an expressive and disruptive force through urban mobility.

Importantly, in "Appalling Heart" the image of the city is invested with a grotesque body animating the city's body. From "eardrum" to "limbs – lips," the city personifies human agency with action verbs used as participles: "tripping – swishing – frolicking – / courtesing – careening – brushing – / flowing – lying down –." As the last line – "Bless mine feet!"— suggests, her expedition is a walking experience, an embodied account of the city through the speaker's sensory engagement with the environment. Here, the city is the body with limbs to be gazed upon and represents the multisensory perception of the speaker, such as the sound of the night

wind and Hudson River (“tin foil river”) as well as the colours of the moon and the sky. Taking an eco-poetical approach, Irene Gammel and John Wrighton have argue that this poem provides “an embodied transcultural interzone,” and “disrupts conventional paradigms of the city by articulating instead a space of bodily and perceptual immersion” (800). Indeed, this approach corroborates my argument that “Appalling Heart” emphasizes the interplay between the self-fashioned body and the urban space, which the poet reshapes with a focus on sensory experience through city walking. As a poet, she breaks the boundaries between the city and nature through the flâneuse’s experience, claiming membership of the city space as a non-conforming subject.

The Baroness also used punctuation in a creative way that is tied to her city walking as a cultural practice. In her multimodal artmaking, punctuation shapes both textual and visual meanings, contributing to the architectural space of the poetic form, emphasizing the poem’s spatial dimension and the materiality of language. She repeatedly used dashes throughout the poem, creating both a fragmentary and sonic feeling, engendering a scene of walking on the streets and picking up various industrial materials and sensory cues closely assembled in the city. In her New York poems, the speaker typically moves through the city on foot, observing the objects, scenes and people, which she creatively clusters together on the streets. She also instils her inner thoughts—or more specifically, her Dada criticism—into the passionate observations. In “Subjoyride,” the speaker leads the reader on a tour through Manhattan opening their eyes to truly seeing the operations of the commercial world, referencing local signs and elements on the streets as “ready-mades,” as seen in the following excerpt:

Tootsie kisses Marshall’s

Kipperd health affinity

4 out of 5 – after 40 – many

Before your teeth full-o'
 Pep with 10 nuggets products
 Lighted Chiclets wheels and
 Axels – carrying Royal
 Lux Kamel hands off the
 Better Bologna's beauty –
 Get this straight – Wrigley's
 Pinaud's heels for the wise –
 Nothing so Pepsodent – soothing –
 Pussy Willow – kept clean
 With Philadelphia Cream
 Cheese. (*Body Sweats*, 99)

This poem continues with a plethora of visual and textual representations from edible objects ("jam," "Oysterettes," and "pancakes") as well as brand names of consumable products ("Meyer's," "Barbasol," "Rinso," and "VapoRub"), all examples of street advertisements, highlighting the commodity culture that marks the landscape of the urban sprawl. The urban spectacle captures the viewer's attention, drawing attention to the quotidian and trivial objects that are overlooked amid the rush and stir of New York's busy thoroughfares. While the poem randomly records brand names and advertising slogans, it compels a creative connection among them to yield a critique on consumer culture. The Baroness mimics the language of commodities and then (re-)assembles them to enact an unceasing, fast movement across the city through a metaphorical way of riding the subway. The poem moves through those commercial objects quickly to avoid a fixed gaze upon on single object; and the speed of the movement is the

substructure that governs the poem. Even more important to my argument, and what has been entirely overlooked, is that the title of the poem evokes “Joy Riding,”¹⁶ which was coined by a New York judge in 1908 as a novel criminal activity, referring to driving or riding in a stolen car with no specific purpose or goal other than the pleasure of doing so (“To Prison for ‘Joy Riding’”). One assumes that the Baroness interrupted her walk with a quick ride on the subway, the “sub-joyriding” flaunting/flouting her willingness to transgress legal boundaries, highlighting also the fact that the Baroness often attracted the attention of law-enforcement officers and found herself arrested for her strange attire. The Baroness’ free verse recalls the type of modern city that Ignacio Fariás describes “an object which is relentlessly being assembled at concrete sites of urban practice” (2).¹⁷ Through using *flânerie* as an urban and poetic practice, the Baroness takes great care to sketch the changing cityscape in terms of its streets, shops, billboards, and neighbourhoods, frequently allowing the speaker of the poem to step into ironic or satirical commentary about the city’s evolution into its current consumer-driven state.

As a self-fashioned *flâneuse*, the Baroness employs a tactic of disrupting and subverting commodity culture and its mainstream messages in public sphere. Through Dada sculpture and corporal performance, and poetic innovation, she demonstrates her radical reaction against aesthetic and social conformity. In this she uses the objects, language and rhetoric of the ready-mades which are turned into irony or satirical commentary, subversively critiquing the

¹⁶ Other scholars have focused on the poem’s title “Subjoyride” as a reference to the New York City Subway, a new rapid transit system that uniquely marked the metropolitan experience in the early twentieth century. The modern transportation technology accelerated the mobility of crossing the city and changed the viewing experience of the city’s spectacles not only through a fast pace but also by challenging the everyday blasé attitude of living in the city.

¹⁷ The Baroness was part of the free verse movement during the modernist period, alongside other modernist poets, such as William Carlos Williams, Ezra Pound, Mina Loy, and Wallace Stevens, but like Gertrude Stein, she was much more experimental and radical in her poetic expression than her peers. For more see, Gammel and Zelazo, Introduction, *Body Sweats*, pp. 1-40.

mainstream paradigm and commodity culture where the ready-mades originate. The Baroness' critical method is a prototype of *détournement*, a countercultural technique developed by the Letterist International (1952 to 1957) and popularized by the French avant garde artist and theorist group of Situationist International (1957 to 1972). This critical method, which was later used by the punk movement in the 1970s and the culture jamming movement in the 1980s, emphasizes the practice of using the aesthetic of capitalist commodity culture and the expression of the mass media culture against themselves. "Détournement is the flexible language of anti-ideology," Guy Debord writes in his manifesto, *The Society of the Spectacle* (208). The Baroness pioneered such an aesthetic technique to revolt against a system that rigidly governs the modern city life—particularly, women's metropolitan experience.

As the Baroness grapples with both the commodified city and gender segregation, her experimental and multimodal expressions present a distinct historical example of female urban walking to claim women's visible presence and participatory role in public space. This is not to say, however, that only a radical approach can genuinely recast the *flânerie* as a cultural and spatial practice; in fact, the case of Florine Stettheimer presents a more subtle but no less powerful aesthetic tactic reimagine the city as a space where the *flâneuse* moves freely without scrutiny. In contrast to the Baroness' radical affront against the mainstream, Stettheimer embraces—and visually dramatizes—New York's street vibrancy and consumer places as a modern sanctuary where the *flâneuse* asserts her place and pleasures in public.

The Tourist Flâneuse: Florine Stettheimer

On the surface the contrast between the impoverished Baroness and the relatively affluent Florine Stettheimer is enormous. Stettheimer studied art in Europe, and she returned to New

York after the World War I broke out. Where the Baroness was often isolated, and entirely alienated from her bourgeois family in Germany, Stettheimer and her sisters, Ettie and Carrie, hosted exclusive soirées at her homes in the fashionable Upper West Side of New York City.¹⁸ Their salons—by invitations only—were exclusive and private but also dazzling affairs, exquisitely curated and staged. Their invited guests were mostly those who shaped American Modernism in the early twentieth century, including Marcel Duchamp, whom the Baroness also knew well, but also painter Georgia O’Keeffe, photographer Alfred Stieglitz, art collector Leo Stein, music critic Carl Van Vechten, playwright Avery Hopwood, and painter Marsden Hartley, to name a few. Emily Bilski and Emily Braun describe Stettheimer’s salon as a “Throwback to seventieth-century sociability,” explaining: “the Stettheimer salon was an inner sanctum where conversation, rather than art world propaganda or agendas, held sway” (128). These salons have led many scholars to privilege Stettheimer as a predominantly domestic and decorative artist. The scholarly literature links Stettheimer almost entirely to the interior realm, often presenting her as a domestic goddess in the world of modern art.¹⁹ By contrast, my focus is the opposite, as I pursue an underexplored research path in studies on this artist and poet. Explore Stettheimer’s

¹⁸ They lived in two places in New York City: first, in a townhouse at 102 West 76th Street and later in Alwyn Court on West 58th Street. For more, see Bilski and Braun, pp. 126-137; see also Gammel and Zelazo’s volume of essays, *Florine Stettheimer: New Directions in Multimodal Modernism* (2019), highlighting the very multimodality emanating from this salon space which encourage Florine Stettheimer’s practice of painting, poetry, set design.

¹⁹ Art historians such as Linda Nochlin, Heather Hole, and Cecile Whiting have all pointed out that Stettheimer’s domestic aesthetics have occupied a unique spot in understanding female artists and their works in the male-dominant avantgarde circle in the first half of the twentieth century. In their study of Jewish women’s salon culture, Emily D. Bilski and Emily Braun conceptualize the sociability taking place in Stettheimer’s salon decorated with her paintings (including her nude *Self-Portrait*), where guests engaged in intellectual exchange about poetry and visual art. “Throwback to seventieth-century sociability,” as they write, “the Stettheimer salon was an inner sanctum where conversation, rather than art world propaganda or agendas, held sway” (128). In their literary criticism on Stettheimer’s visual poetics, Irene Gammel and Suzanne Zelazo argue that her unique poetic aesthetic, inspired by and reflected in her domestic art, is “an ocean of cellophane, of diaphanous whims and magic, crinkling and sparkling in the lightness of its being” (20).

artistic focus at street level—through the lens of urban walking as a cultural practice—I redirect the scholarly focus on her engagement with the city and its streets.

Indeed, in her late work painted during the 1930s and 1940s, extravagant street scenes prevail.

These paintings illustrating that Stettheimer had developed a keen eye for and interest in the street crowd, constructing urban spectacles through her painted work. Her street scenes celebrate the cultural and spatial practice of *flânerie* to both encourage and parody distinctive forms of urban consumption and streetwalking. Her self-awareness in claiming *flânerie* is evident in the excerpt from the second epigraph above, where she writes in a poem about her stay in Paris:

“Paris—Living in the Latin Quarter/ And *flanéing* in the Bois” (128; italics added). Where the Baroness contests the aesthetic normality through a confrontational approach, Stettheimer, in a more subtle way, asserts the *flâneuse*’s experiential subjectivity and turns the city into an aesthetic experiment. In doing so, the artist (en)genders a feminized city through the experience of the *flâneuse*, thereby (like the Baroness) defying a long tradition in western culture that has gendered urban walking as a masculine enterprise. Like the Baroness, Stettheimer articulates women’s presence and participatory roles in the modernist city, enabling the reconstruction and re-imagination of urban subjectivity on the streets. And yet, there is an important difference in the way in which both women configure female interaction with the street, in that Stettheimer, as I argue, reappropriates the *flâneur*’s tourist gaze.

Consider Stettheimer’s 1921 oil painting *Spring Sale at Bendel’s* (fig. 3.4), which transports viewers to New York’s most upscale fashion house on Fifth Avenue. Henri Bendel was the first American retailer to sell Coco Chanel and other European designer brands in the early twentieth century, and where during the 1960s, Andy Warhol, who claimed that Florine Stettheimer was his “favorite artist” (qtd. in Lancaster, 200), was an in-house illustrator. By the

early 1920s, Bendel's diversified its business by incorporating read-to-wear fashion and seasonal discount sales in addition to its couture collections. Stettheimer limns this diversity of shoppers and shopping behaviours in the painting, organizing the commercial space in relation to social class and gender. As a quasi-public space, the store served as a safe and protected site for women to meander and shop. In this painting, all shoppers are women, dressed in stylish garments, displaying their bodies in front of mirrors, and more hilariously, fighting over discounted merchandise. Stettheimer subverts the social stereotype of women as irrational customers and reveals shopping to be a carnival, with crowds of women engaged with colourful fabric and with each other; standing at proximity, many of them look as if they might be dancing. Meanwhile, some wealthy customers, like Stettheimer herself, pay more attention to the designer collection. Despite the differences in shopping behaviours and purchasing power, Stettheimer paints a convivial environment where all women have the freedom to move around and more importantly can embrace their femininity without public scrutiny.

Stettheimer's flâneuse evokes urban sociologist Rob Shields' description of shopping mall visitors, when he writes: "Their wandering footsteps, the modes of their crowd practice constitute that certain urban ambiance: a continuous reassertion of the rights and freedoms of the marketplace, the *communitas* of the carnival" (161; italic in the original). *Spring Sale at Bendel's* draws attention to women's moving legs, as the women are seen striding, stepping, hopping, stretching, and bounding; even the legs of women sitting down and lounging are dramatically angled and in movement. Mimicking the shoppers, the viewer's gaze also meanders from group to group and the painting itself invites the viewer's strolling observation that propels the mobilized gaze through these shoppers. Of course, the carnival itself conveys a temporary

freedom for the flâneuse since she does not have the same freedom to stroll the streets as her male counterpart, as we shall see below in the *Cathedrals* paintings.

In *Spring Sale at Bendel's*, Stettheimer does not configure the shopper-flâneuse as a passive subject in the capitalist consumption of urban spectacles. Unlike Walter Benjamin's flâneur, who is often window-shopping through commercial areas to fulfil his desire of visual consumption, Stettheimer's flâneuse is a shopper moving freely through the department store and consumes not only the visual elements of the commercial space but also the material commodities—in this case, the colourful fabric and garments. By doing so, Stettheimer exploits the possibilities of the urban space for her own purposes of cultural documentation and social critique. In the process, she contradicts and transforms the learned discourses on urban space, as her painting reclaims women's presence in the public sphere and their roles in generating the urban spectacles through the tourist's gaze.

The new urban landscape and new urban activities that Stettheimer identified in her art also attracted a great many tourists. The early 1920s witnessed New York City as a booming centre for tourism and shopping. For instance, the annual Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade, presented by the department store chain Macy's, started in 1924. The first parade drew over 250,000 people, and the event quickly became a tourist destination (Klein n.p.). Just so, I suggest, Stettheimer's multimodal works render a tourist space, where the flâneuse consciously maneuvers on the mobilized gaze. Urry explains that the tourist gaze is a constellation of expectations inherent in the perspective with which mass tourists view the places that they visit, and in return those sites are converted to cultural commodities for material and visual consumption. He writes: "The [tourist] gaze therefore presupposes a system of social activities and signs which located the particular tourist practices, not in terms of some intrinsic

characteristics, but through the contrasts implied with non-tourist social practices, particularly those based within the home and paid work” (2). In Stettheimer’s creative works, readers and viewers are invited to behold the urban spectacles, such as nighttime entertainment and extravagant street weddings that incorporate everyday urban elements and produce a new visual feast. As a painter and poet focussed on the thematic of walking down the street, Stettheimer intentionally constructs the signs that govern what Urry calls the tourist gaze: assembling her paintings and poems with diverse urban elements like billboards and building signs to compose a vibrant image of the city for visual consumption. The nineteenth century flâneur, whom John Urry describes as the pioneering tourist in the modern city, embodies a male version of urban consumption. Urry argues that the flânerie represents “the emergence of relatively novel modes of visual perception which became part of the modern experience of living and visiting new urban centres, particularly the grand capital cities” (125). Strolling through the city streets aimlessly, the flâneur takes visual possession and experience of the modern city.

In 1929, as America entered the Great Depression, and citizens escaped into the world of movies, sports, and entertainment, Stettheimer painted *The Cathedrals of Broadway* (fig. 3.5), the second painting in her *Cathedrals* series: an elaborate and monumental oil painting, which turns the metropolis into a theatrical stage, an explosive neon-bright world of theatre and entertainment. Compositionally, the work exhibits a parataxis of vignettes that usher the viewer (literally with a uniformed usher pointing the way) past the ticket booth to purchase the entrance ticket into this magical world of escapism. In the lower left corner, Stettheimer herself arrives on the scene with her sister Stella and her nephew Walter Wanger (Whiting 41). As the well-to-do patrons in fashionable clothing, they are enthralled by the riveting spectacle in front of them. The American flags flying high above the glamour of the city, testify to the fact that America’s

economic despair does not penetrate this glittering world of make-believe. The word “SILENCE” spelled out in the immediate foreground carries a double meaning: it connotes both the command to be quiet and to listen to the show that unfolds with the emergence of the new sound films,²⁰ but also, more satirically, the temporary hushing of unemployment, inflation, and inequity in America. Under a tall golden arch, the mayor of New York, James Walker makes a cameo on a billboard, holding a baseball that might double as a Big Apple (the nickname for New York City, popularized by sports journalist and editor John J. Fitz Gerald in the 1920s). During his tenure as the mayor (1926–1932), Walker was known for his flamboyant personality as well as his numerous extramarital affairs and municipal corruptions, which were often headlined in the gossip columns and scandal pages of newspapers; and he was also a frequent patron of Broadway theatre and the upper-scale speakeasy bars. However, the salient photographic realism aesthetic of Walker’s portrait ironically reminds the viewer of his controversial public persona represented on newspapers.

Not only does this painting exemplify Stettheimer’s artistic engagement with Broadway’s new entertainment popular culture and urban politics, but she named this work *The Cathedrals of Broadway*. As media scholar John Fiske writes, “commodities become the icons of worship and rituals of exchanging money for goods become a secular equivalent of holy communion” (306). Indeed, within a decade, Stettheimer created three more paintings depicting New York’s highly commercialized street scenes and urban spectacles, whereby Fifth Avenue, Wall Street, and the Metropolitan Museum of Art create an interconnected series with a focus on the collection of sights. The selected representations are linked, displaying, as Urry says about urban cultural

²⁰ The years between 1894 and 1929 are usually marked as the silent film era; sound films started at the end of 1920s and the beginning of 1930s.

tourism, “a coherent relationship between the built environment and the presumed atmosphere or character of the place being developed for the tourist gaze” (108). Implanting a critical tension through irony and wit, Stettheimer subversively plays with the tourist gaze in each painting by creating a new aperture for visual consumption through her assemblage of different elements in the city. A savvy consumer, Stettheimer gazes upon urban spectacles and remains comfortably distant from them to enable critical observation, just as she typically inserts herself in the corner of her paintings and avoids locating herself as the centrality of the gaze.

In her 1931 *The Cathedrals of Fifth Avenue* (fig. 3.6), she turns her gaze to New York’s high fashion district, observing the carnival of shoppers and visitors amidst a street wedding scene replete with flower girls and photographer. The crowded composition visually performs the paratactic cataloguing of her earlier poems, illuminating her integrative aesthetics: there are shops galore with TIFFANY’s jewelry store spelled out in variegated jewels; ALTMAN’s department store shaped from stylish furniture with an aesthetic of monogrammed linens; and upscale fine-dining restaurant Maillard’s displayed on a delicate glass plate. At the distant lower right corner, her usual space of subversive self-staging, Stettheimer elegantly disembarks a Rolls-Royce accompanied by her two fashionable sisters. The large stylized initials FS of her signature on the car’s front visually doubles as a dollar sign (\$). The Stettheimer logo also uses the same graphic technique of partially overlapping letters as found in the Rolls-Royce’s logo. The irony here points back to Stettheimer herself: her initials ostentatiously demonstrate her wealth and economic advantage. Her choice of the car, a Rolls-Royce, a commodity icon of European luxury, plays with the stereotype of the rich American pervasive among Europeans in the early twentieth century. By doing so, she appropriates commercial signs and status symbols to channel her American identity by openly admitting her socio-economic class. From the visible

American flags to her self-representation in the paintings, Stettheimer depicts the public crowd as a convivial gathering for American-style pageantry and celebrations.

These points are further amplified in her 1939 *The Cathedrals of Wall Street* (fig. 3.7). In this painting, Stettheimer brings a critical tension to the major financial district: on one hand, she suggests the close relationship between politics and business by pairing Franklin D. Roosevelt with financiers such as Bernard Baruch, John D. Rockefeller, and J. P. Morgan (on the facade of the New York Stock Exchange building); on the other hand, the charitable organization of Salvation Army appears in the painting to demonstrate Stettheimer's concern regarding the underbelly of economic and political power, as well as modern consumer culture. Once again, Stettheimer inserts female subjects including herself into the public space—on the lower right corner, she holds a bouquet of colourful flowers with a ribbon saying, “TO GEORGE WASHINGTON FROM FLORINE.” Stettheimer herself was inspired by American independence and admired George Washington as a patriotic hero (Nochlin 312-313).²¹ The year of 1939, when this painting was created, marked the 150th anniversary of Washington's presidency; and in the same year, Washington's presidential inauguration at Federal Hall in New York City was celebrated with a three-cent postage. This timely engagement with political and cultural events not only shows that the flâneuse's mobility in public sphere enables active citizen participation, but also demonstrates her proud nationalist identity as an American.

Through the recurring self-representation in this series, we can see Stettheimer as not simply a figure focussed on domesticity and interiority, but also as a paragon of women occupying public space under the flâneur's guise. Indeed, she seems to insist on the power of being, in the words of Baudelaire, “at the centre of the world, and yet to remain hidden from the

²¹ In this, Stettheimer also contrasted with the Baroness who was opposed to patriotic symbols

world.” (39). Such is precisely the condition of the flâneuse in Stettheimer’s New York City. She is an avid observer of urban life through the gilded streets and theatrical aesthetics of the new city, amidst the visual spectacles of the commodities and cultural activities newly available for mass consumption. By doing so, Stettheimer’s paintings not only suggest the possibility of women’s participatory roles in public life, but also reclaims women’s rights in seeking pleasurable experiences in urban space through the mobilized tourist gaze.

These motifs culminate in the fourth and final Cathedral painting, *The Cathedrals of Art* (fig. 3.8), which she began in 1942 and continued working on until her death in 1944. As the title suggests, this work has a particularly personal resonance for Stettheimer who was then contemplating her legacy as an artist. Here, a central red carpeted grand staircase leads up the Metropolitan Museum of Art, with the Museum of Modern Art on to the upper left, and the Whitney Museum of American Art to the upper right. Stettheimer herself appears on the right in the foreground, underneath an open-air gilded canopy of white lace (recalling the design of her bedroom), holding a bouquet of flowers. Stettheimer inserts her friends from her artistic circle and assigns each figure their associated roles. Art critic Henry McBride is positioned on Stettheimer’s immediate right, holding the signs of GO and STOP—signalling his cultural authority in deciding whose art would be appreciated through his critical eyes and whose art is permitted to enter the museum collections. Well-dressed stage designer Robert Locher stands at the lower left corner. There is a ribbon surrounding him, with an inscription that reads “compère.” Stettheimer places him in the front of the painting, where he acts as the one who introduces the event as a host (literally a *compère*). In this, she hails Locher for his applied and decorative arts since she herself was also keen on decorative and performance arts.

Art museum administrator Juliana Force, then the director of the relatively new and still peripheral Whitney Museum, is positioned at the upper right corner.²² Force was the first female director of major art museums in New York. Stettheimer locates her alone in the distant background and separates her from the crowd, signalling not only Force's profession as an art institution administrator to oversee the grand event but also the palpable scarcity of women's representation and participatory roles in the mainstream art industry. The other two male directors Francis Henry Taylor (the director of the Met) and Alfred H. Barr Jr. (the director of MoMA) are portrayed in relaxed and domestic poses: Taylor holding the hand of a child, leading toward the museum's Old-World art collection (signalled by an Egyptian sculpture and a Frans Hals portrait), and Barr languidly reclines on a modern chaise longue designed by French-Swiss architect and designer Le Corbusier. Stettheimer inscribes her own initials right next to Pablo Picasso's name above Picasso's paintings in the up-left corner. By doing so, Stettheimer suggests the gendered dichotomy of modern art and art making in the mainstream art industry. By aligning herself with Picasso, Stettheimer underscores how significantly female artists lack both public recognition and representation in the collections of major art institutions in New York City. While the parallel, then, explicitly draws attention to the gendered contrast, it is also worth noting that this series of Cathedral paintings is displayed in the Met today, and the painter's work is also being recognized after long being neglected in the modernist canon of art.

As in the other *Cathedrals* paintings, Stettheimer presents a kaleidoscopic assemblage of the urban public space and propels the viewer to become the spectator, gazing upon the

²² The Whitney Museum of American Art was founded in 1931 by art patron and collector Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney, for whom Juliana Force worked as an assistant. Whitney established the Whitney Museum after the Metropolitan Museum of Art declined her donation of over 500 works of American art since both the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the Museum of Modern Art preferred European works instead of American ones. A golden statue of Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney is positioned behind Juliana Force in *The Cathedrals of Art*.

phantasmagorias of streets, art, events, and cultural institutions. Her visual and textual representations contribute to the production of modernist urban spectacles and subjects as well as the consumption of urban space through the tourist gaze. These paintings demonstrate Stettheimer's skillful arrangement of space and her dexterity of creating signs and documenting symbols, intentionally making each street a site for the urban walker's immersive articulation of a spatial rhetoric through engagement with modern consumer culture. The *Cathedrals* paintings reconfigure the sights of urban activities and events, such as weddings, nightlife, entertainment, and shopping, and comically coalesce them into one exaggerated carnivalesque public crowd. Thus, the tone is playfully subversive.

In her *Cathedrals* series, Stettheimer paints vivid images of "America having its fling," as the speaker says in her earlier poem. The aesthetics of the streets in this series resonate with Benjamin's arcade architecture, where "both sides of these passageways, which are lighted from above, are lined with the most elegant shops, so that such an arcade is a city, even a world, in miniature" (*Charles Baudelaire*, 36-37). In turn, this arcade-like architecture, where the flâneuse moves freely, maximizes the potential for cultural and visual consumption. In her *Cathedrals* paintings, Stettheimer uses soft and playful shapes and lines, which characterize the streets and the crowds as welcoming and inclusive spaces and dynamic communities. There are no sharp angles or geometric harsh lines. The streets are depicted as pristine and ornate spaces, which are not only visually pleasing but also are opposed to the reality of modern industrial cities, especially New York City as a chaotic and polluted dystopia during the modernist era. The colour palettes are warm and bright; and all of the figures are willowy and gentle—the aggressive facial expression or cold emotions typically associated with modern urbanites are absent. As exemplified in her *Cathedrals* series, Stettheimer's urban scene possesses a quality

and provision of an American modernist city, where the metropolitan life is embedded in modern consumer culture and urban dwellers mingle in active street life and also join in active citizenship.

Directing its lens on the street scenes in Stettheimer's paintings and poetry, this study has argued for a shift in our approach to Stettheimer's work, which has long fixated on the domestic and yet which must also be examined through the multimodality of public engagement with city life. Art historian Cecile Whiting argues that Stettheimer's street paintings have some aesthetic resonance with her paintings about interior space or ornamental portraits, noting her iconic overtly feminine and domestic style. While it is true that Stettheimer adopts the public crowd and consumerism-saturated streets, transforming them into a familiar community by inserting her family and friends in her paintings, as I have contended, Stettheimer's public sphere is more than the extension of her domestic space. She consciously curates the street scenes that construct the viewers' practice of looking in the form of urban consumption. Indeed, Stettheimer's public space is more than a collection of sensory data derived from the modern city. Her sensory stimulation creates a mobilized tourist gaze, yielding an aesthetically constructed space, the glamorous fantasia of the city in which new experience is celebrated and new memories are created through a multimodal aesthetic.

