The Image of the City and Urban Literature

THE IMAGE OF THE CITY AND URBAN LITERATURE:

A COMPARATIVE STUDY BETWEEN JAMES JOYCE'S *DUBLINERS*,

HANIF KUREISHI'S *THE BUDDHA OF SUBURBIA*, AND

IRVINE WELSH'S *GLUE*

By

DANIEL PAUL M<sup>C</sup>KEOWN, B.A.

A Thesis

Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies

in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

for the Degree

Master of Arts

McMaster University

MASTER OF ARTS (2004)                                    McMaster University
(English)                                                Hamilton, Ontario

TITLE:              The Image of the City and Urban Literature:  A
                    Comparative Study between James Joyce's *Dubliners*,
                    Hanif Kureishi's *The Buddha of Suburbia*, and Irvine
                    Welsh's *Glue*

AUTHOR:             Daniel Paul M<sup>C</sup>Keown, B.A. (McMaster University)

SUPERVISORS:        Professor Ronald Granofsky and Professor Sarah Brophy

NUMBER OF PAGES:    v, 122

# ABSTRACT

The objective of this thesis is to demonstrate that "urban literature" is defined as much by the experience of the character as by the presence of the city. My central argument is that "urban" denotes not merely the presence of the city but an attitude adopted by the individual.

I invoke the scholarship of psychoanalyst Georg Simmel to explain how the presence of the city and urban images in a text are structured and quantified through a process of mental calculation. Contrary to Simmel, however, I argue that the process of calculation extends beyond immediate consciousness and into the very subjectivity of the individual. My analysis of calculation within the individual proceeds on three levels: socio-economic, intimate, and spiritual.

In my first chapter, I have chosen James Joyce's *Dubliners* (1914) to establish this three-tiered model of analysis. In my second and third chapters respectively, I have chosen Hanif Kureishi's *The Buddha of Suburbia* (1990) and Irvine Welsh's *Glue* (2001) to complicate the model and explore how the calculated image of the city has developed over the twentieth century. Kureishi and Welsh place a much greater emphasis on personal subjectivity in comparison to Joyce's omniscience. The result is a less imposing and overbearing image of the city as a self-contained active entity.

I hope that this thesis will contribute to the discourse on urban literature in two respects. First, I hope to establish a general understanding of the city's role in literature. Second, I hope to establish the calculative mind as a characteristic common to the urban experience. The misunderstood role of the city and the complexity of urban life have played a role in preventing "urban literature" from becoming a well-defined disciplinary area.

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Introduction:

Urban Literature and the Psychological Formation of the City

In modern and post-modern literature, the city is an almost universal setting. However, it could hardly be argued that every modern or post-modern text with a city setting qualifies as urban literature by virtue of that setting. In critical discourse on urban literature, scholars tend to focus on one of two literary elements as central to the identification of a text as urban literature. On one hand, scholars such as Richard Lehan, Mary-Ann Caws, and David Seed tend to view the city setting as central to the identification of a text as urban literature. On the other hand, scholars such as Diane Levy and Michael Jaye and Ann Watts tend to view character as central to the identification of a text as urban literature. Both views and approaches are valid in their fundamental basis: obviously, a text cannot be considered urban without the presence of the city, yet at the same time, "urban" is an adjective denoting someone or something as being "of" the city. In this thesis, I wish to elucidate this debate and analyse its existence within modern and post-modern literature. From an analysis of three texts, James Joyce's *Dubliners* (1914), Hanif Kureishi's *The Buddha of Suburbia* (1990), and Irvine Welsh's *Glue* (2001), I wish to explore the nuances and implications of both approaches. In this thesis I will use these three texts to support those scholars who view character as central to urban literature. I will demonstrate that the literary image of the city is derived from and structured around character. The city may exist as a prominent and imposing image

in modern and post-modern literature, but the character's experience allows such images and narrative perceptions of the city to be created. As such, the city setting in each of the three texts is subsumed within a larger literary structure of subjectivity. It is my argument that "urban" is not merely a condition created by the city setting but rather an attitude and state of mind expressed by character.

Understanding the individual-city relationship is significant because the debate highlights various reasons why urban literature has failed to achieve identification as a well-defined genre and disciplinary area of study. For those scholars who tend to see primary significance in the city setting, "urban literature" remains relegated to usage as a simple adjectival term that highlights the city as its central element. Anthologies, book-length studies, and journal articles of this tradition tend to use titles that emphasize the role of the city, such as "The City and the Novel" (Seed), *The City in Literature* (Lehan), or *City Images* (Caws). A common objective of these scholars is to document the city across various literary periods. For these scholars, the city is a dynamic character that changes over time. David Seed argues the point that urban literature consists of the changing role of the city setting: "urban fiction has characteristically investigated the tempo of social and environmental change" (221). Such scholars do acknowledge that "urban" also implies experience of the city in such a text. Seed, for example, makes an important observation that the novel came into existence just as the modern city was taking shape, and that there is a necessary connection, therefore, between urban literature and the narrative of experience (218). However, because the focus of such scholars is on the dynamics of the literary city, the "necessary connection" is not adequately explored. Few attempts are made to explore characters' experiences in depth or categorically to

identify commonalities in characters' experiences that can be deemed typical of an urban literary genre. The identification of typical symbols and motifs can certainly be obtained through a setting-based analysis, but such analysis ultimately does not account for a psychological narrative structure common to urban literature.

However, even scholars of the experience-based tradition fail to answer directly what urban literature is. Urban experiences are highly irregular and vastly different from one text to another, and such irregularity can seemingly make the identification of common characteristics of urban literature a daunting task. Jaye and Watts, for example, in their introduction to *Literature and the Urban Experience* note that the diversity of their contributors' approaches reflects the diversity of "human life in the city and in the literature which that life generates and shapes" (x). Levy's very title, "City Signs: Towards a Definition of Urban Literature," suggests that critical discourse on urban literature is still in a highly experimental and formational stage. Levy does not move beyond mere suggestions of what urban literature might be. For example, she sets out her argument with a hypothetical consideration of the opposing position: "we could identify 'urban' literature as that where the setting takes precedence over character; where, in fact, the setting rises to the level of protagonist" (66). While Jaye and Watts' study is much more extensive and elaborates more upon the urban experience, they likewise conclude that the discourse on urban literature is still being defined: "The city – alive, certainly, but with no clear emerging direction, fecund as well, but defying assigned value. [...] This indeterminate positioning, this ambiguity we recognize as modern, as ourselves, is to some large degree still shaped in our awareness by literary power – still being shaped by essays and writers such as are collected here" (xv).

Thus, even after more than two hundred years since the birth of the modern city, the definition of urban literature remains uncertain. Levy's essay, "City Signs," hints at why this is so: the city itself often becomes an obtrusive literary obstacle to comprehending fully a character's experience. Levy argues that the role of the city in a text often shifts from the "setting for the action to an active component of the action" (70). Thus, scholars such as Levy also recognize the importance of identifying the city itself as a dynamically changing character, as is common in the setting-based tradition of interpretation; the physical environment of the character is a major influence on the character's experience and even subtle changes in that environment can drastically change one's experience. Indeed, the two methods of "reading" the city are not always easily distinguishable from one another and are more often highly dependent on one another. While a dichotomy may exist between the two traditions, they nevertheless share common ground. By suggesting that city images are created and structured by a character's experience, I will be drawing together both traditions of discourse in an attempt to move closer to a comprehensible definition.

Trying to identify a common trait typical of urban literature that produces delineated images and perceptions of the city is not as daunting a task as most scholars suggest, however. Levy herself even unknowingly hints at a character trait that I propose to be a common link in urban literature when she states: "there is madness in the city because the intellect is constantly at work – trying to figure out the matrix, the human constructed system. There is insanity because there is intellect" (68). Akin to Levy's observation is the research of psychoanalyst Georg Simmel. In the early twentieth century, Simmel identified the effects of city life on the individual. In his essay, "The

Metropolis and Mental Life" (1903), he argues that the intensification of nervous stimulation in the city causes the metropolitan individual to "react with his head instead of his heart" (410). In contrast to small town or country life where the rhythm of life and sensory mental imagery flows more slowly and habitually, the urban metropolis provides the individual with a barrage of imagery and stimuli. This in turn causes an increase in the individual's awareness and intellectuality – cognitive processes that allow the individual to absorb and deal with intensified stimuli. The result, as Simmel argues, is that the modern mind has become more and more calculating (412). It is Simmel's notion of the calculating mind that I propose to be a characteristic common to the experience of the individual within the literary city.

Simmel's notion of the calculative mind is of particular interest to the current discourse on urban literature because it helps explain the nature of images and perceptions of the city in modern and post-modern literature. Simmel argues that the complexity of life in the modern metropolis allows the urban mentality to develop an "unmerciful matter-of-factness" (412). Interpersonal and even intimate relationships become similar to monetary transactions: "the relationships and affairs of the typical metropolitan usually are so varied and complex that without the strictest punctuality in promises and services the whole structure would break down into an inextricable chaos" (412). Most importantly,

> only the objective measurable achievement is of interest. [...] The
> calculative exactness of practical life which the money economy has
> brought about corresponds to the ideal of natural science: to transform the
> world into an arithmetic problem, to fix every part of the world by
> mathematical formulas. Only [the] money economy has filled the days of so
> many people with weighing, calculating, with numerical determinations,
> with a reduction of qualitative values to quantitative ones. (411-2)

In literature, the city itself becomes reduced to a single identifiable delineated image, a quantifiable entity the character "calculates" and psychologically creates to organize entire matrices of modern social conditions and stimuli. I propose to draw together the two traditions of discourse on urban literature by suggesting that the very perception and image of the city is itself such a quantified product of the character's existence within the city.

I have chosen *Dubliners*, *Buddha*, and *Glue* to apply this hypothesis because of their diversity and their capacity to raise numerous issues surrounding my proposed method of "reading" the city. Whether these three texts can be considered urban literature under the two traditions of discourse is not my concern here; Joyce's, Kureishi's, and Welsh's overt emphasis on the city setting and on experiences within the city inherently qualify them for consideration under the two existing discourses. Rather, my concern with these three texts is how they fall into the existing discourses and how they can be used to expand, clarify, and reconcile the differences between the existing discourses. Although there are many other possible texts that could be used to achieve the goals of this thesis, the three I have chosen are representative selections and will serve as illustrative examples of how the calculative mind creates various perceptions of the city.

Another obvious concern with this thesis is choosing texts which allow the reader to delve into the psyche of characters. Realism is one literary style which facilitates such investigation. The three texts are individually unique yet valuable in a comparison together because of their different uses of realism. Joyce's realism – known as naturalist realism – approaches the narrative in a certain "matter-of-fact," almost scientific manner.

Joyce's omniscient narrator dictates the reality of the Dubliners who become mere "unwitting, trapped philistines, acting out their socially programmed scripts" (Fodaski-Black 114). The image of the city is likewise reflected in this subjection of the individual. Dublin indeed changes from the "setting for the action to an active component of the action," as Levy says. As I will demonstrate in my first chapter, the city itself assumes the omniscience of the narrator, stealing its own subjectivity from the first-person child-Dubliner. Kureishi, on the other hand, uses a more comical irony and realism in *Buddha*. Where the third-person omniscience of *Dubliners* helps portray characters subjected to the city, the first-person narration of *Buddha* offers much greater views into the subjectivity and thought processes of Karim Amir. As I will demonstrate in my second chapter, the image of the city in *Buddha* develops strictly in relation to Karim's maturation; the city's subjectivity is taken directly from Karim's emotional and ideological expectations and education. My third case study, *Glue*, offers a combination of Joyce's omniscient realism and the comedic-irony of Kureishi's first-person subjective realism. Thus, the driving conflict in *Glue* is the struggle between the omniscient and the first-person subjective narrator. As I will demonstrate in my third chapter, the city is in constant flux between real environmental and socially influential factors and negotiable psycho-social realities.

The three texts also provide unique insight into the creation of literary images because of their socio-historical settings. Indeed, another significant part of each author's use of realism is their incorporation of common thematic social elements (which I will discuss further on in this introduction) respective to the time period and city they write about. As I will demonstrate, the literary image of the city and the process of delineation,

quantification, and calculation of that image is by no means a simple process. On the contrary, it is a highly complex process by which real environmental factors are, in a sense, filtered through highly emotional and ideological social conditions. Joyce's literary image is created by the stifling ideological conditions of late-nineteenth and early twentieth-century Dublin; Kureishi's is created by the "enlightening" atmosphere of 1970s London as well as the environmental circumstances of the suburban-urban divide; and Welsh's is created by the social instability and fluctuation of late-twentieth-century Edinburgh. As an important part of my analysis in each chapter, therefore, I will begin with an examination of the relevant socio-historical and/or environmental circumstances of each city.

