CHAPTER I
THE POET AND THE CITY

Urbanism did not begin in the United States, Cities of the Near East and of Europe preceded and set patterns of life that have had their impact on Americans\(^1\). This means that urbanism is older than Americanism. Nevertheless, cities are relatively new to human experience.

I Genesis of a City:

When Paleolithic man moved from his cave into the shelters he constructed, of boughs and leaves, he was taking the first step towards urbanization. Then Neolithic man grew plants, domesticated animals, and introduced agriculture. Families collected into friendly groups and formed villages, which were located on sites offering the natural protection of elevated terrain, islands, peninsulas, or they were surrounded with barricades and moats.

Man was a gregarious being. He sought the companionship of his fellowmen and devised group entertainment and sports. The stronghold of the village became an appropriate sanctuary for the 'altar of his deity'\(^2\). It provided a place for assembly and a center for trade. The environment became popular, and urbanization had begun.

Society has been forged in the crucible of natural forces. Being a natural entity himself, man has inflicted upon himself many of the evils and hardships he has suffered. He has faced the necessity to improve economic security, correct social mal-adjustments, discard mass supervisions, or resist seizure of
power by autocrats bent upon personal glory and self aggrandizement. The conflicts have occurred with varying degrees of pressure upon humankind and under a variety of circumstances.

Evolving from these conflicts the development of cities has marked the culture of a people. Sensitive to the surge between oppression and justice, the physical form of cities has been shaped by the economic, social and political forces of society. The degree to which freedom or slavery has dominated the lives of men, the manner in which war has been waged, the instruments of destruction and defense, the tools for peaceful pursuits and the way they have been used, the consideration, neglect, or disdain men have shown their fellowmen, all account for the kind of cities man has built for himself, and their effect on urban development.

Cities:

The name city is given to certain urban communities by virtue of some legal or conventional distinction. It also refers to a particular type of community, the urban community, and its generic culture, often called ‘Urbanism’. In legal terms, in the United States, for example, a city is an urban area incorporated by special or general act of a state legislature. Its charter of incorporation prescribes the extent of municipal powers and the frame of local government, subject to constitutional limitation and amendment. In common usage, however, the name is applied to almost every American urban center, whether legally a city or not, and without much regard to actual size or importance. In Australia and Canada, city is a term applied to the larger units of municipal
government under state and provincial authority respectively. New Zealand has followed British precedent since the abolition of the provinces in 1876; the more populous towns are called boroughs under the Municipal Corporations Act of 1933 and earlier legislation. In the United Kingdom itself, city is merely an official style accorded to towns either in their historical identity as beneficiaries' honoris causa of a special act of the crown (the first town so distinguished was Birmingham in 1889). Except for the ancient City of London (an area of about 677 acres in central London under the Jurisdiction of the Lord Mayor), the title has no significance in local government in the United Kingdom. In all the other countries of the world, the definition of city similarly follows local tradition or preference.

As a type of community, the city may be regarded as a relatively permanent concentration of population, together with its diverse habitations, social arrangements, and supporting activities, occupying a more or less discrete site, and having a cultural importance that differentiates it from other types of human settlement and association. The ancient city was primarily a fortress, a place of refuge in time of war. The modern city, on the contrary, is primarily a place of commerce, and owes its existence to the market place around which it sprang up. Economically defined, 'the city is a settlement, the inhabitants of which live primarily off trade and commerce rather than agriculture.'

The city... is something more than a congeries of individual men and of social conveniences- streets, buildings, electric lights, tramways, and telephones etc; something more than a mere constellation of institutions and administrative
The city is, rather a state of mind, a body of customs and traditions, and of organized attitudes and sentiments... The city has, as Oswald Spengler has recently pointed out, its own culture: ‘What his house is to the peasant, the city is to civilized man. As the house has its household Gods, so has the city its protecting Deity, its local saint. The city also, like the peasants hut, has its roots in the soil’. In 1904 Wilcox carried out a study of the American city. According to him, ‘The city is indeed, the visible symbol of the annihilation of distance and the multiplication of interests. Here all institutions tend to undergo change the neighborhood, the natural primary unit of local organization is weakened and in many cases nearly destroyed. Home life is little more than a name whereas a hundred people, often of different nationalities, live in a single tenement house...’ Among the business and professional classes, a man’s most intimate associates may be scattered over the whole city, while he scarcely knows his next door neighbor’s name ......... there is an organization of industry as so large a scale that, in cities, only an insignificant proportion of the people work for themselves. Still the city is called, the distributing center of intelligence as well as goods. It tends to become dominant in the same way as a great employer of labor that deals with his men individually (The City 4).

The city transforms men as if by magic and newcomers are absorbed and changed into city men. There is little difficulty making city men out of countrymen. An old German adage declares that ‘City air makes men free’. This is doubtless a reference to the days when the free cities of Germany enjoyed
the patronage of the emperor, and laws made the fugitive serf a freeman if succeeded for a year and a day in breathing city air. An open market in which he sells the products of his labor was a necessary incident of his freedom and it was the application of money economy to the relations of master and man that completed the emancipation of the serf.

Ever since their first appearance several thousand years ago, cities have been the objects of pride and suspicion, of envy and of fear and interest. Books have been written about 'The Shame of the Cities' and about 'The City the Hope of Democracy' by Lincoln Steffens and others. Orators have extolled cities as 'the vanguard of civilization' and condemned them as 'bolts on the landscape'. In America hostility between city and country is suggested by the pitting of Baltimore against the Eastern shore, New York against Upstate, Chicago against Downstate, Denver against the Western slope. All these popular expressions imply that there is something distinctive about cities, but none of them tell what that something is.

Obviously the modern city is something very complex. At least in the United States, its inhabitants include many different kinds of people who have varying relationships to each other. Prosperity and bright lights attract country folks who do not know how to live in cities. The outward push of expanding business sends the 'substantial' citizens to the suburbs. Succeeding waves of new comers press on the older residents and on each other. The net result is an atmosphere of impermanence, physical proximity accompanied by social distance, with great masses of people who seem unable to unite in common tasks
and sometimes fall to fighting. The city is puzzling even to those who know it best. At times it seems utterly chaotic. At other times one catches a glimpse of order and system. At times it is quite disgusting and repulsive. At other times it is strangely alluring. In any case there is need for careful study, if we are to achieve understanding of this enormous, complicated, and changing thing we call, the City.