Stettheimer's paintings yield an important scholarly reconsideration from a focus on Stettheimer's shaping of the domestic interior in art to her dynamic engagement of the cultural, spatial, and visual consumption of the city; in doing so, her work also challenges the status quo of women's presence and participation in the public space under modern urbanism. Stettheimer's flâneuse contemplates the city from a safe and comfortable distance, a distance that encourages her to participate in public cultural life and modern urban consumption—poised elegantly to take

it all in without ever being swallowed by the city. Her ironic distance is key as seen also in her short poem beginning with “All she owned/ Was a white fur coat/ And a white curly pom/ So she stood in the street/ On her velvet silk feet/ And waited for something to come” (50-51). The ambiguous identity of the woman observed standing on the street plays with the multiple roles of the woman standing on the street. Having assembled all of her possessions, she stands at street waiting not for someone, but for “something to come.” This contrasts with the tradition of Stettheimer studies which focus on her intensely private artmaking. She was allured by—and obviously familiar with—the streets as the speaker of her poem puts her own body and possessions in the public space and unapologetically expects the street to offer her “something.” The Baroness also knew about these multiple identities at street level, from performer to ragpicker.

For Stettheimer, in a different way, the distant gaze, an engagement with urban public life through safe tourist space, enables women’s mobility in the city. Stettheimer deployed a more conceptual, but no less sensual, way of aesthetically reconstructing the city to both recreate and challenge the public sphere as a tourist space for women to creatively shape the street and the city. While both artists have been explored under the thematic of the *flâneuse*, they represent vitally idiosyncratic ways of engaging with the street and public urban life. The example of Stettheimer’s work refutes the past critical discussion about the *flâneuse*’s existence, documenting the ways in which she operated on the streets of the modern metropolis, demanding to be seen. These examples document the dynamic and diversified feminine relationship to urban walking.

By contrast, for the Baroness, walking the city became a conscious and necessary choice; a conscious act of self-fashioning or a manifestation of artistic expression of self. Her ambiguity

as living work of art and performing queer aesthetic formulates an anarchist subject who uses and subverts her corporal body as a spectacular revolt. By walking on the streets in New York, she eventually delivers a cultural battle to fight against dominant elitist and masculinist urban aesthetics in the context of New York Dada in the early twentieth century. I argue that the Baroness' performative city wandering enables her body to become a gendered physical configuration that is both astonishing performance and politicized embodiment. Ultimately, her anti-chic maneuvers destabilize the mainstream bourgeois aesthetics of urban modernism.

Here, the city is presented as a collage of consumable parts, from visual feast of sky towers and sport shows, to the cultural appreciation of music and dance, to material consumption of goods in "speakeasy bars and motor cars." The city is perceived as a gestalt, an organized entity that is seen and consumed as more than the sum of its fragmented elements. The speaker lists various new elements of the city and leaves the reader (or the visitor) to choose the most alluring attraction or to consume them all. The speaker's gaze upon the city is thus dispassionate without a fixation.

Finally, the two female artists discussed in this chapter used complementary techniques to refashion female *flânerie* as a cultural practice in New York during the World War I and interwar years: whereas the Baroness adopted a radical approach, projecting her own body into the city's danger zones, Stettheimer proffered an aesthetic project which subversively engages the street and consumer desire through a tourist gaze. They both are keenly aware of consumer projects and their relation to them, the Baroness using the commodity to critique commercial society, and Stettheimer subverts the consumer's gaze to render a women's safe space for promenades. With their distinctive experimental aesthetic, they created art from an outsider's position, shaping aesthetic subjectivity through multimodal experiences to project the

possibilities of aesthetics of resistance in the modernist city. For both artists, to apply the words of Thomas Teo, “Aesthetics becomes a tool for reflection, intuition, and practices of power and resistance” (304). If the flâneur celebrates the autonomy of observing and documenting, the flâneuse, in the cases of the Baroness and Stettheimer, asserts experiential subjectivity and turn the city into an experimental and aesthetic object.

As this chapter, alongside Chapter Two, has demonstrated, the cultural practice of *flânerie* is heterogenous and multitudinous. The walker is by no means a stable generic category. Indeed no one person walks in one manner or path, and no one city affords one kind of walking experience. The next chapter considers urban walking beyond the discussion of the concept of *flânerie*, re-directing the scholarly conversation of urban walking in relation to the temporal dimension (and construction) of the city. It does so in relation to psychological and moral themes, exploring also the grieving and deviant selves of walkers in two semi-autobiographical novels: Djuna Barnes’ *Nightwood* and Jay McInerney’s *Bright Lights, Big City*.

Chapter Four:

Nightwalking: Nocturnal Poetics and Politics of Djuna Barnes' *Nightwood* and Jay McInerney's *Bright Lights, Big City*

Once out in the open Robin walked in a formless meditation, her hands thrust into the sleeves of her coat, directing her steps toward that night life that was a known measure between Nora and the cafes. Her meditations, during this walk, were a part of the pleasure she expected to find when the walk came to an end.
– Djuna Barnes, *Nightwood* (65)

Cities, like cats, will reveal themselves at night.
– Rupert Brooke, *Letters from America* (29)

As the study of urban nightwalking has only recently begun, scholarship has been indebted to the intellectual endeavours of urban geographers as well as social and political thinkers. Henri Lefebvre uses the concept of “night-time spaces” to elaborate on the way in which the temporal shift of the city affords different social norms and controls. Many nocturnal activities, such as prostitution and loitering are usually prohibited during the day but tolerated in the nocturnal city. In *The Production of Space*, Lefebvre writes:

Space is divided up into designated (signified, specialized) areas and into areas that are prohibited (to one group or another). It is further subdivided into spaces for work and spaces for leisure and into daytime and night-time spaces. ... In accordance with this division of urban space, a stark contrast occurs at dusk as

the lights come on in the areas given over to “festivity,” whereas the “business” districts are left empty and dead. Then in a brightly illuminated night the day’s prohibitions give way to profitable pseudo-transgressions. (319-320; ellipsis added)

Lefebvre approaches the urban night from the perspective of space, itself divided and subdivided by social forces and cultural meanings. His nighttime spaces bestow a self-contradictory function: on one hand, permitting what is prohibited during the daytime; on the other, implementing a nighttime economy that thwarts emancipation as only the “profitable” ones that are able to transgress in the capitalist society.

Whereas Lefebvre holds a dialectical view on the nighttime spaces, cultural historian Bryan Palmer sees the nighttime as a genuinely transgressive time and space. In his book *Cultures of Darkness: Night Travels in the Histories of Transgression* (2000), Palmer examines, and historicizes, the cultural significance of nighttime darkness as “the actual and metaphorical place where marginality might best be both lived as an experience and socially constructed as a representation” (6). The darkness offers an asylum for resisting against the glare of modern urbanism and capitalist social forces. Palmer writes: “The night can be grasped historically as both a figment of power’s imaginative fears, a dark designation illuminating the historical traumas of hegemonic regimes, and as an actual place and space in which the ubiquitous contestations of everyday life were fought” (454). Likewise, political scientist Robert Williams writes that “darkness provides various opportunities for transgressions—opportunities not typically available during the daylight hours” (518). He argues that the night is much more than the absence of daylight: nighttime spaces are socially mediated and constructed. Thus, the nighttime city is a complex unit of analysis requiring investigation into how it is produced,

experienced, abstracted, and regulated. While the research on the nighttime city has been fertile in recent years, especially in the social science areas such as geography, sociology, policy studies and urban planning,¹ there is still a scarcity of the studies on humanist experience of urban night as a walker.

In his book, *Nightwalking: A Nocturnal History of London* (2015), literary critic Matthew Beaumont identifies the nightwalker in literary representations from the Middle Age to the Mid-nineteenth Century, surveying works by Blake, Chaucer, Dekker, Dickens, Milton, Poe, Shakespeare, and Wordsworth. Locating historic(al) topographies of London through the practice of nightwalking in literature and legal archives, Beaumont argues that the nightwalker “dramatizes the dialectics of alienation and disalienation, oppression and emancipation, the prosaic and the poetic, at the core of metropolitan modernity” (11). In this sense, walking the nighttime city reveals various subjectivities as the urban night becomes a refuge for the deviant, the forbidden, the criminals, and the excluded in daytime urbanism; and the city reveals its strangeness during the night. Further, the political economy of the urban night makes some people walk the city for professional purposes: police officers, prostitutes, and streetcleaners work for the night economy and often work in groups. By contrast, walking alone unfolds the nocturnal city in a less functionalist or teleological way. “Not all walking at night, then is nightwalking,” as Beaumont writes: “To be alone in the streets at night, even if one walks rapidly, determinedly, is to invite the impression that one is on the run, either from oneself or from another” (6).

¹ In their introduction to the 2005 special issue on the urban night in the journal *Urban Studies*, Ilse van Liempt, Irina van Aalst, and Tim Schwanen have exhaustively listed the studies of urban night and nightlife in the social sciences; for more, see Ilse Van Liempt, Irina van Aalst, and Tim Schwanen, “Introduction: Geographies of the urban night.” *Urban Studies* 52.3 (2005): 407-421.

Consequently, nightwalking is an act of dissidence or a practice of subversion, as seen in the two novels that are the focus of this chapter: Djuna Barnes' *Nightwood* (1936) and Jay McInerney's *Bright Lights, Big City* (1984). Both novels feature protagonists dwelling in the nocturnal cities, who consider the urban night as a refuge for their marginality and/or individual grievance. These novels differ stylistically and geographically. Set in Paris during the 1920s, the story of *Nightwood* unfolds a lyrical, baroque prose, contrasting with the bare, minimalist language of *Bright Lights* set in the 1980s New York. Not only do the characters in both novels spend their time strolling in the nighttime cities, their walking reverberates their inner psyche unfolding the dispossessed urban experience; indeed, some of these fictional walkers experience deep loneliness while others are oppressed by unspeakable grief. By coupling these two very different novels, I also propose to shine the light on two distinct stages of urbanism. Barnes' pre-gentrified nightlife in the post-World-War-I city contrasts with McInerney's gentrified consumer paradise with its alluring promise of individual economic success under a 1980s neoliberal economic agenda. Ultimately, in both novels, the urban night opens up a space for understanding and experiencing the city from a temporal perspective. The night thus illuminates themes of vagabondage, reflectiveness, and an orientation towards the inner world.

Nocturnal Vagrancy: Djuna Barnes' *Nightwood*

Despite the title's focus on the night, the nightly wanderings of Djuna Barnes's novel have remained largely overlooked and underexplored. Critics have placed more emphasis on *Nightwood* as an experimental modernist *roman à clef*, parsing its semi-autobiographical

elements, its language and linguistics, its queered aesthetic, and complex publication history.² Even though there are numerous references to cities such as Munich, Vienna, Budapest, and New York, the novel's true nocturnal focus is Paris, where the night provides an asylum for those whom the daytime city has excluded. The night motif in the novel is explored through a series of bleak and troubling episodes that introduce readers to a spectrum of restless and unsettling characters who are all burdened with personalities that makes them clash with social norms—and suffer as a result. Dr. Matthew O'Connor, the flamboyant, cross-dressing abortionist, suffers from the socially imposed burden of his masculinity. American expatriate Nora Flood, the protagonist from whose perspective the novel unfolds, suffers from the loss of her relationship with Robin Vote, Nora's promiscuous lover who fuels Nora's pain through her nightly escapades, walking the streets of Paris and frequenting the bars.³ Barnes' formulation of the night shapes novel ideas of how the nocturnal city works, with nightwalking evoking an alternative tradition of urban discourse.

The nightwalking in *Nightwood* aesthetically elevates the modernist street by adding a nocturnal dimension to the city, thereby altering the way in which we must approach the city as a unit of analysis. Similar to many characters in modernist urban novels, the origins of Robin remain largely unknown to readers. Throughout the book, we only know that she is an American

² Gammel, *Baroness Elsa*, pp. 193-194; 357-360 reads the novel as an effort to come to terms with Elsa von Freytag-Loringhoven, whose biography Barnes had tried to write but abandoned after several chapters incorporating some of the echoes of the Baroness in *Nightwood*. Jane Marcus has explored the novel's "imagery as a direct descendant of medieval 'grotesque realism'" to render a "feminist critique of Freudian psychoanalysis" (144). Jean Gallagher reads the novel as a literary effort to challenge readers to turn away from the voyeuristic vision in order to approach the ideas of "gendered and sexualized bodies" (280). Although the novel was praised by the likes of T.S. Eliot, Edwin Muir, Dylan Thomas, and Graham Greene, it was a commercial disappointment, and critical appreciation was slow. Barnes herself commented late in life that she was "the most famous unknown of the century" (Barnes, Coleman, and Guirl-Stearley, 105).

³ The novel is based on Barnes' own relationship with American artist Thelma Wood in post-WWI Paris where they were both American expatriates.

expatriate in Paris. The first time we meet Robin is in the Hôtel Récamier, a hotel being for the temporary resident what French anthropologist Marc Augé calls “a non-place,”⁴ meaning that Robin as a temporary visitor and American expatriate does not have a full ownership and belonging of the city, although her knowledge about Paris is conversant and well-informed. This is different from Theodore Dreiser’s naturalist approach to the modern metropolis as a space where migrants (usually from the rural areas) arrive with virtues and moralities that the city’s overpowering material forces and urban dynamics will inevitably erode. By contrast, Barnes’ city is less about the characters’ bodily experience of the urban cartography, and more about labyrinthine repetitions, describing a circulating through spaces and complicated human feelings that expose the psychological dimension of walking through the streets in nocturnal Paris. As Caselli notes, “*Nightwood* baroque focuses on spatial dimension and alchemic transformations, offering the possibility of abstract contemplation rather than experience” (158).

In nightly conversations that become lengthy monologues, Barnes’ poetic style propels the characters to unveil themselves to readers, revealing their internal lives through their nocturnal walking experiences. These experiences repeatedly take readers through odd and unexpected twists and turns and surprises, prompting Daniela Caselli to comment on the novel as an emotional pressure cooker which leaves the impression of *Nightwood* as being excessive: “too emotional, too obscure, too abstract, too stylized: it refuses to be contained, to occupy a position of unadulterated modernist resistance” (156). Indeed, the novel resists a criticism that produces a grand narrative of its subject matter or legitimizes an approach to a unified theme. Yet the novel’s true novelty, I suggest, lies in its focus on nightwalking to challenge the binary

⁴ For details, see Marc Augé, *Non-places: Introduction to an Anthropology of Supermodernity* 75-115. Augé argues that places like hotels, airports and shopping malls are non-places, or an anthropological space of transience.

oppositions governing western philosophical traditions: man and woman, masculinity and femininity, heterosexuality and homosexuality, human and animal, natural and unnatural, mind and body, and day and night. It is a novel that, as Donna Gerstenberger writes, “rages against the imprisoning structures of the language and narratives of the ‘day’” (130). Still, the nightwalking thematic remains to be discussed as essential to Barnes’ innovations in plumbing the complexity of human psychology including sexuality, loss, and grief.

The story follows Robin Vote who wanders through Paris’ night streets in search of “pleasures” and desires—including sexual encounters with other women (65). Nora follows through Robin’s night walks, physically and mentally. Aimlessly walking the nocturnal city, Robin goes “from table to table, from drink to drink, from person to person” (64) and often has flings with strangers who populate the underground nightlife. The night plays a vital role in shaping the characters, especially Robin, whose departures during the twilight announce the end of the day and the beginning of the night, hailing the characters’ nocturnal transfiguration and escape from the day. With these outings on foot, Robin creates a distance from Nora, as seen in the epigraph that opens this chapter, which bears repeating here. Barnes writes:

Once out in the open Robin walked in a formless meditation, her hands thrust into the sleeves of her coat, directing her steps toward that night life that was a known measure between Nora and the cafes. Her meditations, during this walk, were a part of the pleasure she expected to find when the walk came to an end.

It was this exact distance that kept the two ends of her life—Nora and the cafés — from forming a monster with two heads. (65)

In order to escape the internal conflicts and unhappiness, she walks—becoming a nocturnal vagabond. The night street is no longer a destiny in and of itself but has become a transit to

transfiguration. Barnes' nocturnal vision of the city is to transgress the physical cityscape by turning to the characters' griefs and tensions. In other words, emotional and compulsive experiences drives the walking itineraries through Paris at night. Throughout *Nightwood*, the reader is missing a helpful cartographical sketch of Barnes' nocturnal Paris (contrasting with McInerney's grid of New York streets, as discussed below). Instead, Barnes directs the reader's attention towards the characters' reordering of the space through their negotiation of the body and the mind. Through the act of walking, I contend, Barnes captures the (im)moral geography of Paris during the nighttime where queer deviance and disorder prompt the contrast with the daytime regulation and normalcy.

To what extent does Robin's nightwalking reflect *flânerie* as a cultural practice, as elaborated in previous chapters? Avril Honer and Sue Zolnik argue that Robin is a *flâneuse*, who confronts the gothic "beast" within herself and thus transgresses the conventionally constructed boundaries in order to liberate a queer subjectivity and agency in the modern city. As they write: "Her transgression of the boundaries of civil society have represented a freedom but a freedom that ultimately leads to the breakdown of the boundaries of a socially constructed self" (90). In other words, the freedom invoked is of a different order from the freedom associated with walking as *flânerie*. What distinguishes her night cruising from the *flânerie* practiced in *Ulysses*, for example, is that Robin aimlessly wanders through Paris' night streets, passing through cafés and salons with little interest in the crowds and never providing insight into her experiences. There is also no *flaneurial* tension or realism in the novel—as Barnes' novel takes a surrealist turn, unfolding the nocturnal city through dreams and the inner psyche. Robin's walking is not about urban observation nor about exploring the city as a destination, as it was for the Baroness' radical strolling to shock the crowd. Nor is it to configure a subversive tourist gaze for women as

was the case for Florine Stettheimer; nor to formalize an urban subjectivity through the act of strolling, as in Joyce's *Ulysses* and Dreiser's *Sister Carrie*. In Tom McDonough's words, flânerie is a "bourgeois conception" and "the flaneur became its model citizen" of the twentieth-century metropolis ("The Crimes of the Flâneur" 103), but as we will see, there is no "model citizen" in Barnes' novel, where each character is a tortured outsider.

Instead, Robin walks the nocturnal city as a part of her natural space, thereby transforming the city into a hybrid *nightwood*; the city is transfigured into woodland, which contextualizes Robin's recurrent needs to walk in the night city. As Barnes writes: Her thoughts were in themselves a form of locomotion. She walked with raised head, seeming to look at every passer-by, yet her gaze was anchored in anticipation and regret" (65). Unlike the flaneurial practices described in previous chapters, Robin is not enticed by the phantasmagoria of commodities; instead, she follows a compulsion. Her nocturnal vagrancy is an escape mechanism that directs the reader's attention to her internal complexity as the night city on foot serves as a practice of queer space registering her queered desire and sexuality. Barnes continues: "It was this characteristic that saved her from being asked too sharply 'where' she was going; pedestrians who had it on the point of their tongues, seeing her rapt and confused, turned instead to look at each other" (66).

In contrast to Robin, Nora, whom Barnes describes as "an early Christian," holds traditional values in relationship and social identity notwithstanding her own queer identity (56). When Robin goes out to walk during the night, Nora, defined by her patriarchal understanding of female sex(uality), feels Robin's absence in the house is profoundly unbearable so performs an extensive physical and mental stalking. Barnes writes:

That she could be spilled of this fixed walking image of Robin in appalling apprehension on Nora's mind—Robin alone, crossing streets, in danger. Her mind became so transfixed that, by the agency of her fear. Robin seemed enormous and polarized, all catastrophes ran toward her, the magnetized predicament; and crying out, Nora would wake from sleep, going back through the tide of dreams into which her anxiety had thrown her, taking the body of Robin down with her onto it, as the ground things take the corpse, with minute persistence, down into the earth, leaving a pattern of it on the grass, as if they stitched as they descended. (62)

Nora's fear of Robin's absence dominates her dreams and gives her nightmares. She craves for an ideal relationship as she does not fathom Robin's escaping night walk. The imagery of death—“as the ground things take the corpse”—not only signals the coming death of the relationship but also becomes the longing for the ideal love that Robin fails to provide her. Thus, Nora sees Robin's infidelity not only as the failure of their relationship but also as a failure of her own identity.

Unlike Robin who truly belongs to the night, Nora prefers to stay in the daytime city but is dragged into the seedier side of the urban night by her lover. For Nora, the night street is nothing more than her mental image preoccupied by Robin. It is a space of sorrow, a process of grieving. Thus, her walking—always in pursuit of Robin—manifests the experience of loss and pain while affirming her yearning for an ideal relationship. Compelled singularly by Robin's absence, there is no autonomous agency in Nora's walking. Barnes writes:

Listening to the faint sounds from the street, every murmur from the garden, an unevolved and tiny hum that spoke of the progressive growth of noise that

would be Robin coming home, Nora lay and beat her pillow without force, unable to cry, her legs drawn up. At times she would get up and walk, to make something in her life outside more quickly over, to bring Robin back by the very velocity of the beating of her heart. And walking in vain, suddenly she would sit down on one of the circus chairs that stood by the long window overlooking the garden, bend forward, putting her hands between her legs, and begin to cry, “Oh, God! Oh, God! Oh, God!” repeated so often that it had the effect of all words spoken in vain. (67)

Here, Nora’s mental outings—tracking and shadowing Robin—echoes her obsession and therefore leads to her suffering, shame, and depression. By stalking Robin, Nora tries to hold on to her lover, desperately enacting a quasi-marital vow of “to have and to hold.” She transforms Robin into an object of spectatorship with her gaze fixated upon her as she recedes into the night. Consequently, Nora suffers not only because of Robin’s infidelity but also because of her own obsession with controlling Robin. Her mental wandering becomes a moral inquisition of her own emotional suffering.

In their article, “A Wandering Mind is an Unhappy Mind” (2010), social psychologists Matthew A. Killingsworth and Daniel T. Gilbert study the correlation between mind wandering and emotional consequences. Their conclusion is pertinent to this discussion as they write: “people were less happy when their minds were wandering than when they were not, and this was true during all activities, including the least enjoyable” (932). The team also found that participants in their study were significantly unhappier when thinking about unpleasant topics. Thus, mind wandering, in contrast to bodily walking, as they conclude, “[is] generally the cause, not merely the consequence, of unhappiness” (932). This psychological vicious circle helps

explain Nora's mental stalking as both the consequence and cause of her emotional suffering while Nora insists that her unhappiness is purely due to the absence (and loss) of Robin. Her mental wandering during the night makes her emotional suffering an inevitability that is cognitively devoid of self-consolation. Fuelling Nora's obsessive love is her Puritanism, which imposes added complexity on her relationship with Robin. Thus, Nora's walks are all "in vain" during the night, as Barnes writes.

This pattern corresponds to Beaumont's nocturnal paradigm, as he distinguishes between two archetypes of nightwalkers:

One is driven by a pathological compulsion, the other by a scarcely controlled curiosity. The former is the nightwalker—a disreputable, indeterminately criminal type who embodies the half of the flâneur characterized by a state of restless mobility. The latter is the detective—another kind of nocturnal itinerant, who incarnates the half of him characterized by an attitude of relentless inquisitiveness. They are the hunted and hunter; the stalked and the stalker. (408).

This paradigm may explain the difference between Robin and Nora's nightwalking. Nora (the detective and hunter) follows Robin (the nightwalker and the hunted) —physically and mentally—through the city with her "relentless inquisitiveness;" but Nora does not document Robin's streetwalker's habits and pleasures as a flâneuse is supposed to do; instead, she immerses herself in the walking habit of Robin and inserts a subjective perspective fixed upon the image of Robin.

As an American expatriate, Barnes was intimately familiar with Paris' topography, depicting the Left Bank, a locale infused with bohemianism and avant-garde art with which

Robin is associated with throughout the novel. In her circular nightwalking, Robin crosses the Left Bank and the Luxembourg quarter to return finally Nora's home on the Left Bank. Later in the novel, Robin has an affair with Jenny Petherbridge, who is associated with the Right Bank's institutionalized culture, which Robin does not closely engage. The 1920s Paris of Barnes' *Nightwood* had gone through Georges-Eugène Haussmann's large-scale renovation of the city, which has begun under Emperor Napoleon III, under Haussmann's supervision between 1853 and 1870. The renovation of Paris included the dismantling of overcrowded neighbourhoods and the expansion of avenues and parks to create new public space adorned with fountains and new sewer systems. This controversial modernization of the city continued into the 1920s, with the wide avenues and squares and parks becoming the familiar image in contemporary Paris. The project was the result of a clean-up campaign to regulate the modern city and its dwellers under the capitalist framework. In his excellent study of *Nightwood's* relationship with Paris' social geographies, literary critic Thomas Heise writes about "the modernized, post-Haussmann city [where] there remain underworld enclaves where city residents amuse themselves" (306). However, Barnes' deliberately turns away from this sanitized image of the city, directing the reader's attention towards the quirky and evasive night version of Paris, in which the dispossessed can escape and unfold subjectivities deemed unacceptable during the day.

Nightwood's nocturnal city belongs to those who love the city life but feel rejected by its daytime regulations. The city during the night offers a temporary asylum for queer identities, desires, and sexualities. The night is the quintessential alternative space and time for the dispossessed, as Barnes writes: "Those who love everything are despised by everything, as those who love a city, in its profoundest sense, become the shame of that city, the *détraqués*; the paupers" (57). Addicted to the streets, the *détraqué* is the product of industrial commodity

culture, as Walter Benjamin has written. Like the *flâneur*, the *détraqué* has an intimate yet complicated relationship with the modern city. Following Benjamin, Dianne Chisholm argues that the *détraqué* and the *flâneur* both have inherited a bohemian spirit to “resist the industriousness of the modern megapolis but not its intoxication” (189). However, the *détraqué* also differs from the *flâneur*. Chisholm writes:

The *flâneur* gets drunk on the commodity, the *détraqué* on refuse. The *flâneur* strolls through the merchandise that fills the arcades, enraptured with the same “aura” of commodity fetishism that enraptures the crowd, though it is the crowd from which he remains heroically and poetically detached. The *détraqué* retreats from the commercial spotlight to poorly lit districts where he spends his libidinal economy on the depreciated arts of the circus and the theater. (189, italics in the original)

The *détraqué*, in this sense, refuses the flirtation with the mainstream commodity culture and turns the gaze away from the modern crowd that defines the modern city streets and city culture. The *détraqué* is the perfect nocturnal subject. As we have seen, Robin consumes alcohol and enjoys sexual encounters with anonymous strangers every night; her nocturnal outing on foot counteracts and rejects monogamy and other mainstream sexual mores. Despite her preference for the daytime city, Nora is also a nocturnal *détraqué* whose nocturnal life begins with Robin’s absence and her internal need to search for her. The *détraqué* offers a dissident discourse that contests urban modernity’s normalcy—especially the sanitized narratives derived from Haussmann's renovation of Paris.