Before I introduce the literary analysis I will undertake, however, I wish to discuss further approaches scholars have used for "reading" the city and sociological themes that will bear significance on my own analysis. The literary city and the influences it has over a character and reader can be likened to a real city and the effects it has upon society: the literary city has physical characteristics that spatially prescribe parameters for sociological and psychological movement. Allan Irving argues that modern urban planning and architecture is most often an expression of social control and dominant social ideologies. He quotes architect Ludwig Mies van der Rohe as saying that "modern architecture is the will of the age conceived in spatial terms" (475). Mike Featherstone also argues that "cities have always produced cultural artefacts, buildings and distinctive ways of life. [...] the very organization of space, the layout of buildings, is itself a manifestation of particular cultural codes" (95). In Joyce's text, the physical structures with which the Dubliners interact are largely eighteenth- and nineteenth-century remnants

of British rule in Ireland. These structures serve as constant reminders to Joyce's reader that his characters are indeed subjected to the logistics of an imposing, oppressive, and "paralysed" city (see Joyce *Dubliners* 1). Karim Amir in *Buddha* is also highly influenced by the physical parameters of 1970s London. For Karim, the suburbs are "a leaving place" (117) of stagnation and complacency while the city is a seemingly welcoming location of freedom. In *Glue*, the community-planned homes and apartments of Edinburgh demarcate and identify Billy, Carl, Andrew, and Terry as lower working-class "schemies" (204). The demographics, buildings, and physical layout of the city do indeed have a strong influence on how the characters perceive themselves and how the reader perceives them.

Joyce, Kureishi, and Welsh, however, all place varying emphasis on the city setting in their narratives. Among the three texts, Joyce's narrative description of Dublin is the most detailed. He extensively and specifically names certain buildings and locations such as Crosbie & Alleyne or Stephen's Green as opposed to simply referring to "the office" or "the park." For the reader, such naming alludes to the history and cultural significance of the specified location. It prompts the reader to associate the character with the social, cultural, and historical significance of the location. As Donald Torchiana discusses in his essay, "'Two Gallants': A Walk Through the Ascendancy," the city spaces and buildings Lenehan and Corley walk past are most prominently associated with the Anglo-Irish Ascendancy in Dublin. As Torchiana's title suggests, Joyce's intention was for his reader to view Corley and Lenehan as individuals unknowingly oppressed by British colonialism. Kureishi and Welsh do name specific locations but certainly not to the extent that Joyce does. One certainly does not sense that in *Buddha* and *Glue* the act

of place-naming serves to allude to specified historical and cultural discourses. Specified

points within the city do not prompt the reader to view Kureishi and Welsh's characters

in a specified way. The reader is prompted to view their characters as unrestricted and

free in the formation of their identities. For Kureishi and Welsh, significance lies in the

fact that their characters are in *a* pub or *an* office as opposed to a specified pub or office.

In *Buddha* and *Glue*, Kureishi and Welsh describe city spaces with the intention of

indicating their sociological *function* while Joyce describes them with the intention of

indicating a specified historical, cultural, or social *significance*. It is also possible to

observe that where Joyce's characters interact with specified points and confining spaces

in the city, Kureishi and Welsh's characters interact more commonly with open spaces,

niches, and pathways through the city.[1]

Thus, while it is my argument that "the urban" is most tangibly manifested through

the underlying emotional and ideological attitudes of the character, a comparison among

*Dubliners*, *Buddha*, and *Glue* reveals that the city setting still plays a very central role in

psychologically and sociologically organizing a character's reality and geographically

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[1]     I am alluding here to a psychological theory on how individuals mentally organize and perceive a city. Psychologist Kevin Lynch postulated in 1960 that humans organize their perception of a city in a "mental map" organized around five environmental categories: paths, edges, districts, nodes, and landmarks (see Aragones and Arredondo 13). Psychologists generally hold two fundamental views on the significance of the mental map (Aragones and Arredondo 13). First, the environmental categories within the map serve as points that individuals use in the mental perception of a city as a unified, delineated, and self-enclosed structure unique with its own characteristics. Second, paths, edges, districts, nodes, and landmarks serve as physical points of reference by which individuals learn about and experience their environment. This theory is relevant here in that the interaction of Kureishi and Welsh's characters with more "open spaces" indicates that their characters are less psychologically restricted in the formation of their identities. Their interaction with "niches" indicates that they are more prone to finding permanent, stable, and safe spaces within the city. Their interaction with "pathways" indicates that they are more conscious of actively seeking out and travelling between categories of identity and corresponding physical areas within the city. Other scholars on urban literature have invoked the "mental map" theory of Lynch as well. Mary Ann Caws in particular has argued that "Kevin Lynch's ground-breaking *Image of the City* of 1960 maintains that legibility is a vital component of all modern cities: the recognizable symbols in their accustomed and understandable grids, the apparent clarity, and the ease of detection of its parts in their own visibly coherent pattern all contribute to a heightened sensation, quite like the sensation of reading poetry" (2).

locating the cultural and historical underpinnings of a text. As all characters strive (most often sub-consciously) to locate a sense of identity, the city setting itself becomes a type of physical system of support in which individuals can find concrete spaces or niches – such as the pub or workplace – to build their identities. I would argue that the city acts as a "grid" (see footnote above; Caws 2) or geographical structure upon which cultural reality and the individual's experience occurs; the more definition that occurs within that "grid," the more rigidity we find within the characters. The less definition that occurs within that "grid," the more characters are free to negotiate with their cultural realities. Indeed, Joyce's primary emphasis on the city setting is most often paralleled by highly rigid and non-negotiable character identities and cultural thematic categories. Kureishi's and Welsh's decreased emphasis on the city setting is paralleled by more fluid and negotiable character identities and thematic categories. The narrative form and structure of the city setting, therefore, parallels each author's portrayal of the individual's subjectivity.

Some scholars also argue that literary and social themes such as crime and social degeneration are the telling signs of urban literature. Such arguments do indeed hold value. A subject's existence within a city does not necessarily imply the subject is urban; certain conditions and circumstances must exist in order for the subject to be considered urban. Saskia Sassen is one scholar who suggests that "the urban" is a product not of character interactions with the city but of interaction between the city and socially determined categories. She argues in her essay "Whose City Is It? Globalization and the Formation of New Claims" (1999) that "place is central to the multiple circuits through which economic globalization is constituted" (99). She continues by saying that

"introducing cities in an analysis of economic globalization allows us to reconceptualize processes of economic globalization as concrete economic complexes situated in specific places [and...] a focus on cities also captures the concrete, localized processes through which globalization exists" (100). Sassen's argument for the importance of considering globalization and the city can also be extended to include other thematic categories commonly found in urban literature. Sassen's argument suggests that the function of the city is to conglomerate cultural and social discourses – such as nationalism – in a single localized space where such discourses can become manifest. As the city is a space for localizing cultural and social discourses, many thematic areas can often be compressed into literary representations of the city.

Indeed, there are a number of thematic areas which can be identified as common to my chosen texts and which significantly influence the image of the city. They include issues of post-colonialism, nationalism, ethnicity, art and popular culture, social class, occupation, family, sexuality, gender, religion, and substance abuse. In *Dubliners*, for example, the characters in "Ivy Day in the Committee Room" attempt to carry on Ireland's nationalist campaign without the leadership of Charles Parnell, a key figure in Ireland's fight against British rule during the mid-to-late nineteenth century. Karim in *Buddha* opens the novel by stating "my name is Karim Amir, and I am an Englishman born and bred, almost. I am often considered to be a funny kind of Englishman, a new breed as it were, having emerged from two old histories" (3). The council housing projects of *Glue* often become subtle points of tension against English colonization. While the Scots of *Glue* often despise English cultural colonization, some cannot help but

feel thankful for increased social emphasis on the notion of property ownership – a primary tenet of the Thatcherian government.

Popular culture and artistic forms often bring (or fail to bring) characters into contact with new spaces and groups within the city. In "A Mother," Kathleen is discouraged in her attempt to emerge into society as an *"artiste"* (92). Music and dancing also help create the social atmosphere of "The Dead." In *Buddha*, Karim's acting career helps bring him into the "cultured" lifestyle of greater London and also gives him the opportunity to travel to New York City. In *Glue*, Carl finds his identity in Edinburgh and then globally by becoming a musician and D.J. N'SIGN.

Social class is an important category of identification within the three texts and drastically limits how characters view themselves in relation to the rest of the city. The Dubliners are all lower-middle class and are out of place when they attempt to enter places of "higher" culture, such as Mrs. Kearney in "A Mother" who is told by Mr. Holohan "'I thought you were a lady'" (100). In *Buddha*, Karim's move into greater London also entails a move away from the middle-class suburbs and into circles of "higher" culture. In the first section of *Glue* Duncan Ewart (Carl's father), a working-class shop steward, acts as an advocate for the labour rights of Wullie Birrell (Billy's father), and it becomes apparent that occupations (or the lack thereof) will play highly significant roles in the social-class status of the main characters.

Family is one of the key reasons for Eveline's desire for escaping Dublin: "mother's life laid its spell on the very quick of her being – that life of commonplace sacrifices closing in final craziness" (23). Karim introduces his family as a major cause of his suburban stagnation and melancholy in the very first paragraph of *Buddha*: "I was

looking for trouble, any kind of movement, action and sexual interest I could find, because things were so gloomy, so slow and heavy, in our family, I don't know why" (3). In *Glue*, almost the entire first section of the novel is narrated from a third-person perspective of the fathers of the four main characters. This immediately suggests that issues surrounding the family unit will be a prominent theme throughout the novel and in the characters' intimate interactions during adulthood.

Spirituality is a constantly recurring issue in the daily lives of almost all characters. In *Dubliners*, religion is immediately introduced as a significant theme in "The Sisters" with the death of Father Flynn. In *Buddha*, Karim's move from the suburbs comes partially because of his father's new status as "The Buddha of Suburbia." As the characters of *Glue* attend a Catholic school, religion is often pushed upon them by authority figures such as Blackie, the school's truancy officer: "'What would have happened, Blackie asked us [...] if Jesus had been late for the last supper?'" (85). In *Glue*, however, institutional religion is not as significant as spirituality more generally, which is conveyed by the metaphorical "glue" that bonds the four friends. The second section of *Glue* is also suggestively titled "The Last (Fish) Supper" in allusion to the characters' movement out of adolescence and their (Catholic) school-age years and into a more mature spirituality.

The use of intoxicants exists in all texts as a means of inducing a false sense of "higher being." While on the surface it seems that Farrington of "Counterparts" uses alcohol to escape his boss, the story concludes by highlighting that the real underlying cause of alcoholism is broken spirituality: "'I'll say a *Hail Mary* for you, pa, if you don't beat me...'" (63). For Karim, sitting in a pub often entails moments of reflection upon

himself and others around him: "I went to the Nashville every night and reckoned that Charlie's glory in South London was the most he'd ever get. [...] I'd been looking forward to telling Charlie how depressed and lonely I'd been since we moved to London" (127-8). As Carl mentions in *Glue*, "we hud aw grown up oan bevvy, n our whole culture was saturated in the fuckin drug" (272). The trip to Munich serves as a means of returning to these Edinburgh "alcohol-roots": "the avowed purpose was tae get away, and get back oan the beers" (272). Ironically, they must leave Edinburgh and travel to another city to return to the "drug" which originally helped bring them together as four friends in the community.

Indeed, the literary city can certainly conglomerate socially significant categories of identification, as Sassen's argument suggests. However, I believe it would be a mistake to identify these themes as common to urban literature without considering what particularly makes them urban within the character's psychology. In this thesis, I wish to posit a model for exploring these themes within the psychology of the character; I wish to consider them under three specific areas: socio-economic and political concerns, intimacy, and spirituality. Since my argument is that "the urban" is an attitude exuded by the individual, my analysis must somehow attempt to locate "the urban" within the literary character. These three areas help divide the literary character into areas which can be engaged with critically. The division of my analysis into these three areas will allow me to explore characters' personalities in significant depth. The division will also allow me to locate and contextualize "the urban" as an attitude which pervades the very being of the individual, and it is intended to reinforce and support my argument that Simmel's calculative mind extends beyond the immediate cognition of the individual.

Simmel's notion contains an inherent flaw in the claim that the urban individual "reacts with his head instead of his heart." "The heart" in Simmel's statement is most reasonably read as "the individual's emotional being." Within this claim and throughout Simmel's essay is an implicit assumption that "the heart" is somehow unaffected by the stimulus of urban life. However, the mind and the body's emotional being are not independent of one another, and it should be reasonably expected that a change within one entails a change within the other. Simmel even contradicts his own line of argumentation by saying "the heart" becomes desensitized to increased stimulus and the individual thereby develops a "blasé" attitude: "there is perhaps no psychic phenomenon which has been so unconditionally reserved to the metropolis as has the blasé attitude" (413). As opposed to stating that "the heart" no longer reacts, it would be more appropriate to state that it changes proportionately with conscious cognition. As I will attempt to demonstrate in this thesis, "the heart" and the character's emotional being are as much primary elements in the quantification of the city as the character's immediate consciousness. The analysis of the intimate and spiritual in particular will allow me to explore these emotional calculative depths within the character. The three levels in themselves are not necessarily urban but will allow me to locate "the urban" as an all-pervasive attitude.