II The City in Literature:

The city has determined our cultural fate for the last three hundred years. It has become inseparable from our personal and national destiny. As the product of the enlightenment, urbanism is at the very heart of Western culture, the source both of political order and of social chaos. 'As such, the city is also the source of intellectual excitement and challenge.'

When Christopher Wren drew up a plan (1666) for a new London with the Royal Exchange replacing St. Paul's Cathedral as the new center, his idea only reflected what was happening in practice. Daniel Defoe gave us a portrait of this new city, an entity held together by commercial need. While Defoe welcomed the city as offering a new way of life to a new class of people, Dickens saw how this process had become so materialistic that it hardened the heart and diminished compassion, altering the sense of human scale, and also our sense of community.

As the city became more materialistic, it engendered hostility in the literary imagination—a hostility that went hand in hand with a distrust of enlightenment values. From Ralph Waldo Emerson to Ralph Waldo Ellison,
writers have depicted 'the material city cutoff from a spiritual energy'. Thomas Pynchon, however, entertained no such binary view, he emptied Eliot's past of mythical meaning, removed Defoe's transcendental signifiers, and set his characters in a perpetual present in which they were cut off from everything except the constant play of urban signifiers and cultural stimuli. A sense of the uncanny, a sense of mystery that the mind cannot fathom, is at work in Pynchon's city. Strange connections are made—perhaps the work of a paranoid mind, perhaps the work of urban conspiracy (Richard Lehan 7).

All of these urban visions suggest that beneath the surface of the modern city are forces at work as old as our origin. These forces have taken many shapes. Dionysus embodies the disruptive force in the city; his spirit is later embodied by the carnival, still later by the mysterious stranger and the man in the crowd, and again by Freud's theory of the uncanny as the return of the repressed. 'The major writers and thinkers of the western world have had to come to terms with the city, each era offering us an urban identity that reveals our secret cultural values.' (Richard Lehan The City in Literature 6). The urban drama played itself out against a Europe transformed by the Enlightenment, by a America that offered a New Jerusalem, and by a wilderness and a frontier against which the city assumed its meaning.

As the city becomes more complex as a physical structure, the ways of seeing it become more difficult and the individual more passive in relation to it. The city came into being when a surplus of food allowed a diversity of tasks. Diversity is a key to urban beginnings and continuities, and diversity is also the
snake in the urban garden, challenging systems of order and encouraging disorder and chaos. As the city reached out into the hinterland and eventually beyond itself in the name of empire, more was demanded of the urban center. The industrial city brought with it urban pollution and slums, smokestacks become a way of life. The urban crowd, unstable, volatile, made city life increasingly unpredictable.

The city is the place where man and nature meet. The city promises a way of regulating the environment, subduing the elements and allowing a certain control over nature. Most urban historians believe that the city could not have come into existence without a surplus of food, which enabled a diversification of work and social function. Such a surplus also led to trade with other communities. For this the city needed a recording system. The city thus emerged together with the development of writing, what Lewis Mumford calls 'the permanent record'.

As the enlightenment came into being with the commercial city, so literary naturalism came into being with the industrial city. And a mediator between naturalism and the industrial process was Karl Marx (1818-83). Marx was not challenging the mechanisms of capitalism, only its ends. He gave priority to the element of work over that of investment capitalism, and he believed that work was the matrix that transformed nature into the built environment- turned raw goods into finished products and untamed land into cities. Marx believed that the worker was getting less and less of the benefits his labor brought into being, and he saw the class struggle as the antagonism that
characterized every society. Disagreeing with Herbert Spencer's emphasis upon
the survival of the fittest, he felt the need for the working class to generate
wealth by controlling the means of production, and he believed that history was
moving toward this end.

III The Poet and The City:

Since there has been literature, there have been cities in literature.
We unthinkingly consider this phenomenon modern, but it goes back to early
epic and mythic thought. We cannot imagine Gilgamesh, the Bible, the Iliad, or
the Aeneid, without their cities, which contain so much of their energy and
radiate so much of their meaning. Small settlements and villages had, then as
now, some direct connection to the land around them, and provided clear and
limited social functions. But cities were from the beginning something special.
As centers of religious and military power, as well as of social life on a large
scale, they were things apart.

The city has always been man's single impressive and visible
achievement. It is a human artifact, which has become an object in the world of
nature. Cities are a plural phenomenon: There are many of them, but though
each has its individual history, they all seem to exemplify similar patterns. The
most basic of these is the interpenetration of past and present. On the one hand
there is the visible city of streets and buildings, frozen forms of energy fixed at
different times in the past and around which the busy kinetic energy of the
present swirls. On the other hand there are the subconscious currents arising in
the minds of the city's living inhabitants from this combination of past and
present. These currents include the city's ties with the realm of the dead through its temples, cemeteries, and ceremonies as well as its old buildings, and also its functions as the seat of secular power, embodied in kings, governments, and banks. Northrop Frye, following, Kierkegaard's concept of repetition as re-creation, writes that 'the culture of the past is not only the memory of mankind, but our own buried life, and study of it leads to a recognition scene, a discovery in which we see, not our past lives, but the cultural form of our present life'.

The city is, as Joseph Rykwert characterizes it, a curious artifact 'compounded of willed and random elements, imperfectly controlled'. It has even been called 'a state of mind'.

The city has been used as a rhetorical topos throughout the history of Western culture. But it has another aspect as well, whose referent seems to be a deep-seated anxiety about man's relation to his created world. The city crystallizes those conscious and unconscious tensions, which have from the beginning characterized the city in Western culture. Only such a crystallization can explain man's deep pre-occupation with the city, or account for the hypnotic attraction of its destruction since Troy, Sodom and Gomorrah, and Carthage.

'Man constructs according to an archetype', writes Mircea Eliade. Man's city and temple, as well as the entire region he inhabits, are built on celestial models. The act of Creation was a divine act; when man creates, he repeats the divine act, and formalizes connection through ritual. The sacred city or temple is symbolically the center of the universe, the meeting point of heaven, earth, and hell. The sacred rites of the founding of the city were
repeated in regular recurrent festivals, and in its monuments. The founding of cities, even as late as those of the Roman Empire, was a matter of myth and ritual to which practical concerns were completely subordinated. 'The city had to be founded by a hero', Rykwert says, and the hero-founder had to be buried at the heart of the city; only the tomb of the hero-founder could guarantee that the city lived. (Rykwert 35).