Refusing to recuperate a panoramic image of Paris, the novel curates a nocturnal city through characters’ walking itineraries, especially Dr. Matthew O’Conner’s construction of the

city. Suffering from pain, Nora turns to the doctor for help as she attributes Robin's elusive walking to the night. "Doctor, I have come to ask you to tell me everything you know about the night," Nora says (86). The doctor's answer to Nora's question engenders an extensive, breathless walking narrative in nocturnal Paris. He asks Nora a rhetorical question: "Have you thought of the night, now, in other times, in foreign countries—in Paris?" (88). He suggests Nora turn to Paris at night for an inquiry about her grievance and mystifies the city's darkness as a surrealist account of love, loss, desolation and pain. He continues,

When the streets were gall high with things you wouldn't have done for a dare's sake, and the way it was then; with the pheasants' necks and the goslings' beaks dangling against the hocks of the gallants, and not a pavement in the place, and everything gutter for miles and miles, and a stench to it that plucked you by the nostrils and you were twenty leagues out! The crier telling the price of wine to such effect that dawn saw good clerks full of piss and vinegar, and blood-letting in side streets where some wild princess in a night-shift of velvet howled under a leech; not to mention the palaces of Nymphenburg echoing back to Vienna with the night trip of lake kings letting water into plush cans and fine woodwork! (88-89)

The doctor's lyrical tirade conjures the surrealist image of a walker who traipses around the labyrinth of the city and overthrows the conventions of the day during the night. The doctor's walker sneaks onto the street without announcement and interaction. But the observation is hardly objective as his harangues are filled with subjective perspectives as well as surrealist images. He frequently digresses from the reality (or the rational/logic), which is secondary to his own imagination (or dreams). In other words, the doctor *doctors* the version of nocturnal city to

derail Nora's moral inquest of Robin's nocturnal walking. Surrealist artists such as Salvador Dalí, René Magritte, and André Breton often focus on excavating the unconscious mind to celebrate creativity, dream-like visuals, and symbolism. The doctor "follows the Surrealists," Chisholm writes, "who with their sleeping fits, automatic writing, seductive dreaming, and round-table *recherche sur la sexualité* contrive to experience life beyond the limits of bourgeois anthropology" (191-192). The doctor is a surrealist walker who rejects the flaneurial realism: he is not interested in flâneur's documentation nor in respecting flâneur's ethics of what to observe and what not to observe.

The doctor's long, inflated passages about Paris' night throughout the novel, I suggest, represent little more than the doctor's talking to himself in a self-absorbed narrative. Although he feigns to address Nora's inquiry, he deliriously rants about the urban night. Using the language that flows in and out of reality at the same time, he renders a space to perform his own *détraqué* identity. His metaphorical night outing exhibits the humanity of freaks and outcasts in the dark. The doctor begins to live at night to unravel the night's mystery which is inaccessible during the day. The doctor is a metaphorical nightwalker, who sneaks into subjective, surrealist details about the Paris night and who quietly walks through the unknown night streets. "Take history at night; have you ever thought of that now?" the doctor tells Nora: "A city given over to the shades, and that's why it has never been countenanced or understood to this day" (92). Here, the doctor postulates his night theory, in which the darkness of urban night affords a space for a different existence from that taking place during the daytime: his queer identity and transvestite performance. When Nora arrives at his untidy apartment, the doctor is in the middle of crossdressing. Barnes writes:

In the narrow iron bed, with its heavy and dirty linen sheets, lay the doctor in a woman's flannel nightgown. The doctor's head, with its over-large black eyes, its full gun-metal cheeks and chin, was framed in the golden semi-circle of a wig with long pendent curls that touched his shoulders, and falling back against the pillow, turned up the shadowy interior of their cylinders. He was heavily rouged and his lashes pained. (85)

Self-proclaiming that he is the “god of darkness” (126), the doctor, a quintessential nocturnal *détraqué* in the novel, takes readers on a tour of Paris' night, where he transgresses performing a reversed gender role. His example and shifting identity reveals the temporal divisions as a way of policing the city. He keeps his secret in the night—showing the private sexual life of the *détraqués*. As Heise points out, “lesbian promiscuity in the urban underworld is a source of heart ache for Nora in a way that anonymous sex between men in criminally reappropriated spaces is not for O'Connor” (314).

Barnes' deliberate contradictions and tensions within and between characters are played out on the streets of Paris at night. While Robin is a boyish woman on her nightly prowls, the body of an anonymous woman pressed against her (69-70), the doctor is an effeminate man, whose nightwalking is a secretive, quietly sneaking in and out of the rhythm between the day (the normal) and night (the deviant). As he says: “Those who turn the day into night, the young, the drug addict, the profligate, the drunken and that most miserable, the lover who watches all night long in fear and anguish. These can never again live the life of the day” (101). Looking for an answer to the relationship between love and sacrifice through the contradictions of the night, he tells Nora:

So, I say, what of the night, the terrible night? The darkness is the closet in which your lover roots her heart, and that night-fowl that caws against her spirit and yours, dropping between you and her the awful estrangement of his bowels. The drip of your tears is his implacable pulse. Night people do not bury their dead, but on the neck of you, their beloved and waking, sling the creature, husked of its gesture. And where you go, it goes, the two of you, your living and her dead, that will not die; to daylight, to life, to grief, until both are carrion. (95)

Using a surrealist technique, the doctor's speech is a *non sequitur*, whose effect is absurd, confusing and comedic. Trying to alleviate Nora's grieving, he suggests that Robin's heart is the bird (the night-fowl) demanding freedom and nomadic homelessness (as seen in Robin's elusive and evasive nightwalking). The doctor sees Robin as the "night people who do not bury their dead," an evocative suggestion that is both Freudian and an allusion to the recent war with its hundreds of thousands of unburied dead that haunt the psyches of the living until they too become "carrion" decaying flesh.

In the complicated universe of *Nightwood*, walking appears to be anathema to talking. Throughout the novel, Robin is wordless. Nora is a passive listener. The doctor is extravagantly loquacious but without truly communicating. Barnes uses the urban night to create the moments of embodied and situated cognition. Marshall Berman reminds readers that the modernist street is "experienced as the medium in which the totality of modern material and spiritual forces could meet, clash, interfuse and work out their ultimate meanings and fates" (316). In *Proletarian Nights: The Workers' Dream in Nineteenth-Century France* (2012), Jacques Rancière documents the experiences of working-class people in the nineteenth-century France who used nighttime—in opposite to selling their labours during the day—to write and dream socialist poetics about a

utopian world. In other words, the night provides a space of action for those who are excluded from the daytime and empowers the powerless to negotiate their values and identities.

Barnes' ambiguous ending of the novel returns to Robin and Nora in nocturnal New York City, where Nora sits by "a kerosene lamp" and Robin plays with Nora's dog. Barnes writes: "Then she [Robin] began to bark also, crawling after him [Nora's dog]—barking in a fit of laughter, obscene and touching" (179). Robin ultimately metamorphoses into an animal, a pet in particular—another surrealist touch. Barnes uses zoomorphism—portraying or imagining humans as non-human animals—to end the novel by transforming Robin's walking into *crawling*—to move forward on one's hands and knees with the body close to ground. Barnes ends: "until she gave up, lying out, her hands beside her, her face turned and weeping; and the dog too gave up then, and lay down, his eyes bloodshot, his head flat along her knees" (180). Turning Robin into a domestic pet makes her controllable and manageable. Art critic John Berger writes: "the pet is either sterilized or sexually isolated, extremely limited in its exercise, deprived of almost all other animal contact, and fed with artificial foods. This is the material process which lies behind the truism that pets come to resemble their masters or mistresses. They are creatures of their owner's way of life" (256). Does Barnes' ending suggest that Robin fails to regenerate through her nightwalking or return to Nora as her "pet?" Ultimately, as my nocturnal walking focus suggests, Barnes narrates urban walking as a cognitive experience in navigating the underground dimension of the nighttime city inhabited by the dispossessed. Such a practice of walking—whether physical or metaphorical—demands a situated cognition provided by nocturnal Paris, in contrast to New York's "rigid systems of thought through disruption and reterritorialization" (Heise 316).

In the end, *Nightwood* is not a nocturnal picaresque, narrating urban adventures or criminal activities with realist language, nor is it a journalist's biography of the nocturnal city exposing the hidden stories of the city's spatial ecology and dark economics with a sensationalist touch. Instead, *Nightwood* is an invitation to readers to walk the city at night to explore the inner life of its characters enjoying and struggling with the metropolitan life. This text speaks to the cultural and spatial practice of urban walking with its own voice and its own uncanny urgency in relation to postwar psychological experience. Throughout the novel, the urban walking—at night—generates a poetics of physical and mental mobilities and transgressions, turning the unutterable feelings that characters otherwise have no accessibility to into soul searching. This process is more psychological nightmare than mental pilgrimage. In the end, this nocturnal urban nightmare world makes it an ideal comparison with the night ambles performed in Jay McInerney's *Bright Lights, Big City* (1984), a renowned novel of 1980s Reagan-era New York City.

“Walk and Don't Walk:” Jay McInerney's *Bright Lights, Big City*

Where *Nightwood* dramatizes the shards of post-war Paris through its poetic evocations of the night street, five decades later, Jay McInerney's novel presents a second-person narration about the drug-fueled Manhattan nightlife, thematizing the hyper-consumption of the 1980s post-industrial economy. Interlaced with the emerging yuppie culture of hedonism and narcissism, the story follows an unnamed young man living in New York City. The narrator works during the day as a fact checker for a high-brow New York magazine, like its author, a fact-checker for the

New Yorker,⁵ but dedicates his sleepless nights to fashion, sex, alcohol, and drugs in Manhattan parties and clubs. With McInerney enjoying extravagant nightlife, dating and marrying fashion models and socialites, his novel presents a *roman à clef*, like *Nightwood*, fueled by overt autobiographical dimensions that readers are meant to recognize and decode as they have done in countless media articles.⁶ While the novel revels in consumerist and branding excess (anticipating the aggressive consumerist ethos of Bret Easton Ellis' 1991 *American Psycho*), the novel's urban night remains as much haunted by alienation and loneliness as *Nightwood*. David Kaufmann credits *Bright Lights* with being the first "Yuppie bestseller" (95), with more than 300,000 copies sold in two years, while Stephanie Girard discusses the novel's new aesthetic experiment of "narrative and material form and content" to successfully echo the economy and mass media of the mid-1980s (168).

The novel reveals that neoliberal urban space is unwelcoming and hostile to the urban pedestrian citizen. As McInerney's narrator puts it: "The city's economy is made up of strange, subterranean circuits that are mysterious to you as the grids of wire and pipe under the streets" (86). Juxtaposing the city with the concept of neoliberalism is to ask about a new repertoire of action and affection, questions with political and economic implications. In an urban space constructed by the logic of the free market, citizens are primarily consumers while walkers are merely pedestrians. Thus, the novel anticipates urban and economic geographer David Harvey's critical study *A Brief History of Neoliberalism* (2007), which warns that the neoliberal freedoms

⁵ The novel alludes to *The New Yorker*, where McInerney briefly worked as a fact-checker; he later worked as a wine columnist for the *Wall Street Journal*.

⁶ Among other scholars, John W. Aldridge has criticized McInerney, "[who] evidently possesses no morally evaluative or critical attitude toward his materials" and his characters who are "all young, presumably attractive, mostly very affluent people who float through the fashionable nightspots of New York without a thought in their heads, seeking no authenticity beyond sex, entertainment, and cocaine anesthesia" (129).

“reflect the interests of private property owners, businesses, multinational corporations and financial capital” (7). In this post-industrial, neoliberal universe, walking is neither a preferred mode of transportation, nor a favorite leisure activity for pleasure, recovery, or contemplation. On the sidewalk, the unnamed narrator often hesitates to walk—literally, “standing at the corner of Walk and Don’t Walk” (66).⁷ This thematic is little explored in the scholarship, and yet is central to an understanding of this work’s ethos and the novel’s long-time cult status since its publication in 1984. By exploring the avoidance of urban walking, I argue, the novel grapples with the profound neoliberal transformation of the social geography during the 1980s, while also offering insight into economic uncertainty and status anxiety.⁸ As a cultural practice, walking is the litmus test for growth in the life of the thoroughly confused and emotionally bankrupt twenty-four-year-old nameless anti-hero of *Bright Lights*.

A self-indulgent and bored urban young professional who is lost in the chaos of city, the novel’s uprooted protagonist is living a life of alcohol and cocaine addiction prompted by the death of his mother, although the traumatic cause for his grief becomes known to the reader only very late in the novel. The unnamed narrator who addresses the reader as “you,” tells the entire story in the second person, a most unusual narrative perspective whose rhetorical effect is to draw the reader into the dangerously seductive spiral of drugs and nightlife. It is a seductive rhetoric accounting for much of the novel’s cult success as many of its readers (particularly, the

⁷ “Walk and Don’t Walk” is one of the songs in the show *Missing Person*, “starring at Mary O’Brien McCann” (McInerney 66). It suggests that the narrator is always indecisive regarding walking as transportation.

⁸ Where modernist texts such as Edith Wharton’s *The Age of Innocence* (1920) and F. Scott Fitzgerald’s *The Great Gatsby* (1925) use the nighttime space to dramatize a finely calibrated social strata of American society and document nighttime spaces as spheres of social inclusion and exclusion, post-modern novels shift focus to alternate identities in their emphasis on nighttime consumerism and sleeplessness as seen also in Bret Easton Ellis’s *American Psycho* (1991), Chuck Palahniuk’s *Fight Club* (1996), Tama Janowitz’s *Slaves of New York* (1986), and McInerney’s text. In 1987, the *Village Voice* grouped Ellis, Janowitz, and McInerney as the literary brat pack, who gained their fame and media attention at a young age and was part of the media hype generation of the 1980s. For more on the brat pack, see Bill Wasik (64).

yuppie generation) precisely identify with the focus on branding and consumer pleasures. The novel depicts nightlife as having a vital role in the urban experience spawning processes of constructing alternate identities that make the city's night spaces bodily extensions of characters' sartorial and rhetorical styles.

In its focus on the conspicuous consumption of the 1980s, the novel illuminates what political geographer Laam Hae has described as a characteristic of the Reagan years wreaking havoc on the city's heterogeneous nightscapes. No longer associated with "the liminal and transgressive activities" in the 1960s, nightlife has morphed into a legitimate industry that supplies post-industrial lifestyle consumption commodities to the city (Hae 29). Nightlife is thus the important barometer to evaluate the city's political and economic orientation. As noted in Chapter One, urban economist Richard Florida, while following Jane Jacobs' urban progressivism, has developed a theory of the so-called "creative class" contending that urban planning should pay attention to "creativity as an economic force" in order to attract creative human capital, read: designers, writers and advertising agents (17). Florida suggests that developing a vibrant nightlife as an economic sector is crucial to serve the lifestyle of this creative class.⁹ Florida's theory underpins the universe depicted in *Bright Lights* where the narrator immerses himself in the world of the Odeon, a nightclub on Broadway: "Along the bar are faces familiar under artificial light, belonging to people whose daytime existence is only a

⁹ Not everyone agrees with Florida's theory and aspects of his theorizing has been contested; for example, Brian Tochtermann, "Theorizing Neoliberal Urban Development: A Genealogy from Richard Florida to Jane Jacobs," has argued that Florida's interpretation of Jacobs' urban theory facilitates the "neoliberal economic development by addressing the question of urban growth in the postindustrial age" (75). Other urbanist scholars such as Jamie Peck, Peter Marcuse, and Laam Hae have criticized Florida's concept as facilitating cultural gentrification of urban space and places, catering to neoliberal economic development and mass gentrification to construct spaces promoting middle class values while neglecting to create inclusive cultural spaces.

tag—designer, writer, artist” (44-45). In this, McInerney’s protagonist is the prototype of Florida’s creative class.¹⁰

Born and raised in a suburban middle-class family, the narrator received a privileged Ivy-league education before moving to New York for professional opportunities in the creative industry. In the novel, nightclubs are crowded with the urban young professionals, who indulge themselves with alcohol and drugs during sleepless nights. These nocturnal spaces are consumer and upper-middle class oriented: they are corporate-owned and corporate-managed pubs, nightclubs, cafes, and styled bars.¹¹ Since urban nightlife transcends biological rhythms, it creates what Jonathan Crary describes as the 24/7 capitalism, whereby the logic of the neoliberal market has entirely transformed the city’s social concept of space and time (77).

The narrator aspires to become like his sometime friend Tad Allagash, who effortlessly enjoys the extravagant life in the nocturnal city. “You want to be like that,” as the narrator says, inviting the reader to become a part of this heady crowd for whom nightclubs are a natural habitat. Surrounded by beautiful women, Tad is wealthy and fashionable. “Looking *très sportif* in J. Press torso and punked-out red SoHo trousers,” as the narrator describes Tad’s outfit in one scene (42). Later, the reader learns that Tad’s (and the narrator’s) interest in fashion is focussed on “Brooks Brothers and J. Press” (119)—the two designer labels representing the sartorial

¹⁰ In his 1984 article in the *New York Times*, Steven V. Roberts writes: “the ‘yuppies’ belong to the baby boom generation born from 1945 to 1960. This group has been slow to develop a political identity and to join the system, but when they do, many analysts believe they will permanently alter the face of American politics.” Florida did his doctoral studies at Columbia University in New York City during the 1980s when McInerney gained his literary fame.

¹¹ New York nightclubs during the 1980s, as McKenzie Wark points out, “catered to the aristocracy of the fabulous, to those with the looks, the style, or the connections to gain admittance to the world of the night” (39). However, the emerging of the yuppie culture, as the novel shows, contributes to the corporatization of nightclubs as wealthy, self-entitled young people flock into the social space of night entertainment by transforming the semi-public space into quasi-public or fully private space.

aesthetic of “preppy culture” on American elite campuses during the era,¹² references that inevitably draw readers into these subcultural movements. Indeed, Tad is the nocturnal guide into the Manhattan nightlife, whose invitations are rhetorical calls to action for both the protagonist and the reader. “Ready to roll?” Tad asks. “Where are we rolling?” the narrator queries. To which Tad answers with compelling slogans and promises fuelled by the action-focussed language and rhythm of advertisement: “Into the heart of night. Where there are dances to be danced, drugs to be hoovered, women to be Allagashed” (42).

Tad’s promise for exploring the city at night is predicated on automobility, meaning that walking using legs and feet is always a last resort, a moment of crisis, a point that is central to the working of this novel but has not yet been recognized. Typically, Tad and the narrator cruise through the nocturnal city ensconced in lavish limousines, which in turn remove them from the chaos of the urban streets. In this remotely observed cityscape, car culture recklessly dominates; the fetish of privately owned vehicles on public streets constructs spatial relationships that are discursively related to systems of finance, “contribut[ing] to the mobility of capital,” to use Ian Davidson’s words (478),¹³ while obliterating the boundaries between public and private spaces. Thus, in *Bright Lights*, urban locomotion relies on the conspicuous consumption of cars as the status symbol implying financial success and cultural taste in ways that make visible and seductive the free market logic of Reaganomics. As the narrator says, referencing himself: “You

¹² Brooks Brothers, founded in 1818 as the oldest men's clothier in the United States, was known for its button-down oxford shirts; while J. Press was an American company founded at Yale University in 1902, known for its traditional Ivy League style of men's clothing. According to *The Official Preppy Handbook* (1980), a popular tongue-in-cheek humor reference guide in the 1980s, both labels are the default choices to present a preppy look from college admissions to workplaces (83; 140-141).

¹³ This auto-mobilized urban voyage can be found in Don DeLillo’s *Cosmopolis* (2003), whose protagonist Eric Parker, a young urban multi-billionaire, travels across Manhattan in a limousine in order to get a haircut. This postmodern urban odyssey empathizes automobility as the literary icon of the neoliberal city in contrast to walking often framed as an obsolescent mode of transportation.

are the stuff of which consumer profiles—American Dream: Educated Middle-Class Model—are made. *When you're staying at the Plaza with your beautiful wife, doesn't it make sense to order the best Scotch that money can buy before you go to the theater in your private limousine?*" (151, italics in the original).

At the same time, the narrator's self-made yuppie status does not share the same privilege as Tad's inborn preppy identity; and in this finely calibrated construction of characters through material objects and consumption, the novel shares much with its progenitors—notably the novels of desire by Theodore Dreiser, a point to which I shall return. The narrator loathes his work as a magazine fact-checker, while ironically enjoying the admiration from other yuppie friends. Yet despite belonging to what Harvey terms in his 2005 book, *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*, "the city's elites" (47), the narrator is troubled by his lack of high-class taste which relentlessly exposes his social origin. Pierre Bourdieu has long pointed out the significance of cultural capital in shaping aesthetic and cultural patterns of choice and preference. One's aesthetic disposition is a consciousness of status mixed with social, cultural and economic capitals. Thus, the narrator often distances himself from lower social groups, scorning the Sicilian elevator operator who "has been doing this for seventeen years" and the receptionist as someone "with a low-rent accent ... from one of the outer boroughs" (15; ellipsis added). At the same time, whenever he fails to dissociate himself with what he perceives as low-class tastes, he feels shame and self-loathing as seen with his secret obsession with reading the *New York Post*, a newspaper notorious for its sensationalism and gossip columns.

Tad's auto-mobilized locomotion, which echoes his *auto*-social mobility as a preppy, is the lived experience of the phantasmagoria of nightlife, which turns the nocturnal city into a consumer spectacle. For the narrator, however, this *automobility* instigates a subsequent

immobility in his personal and professional life. “You have always wanted to be a writer. Getting the job at the magazine was only your first step toward literary celebrity,” the narrator tells himself (40). The very absence of walking, I argue, signals the absence of movement in his life, illustrating Jean-François Lyotard’s concept about the postmodern condition: “It is no longer possible to call development progress. It seems to proceed of its own accord, with a force, an autonomous motoricity that is independent of ourselves” (91-92). The “autonomous motoricity” makes it difficult for the narrator to believe that there is a positive image of the future or an optimistic narrative of better self. As I argue further, this lack leads to the narrator’s procrastination of his writing project, which is a symptom of his endless boredom, a by-product of the post-industrial city as consumer haven in which he prefers to travel by car in order to accelerate his potential financial success. At the same time, the nocturnal *automobility*—and the absence of physical walking at night—exposes the *immobility* in the narrator’s literary entrepreneurship.

The title of McInerney’s novel recalls blues musician Jimmy Reed’s 1961 eponymous song, whose lyrics hold the “bright lights big city” responsible for “go[ing] to my baby’s head.” Similarly, McInerney’s protagonist grieves over the marriage failure with his wife, Amanda White, who initially adored his elite education and presumed his affluent family background but leaves him after becoming successful in fashion modelling. As a self-made urban subject, she, too, seeks upward mobility in the metropolis. Unlike Tad’s privileged *automobility*, Amanda practices a physical and stylized walking, which propels her social mobility. She walks on the runway in exchange for financial capital. Here, urban mobility has an intricate relationship with social mobility. In *Signs Taken for Wonders* (1983), Franco Moretti writes that the city’s “spatial structure (basically its concentration) is functional to the intensification of mobility: spatial

mobility, naturally enough, but mainly social mobility” (111). When the narrator stalks Amanda, spying on her at one of her fashion shows, he sees her performing on the catwalk “stylized” with her “signature sway and rhythm” (124). He reports Amanda’s runway walk:

She keeps walking. She walks to the end of the runway and pirouettes in a way that glares the skirt of her dress. She walks down one arm of the T, turns and walks down the other. When she is almost directly in front of you, she turns and looks at you. It is a look that carries either hatred or indifference. You want to ask for an explanation. She turns away and retraces her steps down the runway as if nothing had happened. Whoever she is, she is a professional. Whoever she is, you don’t know her. (125)

Decorated by dream-inducing artificial lights, the runway epitomizes the visual commodification of the nocturnal city (during the daytime). Amanda’s performative walking is the commodity itself as fashion models display their bodies on the stage as part of visual spectacles on the runway. Her stylized walks are the product of an aestheticized consumer economy, in which she is fetishized as a glamorous mannequin, even as her own role is eminently replaceable.¹⁴ Ironically, Amanda initially loathed the fashion modelling industry. “She hated the *models*. She felt guilty making all this money on her looks, in which she didn’t believe anyway,” the narrator recalls (74, *italic in the original*). Amanda’s catwalk serves a purpose for not only exchange value but also creating an entrepreneurial self: an all-powerful divinity in the neoliberal city.

In addition to its performative purpose, the catwalk on high heels requires the practice of walking with extreme caution in order to avoid falling or running into other models on the

¹⁴ While the narrator does not directly comment on Amanda’s cultural capital, he consistently runs into Amanda’s fashion model friends in nightclubs, who are perceived as being replaceable by one or another.

narrowly constructed runway. The practice of cautious walking also signals the precarity of living in the neoliberal city as Amanda does not have the same privileges of the narrator and Tad. Although the fashion show takes place on “a blue, sunny day” (127), the interior ambient of the runway—a quasi-public space—mimics the nighttime spectacles of the city, turning the day into an artificial night when exchange value of visual commodities can be maximized. Amanda’s catwalk exhibits that the urban night, however natural or artificial, entails an economic agenda, which optimizes profits in the mechanisms and rationality of neoliberal market.

Tad’s cruising through the nocturnal city annihilates the temporal boundaries, as does Amanda’s simulated night catwalk, recalling David Harvey’s essay “Between Space and Time: Reflections on the Geographical Imagination.” Harvey argues that neoliberal capitalism has “altered space and time relations [forcing] us to new material practices as well as to new modes of representation of space” (425). Once, after having a lunch with the fiction editor emeritus at his magazine, who gives lukewarm support to his literary ambition, the “glazed” narrator wants to take a walk to “[clear] the head” (66). During this daytime walk, intoxicated from excessive alcohol, the narrator is a walking zombie, aimlessly roaming through consumerism-infested streets. He recounts:

You walk across town, east on Forty-seventh, past the windows of the discount jewelry stores. A hawker with an armful of leaflets drones in front of a shop door: “Gold and silver, buy and sell, gold and silver, buy and sell.” No questions asked on the buying end, you presume. Chain-snatchers welcome. You stop to admire an emerald tiara, the perfect gift for your next queen for a day. Fantasy shopping. Of course, when you have money you will not stop here. You’re not going to wow your dream girl with a jewelry box that reads Gem-O-Rama.