Moreover, these three areas stand out because they help organize a critical consideration of the literary themes I have already mentioned. It is through these three emotional and ideological structures that other thematic areas within *Dubliners*, *Buddha*, and *Glue* become relevant and relative to the urban experience. The character's sense of socio-economic worth most often subsumes issues relating to nationalism and politics, occupation, crime, art and popular culture, and social class. The character's sense of

intimacy most often subsumes issues relating to family, gender, and sexuality, and the character's sense of spirituality most often subsumes issues of substance abuse. By no means are these categories firm in this organization. Nationalism and ethnicity, for example, can also entail spirituality. In *Buddha*, for example, Karim comes to a deep spiritual understanding about his ethnic ties to Jamila and Changez: "looking at these strange creatures now – the Indians – that in some way these were my people, and that I'd spent my life denying or avoiding that fact. [...] It was only with these two that I felt part of a family. The three of us were bound together by ties stronger than personality" (212-4). Using *Glue* in my third chapter, I will also demonstrate how a single literary theme, social class, strongly influences the intimate and spiritual characterizations in the novel. I only wish to propose this categorical division as a working model to use for engaging in a critical discussion of the interrelationship of the individual and the city. *Dubliners* is a particularly apt text to establish this model in my first chapter. While each short story deals with multiple issues of social class, intimacy, and spirituality, they all (excluding "The Dead") push at least one issue to the forefront. I will use *Buddha* and *Glue* to further complicate the model. The first-person narration of *Buddha* will allow me to use the model for the analysis of a single character and explore the creation of the image of the city in more significant depth. *Glue* will allow me to posit the model against a text which brings a single literary theme, social class, to the forefront. It will allow me to explore in greater depth how an influential factor can contribute to the creation of the urban attitude and urban images.

I now wish to discuss directly how the characters themselves are demarcated as specifically urban under Simmel's notion of the calculative mind. By doing this, I will be

able to introduce the final connection between the urban individual's psychology and how this psychology relates to the three levels of sociological interaction I have proposed. To identify "the urban" as a characteristic expressed by the individual, it would be beneficial to turn back briefly to Levy's argument that in urban literature the city rises as a protagonist against the individual. Implicit within this argument is the inference that a narrative conflict exists between the individual and the city. A struggle against the city often does exist within the mind of an individual and it is indeed a telling characteristic of some urban literature. However, as I hope it has become apparent through my discussion of the themes, the sense of conflict is not at all unchanging. For some characters, such as Eveline, the city is something to be escaped. For others such as Terry and Mrs. Kearney, it is something to be held in contempt. For Karim and Carl the city is something to be desired, often as a phallic symbol. While Levy is correct in her argument that the city often rises as a protagonist, her statement must be qualified very specifically. The city becomes a protagonist only in relation to the character's own disposition, and from my examination of *Dubliners*, *Buddha*, and *Glue*, it will become quite clear that a range of character-types exist, all of whom mentally transform the city into different entities.

Thus, the existence of the calculative mind as the key urban feature in *Dubliners*, *Buddha*, and *Glue* subverts and weakens a common literary position taken on the individual's relationship with the city. As Richard Lehan notes, the most common position taken by writers following the Enlightenment was to view the city as a place of empty promises and degeneration (38). Indeed, it would be accurate to argue that it is a modern phenomenon to view the city as a place of disease and degeneration. Most

modern scholars and authors are quick to identify the presence of a degenerative society

and contemptuous or devious individual attitudes as telling characteristics of urban

literature. However, if a character demonstrates a calculative mind as a result of city life,

then that character can be deemed urban regardless of whether the city is perceived as a

negative place or not. Thus, the frame of reference in which I wish to posit a literary

interpretation of the calculative mind is in direct opposition to the common literary

portrayal of the city as a negative place. Charles Baudelaire was one modern theorist

who did view the city as a positive place. In his essay, "The Painter of Modern Life," he

identified the *flâneur* as an artist, "the painter of the passing moment and of all the

suggestions of eternity that it contains" (5). As Lehan argues, this person is distinctly a

product of the city (74). According to Baudelaire "the crowd is his element" (9), as the

*flâneur* finds himself most content "in the heart of the multitude" (10). Moreover, the

*flâneur* "marvels at the eternal beauty and the amazing harmony of life in the capital

cities, a harmony so providentially maintained amid the turmoil of human freedom"

(Baudelaire 11). Thus, not only does the *flâneur* view the city as a positive place, but by

implication also engages with the process of calculation to quantify the city as a positive

place. As I will demonstrate in this thesis, Karim, Billy, and Carl are each in his own

way a *flâneur*, finding positive ways to immerse themselves within the multitude and

stimulate wide audiences. These three characters have a powerful ability to diffuse or

circumvent negative emotional and ideological structures and create harmony from

chaos. Their calculative mind exists as a trait that allows them to absorb and process

intense stimuli and respond by turning those stimuli into artistic or entrepreneurial

products.

By contrast, the Dubliners, Terry, and Andrew are anti-*flâneurs*. Among these characters, who often attempt to view themselves as *flâneurs*, the calculative mind is articulated through very anxious, scornful, or violent language and actions. For the Dubliners, Terry, and Andrew, violent and acute attitudes are seen as the best means of dealing with a city which is confining and imposing and whose physical and cultural realities cannot be escaped or overcome. Ironically, however, violent and acute forms of cognition reveal the exact opposite, defeat by the city. The Dubliners, Terry, and Andrew become victims of environmental and cultural institutionalization,[2] and their cultural reality is very resonant of their environmental reality. In their minds, cultural reality is static, immovable, and non-negotiable just as the physical environment cannot be moved. When Terry and Andrew travel to other cities (the Dubliners cannot even do this), they take their emotional "baggage" with them. They cannot enjoy other cultures for what they are, but constantly try to project and impose their own realities. Similarly, when new ideas or cultures are introduced to their own lives, the Dubliners, Terry, and Andrew constantly attempt to subject and subvert them, ironically only doing more psychological damage to themselves. The epitome of this comes when Andrew commits suicide because of the existential angst he feels upon learning he is HIV positive. Suicide is a means for Andrew to have the final word in the control of his own life. The cultural and

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[2]    I am using "institutionalization" here not in its sociological sense of physical structures which institutionalize and embody cultural codes, but in its psychological sense of an individual having been irreversibly and traumatically conditioned by their physical environment and their subjection to cultural codes. I draw this usage of "institutionalization" from one literary source in particular: the 1994 film *The Shawshank Redemption*. In the film, Ellis "Red" Redding describes another prison inmate, Brooks Halten, after Brooks' nervous breakdown: "He's just institutionalized. [...] The man's been in here fifty years. [...] Fifty years! This is all he knows. In here, he's an important man. He's an educated man. Outside he's nothing. Just a used up con with arthritis in both hands. Probably couldn't get a library card if he tried. [...] I'm telling ya' these walls are funny. First you hate 'em. Then you get used to 'em. Enough time passes, it gets so you depend on 'em. That's institutionalized" (see *Shawshank*). Likewise, Joyce's main characters in *Dubliners* cannot psychologically exist beyond the physical limits of either the city or the cultural norms imposed upon them.

physical institutions which have conditioned their psychology will not allow them to accept change or difference.

For Karim, Carl, and Billy, cultural and environmental reality is the opposite of the cultural and environmental reality of the Dubliners, Terry, and Andrew. They see cultural reality as negotiable and dynamic, and their perception of the city is likewise fluid. Billy believes in the ability to change and develop the urban landscape itself, as the creation of his "Business Bar" is part of a project to redevelop a run-down section of Edinburgh. Karim and Carl do not even view the city in terms of physical structures such as buildings. For them, the city is delineated by experiences such as sexuality, music, and pop culture. These three characters are no less involved than the other characters with excesses such as drugs, alcohol, promiscuity, and fighting. However, their cognition is clearly underscored and reinforced by positive emotion, and they view urban decadences as lifestyle choices and not as acts of rebellion or means of escape. They have a distinct ability to diffuse, absorb, and circumvent negative emotion. This ability is highly demonstrative of their calculative minds and the attitudes that reveal the calculative mind. Their ability to negotiate paths through frustrating experiences demonstrates a high level of conscious and subconscious calculation.

Most revealing about these character types, therefore, is that contrary to Simmel's argument, the calculative mind is not entirely expressed through the processes of intellectuality and consciousness. The notion of the calculative mind should not be conceptualized solely in terms of "speed of conscious cognition," as Simmel's argument seems to suggest. Rather, I will reiterate my original argument and suggest again that "the urban" is an attitude that a text exudes, born deep within the emotional and

ideological subconscious of a character. It is an attitude that we may observe in the metaphysical, intimate, and interpersonal relationships between characters and between characters and their environment. The multiplicity of these relationships and the urban attitude which pervades them is what creates corresponding multiple perceptions and images of the city. Such varying perceptions of the city have eluded or deterred many scholars, such as Levy, in their definitions of urban literature and have allowed scholars to gravitate towards two opposing traditions of discourse on urban literature: one in which the city is emphasized and one in which the individual is emphasized. This thesis will contribute to the discourse by drawing the two opposing traditions closer together.

## Chapter One

### 1900 Dublin:
### James Joyce and the Modern "Paralysed" City

To begin this chapter, I wish to reiterate what I intend to achieve with my analysis

of *Dubliners*. While each story of *Dubliners* incorporates various issues of socio-

economic, intimate, or spiritual significance, each story, excluding "The Dead," tends to

draw one in particular to the forefront. "The Dead," on the other hand, draws all of these

issues together into a final concluding image of the city demarcated as a paralysed city

and delineated by its situation within Ireland more generally. Sitting in a Dublin hotel

room, Gabriel watches the snow falling over the country: "his soul swooned slowly as he

heard the snow falling faintly through the universe and faintly falling, like the descent of

their last end, upon all the living and the dead" (152). This image is created by a

compounding of Gabriel's socio-economic, intimate, and spiritual self-worth, invoked by

the memory of the dead Michael Furey. Michael directly casts doubt on Gabriel's own

sense of socio-economic worth: "Gabriel felt humiliated by the failure of his irony and

by the evocation of this figure from the dead, a boy in the gasworks. [...] He saw himself

as a ludicrous figure, acting as a pennyboy for his aunts, a nervous, well-meaning,

sentimentalist, orating to vulgarians and idealising his own clownish lusts" (149-50).

Intimately, Gabriel must contend with Michael in Gretta's memory and her love for the

lost boy. Spiritually, Michael represents the fallen archangel of Christian mythology

whose metaphorical heavenly counterpart is Gabriel. Michael represents a part of

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Gabriel's psychology that has been lost, and along with it, an important sense of orientation to the city: "his own identity was fading out into a grey impalpable world: the solid world itself, which these dead had one time reared and lived in, was dissolving and dwindling" (152). Thus, as it becomes especially evident in Gabriel's perception of the city, the calculative effect of modernity extends beyond simply the immediate cognition of the individual but deep into the core of his/her being. As Gabriel demonstrates, the psychological burdens of modernity have disoriented the character from the city and destabilized his/her sense of location.

My concern with this chapter is to demonstrate how the stories of *Dubliners* progress towards this image and to establish a working model of analysis. In order to establish the socio-economic, intimate, and spiritual model, I will concentrate on specific stories within *Dubliners* that tend to highlight respectively issues of socio-economic, intimate, or spiritual importance. I will discuss socio-economic issues in "Clay," "After the Race," "A Mother," "Ivy Day in the Committee Room," and "Two Gallants"; I will discuss issues of intimacy in "Araby," "A Little Cloud," "Eveline," and "A Painful Case"; and I will discuss issues of spirituality in "The Sisters" and "Grace." Before I proceed with the analysis, however, I will discuss a number of issues relevant to the analysis. First, I will discuss the relevant socio-historical circumstances of late-nineteenth and early-twentieth-century Dublin; following this I will discuss how Joyce incorporates these circumstances through his use of realism; then I will briefly discuss how Joyce's use of realism relates to the psychological structure of modernity that Simmel envisioned.

The social issues that characterized Dublin at the turn of the twentieth century are much altered by Joyce for the purpose of portraying the individual's urban experience. For example, one may notice that Joyce's incorporation of the social problems of Dublin is not complete. What Joyce chose not to incorporate into *Dubliners* is very significant because it helps contrast and illuminate what Joyce did intend to portray about urban life. Late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Dublin was an unpleasant and filthy city, much more so than Joyce portrays in *Dubliners*. For example, a common household arrangement in Dublin during this time was for up to several families to be all crowded into a small living space: "not an infrequent occurrence is to see above a dozen human beings crowded into a space not fifteen feet square. Within this space the food of these beings, such as it is must be prepared; within this space they must eat and drink; men, women and children must strip, dress and sleep" (Somerville-Large 238). The sanitation and sewage system of Dublin was very poor and sanitary amenities were accessible primarily to the affluent. It was not uncommon to see piles of human feces "appearing before the various houses in the street. Each door would have a horrid hill outside of it till a cart came later on to carry them away" (Somerville-Large 265). If human waste was a problem in Dublin, then animal waste was likely as much of a problem. Travelling through the city, it was common to be "held up by the weekly flow of beasts. [...] An average of 15,000 animals were exported weekly. [...] About 4,000 were cattle; the rest were made up of sheep, pigs, horses, mules and the odd goat" (261-2). Peter Somerville-Large also cites "Sean O'Casey, [who] two years older than Joyce, spent part of his childhood viewing this weekly rush of cattle 'in their hundreds, streaming along holding up the traffic...a mist of steam hanging over them as the hot sun dried the falling rain that

glistened on their hides…then a herd of pigs…'" (262). Such conditions are notably absent from *Dubliners*, and it becomes even more noticeable in comparison to Joyce's other texts like *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* and *Ulysses* which both incorporate such conditions at least to some extent (Somerville-Large 260-3). With the absence of such conditions, the characters of *Dubliners* are constructed to give the appearance of having already been "modernized" in comparison to the actually poor conditions that existed in Dublin at the time. The characters of *Dubliners*, therefore, are specifically portrayed as lower-middle class.