Underlying the cosmogony of the founding of the ancient city, is the idea that 'the city of necessity represents a separation from the world of nature, the imposition of man's will on a natural order created by a divinity'. This would account for the importance of ritual in the founding of the city. The founding as an act of interference in the divine order also involves a sense of guilt. This guilt might be connected with the curious myth that so many ancient cities were founded by murderers. In Genesis, the first city founder is Cain; Romulus was also a fratricide founder, and these us a parricide founder. In addition to their public names, cities were also given secret names, presumably the name of the protecting deity. Pliny reports that a magistrate was executed for revealing the secret name of Rome. When a city was destroyed, it had to be extirpated ritually as well as physically, reversing the process of founding; it was after all, the sacred axis of the Universe which had to be deconsecrated.

According to John. H. Johnston, the outward sign and scene of technological power is the city, where the multiform physical products of that power are likewise delivered, concentrated, distributed, expended, and consumed. For broadly critical purposes, therefore, the poetry of modern
warfare might be said to have its artistic and moral corollary in the poetry of the modern city.  **If the war poet describes the terms in which men fight and die, the city poet describes the terms in which men work and live.** In both cases, technology has affected a broad range of human conduct and experience. One of the better poems of W.H. Auden *Unknown Citizen* (1940) perfectly illustrates the intersection of war and peace, the battlefield and the city. Auden’s anonymous hero-worker, consumer, and soldier-obediently plays out any role a technocratic bureaucracy many assign him.

As a phrase often rather casually employed by critics and scholars interested in the subject, *City Poetry* may have a number of different meanings. **John. H. Johnston**’s choice of city poems began to emerge out of his preoccupation with the topographical poets, who viewed the city primarily as a physical place.

*The Poet and the City* is not meant to be an exhaustive treatment in terms of rigorous historical or literary principles, but rather an exploration of poetic materials which possess a sometimes tenuous but nevertheless a real and illuminating relationship. An American critic has observed that there is ‘**little in the English poetic tradition... to help a modern poet to learn how to deal with what must be the great modern Subject**’. There is actually an abundance of material in the English tradition of city poetry. Three interesting studies of urban poetry have appeared recently, these studies— as their titles indicate are clearly limited by time and place, or both, or deal with fiction as well as verse, or confine themselves to only one aspect of poetic art.
According to James Dougherty, even to contemplate the word 'City' and its possible layers of significance is to apprehend realities at the very limits of our comprehension, 'this everyday term, if we are mindful of its import, enters our speech always with a charge of meaning that exceeds its literal reference to some assemblage of women and streets and structures'. One would think that these facts, in addition to some of the significant physical and social changes visible in some of the greater cities—dispersal, decline, and decay along with the hint of new, almost unimaginable threats to the integrity, even the identity, of the traditional Western polis—might induce one or two reflective critics to undertake a broadly evaluative survey of the art form that, in the past, has recorded many of the earlier stages through which the human community has evolved.

"Hence poetry of the city, as a depiction of women and men, streets and structures, must of necessity possess a great many profoundly revealing dimensions - especially today, when there are many closely inter-related 'World Cities', many perspectives and levels from which each city may be seen, and many poets of diverse Talents whose experiences have more and more frequently touched upon some aspect of city life". Within the past twenty years, however, the interests of a number of writers have been directed toward an area of inquiry where many disciplines coverage, all seeking the meaning of the modern city or the general import of the 'technological revolution that created it'. 
The following are the explicit observations about urban literature, which preface James Dougherty's fascinating, study of the impact of the city on the religious imagination.

'We do not need literature or art to tell us how the city appears. We know that altogether too well, by firsthand experience. No set of words, however evocative, could improve on a day's direct experience of city 'facts'. Literature is a frail, vehicle for documentation. But it can become powerful when understood as the imaginative review of experience, a review that both discovers and imparts those spiritual expectations against which the city's appearance must be measured.'

Place, spirit, fact, dream, symboimage, event, process, nightmare, myth- whatever it is, the modern city dominates twentieth-century life to the extent that any serious artistic reaction to it is implicitly or explicitly a reaction to all of the powers and forces operating in contemporary civilization. Even the absence of artistic reaction to the modern city may be in some sense a conscious or unconscious choice on the part of the artist and an unspoken commentary on what the city has been, is now, or what it is in the process of becoming.

For many of the countless millions who never read poetry or who never see the 'Unreal City' (whether Chicago, London, or Paris), the really sinister effects of a churning city and factory civilization upon elemental air and water have today become all too obvious. "The river sweats / oil and tar under 'the brown fog of a winter-noon'"- Eliot's descriptive details already seen dated when we consider forms of industrial contamination a thousand fold more
threatening to life and health than oil and tar and smog. Are we the last generation of men who may remember what Ruskin in ecological innocence called the ‘Three Material Things’... essential to Life: ‘Pure Air, Water, and Earth’? No one today, it seems, can escape the deteriorating conditions of life imposed as the price of progress by an energy-hungry, city and factory civilization.

If the city and what it represents is indeed the dominant fact of modern life (as well as its dream and its nightmare), what then are the artistic possibilities of this immense subject for the contemporary poet? What does the poet see when he sees New York, for instance, from afar or from within? And what does he make of what he sees? In speaking of the city in this general way we are referring to a complex moral and physical entity- a place yet something much more than a place-which resists both easy analysis by the urbanologist and easy description by the poet. This entity has always encouraged abstract and possibly meaningless simplifications in terms of moral or spiritual ideas; when we speak of the ‘City of God’ and the ‘City of Man’, of the holy city of Byzantium and the unholy city of Babylon. Though he may begin with static archetypes like these, the poet must ultimately come to grips with the real city, the indescribably dynamic entity impinging upon his senses and endlessly soliciting his imagination. Unlike traditional poetic subjects such as love and death, the city manifests tremendous and sometimes shocking change not only within the two hundred-year period of modern industrial expansion but also
within the adult years of poets now living. Can any of these writers ever again see Sandburg's Chicago of 1914 as 'City of the Big Shoulders'?

Although poetry of place is indeed a rather indeterminate literary category, it is critically quite useful in marshalling some of the larger descriptive efforts of poets whose interest in nature and man frequently—and significantly, from the point of view of this study—leads them to that man made antithesis of nature, the city.

An era devoted to the ideal of artistic 'imitation' may not seem to be fruitful ground for the investigation of beginnings. During the eighteenth century, however, the recognizable foundations of the twentieth century were being optimistically assembled, science, commerce, and industry were beginning to transform human life, and the modern city was beginning to take shape. It is one of the oddities of literary history that the outer, more obvious aspects of this era of change are frequently registered in an ancient, clumsy, diffuse, rambling, and now almost unused verse form known as the topographical poem—a fairly well defined subcategory of the poetry of place.