You'll head straight for Tiffany or Cartier. Sit in a chair in the president's office and have them fetch the merchandise for your inspection. (66-67)

The narrator's walk creates a moment of daydreaming, engendering an imaginary financial success. He embraces both commodities and women as a consumer, performing a "fantasy shopping" on the street. But the sidewalks also confront him with the blunt reality—the lack of his purchasing power—just as they confronted Carrie Meeber on her first day window shopping in Chicago. This technique of parataxis, which consists of sequences of short and simple sentences, reveal the sobering material reality and limits.¹⁵ This zombie walking—the underside of consumerism—echoes the narrator's own fractured identity he grapples with being a consumer identity he cannot afford. The narrator continues:

At Fifth Avenue you cross and walk up to Saks. You stop in front of a window. Inside the window is a mannequin which is a replica of Amanda—your wife, the model. To form the cast for the mannequin, Amanda lay face down in a vat of latex batter for ninety minutes, breathing through a straw. You haven't seen her in the flesh since she left for the last trip to Paris, a few days after she did the case. You stand in front of the window and try to remember if this was how she really looked. (67-68)

In this stunning Dreiserian moment, the narrator mirrors Charles Hurstwood seeing his common-law wife Carrie on a poster on Broadway without being able to reach her. Like Hurstwood who

¹⁵ The postmodern ethos against fictitious totalization rejoices in paratactical sentences, which allow metanarrative and fragments to be the dominant literary mode. Bob Perelman writes: "Far from being fragments, these sentences derive from a coherent, wide-ranging political analysis" (316). The monotonous voice also caricatures a way of how children speak and points directly towards the narrator's prolong adolescence driven by his hedonistic pleasure. In this way, the literary aesthetics unravels the narrator's struggle with personal maturation and failure to formulate his identity in the city, but also his voice sonically appears to be juvenile as his thoughts and behaviours are increasingly juvenile or even infantilized.

is mesmerized and confused by her fictional transformation, McInerney's narrator realizes that he is confronting the simulacrum of consumer culture. Later he notes, "Amanda is a fictional character" (139). Meanwhile, the narrator is forced to haggle to purchase the counterfeit designer watch as a status symbol and a solution for his "slippery flux" of time (28). "You wind your new watch and admire it on your wrist. 1:25," the seller says (28). In his aptly titled book *Wish I Were Here* (2019), Mark Kingswell sums up this harmful dynamic of postmodern conspicuous consumption: "We no longer straightforwardly produce goods and services, or even produce consumption; instead, we produce and consume ourselves under the sign of our own status as consumers" (44).

Both the automobility and the concomitant simulacrum of nightwalking expose the urban night as fuelled by the logic of the free-market economy. This returns readers to the sporadic scenes of reluctant nightwalking, as seen at the end of the first chapter, when the narrator decides to walk back home because he does not have money to take a taxi after an extravagant night outing. Walking is the last option of transportation, reliable and without adding financial strain. The narrator says:

You start north, holding a hand over your eyes. Trucks rumble up Hudson Street, bearing provisions into the sleeping city. You turn east. On Seventh Avenue an old woman with a hive of rollers on her head walks a German shepherd. The dog is rooting in the cracks of the sidewalk, but as you approach he stiffens into a pose of terrible alertness. The woman looks at you as if you were something that had just crawled out of the ocean trailing ooze and slime. An eager, tentative growl ripples the shepherd's throat. "Good Pooky," she says. The dog makes a move but she chokes it back. You give them a wide berth. (9)

Such undesirable nightwalking brings the narrator's consciousness back from his drugged-out and hedonistic escapades, harshly confronting him from close up with the social reality of the nocturnal city on foot. Here, the focus is on the sensory, smell, touch, and auditory perception to communicate the unmediated danger and suspicion, and the breakdown of human connection even during the walk.

Similarly, the narrator confronts the breakdown of his intimate relationship as he walks down Bleecker Street in Greenwich Village, where he used to share an apartment with Amanda when they just moved to the city. The cobble-stoned village has a unique streetscape, significantly differing from the grid pattern in the rest of Manhattan, which is the result of the New York Commissioners' Plan of 1811. The streets are narrow and cut at irregular angles, but the layouts organically facilitate everyday street life, a decentralized model that Jane Jacobs fiercely defended for Greenwich Village against a master plan renewal during the 1950s and 1960s. The village also epitomizes the traditional neighborhood design with pedestrian-friendly roads and vibrant street life that New Urbanists have passionately advocated for. In *Suburban Nation*, DPZ New Urbanists Andres Duany, Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk, and Jeff Speck write: "The five-minute walk—or pedestrian shed—is roughly one-quarter mile [400 metres] in distance. It was conceptualized as a determinant of neighborhood size in the classic 1929 New York City Regional Plan, but it has existed as an informal standard since the earliest cities, from Pompeii to Greenwich Village" (198). Nurturing bohemian culture and civil rights movements, furthermore, the Village has remained as epicentre for the city's literary inspiration and social justice

advocacy.¹⁶ For McInerney's protagonist, Greenwich Village represents a memory, the past, when he hoped to find literary inspirations there. In contrast, he is now living in an apartment with "high ceilings, daytime doorman, [and] working fireplaces" on West Twelfth Street (38). This building was built according to "the architect's dim concept of European fortresses: a crenelated tower atop of the building conceals the water tank and the entrance is fitted with a mock portcullis" (36). Compared to the village's spontaneity and authenticity at foot level, his current habitat concretizes and symbolizes financial success. Consequently, as in *Nightwood*, in *Bright Light, Big City*, the protagonist's strolling through the city fills him with a strong sense of loss and grieving. As he skims across the expanse of the Hudson River, he interrupts his walk and sits down for an interlude:

You sit down on a piling and look out over the river. Downriver, the Statue of Liberty shimmers in the haze. Across the water, a huge Colgate sign welcomes you to New Jersey, the Garden State.

You watch the solemn progress of a garbage barge, wreathed in a cloud of screaming gulls, heading out to sea.

Here you are again. All messed up and no place to go. (10)

Ironically, this supposed walking-back-home journey becomes an urban excursion through which the narrator realizes that he has "no place to go." He is *homeless*. Confronting the barge of garbage, which doubles as a funeral barge with its solemn progress and its wreath of gulls, he confronts a truth about himself. Integrating past memories and spatial relationships, the

¹⁶ In the previous chapter, I have looked at Dada artist Elsa von Freytag-Loringhoven's radical promenade during her dwelling in the village at the early twentieth century. The village has also been well-represented in many popular literary works from American writers, including James Baldwin, Jack Kerouac, Marianne Moore, and Maya Angelou. The 1969 Stonewall uprising happened in the Village, where a series of spontaneous demonstrations by the LGBTQ community against a police raid which profiled gay residents.

narrator's stroll executes a nocturnal version of *dérive*, an inventive walking technique advocated by the Situationists International. The narrator's walking itinerary emphasizes his emotional experiences of the urban environments, the walk describing a process of psychogeography by illuminating the suppressed, discarded or marginalized aspects of the nocturnal city. In this manner, his walk works against values embedded in New York City's grid streetscape and nightlife consumption, exposing the compulsory leisure of neoliberal capitalism.¹⁷ The narrator's unplanned urban excursion is a sober, warts-and-all look at the affective experience of the urban places in relation to his own past, prompting him to re-orientate his emotional investment in the terrain of streetscape. Here, the practice of walking is a method of counteracting the alienation and nihilism that are entrenched in the numbing spectacle of urban nightlife. The nightwalking prompts a critical moment of self-reflexivity, returning the narrator to the past and transforming the mundane reality of everyday life into a liminal space to react against the conformity and homogeneity of the spatial and social environments.

Throughout the novel, the narrative is both fragmented and episodic: one scene immediately after another. That, one could argue, mimics New York's hurtling streets maximizing neoliberal productivity. There is an imperative to speed up in the city, ideologically eliminating the time and space and maximizing the profits in the neoliberal mode of production. Trapped in this circuit of repetitive, fast-paced urban psyche, the narrator's nightwalking in contrast adopts a filmic long-take approach—less fragmentary and more focused on a single experience—through which the narrator can freely and leisurely, although reluctantly, ramble on

¹⁷ Guy Debord explains that the aim of psychogeography is “to study of the precise laws and specific effects of the geographical milieu, consciously planned or not, acting directly on the affective comportment of individuals. The adjective psychogeographic, preserving a rather amusing vagueness, can thus be applied to the data ascertained though this type of investigation, to the effects of their influence on human feelings, and even more generally to any situation or any conduct that seems to arise from the same spirit of discovery” (“Introduction to a Critique of Urban Geography,” 59).

the sidewalks while unfolding his emotional connections with the neighbourhoods. This one continuous strolling, emphasizing the influence of urban topography on emotions and behaviours, creates an organic experience of re-imagining the everyday space by entering the metaphysical space of the interior self—a psychological re-evaluation of the self that ultimately contrasts with the more absurdist ending of *Nightwood*.

Another scene helps anchor this key point, when the narrator meditates on strolling “without any firm destination in mind.” He explains:

You find yourself walking the Village, pointing out landmarks and favorite townhouses. Only yesterday you would have considered such a stroll too New Jersey for words, but tonight you remember how much you used to like this part of the city. The whole neighborhood smells of Italian food. The streets have friendly names and cut weird angles into the rectilinear map of the city. The buildings are humble in scale and don't try to intimidate you. (93-94)

In contrast with his daytime walking, which largely engages with consumerist elements on the streets, the nightwalking experience here is mundane and ordinary: there is no sensualist description of the night or glamorous spectacle of nightlife. It is through this ordinary activity that enables him to experience the bodily sensation that automobility is unable to provide. In the previous night's stroll, the smell of Italian bakery that he used to buy croissants in mornings reminds him of his emotional attachment to his past and his loss of the city due to the mass gentrification under Reaganomics. Sharon Zukin suggests that the development of global urbanism under neoliberal economic agenda forcefully leads to a destruction of authenticity in the city. An integral part of neoliberal urban lifestyle, the upscaling nightlife, which plays a central role in McInerney's novel, has brought “an undesirable change in urban experience” for

everyday dwelling (Zukin “Changing Landscapes,” 545). “Global urbanism is not only a source and symptom of economic crisis,” Zukin argues further, “it also connects to a crisis of authenticity” (545).

At the same time, this night walk also exposes that the narrator can only appreciate the city through a tourist view. As he shows his new companion Vicky his old neighbourhood, the narrator turns the Village’s Italian food, narrow streets, small-scale architectures into an urban consumption of the exotic and reminiscent place. He transforms his nostalgia into a tourist view of the city. In her exploration of “literary gentrification,”¹⁸ Zukin comments on McInerney’s fictional avatar who could only view the city as a tourist: “Now the food smells are pleasantly ethnic rather than putrid; the streets and townhouses are small-scale, reminiscent of civil society. Unlike the weirdness in the human landscape, the tourist landscape is not intimidating” (*Landscapes of Power*, 36). This tourist view, of course, contrasts with his yuppie status, whose ownership and membership of the city is the core property to constitute his identity; but he could only appreciate the city as an outsider here.

While walking during the night, the narrator often drifts between his past and present. However, he understands as little about the past as the present. His nightwalking always renders a quasi-confession for reclaiming his own history and regaining authenticity. He revisits the old neighbourhood of the Village that reminds his “starting out;” but it does not liberate him from the pursuit of neoliberal happiness and the loss of his authenticity in the yuppie fable. The

¹⁸ Zukin borrows the term “literary gentrification” from Bill Sharpe and Leonard Wallock’s book, *Visions of the Modern City: Essays in History, Art, and Literature* (1987). In her book *Landscapes of Power: From Detroit to Disney World* (1993), Zukin looks at the literary landscape within postmodern fiction and explores the fictional characters in relation to the urban mass gentrification. She says that the characters in McInerney’s text and Bret Easton Ellis’ short stories *Less Than Zero* (1985) as “a college-educated, quasi-professional and quasi-intellectual group of young people who connect in some way with the arts” (*Landscapes of Power*, 35). Zukin writes: “Affluent or not, these characters represent the economic motif of growth amid decay that is so typical of the concept of *gentrification*. This turn reflects the social motif of regional dualism, a worrisome aspect of structural change” (*Landscapes of Power*, 35; italic in original).

familiar places and sights prompt the memories of his younger self; walking in the village, thus, is a quest for self-transformation. However, the reclamation of his own history does not successfully enable him to reclaim other things as the consumption of authenticity (such as food and architecture) leads to further gentrification in the Village, which has become one of the most expensive real estates in New York City. Nostalgia does not necessary brings about transformation. As New Urbanists continues celebrating the Village's traditional patterns of neighbourhood (as an exercise in nostalgia), urban sociologist Neil Smith has diagnosed that gentrification has been "a central feature of this new urbanism" (430) and later has led to "the centralization of capital" in the metropolitan area especially under neoliberal economic globalism (432). Therefore, the resolution of the narrator's quasi-confessional nightwalking is surprisingly unsatisfying. Beneath the self-confidence of the yuppie class, the self-destruction and self-exile is simply a prolonged adolescence, fecklessly indulging in narcissistic melancholy.

Towards the end of the novel, his brother Michael pays him an unexpected visit as his family could not reach him through the telephone. During Michael's visit, we learn that the narrator married Amanda because he attempted to replace a female figure in his life while his mother was dying from cancer as his mother was the only female figure in his family.¹⁹ He recalls: "After the funeral it seemed as if you were wandering around your own interior looking for signs of life, finding nothing but empty rooms and white walls. You kept waiting for the onset of grief. You are beginning to suspect it arrived nine months later, disguised as your response to Amanda's departure" (162). Michael's visit promises a redemptive moment, leading to a flashback that connects the disparate threads about his past while bringing familial and

¹⁹ The oldest child in his family, the narrator has three younger brothers, Michael as well as the twins Peter and Sean.

personal support to his decline of authenticity (or self-exile). And yet as in *Nightwood*, such redemption is ultimately denied. The narrator is unwilling to share his guilt of self-exile and grief. Even his semi-repentant conversations with Vicky and Michael—the seemingly *bona fide* moments—do not result in any significant change or disclose any important sources that constitute his identity.

The novel ends with the narrator's final nocturnal odyssey on foot, once again, ambulating the nighttime streets without a clear destination—avoiding going back *home*, an empty signifier for him. This time, on Canal Street in Lower Manhattan, he decides to walk because he is unable to find a taxi. Once again, he is distracted by the smell of fresh bread which reminds the narrator of his late mother who baked bread with “this same aroma” when he returned from college (180). He says: “As you approach, the smell of bread washes over you like a gentle rain. You inhale deeply, filling your lungs. Tears come to your eyes, and you feel such a rush of tenderness and pity that you stop beside a lamppost and hang on for support” (181). Then a tourist spot with a reputation for its street vendors selling counterfeits (such as bootleg CDs, knock off jewellery and bags, and replicas of Rolex watches that are typically associated with New York infringers),²⁰ Canal Street, unlike other areas of downtown New York, is yet to be overwhelmed by mass gentrification even today (Phelan n.p.). The nightwalking here reorients the narrator's mental engagement with the city and leads him to an unfamiliar street to regain a familiar feeling—a feeling of belonging and familial support. Once more, he is walking at a corner during night and anxiously yearning for a self-transformation.

²⁰ In his 1987 *New York Times* article, architecture critic Joseph Giovannini describes Canal Street as “New York's attic and garage” where tourists and locals enjoy the scenes of street vendors during the 1980s (n.p.).

On some level, the novel is a long tease for all the narrator's confessions of indiscretions through the reluctant act of nightwalking. In this last scene, he finally confesses his fear and failure, feeling "a rush of tenderness and pity" (182). He approaches a tattooed man and trades his Ray-Bans sunglasses for "a bag of hard rolls" (182). He continues:

You get down on your knees and tear open the bag. The smell of warm dough envelops you. The first bite sticks in your throat and you almost gag. You will have to go slowly. You will have to learn everything all over again. (182)

This humanizing ending contrasts with the ending in *Nightwood*, which also involved the kneeling as Robin who enacts a barking dog. In McInerney's final scene, instead of continuing his walk—which begins a promise of transformation, the narrator stops and succumbs to a bag of bread which he sees as a salvage of authentic self and nostalgic feeling. As he gets down on his knees—an act of religious praying to address a solemn request to a deity (such as asking for forgiveness or guidance), he desires a metamorphosis. While admitting that he has to "go slowly" (working against the high speed and efficiency that has been his life of consumption), the narrator's focus on learning hails a cautious new beginning. Mike Featherstone points out that the postmodern consumer culture deprives us of a connection to the real and it further leads to a nostalgia for the real (58-60). At the same time, the narrator obfuscates his own analysis when he mentions his family or past. His nightwalking are attempts to transform himself. McInerney asserted that he "*thought* he was writing a book about someone coming to terms with failure" (qtd. in Girard 173). Indeed, the mantle of success passes on to Amanda White and Tad Allagash, as Girard has pointed out (174). In the end, in looking at the narrator from the vantage point of nightwalking, he returns not only to confront rock bottom and grief but comes to a realization: to slow down in consumption. From the vantage of the thematic of urban walking at

night, both *Nightwood* and *Bright Lights* enable their protagonists to survive the uncertainty that comes from failure, loss and absence. This tension is also in the foreground of the next chapter, which addresses urban walking against the backdrop of post-9/11 tensions in a city shaped by immigration and ethnic and cultural alterity.

Chapter Five:

Walking the Post-9/11 Metropolis: Literary Paradigms of Reconstruction in Joseph O'Neill's *Netherland* and Teju Cole's *Blind Spot* and *Open City*

The walks met a need: they were a release from the tightly regulated mental environment of work, and once I discovered them as therapy, they became the normal thing, and I forgot what life had been like before I started walking. Work was a regimen of perfection and competence, and it neither allowed improvisation nor tolerated mistakes. ... The streets served as a welcome opposite to all that. Every decision—where to turn left, how long to remain lost in thought in front of an abandoned building, whether to watch the sun set over New Jersey, or to lope in the shadows on the East Side looking across to Queens—was inconsequential, and was for that reason a reminder of freedom.

– Teju Cole, *Open City* (7; ellipsis added)

To walk is to lack a place.

– Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* (103)

In the first epigraph, the urban walking practiced by Teju Cole's protagonist, Julius, a Nigerian-born medical resident in psychiatry at the Columbia Presbyterian Hospital in New York, offers a cathartic experience and quotidian therapy. The street connotes release from tension, whereby each turn in his promenade is an assertion of his freedom, as well as a celebration of the inconsequential and fleeting nature of sauntering. Published a decade after the fall of the Twin Towers, the novel has been hailed as a post-9/11 novel, written with a meditative reflectiveness achieved with a decade's distance from the shock.

9/11 was the defining moment of the new millennium prompting American military intervention, political polarization, and much international tension.¹ Some scholars have seen the event as a turning point creating new social and cultural narratives.² Specifically, the beginning of the twentieth-first century witnessed a cascading of literary responses towards the catastrophic events and their aftershocks. British writer Martin Amis has suggested that the events marked “the apotheosis of the postmodern-era—the era of images and perception” (qtd. in Houen, 419). By configuring the trauma of 9/11 into the rhetoric of loss and grief, many city novels in the early twentieth-first century deal with the urban destruction through a return to a conventional pattern of domestic life, especially the typical white American middle-class family. This template is evident, for example, in Don DeLillo’s *Falling Man* (2008), Jay McInerney’s *The Good Life* (2006), and Ken Kalfus’ *A Disorder Peculiar to the Country* (2006). Other literary works, such as Jonathan Safran Foer’s *Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close* (2005) and Amy Waldman’s *Submission* (2011), dramatize the need for both individual and collective healing from this unprecedented rupture in American urban history. In addition, the reimagination of the events and the consequences of the aftermath prevail in the pages of many immigrant novels, including Mohsin Hamid’s *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* (2007) and H. M. Naqvi’s *Home Boy* (2009).

¹ Anne-Marie Slaughter sees the case of military actions in international politics after the 9/11 events as a defining point of the end of the twentieth century. She writes that “From the vantage point of 2011, however, it is far more likely that historians will see 9/11 as the catalyst for the end of twentieth-century warfare: large-scale, multi-year deployments requiring the conquest, control and longterm stabilisation and reconstruction of foreign territory” (Fidler, et al 5). Other scholars such as Jack Spence and Aaron L Friedberg share a similar argument that the 9/11 was the poignant moment in the shaping the twentieth first century era. (See details in Stephen Fidler, et al’s writings in “Reflections on the 9/11 Decade”).

² Jasbir Puar sees the 9/11 events as “a particular turning point or a central generator of desires for expediency, rapidity, political innovativeness” (xviii). “As metaphor,” she argues, “9/11 reflects particular spatial and temporal narratives and also produces spatializing and temporalizing discourses” (xxvi).

With the literary imagination revolving around these events over almost two decades, the resulting novels have become sociologically and politically complex, while also querying aesthetics. Literary critic Richard Gray sees many of the post-9/11 novels disavowing the public life altered by the events. He argues that those fictional accounts on the events “simply assimilate the unfamiliar into familiar structure” by overemphasizing the “emotional entanglement” of their characters within a domesticated sphere (“Open Doors,” 134). This leads to the aesthetic limitations of many post-9/11 texts, he argues, with novels failing to find a way to cope with the strangeness and disorientation in the public sphere. In Gray’s view, the destructive events and their aftermath in politics and everyday culture create a liminal condition. In this transitional situation, Americans find themselves “situated at a peculiarly awkward meeting place between the culture(s) of the nation and the culture of the global marketplace – and, perhaps above all, faced with the challenge of new forms of otherness that are at best virulently critical and at worst obscenely violent” (*After the Fall*, 18). Gray’s words expose the challenges that writers face in articulating and reimagining the conflicting interests and practices as well as the new relationship with otherness in the early twentieth first century. Echoing Gray’s argument on the need for writers to rethink the post-9/11 city as a transcultural space, Kristiaan Versluys envisions that the central concerns expressed in 9/11 fiction would be “less directly related to the experience of trauma” and more focused on “the confrontation with the Other” (183).

While most post-9/11 fiction focuses on narrating the events per se, Joseph O’Neill’s *Netherland* (2008) and Teju Cole’s *Open City* (2011) deal with the continuous and unrelenting aftereffects of the 9/11 events. They are concerned with the aesthetic, political, ethical, and ethnic challenges of the event as they explore the quotidian city life that emerges in the wake of

the fall of the Twin Towers.³ Thematizing urban walking, the two novels create a literary case study to explore the context of the post-9/11 city as a neoliberal public space embedded in the aftermath of urban destruction. With grief at the core, these novels point to the need for cultural healing and the reconciliation with otherness. Each novel's grieving and alienated protagonist enacts urban walking to re-formulate individual and collective subjectivities in the post-9/11 city. In both novels, urban walking is involved in identity reconstruction, galvanizing the cosmopolitan imagination as well as engaging the global migration and multi-culturalism of the early twenty-first-century American megacity.

As I argue, urban walking provides a liminal space for insightful imagining of a new way of being in the post-9/11 immigrant city, while coping with the social and political tensions and the aftereffects of massive trauma. Thus urban walking renders a literary potential to recreate a mode of experience of the city; however, it also represents a kind of social hermeneutics, alongside its limitations, to perform pedestrian walking as a cultural critique for imagining new personal and collective renewal.

Walking With/Out Purpose: Joseph O'Neill's *Netherland*

Published seven years after 9/11, *Netherland* presents an outsider's point of view of New York City marked by the trauma. Dutch-Irish-American author Joseph O'Neill (1964 -) had begun writing the novel when the Twin Towers fell, and the dramatic events compelled him to shift the

³ See also Deena Dinat's Master's thesis, "Rereading the City: Race, Space, and Mobility in Post 9/11 New York" (University of British Columbia, 2015). He juxtaposes O'Neill's *Netherland* with Cole's *Open City* to argue that both texts take "post-9/11 New York City as a landscape that focalizes concerns of mobility, race, and the city." While he mounts a case arguing that the racialized characters (especially the minor figures in the novels) render a radical critique of the post-9/11 city, my approach departs from his approach especially in the case of treating Julius as a black flâneur. Instead, my approach focuses on the failure of Julius' attempt to personify a flâneur.

novel's thematic to incorporate the immediate post-9/11 confusion and anxiety. One of the novel's major threads is the effect of 9/11 on the Dutch-born émigré protagonist and narrator Hans van den Broek's family relationship. The novel's second thematic thread explores the emotional fall-out that follows 9/11, registering the confusion, anxiety, and disintegration. Although he is a banker and investment analyst on Wall Street, Hans van den Broek is also a perennial daydreamer during his walks through the city. He lives in a fashionable Tribeca loft with his British-born wife, Rachel, and their son, Jake, but after 9/11, the couple's marriage disintegrates and Rachel returns to London with their son. She is a lawyer and disgusted with the social effects of Bush's war on terror. Hans stays back in New York and moves into the Chelsea Hotel; alone and increasingly alienated, at first commuting to London every fortnight. By the novel's end, more positively, he reunites with and essentially rebuilds his family in London, and the novel unfolds from that narrative perspective and point of departure. In a way, *Netherland* is Hans' account of his New York memory in flashback, taking readers inside the emotional—often paranoid and angry—atmosphere in the two years immediately following 9/11.

While Hans' cartographical mobility is remarkable, his urban voyage is nonetheless not about exploration and discovery or collecting of urban debris to constellate a new image of the city. He is a newcomer to New York after accepting his new position there, and still "capable of marveling even at the traffic lights on Amsterdam Avenue, a red muddle that as you cross the street organize itself into eternally tapering emerald duos" (91). In the beginning, Hans' long walks echo Michel de Certeau's idea of "walking in the city," emphasizing the individualized tactical reading of the city as a cultural text. It's worth recalling in detail de Certeau's influential text describing his experience of seeing Manhattan from the 110th floor of the then-World Trade Centre *before* its catastrophic destruction. As de Certeau writes:

The ordinary practitioners of the city live “down below,” below the thresholds at which visibility begins. They walk – an elementary form of this experience of the city; they are walkers ... whose bodies follow the thicks and thins of an urban “text” they write without being able to read it. These practitioners make use of spaces that cannot be seen; their knowledge of them is as blind as that of lovers in each other’s arms. (93; ellipsis added)

De Certeau sees the practice of walking as a form of re-writing and re-mapping the city on the street level. De Certeau’s pedestrian citizens invest places with meaning, memory, and desire; and through walking the streets, the city becomes de-objectified from authoritative knowledge, hegemonic discourse and oppressive consumer logic. “Walking in the city” empowers walkers to reinvent the city for themselves. In this process, as de Certeau writes, “Talking, which alternately follows a path and has followers, creates a mobile organicity in the environment, a sequence of phatic topoi” (99). Hans fulfills the mission of de Certeau’s pedestrian walkers whose creative resistance can challenge the underlying strategy of built forms and question the instituted spatial arrangement.

Walking plays a key role in Hans’ coping and grieving. Even before the traumatic assault on the Trade Centre, Hans walked the neighbourhood of Manhattan. During the first few weeks in the city, before he started the new post, he spent some leisure time “trying out the part of flâneur” and “watching the C-SPAN coverage of the impeachment proceedings” (91). The narrative pays evident homage to the tradition of flânerie, but from the beginning, Hans’ urban walking also performs a therapeutic intervention. Drawing on the Romantic nature tradition of

Rousseau, Emerson, and Thoreau,⁴ the novel evokes walking's cathartic function—alluding also to its capacity to restore the fractured self to itself and society. Hans fits Thoreau's motto, as the nature philosopher articulated in his essay "Walking": "*Ambulator nascitur, non fit*," walkers are born, not made (658). Thus, more than revisit nostalgic feelings, I argue, Hans walks to restore and reconstruct his identity after the material and emotional devastation.