As Allan Irving argues, modernity and urbanity are in a sense largely synonymous: "modernism was, if nothing else, an urban phenomenon" (475). I should also add to Irving's argument that the urban-modernity phenomenon was also largely characterized by industrial development. In comparison to other urban centers of late nineteenth and early twentieth-century Europe, Dublin was not a highly industrialized city, but as Sommerville-Large notes, the modernity of Dublin, as characterized by mass industry, was at least noticeable:

> The Industrial Revolution had brought in some industry, most of which was located along the canals, beside the port or along the Liffey and its tributaries. On the Dodder there were mills and factories from Ringsend at its mouth right up to Ballyboden. Donnybrook had a bleaching green, while Ballsbridge boasted its 'hammersmith works' and a calico printing factory. […] The quays on the north side supported two vinegar works, a vitriol works and a glass works; those south of the river possessed the gas works, a salammoniac factory, and chemical works and the coachworks for the railway beside the Grand Canal Docks. West and north-west Dublin never became residential. The western approaches to the city were fairly squalid because of the industry located beside the Liffey, while the north-west contained a disproportionate number of institutions like the Royal Barracks, the workhouse, a prison and a lunatic asylum. (217)

If Joyce was interested in portraying modern urban life in *Dubliners*, then it is a curiosity

that the only significant image of mass industry comes in one of the childhood stories,

"An Encounter":

> We walked along the North Strand Road till we came to the Vitriol Works
> and then turned to the right along the Wharf Road. [...] We came then near
> the river. We spent a long time walking about the noisy streets flanked by
> high stone walls, watching the working of cranes and engines and often
> being shouted at for our immobility by the drivers of groaning carts. [...]
> We pleased ourselves with the spectacle of Dublin's commerce – the barges
> signalled from far away by their curls of woolly smoke. (10)

Since *Dubliners* was not written with emphatic attention to these *material* urban

conditions of modernity, one must conclude that Joyce was concerned with depicting

more intangible conditions of modernity and urbanity: the psychological and

sociological conditions. As Martha Fodaski-Black argues, the Dubliners are "unwitting,

trapped philistines, acting out their socially programmed scripts" (114). Thus, I now

wish to discuss how Joyce incorporated these conditions of modernity into his literary

style, realism, and into his psychological portrayal of the Dubliner. Joyce's ability to

portray these intangible conditions of modernity is made possible by his naturalist

technique. Naturalism is Joyce's most prominent and visible style in *Dubliners*.

Naturalism partially took its cue from Darwinian theories of evolution, natural selection,

and survival of the fittest. Literary interpretations of Darwin tended to focus on the

negative effects of these ideas. The city, for example, became seen as a self-enclosed

system of negative energy and degeneration. It was a "diseased center" detached from

nature (Lehan 70) within which the economically unfit, the urban masses, were left to

their perpetual decline while they struggled for survival. Literary naturalists and other

urban authors such as Emile Zola depicted the city as though they were scientists

observing nature and social data (Lehan 52). Joyce's portrayal of Dublin fits well into this generic description. His use of short stories and primarily omniscient narration gives one the sense of *Dubliners* as a catalogued, calculated, and scientific examination of the city and its inhabitants. This sense of *Dubliners* is also heightened by the fact that Joyce himself intended the stories to be divided into categories representing childhood, adolescence, maturity, and political life (Joyce *Letters* II.111. 24 Sept. 1905). The final story, "The Dead," can be seen as an overarching conclusion for the observations Joyce makes. Thus, Joyce's naturalism can most easily be conceptualized as a portrayal of the human subject *in situ*, and Joyce himself or the reader can be conceptualized as a cultural anthropologist looking upon the psycho-social behaviour of humans in their urban habitat. Each of the fifteen stories is such an instance of revealing urban behaviour.

The conflict in *Dubliners* is indeed a psychological conflict between the character and the city setting whereby the character becomes progressively subjected to the omnipotence of the city setting. This conflict is represented most strongly by the movement into omniscient narration and away from the first-person subjective narration. This narrative movement conveys that the city has stolen its subjectivity from the child-Dubliner. For example, the final image of the city as cold and impersonal reflects the state of the child in "The Sisters": cold and undisturbed by the death of Father Flynn.

In Joyce's own critical writings and in letters to friends on *Dubliners*, there exists a noticeable tension as to how the city and the individual were to be balanced in a narrative about life in Dublin. At certain times, Joyce suggested that the narrative significance of *Dubliners* was in the city setting, as he once wrote to Adolf Hoffmeister (1930) that "*Dubliners* was my last look at that city. Then I looked at the people around me"

(Hoffmeister 132). In other letters, however, Joyce's thoughts convey a noticeable contradiction of this view. In a letter to Grant Richards, for example, Joyce wrote regarding *Dubliners* that "I do not think that any writer has yet presented Dublin to the world. [...] The expression 'Dubliner' seems to me to have some meaning and I doubt whether the same can be said for such words as 'Londoner' and 'Parisian'" (Joyce *Letters* II.122. 15 Oct. 1905). This particular letter demonstrates that in order to present Dublin to the world Joyce would have to present the Dubliner. In another letter to his friend Constantine Curran, Joyce wrote that "I call the series *Dubliners* to betray the soul of that hemiplegia or paralysis which many consider a city" (Joyce *Letters* I.55. n.d. 1904). Even while Joyce may have seen the city setting as the most prominent literary element in *Dubliners*, it was still the citizen of Dublin who gave voice and "soul" to that city. The conflict exists within the mind of the Dubliner and is illustrated by the various perceptions that the calculative mind of the Dubliner creates.

One final point I wish to raise before I begin a more specific analysis is in regard to how the social themes in *Dubliners* contribute to the various perceptions of the city. It is important to understand that a continuity exists between the stories. All the stories collectively contribute to a single perception of the city created by a single underlying urban attitude. The attitude I am trying to identify can also be seen as the "soul" that Joyce envisioned in his letter to Constantine Curran. Brewster Ghiselin has argued that the unity of *Dubliners* "is not so much in the thematic of childhood-adolescence-adulthood-public life, but rather in the progressive degeneracy of each state" (40). I would like to contribute to Ghiselin's argument by adding that neither is the continuity of *Dubliners* necessarily found between thematically related stories. For example, "The

Boarding House" and "A Mother" on the surface may be thematically connected in that they both highlight issues surrounding the traditional family unit. However, as I will demonstrate, a story such as "A Mother" actually shares more continuity in the urban "soul" with "Two Gallants," a story which holds the family at a marked distance. I wish to stress that the urban attitude and "soul" is not necessarily found in the themes themselves but rather in the sociological states those themes represent: socio-economic worth, intimacy, and spirituality. The progressive degeneracy of each state allows the reader to detract his/her attention from the character differences and discontinuous plots between each story and understand that the character development of *Dubliners* is a much deeper, subconscious progression of the "soul" or "hemiplegia" that Joyce envisioned. While there may be a variety of characters in *Dubliners*, collectively they form a single state of awareness and state of being "of" the city. If anything the character differences and discontinuities heighten the sense of an underlying, unifying "soul" which connects the characters. One of the city's ironies is that thousands of people can live in such close proximity without ever having any manifest connection to one another (Seed 219). The seemingly disconnected characters within each *Dubliners* story reflect the very condition of experience within the city.

Social class in *Dubliners* does the most to narrow the perception of the city within the immediate consciousness of the Dubliner's mind. Because this level of community interaction occurs on a socio-economic and interpersonal level, a fundamental application of Simmel's notion of the calculative mind is possible. The socio-economic level of the Dubliner's personality, therefore, is a desirable starting point for discussion. As Terrence Brown points out, the characters of *Dubliners* are all lower-middle class. The reader can

observe city spaces with which the Dubliners cannot engage: "no galleries, museums,

clubs, sports-centres, coffee-houses, or great schools are mentioned as natural

environments" for the Dubliners (Brown 13). The atmosphere created by social class

immediately narrows and specifies a perception of the city and community to which the

Dubliners belong: the Dubliners cannot ascend in society. Thus, as Joyce also chose not

to incorporate the extreme poverty of 1900 Dublin, there is no prospect for social

mobility whatsoever. The Dubliners nevertheless demonstrate a wide range of attitudes

in relation to their social status. In Maria's case in "Clay," there is indifference to social

ascension: "she had become accustomed to the life of the laundry. [...] She had the

notions of a common woman" (65). As in this instance, Maria even often exudes an

attitude of contentment about her social standing. In Jimmy's case in "After the Race,"

there is pronounced enthusiasm at the possibility of ascension:

> In Jimmy's house this dinner had been pronounced an occasion. A certain
> pride mingled with his parents' trepidation, a certain eagerness, also, to play
> fast and loose for the names of great foreign cities have at least this virtue.
> Jimmy, too, looked very well when he was dressed and, as he stood in the
> hall giving a last equation to the bows of his dress tie, his father may have
> felt even commercially satisfied at having secured for his son qualities often
> unpurchaseable. (26)

In the case of Mrs. Kearney in "A Mother," there is astute opportunism: "when the Irish

Revival began to be appreciable Mrs. Kearney determined to take advantage of her

daughter's name and brought an Irish teacher to the house" (92).

The initial perception of Dublin created by the attitudes of these characters is one of

openness and possibility. For Jimmy, Dublin is a city that merits worldly recognition:

"that night the city wore the mask of a capital. [...] They drank, however: it was

Bohemian. They drank Ireland, England, France, Hungary, the United States of

America" (27). The narrative even conveys the idea that Jimmy, in a sense, "owns" the

city and is showing off its worldliness: "The five young men strolled along Stephen's

Green in a faint cloud of aromatic smoke. They talked loudly and gaily and their cloaks

dangled from their shoulders. The people made way for them" (27). In "Clay," the city

is described in simple terms relative to Maria's own indifference: "Maria looked forward

to her evening out. [...] From Ballsbride to the Pillar, twenty minutes; from the Pillar to

Drumcondra, twenty minutes; and twenty minutes to buy the things. She would be there

before eight" (64). In "A Mother," Mrs. Kearney convinces herself that she is a social

"*artiste*" (91) or *flaneur* who can creatively control the city: "in the end it was Mrs.

Kearney who arranged everything. [...] Soon the name of Miss Kathleen Kearney began

to be heard often on people's lips. [...] Mrs. Kearney was well content at this" (91-2).

Jimmy's and Mrs. Kearney's idealistic expectations and Maria's indifference each

culminate in what Joyce calls an "epiphany" or a character's realization of their own

positioning in relation to people and objects around them. In *Stephen Hero*, Joyce

describes an epiphany as the moment when "'the relation of the parts is exquisite, when

the parts are adjusted to the special point, we recognise that it is that thing which it is. Its

soul, its whatness, leaps to us from the vestment of its appearance. The soul of the

commonest object, the structure of which is so adjusted, seems to us radiant'" (213). In

*Dubliners*, images of the city are often revealed most acutely during these moments

which are found at the end of each story. Each character's realization and their final

mental quantification of the city are directly proportional to the emotional expectation

he/she initially assumes. In "After the Race," Jimmy "leaned his elbows on the table and

rested his head between his hands, counting the beats of his temples" (28). The reader

can literally feel Jimmy's own racing thoughts and the anxiety of Jimmy's hangover as a result of his attempt to associate with individuals of "higher" social standing. Jimmy's own mental inability to absorb the previous night's activity is also made manifest in relation to Villona who seems particularly able to do just that: "the cabin door opened and he saw the Hungarian standing in a shaft of grey light: 'Daybreak, gentlemen!'" (28). As Jimmy himself demonstrates, Dublin's lower-middle class citizens cannot, or can only with great difficulty, psychologically absorb the pace of life that citizens of worldly capitals enjoy.

With each successive epiphany, the socio-economic aspect of the Dubliner's "soul" becomes further ensconced as lower-middle class. When Maria's epiphany occurs, it has the effect of reinforcing and emphasizing Maria's position as an uncultured person within the Dublin masses, as opposed to Jimmy who at least tries to advance. Following Maria's rendition of "I Dreamt that I Dwelt," the narration points out that "no one tried to show her her mistake" (69). Maria's mistake is a repetition of the first verse. She omits the second verse which should read: "I dreamt that suitors sought my hand; / That knights upon bended knee, / And with vows no maiden heart could withstand / They pledg'd their faith to me; / And I dreamt that one of that noble host / Came forth my hand to claim" (see Folk). This omitted verse alludes to Maria's status as an unmarried woman who holds a simple job in a laundry. The name of the laundry, Dublin by Lamplight, alludes to the quickly fading opportunity for the Dubliner to ascend. Thus, the "mistake" of her repetition reinforces and alludes to her folly of romanticizing herself and her friends within a "higher" class: "'I dreamt that I dwelt in marble halls / With vassals and serfs at my side / And of all who assembled within those walls / That I was the hope and

the pride. / I had riches too great to count, could boast / Of a high ancestral name'" (68). The final image that the narrative conveys is of a group of lower-middle class Dubliners sitting around in a single Dublin house and acting overtly sentimental about a simple song and the past: "he said that there was no time like the long ago and no music for him like poor old Balfe [...]; and his eyes filled up so much with tears that he could not find what he was looking for" (69). Joe's overt sentimentalism and sensitivity does indeed convey the pettiness that Joyce saw in the Dubliner.