And happy...is he, who decks the Bow'rs Of Sylvans, and adores the Rural Power's: Whose mind, unmoved, the Bride of Courts can see; Their glittering Baits, and purple slavery. But in city:
Some through Ambition, or thro,
Thirst of Gold.
Have slain their Brothers, or their
Country Sold
And leaving their sweet homes in Exile
run
To lands that lye beneath another
Sun.

Here Virgil is concerned not so much with the city as a physical fact as
with the moral phenomenon of its apparent disintegration. Greed and ambition,
like contagious diseases, have become forces which ravage public institutions
and threaten the social fabric of the city itself; blasphemy and treason-the
ultimate crimes-undermine the order implicit in elementary religion and
political codes. The honest countryman who keeps his distance from the
outrageous excesses of city life serves as Virgil's reminder that, though man
can learn to live in accord with nature, he finds it much more difficult to
perceive a commanding design in the uncertain continuities of human history.
True civilization, as Virgil tells us repeatedly, is rooted in the earth and in
man's ceaseless struggle to make the earth fruitful through knowledge, toil, and
rigorous self-discipline.

But the nineteenth century witnesses the decline of the topographical
poem as a major form, though as Robert Aubin's lengthy 'Bibliographies' shows, it continued to be popular among minor poets in whom the desire
merely to describe rural scene and place was the chief motivation. These poets
wrote mainly about traditional topographical subjects within the large realm of nature; hills, prospects, gardens, estates, castles, rivers, villages, and ruined abbeys; they did not write about mines, factories, railroads, or cities, even during the years when the encroachment of the industrial system upon the national life were beginning to arouse grave concern among men like Carlyle and Ruskin.

The city as negative point of reference is also well illustrated in Romantic poetry by William Wordsworth's 'Tintern Abbey' (1798) and 'MichaeP' (1800). In neither of these poems is the country-city antithesis given an explicit thematic extension; the country (or nature) is the source of moral good, and the city exists only remotely as an alternative and possibly destructive mode of life. (John H. Johnston, The Poet and the City.87).

Ever since the industrial revolution, the poets, instead of regarding the cities as centers of civilization, have regarded them as destructive of the conditions out of which the supreme achievements of poetry in the past were created. The modern urban environment is ugly, overwhelming, and materialistic. Its power is expressed in a scientific, sociological vocabulary, which is alien to the image-making vocabulary of past poetry.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, the association of artists-themselves rejected-with the rejected members of society in great cities and the equating of what had been thought to be ugly with the beautiful led to the
association of revolutionary artists with revolutionary politics, based on the self-identification of many poets and painters with the poor.

In the course of time, this meant that the poet and artist, associating with the politics of the proletariat, began to see himself as redeeming the city, making it anew. The poets and the artists came to feel that through their art, allied with powerful forces in the society, they could transform the city, making it—according to their own aesthetic standards—beautiful, and creating an urban environment which would transform the lives and attitudes of the inhabitants. This point of view is expressed energetically by Wyndam Lewis, in the early twenties, when he was very much in sympathy with the Futurists: "Art, however, the greatest art, even, has in its power to influence everybody. Actually the shapes of the objects, (houses, cars, dresses and so forth) by which they are surrounded have a very profound subconscious effect on people. A man might be unacquainted with the very existence of a certain movement in art, and yet his life would be modified directly if the street he walked down took a certain shape, at the dictates of an architect under the spell of that movement, whatever it were. Its forms and colors would have a tonic or a debilitating effect on him, an emotional value. Just as he is affected by the changes of the atmosphere, without taking the least interest in the cyclonic machinery that controls it; so he would be directly affected by any change in his physical milieu.27"

Looking at the cities with their architecture of glass boxes of almost uniform design, we cannot feel that modern art has influenced more than a very
few architects, for less, through the media of architecture and design, transformed cities and the lives of men and women in them. All we can say is that through the diverse energies of modern movements in art, the poets of the early twentieth century did evolve a poetic idiom in which it was possibly to carry on a dialogue with those conditioned in their consciousness by the urban environment.

IV Enduring Images of the City:

“A writer’s country is a territory within his own brain; and we run the risk of disillusionment if we try to turn such phantom cities into tangible brick and mortars.”

“Virginia Woolf, “Literary Geography.”

This is a book not about cities of brick and mortar, but about the “Unreal Cities”-cities of mind, cities of words-into which the metropolis has been transformed by the power of art. For the city dwells as much in us as we in it. It lives as fully in the imagination as in the material world, a circumstance that challenges the critic who would invade the ‘phantom cities’ constructed by poets. We cannot pretend to know, from the study of literary texts, the actual Paris of Baudelaire or the London of Blake, Wordsworth, or Eliot. But through our reading we can begin to understand how these cities were perceived by the poets who lived in them, and also how the literary representation of that perception has been shaped by earlier texts about the city. ‘City Poetry’ is a compound of contemporary impressions on the one hand and, on the other, of poetic structures already in place.
In treating the city as the predominant image of modern life, the poetry of Wordsworth, Baudelaire, Walt Whitman, Eliot, and Williams dramatically highlights the dynamic relations between poet and tradition, Self and Other, male and female, sexual desire, and textual distance.

**Unreal City, I have seen and see...**


T.S. Eliot’s *The Waste Land* presents a bleary vision of a city already seen. It is a city made unreal by repetitive, worn out sight of places, people, and texts. *My personal landscape is a composite*, Eliot once remarked, and in *The Waste Land* he fashions an amalgam of *slumminess* and urban woe based on his experience of blighted life in St. Louis, Boston, Paris, and post-world war I London.28

The absence of vital contact and stimulating encounters among the citizens of the Wasteland bespeaks the extent of Eliot’s despair over the brutalizing monotony of urban existence. This absence also accentuates his difference from Wordsworth, Baudelaire, and Whitman: amid the swarming crowds he fails to find a glimpse of the entrancing *Unknown Other* through whom he might discover the ‘real’ city of genuine communication.