Walking through pre-9/11 New York, Hans recalls his childhood in Holland, his young adult life in London, and his marriage. He recuperates these personal memories through ambulatory remembrance, his physical walking merging his personal memories and daydreams with snippets of New York life and city scenes. Having lived in different cities and countries, Hans longs for a sense of home. Indeed, he started to walk as a coping mechanism after the loss of his mother, approximately a year before 9/11. Hans explains: "After my mother's death I began taking long walks to Chinatown and Seward Park and the old Seaport area, pushing baby Jake in his stroller. On summery Pearl or Ludlow or Mott I'd find respite from our apartment and its transformation into a kind of parental coal mine, and walk and walk until I reached a state of fancifulness, of indeterminately hopeful receptiveness, which seemed to me an end in itself and as good as it got. These walks were, I guess, a mild form of somnambulism—the product of a coal-miner's exhaustion and automatism" (93). While I will return to the idea of somnambulism later in this chapter, the location he identifies requires a closer look. Mott Street, a southbound, one-way street through Chinatown, takes Hans through the earliest Chinese immigrant quarter, the home of a more than century-old Chinese immigrant community. Between 2000 and 2010,

⁴ "In my walks I would fain return to my senses," Henry David Thoreau writes in his 1862 essay "Walking" (659). Developed in the late nineteenth century, the literary and philosophical movement of transcendentalism emphasized subjective intuition over objective empiricism and celebrated the inherent goodness of nature and human beings. For transcendentalists, like Thoreau and Emerson, walking was a spiritual act but typically involved walking in the woods or the mountains.

the area witnessed a high influx of high-income non-Asian professionals and its streets were becoming increasingly popular for non-Asian pedestrians. Through these long walks, feeling his mother's presence beside him like a Virgil figure to Dante, Hans belongs to this group, contemplating on his walk his past, present, and future, the latter connected with the baby in his stroller. As he "was abetted by the streets of New York City" (93), Hans hoped to create new home with his wife and son in the city, but 9/11 changes his world dramatically.

In the post-9/11 city, Hans' walking follows his acute awareness of trauma, grief, and alienation. Living alone in a hotel and separated from his family, Hans' sense of homesickness intensifies amid the unsettling disorientation. New York has become a space of displacement, "the unanswerable, conspiratorial place" (93). The once familiar space is beset with a new uncertainty as the awareness of "ground zero" has destroyed Hans' sense of stability and orientation physically and symbolically; he skeptically queries his prior identity as "the desirer who'd walked its streets" (93). "Life itself had become disembodied. My family, the spine of my days, had crumbled. I was lost in invertebrate time," Hans comments on his post-9/11 New York life (30). Hans' fragile sense of identity is shattered. When authorities refuse to accept his driver's licence and he has to re-take his driving tests, Hans feels oppressed by heightened suspicions against non-Americans. Realizing his peculiar *un-Americanness* as a resident who does not hold American citizenship, he feels oppressed: "under the secret actuation of unjust, indifferent power" (68).⁵ The effects of President Bush's declaration of a war on terror gives

⁵ The immediate aftermath of the 9/11 events led to the militarization of the urban space under America's so-called "war on terror." This discourse also has a pervasive influence on other areas of social activities and services including the implementation of militarized checkpoints: people need to present their identity cards to prove their citizenship, residency and identity.

Hans “a nauseating sense of America” (69), complicating his attempts to make a home in his adopted country.

Hans starts to explore, shape, and reclaim his shaken identity through the act of walking. For example, one day in January 2003, on his way back to Chelsea Hotel, Hans chooses to take a long ramble. Unlike most of his pre-9/11 walks along predictable paths, this one is unplanned and its sightings unexpected. To Hans, it reveals a different side of the city, an alternative to the familiar streets and quarters. At the Greeley Square Park near Broadway and Thirty-second street, he reports:

I decided to walk homeward down Broadway. The route, unfamiliar to me,
passed through the old Tin Pan Alley quarter, blocks now given over to
wholesalers and street vendors and freight forwarders and import-exporters—
UNDEFEATED WEAR COPR, SPORTIQUE, DA JUMP OFF, signs
proclaimed—dealing in stuffed toys, caps, novelties, human hair, two-dollar
belts, one-dollar neckties, silver perfumes, leather goods, rhinestones,
streetwear, watches. (69)

Located on West 28th Street, the old Tin Pan Alley Historic District is a long-established neighbourhood of music shops and former sheet music publishers. Through this stroll, Hans discovers the previously uncharted or unnoticed places. In addition to the street scene, Hans encounters a different crowd of city dwellers, as he observes: “Arabs, West Africans, African Americans hung out on the sidewalks among goods trucks, dollies, pushcarts, food carts, heaped trash, boxes and boxes of merchandise. I might have been in a cold Senegal” (69). Hans immerses in a world of “Black-skinned buyers carrying garbage bags” (69). He passes shoppers dressed alternately in leather jackets or fur coats, in African robes or tracksuits, busy with

heckling or speaking on cell phones. As Hans takes walks through these new territories of the city, new images and narratives begin to replace the familiar images of urban Manhattan.

Walking narratives in fiction do not simply document the street or the city, as Nathalie Cochoy has pointed out, but recreate a new feeling and a new experience of the city. She suggests that “the motif of walking initiates a transition from *mimesis* to *poiesis*, from an *imitating* to a *making* urban space, in an artistic gesture that aesthetically ethically reveals the value of the ordinary” (45). In *Netherland*, Hans’ travelling and exploring on foot galvanizes an important transition. As an urban wayfarer of sorts, he re-navigates the repertoire of New York’s spatial imagination in order to recast a primary interface between himself and the post-9/11 urban space. Throughout the novel, there are many such pedestrian passages, using as a literary technique a non-hierarchical, paratactic listing of alternate city images as seen above. These ambulatory passages not only sustain a nuanced link between urban walking and the politics of spatial aesthetics but also suspend the labour of cross-cultural translation.

Soon Hans’ exploratory urban journey extends beyond the Manhattan downtown core. He wants to discover, or more precisely to re-explore—on foot and at street level—what New York is about after the 9/11 events. These walks bring him to the peripheral neighbourhoods of the city, especially to Staten Island, Queens, and Brooklyn. These walks unfold new locales that are not part of New York’s popular literary and cultural spatial narratives, allowing him to discover entirely new spaces and cultural activities. Among them are Randolph Walker Park (known for its cricket and tennis games), Idlewild Park (where many cricket legends played), Marine Park (near Brooklyn and a former hunting and fishing ground for Indigenous Americans), and Monroe

Cohen Ballfield (near the Belt Parkway), to name but a few.⁶ Through those walks, Hans discovers the city's cricket subculture—what will soon become an important theme in the novel. Cricket is an instant reminder of his childhood identity growing up in the metropolis of The Hague in the Netherlands, reminding readers also of the colonial past, the sport being popular in the West Indian and South Asian regions.⁷ This sport reverberates with Hans' Dutch heritage problematizing the perception of otherness and cultural alterity in the post-9/11 city. "In *Netherland* cricket functions as a reassuring and transnationally relevant activity," Karolina Golimowska has argued, noting that the game brings "coherence to the otherwise fragmented reality" (231). In her essay on the role of cricket in the novel, Golimowska also suggests that Hans navigates the city while "looking for something that is difficult to grasp or describe" (235)—thus, as I argue, he walks to search for some kind of renewal and unfamiliar scenes in the familiar city to cope with the post-9/11 devastation.

Unlike American football or baseball games, which produce dramatic spectacles for consumerist purposes by celebrating American masculinity, cricket is a traditional bat-and-ball game with deep roots in 16th century England. While Hans belongs to the economically privileged "global business class," representing Wall Street "corporate masculinity," to apply Michael Kimmel's sociological terminology,⁸ Hans finds himself increasingly drawn to the "exotic cricket circle" which offers new racial and social class dimensions of the city. This fringe

⁶ Hans identifies the locations by street names during his pre-9/11 walks; but his post-9/11 walks often reveal the specific site names of the previously uncharted places.

⁷ Anthropologist Arjun Appadurai writes that for the game cricket was "the key to their [Indians] own entry into the cosmopolitan world of big-time cricket. Such players were thus able to achieve some measure of mobility through cricket and to introduce a considerable degree of class complexity into Indian cricket, a complexity that persists today" (95).

⁸ "Globalization's well-dressed *Homo economicus* was pushed aside by the reemergence of *Homo Reaganomicus*—the recharged militarized masculinity of the Bush-Cheney years," sociologist Michael Kimmel writes about the post-9/11 American masculinity (7).

side of the city has “no intersection with the circumstances of my everyday life,” Hans says (19). As he immerses in cricket culture, his teammates, as he observes, “variously originated from Trinidad, Guyana, Jamaica, India, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka” (10). “I was the only white man I saw on the cricket fields of New York,” Hans reports (10). The cricket game in New York thus directs readers’ attention to the black and brown bodies that are conceived as the Other. For many white Americans, they represented the enemy manufactured in post-9/11 social and political narratives. Hans, an immigrant in the United States, found unlikely allies with those who personified the Other under a racialized and militarized masculinity promoted in the post-9/11 reality of cultural alterity and political propaganda.⁹

Hans’ new post-9/11 friend is Chuck Ramkissoon, whose eventual death prompts the narrator’s recollection, setting the plot of remembrance in motion. Chuck represents an optimistic, at times opportunist, worldview contrasting with the image of the disastrous and desperate city haunted by the 9/11 events. The spatial engagement in the marginalized communities and neighbourhoods marks his changed perception of an imagined immigrant city. Compared to Hans’ blasé attitude and highly calibrated wandering narratives before the 9/11 events, Hans’ post-9/11 stride is expressed through the reiterative performativity of paratactic listing, as seen when Hans and Chuck explore Coney Island Avenue in Brooklyn, and Hans witnesses the street in a flow of city images:

That low-slung, scruffily commercial thoroughfare that stands in almost surreal contrast to the tranquil residential blocks it traverses, a shoddily bustling strip of

⁹ It is not uncommon to use cricket as a metaphor for retrieving memories and reconstructing identities construction in post-9/11 literary fiction. For instance, in Moshin Hamind’s *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* (2007), the characters use cricket as a historical reference for their tracing back for their past memories. H. M. Naqvi’s *Home Boy* (2009), whose narrator is also named Chuck, uses cricket as a mediator to shape identities through childhood memories.

vehicles double-parked in front of gas stations, synagogues, mosques, beauty salons, bank branches, restaurants, funeral homes, auto-body shops, supermarkets, assorted small businesses proclaiming provenances from Pakistan, Tajikistan, Ethiopia, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Russia, Armenia, Ghana, the Jewry, Christendom, Islam: it was on Coney Island Avenue, on a subsequent occasion, that Chuck and I came upon a bunch of South African Jews, in full sectarian regalia, watching televised cricket with a couple of Rastafarians in the front of office of a Pakistani-run lumberyard. This miscellany was initially undetectable by me. It was Chuck ... who pointed everything out to me and made me see something of the real Brooklyn, as he called it. (146; ellipsis added)

Here, O'Neill's adopts a Joycean mode of narrating the street using the rhythm of the walk whose itinerant movement affords a cosmopolitan imagination. As Hans consumes these cultural objects—locations, churches, shops, and peoples, one can almost hear Walter Benjamin intone the cultural relevancy of this walking. As Benjamin writes in "The Flaneur's Return": "The city as mnemonic for the solitary walker evokes more than his childhood and youth, more than its own history" (xiv). As Hans walks through the immigrant communities and navigates those sights of the city previously unnoticed, he crosses the boundaries of culture and ethnicity. From the Manhattan downtown core to the fringe immigrant communities in Queens and Brooklyn, and from his Wall Street urban elite circle to the "black and brown" cricket teammates, Hans' walking transcends the borders, not only the border of ethnic and social class groups but also nationalities. His physical walking, commensurate with Benjamin's thinking, assumes symbolical and historical significance. For example, the reader is reminded that in the 17th century, the southern side of Manhattan Island was called New Amsterdam and was the hub of

its colonial government in New Netherland. Located on the east coast of the United States, what is now New York, New Jersey, Connecticut and Delaware, New Netherland was a Dutch colony, which was lost to the British a century later. The novel's title, *Netherland*, alludes to the city's complex colonial history giving the novel a postcolonial emphasis.

O'Neill presents many scenes with similar pedestrian foci, inducing a multicultural image of the immigrant city. These scenes demonstrate his own reconstruction of New York as a postcolonial space of transnational and cross-cultural hybridity. Further, Hans' movements also transcend his own communal, spatial, and cultural attachments in order to give allegiance to a borderless, cosmopolitan, and de-territorialized post-national community against the territorial dimension in nationalism, which was elevated in political discourses after the 9/11 assault on New York. Specifically, Hans' walking disputes the binary narrative of terrorism and counterterrorism resulting from the racial profiling implemented in the wake of 9/11 to assuage anxiety. But does this borderless walking attain a political aim? Does it enable freedom and engender a feeling of belonging? Does such a perambulatory cosmopolitanism present a model for reconciliation in the post-9/11 world of social disruption and ethnic tension?

O'Neill's literary technique provides insights. On one hand, the "miscellany" presented by the outings on foot concretizes the immigrant city and provides the building blocks for the immigrant novel. The expansive list avoids a hierarchy among each element, creating a bond between them without any ranking or borders. The de-territorialized cosmopolitanism is activated and celebrated, as is the city's globalized outlook. His strategy averts cultural appropriation by not adopting descriptive elements of a specific culture of which Hans does not hold a membership. On the other hand, however, the paratactic listing also implies his emotional detachment—paralleling his lack of meaningful communication and his withdrawal of emotional

attachment from loved ones and friends. As Hans sees and lists his teammates and other immigrants, he does not truly engage with them. Through Hans, readers become spectators, passing through the immigrant communities while gazing upon the “miscellany” loosely assembled from different cultures and ethnicities, a gaze that risks fetishizing multicultural subjectivity.

Hans extends his mobility through digital walking. After Rachel and Jake return to London, Hans spends the evenings and nights navigating Google Maps,¹⁰ digitally walking through some familiar places in England. “There was no movement in my marriage, either,” Hans says, “but, flying on Google’s satellite function, night after night I surreptitiously travelled to England” (123). Just like his physical strolling in New York, this cyber walk through London shows Hans’ freedom of moving across borders, emphasizing his borderless cosmopolitan identity. These digital walks reveal his longing for family attachment, and his nostalgic hovering over his wife and child. Each night he returns to his son’s house, lingering over the spaces connected with his son, from his son’s dormer window to his inflatable toy pool. Mediated by technology, these walks from his domestic setting relegate him to the position of a flâneur cum observer, “meander[ing] from the confines of physical rooms across, beyond and through virtual windows, via digital flânerie,” as Ying-Lan Dann and Liz Lambrou have described the phenomenon of digital flânerie in their COVID-19 inspired study (149). Digital flânerie can be practiced within a domestic location, “using computer screens and digital applications as *sites*” (149). As Hans zooms in and out on Google Maps, he performs a digital touring that extends his privilege and freedom of de-territorialized movements. This digital flânerie precisely recalls

¹⁰ O’Neill’s novel, published in 2008, is mainly set between 2001 to 2003 while Google Maps was officially launched on February 8, 2005. Thus, what Hans refers to as Google Maps is Google Earth, which was launched on June 11, 2001.

Benjamin's account of the flâneur who goes for a walk in his room. In his *Arcades Project*, Benjamin describes a boy, Johannes, who was distressed about not being allowed to go for a walk. Then his father suggested "that they walk up and down the room hand in hand. That seemed at first a poor substitute, but in fact ... something quite novel awaited him" (421; ellipsis added). Just as the physical room becomes a space for Johannes' imaginative flânerie, so for Hans, the multi-directionality of the digital medium becomes a new form of flânerie: a new enclosed and networked arcade.

This interior focus of digital flânerie is all the more appropriate, as in many ways, O'Neill's protagonist is a drifter. In a passage cited earlier, Hans is linked to somnambulism like Djuna Barnes's Robin Vote, the nocturnal somnambulist with whom he shares a desperate sense of dislocation; like Robin, Hans is involved in a disintegrating relationship, lives in hotels, and tries to escape an oppressive sense of exile through walking. Somnambulism is the state in-between sleep and wakefulness, punctured by involuntary acts of walking that can be dangerous due to the walker's disorientation, impairment, and confusion. As an automatism, somnambulism leaves the walker with little agency, their condition prompting involuntary actions. This drifting attitude is evident in his friendship with Chuck, who presents his complimentary opposite. Where Hans dreams without acting, Chuck acts decisively. For example, when they first meet, Hans asks Chuck about his national origin, and Chuck assertively says, "The United States" (17) without mentioning his immigrant status from Trinidad. Chuck drives a 1996 Cadillac, which Hans describes as "a patriotic automobile aflutter and aglitter with banners and stickers of the Stars and Stripes and yellow ribbons in support of the troops" (74). Where Hans is non-committal, Chuck is a Jay Gatsby figure with a belief in the American dream and a passionate attachment to the idea of America as connected with the promise of opportunity and freedom.

Chuck remains optimistic and hopeful even after the fall of the Twin Towers. His belief in the American dream comes alive in his entrepreneurial effort to build a dedicated cricket field and make the game of cricket become popular in New York and even in America. And yet, Chuck ends up dead like Fitzgerald's hero. Conversely, Hans dwells in nostalgia and melancholia, galvanized by his exploration of the city through walking the peripheral and marginal immigrant communities. Hans's digital *flânerie* and commuter life remind us of philosopher Martha Nussbaum's argument that cosmopolitanism does not offer a refuge. As she writes: "Becoming a citizen of the world is often a lonely business. It is, in effect, as Diogenes said, a kind of exile—from the comfort of local truths, from the warm nestling feeling of patriotism, from the absorbing drama of pride in oneself and one's own" (161).¹¹

As O'Neill depicts the post-9/11 city through quotidian trivial details recorded at the street level through Hans' urban walking, the author deliberately shifts the reader's scrutiny away from the graphic and gruesome documentary images of the events or the Hollywood-style glamorized and voyeuristic disaster spectacles. Nonetheless, as these events remain the backdrop of the literary city, and the protagonist travels on foot to avoid the areas near the traumatized grounds, the novel communicates through indirection and aesthetic avoidance. As the narrator puts it: "Sometimes to walk in shaded parts of Manhattan is to be inserted into a Magritte: the street is night while the sky is day" (63). Hans' words invite readers to walk the streets of post-9/11 New York in order to experience the urban landscape somewhat like the surrealist paintings of René Magritte, portraying familiar objects in unfamiliar contexts. This hyperreal situation and

¹¹ In her 1994 essay "Patriotism and Cosmopolitanism," Martha Nussbaum argues that the defence of national cultures and values should transcend the borders classified by nationalities. Respect and appreciation should be rendered for universal humanity rather than to individual groups categorized by borders. The cosmopolitan image of the self thus results from this universal humanity value, which is upheld above individual tribes, ethnic groups and nation states. Nevertheless, Nussbaum also acknowledges that the borderless cosmopolitanism could deprive an individual of a sense of belonging.

aesthetic unfold Hans' nostalgia and complicates his cosmopolitan subjectivity. Thus, urban walking becomes a technique to de-familiarize the familiar city life.

By the end of the novel, after recalling and narrating his lonely life in New York, with the narrative punctuated by Chuck's death and Hans's memorializing of his life, Hans returns to London, and to his digital *flânerie* but from the opposite perspective, from the opposite side of the Atlantic. This time, reunited with his family, he sits in front of his computer screen at the kitchen table during a sleepless night. He zooms across the Atlantic Ocean, placing his view on Manhattan, and then digitally roams the peripheral side of the city. In this digital tour, a simulacrum of walking the city, Hans says:

I veer away into Brooklyn, over houses, parks, graveyards, and halt at olive-green coastal water. I track the shore. Gravesend and Gerritsen slide by, and there is Floyd Bennett Field's geometric sprawl of runways. I fall again, as low as I can. There's Chuck's field. It is brown—the grass has burned—but it is still there. There's no trace of a batting square. The equipment shed is gone. I'm just seeing a field. I stare at it for a while. (252)

The digital voyage takes Hans back to the cricket field that Chuck wanted to build for their cricket club. It was once named "Bald Eagle Field" to demonstrate Chuck's patriotic ethos and American dream. This technology-mediated visit pays tribute to Chuck, whose murder remains unsolved, the New York Police Department having closed the investigation. The cricket field, as a legacy of Chuck, is now dilapidated. Hans' digital *flânerie* becomes a commemorative walk, a memorial for his friend, even as he realizes that the traces of his life have already been erased from the field. His life's work already gone, his legacy invisible, the brown field doubles as a gravesite for Chuck. This mobilized digital gaze is unsettling, not only because Hans is mourning

his friend; he is also iterating his ambiguous cosmopolitan mobility that ironically indicates his privilege as a global citizen from Europe. Hans says: “From up here, though, a human’s movement is a barely intelligible thing. Where would he move to, and for what? There is no sign of nations, no sense of the work of man. There USA as such is nowhere to be seen” (252).

Hans’ digital and physical wayfaring is of a borderless perambulation—crossing the Atlantic Ocean and crossing New York City’s ethnical and cultural borders, perhaps best visualized by his digital *flânerie*. Such borderless walking demonstrates that nationality has little effect on his freedom of movement. But for refugees and labour migrants, nationality and ethnical boundaries still hold significant power in determining their personal freedom and material mobility. In the novel, for instance, while Hans’ peripatetic walks transcends the boundaries and embrace a borderless cosmopolitanism, his Brooklyn cricket friends and other immigrants do not share the same freedom to move freely. The tension between Hans’ walks across borders and the absence of borderless walking for other characters such as Chuck and their cricket teammates ironically reveals the grim reality of social and racial inequity. Philosopher Kwame Anthony Appiah has dubbed global citizens like Hans emblems of “[the] platinum frequent flyer cosmopolitanism.” Noting that forced or labour migrants do not share the same freedom, Appiah argues that most of them “do have legal freedom of movement very often, but they don’t have practical freedom of movement because it’s too expensive to go to the places they want to go to, like back home” (qtd in Appiah & Bhabha 189). Thus, the novel’s walking narratives exposes the ethnical imbalance and unjust pronouncement derived from the city’s multicultural imaginations.

Hans’ borderless crossing—his physical, digital, and symbolical walking—confirms the categories of origin and identity. In this sense, borderless walking does not promise a humanist

empathy and deep compassion, especially within the post-9/11 context. In the end, the story of O'Neill's *Netherland* is that of a privileged white city walker who is free to cross borders; he can afford to be a drifter in a way that Chuck cannot. In comparison with O'Neill's novel, Teju Cole's *Open City* introduces a rare literary case of a black pedestrian who tries to reconfigure the city's identity on foot while in search of his own identity.

“Flânerie is For Whites”: Teju Cole's *Blind Spot* and *Open City*

Taken from an aeroplane, one of the photographs (fig. 5.1) in Teju Cole's album *Blind Spot* (2017) offers a panoramic view of Manhattan. As Cole's description notes, he had captured “the real city that seemed to be matching, point for point, my memory of the model, which I had stared at for a long time from a ramp in the [Queens] museum” (94). However, the photo itself is in a haze without a clear contour of the city; New York's iconic grid cityscape is also invisible; the image itself clearly does not represent the ideal museum “model.” Instead, this blurred version of the city offers an atmospheric rendering as opposed to a documentary one, the image suggesting that the city's identity remains hidden or unknown, requiring the viewer to imagine it. Cole's dreamy panorama offers instead the perspective of a flâneur who imagines the city.

The title of the entire collection, *Blind Spot*, similarly problematizes vision. A blind spot is an obscuration of the visual field, and the title evokes the camera's and the viewer's limits: each act of viewing also entails seeing only a part of what is there. As an album, *Blind Spot* includes over 150 photographs of international cities including Lagos, Milan, Berlin that Cole has visited. In her preface to *Blind Spot*, New York novelist Siri Hustvedt writes: “Teju Cole jets from city to city. Teju Cole explores one outpost after another, and Teju Cole punctuates these flying leaps with visual and written records” (x).

The photographs started as a memory aid for the author to recall the scenery for his writing and teaching. He has captured them from the street level, rendering fleeting impressions of the cities titled in the caption. They depict mundane objects such as folding chairs, lamps, tables, even a fake Gucci bag; or candid street scenes with quotidian buildings. Sometimes, there are tarps and cloths, artistic drapery adding to the visual narratives. When humans are in the foreground, they typically show their backs, remaining anonymous and ephemeral city connections.¹² Still, as Cole asserts, “[the images] have an inquiring feeling to them and, in some cases, showed me more about the place than I might have seen otherwise” (324).

This inquiring feeling is discernable in a photo titled *New York City* (fig. 5.2). In the immediate foreground, it depicts the backs of two uniformed navy servicemen standing in front of a street sign with an arrow pointing toward the viewer and the inscription: “9/11 MEMORIAL.” Ignoring the signpost arrow, the two men are heading in the opposite direction. Cole’s text next to the photo reads:

I last walked in there on September 9, 2001. Since then, I’ve gone near it many times... but have been unable or unwilling to go into the plaza. Thirteen years pass. I finally return, in May 2015, with the camera as a mask. The fusion of dream and reality into a single reality.... One turns away to show what cannot otherwise be shown. The sense in turning away. The power of a gesture that speaks without being spoken to. (172; ellipsis added)

By the time Cole took the photo, in 2015, the National September 11 Memorial & Museum were

¹² These faceless figures refuse a temptation of identification. In this entire collection, only the last photo shows a human face, a boy in Brazzaville (322).

already open to the public and had become popular tourist spots in Manhattan.¹³ Cole's photo avoids a direct gaze upon these traumatic events. The camera gave him a critical distance from the events and the freedom to explore the site indirectly. As Cole mainly exposed the image on the bright uniform, emphasizing the dominant *whiteness* in the entire composition, the background in the photo remains uncomfortably dark and almost invisible. This harsh contrast was the result of the photographer's manipulation, as a camera's automatic system can easily even out the exposure in images. This harsh contrast, alongside the faceless human figures, allows viewers to stand back from the site of trauma. The traumatized scene can only be imagined but not openly shown. At the same time, the blurred and dark background signals a dramatic absence.

This photo, like others in *Blind Spot*, recall Cole's approach to the post-9/11 city in his 2011 novel *Open City*, where the urban environment is reflected through the experience of a black walker in search of identity. The novel's protagonist Julius is a cosmopolitan dandy, a medical resident whose dual heritage includes a late Nigerian father and an estranged German mother. Set between the fall of 2006 and the late summer of 2007, *Open City* does not dwell on 9/11; but like O'Neill's *Netherland*, it immerses readers in the post-9/11 atmosphere. Compared to O'Neill, Cole creates even more distance from the traumatic events. He does so by treating the post-9/11 city as a palimpsest, on which more than one text has been written. Walking near the ruins of the World Trade Centre, Julius says, "The place had become a metonym of its disaster: I remembered a tourist who once asked me how to get to 9/11: not the site of the events of 9/11 but to 9/11 itself, the date petrified into broken stones" (52). When he walks around the site,

¹³ The National September 11 Memorial was officially open on September 11, 2011, and the National September 11 Museum was open to victims' families on May 15, 2014 and to the public on May 21, 2014.

Julius retrieves the historical information and remarks that the 9/11 attack on the World Trade Center “was not the first erasure on the site” (58). He recalls the earlier moments of erasure: “Robinson Street, Laurens Street, College Place: all of them had been obliterated in the 1960s to make way for the World Trade Center buildings, and all were forgotten now” (59). Delving even deeper into the little-known history of the site, he recalls for readers the disappearance of the old Washington Market in the late 1800s following the erasure of the pre-Colombian space of Native Americans who has lived on the same site.