The progression of the lower-middle class aspect of the Dubliner's "soul" becomes so deeply pervasive that when Mrs. Kearney attempts to use the leverage of her social craftiness, she is ironically halted by this very characteristic. She simply assumes that "'when I ask when my daughter is going to be paid I can't get a civil answer'" (99). Her indignation reaffirms her as lower-middle class and outside the *artiste* class. As Mr. Holohan says sarcastically, "'O, she's a nice lady!'" (100). While Jimmy at least initially displays the psychological possibility of social ascension, Mrs. Kearney's very personality does not even permit "civil" interaction. The final image in "A Mother" is of various *artiste*-class individuals standing around a Dublin theatre discussing the pettiness of Mrs. Kearney.

The direct sense of community interaction is also made apparent in "Two Gallants" and "Ivy Day in the Committee Room." In "Two Gallants," the sociological vehicle for community interaction is prostitution. It is difficult to distinguish exactly what the transaction is that takes place in "Two Gallants," but it is clear that Corley has prostituted himself for the unnamed woman and that Lenehan has prostituted himself for Corley, whose name is appropriately pronounced "whorely": "he aspirated the first letter of his

name" (31). The attitude conveyed by these interactions toward Dublin is also very clear:

as Clair Wills argues, the prostitute in Joyce's writing, and in modern literature more

generally, functions as a point of resistance to traditional and authorial "constructions of

the public domain" (79). Wills notes that Joyce "continually blurred the distinction

between marriage and prostitution, depicting them as analogous or interdependent social

contracts. [...] prostitution is at least a more explicit exchange. [...] The prostitute could

represent all the terms within the circuit of capitalist production by operating

simultaneously as labor, object of exchange, and seller" (86). This is indeed a stark

contrast to Mrs. Kearney whose exploitation of her daughter is no less a form of

prostitution. At least Corley and Lenehan are forthright about their intentions: "'[...] I

was afraid, man, she'd get in the family way. But she's up to the dodge.' 'Maybe she

thinks you'll marry her,' said Lenehan. 'I told her I was out of a job,' said Corley" (30).

Corley's forthcomingness allows the woman to accept him on those very terms of

socially deviant behaviour: "'she thinks I'm a bit of class, you know'" (30). Corley is

very much an anti-*flâneur*, especially in that he does not seek "the eternal beauty" of

human life in the city but only seeks profit. As Wills notes, for Baudelaire, "prostitution

represented the human form of commodity capitalism" (81). The narrative portrays

Corley as a self-idealized *flâneur* who does not recognize his own self-indulgence:

> At present he was about town. Whenever any job was vacant a friend was
> always ready to give him the hard word. He was often to be seen walking
> with policemen in plain clothes, talking earnestly. He knew the inner side of
> all affairs and was fond of delivering final judgements. He spoke without
> listening to the speech of his companions. His conversation was mainly
> about himself: what he had said to such a person and what such a person
> had said to him and what he had said to settle the matter. When he reported
> these dialogues he aspirated the first letter of his name after the manner of
> Florentines. (30-1)

Lenehan, being the "disciple" of Corley (37), thereby gives the impression of one

learning to become an anti-*flâneur*:

> He walked listlessly round Stephen's Green and then down Grafton Street.
> Though his eyes took note of many elements of the crowd through which he
> passed they did so morosely. He found trivial all that was meant to charm
> him and did not answer the glances which invited him to be bold. He knew
> that he would have to speak a great deal, to invent and to amuse, and his
> brain and throat were too dry for such a task. (34)

For Lenehan, the city does not become a centre of human wonderment, but rather a

rudimentary location in which to pass the time *en route* to his next encounter with

Corley: "The problem of how he could pass the hours till he met Corley again troubled

him a little. He could think of no way of passing them but to keep on walking. He turned

to the left when he came to the corner of Rutland Square and felt more at ease in the dark

quiet street, the sombre look of which suited his mood" (34).

The city is similarly brought to the forefront of the characters' consciousness in

"Ivy Day in the Committee Room." The characters of "Ivy Day" view the city in terms

of politics and utter despair. In "Ivy Day," the despair of Joe Hynes, Mr. O'Connor, Old

Jack, and Mr. Henchy is created by a lingering reverence for the dead political leader

Charles Parnell. Parnell was an outspoken Irish nationalist in British Parliament. The

impact Parnell had on the Irish Home Rule movement was so great that following his

death in 1891 the general feeling shared by Irish nationalists was that "no [other]

politician would be worth following" (Sommerville-Large 260). Hélène Cixous argues

that Parnell's presence in "Ivy Day" is similar to the presence of Hamlet's dead father:

Parnell may not be physically present, but he still manages to inform every word spoken

by the characters in the narrative (Cixous 15). Joyce includes two particular details to

indicate that the mood of "Ivy Day" is created by Parnell's memory. The first is near the

beginning of the story: "it was the sixth of October, dismal and cold out of doors" (79). October sixth was the date of Parnell's death in 1891. The second instance makes Parnell's influence explicit and serves as the story's point of epiphany. In Joe's poem, the final line reads "'One grief – the memory of Parnell'" (90).

Joyce was affected by Parnell's death in a way which influenced the writing of "Ivy Day." While Joyce was a strong supporter of Parnell and Irish Home Rule, he strongly abhorred the effect that the memory of Parnell had on the Irish. Sommerville-Large argues that Joyce's feeling towards Parnell originated when the 1891 Joyce family Christmas dinner "was ruined by bitter quarrelling over the dead leader" (259). Joyce believed that the Irish were foolish to place so much significance in the memory of a dead leader at the cost of sacrificing the immediacy of the nationalist cause. As is reflected in "Ivy Day," Joyce believed the nationalist cause had consequently grown tired and misdirected. The narrative begins with the description of Old Jack as a decrepit man: "his crouching shadow ascended the opposite wall and his face slowly re-emerged into light. It was an old man's face, very bony and hairy" (78). Even some of the younger nationalists are too easily overcome by the dismal Dublin weather: "Mr. O'Connor had been engaged by Tierney's agent to canvass one part of the ward but, as the weather was inclement and his boots let in the wet, he spent a great part of the day sitting by the fire in the Committee Room in Wicklow Street with Jack" (79).

Aside from the narrative's indication that the weather is "dismal and cold out of doors" and that the Committee Room is in Wicklow Street, the city is only revealed through the conversation in the Committee Room. While the city may be revealed in such a non-descript manner, it was Joyce's very intention to reveal the city through even

the most trivial and seemingly insignificant moments of activity. Sommerville-Large argues that Joyce's obsession with Parnell "would become the trivia of his surroundings" (259). I believe what Sommerville-Large means by this comment is that Joyce tended to convey the significance of Parnell's death in even the most seemingly trivial and insignificant symbols. While remarks about the city in "Ivy Day" may be sparse and transient in themselves, collectively they add up to a complete picture of the city which is far from insignificant. Through the extended conversation, the perception of the city is concentrated along increasingly narrow lines. More significantly, however, the various attitudes the characters convey grow increasingly contemptuous as the perspective narrows. In its broadest frame of reference, Dublin is described from the perspective of international affairs. In a statement advocating labour candidate Colgan, Joe Hynes remarks "'the working man is not going to drag the honour of Dublin in the mud to please a German monarch'" (80). Mr. Henchy even shows enthusiasm for the possible visit of King Edward: "'The King's coming here will mean an influx of money into this country. The citizens of Dublin will benefit by it. Look at all the factories down by the quays there, idle! Look at all the money there is in the country if we only worked the old industries, the mills, the ship-building yards and factories'" (87). The city is placed in a more narrowed perspective during a series of sarcastic remarks about the city administration: "'you must owe the City Fathers money nowadays if you want to be made Lord Mayor. Then they'll make you Lord Mayor. [...] What do you think of a Lord Mayor of Dublin sending out for a pound of chops for his dinner? How's that for high living?'" (84-5). The city is then referred to in terms of canvassing for Richard Tierney, which brings them directly into contact with the city: "'I got him one or two

sure things in Dawson Street [...]. Is that the way you chaps canvass, [...] and Crofton

and I out in the cold and rain looking for votes?'" (86). Finally, the city is revealed

through the discussion of absent individuals, as when Mr. Henchy rails on Tierney: "'I

suppose he forgets the time his little old father kept the hand-me-down shop in Mary's

Lane'" (82). Thus, national politics serve as a particularly useful vehicle for delineating

the city, as it places the city in a wide global context and narrower localized context. It

allows the reader to view the city internationally yet also within the politics that take

place at a very basic level on the city streets. As I hope it has become apparent through

my discussion of the Dubliner's sense of socio-economic worth, the very communal

interactions which occur at such a fundamental level create the potential for more deeply

rooted subconscious and emotional attitudes which form larger perspectives of the city.

Joyce establishes intimacy as requisite to the psychological well-being of the urban

individual in the third story of childhood, "Araby." This story begins with a description

of the city as a highly impersonal and cold place: "the other houses of the street,

conscious of decent lives within them, gazed at one another with brown imperturbable

faces" (15). The houses' consciousness "of the decent lives within them" immediately

suggests a safe space in contrast to the impersonal city: the family unit. The dead priest

who had previously resided in the child's house represents a standard for the child to

esteem the family unit. The house itself is described as decrepit: "air, musty from having

been long enclosed, hung in all the rooms, and the waste room behind the kitchen was

littered with old useless papers" (15). This atmosphere, however, is not as significant to

the child as the activity that occurred within the house: "he had been a very charitable

priest; in his will he had left all his money to institutions and the furniture of his house to

his sister" (15). The young child, however, maintains a precarious position because he himself does not belong to a traditional family. He lives with his aunt and uncle who do not provide the necessary safeguard against the impersonal city. If anything, his aunt and uncle force him into the darkest recesses and most hostile areas of the city: "if my uncle was seen turning the corner we hid in the shadow until we had seen him safely housed. [...] On Saturday evenings when my aunt went marketing I had to go to carry some of the parcels. We walked through the flaring streets, jostled by drunken men and bargaining women" (15-16).

The young child counters his irregular family situation by idealizing Mangan's sister who represents all that is warm and perfect about the family home: "she was waiting for us, her figure defined by the light from the half-opened door" (16). The child's idealization of Mangan's sister transforms his own self-perception into the extreme antithesis of the cold and impersonal city. He imagines himself upon a sexual or romantic conquest of the city: "her image accompanied me even in places the most hostile to romance. [...] I imagined that I bore my chalice safely through a throng of foes. Her name sprang to my lips at moments in strange prayers and praises which I myself did not understand" (16). The boy's home loses its gloomy atmosphere and instead provides objects of security: "every morning I lay on the floor in the front parlour watching her door. The blind was pulled down to within an inch of the sash so that I could not be seen" (16). When the morning of the bazaar arrives, one can observe how the young child begins to strategize and calculate against losing the opportunity to impress Mangan's sister. He maintains a delicate balance between himself and his surroundings, which are simultaneously foreboding yet adopted as allies against the thought of

disappointing Mangan's sister: "I sat staring at the clock for some time and, when its ticking began to irritate me, I left the room. I mounted the staircase and gained the upper part of the house. The high cold empty gloomy rooms liberated me and I went from room to room singing" (17). During his journey to the bazaar, he does not acknowledge the foreboding atmosphere of the city around him, and he consistently counters it with his idealization of the bazaar: "I took my seat in a third-class carriage of a deserted train. After an intolerable delay the train moved out of the station slowly. [...] In front of me was a large building which displayed the magical name" (18). Finally, however, he psychologically fuses his perception of the city with broken ideals of romance: "I knew my stay was useless, [...]. The upper part of the hall was now completely dark. Gazing up into the darkness I saw myself as a creature driven and derided by vanity" (19). The city and the child's sense of intimacy at the conclusion become parallel.

The significance of the child's epiphany here is that it infuses the Dubliner's "soul" with a sense that intimacy is forever lost. This is exactly the conflict with which Little Chandler in "A Little Cloud" must deal. The sense of shame that traumatizes the child in "Araby" directly betrays Little Chandler's inability to be intimate:

> He remembered the books of poetry upon his shelves at home. He had
> bought them in his bachelor days and many an evening, as he sat in the little
> room off the hall, he had been tempted to take one down from the bookshelf
> and read out something to his wife. But shyness had always held him back;
> and so the books remained on their shelves. (45)

Little Chandler will not perform the intimate act of reading for another individual out of fear that he will be rejected. Thus, the narrative of "A Little Cloud" progresses by teasing out this fear. With his wife absent, Little Chandler attempts to perform the intimate act for someone who may be receptive, his sleeping baby. As Little Chandler is

too ashamed to read to his wife, he sees the sleeping child as the ideal person for this activity. Little Chandler wonders "could he, too, write like [Byron], express the melancholy of his soul in verse?" (53). The child will not criticize him or respond by saying "no." Moreover, the child may even respond to the emotion and intimacy Little Chandler invests in performing the verse: the act of reading could contribute to the child's emotional development. The child only responds to Little Chandler rendition of Byron by crying, however, and Little Chandler feels hopeless in his attempt to be intimate with the child: "It was useless, useless!" (53). Finally, when his wife re-enters the room, Little Chandler is even further removed from his attempts to be intimate with his family. He objectifies the family as mother and son and mentally places himself outside it. The narrative ends by evoking a deeper, more highly developed sense of the shame and anger which concludes "Araby": "Little Chandler felt his cheeks suffused with shame and he stood back out of the lamplight. He listened while the paroxysm of the child's sobbing grew less and less; and tears of remorse started to his eyes" (54). Intimate belonging to the family is lost in Little Chandler's eyes.