At first, Eliot’s metropolis reveals itself only as an insubstantial tissue of texts, perverse personae, and fragmentary relationships representing the ruin of Western Civilization. Sexual dysfunction, social alienation, and spiritual despondency— all conspire to prevent the poems various persons and voices from true interaction. As image and recorder of the divorce of *Self* from *Other,*


Self from Self, the blind, two sexed Tiresias, wanders Eliot’s London. According to Eliot, the “plan” of the Waste Land is based on the legend of the Holy Grail as presented in Jessie L. Weston’s “From Ritual to Romance”. Not only the title, but the plan and a good deal the incidental symbolism of the poem were suggested by Miss Jessie L. Weston’s book on the Grail legend.... (quoted in. T.S Eliot’s Introductory Note on The Westland)

The legend postulates a close connection between the vitality of a certain king, and the prosperity of his kingdom; the forces of the ruler being weakened or destroyed, by wound, sickness, old age, or death, the land becomes waste, and the task of the hero is that of restoration. Eliot’s poem hinges on this mythic association of the ruler’s strength and potency with that of his city, but extends it to include every inhabitant. Each one becomes a sterile Fisher King, bringing desolation to the waste land of London, which in the poem serves as a synecdoche for the degradation of Western Civilization.

If Eliot’s city is unreal, it is in part because the quaint-essential urban experience, the encounter with the passant, does not take place. This vitalizing shock of recognition, which lies at the heart of city and city poetry, has been effaced, or at least repressed and deferred, in the Waste Land. Its inhabitants are not invigorated by fresh eyes; on the contrary, they cannot escape their all too familiar partners. Every thing in his city seems stale and lifeless; the original draft of the poem finished the line “Unreal city” with the words “I have seen and see” (Waste Land ft, 31).
Unreal City

Under the brown fog of a winterdawn,  
A crowd flowed over London Bridge,  
so many,  
I had not thought death had undone so many.  
Sighs, short and infrequent, were exhaled,  
And each man fixed his eyes before his feet.  
Flowed up the hill and down king William Street,  
To where Saint Mary Woolnoth kept the hours  
With a dead sound on the final Stroke of nine.

('The Waste Land' 60-68).

However, in The Waste Land the city over mountains is not just one more earthly city that cannot survive the human desert within. Rather, it becomes a mythicized urban symbol of a culture in crisis: 'Cracks and reforms and bursts in the violet air'. The first unreal city was glimpsed at dawn; the second at noon; and now, at the "violet hour," the third must fall, unable to withstand the force of the final violent upheaval in human relations, the tremendous pressure of the poet's apocalyptic vision. The list of falling or fallen cities that appears before the final 'unreal'- Jerusalem, Athens, Alexandria, Vienna, London-progresses in time and space toward the reader and poet, toward the here and now in London. The inevitability of this clean
sweep is reiterated in one of the poem’s closing lines, ‘London Bridge is falling down, falling down, falling down’ (426).

Eliot superimposes the vegetative myths upon a description of the modern city because he realized the unbreakable connection between the two. The megalopolis not only had destroyed the symbiotic relationship between man and the land, but in controlling the land it had trapped humanity within a monument of self. That Eliot ends his poem on a note of doubt shows his awareness that he could not go beyond history and free modern man from the perils of urbanism.

The city both contained and organized vital energy. When morally complete, the container brought material and spiritual energy into centripetal harmony; when morally depleted, it dissolved into centrifugal chaos. Always beneath the order was a disorder waiting to erupt. Eliot’s world, especially his view of the city, is a constant attempt to keep a primitive energy in check. This is why Eliot was so taken with Conrad’s ‘Heart of Darkness’ and its sense of savage energy barely contained by a civilized veneer. Humanity was in a halfway house between order and disorder, the spiritual and the material, the City of God and the City of Man, the Savage Sweeney and the decadent Prufrock. He believed that there were realms where these levels of being met: man and God met in Christ; man and the animal in Sweeney; desire and inhibition in Prufrock, the city of order and disorder, the primitive and the civilized, in Elizabethan London. He could then address the religious and mythic aspects of the city-Augustine and Dante’s City of God, Frazer and the
city of fertility and waste—before moving to the modern city, which had abandoned the original meaning of the city.

T.S. Eliot saw modernism as the last effort of an old world rather than the first struggle of a new. Disillusioned with the Enlightenment city, he believed that the modern city could be redeemed by a radical change of mind as the old materialism was tempered with a new spirituality. The individual, no longer autonomous, needed to find a new source of energy and needed to ground anxiety in a shared community. Writers like Eliot and Auden looked to religious ideals to replace the Enlightenment view of radical egoism, the liberal belief that the individual-rational, pragmatic, and inventive—was free to remake the self in a world that guaranteed unlimited progress.

Close to Eliot’s view of the city is W.H. Auden’s. The two poets careers have remarkable symmetries. Eliot was born in America and moved to England; Auden was born in England and moved to America. For each, the secular voice that characterized his earlier poetry gave way to a religious one. And both poets spent much of their later career in search of an idealized Christian community, what Auden called the ‘Just City’.

In his early poetry, Auden was indebted to Marx, Freud, and the psychologist Homer Lane. When he left Europe in 1938 and settled in America, the physical move was matched by an ideological change; his religious beliefs increasingly showed the influence of Kierkegaard. This transition also marked his movement from communist sympathizer to renewed Christian. A Christian image of the city began to emerge, as Auden sketches
two possibilities. "Human will, if exercised, could turn the urban community into the Just City, the good place, the City of God; or passivity could let the city degrade and decay."

Auden’s poetry offers many images of the modern city. In “Paysage Moralise” the city is the opposite of the island, symbolizing social life as opposed to isolation and escape. In poem XXII (1934), Auden depicts the city as an industrial ruin: smokeless chimneys, damaged bridges, deserted power stations. In poem XXXI of Look Stranger! (1936), the city, built by the “Conscience stricken, the weapon making” is a place where “Wild rumors woo and terrify the crowd” in a world menaced by hatred and fear. The modern urban society is like a desert-expanded desolation, a place without limits. In ‘City Without Wall’ (1969), Auden insists that the walls of tradition, myths and cultures…. have crumbled, leaving modern man’s life directionless and meaning less. Urban humanity has turned into compulsive hermits in caves of steel and glass (35). But even though Auden’s actual city is disordered, dirty, and immoral, he always depicts a redeeming ideal. “Spain” (1937) entertains the possibility of the Just City, a social ideal he will later identify with the religious ideal of the ‘City of God’. In ‘In Memorial for the City’ (1949), Auden tells us that the City of God is attainable only through “full acceptance of faith.” His earthly city is the secular and material city of the Greeks, his ‘City of God’ is a Christian city with an eternal component that allows the moment to become an “eternal fact.” The heavenly city of faith may redeem the earthly city. Auden moved from secular humanism to religious belief, insisting the
spiritual was often released by the profane. Auden believed that the carnival was relevant to the fallen city. The carnival was a cathartic release of repressed discontent; it encouraged a protest element. The carnival involved a comic acceptance of human earthliness—a form of laughing with and at ourselves. It offered a recourse to a higher realm of life, a realm of faith, from which suffering emerges as an occasion for grace. In “The Sea and the Mirror” (1944), Auden uses Shakespeare’s ‘The Tempest’ as an object lesson for the modern condition. Prospero needs both Caliban and Ariel, the earthly and the airy, just as the industrial city needs its smoke stacks and an idealized antithesis. As failed artist, Prospero runs the risk of turning from aesthetics to politics and becoming a despot, the Hitler figure of modernism.