As Julius sums up: “The site was a palimpsest, as was all the city, written, erased, rewritten” (59). In this vein, the city’s trauma is a multilayered site—including spatial, temporal, historical and imaginary layers of realities and narratives. Its unfixed and fluid identity is analogous with a palimpsest, a manuscript or scroll whose writing has become obliterated to make room for later writings with a few traces nonetheless remaining visible. Julius’ walking in the palimpsest city reverberates with de Certeau’s idea of writing the city through “pedestrian speech acts” (97). Indeed, as the example above illustrates, Julius’ gait and movement spatially act out the urban fabric through the microscopic complexities of the streets; he unfolds and narrates each site with multiple layers of identities and history that are, in Julius’ words, “written, erased, rewritten.” The practice of walking thus affords a “pedestrian enunciation” of the city (de Certeau 99) and galvanizes the textual city as a space of immigrant history. In this palimpsest, it’s helpful to recall what Cole’s city is different from other models of *flânerie*. For example, Cole’s city is not a labyrinth like James Joyce’s modernist Dublin, where the *flâneur* used to seek sensory exploration and documentary observation. It also exceeds de Certeau’s urban text as Cole’s mobilized city unsettles its own identities through Julius’ flows of thoughts that echo the rhythm with his everyday walking. By walking through various streets and neighbourhoods in

New York City, Julius, as the authorial avatar of Cole as a photographer, “turns away to show what cannot otherwise be shown” (*Blind Spot*, 172).

Julius’ practice of walking performs an urban excavation. His walking formulates an archeological text, unfolding the layers of the palimpsest city and unfurling the histories and stories that have been buried, erased, or forgotten. “Walking is what turns spaces into places,” Kwame Anthony Appiah writes in his essay “Boundaries of Culture.”¹⁴ Proposing walking as a “humbling metaphor of criticism,” Appiah writes: “There is something to be said for walking, by which I mean hoofing, wheeling, crawling, scrambling, dragging ourselves as best we can along paths we share with others” (522). For Appiah, de Certeau’s urban text—which pedestrian walkers “write without being able to read” (93)—emphasizes the relationship of the writer (the producer; the official map) and the reader (the consumer; the walker) but neglects the effect of the text itself (the city) on the writer and the reader. Appiah reads Julius as a tireless walker who “sees a city that evokes the map, but walking in that city, he sees a hundred other cities furred within it” (522).¹⁵

Whereas Hans practices borderless walking to consolidate his fragmentary self in the wake of the trauma and construct his post-9/11 identity, Julius walks to unfold the different layers of the palimpsest city through his encyclopedic narrative in search of his own identity. Indeed, Julius’ walking is a method of conducting a folk ethnography, which produces a recording of cosmopolitan culture, experience, and affect and claims for distinction, difference,

¹⁴ Appiah delivered “Boundaries of Culture” as the Presidential Address at the 2017 Modern Language Association Convention, whose Presidential Theme in that year was Boundary Conditions.

¹⁵ Critics have pointed out the connection between Cole’s *Open City* and W. G. Sebald’s works. For instance, Werner Sollors points out that Cole’s novel shares with Sebald’s literary mode for “not just an extraordinary attention to details in many descriptions but also a heightened sensitivity to the undercurrents of violence that he lays bare in stories from around the world, stories to which Julius is exposed by the things he sees as a walker and by the conversations he engages in” (241).

and detection in the immigrant city. The walks encompass not only going and moving, or seeing and observing, but more importantly spatial engagement and human participation.¹⁶

Julius' restless mobility invites conversations and interactions with strangers on the street. He meets people from a wide range of backgrounds: an old gay Japanese American professor living in Central Park South; Chinese musicians in the park; a runner from Mexico or Central America in the New York City Marathon. These immigrants in the city have stories of suffering from discrimination; they are also part of the city's own stories and histories, which have demonstrated that there is no such thing as a native New Yorker. Julius is good at tracking multicultural interactions in his walking itineraries. He observes "a white man teaching Chinese to an Asian woman" (217), a Belgian woman who has "the accent only vaguely European" (95), and as a Czech woman who speaks "halting English with an Eastern European intonation" (109). By walking in different neighbourhoods, he expands his personal boundaries through cross-cultural exchanges. Or, to borrow Appiah's words from *Cosmopolitanism*, Julius' walks express his "cosmopolitan curiosity about other peoples" (7). Walking allows Julius to be a social actor in public space to render an urban imaginary with cultural hybridity, linguistic mixture, and ethnic diversity. Whereas his encyclopedic narratives reveal the city's complicated transnational history and cross-cultural connections, Julius' engagement with other pedestrians inserts an interactive element in his inscription upon the immigrant city.

Julius' encyclopedic narratives often expose the dark side of human history: violence, cruelty and barbarity. His walking evokes an Anthropocene approach to the city, emphasizing

¹⁶ What makes Appiah's walking criticism differ from de Certeau's pedestrian act is that the spatial story created by the pedestrian walker, in de Certeau's theory, focuses on individual action and lacks a necessary presence of others. In contrast, Appiah's idea about city walking encourages an intersubjective experience with a presence or a recognition of others.

human activities as the dominant influence on the built and social environments. Strolling near Battery Park at the southern tip of Manhattan Island and looking across to Brooklyn, Staten Island and the Statue of Liberty, Julius recalls the history of slavery trade, connecting the city sites with the humanity's brutality during the nineteenth century. "New York long remained the most important port for the building, outfitting, insuring, and launching of slavers' ships. Much of the human cargo of those vessels was going to Cuba; Africans did the work on the sugar plantations there" he says (163). Julius presents precise historical details: "A fully outfitted slaving ship costing around \$13,000 could be expected to deliver a human cargo worth more than \$2000,000" (163). Julius's erudite style elucidates the space on foot, his walks spawning encyclopedic narratives that take readers inside the hidden histories of the city.

Like the walkers in Montreal fiction theorized by literary scholar Andre Furlani, Julius acquires knowledge "by following trails through a meshwork." As Furlani asserts, "it is through wayfaring and not transmission that knowledge is carried on" (73; ellipsis added). The encyclopedic narrative mobilized by Julius' walking gains further texture when seen within the context of theories offered by literary theorist Edward Mendelson, who writes: "Encyclopedic narratives all attempt to render the full range of knowledge and beliefs of a national culture, while identifying the ideological perspectives from which that culture shapes and interprets its knowledge" (1269).¹⁷ Julius' walking assembles the "full arrange of knowledge and belief" of the city and relates them to a larger historical context, which is always trans-spatial, trans-

¹⁷ Mendelson identifies encyclopedic novels—such as Herman Melville's *Moby-Dick* (1851), James Joyce's *Ulysses* (1922), and Thomas Pynchon's *Gravity's Rainbow* (1973)—as the ones that transcend "*both* historical and formal" qualities in English literature (1267; *italic* in the original text). Here, I do not suggest that Cole's *Open City* itself is an encyclopedic novel even though it could be arguably read as one. Instead, it incorporates the aesthetics of encyclopedic narrative as a literary technique to incorporate extensive information and data about the experience of walking the city.

temporal and transnational.¹⁸ Julius' ambulatory mobility promotes a microscopic view: a complex, multilayered urban imaginary infiltrated by the city's history, ideology, landscape, and identity reconstruction.

At the same time, walking confronts Julius with his blackness and racial conflictedness. Julius is perceptive in diagnosing other cultures and people, but he avoids interacting with fellow black Americans. In particular, he is uneasy with those who "lay claims" on his own African identity and origin (40). During a walk, Julius runs into Kenneth, a security guard from Barbuda working at the American Folk Art Museum, who recognizes him and starts talking to him. Kenneth is "dark-skinned, bald, with a broad, smooth forehead, and a carefully trimmed pencil mustache" (53) and "making a similar claim" about Julius in the conversation. "Kenneth was, by now, starting to wear on me, and I began to wish he would go away," Julius says (53). Later, he is annoyed when a black post office employee calls him "brother" from the "Motherland," informing Julius: "I am raising my daughters as Africans" (186). Julius' response: "I made a mental note to avoid that particular post office in the future" (188). This self-assured hubris contrasts with his pedestrian narratives that generously unfold his breath and depth of knowledge about not only the city but its African American slavery past and racial suffering.

Julius hardly talks about his own blackness. He is introduced to the reader by his first name only, and his racial identity is revealed belatedly through a shocking, racist act. On his way home after a night in the theatre, a girl of thirteen and her brother waiting for the subway train, think out loud if Julius might be a gangster: "He's black, said the girl, but he's not dressed like a

¹⁸ The aesthetic of encyclopedic narratives allows readers to see Julius' pedestrian enterprise of retrieving and retaining the historical, cultural, and collective memories of the cosmopolitan city. Julius's walks unwrap each site as a microscopic container of transnational human history and activities, and at the same time unsettle them as a palimpsest in which some of the original text has been removed and replaced by a new text. The walks also reconfigure the experience of the city as an activity of museum-going—a multilayered record, in which walkers contribute to writing and rewriting the palimpsest city.

gangster” (32). With their parents close by but oblivious, the pair taunt Julius by flicking their fingers, practicing what sociologist Elijah Anderson has theorized as “the white space” (10). The white space constitutes the social and physical space that white people consider to be “off-limits” to blacks such as overwhelmingly white neighbourhoods, restaurants or other public spaces. While white people tend to avoid “the black space,” as Anderson writes, black people are expected to navigate “the white space.” This routinely exposes them to racist behaviour signalling to them that they have entered a space that is “off limits” to blacks (10). The black flâneur is almost inevitably in a space that is “off limits” and where he has to explain himself.

In his essay, “Black Body,” Teju Cole asserts: “You are a black body first, before you are a kid walking down the street or a Harvard professor who has misplaced his keys” (14). In April 2018, two black men were arrested at a Philadelphia Starbucks café while they were waiting for a business associate; the manager had called 911 after they failed to make a purchase. This event circulated widely through international news media and social media platforms. As Cole commented in his April 18, 2018 Facebook post: “Flanerie is for whites. For blacks in white terrain, all spaces are charged.”¹⁹ The everyday urban space is racially charged against the black body. In *Open City*, it cannot be coincidence that word “black” and “white” are repeated on almost every second page, appearing 95 respectively 93 times on the 259 pages. This linguistic focus reveals the narrator’s profound awareness of issues of black and white, noting blackness as a signifier in clothing, paintings, buildings, and people. Even the shoeshiner becomes a “bootblack,” promising to make Julius’ shoes “black as black as night for [him]” (71). In contrast, the light in the hospital is white, as are the crosses in Ypres, Flanders. The narrative is infused with stories of pain and trauma, as when the shoeshine man from Haiti recalls the stories

¹⁹ See Appendix to this dissertation, for a screenshot and transcription of excerpt.

of the terror of Bonaparte and Boukman, reminding Julius and the reader that “there was no difference to those who suffered” (72). Indeed, in *Democracy Matters* (2004), philosopher Cornel West has argued that the 9/11 attacks have let white Americans finally have a chance to see what it means to be a black person in the territory of United States. He writes: “The ugly terrorist attacks on innocent civilians on 9/11 plunged the whole country into the blues” and the events have largely escalated the “unsafe, unprotected, subject to random violence, and hated” feelings towards black Americans (20).

Previous scholars have argued that the protagonist’s racial identity offers the potential for a radical critique of the city,²⁰ as it certainly does. However, I argue from the opposite, complementary angle, exploring the practice of black *flânerie* as systemically fraught. While black *flânerie* has been long relegated to the margins and into invisibility, a precedence for black *flânerie* can be found in the Harlem Renaissance modernist tradition. Jamaican-American author Claude McKay (1889-1948) represents one example of pushing against the invisibility of the black *flâneur*: donning dandy and diasporic fashions, he was also an avid traveller who encoded a subversive dandyism.²¹ Two generations later, Harlem writer and activist James Baldwin (1924-1986), who was angry about the lack of change during his lifetime, arguably represented another black *flâneur*.

For black persons to navigate within “the white space,” they have to perform what some blacks call “the dance:” a performance to show that black or ghetto stereotypes do not apply to them. As Anderson explains: “This performance can be as deliberate as dressing well and

²⁰ See Dinat, “Rereading the City: Race, Space, and Mobility in Post-9/11 New York.”

²¹ See Graeme Abernethy, “‘Beauty on Other Horizons’: Sartorial Self-Fashioning in Claude McKay’s *Banjo: A Story Without a Plot*,” 445-460.

speaking in an educated way or as simple as producing an ID or a driver's license in situations in which this would never be demanded of whites" (13). On his strolls through white public places, Julius over-performs "the dance." Regardless of his African origin, Julius' taste is principally Euro-American centric, reminding readers that the culture of taste has a nuanced relationship with power, globalization, and western modernity. Postcolonial literary scholar Simon Gikandi elaborates: "Others—women, slaves, and the poor—were not totally excluded from the discourse of modern identity; rather, they were deployed in a subliminal, subordinate, or suppressed relation to the culture of taste" (26). Julius' obsession with the culture of aesthetic taste speaks of the precarity of a black body exposed to a white gaze in public space. Through his restless walks, Julius exhibits the flâneur's proclivity and cosmopolitan sensibilities. But at every step he must also expect inspection by those who monitor the public places. So, does he truly *embody* a flâneur? Or does his blackness undo the very possibility of embodying the leisurely, purposeless and aimless wandering in public space without hostile scrutiny? "In the white space," as Anderson writes, "the anonymous black person's status is uncertain, and he or she can be subject to the most pejorative regard" (15).

To this day, Walt Whitman's famous motto "Manhattan's streets I saunter'd, pondering" remains a privilege that largely excludes the black body in the post-9/11 city. Far from the aimless and leisurely wandering of the flâneur, black urban walking has become a symbol of lamentation and grief. James Baldwin's 1960 *Esquire* essay "Fifth Avenue, Uptown" epitomizes such black walking experience on New York's streets.²² He comments on the new low-income housing projects for the displaced by taking readers to a walk in Harlem, against the glamorous

²² In his 1985 essay collection, *The Price of the Ticket*, Baldwin's autobiographical approach shows the black life and black body against the backdrop of urban apartheid and racial ghettoization in New York City.

popular imagination of the Fifth Avenue which connects the upscale Manhattan neighbourhoods to Harlem. He writes: “The avenue is elsewhere the renowned and elegant Fifth.... Walking along 145th Street—for example—familiar as it is, and similar, does not have the same impact because I do not know any of the people on the block” (np; ellipsis added). Cole, however, sees Baldwin’s approach as “self-abnegation,” arguing that Baldwin was tortured by the question of filiation. As Cole writes in his essay “Black Body:” “He was sensitive to what was great in world art, and sensitive to his own sense of exclusion from it” (11). Julius’ excessive engagement with white culture refuses to offer a transitory asylum for his black body. His failure is related to the difficult work of a black man recreating an urban dandy through the act of *flânerie*. As a black walker, Julius’ pedestrian ambulation offers a rare literary case for readers to witness a black man’s itinerant movements in a dialogue with the ideas of freedom and movement—both liberated and subjugated by the immigrant city.

Ironically, “the black space,” or what Anderson calls “the black ghetto” is not safe for Julius either. This is the space that Anderson describes as marked by “the irregular economy” where people barter, borrow and beg, or develop informal businesses, trafficking in cigarettes, magazines and soft drinks, to the truly desperate who trade in illegal activity to survive (12;13). Here, within the black space, Julius also stands out as an outsider. It is in “the black space,” in Harlem, that Julius is robbed and violently beaten by three black men. Sauntering down the street just moments before attracting their attention, Julius catches snippets of profanity-peppered dialogue, and their language strikes him as exotic. Applying Anderson’s terms, ironically Julius is lacking “street credibility ... a valuable coin that promises security while in fact it exacerbates violence and homicide” (13; ellipsis added). Pariahs themselves, the ghetto poor victimize others, thereby enacting the clichéd media reports of black-on-black crime. As Julius sits on the

street with his wounded body and physical pain after the incident, he says enigmatically: “It could have been worse: an infuriating thought, a false thought, because what had happened was worse, worse than safety and an unviolated body” (213).

Garnette Cadogan’s essay, “Walking While Black,” illustrates experiences of urban walking in Kingston, Jamaica, and American cities. Cadogan argues that walking in the city “turns out not to be so simple if you’re black” and “walking alone has been anything but monotonous for me; monotony is a luxury.” Julius is self-conscious about his black body in a white terrain as he veils it to avoid a white gaze in public space.²³ Walking on the streets involves an encounter with his own black body—both from others and from his own self-consciousness.²⁴ On foot, in public spaces, Julius is uncomfortable with his identity. Whereas his pedestrian narratives unfold the city, Julius hardly shares information about himself. Readers learn about his blackness through others.

Julius’ urban walking is also evasive to the point that literary scholar Pieter Vermeulen recognizes aspects of the nineteenth-century *fugueurs*, an escape artist in Julius. In contrast to the flâneur, the *fugueur* figures “unaccountably walked away from their lives and, when found, were unable to remember what had happened on these trips” (42). While Julius avoids disclosing much information about himself, readers are startled about a disturbing interaction that happens towards the end of the novel. A Nigerian childhood friend, Moji Kasali reunites with Julius in New York. In one of their conversations, she makes a shocking accusation that has remained virtually undiscussed in the scholarship on the novel, and yet needs to be discussed and

²³ “Walking while black” has become a social media hashtag *#walkingwhileblack* to share stories about anti-black hostile encounters on everyday streets.

²⁴ One cannot help but think of the term double consciousness, advanced sociologist W. E. B. Du Bois to explain the psychological challenge African Americans experienced in living in a white-dominated society: “of always looking at one’s self through the eyes of others” and “of measuring one’s soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity” in a racially charged and racially profiled white society (n.p.).

confronted. It concerns an episode that provides a sudden turn and epiphany: a sudden moment of insight into the underside of Julius' fleeting and nonconsequential attachments that are part of his attempted *flânerie*. As he relays the event:

And then, with the same flat affect, she said that, in late 1989, when she was fifteen and I was a year younger, at a party her brother had hosted at their house in Ikoyi, I had forced myself on her. Afterward, she said, her eyes unwavering from the bright river below, in the weeks that followed, in the months and years that followed, I had acted like I knew nothing about it, had even forgotten her, to the point of not recognizing her when we met again, and had never tried to acknowledge what I had done. (244)

When confronted with the emotional scars Moji says she suffered as a fifteen-year-old, inflicted by Julius, his response is shocking as it is revealing of moral complexities and failings. Without missing a beat, Julius channels and transforms this knowledge through mental *flânerie*. Refusing to engage Moji and her accusation of teenage sexual misconduct, he instead recollects an anecdote of Friedrich Nietzsche as a fifteen-year-old teenager. According to the anecdote, the fifteen-year-old nascent philosopher burnt himself and carried the scar for the rest of his life. Julius' intellectualized response is a denial, his mental *flânerie* a camouflage for a lack of empathy and responsibility in this particular situation.

With Julius' intellectualizing façade intact, readers learn little more about him or about this episode that caused extensive pain to his friend, and which he conveniently forgot. In this context, physical and mental *flânerie* and his mask of sophistication camouflage a character flaw—his callousness and dishonesty, revealing also an inability to grow as a character. In this situation, his refusal to engage at a human level is unnerving, denying an opportunity for some

form of restoration or moral transformation. Moji tells him: “I don’t think you’ve changed at all” (245). Just like the city’s palimpsest, Julius has rewritten and erased aspects of his identity, but some traces nonetheless remain in the memories of others. In *Every Day I Write the Book* (2020), Amitava Kumar, a friend of Teju Cole, relays his interaction with Cole, having asked him about experience in writing *Open City*.²⁵ Cole’s response provides insight: “he had been responding to questions about mourning in the post-9/11 moment, that he had been working through how historical innocence and guilt affect personal innocence and guilt” (paraphrased in Kumar, 140).

This morally fraught context reminds of Benjamin’s *Arcades Project*, which distinguishes between two difference experiences: *Erlebnis*, the crisis or flash that is the very result of modernity; and *Erfahrung*, the experiences of the flâneur who mobilizes the city through the body. Benjamin, who saw these experiences operate as a dialectical relationship, warned against a reification and fetishizing of culture. “Barbarism lurks in the very concept of culture,” he notes (467). A cosmopolitan dandy, Julius is unduly devoted to the refined language and the experience of cross-cultural aesthetics and taste.²⁶ While walking through the city, he engages with the writings from Italo Calvino, J. M. Coetzee, Vladimir Nabokov, and Albert Camus. He also “flitted from book to book: Roland Barthes’s *Camera Lucida*, Peter Altenberg’s *Telegram of the Soul*, Tahar Ben Jelloun’s *The Last Friend*” (5); and it is telling that he reads Sigmund Freud’s works “only for literary truths” (208). Dandyism focuses on the aesthetics of life, as Rhonda K. Garelick writes: “Dandyism is itself a performance, the performance of a highly stylized, painstakingly constructed self, a solipsistic social icon” (3). In

²⁵ Amitava Kumar dedicated his 2018 novel, *Immigrant, Montana*, to Teju Cole.

²⁶ In his 1951 essay, “The Rebel (French: L’Homme révolté),” Albert Camus writes that the dandy “is always compelled to astonish. Singularity is his vocation, excess his way to perfection. Perpetually incomplete, always on the fringe of things, he compels others to create him, while denying their values. He plays at life because he is unable to live it” (51-52).

the intellectual and philosophical references, Julius namechecks Walter Benjamin, Friedrich Nietzsche, Edward Said, Noam Chomsky, Gaston Bachelard, Simone Weil, Alain Badiou, and many others—mostly drawn from the white Euro-American cultural and intellectual tradition.²⁷ These luxurious catalogues are explicitly associated with cross-cultural literacy, post-national sensibilities, aesthetic experience, and the freedom to travel. This encyclopedia also represents a fetishizing of western culture symbolizing his social and cultural capital whose privilege affords the aesthetic spectatorship of cosmopolitanism.

Like Hans, Julius also confronts his identity crisis while walking on the street. Near Wall Street Station at an ATM to get some cash, he fails to remember the password while he has just recently used his card. When he finds himself declined, standing at the corner of Water Street, he starts thinking of himself as “a minor character in a Jane Austen novel”²⁸ and diagnoses forgetting the PIN as “mental weakness” (161). Then he says that this mental weakness “was from a simplified version of the self, an area of simplicity where things had once been more robust” (161). This brief and minor identity crisis suggests that Julius himself is a palimpsest of sorts. Like the layered city that he tries to unfold on foot, he is a person with different layers of identity. He even continues: “This was true of a broken leg, too: one was suddenly lessened, walking with an incomplete understanding of what walking was about” (161). Ultimately, Cole posits postmodernist irony about the black practice of walking in the city: a discrepancy of the

²⁷ In addition, his literary catalogues emphasize both high cultural aesthetics and popular culture recognized and celebrated in the Euro-American context in contrast to his own African cultural origin. He says that he has a particular taste for music and is mainly interested in Gustav Mahler’s symphonies; he prefers the paintings of Johannes Vermeer, Jean-Baptiste-Siméon Chardin, and Vilhelm Hammershøi. He also briefly makes comments on contemporary British composer Judith Weir’s opera *The Consolation of Scholarship*, American singer Michael Jackson’s music video *Thriller*, and Scottish director Kevin Macdonald’s film adaption of English author Giles Foden’s novel *The Last King of Scotland*.

²⁸ In Jane Austen’s novels, the minor figures often represent comments on some aspects of society. Through them, readers can glimpse the societal backgrounds where the heroines are situated. For more about Austen’s minor figures in literary criticism, see Lesley H. Willis’ essay “Object Association and Minor Characters in Jane Austen’s Novels.”

flâneur as illustrious hero in urban modernity and the pedestrian walker as an obscure dilettante flirting with cosmopolitan ambiguity. This ironic discrepancy propels a new paradigm of piloting an imagination of black urban walking.

Nonetheless, black American history has demonstrated that a collective consciousness of walking can effect social and political changes through revolutionary actions and civil rights advocacy. In 1963, Martin Luther King, Jr. (1929 – 1968) organized the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom, where he delivered his famous “I Have a Dream” speech in front of the Lincoln Memorial. With nearly 250,000 people marching against the racial segregation in the United States, walking, in the form of public presence with a large crowd, not only united collective tread and formed a collective action but also more importantly assembled a collective ambition for social justice and a collective political will to make the world more humane and just. In 1965, civil rights leader John Lewis (1940 – 2020), who had co-organized King’s 1963 March on Washington, led the first of three Selma to Montgomery marches across the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma, Alabama. Such collective walking quickly turned into what we know as Bloody Sunday (March 7, 1965), in which state troopers and law enforcement violently attacked the marchers, including Lewis himself. The tireless efforts of black Americans like King and Lewis who collectively fought against anti-black racism on foot effected change, even as it was dangerous and involved suffering.

This danger was visible for the world to see on May 25, 2020, in a neighbourhood south of downtown Minneapolis, Minnesota, where George Floyd—handcuffed and unarmed—lay face down on the street, pleading for his life with the policeman who was firmly kneeling on his neck. A global revolt has been fuelled by the wish that the lives of black men like George Floyd must not be cut short, or that a black birdwatcher strolling through Central Park should be able to

do so without fearing the arrival of police. The quotidian aggression encountered by the black man who navigates the white space ranges from small to large. As Anderson writes: “the large ones cannot be ignored, for typically they are highly disturbing, volatile, occasionally even violent, and capable of fundamentally changing one’s outlook on life” (15).

As James Wood argues, “Cole activates the tension in flaneurial realism between saturation and selection, and transfers it to the moral and political sphere.” This leads Wood to ask this pertinent question: “as readers of Cole’s book, will we truly notice Julius’s moral and political lapses, or will we neglect to see them?” (*How Fiction*, 57). Indeed, Julius’ urban walking demonstrates that his moral failing of addressing the charge of sexual misconduct is in line with his political failing. Julius fails to mobilize his intellectual sphere—into a daring, ethically responsible imagination or engagement on behalf of others; through his walking that is attentive to the condition of black life in the city. And herein lies the strength of Cole’s *Open City*, complicating and critiquing a black pedestrian’s attempt to use an individualist approach—a tradition inherited from the white practice of flânerie—to search for cosmopolitan identities of the city and himself. Kumar writes about Cole’s oeuvre: “I would argue that collaboration is a basic tenet of Cole’s formal aesthetic. You can read an essay of his and find that no idea is presented alone” (*Everyday*, 191). In the end, as O’Neill’s *Netherland* and Cole’s *Open City* are making the case of urban walking, the day so with the concept of cosmopolitanism at the centre. Both novels’ social mission consists in transmuting political and ethical issues into aesthetic ones. Both of the protagonists’ pedestrian acts serve an aesthetic purpose—but also as a warning of its limitations.

Epilogue:

Walking Forward

The flâneur's movement creates anachrony: he travels urban space, the space of modernity, but is forever looking to the past. He reverts to his memory of the city and rejects the self-enunciative authority of any technically reproduced image. The photographer's engagement with visual technology is similarly ambivalent. The photographer reiterates the trajectory of technological advance through his or her acculturation to new technologies, yet the authority of this trajectory is challenged by photography's product: the photograph, a material memory which is only understood by looking away from the future, by reading retrospectively.