Most revealing about this sense of lost intimacy and the role of the family in *Dubliners* is that in these cases the imagery of Dublin is anti-sexual or often described using anti-erotic tones. As I have demonstrated in my analysis of "Araby," the city becomes a cold, impersonal place in relation to the boy's self-perception. The significance of the child's trauma in "Araby" is that the Dubliner's self-perception becomes sexually and intimately one with Dublin. Thus, in "A Little Cloud," both Dublin and Little Chandler's sense of self are anti-phallic in relation to other European cities: "Little Chandler's thoughts ever since lunch-time had been of his meeting with

Gallaher, of Gallaher's invitation and of the great city London where Gallaher lived. He was called Little Chandler because, though he was but slightly under the average stature, he gave one the idea of being a little man" (44). Other cities beyond Dublin are described in highly sexualized terms as something to be erotically desired and to compensate for the desexualized existence of the Dubliner within a desexualized city. As Gallaher describes Paris for example: "'Ah, there's no city like Paris for gaiety, movement, excitement...I've been to the Moulin Rouge [...] and I've been to all the Bohemian cafés. Hot stuff! Not for a pious chap like you, Tommy'" (48). This is also true, for example, in "Eveline." When Eveline begins to think of her upcoming journey to Buenos Ayres, she immediately lapses into memories of her first encounters with Frank, and she associates Buenos Ayres with sexual freedom and sexual imagery: "he had told her the names of the ships he had been on and the names of the different services. He had sailed through the Straits of Magellan and he told her stories of the terrible Patagonians. He had fallen on his feet in Buenos Ayres, he said, and had come over to the old country just for a holiday" (22). The anti-sexualization of Dublin and its conflation with the anti-sexualization of the Dubliner, however, is nowhere more apparent than in "A Painful Case." John Corrington argues that "besides 'The Dead,' it is in 'A Painful Case' that Joyce had placed the largest burden of his meaning" (182). While I would not agree that "A Painful Case" carries the greatest meaning aside from "The Dead," I would agree that "A Painful Case" carries the greatest meaning in regard to intimacy. The opening sentence of the story rejects the possibility that the city can be viewed intimately: "Mr. James Duffy lived in Chapelizod because he wished to live as far as possible from the city of which he was a citizen and because he found all the other suburbs of Dublin mean,

modern and pretentious" (70).[3] Not only is the city rejected as a place of warmth and comfort, but Dublin in "A Painful Case" is delineated the most distinctly as anti-phallic and reflective of the main character's desexualization. Where Little Chandler, Eveline, and the child in "Araby" work toward identifying with the city as desexualized or anti-phallic, Duffy is the end-product of that process; he is an incarnation of Dublin itself as anti-sexual: "his face, which carried the entire tale of his years, was of the brown tint of Dublin streets" (70). Thus, the sense of intimacy (or non-intimacy) created throughout *Dubliners* provides a direct antithesis to the urban *flâneur*. As Baudelaire argues, the key tenet of the *flâneur* is his/her ability to recognize the "beauty" and multiplicity of human life within the city. The inability of the Dubliner to feel intimacy directly demarcates him/her as an anti-*flâneur*. As one can see in Duffy's epiphany, the city becomes absolutely devoid of all meaning once human contact is removed: "He turned his eyes to the grey gleaming river, winding along towards Dublin. [...] He waited for some minutes listening. He could hear nothing: the night was perfectly silent. He listened again: perfectly silent. He felt that he was alone" (77).

The sense of spirituality that Joyce conveys in *Dubliners* puts the Dubliner in a highly compromised position within his/her community. The only vehicle that the Dubliner can use to express his/her spirituality is institutional religion. As I have demonstrated, the Dubliner's sense of socio-economic worth is expressed through multiple channels. Even the Dubliner's sense of intimacy can be expressed either through marriage, sexual interest, or highly personalized responses to the city. The

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[3]   I will deal with the issue of suburbia in my next chapter. For now, my present concern is to stay focused on the sociological and psychological constitution of Duffy. As it will become apparent through this discussion, regardless of his present living situation, he is still psychologically a product of the city.

Dubliner's spirituality, however, is something that he/she does not have control over. As Sommerville-Large claims, the Catholic Church was "the chief civilizing influence" in the city (62). This puts the Dubliner in a precarious position, because as Joyce demonstrates, the Catholic Church was growing further and further from being able to address the spiritual need of the Dubliner. "The Sisters" represents a synecdoche of this gradual separation. Father Flynn's mental collapse is one such instance where the separation between the church and the spirituality of the Dubliner becomes especially apparent: "'he began to mope by himself, talking to no one and wandering about by himself. [...] And what do you think but there he was, sitting up by himself in the dark in his confession-box, wide awake and laughing-like softly to himself'" (7). The most significant image in this description of Father Flynn is the priest's aloneness which is directly contrasted by the child's indifference to that aloneness: "she stopped suddenly as if to listen. I too listened; but there was no sound in the house: and I knew that the old priest was lying still in his coffin as we had seen him, solemn and truculent in death, an idle chalice on his breast" (7).

The true casualty of the conflict between the child's spiritual indifference and religious authority, however, is Dublin itself. While Sommerville-Large argues that Joyce's obsession with Parnell "would become the trivia of his surroundings," I would argue that this is even more true of Joyce's emphasis on the spiritual indifference of the Dubliner. The child's surroundings become trivial indicators of his indifference. He lazily walks along the street, "reading all the theatrical advertisements as I went. I found it strange that neither I nor the day seemed in a mourning mood and I felt even annoyed at discovering in myself a sensation of freedom as if I had been freed from something by

his death" (3). The child soon reveals that his liberation is not as it seems, however. Instead, he recalls an old dream which betrays his own spiritual displacement from Dublin: "I felt that I had been very far away, in some land where the customs were strange – in Persia, I thought...But I could not remember the end of the dream" (4). Had the child been able to recall the end of the dream, the reader might be able to draw some meaningful connection between Persia and the child's Dublin existence. As the narrative stands, however, one only gets the sense that the child feels Dublin to be exotic and mysterious. The child's "soul," in a sense, does not become "grounded" in Dublin but rather hangs in a type of spiritual limbo waiting for something to "ground" him.

Spiritual compensation for the "ungrounding" and blurring of the physical city (as opposed to the objectification of the city) initiated in "The Sisters" comes through alcohol. Alcohol's ability to induce spiritual-like sensations directly counters the inability of institutionalized religious spirituality to "ground" the Dubliner. As Joyce very bluntly utilizes alcohol in "Grace," Mr. Kernan's drinking binge has brought him around the city. Mrs. Kernan exclaims that "'he's been drinking since Friday,'" so the reader could reasonably imagine that Mr. Kernan has been in and out of Dublin pubs for at least three days. Elsewhere, alcohol similarly provides a false sense of "grounding" for characters and supplements their various states of experience in relation to the city, such as in Jimmy's desire to view Dublin as a worldly city: "they drank Ireland, England, France, Hungary, the United States of America" (27). Alcohol elucidates Little Chandler's sedentary Dublin lifestyle in contrast to Gallaher's fast-paced London lifestyle: "Three small whiskey's had gone to his head [...]. He felt acutely the contrast between his own life and his friend's, and it seemed to him unjust" (51). Farrington of

"Counterparts," like Mr. Kernan, comes into contact with broad areas of the city. Over the course of only a few paragraphs, drinking takes Farrington from the office of Crosbie & Alleyne to Terry Kelly's pawn shop in Fleet Street, to Davy Byrne's pub, to the Scotch House near Duke Street, to Mulligan's in Poolbeg Street, to the corner of O'Connell Bridge, "waiting for the little Sandymount tram to take him home. [...] He began to feel thirsty again and he longed to be back again in the hot reeking public-house" (62). As Joyce's use of alcohol demonstrates, the Dubliner's sense of spiritual self-worth is not expressed only during moments of religious epiphany, but also during everyday moments of social interaction, especially when aided by alcohol.

In this manner, Joyce completes the psychological constitution of the Dubliner by relating all levels of his/her experience to one another. "Grace" reveals that spirituality is at once a highly personalized yet social level of interaction with the city, as Mr. Kernan's sense of spirituality is partially expressed through his sense of socio-economic and communal self-worth. As Scott Klein points out, there is indeed a curiosity in the fact that "'Grace' is the only story where the characters are introduced by separate and scanty paragraphs that trace their professional or economic circumstances" (118). For example, Mr. Kernan is first introduced as "a commercial traveller of the old school which believed in the dignity of its calling" (103). Mr. Power is next described as "employed in the Royal Irish Constabulary Office in Dublin Castle" (104). Mrs. Kernan is likewise introduced as "an active, practical woman of middle age" (105). Mr. Cunningham is introduced as "an elder colleague of Mr. Power. His own domestic life was not very happy," and therefore, "was the very man for such a case" (106). Mr. M'Coy "had been at one time a tenor of some reputation" (106), and Mr. Fogarty "was a modest grocer"

(112). In other stories, the characters are certainly described in terms of their socio-economic worth, but only in "Grace" does such description occur to convey a sense that the characters are being judged and compared against one another to measure their spiritual value. Mr. Kernan is described in a very pitiful state of drunkenness: "his hat had rolled a few yards away and his clothes were smeared with the filth and ooze of the floor on which he had lain, face downwards" (101). Such imagery contextualizes the extent of Mr. Kernan's commercial "decline" (104), as he would otherwise never be "seen in the city without a silk hat of some decency and a pair of gaiters. By grace of these two articles of clothing, he said, a man could always pass muster" (103). Even the Roman Catholic Church, which is "'*the* religion, the old, original faith'" (112), is measured by the main characters against the Jesuit Order of scholars. Mr. Kernan's friends attempt a spiritual intervention to retrieve Mr. Kernan from a state of disrepair, but he cannot find his identity within the spiritual community. When Mr. Kernan is inside the church, he responds "to the religious stimulus" simply by following the general example of the congregation: "Simultaneously the congregation unsettled, produced handerchiefs and knelt upon them with care. Mr. Kernan followed the general example. [...] The congregation rose also and settled again on its benches. Mr. Kernan restored his hat to its original position on his knee and presented an attentive face to the preacher" (117). As the narrative reveals, the "religious stimulus" does not penetrate into Mr. Kernan's "soul" but only induces Mr. Kernan to maintain the outward appearance of reverence. The image of the city is highly ambiguous and vague when Mr. Kernan is in the church, surrounded by others in the community. The image, however, becomes very clear when he compensates for lost communal spirituality with alcohol.

I hope it has become apparent that as one progresses deeper into the "soul" of the Dubliner, the perception of Dublin goes through different phases. At this point, I can conclude that the significant difference between the socio-economic and intimate self-worth of the Dubliner is in regard to the multiplicity of perceptions the two sociological levels produce. In regard to the socio-economic self worth of the Dubliner, there are various perceptions. In regard to the Dubliner's intimate sense of self, there are various emotional attitudes toward the city, but ultimately a much more singular objectified perception of the city as anti-phallic or desexualized. However, the Dubliner is not able to objectify the city spiritually the way he/she does in relation to his/her socio-economic and intimate self-worth. Rather, the spiritual essence of the Dubliner, as exemplified by the child in "The Sisters," is completely subsumed and engulfed within the city. It is impossible for the Dubliner in this spiritual state to objectify the city and marvel at its "eternal beauty and the amazing harmony of life" because this would require him/her to separate at least a rudimentary sense of self from the city. I can conclude that the calculation which forms a perception of the city is not necessarily a superficial process of the conscious mind, but rather a state of being which exists in the very depth of the urban individual's spiritual being, ironically brought about by alcohol instead of the church.

Chapter Two

1970 London:
Hanif Kureishi and the City of "Enlightenment"

As I hope to make clear in this chapter, the physical and environmental

circumstances of 1970s London play a more dynamic role in *Buddha* than those of 1900

Dublin do in *Dubliners*. Joyce's characters are confined to the physical boundaries of a

literary city which is paralysed and paralysing. Karim on the other hand begins the

narrative of *Buddha* in a suburb of London. His perception of the city is in constant

fluctuation, while for the Dubliners, the city develops in a linear fashion toward a single

image of stagnation. Karim's sense of location and orientation within the suburban-urban

divide generate the key psychological conflicts in the novel and are central to this

dynamic image of the city. The suburban-urban divide structures the progression and

development of the plot, characterizations, and setting. Some questions arise as to how

the suburban-urban divide affects the psychology of the individual. Does Simmel's

notion of the calculative mind apply only to those within the city proper? Or has the

post-modern suburb become so engulfed by urban sprawl that there really is no physical

or psychological distinction? In his essay, "The Rainbow Sign," Kureishi hints that the

real difference between the suburb and the city exists only in the mind. He calls it "a

condition I recognized from my time living in the suburbs. It was a dangerous

psychological cocktail consisting of ambition, suppressed excitement, bitterness and

sexual longing" (*Rainbow* 16). I wish to demonstrate in this chapter that Karim's

narrative is a psychological progression away from the restrictive notion of the suburbs as "fringe" districts of the city; he attains a realization that location does not entail happiness. It is at once a socio-economic, intimate, and spiritual maturation reflected in the dynamically changing image of the city.