In the center of Auden’s world is the opposition between art and politics; while the failure of one, encouraged a reliance on the other, religion provided an alternative. This confluence of history, was not without peril.

The crowd had rolled back and were
Now huddled
Together nearly at the extremity of the Street, while
The soldiers had advanced no more
Than a third of its length.
The intervening space was empty
A paved Solitude between lofty Edifices, which threw almost
A twilight shadow over it.

Such an adapted stereotype occurs in Hawthorn’s ‘The Gray Champion’. In this story from ‘Twice-Told Tales’, the city is located in the past rather than the present: Hawthorne is ostensibly writing about Boston during the colonial period. But the fine icy chill of the passage, which serves as epigraph to this matter belongs to the writer of 1837, not to the screen Boston of “1689.” This single use of the image of the city contains many layers of meaning; “The crowd had rolled back and were now huddled together nearly at the extremity of the street, while the solders had advanced no more than a third of its length. The intervening space was empty- a paved solitude between lofty edifices, which threw almost a twilight shadow over it”. (Burton Pike The Image of The City In Modern Literature 3).

The whole weight of these two sentences falls on the emptiness of something which should be full, and which is made to serve a function opposite to the one for which it was intended. A city street lined with buildings was designed to be, literally and figuratively, an avenue of communication of all kinds. It is an emblem of both ‘civitas’ and ‘communitas’. Hawthorne, with great care and deliberation, in this image turns this basic assumption of positive space into a negative one. He empties the street and uses it instead as a brooding figure which separates two hostile masses, the people on the one end, the soldiers advancing toward them from the other. The street is filled with a tense emptiness. The two groups have lost their individuality; they are compressed into two masses, one “huddled,” one composed of the uniformity of soldiers. Since the street is denied its natural functions, the buildings while line
it seem to come alive with a threatening presence of their own, as 'lofty edifices' they seem higher and more stern than mere buildings. In this negative space the soldiers represent the instinct of aggression, the crowd populace the instincts of hatred and fear. The empty space of the street shows forcefully how community, civilization in the form of the city, is blotted out by the breaking through of these primitive instincts. At this point in his story, Hawthorne is articulating the disruption of civilization, embodied in the physical form of the city, by the forces of aggression and fear, which underlie it and which civilization must constantly seek to control.

It is as a result of the eruption of these dark instincts that the street's normal function is destroyed and it becomes a 'paved solitude.' 'Paved' implies all the purposefulness of modern city life; business, activity, communication. 'Solitude' is the denial of all this. A grand word of Miltonic and Wordsworthian ring in English, 'Solitude' is both existential and topographical. It refers both to the aloneness of an individual and to a lonely place, generally rural. 'Solitude' is also an ambiguous term: it can mean a place of either alienation or refuge. In 'The Machine in the Garden,' Leo Marx quotes passages from many nineteenth Century American writers in which 'Solitude' is used as a synonym for "desert." It represents a wilderness as opposed to the idealized landscape of the middle distance, the pastoral landscape, whose model is the harmony of men and nature; the model for solitude is isolation. 'Solitude' is an abstract word as well as a dramatic one: it does not bring to mind any
specific locality with characteristic features, but rather seems to express the state of mind of an observer contemplating an unpeopled landscape.

Hawthorne brings this state of mind to the city. It is the observing narrator and not the characters involved for whom the tension of this scene is expressed in the verbal tension of combining ‘Paved’ with ‘Solitude’. The characters in this passage are not included in the solitude, which refers to the empty street-space separating the two groups. By raising the simple concept of ‘intervening space’ to the complicated and clashing ambivalence of ‘paved solitude’, Hawthorne brings the city into the action of his story. The ‘lofty edifices,’ buildings deprived of their function as the street is deprived of its function, emerge as inscrutable, shadow-casting monuments rather than as structures serving a living society, “Lofty edifices” is not descriptive but a purely verbal projection of a heightened mood, here one of menace. There were no high buildings in Boston in either 1689 or 1837. Mumford’s characterization of the modern city as still essentially an earthbound Stone Age structure (The City in History 46) again comes to mind; Hawthorne is throwing his reader back from 1837 to well before “1689”, to the archetypal ambivalence of the city as the home of man.

In modern times the real cities of Western Europe and America have generally tended to be associated with the evils of human nature; ideal cities, on the model of Revelation, have been put off to some vague future time, as in Blake’s vow to build Jerusalem in England’s green and pleasant land, or the
alabaster cities of *America the Beautiful*, which gleam ‘undimmed by human tears’. (Burton Pike The Image of The City In Modern Literature.)

The double view of the real city and the mythic city is not so mysterious as might first appear, for all myths are attempts to explain realities. Most basic myths are, however, attempts to account for occurrences of nature. The myth of city must rationalize an object built by man which, because of its size and concentration of ritual and power (Religious, Government, Military, Financial) has displaced nature in the natural world.

The myth of the city as corruption, the myth of the city as perfection: This bifocal vision of Western culture is still very much with us. Indeed, the image of the city stands as the great reification of ambivalence, embodying a complex of contradictory forces in both the individual and the collective Western minds. The idea of the city seems to trigger conflicting impulses, positive and negative, conscious and unconscious. At a very deep level, the city seems to express our culture’s restless dream about its inner conflicts and its inability to resolve them. On a more conscious level, this ambivalence expresses itself in mixed feelings of pride, guilt, love, fear and hate toward the city. The fascination, people have always felt at the destruction of a city may be partly an expression of satisfaction at the destruction of an emblem of irresolvable conflict.