– Kirsten Seale, "Eye-swiping London: Iain Sinclair, Photography and the Flâneur"

As of 2018, 55% of the world's population have lived in urban areas, with a United Nations study forecasting an increase to 68% by 2050,¹ suggesting an increasingly urbanized consciousness as part of the everyday global reality for years to come. These growing numbers fuel the timeliness of some of these insights as this dissertation is aware of the global reality of urbanization and the concomitant role of urban walking as a cultural practice. As this global urbanization transforms the conditions of spatial and political relations locally and internationally, I suggest that walkers will continue to find new ways of itinerary strategies and tactics to navigate these relations in times to come. The future holds infinite possibilities due to technology in large part; the algorithmic scripting of information arguably pledges cautious optimism for the imminent, new imaginations of the city. The walker's strategies and tactics then stimulate further reflection on

¹ See "68% of the World Population Projected to Live in Urban Areas by 2050, Says UN." UN DESA | United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs. N.p., 16 May 2018. www.un.org. Web. 25 June 2020.

the city as well as its history, aesthetics, politics, and now the digital. The nature and conditions of the walker's knowledge prop up—and are always upgraded by—the understanding of the perceived, situated, and bodily and/or digitally experienced space.

As I write this epilogue to my dissertation, the world is slowly reopening after months of lockdown due to the COVID-19 pandemic.² The stay-at-home orders, the curfews, and the mass quarantines have become an echo of literary dystopia. From Toronto and New York to London and Rome, and from New Delhi and Shanghai to São Paulo and Tokyo, a void of motor traffic and large crowds happened abruptly—almost overnight—in many cities. I captured the atmosphere in July with a photograph of the “flatiron” building (fig. E.1), whose triangular shape stands as a Toronto landmark. At the confluence of Wellington Street and Front Street, the photo shows the normally busy scene deserted in the early afternoon, with the red brick of the building glowing in the sun. The construction equipment stands idle, and their yellow demarcation tape creates a complex path, symbolizing the new difficulties to navigate the boundaries of our daily lives especially in public. A single walker with red T-shirt and blue mask is briskly crossing the street, further back a man on a bike. There are caution and danger signs, and the two traffic lights facing the viewer are red: Stop! As the world has come to a stop, walking the city these past months has confronted me with a new sense of detachment, mirroring some of the feelings of emptiness portrayed by Djuna Barnes and Joseph O'Neill, but also with scenes of protest, with anger against social injustice turning to action in many urban centres around the globe.

On that same sunny day excursion in July, almost four months since the lockdown, at the corner of Bay Street and Adelaide Street in Toronto, I snapped a photograph of the crosswalk in front of me (fig. E.2). The rails of the streetcar run horizontally in the immediate foreground with

² The World Health Organization (WHO) declared the COVID-19 outbreak a pandemic on 11 March 2020.

the crosswalk markers behind. On the far side of the street stands a man with a baseball cap and green mask—waiting. At mid-distance is a woman with shopping bag, also wearing a green mask. The vertical banner at mid-distance ask viewers to “CONNECT,” yet each stands or walks isolated. In the background, the clock at the Old City Hall indicates the time: 5:47 PM (rush hour on a regular workday). To the right foreground is the sign of the one-way street for Adelaide. Both the arrow and the crosswalk solicit action and movement, but the scene is at a standstill. I took a long walk through downtown Toronto. Streets were deserted, office towers vacant, shopping malls closed, and tourist spots emptied out. The sites that were typically crowded with large numbers of tourists and suburban visitors were empty and eerie.

During the tumultuous time of COVID-19, with physical and spatial distancing prevailing in everyday life, urban walking has become a more complex cultural practice. A walker does not have much to observe by the standard of traditional *flânerie*. Even walking on the empty streets takes an extra effort. From wearing a face mask to maintaining two-meter distances from fellow pedestrians, the urban walker seems physically alone in public space during the lockdown. Nevertheless, walking has been a daily escape from inside, especially for those confined in high-rise living. Walking on the streets enables one to track the changes happening in front of their very eyes on the ground, from shuttering the stores they used to shop at to witnessing the mass protests marching through main streets. In the city, daily walking becomes more important than ever before; it communicates the bodily immersion in the crisis but also gives a sense of still being an agent in an uncertain situation.

Many have turned to the practice of the digital *flânerie* to cope with the isolation and boredom of lockdown. Thanks to technologies, especially social media as well as messaging and conferencing applications, physical and spatial distancing does not necessarily result in *social*

distancing. We communicate online, shop online, teach and study online, and entertain online. The endless scrolling Twitter feeds and Instagram posts satisfies the restless desire of the digital flâneur/flâneuse. Tao Lin's social media novel *Taipei* (2013) has already shown readers how urban streets are beginning to emulate internet-mediated itinerant mobility. Therefore, the options of urban walking keep changing as the digital environment around us transforms.

If there was a positive aspect of the coronavirus-induced lockdown, it was that there was more pedestrian space available, reducing the competition between walkers and cars. Many citizens have renewed their enthusiasm of walking during the slow process of reopening and recovery. Some do so for physical exercises, some for human connections, and some to experience a quiet and bare city as sociological escapism.³ Walking is enjoying a resurgence after a long twentieth century obsession with the automobile. In his *New York Times* article, "We Can't Comprehend This Much Sorrow," written during the pinnacle of death tolls in the United States in April 2020, Teju Cole asserted: "History's first draft is almost always wrong—but we still have to try and write it" (n.p.). The walker's voice can fuel the imagination, contemplation, and action.

The chapters that precede have intentionally pivoted between theory and practice, text and visual, to help advance the field of urban walking as a dynamic and underexplored scholarly space for politically engaged interventions responding to the economic, gender, racial, and ecological urgencies of our era. The analytical model I have proposed—Walter Benjamin's concept of the *flâneur* as a perambulating social critic, Guy Debord's idea of the *dérive* as the drifting journey without an official map, and Michel de Certeau's city walking as a rhetorical

³ Walker perception of escape from daily boredom, isolation, and anxiety during the lockdown is to not intentionally deal with complex social, cultural and environmental questions.

tactic for creative resistance—suggest the social engagement I have been arguing for as a key part of this practice. Charles Baudelaire’s flâneur practiced urban walking as a form of heroism, claiming ownership of public space and the freedom afforded by modernity. In the end, Benjamin’s flâneur is an engaged social and cultural critic, an urban spectator who toys and contests consumer capitalism: ferreting out signs of modern alienation, investigating the source of inspiration and disenchantment beneath the byzantine commodity culture, and ultimately celebrating his full possession of individuality. Through the consideration of the influence of urban typography on emotions and behaviour, Guy Debord’s psychogeography has allowed me to reclaim the significance of walking in relation to individual and collective agency. Drifting involves looking for new meanings of the celebrated, the banned, and the forgotten, while actively dissecting the grand narratives of the city. Likewise, Michel de Certeau’s tactic of infusing personal (his)stories and memories through urban walking helps to challenge the built forms and to question the spatial arrangement of institutions. Like many others, de Certeau’s pedestrian walker embodies a creative resistance to make the city more intimate and more memorable, while the New Urbanists embrace walking as the very foundation for social and cultural transformation, commensurate with Jeff Speck’s manifesto-like motto: “Get walkability right and so much of the rest will follow” (4). While these theorists intersect to inform my literary and cultural analysis of the politics of spatial aesthetics and the aesthetics of spatial politics of urban literature and culture, my study hopes to provide a template for further studies on urban walking, adapting these insights in other contexts, including citizen engagement, political actions, and spatial equality in the city. It concludes that urban walking, as literary theory and criticism, sketches ways of reading at the interface of aesthetics, politics and ethics

that might be energized by an appeal to the ideas, methods and contexts that are produced and compelled by the relationship between the city and its walkers.

As the preceding chapters have documented, there is a dynamic interplay between the city and its walkers: each city, with its distinct spatial and temporal character, affords its walkers an environmental aspiration to ventriloquize both individual voices and those of the cities they dwell in and walk through. By exploring diverse forms of walking in relation to aesthetic expressions, from the wandering consciousness in narrative to the perambulatory parataxis in poetry, from the temporal construction of nocturnal strolling to the ethical reconsideration of pedestrianism in the immigrant city, we realize the imbrication of physical journey with the intellectual expedition, as well as walkers' making of their own identities.

Moreover, to walk the city is to experience and shape modernity. This modernity shakes the walkers out of their complacency, enacting new ways of relating to the city, and themselves, through curiosity and contemplation, as well as compassion and sympathy. At times, the complexity of modernity, manifested in urban experience, cognitive resonance, and cartographical mobility, makes these walkers question what they know about the city, themselves, and others. From the modernist montages of the metropolis to the postmodern shards of the megacity, the urban walker is always modernity's beneficiary as well as its *Other*. For Theodore Dreiser's Carrie Meeber, urban walking in Chicago and New York becomes a pedagogical method for self-transformation from late 1889 into the 1890s; in the all-absorbing expanding industrial city, her sense of self-preservation veers toward embracing modern commodity culture representing a nascent practice of *flânerie*. James Joyce's Leopold Bloom wanders through Dublin in the course of the single day, encompassing a series of encounters and incidents through an embodied cognition on foot. By the 1920s, as women asserted themselves in

the public space, urban walking emerged as a deeply engendered practice, yielding new multimodal expressions in art and literature and performance. Moving beyond the domestic space, artist Florine Stettheimer experimented with constructions of the role of flâneuse in her paintings of street scenes that often include herself. Aesthetically constructing the city through a tourist promenade, her paintings stage women's public walking on Fifth Avenue, Wall Street, and Broadway with daring self-referential element in which boundaries of life and art blur, forcefully inserting female flânerie in a male-dominated tradition. Dada artist Elsa von Freytag-Loringhoven radicalized the practice in unprecedented ways, revolting against the city's gender segregation through radical and risky self-performance in fashion, sculptures and poetry.

Beyond these spatial dimensions of the city, the temporal structure of the metropolis also shapes a walker's experience and mentality. In Djuna Barnes's post-World-War-I Paris, American expatriates Robin Vote and Nora Flood perform physical and metaphorical night vagrancy to engage with the multifarious queer sexual dynamics in Paris; even more importantly, they enact nightwalking as a pathological urgency to cope with grief. In Jay McInerney's sleepless New York City during the Reagan era, nocturnal walking calibrates the unnamed protagonist's struggle for self-transformation beyond the yuppie fable. In the post-9/11 context, Joseph O'Neill's *Netherland* evokes borderless walking as identity reconstruction and critiques cosmopolitan ethics. In *Open City*, Teju Cole creates a contemporary black walker-narrator who is devoted to the refined language and the experience of cross-cultural aesthetics and taste; but the problematic of the black flâneur signals the problematic of the political project that the immigrant city aims to accomplish. These walkers—wanderers, strollers, stalkers, and pedestrians—are simultaneously insiders and outcasts of the self-contradicting modernity; they are all the city's avid advocates by taking the street as a site of individual and urban

transformations as well as its fervent critics by pointing to the city's failings, its gender bias, social inequality, and cultural and ethnic alterity.

The theoretical framework on urban walking as a cultural practice intersects theories of the flâneur with theories of urban studies, sociology and political science. Thus, my broader ambition in this dissertation has been to help advance the intersecting fields of literary studies, urban studies, and aesthetics. The discoveries and insights of this dissertation contribute to the conversation and debates concerning literary and cultural paradigms of urban walking, while also contributing to understanding of how urban literature contributes to social change and political engagement. I have argued for the need to establish connections between walking and the walker, and between the practice and motivation of walking while considering the environment within socially and historically specific contexts. I hope to have advanced our understanding of urban walking as a field that is concerned not merely with urban cultural studies or the politics of consumption but with making interventions to help address issues of social justice including inequalities concerning gender, race, and class.

Further, the writers and artists discussed in this dissertation—through their elucidation of literary strategies and artistic innovations—remind readers of the need for a space for experimentation and a creative force to challenge status quo. Some walkers, like Stettheimer's visual portraiture of women's flânerie, play with the external environment to construct long-negated subjectivities; others like Barnes' Robin and Cole's Julius construct psychological subjectivities by turning to their inner fragmented and tortured selves. While the walkers are mainly solitary—each with an inimitable style, walkers can also constitute a powerful collective consciousness. From the Occupy Wall Street (2011), to the Women's March (2017), to Black Lives Matter protests against police brutality (2020), the practice of walking has effected social

change and lifted political awareness through a collective, mass body.⁴ To study urban walking is to study a collection of intricate and polygonal directions, itineraries, trajectories, and rhythms that are at once historical, aesthetic, psychological, and political. Therefore, my study of urban walking suggests the need to identify the way in which walking the city should be in spatial and temporal synchronicity with its own making (and/or unmaking) as well as becoming. The hope is that urban walkers be attentive to the changing dynamics of the city and reconnect with a bold moral imagination. Urban walking encompasses not only the space, the speed, and the scale of modernity at large, but also humanist enterprises—individual and collective—as well as social and cultural movements that have staked their claims on foot at street level. It is my hope that this approach may provide a template for others studying urban walking.

With my camera in hand, I am ready to head out and hit the pavement—catching new post-pandemic impressions of the changing city alongside our changing selves as walkers.

⁴ In their essay, “Walking, Social Movements, and Arts Activities in the United States, Canada, and France,” Brian B. Knudsen, et al. have argued that the practice of walking contributes “key elements of environments conducive to cultural and political creativity... [and] undergirds both contemporary social movement organizations and artistic activity” (243; ellipsis added).

Bibliography

“To Prison For ‘Joy Riding’.” *The Gazette Times*. N.p., August 13, 1908. Web. 4 July 2017.

<https://news.google.com/newspapers?id=a01RAAAAIIBAJ&sjid=gWcDAAAAIIBAJ&pg=5106%2C2719608>

Abernethy, Graeme. “‘Beauty on Other Horizons’: Sartorial Self-Fashioning in Claude McKay’s *Banjo: A Story Without a Plot*.” *Journal of American Studies* 48. 2 (2014): 445-460. Web.

Aldridge, John W. *Talents and Technicians: Literary Chic and the New Assembly-Line Fiction*. Scribner, 1992. Print.

Alpert, Leo M. “Judicial Censorship of Obscene Literature.” *Harvard Law Review* 52.1 (1938): 40–76. Web.

Alÿs, Francis. *Something Making Something Leads to Nothing*. Video art. Mexico, 1997.

Alÿs, Francis. *Railings*. Video art. London, 2007.

Anderson, Elijah. “The White Space.” *Sociology of Race and Ethnicity* 1.1 (2015): 10-21. Web.

Anderson, Margaret C. *My Thirty Years' War: An Autobiography*. London: A.A. Knopf, 1930. Print.

Appadurai, Arjun. *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996. Print.

Appiah, Kwame Anthony, and Homi Bhabha. “Cosmopolitanism and Convergence.” *New Literary History* 49.2 (2018): 171-198. Web.

Appiah, Kwame Anthony. “Presidential Address 2017—Boundaries of Culture.” *PMLA* 132.3

(2017): 513-525. Web.

Appiah, Kwame Anthony. *Cosmopolitanism: Ethics in A World of Strangers*. New York: WW Norton, 2007. Print.

Augé, Marc. *Non-places: Introduction to an Anthropology of Supermodernity*. John Howe, trans. London: Verso, 1995. Print.

Baldwin, James. “‘Fifth Avenue, Uptown’ by James Baldwin.” *Esquire*. N.p., 16 Oct. 2007. www.esquire.com. Web.

Barnes, Djuna, Emily Holmes Coleman, and G. C. Guirl-Stearley. “The Letters of Djuna Barnes and Emily Holmes Coleman (1935-1936).” *The Missouri Review* 22.3 (1999): 105-146. Web.

Barnes, Djuna. *Nightwood*. New York: New Directions Press, 2006. Print.

Baudelaire, Charles. “The Painter of Modern Life.” *Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism*, *The 2nd edition*. Vincent Leitch, et al, ed. New York: WW Norton, 2010. 680-690. Print.

Baudelaire, Charles. *The Painter of Modern Life*. London: Phaidon, 1964. Print.

Baudrillard, Jean. *Simulacra and Simulation*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1994. Print.

Beaumont, Matthew. *Nightwalking: A Nocturnal History of London*. London: Verso, 2015. Print.

Begnal, Michael H. *Joyce and the City: The Significance of Place*. Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2002. Print.

Benjamin, Walter. “Berlin Chronicle.” *Walter Benjamin: Selected Writings*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2003. 595-637. Print.

- Benjamin, Walter. "The Flaneur's Return." *Walking in Berlin: A Flaneur in the Capital*. Franz Hessel. Amanda DeMarco, trans. Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 2017. xii-xix. Print.
- Benjamin, Walter. *Charles Baudelaire: A Lyric Poet in the Era of High Capitalism*. London: New Left Books, 1973. Print.
- Benjamin, Walter. *One-Way Street*. Ed. Michael W. Jennings. Trans. Edmund Jephcott. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Belknap Press, 2016. Print.
- Benjamin, Walter. *Selected Writings: 1938-1940*. Michael William and Jennings Cambridge, eds, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2003. Print.
- Benjamin, Walter. *The Arcades Project*. Rolf Tiedemann, ed. Howard Eiland and Kevin McLaughlin, trans. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Belknap Press, 2002. Print.
- Benjamin, Walter. *The Writer of Modern Life: Essays on Charles Baudelaire*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2006. Print.
- Berger, John. "Why Look at Animals?" *The Animals Reader*, Linda Kalof and Amy Fitzgerald, eds. New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2007. 252-261. Print.
- Berman, Marshall. *All That is Solid Melts into Air: The Experience of Modernity*. London: Verso, 1983. Print.
- Bhabha, Homi. "Unsatisfied: Notes on Vernacular Cosmopolitanism." *Text and Nation*. Laura Garcia-Morena and Peter C. Pfeifer, eds, London: Camden House, 1996. 191-207. Print.
- Bilski, Emily D., and Emily Braun. *Jewish Women and Their Salons: The Power of Conversation*. New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 2005. Print.

- Birnbach, Lisa, Jonathan Roberts, Carol Wallace, and Mason Wiley. *The Official Preppy Handbook*. New York: Workman Publishing Company. 1980. Print.
- Bois, W. E. Burghardt Du. "Strivings of the Negro People." *The Atlantic*. N.p., 1 Aug. 1897. www.theatlantic.com. Web. 29 July 2020.
- Bourdieu, Pierre. *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1984. Print.
- Brooke, Rupert. *Letters from America*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1916. Print.
- Brooker, Joseph. *Literature of the 1980s: After the Watershed*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2012. Print.
- Buck-Morss, Susan. "The Flâneur, The Sandwichman and The Whore: The Politics of Loitering." *New German Critique* 39 (1986): 99-140. Web.
- Buck-Morss, Susan. *The Dialectics of Seeing: Walter Benjamin and the Arcades Project*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1991. Print.
- Cadogan, Garnette. "Walking While Black." *Literary Hub*. N.p., 8 July 2016. <https://lithub.com>. Web.
- Camus, Albert. *The Rebel: An Essay on Man in Revolt*. New York: Vintage, 2012. Print.
- Caselli, Daniela. *Improper Modernism: Djuna Barnes's Bewildering Corpus*. London: Routledge, 2016. Print.
- Cheever, John. "The Five-Forty-Eight." *The New Yorker*. N.p., 10 April 1954. <https://www.newyorker.com>. Web.
- Chtcheglov, Ivan. "Formulary for a New Urbanism." *The Situationists and the City*, Tom

- McDonough, ed. New York: Verso, 2009. 32-41. Print.
- Cochoy, Nathalie. "Walking, Writing—Reinventing the City in American Fiction." *South Atlantic Review* 76.4 (2011): 41-55. Web.
- Cole, Teju. *Open City: A Novel*. New York: Random House, 2011. Print.
- Cole, Teju. *Every Day Is for the Thief*. Illustrated edition. New York: Random House, 2014. Print.
- Cole, Teju. *Blind Spot*. New York: Faber & Faber, 2017. Print.
- Cole, Teju. "Black Body." in *Known and Strange Things: Essays*. New York: Random House, 2016. 3-16. Print.
- Cole, Teju. "We Can't Comprehend This Much Sorrow." *The New York Times*. N.p., 18 May 2020. *NYTimes.com*. Web.
- Cole, Teju. Comments on Starbucks having two black men arrested in its Philadelphia store. *Facebook*, 18 April 2018, 12:13 p.m., <https://www.facebook.com/Teju-Cole-200401352198/>. Web.
- Corinne, Tee A. "Wood, Thelma Ellen." *The Queer Encyclopedia of the Visual Arts*, Claude Summers, ed. Jersey City, New Jersey: Cleis Press, 2012. 350. Print.
- Crary, Jonathan. *24/7: Late Capitalism and the Ends of Sleep*. New York: Verso Books, 2013. Print.
- Dann, Ying-Lan, and Liz Lambrou. "Placing Elsewhere: Approaches for Physical and Digital Flânerie." *Interiority* 3.2 (2020): 145-162. Web.
- Davidson, Ian. "Automobility, Materiality and Don DeLillo's *Cosmopolis*." *Cultural*

Geographies 19.4 (2012): 469-482. Web.

Davison, R. C. Richard, and Stanley Grant. "Is Walking Sufficient Exercise for Health?" *Sports Medicine* 16.6 (2012): 369–373. Web.

De Certeau, Michel. *The Practice of Everyday Life*. Steven F. Rendall, trans. 3rd Revised edition. Berkeley, California: University of California Press, 2011. Print.

Debord, Guy. "Introduction to a Critique of Urban Geography." *Situationists and the City: A Reader*. McDonough, Tom, ed. New York: Verso, 2010. 59-65. Print.

Debord, Guy. "Theory of the Dérive." *Situationists and the City: A Reader*. McDonough, Tom, ed. New York: Verso, 2010. 77-85. Print.

Debord, Guy. *Society of the Spectacle*. Detroit: Black & Red, 2002. Print.

DeLillo, Don. *Cosmopolis*. Reprint edition. New York: Scribner, 2004. Print.

DeLillo, Don. *Falling Man*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 2007. Print.

Dewdney, Christopher. *Acquainted with the Night*. Toronto: Harper Perennial Canada, 2005. Print.

Dinat, Deena. "Rereading the City: Race, Space, and Mobility in Post 9/11 New York." T. University of British Columbia, 2015. Web.

Dreiser, Theodore. *Sister Carrie*. 1900. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009. Print.

Dreiser, Theodore. *The Color of a Great City*. New York: Boni and Liveright Publishers, 1923. Print.

Duany, Andres, Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk, and Jeff Speck. *Suburban Nation: The Rise of Sprawl and the Decline of the American Dream*. New York: North Point Press, 2010. Print.

- Dussel, Enrique. "Eurocentrism and Modernity (Introduction to the Frankfurt Lectures)." *Boundary 2*, 20. 3 (1993): 65–76. Web.
- Eagleton, Terry. *Walter Benjamin: Or, Towards a Revolutionary Criticism*. London: Verso, 2009. Print.
- Eco, Umberto. *The Aesthetics of Chaosmos: The Middle Ages of James Joyce*. Ellen Esrock, trans. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1989. Print.
- Eliot, T. S. "Introduction." *Nightwood*. Barnes, Djuna. New York: New Directions Press, 2006. xvii-xxii. Print.
- Elkin, Lauren. *Flâneuse: Women Walk the City in Paris, New York, Tokyo, Venice, and London*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2017. Print.
- Ellis, Bret Easton. *American Psycho*. 1st edition. New York: Vintage, 1991. Print.
- Entwistle, Joanne. *The Fashioned Body: Fashion, Dress, and Modern Social Theory*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2000. Print.
- Ewen, Shane. *What Is Urban History?* Cambridge: Polity, 2016. Print.
- Fariás, Ignacio. "Introduction: Decentering the Object of Urban Studies," *Urban Assemblages: How Actor-Network Theory Changes Urban Studies*, Fariás and Thomas Bender, eds. New York: Routledge. 2010. 1-24. Print.
- Featherstone, Mike. "The Flâneur, the City and Virtual Public Life." *Urban Studies* 35.5 (1998): 909-25. Web.
- Featherstone, Mike. *Consumer Culture and Postmodernism*. New York: Sage. 2007. Print.
- Fidler, Stephen, et al. "Reflections on the 9/11 Decade." *The RUSI Journal* 156.4 (2011): 4-10.

Web.

Fishkin, Shelley Fisher. *From Fact to Fiction: Journalism & Imaginative Writing in America*.

New York: Oxford University Press, 1988. Print.

Fiske, John. "Shopping for Pleasure: Malls, Power, and Resistance." *The Consumer Society*

Reader, Juliet Schor and Douglas B. Holt, eds. New York: The New Press, 2011. 306-

328. Print.

Fitzgerald, F. Scott. *The Great Gatsby*. Peterborough: Broadview Press, 2007. Print.

Florida, Richard. "2015's Most Walkable U.S. Cities: Miami and Detroit Make Serious Strides."

CityLab. N.p., n.d. Web. 7 July 2016.

Florida, Richard. *The Rise of the Creative Class - Revisited: 10th Anniversary Edition - Revised*

and Expanded. New York: Basic Books, 2012. Print.

Foer, Jonathan Safran. *Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close: A Novel*. Boston: Houghton

Mifflin Harcourt, 2005. Print. Foucault, Michael, "What Is Enlightenment?" in *The*

Foucault Reader, Paul Rabinow ed., Catherine Porter, trans. New York: Pantheon, 1984.

Print.

Fraser, Nancy. "Rethinking the Public Sphere: A Contribution to The Critique of Actually

Existing Democracy." *Social Text* 25/26 (1990): 56-80. Web.

Freytag-Loringhoven, Elsa von, "Appalling Heart," *Body Sweats: The Uncensored Writings of*

Elsa von Freytag-Loringhoven, Irene Gammel and Suzanne Zelazo, eds. Cambridge,

Massachusetts: The MIT Press: 2011. 103-104. Print.

Freytag-Loringhoven, Elsa von, "Cathedral," *Body Sweats: The Uncensored Writings of Elsa von*

Freytag-Loringhoven, Irene Gammel and Suzanne Zelazo, eds. Cambridge,

- Massachusetts: The MIT Press: 2011. 61. Print.
- Freytag-Loringhoven, Elsa von, "Subjoyride," *Body Sweats: The Uncensored Writings of Elsa von Freytag-Loringhoven*, Irene Gammel and Suzanne Zelazo, eds. Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press: 2011. 99-102. Print.
- Freytag-Loringhoven, Elsa von, "The Modest Woman," *Body Sweats: The Uncensored Writings of Elsa von Freytag-Loringhoven*, Irene Gammel and Suzanne Zelazo, eds. Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press: 2011. 286-289. Print.
- Friedberg, Anne. *Window Shopping: Cinema and the Postmodern*. Berkeley, California: University of California Press, 1993. Print.
- Furlani, Andre. "'Flânoter': The Montreal Pedestrian Narrates." *Canadian Literature* 236 (2018): 71-182. Web.
- Gallagher, Jean. "Vision and Inversion in *Nightwood*." *MFS Modern Fiction Studies* 47.2 (2001): 279-305. Web.
- Gammel, Irene. *Sexualizing Power in Naturalism: Theodore Dreiser and Frederick Philip Grove*. Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 1994. Print.
- Gammel, Irene. *Baroness Elsa: Gender, Dada, and Everyday Modernity--A Cultural Biography*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 2002. Print.
- Gammel, Irene. "The City's Eye of Power: Panopticism and Specular Prostitution in Dreiser's New York and Grove's Berlin." *Canadian Review of American Studies* 22.2 (1991): 211–228. Web.
- Gammel, Irene, and John Wrighton. "'Arabesque Grotesque': Toward a Theory of Dada Ecopoetics." *Interdisciplinary Studies in Literature and Environment* (2013): 1-22. Web.