As I began the last chapter with a discussion of the historical and social circumstances relevant to *Dubliners*, I will begin this chapter with a discussion of the historical and social circumstances relevant to *The Buddha of Suburbia*. What I wish to demonstrate through this discussion is that Kureishi's portrayal of London allegorizes the actual twentieth-century movement where the suburban towns of London became engulfed by the city. Kureishi's narrative is a portrayal of the psychological responses to London's physical growth. Physically, environmental indicators suggest that Karim's suburban area is part of London itself. Unlike some suburbs which are often many kilometres from their urban centre, the area encompassing Penge, Beckenham, Bromley, Orpington, and Chislehurst directly borders upon central London. These are the five districts of south London that comprise the area of Karim's suburban existence. The furthest edge of this area is only twenty-five kilometres from the centre of urban London. In the early twentieth century, London was demarcated by a "green belt" of rural land which contained the "conurbation"[4] of London (Young and Garside 335). During the twentieth century, however, this "green belt" was increasingly marked by development. By 1951, London's "sphere of influence had expanded to include many of the outer districts beyond the Conurbation such as Orpington and Chislehurst" (Young and Garside

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[4]    Young and Garside quote C.B. Fawcett saying, "Fawcett developed the term, limiting its meaning and emphasizing continuity as the defining characteristic: 'a conurbation is an area occupied by a continuous series of dwellings, factories and other buildings, harbours and docks, urban parks and playing fields etc. which are not separated from one another by rural land'" (Young and Garside 335; Fawcett 100).

284). The Amir family home is in Orpington, and as Kureishi portrays it, this suburban area was entirely within the conurbation of London by the 1970s. Karim's travels among the four suburban districts and into the city never bring him across rural land. Only when Karim travels north-east into Chislehurst does he move into territory that he "considered to be the country" (29). Karim blurs the physical city-suburb distinction further when he even refers to a district of the city proper as resonant of the country: "this part of West London seemed like the country to me, with none of the disadvantages, no cows or farmers" (126). If a city is understood as the physical continuity of urban development, then London and its immediate suburbs had become a single entity by the 1970s. London had become "an area which possessed what unity and cohesion it had from the fact that it had grown physically to be part of a single urban mass spreading originally from one centre, the City of London" (Rhodes 22).

While the growth of London may have entailed physical continuity, the political amalgamation of London's suburbs did not entail the continuity of political viewpoints on urban development. Throughout the twentieth century, London's growth was resisted by suburban communities through multiple channels. As Young and Garside note, there existed "conflicts over boundaries and jurisdictions, conflicts over centralization and decentralization of power, conflicts over the control of urban space" (334). In a historical context, localized resistance played a very significant role in the urban development of London. Cities often develop in a politically linear fashion, where city governance increases or becomes more centralized as the population and physical city space increases.[5] The resistance from London's suburbs, however, caused the city to develop in

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[5]    Richard Lehan, for example, discusses the research of a group known as the "Chicago School" of urban studies who have argued that cities normally develop according to a very specific scheme. During

a distinct fashion that Young and Garside characterize as "concentration, growth, decentralization, diversity" (333). While greater London became more centralized and continuous in basic necessities such as transportation, utilities, and housing, individual communities often insisted on retaining a certain degree of autonomy. However, the decentralization and autonomy which Young and Garside indicate can certainly not be measured by public services. The decentralization that occurred was of a much more ideological nature where suburban communities desired to retain their autonomous characters and ways of life.

This desire for autonomy is best illustrated by Kureishi through two characters, Auntie Jean and Hairy Back, both of whom live in Chislehurst and cannot bear the thought of disruptions to their upper-class suburban lifestyles. As Sukhdev Sandhu argues, "Kureishi's suburban residents decry forms of culture that challenge or disrupt their self-identifications" (134). For Auntie Jean and Hairy Back, the suburbs are a refuge from the chaotic cosmopolitanism London has become. Auntie Jean, for example, claims that "'we never had objections to [Haroon] marrying Margaret,'" yet she immediately betrays her true thoughts by mentioning that "'some people didn't like her marrying a coloured'" (44). When Haroon's Buddha routine interferes with Auntie Jean's lifestyle, his ethnicity does become an issue for her and it directly infringes upon what she considers proper behaviour in the suburbs: "'Your mum's told me all about what a caper your dad's been leading over in Beckenham. He's been impersonating a

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the 1920s, the "Chicago School" developed the "Concentric Ring Theory." As Lehan describes, this theory was concerned with "how physical laws applied to social phenomenon. Robert E. Park maintained that the city was externally organized in terms of laws of its own. His colleague Ernest W. Burgess illustrated this point when he insisted that the city grows in concentric rings – spreading out from the central business area to an area of poor housing and low rents, a slum; to the workingclass area, which will become the next slum; to a residential area of highclass apartments; and finally to a commuter zone, a suburban area, or satellite sites within thirty to sixty miles of the central business area" (198).

Buddhist – [...] It affects all of us! They'll think we're all bloody barmy. [...] What

would the Queen say if she knew what he was up to?'" (44-5). Hairy Back is the most

explicit about resisting change within his neighbourhood, as his residence symbolizes the

epitome of suburban ideological conservatism in *Buddha*. He lives in "a big old place set

back from the road," and when he catches Karim trying to rendezvous with his daughter

Helen, he says quite bluntly "'we don't want you blackies coming to the house'" (39-40).

If anything can be taken from these two characters, it is that 1970s suburban London was

characterized by largely conservative elements that sought uniformity and refuge from

the cosmopolitan centre. The result was a metropolis that was ideologically inconsistent

with its physical form. Where London was physically a single mass of conurbation,

ideologically it was a complex conglomeration of multiple (sub)urban centres.

Sandhu refers to Kureishi's literary technique for portraying this diversity in a

realistic novel as juxtaposition (144). Indeed, juxtaposition[6] is found in almost every

scene right from the beginning of the novel, and it is Kureishi's method of portraying the

ideological diversity of 1970s London. In his use of juxtaposition, Kureishi breaks down

traditional barriers of identification. The novel opens, for example, with Karim stating "I

am often considered to be a funny kind of Englishman, a new breed as it were, having

emerged from two old histories [English and Indian]" (3). His father, Haroon, is Indian

by birth. Haroon is loud, obnoxious, and overbearing, yet married to a complacent and

subdued Englishwoman, Margaret. Haroon is described in very sensual and physical

terms: "his balls and prick fell forward in his pants. The considerable muscles in his

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[6]   I am using "juxtaposition" here and in this thesis to indicate a literary technique whereby Kureishi places various items together for the purpose of creating a stark contrast. Such items may include, but are certainly not limited to various objects, images, settings, characters, phrases, themes, or even entire discourses and literary areas. For example, as I will discuss further on, Kureishi makes a literary juxtaposition by making parallels to Voltaire, an Enlightenment author, in a post-modern novel.

arms swelled up and he breathed energetically. Like many Indians he was small, but Dad was also elegant and handsome, with delicate hands and manners" (4). Margaret on the other hand is described as the exact antithesis: "Mum was a plump and unphysical woman with a pale round face and kind brown eyes. I imagined that she considered her body to be an inconvenient object surrounding her, as if she were stranded on an unexplored desert island" (4). In another example, when Karim catches his father having sex with Eva, he draws a mental image of the scene out of three disparate religious traditions: "was I conceived like this, I wondered, in the suburban night air, to the wailing of Christian curses from the mouth of a renegade Muslim masquerading as a Buddhist?" (16).

Kureishi's use of juxtaposition complicates the realism that is so significant to Joyce's creation of urban images. Because Kureishi uses juxtaposition so extensively, the narrative often seems carefully crafted and obvious as an ironic allegory for the cosmopolitan invasion of suburban London. For example, Jamila, who is Karim's best friend and part of what Karim considers his "alternative family" (52), often seems too out of touch with Karim's life. For two people who are supposed to know each other intimately, Jamila's acknowledgment of Karim often seems too obvious, as when she refers to Karim by his nickname: "'Oh, Creamy, you do get in some stupid situations. And you do realize it's absolutely characteristic of you, don't you? [...] Sometimes you can be so bourgeois, Creamy Jeans'" (54-5). In another example, near the end of the first chapter, Kureishi similarly makes an overtly obvious attempt to accentuate and emphasize Eva as cosmopolitan in contrast to Karim's complacent, bourgeois, suburban family. When Eva calls the Amir house one evening, she tells Karim "'you'd better

come and see me, and I'll fill your head with purple ideas'" (21). Eva's statement strikes

the reader as overly typical of the cosmopolitan culture of late 1960s and early 1970s

London.

However, where the realism of *Buddha* is somewhat confused or complicated by

Kureishi's artistry and juxtaposition, it is nevertheless clarified within a first-person

narration which mitigates this effect of juxtaposition. The narrative itself begins and ends

as a self-reflective activity for Karim who tries to piece together the defining moments of

his life. The juxtaposition which initially often seems too overt becomes not just

Kureishi's literary style but an important part of the various characterizations that

surround Karim. After Karim settles in West Kensington, Eva, for example, is portrayed

as one whose juxtaposed and carefully crafted lifestyle is an important part of who she is.

During a party at their flat, Karim observes Eva trying to "scour that suburban stigma

right off her body. She didn't realize it was in the blood and not on the skin; she didn't

see there could be nothing more suburban than suburbanites repudiating themselves"

(134). It is at this moment that Karim realizes a truth about post-modern life: people

craft their lifestyles and become them no matter how false or phoney they seem in the

process. He finally accepts this fact and reconciles it with his own sense of contentment

at the very end of the novel. The novel closes with a dinner party where Karim invites

almost everyone he knows and revels in their diverse lifestyles and career choices. As

opposed to juxtaposition impeding the sense of realism in *Buddha*, therefore, it instead

infuses the novel with an ambiguous irony that is absent in Joyce's realism. The novel's

conclusion is a happy ending with odd melancholic undertones: "And so I sat in the

centre of this old city that I loved, which itself sat at the bottom of a tiny island. I was

surrounded by people I loved, and I felt happy and miserable at the same time. I thought

of what a mess everything had been, but that it wouldn't always be that way" (284).

Sandhu argues that Kureishi's use of juxtaposition is intended to "draw out irony to

unprecedented levels and as the modern mode of expressing a way of commenting on

bleakness and cruelty without falling into dourness and didacticism" (144). This rings

particularly true especially when compared to Joyce's use of irony. Instead of

commenting on bleakness and cruelty, Joyce incorporated them directly into his irony.

Joyce was a socialist and as such was highly didactic and concerned with showing the

people of Dublin what was wrong with their lives.

In numerous ways, therefore, *Buddha* offers unique opportunities for applying

Simmel's notion of the calculative mind in comparison to *Dubliners*. Because of

Kureishi's use of juxtaposition, one can observe the city through a different type of

realism: the fact that post-modern life is not monotonous but filled with contradictions

which include simultaneous states of happiness and melancholy as well as simultaneous

states of socio-economic, intimate, and spiritual significance. As a collage of juxtaposed

and contrasting images, *Buddha*'s type of realism can adequately be deemed

cosmopolitan to denote post-modern life as inherently complex. Furthermore, as a self-

reflective narration, *Buddha* is inherently calculative.

Kureishi's use of juxtaposition extends far beyond the contrast of opposing cultural

elements into his usage of psychological literary traditions. One important aspect of

Karim's modernist psychological structure, for example, lies in Kureishi's parallels and

allusions to an Enlightenment author. Karim's psychological quantification of the city

parallels the quantification of the city in Voltaire's *Candide*. It is no coincidence that one

of the first allusions to a literary work in *Buddha* is *Candide* (10). The parallels between

*Buddha* and *Candide* are twofold. First, *Buddha* parallels *Candide* in important

similarities of narrative form, including plot movement and shifts in setting. Regarding

plot, Karim makes four distinct movements during the novel: from the suburbs into

London, across the Atlantic into America and New York, back across the Atlantic, and

back into the suburbs. Candide moves from a rural estate in Westphalia and into various

urban areas of Europe, across the Atlantic and into a South American city of gold, El

Dorado, back to various European cities, and then he finally settles on a farm. New York

City in *Buddha* is described in terms highly resonant of the elegance and luxury of El

Dorado:

> After the opening night in New York we got out of the theatre and were
> taken in taxis to an apartment building on Central Park South, near the Plaza
> Hotel. We were on the nine-hundredth floor or something, and one wall was
> solid glass, and there was a view over the park and to the north of
> Manhattan. There were servants with silver trays, and a black man played
> 'As Time Goes By' on the piano. (243)

While Candide is in El Dorado, their stay in the King's palace is described like this:

> Candide and Cacambo got into the coach, the six sheep flew, and in less
> than four hours they reached the King's palace situated at the extremity of
> the capital. The portal was two hundred and twenty feet high, and one
> hundred wide; but words are wanting to express the materials of which it
> was built. It is plain such materials must have prodigious superiority over
> those pebbles and sand which we call gold and precious stones.
>   Twenty beautiful damsels of the King's guard received Candide and
> Cacambo as they alighted from the coach, conducted them to the bath, and
> dressed them in robes woven of the down of humming-birds; after which the
> great crown officers, of both sexes, led them to the King's apartment,
> between two files of musicians, a thousand on each side. (45)

Second, the characterizations of Candide and Karim parallel each other in one

important psychological respect. They both idealize the city as the place where their

personal enrichment will occur. For Karim, "I knew it did me good to be reminded of

how much I loathed the suburbs, and that I had to continue my journey into London and a new life" (101). Referring to the city of El Dorado, Candide remarks, "'what sort of country is this, [...] a country unknown to all the rest of the world, and where nature is of a kind so different from ours? It is probably the country where all is well; for there absolutely must be one such place. And, whatever Master Pangloss might say, I often found that things went very ill in Westphalia'" (42). Further on, Candide also remarks, "'it is evident that one must travel'" (44). Similar to Candide's, Karim's search is for a city of gold. When he does not find it in London, he expects it in New York. Karim and Candide also eventually realize the folly of their idealizations: alternate places do not necessarily entail greater happiness. Candide sums up the experience metaphorically by saying "'we must cultivate our garden'" (87). Karim unravels Candide's metaphor by acknowledging that only hard work, not location, provides happiness: "I could think about the past and what I'd been through as I'd struggled to locate myself and learn what the heart is. Perhaps in the future I would live more deeply" (283-4). With these statements, both *Buddha* and *Candide* conclude in very ambiguous terms about how the future will unfold, but both are definite in their assertions that there is no metaphorical city of gold. Just as Kureishi turns his use of juxtaposition into an important part of *Buddha*'s realism, he also turns his use of Voltaire's Enlightenment structure into an important part of the novel's psychological realism. Kureishi's use of this psychological structure amounts to an acknowledgment that modern life is not eternally paralytic as Joyce portrays it, but is also filled with moments of idealism, disappointment, and contentment. Most importantly, as Kureishi's parallels to Voltaire demonstrate, the narrative movement of *Buddha* is psychologically centred on the issue of location, while

in *Dubliners*, location merely provided the space for modern psychological burdens to exist.