If one of the writer’s functions is to give voice to aspects of culture, which are fragmentary perceptions, or preconscious or perhaps even unconscious feelings in the mind of the citizen, then the city is one of the most
important metaphors at his command. Technically, the city is an ideal mechanism for the writer, especially the novelist; it enables him to bring together in a plausible network extremely diverse characters, situations, and actions. The image of the city is a figure with profound tones and over tones, a presence and not simply a setting. This emerges, for instance, in the peculiar opening pages of *Moby-Dick*, a novel by Herman Melville (1920) in which Ismael (a major character) and city dwellers of Manhattan are drawn magnetically to the edge of the water, yearning outward from their city existence - which itself is presented in strongly negative terms. *Moby-Dick* is not a 'City novel', and yet it begins with the image of the city. This opening passage, which arouses resonance in the characters and the reader, stands in a long tradition of the city as a figure for ambivalence in literature. (The American city Novel 11).

These conflicting resonances of the image are reinforced by a writer's and reader's own experiences of city life, whether real or imagined. What exactly does happen when one experiences city in real life? The question itself makes us realize the complexity of the problems facing anthropologist, sociologist, writer, and critic. The basic problem is how to reduce a cacophony of impressions to some kind of harmony. Kevin Lynch has tried to categorize some aspects of this problem as far as empirical response is concerned. The inhabitant or visitor, basically experiences the city as a labyrinth, although one with which he may be familiar. He cannot see the whole of a labyrinth, at once, except from above, when it becomes a map. Therefore his impressions of it at
street level at any given moment will be fragmentary and limited: rooms, building, streets. These impressions are primarily visual, but involve the other senses as well, together with a crowd of memories and associations. The impressions a real city makes on an observer are thus both complex and composite in a purely physical sense, even without taking into account his culture's pre-existing attitudes. 'Observer' is a slightly awkward term to use here since it indicates a person who is, with some awareness, looking at the city from a detached viewpoint. "Observer" applies better to the writer and the narrator than to the citizen. In daily life most urbanites go about in the city concentrating on their immediate business; they swim in urban ocean without being particularly aware of it.

There is a paradox in this entire situation. The city is, on the one hand, incomprehensible to its inhabitants; as a whole "it is inaccessible to the imagination unless it can be reduced and simplified". But on the other hand, any individual citizen, by virtue of his particular choices of alternatives for action and experience, will need a vocabulary to express what he imagines the entire city to be.

From the sociological point of view, the individual citizen, according to Wohl and Strauss, is involved in a continual quest for the essence of his urban experience and for ways to express it. The language used, however, is a formal one. A fairly limited range of linguistic conventions has come into use, whole formality is shaped by the fact that the form of the rhetorical devices employed does not depend on their content; their set phrasing is hospitable to any and all
substantive statements about a city's qualities. (R. Richard Wohl and Anselm L. Strauss, Symbolic Representation and the Urban milieu in American Journal of Sociology, 524.) They conclude: **It seems safe to say that without the resources of rhetoric the city-dweller could have no verbal representations of his own or any other city.**

So the process by which the writer evokes the city appears to parallel the process by which the citizen seeks to encompass his experience of it. The writers “**task is both to evoke and to organize many kinds and levels of response in the reader. It is not artist who dreams, says Kenneth Burke, but rather the audience, while the artist overseas the conditions which determine this, dream**”. In this process of overseeing, it is clear that the city evoked in words, especially in a fictional text, is toponymical rather than topographical. The name of the city and whatever physical features are labeled function within the relational context of the work; their reference to the real city outside the text may appear to be direct, but is actually indirect. One test of this is the coherence of the word-city to readers who are not the author’s contemporaries or countrymen.

Writers seem to pay careful attention to this difference between reality and image. For instance, though Flaubert, Hugo, Balzac, and Dickens have been praised for the realistic urban descriptions in their novels, close examination shows that they typically create in their fictions the Paris or London of a time considerably before the actual time of writing. Through the use of the conventions governing verb tenses in narration, they give the
impression of describing a present scene when they are actually inventing the picture of a past one. It is as if, by displacing the city backward in time in this fashion, they wished to insure its metaphorization, to place it as firmly as possible in the realm of the imaginary while at the same time presenting it as a “reality”. The result of this procedure is not the evocation of historically past city but a palimpsestic impression, which results in a tension between the city as past and the city as present.

To point out the discontinuity between the empirical city and its fictional counterpart is not to suggest that in using this image the writer has in mind a secret, coded meaning which the reader is challenged to decipher. That would make the city too literally symbolic, when actually it seems to function primarily as both an emblem and archetype. As such it has more various and more diffuse associations and resonances than a symbol can generally encompass. However the city image may function, it always brings into the text a power of its own; it might be more accurate to say that a writer harnesses this image rather than that he creates it. 'The poet does not confer the past of his image upon me,' Bachelards writes, 'and yet his image immediately takes root in me.' Bachelards notes in the same work, that 'great images have both a history and a prehistory; they are always a blend of memory and legend... Every great image has an unfathomable oneric depth to which the personal past adds special color. And in becoming assimilated into the consciousness of the reader, the image has touched the depths before it stirs the surface.'
Henry James' 'The American scene' is a work of non-fiction written by a novelist. Many of its passages combine the personal reactions of a sharp witted observer of cities with the boldness of the novelist's invention. James frequently sees the city as casting back an image of truth at a self-deluded character, as Paris does to Stretcher in 'The Ambassadors'. In 'The American scene' the image is cast back at James himself. (Henry James The American Scene 79-80) Summing up his impression at seeing New York again after an absence of a quarter-century, James writes that "the sky-Scraper and the league-long bridges, present and to come, marked the point where the age.... had come out. That in itself was nothing, ages do come out, as a matter of course, so far from where they have gone in. But it had done so, the latter half of the nineteenth century, in one's own more or less immediate presence; the difference, from pole to pole, was so vivid and concrete that no single shade of any one of its aspects was lost. This impact of the whole condensed past at once produced a horrible, hateful sense of personal antiquity". 36

In this complicated reaction to the city James makes the physical city an organism like himself, whose changes and rhythms in both time and space are, however, on a different scale and rhythm from his own. It is this discrepancy which reminds him so abruptly of his 'personal antiquity' when suddenly faced with "the whole condensed past". The overall impression of the physical city to one who observes it, as James does here, is of buildings and streets deposited in sedimentsary fashion over a long period, and implying a future.
Robert Musil also makes witty use of this slow rhythm of accretion separating a city's growth from the faster rhythm of an individual's life. In describing the grounds and house in Vienna which belong to Ulrich, the man without qualities, the narrator evokes, "a garden, partly still preserved from the eighteenth, or even the seventeenth century; and if one strolled past its wrought-iron fence, one glimpsed something like a short-winged little castle, a hunting lodge or pleasure palace from bygone times. Precisely speaking, its cellar vaults were from the seventeenth century, the garden and the main floor bore the appearance of the eighteenth century, and the façade had been renovated and rather spoiled in the nineteenth century. The whole made, in short, a rather blurred impression, like superimposed photographic images; but of such a kind that one invariably stopped and said 'Ah'!\textsuperscript{37} This description of the past frozen as an architectural jumble in the present is a special representation of a long time-scale. This contrasts with the shorter time-scale of Ulrich, who is introduced immediately after this description of his house.