- Gammel, Irene, and Suzanne Zelazo, *Florine Stettheimer: New Directions in Multimodal Modernism*. Toronto: Book*hug. 2019. Print.
- Gammel, Irene, and Suzanne Zelazo. "Introduction: The First American Dada." *Body Sweats: The Uncensored Writings of Elsa von Freytag-Loringhoven*, Irene Gammel and Suzanne Zelazo, eds. Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 2011. 1-40. Print.
- Gammel, Irene, and Suzanne Zelazo. "Wrapped in Cellophane: Florine Stettheimer's Visual Poetics." *Woman's Art Journal*, 32. 2 (2011): 14–21. Web.
- Garelick, Rhonda K. *Rising Star: Dandyism, Gender, and Performance in the Fin De Siècle*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1998. Print.
- Garrett, Bradley. *Explore Everything: Place-Hacking the City*. London: Verso, 2014. Print.
- Garvey, Johanna X. K. "City Limits: Reading Gender and Urban Spaces in *Ulysses*." *Twentieth Century Literature* 41.1 (1995): 108–123. Web.
- George, Jibu Mathew. *Ulysses Quotidianus: James Joyce's Inverse Histories of the Everyday*. Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2016. Print.
- Gerstenberger, Donna. "The Radical Narrative of Djuna Barnes's *Nightwood*." *Breaking the Sequence: Women's Experimental Fiction*, Ellen G. Friedman and Miriam Fuchs, eds. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1989. 129–139. Print.
- Geyh, Paula E. "From Cities of Things to Cities of Signs: Urban Spaces and Urban Subjects in 'Sister Carrie' and 'Manhattan Transfer'." *Twentieth Century Literature* 52.4 (2006): 413-442. Web.
- Giddens, Anthony. *The Consequences of Modernity*. London: Polity, 1990. Print.

Gifford, Don, and Robert J. Seidman. *Ulysses Annotated: Revised and Expanded Edition*. 2nd Edition. Berkeley, California: University of California Press, 2008. Print.

Gikandi, Simon. *Slavery and the Culture of Taste*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2011. Print.

Gilbert, Roger. *Walks in the World: Representation and Experience in Modern American Poetry*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2014. Print.

Gilson, Nicholas et al. "Walking towards Health in a University Community: A Feasibility Study." *Preventive Medicine* 44.2 (2007): 167–169. Web.

Giovannini, Joseph. "Shopping Canal St., New York's Attic." *The New York Times* 29 Oct. 1987. *NYTimes.com*. Web. 8 Mar. 2020.

Girard, Stephanie. "Standing at The Corner Of Walk And Don't Walk": Vintage Contemporaries, *Bright Lights, Big City*, and the Problems of betweenness." *American Literature* 68.1 (1996): 161-185. Web.

Gleber, Anke. *The Art of Taking a Walk: Flanerie, Literature, and Film in Weimar Culture*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1998. Print.

Golimowska, Karolina. "Cricket as a Cure: Post-9/11 Urban Trauma and Displacement in Joseph O'Neill's Novel *Netherland*." *The Journal of American Culture* 36.3 (2013): 230-239. Web.

Goody, Alex. "'Consider Your Grandmothers:' modernism, gender and the New York press." *Media History* 7.1 (2001): 47-56. Web.

Goody, Alex. *Modernist Articulations*. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007. Print.

- Gray, Richard. "Open Doors, Closed Minds: American Prose Writing at a Time of Crisis." *American Literary History* 21.1 (2009): 128-151. Web.
- Gray, Richard. *After the Fall: American Literature Since 9/11*. John Wiley & Sons, 2011. Print.
- Grant, Jill. "The Ironies of New Urbanism." *Canadian Journal of Urban Research* 15. 2 (2006): 158–174. Web.
- Gros, Frédéric. *A Philosophy of Walking*. John Howe, trans. London: Verso, 2014. Print.
- Habermas, Jürgen. *The Theory of Communicative Action: Volume 1: Reason and the Rationalization of Society*. Thomas McCarthy, trans. Boston: Beacon Press, 1985. Print.
- Hae, Laam. *The Gentrification of Nightlife and the Right to the City: Regulating Spaces of Social Dancing in New York*. New York: Routledge, 2012. Print.
- Hamid, Mohsin. *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*. New York: Harcourt, 2007. Print.
- Haraway, Donna. "A manifesto for Cyborgs: Science, Technology, and Socialist Feminism in the 1980s." In *Feminism/Postmodernism*, Linda J. Nicholson, ed. New York: Routledge. 1990. 190-233. Print.
- Harmon, Charles. "Cuteness and Capitalism in 'Sister Carrie'." *American Literary Realism* 32.2 (2000): 125-139. Web.
- Harvey, David. "Between Space and Time: Reflections on the Geographical Imagination." *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 80.3 (1990): 418-434. Web.
- Harvey, David. *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2007. Print.

Harvey, David. *Rebel Cities: From the Right to the City to the Urban Revolution*. London: Verso, 2013. Print.

Hayden, Dolores, and Gwendolyn Wright. "Architecture and Urban Planning." *Signs*, 1.4 (1976): 923–933. Web.

Heap, Jane. "Dada," *The Little Review* 8, 2 (Spring 1922), 46. Web.

Hegglund, Jon. "'Ulysses' and the Rhetoric of Cartography." *Twentieth Century Literature* 49.2 (2003): 164–192. Web.

Heitmann, Annegret. "Nordic Modernists in the Circus. On the Aesthetic Reflection of a Transcultural Institution." *Humanities* 7.4 (2018): 111-122. Web.

Helmreich, William B. *The New York Nobody Knows: Walking 6,000 Miles in the City*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2015. Print.

Hessel, Franz. *Walking in Berlin: A Flaneur in the Capital*. Amanda DeMarco, trans. Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 2017.

Hole, Heather. "Florine Stettheimer, the Department Store, and the Spaces of Display, New York 1916–1926," *Panorama: Journal of the Association of Historians of American Art* 3. 2 (Fall 2017), n.p. Web.

Horner, Avril, and Sue Zlosnik. "Strolling in the Dark: Gothic Flânerie in Djuna Barnes's Nightwood." *Gothic Modernisms*, Andrew Smith and Jeff Wallace, eds. Palgrave Macmillan, London, 2001. 78-94. Web.

Houen, Alex. "Novel spaces and taking place (s) in the wake of September 11." *Studies in the Novel* 36.3 (2004): 419-437. Web.

Hustvedt, Siri. "Foreword." *Blind Spot*, Teju Cole. New York: Random House, 2017. ix-xvi.

Print.

Hutton, Clare. *Serial Encounters: Ulysses and the Little Review*. Oxford: Oxford University

Press, 2019. Print.

James, Henry. *Literary Criticism French Writers; Other European Writers*. New York: Library

of America, 1984. Print.

Jameson, Fredric. *A Singular Modernity: Essay on the Ontology of the Present*. New York:

Verso, 2013. Print.

Janowitz, Tama. *Slaves of New York*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1987. Print.

Jenkins, Carrie. *What Love Is: And What It Could Be*. New York: Basic Books, 2017. Print.

Jones, Amelia. *Irrational Modernism: A Neurasthenic History of New York Dada*. Cambridge,

Massachusetts: MIT Press, 2004. Print.

Joyce, James. *Ulysses*. First Vintage International Edition. New York: Vintage, 1990. Print.

Kaufmann, David. "Yuppie Postmodernism." *Arizona Quarterly: A Journal of American*

Literature, Culture, and Theory 47.2 (1991): 93-116. Web.

Kern, Leslie. *Feminist City: Claiming Space in a Man-Made World*. Toronto: Verso, 2020. Print.

Kiberd, Declan. *Ulysses and Us: The Art of Everyday Living*. London: Faber & Faber, 2010.

Print.

Kierkegaard, Søren. *Kierkegaard's Writings, XXV, Volume 25: Letters and Documents*.

Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2009. Print.

Killingsworth, Matthew A., and Daniel T. Gilbert. "A Wandering Mind is an Unhappy

- Mind.” *Science* 330.6006 (2010): 932-932. Web.
- Kimmel, Michael. *Misframing Men: The Politics of Contemporary Masculinities*. New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 2010. Print.
- Kingwell, Mark. *Concrete Reveries*. Toronto: Penguin Canada, 2009. Print.
- Kingwell, Mark. *Wish I Were Here: Boredom and the Interface*. Montreal: McGill-Queen's Press, 2019. Print.
- Klein, Christopher. “The First Macy’s Thanksgiving Day Parade.” *HISTORY*. N.p., n.d. Web. <https://www.history.com/news/the-first-macys-thanksgiving-day-parade>
- Knudsen, Brian B., et al. “Walking, Social Movements, and Arts Activities in the United States, Canada, and France.” *Walking in Cities: Quotidian Mobility as Urban Theory, Method, and Practice*, Evrick Brown and Timothy Shortell, eds. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2016. 229–246. Print.
- Kracauer, Siegfried. “Memory of a Paris Street.” Ross Benjamin, trans. *Walking the World*. Words without Borders. September 2009. Web. <http://www.wordswithoutborders.org/article/memory-of-a-paris-street>
- Kumar, Amitava. *Every Day I Write the Book: Notes on Style*. Durham: Duke Univ Press, 2020. Print.
- Kumar, Amitava. *Immigrant, Montana*. New York: Penguin Random House, 2018. Print.
- Kumar, Krishan. *The Rise of Modern Society: Aspects of the Social and Political Development of the West*. Oxford: B. Blackwell, 1988. Print.
- Lancaster, Mark. “Andy Warhol Remembered.” *The Burlington Magazine*, 131.1032 (1989):

198–202. Web.

Lefebvre, Henri. *Critique of Everyday Life, Vol. 1: Introduction*. John Moore, trans. New York: Verso, 2008. Print.

Lefebvre, Henri. *The Production of Space*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Wiley-Blackwell, 1992. Print.

Lehmann, Ulrich. *Tigersprung: Fashion in Modernity*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 2002. Web.

Leinberger, Christopher B. *DC: The WalkUp Wak-up Call*. Washington DC: The George Washington University, 2012. Web.

Leinberger, Christopher B., and Michael Rodriguez. “Foot Traffic Ahead: Ranking Walkable Urbanism in America’s Largest Metros 2016.” Washington DC: The George Washington University, 2016. Web.

Lemaster, Tracy. “Feminist Thing Theory in ‘Sister Carrie’.” *Studies in American Naturalism* 4.1 (2009): 41-55. Web.

Lin, Tao. *Taipei*. New York: Vintage Books, 2013. Print.

Marcus, Jane. “Laughing at Leviticus: ‘Nightwood’ as Woman’s Circus Epic.” *Cultural Critique* 13 (1989): 143-190. Web.

Marcuse, Peter. “Review of The Rise of the Creative Class by Richard Florida.” *Urban Land* 62.8 (2003): 40-41. Web.

Marshall, Stephen. “New Urbanism: An Introduction.” *Built Environment* 29.3 (2003): 188–192. Web.

“Maurice Merleau-Ponty,” Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, 2016. Web.

McDonough, Tom, ed. *Boredom*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 2017.

McDonough, Tom, ed. *The Situationists and the City: A Reader*. New York: Verso, 2010. Print.

McDonough, Tom. “The Crimes of the Flâneur.” *October* (2002): 101-122. Web.

McInerney, Jay. *Bright Lights, Big City: A Novel*. New York: Vintage Contemporaries, 1984.
Print.

McInerney, Jay. *The Good Life*. New York: Vintage, 2007. Print.

Mendelson, Edward. “Encyclopedic Narrative: From Dante to Pynchon.” *MLN* 91.6 (1976):
1267-1275. Web.

Merleau-Ponty, Maurice. *Phenomenology of Perception*. Donald Landes, trans. London:
Routledge, 2012. Print.

Middleton, Jennie. “‘Stepping in Time’: Walking, Time, and Space in the City.” *Environment
and Planning A* 41.8 (2009): 1943–1961. Web.

Middleton, Jennie. “Sense and the City: Exploring the Embodied Geographies of Urban
Walking.” *Social & Cultural Geography* 11.6 (2010): 575–596. Web.

Middleton, Jennie. “Walking in the City: The Geographies of Everyday Pedestrian Practices.”
Geography Compass 5.2 (2011): 90–105. *Wiley Online Library*. Web.

Miller, Stephen. *Walking New York: Reflections of American Writers from Walt Whitman to Teju
Cole*. New York: Fordham University Press, 2016. Print.

Mitchell, Lee Clark. Introduction. *Sister Carrie*, by Theodore Dreiser, Oxford: Oxford
University Press, 2009. ix - xxx. Print.

- Moretti, Franco. *Modern Epic: The World System from Goethe to Garcia Marquez*. Quintin Hoare, trans. New York: Verso, 1996. Print.
- Moretti, Franco. *Signs Taken for Wonders: On the Sociology of Literary Forms*. New York: Verso, 2005.
- Morris, Jeremy N., and Adrienne E. Hardman. "Walking to Health." *Sports Medicine* 23.5 (1997): 306-332. Web.
- Mumford, Lewis. *The City in History: Its Origins, Its Transformations, and Its Prospects*. San Diego: Mariner Books, 2001. Print.
- Naqvi, H. M. *Home Boy*. New York: Crown, 2009. Print.
- Naumann, Francis M. *New York Dada, 1915-1923*. New York: Abrams, 1994.
- Nietzsche, Friedrich. *Ecce Homo: How One Becomes What One Is; Revised Edition*. Ed. Michael Tanner. R. J. Hollingdale, trans. New York: Penguin Classics, 1992. Print.
- Nietzsche, Friedrich. *The Twilight of the Idols and the Anti-Christ: Or How to Philosophize with a Hammer*. Michael Tanner, trans. R. J. Hollingdale, ed. Reissue edition. New York: Penguin Classics, 1990. Print.
- Nochlin, Linda. "Florine Stettheimer: Rococo Subversive." *Critical Issues in American Art*, Mary Ann Cal, ed. New York: Routledge, 2018. 303-318. Print.
- Nussbaum, Martha. "Patriotism and Cosmopolitanism." *The Cosmopolitan Reader*, Garrett W. Brown, David Held, eds. Cambridge: Polity, 1994. 155-162. Print.
- O'Neill, Joseph. *Netherland: A Novel*. New York: Vintage, 2008. Print.
- O'Sullivan, Timothy M. *Walking in Roman Culture*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press,

2011. Print.

Oja, Pekka, Ilkka Vuori, and Olavi Paronen. "Daily Walking and Cycling to Work: Their Utility as Health-Enhancing Physical Activity." *Patient Education and Counseling* 33, Supplement 1 (1998): S87–S94. Web.

Oniwe, Bernard Ayo. "Cosmopolitan Conversation and Challenge in Teju Cole's *Open City*." *Ufahamu: A Journal of African Studies* 39.1 (2016). Np. Web.

Oppezzo, Marily, and Daniel L. Schwartz. "Give Your Ideas Some Legs: The Positive Effect of Walking on Creative Thinking." *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Learning, Memory, and Cognition* 40.4 (2014): 1142. Web.

Orr, Leonard, ed. Joyce, *Imperialism, and Postcolonialism*. Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2008. Print.

Palahniuk, Chuck. *Fight Club*. New York: WW Norton & Company, 2005. Print.

Parsons, Deborah L. *Streetwalking the Metropolis: Women, the City and Modernity: Women, the City and Modernity*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000. Print.

Pastoureau, Michel. *The Devil's cloth: A History Of Stripes and Striped Fabric*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2001. Print.

Perelman, Bob. "Parataxis and Narrative: The New Sentence in Theory and Practice." *American Literature* 65.2 (1993): 313-324. Web.

Phelan, Hayley. "The Gentrification of Canal Street." *The New York Times* 16 May 2018. *NYTimes.com*. Web.

Pile, Steven. *The Body and the City: Psychoanalysis, Space and Subjectivity*. New York:

- Routledge, 1996.
- Pollock, Griselda. *Vision and Difference: Femininity, Feminism, and the Histories of Art*. London: Routledge, 1988. Print.
- Puar, Jasbir. *Terrorist Assemblages: Homonationalism in Queer Times*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2018. Print.
- Pucher, John, et al. "Walking and Cycling to Health: A Comparative Analysis of City, State, and International Data." *American Journal of Public Health* 100.10 (2010): 1986–1992. Web.
- Pucher, John, and Lewis Dijkstra. "Promoting Safe Walking and Cycling to Improve Public Health: Lessons from the Netherlands and Germany." *American Journal of Public Health* 93.9 (2003): 1509–1516. Web.
- Rancière, Jacques. *Proletarian Nights: The Workers' Dream in Nineteenth-Century France*. New York: Verso, 2012. Print.
- Reilly, Eliza Jane. "Elsa von Freytag-Loringhoven." *Woman's Art Journal* 18.1 (1997): 26-33. Web.
- Robbins, Bruce. "Actually Existing Cosmopolitanism." *Cosmopolitics: Thinking and Feeling beyond the Nation*. Pheng Cheah and Bruce Robbins, eds. University of Minnesota Press, 1998. 1-19. Web.
- Roberts, Steven V. "Hart Taps a Generation of Young Professionals." *New York Times* 18 March 1984. <https://www.nytimes.com/>. Web.
- Rousseau, Jean-Jacques. *The Confessions*. Ware, Hertfordshire: Wordsworth Editions, 1996. Print.

- Said, Edward W. *Culture and Imperialism*. New York: Vintage, 2012. Print.
- Seale, Kirsten. "Eye-swiping London: Iain Sinclair, photography and the flâneur." *Literary London: Interdisciplinary Studies in the Representation of London* 3.2 (2005): 18-32. Web.
- Seidel, Michael A. *Epic Geography: James Joyce's "Ulysses."* Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2016. Print.
- Sharpe, William. *New York Nocturne: The City After Dark in Literature, Painting, and Photography, 1850-1950*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2008.
- Shi, David E. *Facing Facts: Realism in American Thought and Culture, 1850-1920*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996. Print.
- Shields, Rob. "Social Spatialization and the Built Environment: The West Edmonton Mall." *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 7.2 (1989): 147-164. Web.
- Sim, Lorraine. *Virginia Woolf: The Patterns of Ordinary Experience*. Farnham: Ashgate Publishing, 2010. Print.
- Simmel, Georg. "Fashion." *The American Journal of Sociology* 62.6 (1957): 541-558. Web.
- Simmel, Georg. "The Metropolis and Mental Life." *The City Cultures Reader*, Malcolm Miles, Tim Hall, and Iain Borden, eds. London: Psychology Press, 2004. 12-19. Print.
- Smith, Neil. "New Globalism, New Urbanism: Gentrification as Global Urban Strategy." *Antipode* 34.3 (2002): 427-450. Web.
- Singer, Ben. *Melodrama and Modernity: Early Sensational Cinema and Its Contexts*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2001. Print.

- Snowden, Frank M. *Epidemics and Society: From the Black Death to the Present*. New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 2019. Print.
- Sollors, Werner. "Cosmopolitan Curiosity in an Open City: Notes on Reading Teju Cole by way of Kwame Anthony Appiah." *New Literary History* 49.2 (2018): 227-248. Web.
- Solnit, Rebecca. *Wanderlust: A History of Walking*. New York: Penguin Books, 2001. Print.
- Speck, Jeff. *Walkable City: How Downtown Can Save America, One Step at a Time*. New York: North Point Press, 2013. Print.
- Stanton, Domna C. "Presidential address 2005: On rooted cosmopolitanism." *PMLA* 121.3 (2006): 627-640. Web.
- Stettheimer, Florine. "All She Owned." *Crystal Flowers*, Irene Gammel and Suzanne Zelazo, eds. Toronto: BookThug, 2010. 50-51. Print.
- Straw, Will. "Chrono-Urbanism and Single-Night Narratives in Film." *Film Studies* 12.1 (2015): 46-56. Web.
- Straw, Will. "The Urban Night." In *Cartographies of Place: Navigating the Urban*, Darroch, Michael and Janine Marchessault, eds. Montreal: McGill-Queen's Press, 2014. 185-202. Print.
- Tandt, Christophe Den. *The Urban Sublime in American Literary Naturalism*. Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1998. Print.
- Thoreau, Henry David, "Walking." *The Atlantic Monthly*. 1862. 657-647. Web.
- Thwaites, Tony. "Mr. Bloom, Inside and Out: Some Topologies of the 'Initial Style' of *Ulysses*." *James Joyce Quarterly* 47.3 (2011): 363-381. Web.

- Tochterman, Brian. "Theorizing Neoliberal Urban Development: A Genealogy from Richard Florida to Jane Jacobs." *Radical History Review* 2012.112 (2012): 65-87. Web.
- Toe, Thomas. "Essay on An Aesthetics of Resistance." *Dialogue and Debate in the Making of Theoretical Psychology*, Gavin Brent Sullivan, James Cresswell, Antonia Larrainm Andres Haye, and Catherine Amanda Morgan, eds. Concord: Captus Press, 2015. 303-310. Print.
- United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs. "68% of the World Population Projected to Live in Urban Areas by 2050, Says UN." N.p., 16 May 2018. www.un.org. Web. 25 June 2020.
- Urry, John. *The Tourist Gaze*. London: SAGE, 2002. Print.
- Van Liempt, Ilse, Irina Van Aalst, and Tim Schwanen. "Introduction: Geographies of the Urban Night." *Urban Studies* 52.3 (2015): 407-421. Web.
- Vanderham, Paul. *James Joyce and Censorship: The Trials of Ulysses*. New York: Springer, 2016. Print.
- Vermeulen, Pieter. "Flights of Memory: Teju Cole's *Open City* and the Limits of Aesthetic Cosmopolitanism." *jml: Journal of Modern Literature* 37.1 (2013): 40-57. Web.
- Versluys, Kristiaan. *Out of the Blue: September 11 and the Novel*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2009. Print.
- Waldman, Amy. *The Submission*. New York: Random House, 2012. Print.
- Walkowitz, Rebecca L. *Cosmopolitan Style: Modernism beyond the Nation*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2006. Print.

- Wark, McKenzie. *The Spectacle of Disintegration: Situationist Passages out of the Twentieth Century*. New York: Verso, 2013. Print.
- Wasik, Bill. *And Then There's This: How Stories Live and Die in Viral Culture*. New York: Penguin Books, 2010. Print.
- Watson, Steven. *Strange Bedfellows: The First American Avant-Garde*. New York: Abbeville Press Publishers, 1991. Print.
- West, Cornel. *Democracy Matters: Winning the Fight Against Imperialism*. Reprint edition. New York: Penguin Books, 2005. Print.
- Wharton, Edith. *The Age of Innocence*. Reissue edition. New York: Macmillan, 2019. Print.
- Whiting, Cécile. "Decorating with Stettheimer and the Boys." *American Art* 14.1 (2000): 25-49. Web.
- Williams, Raymond. "The Metropolis and the Emergence of Modernism." Peter Brooker, ed. *Modernism/Postmodernism*. New York: Longman, 1992. 82-94. Print.
- Williams, Raymond. *The Country and the City*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1975. Print.
- Williams, Robert. "Night Spaces: Darkness, Deterritorialization, and Social Control." *Space and Culture* 11.4 (2008): 514-532. Web.
- Willis, Lesley H. "Object Association and Minor Characters in Jane Austen's Novels." *Studies in the Novel* 7.1 (1975): 104-119. Web.
- Wilson, Elizabeth. "Bohemian Dress and The Heroism of Everyday Life." *Fashion Theory* 2.3 (1998): 225-244. Web.
- Wilson, Elizabeth. *Adorned in Dreams: Fashion and Modernity*. New Brunswick, N.J: Rutgers

- University Press, 2003. Print.
- Wilson, Elizabeth. *The Contradictions of Culture: Cities, Culture, Women*. New York: Sage, 2001. Print.
- Wilson, Elizabeth. *The Sphinx in the City: Urban Life, the Control of Disorder, and Women*. Berkeley, California: University of California Press, 1992. Print.
- Winkiel, Laura. "Circuses and Spectacles: Public Culture in 'Nightwood'." *Journal of Modern Literature* 21.1 (1997): 7-28. Web.
- Winterson, Jeanette. "Preface." *Nightwood*. Barnes, Djuna. New York: New Directions Press, 2006. ix-xvi. Print.
- Wohlfarth, Irving. "Et Cetera? The Historian as Chiffonnier." *New German Critique* 39 (1986): 143-168. Web.
- Wolff, Janet. "The Invisible Flâneuse. Women and the Literature of Modernity." *Theory, Culture & Society* 2.3 (1985): 37-46. Web.
- Wood, James. "Beyond a Boundary." *New Yorker*. N.p., 19 May 2008.
<https://www.newyorker.com>. Web.
- Wood, James. *How Fiction Works—Tenth Anniversary Edition*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2018. Print.
- Yancy, George. *Black Bodies, White Gazes: The Continuing Significance of Race in America*. Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield, 2016. Print.
- Zukin, Sharon. "Changing Landscapes of Power: Opulence and the Urge for Authenticity." *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 33.2 (2009): 543-553. Web.

Zukin, Sharon. *Landscapes of Power: From Detroit to Disney World*. Berkeley, California: University of California Press, 1993. Print.

Appendix

Teju Cole, Facebook post, dated April 18, 2018.

“This is why I always say you can’t be a black flâneur. Flanerie is for whites. For blacks in white terrain, all spaces are charged. Cafes, restaurants, museums, shops. Your own front door. This is why we are compelled, instead, to practice psychogeography. We wander alert, and pay a heavy psychic toll for that vigilance. Can’t relax, black.”



Teju Cole
 April 18, 2018 · 🌐

The Starbucks thing hit me harder than I expected. I've been brooding for days. On the face of it, it's inconsequential. It is certainly inconsequential in direct comparison to the "newsworthy" horrors we are used to. No one was shot. Nobody died.

It happened on an ordinary day in an ordinary place. But that's also the reason it stings: precisely because of that ordinariness. Show of hands: who's ever been to a Starbucks? It happened in Starbucks, with their overpriced faux-Italian menu, their aspirational but mass-market signaling, their burnt coffee, it happened to people like us doing the things we do: waiting for a friend to arrive before ordering.

Keen-eared Prof Vijay Iyer notes that playing overhead during the arrest was Dizzy Gillespie's Salt Peanuts. A compact contemporary history of public space could be written with the title "Black Music, Yes! Black People, No!"

We are not safe even in the most banal place. We are not equal even in the most common circumstances. We are always five minutes away from having our lives upended. Racism is not about actively doing stuff to you all the time—it's also about passively keeping you on tenterhooks. We are always one sour white away from having the cops arrive. And the cops! The cops are like a machine that can't stop once set in motion, what Fela called "zombie." When the cops arrive, the human aspect of the encounter is over.

This is why I always say you can't be a black flâneur. Flanerie is for whites. For blacks in white terrain, all spaces are charged. Cafes, restaurants, museums, shops. Your own front door. This is why we are compelled, instead, to practice psychogeography. We wander alert, and pay a heavy psychic toll for that vigilance. Can't relax, black.




 4.2K

179 Comments 2.3K Shares

 Like
  Comment
  Share