This contrast can, of course, work in the opposite way: instead of long, slow accretion, the architectural representation of the past can disappear very quickly, through acts of war, nature, or economics. In this case the time-span of the individual would be longer than that of the urban environment. Baudelaire seems to have been the first writer who systematically exploited these syncopated rhythms of a way of indicating the estrangement of the individual from the city. For if in earlier times the city had been predominantly an image
of fixed relationships and fixed elements, during the nineteenth century it became a primary image of flux, of dislocation rather than location.

**Freud** says, that the city occupies a special place as the most intense locus of culture within a given civilization, then we could apply to the city Freud’s points about conflict, guilt, the function of the superego, and neurosis as factors in the development of civilization. Freud’s line of thought reflects ambivalence; the dark shadows of conflict, aggression, and guilt are an integral part of civilization, which is man’s greatest achievement and the ultimate container and transmitter of his highest values.

**Lewis Mumford** again caught in the urban implications of Freud’s argument. ‘No matter how many valuable functions the city has furthered,’ Mumford writes, ‘it has also served, throughout most of its history, as a container of organized violence and a transmitter of war’. In the walled city, Mumford continues, ‘The division of labor and castes, pushed to the extreme, normalized schizophrenia; while the compulsive repetitious labor imposed on a large part of the urban population under slavery, reproduced the structure of a compulsion neurosis. Thus the ancient city, in its very constitution, tended to transmit a collective personality structure whose more extreme manifestations are now recognized in individuals as pathological’.

Freud’s insights and Mumford’s application of them are further evidence that the city as an image in culture and consequently in literature is not a superficial matter, but has, on the contrary, profound associations for both
writers and readers. Some sociological writing on the city overlooks these associations.

Thus Morton and Lucia White assert that America’s “most celebrated thinkers have expressed different degrees of ambivalence and animosity toward the city... We have no persistent or pervasive tradition of romantic attachment to the city in our literature or in our philosophy, nothing like the Greek attachment to the polis or the French writer’s affection for Paris. And this confirms the frequently advanced thesis that the American intellectual has been alienated from the society in which he has lived, that he has been typically in revolt against it. For while our society became more and more urban throughout the nineteenth century, the literary tendency to denigrate, the city hardly declined; if anything, its intensity increased. One of the most typical elements in our national life, the growing city, became the betenoire of our most distinguished intellectuals rather than their favourite”. 40 This argument does not go far enough. If the Whites had looked more deeply into the ambivalence reflected in the city, they would have found that it is characteristic of far more than nineteenth century American society. It has a striking phenomenon of western culture since ancient times.

The word-city, then, leads a double life, evoking deep-rooted archetypal associations while its surface features reflect changing attitudes and values. Viewers of the medieval paintings and wood-cuts depicting cities are struck by the fact that a representation of Jerusalem, for instance, is that of a medieval city. E.H. Gombrich refers to the illustrations in Hartmann Schedel’s
‘Nuremberg Chronicle,’ in which the identical woodcut of a medieval city recurs with different captions as Damascus, Ferrara, Milan, and Mantua; all that these pictures were expected to do, Gombrich writes, ‘was to bring home to the reader that these names stood for cities. 4: What was to be depicted was the idea, not the concrete individualized form, Gombrich calls this “the principle of the adapted stereotype,’ in which the illustrator depicts an inner stereotype derived from the current culture, rather than an objective rendering of a real city.

The metaphorical application of solitude to the city was by no means limited to America in the nineteenth century. Baudelaire, for example, was fond in his poetry of playing off the solitude of the observing poet against the city as a collective scene. Just how conscious and deliberate this was on his part can be seen in a section of the spleen of Paris called ‘Crowds’. Multitude, Solitude: equal and convertible terms for the active and fecund poet. He who does not know how to people his solitude will not know either how to be alone in a bustling crowd.

“The poet enjoys the incomparable privilege of being able as he likes to be himself and others. Like those wandering souls which search for a body, he can enter every person whenever he wants. For him alone, every thing is empty...” 42 The solitary and pensive walker draws from this universal communion a singular sense of intoxication.

Ever the Latin linguist, Baudelaire begins by playing on the antiphonal contrast between ‘multitude’ and ‘solitude’, manyness and oneness, which he
proceeds to equate. Using the terms to mean 'togetherness' and 'isolation', he throws them in the air and plays with them like a juggler. The isolated poet can through his imagination be the many as well as the one; he can be both 'solitary and pensive' and partake at the same time of the universal communion. Baudelaire's use of the religious term is interesting, underlining as it does the integration of the individual into the sharing group in a ceremony of reconciliation. As a poet, the individual must be isolated from the group in order to create, but through his imagination, and his poetry, he can join it. This sovereign freedom understandably produces in the poet 'a singular sense of intoxication'.

However, this intoxication is indeed singular. The underlying tone of this passage is not that of the playful equation of opposites, but the expression of a splenetic solitude; as Walter Benjamin has pointed out, 'Baudelaire's attitude toward the city is predominantly negative'.

Henri Lefebvre, though not discussing Baudelaire specifically, has perhaps pinpointed this quirkiness more exactly in a thought about the extreme ambivalence of modern society. This ambivalence expresses itself in two contradictory obsessions, integrating and disintegrating. Lefebvre sees one of these obsessions, the compulsive need to integrate and be integrated, as a response to the other, the disintegration of the idea of community.
Clashing contradictions: perhaps the central fascination of the city, both real and fictional, is that it embodies man's contradictory feelings—pride, love, anxiety, and hatred—toward the civilization he has created and the culture to which he belongs.
CHAPTER I

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