It would be helpful to begin the analysis of the city in *Buddha* by considering Karim's sense of artistry and pop culture, as this aspect of his socio-economic worth is most closely related to Kureishi's narrative style. Moreover, this aspect also illustrates how Kureishi draws the structure of Karim's psychology into a literary characterization of the *flâneur*.[7] The placement of Kureishi's artistry in Karim's hands entails a specific literary structure of Karim's character: Karim is a *flâneur* by virtue of his self-reflective activity. His ability to piece together defining moments and important figures in his life is an inherently artistic and literary activity. As Baudelaire says, "the painter of manners is of a mixed nature, by which I mean that it contains a strong literary element. Observer, philosopher, *flâneur* – call him what you will; [...]. Sometimes he is a poet; more often he comes closer to the novelist or the moralist; he is the painter of the passing moment and of all the suggestions of eternity that it contains" (4-5). Karim's literary characterization as a *flâneur* also incorporates and accounts for his psychological structure. As a *flâneur* painting a picture of his own life, Karim is always searching for the most suitable location or setting. As Baudelaire says, the *flâneur* is not always content: "and so he goes, hurrying, searching. But searching for what? [...] He is looking for that quality which you must allow me to call 'modernity'; for I know of no better word to express the idea I have in mind. He makes it his business to extract from

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7    While I have made significant attempts to simplify my usage of "*flâneur*" in this chapter and the next, it may still cause confusion as to how I distinguish between modernity and post-modernity. It should be sufficient, however, to simply state my views on the modern/post-modern divide. I believe modernity is a historical continuum where the social impact and essence of even early modernity continues to exist within post-modernity. Thus, I consider Karim to be "modern" by implication of his portrayal as a post-modern subject. Further on when I cite a passage from Baudelaire, I refer almost explicitly to Karim as "modern." Indeed, Baudelaire uses "modernity" in a very broad historical manner that could potentially apply to the entire era encompassing early modernity and late or post-modernity.

fashion whatever element it may contain of poetry within history, to distil the eternal from the transitory" (12). Karim's struggle is indeed a conflict of the stable versus the transitory, as he is often filling voids in his life with transitory and fleeting objects. He states in the opening paragraph, "why search the inner room when it's enough to say that I was looking for trouble, any kind of movement, action and sexual interest I could find, because things were so gloomy, so slow and heavy, in our family" (3). Right from the outset, Karim acknowledges that he will be searching "the outer room" (i.e.: other places and people around him). He is quantifying the city as the space where such "inner" voids can be filled. Not only is he a *flâneur*, but he also demonstrates a high level of the calculation that Simmel envisioned was a result of modern life.

Thus, his perception of the city becomes filled with highly transitory and fleeting indicators of pop culture and trendy 1970s objects and activities. Nowhere is this more apparent than in the final paragraph while "In the Suburbs":

> In bed before I went to sleep I fantasized about London and what I'd do there when the city belonged to me. There was a sound that London had. It was, I'm afraid, people in Hyde Park playing bongos with their hands; there was also the keyboard on the Doors's 'Light My Fire'. There were kids dressed in velvet cloaks who lived free lives; there were thousands of black people everywhere, so I wouldn't feel exposed; there were bookshops with racks of magazines printed without capital letters or the bourgeois disturbance of full stops; there were shops selling all the records you could desire; [...] You see, I didn't ask much of life; this was the extent of my longing. But at least my goals were clear and I knew what I wanted. (121)

Karim's goals may be clear, but they are disturbingly idealistic. Soon after this fantasy, Karim comes to a more brutal understanding of popular culture in the city. While sitting in The Nashville having a drink with Charlie, Karim bears witness to the beginning of punk music: "I began to see that I was among the strangest audience I'd seen in that place. [...] at the front of the place, near the stage, there were about thirty kids in ripped

black clothes. [...] Charlie stirred restlessly as he leaned there. He hugged himself in self-pity as we took in this alien race dressed with an abandonment and originality we'd never imagined possible" (129). It is indeed a stark contrast to the popular culture ideals that Karim originally imagined of the city. Bongos and the keyboard of "Light My Fire" seem rather conservative in comparison to the punk music that Karim is shocked by: "the music was thrashed out. It was more aggressive than anything I'd heard since early Who. This was no peace and love" (130). The city itself becomes alien to Karim under this culture-shock: "I began to understand what London meant and what class of outrage we had to deal with. It certainly put us in proportion" (130). Not only is it alien, but also frightening: "the city at night intimidated me: the piss-heads, bums, derelicts and dealers shouted and looked for fights. Police vans cruised, and sometimes the law leapt out on to the street to grab kids by the hair and smash their heads against walls. The wrecked kids pissed into doorways" (132). Karim responds to the culture-shock, however, in a remarkably realistic fashion. Similar to the way Candide realizes that all is not necessarily good in the world (51), Karim realizes that all is not necessarily suited to his taste in the city. When Charlie decides to adopt a punk persona, Karim responds by saying, "'It would be artificial [...]. We're not like them. We don't hate the way they do. We've got no reason to. We're not from the [Council Housing] estates. We haven't been through what they have'" (132). With this statement about punk music, Karim makes his first step towards realizing the city is not necessarily an ideal place to live.

Kureishi's use of pop culture, however, still represents and conveys a very small part of Karim's psychology. As I have shown above, Karim's popular culture shock serves to highlight the city as radical in opposition to the complacent and idealistic

suburbs. When Karim explores the nuances of postcolonial, political, and ethnicity

issues, the narrative reveals a more complex side to his socio-economic sense of

belonging in the city. In dealing with these issues, Karim is forced to deal with his sense

of socio-economic worth in the city much more directly and immediately: postcolonial

politics give Karim a stage upon which to act out his sense of artistry and talent as a

*flâneur*. As I will demonstrate in this discussion of post-colonial politics, Karim deals

with post-colonial politics by becoming an actor, thereby contributing very specifically to

the socio-economic life of London and England more generally.

An overwhelming majority of scholars who have written on Kureishi have argued

that *Buddha* does or does not fit into the binarisms of postcolonial discourse because

Karim is a half-Indian and half-Englishman living in London. Judith Misrahi-Barak, for

example, has argued that "as early as the very first paragraph, *The Buddha of Suburbia*

opens onto a bi-dimensional, almost contradictory kind of space. First, the space within

and in-between two continents unfolds as the narrator introduces himself as 'a funny kind

of Englishman...having emerged from two old histories' and refers to 'the odd mixture of

continents and blood'" (31). I agree with scholars such as Misrahi-Barak who emphasize

the significance of Kureishi within such a binary postcolonial discourse; the consistent

references to the England-India relationship in the novel beg such consideration.

However, I would be much more specific about how and where to apply such

notions in relation to Karim. From a strictly political or socio-economic consideration of

Karim's personality, I would argue that Karim effectively removes himself from such

binary discourse. Karim is often able to make psychological distinctions regarding post-

colonial discourse. He is very aware that certain issues (such as racism and ethnicity as I

will demonstrate further on) can be dealt with on a political level, while others (such as family history) hold a much more personalized and intimate or spiritual influence. Politically, Karim recognizes the fallacy of placing undue emphasis on his "odd mixture of continents and blood," and Misrahi-Barak's suggestion that Karim's world exists "in-between two continents" must be understood metaphorically. Karim's own acknowledgement of his "hybridity" is more appropriately seen as an acknowledgment of his family history. This point is confirmed later in the novel when his uncle Anwar dies. Karim acknowledges that his "Indianness" belongs to his father, not to himself: "he wasn't proud of his past, but he wasn't unproud of it either; it just existed, and there wasn't any point in fetishizing it, as some liberals and Asian radicals liked to do. So if I wanted the additional personality bonus of an Indian past, I would have to create it" (213). Karim's own self-identification with post-colonial discourse, therefore, must be limited to his sense of intimacy and belonging to his family.

Also indicated in the passage above is Karim's awareness for ethnicity to become utilized and manipulated for political means. In the context of Karim's sense of socio-economic and political belonging to London, two issues of post-colonialism are raised: racism and ethnicity. Throughout the novel, Karim is an antagonist to those who attempt to place him within racial and ethno-centric oppressor-oppressed binarisms. However, Karim effectively removes himself from the oppressor-oppressed mentality that others such as Jamila and Shadwell attempt to push him into. Jamila accuses him of not caring when he abandons an anti-racism march in order to spy on his girlfriend Eleanor. When Jamila attempts to associate his apparent lack of concern with an identity crisis, "'where are you going as a person, Karim?'" (232), he responds with a sarcastic "'over there'"

which degrades the seriousness of Jamila's "guerrilla war" (56). When Shadwell

questions Karim about racism, the question contains an inherent assumption that Karim is

in fact oppressed: "'that must be complicated for you to accept – belonging nowhere,

wanted nowhere. Racism. Do you find it difficult? Please tell me'" (141). Karim,

however, tactically changes the subject saying, "'I don't know, lets talk about acting.'

[…] I was shaking with embarrassment that he could talk to me in this way at all, as if he

knew me, as if he had the right to question me" (141-2). Further on, when Shadwell

berates Karim for not having an "authentic" Indian accent, Karim is able to maintain his

posture by keeping the matter in perspective. He responds to Shadwell's request by

simply saying, "'it's a political matter to me'" (147). When Jamila attempts to push the

accent issue further and associate it with a lack of morality on Karim's part, Karim

responds by saying "'you're going too far, Jamila,' I said, and turned my back on her"

(157).

The significance of Karim's positioning outside the political boundaries of

postcolonial discourse is that instead of grounding himself within an idea of

binary/hybrid English-Indian culture, he grounds himself more concretely in his

immediate surroundings, the South London suburbs. In the instances mentioned above,

for example, Karim responds to Jamila with an emphasis on location, "over there," and

responds to Shadwell with an emphasis on the issue at hand, acting. His

acknowledgement of the political implications of his ethnicity remains highly

speculative, "perhaps it is the odd mixture of continents and blood" (3), while his

acknowledgement of where he is remains definite, "but I don't care – Englishman I am

(though not proud of it), from the South London suburbs and going somewhere" (3).

Place is much more significant for Karim than belonging to any political binary category of identification. Because Karim is an antagonist to the binary discourse, and because his character is defined so markedly through location, his awareness of post-colonial politics, for example, delineates images of the city very sharply. During one of the initial conversations between Karim and Shadwell, Shadwell demonstrates his own political fallacy of perceiving skin colour as a demarcation of ethnic authenticity: "'everyone looks at you, I'm sure, and thinks: an Indian boy, how exotic, how interesting, what stories of aunties and elephants we'll hear now from him. And you're from Orpington'" (141). Most significant about Shadwell's comment here is that he inadvertently highlights the fallacy in opposition to the more concrete and reliable indicator of location. In this instance, Orpington itself is a political indicator as the referent for location; it acts as the vehicle for highlighting Shadwell's fallacy. Ironically, however, Orpington is still the suburb that Karim wishes to get away from. The image of Orpington, therefore, serves an ironic dual purpose. It is a physical space which betrays the fallacy of a racial assumption, yet it is still a dull suburban community, delineated by the monotony of its ideological and political circumstances and contrasted against the "exoticness" of India.

In another example, one of the most acutely delineated images of the city comes during an instance when Karim is describing the racism that Jamila faces in her suburb of Penge. Penge is a particularly apt choice in which to place a character such as Jamila who is so politically conscious. As Karim describes her, Jamila was "preparing for the guerrilla war she knew would be necessary when the whites finally turned on the blacks and Asians and tried to force us into gas chambers or push us into leaky boats" (56). Penge serves as a particularly apt choice because of its physical, political, and economic

characteristics in relation to the other suburbs. Beckenham, Bromley, Orpington, and

Chislehurst are all relatively large areas in comparison to Penge. Penge is by far the

smallest of all London suburbs (see Young and Garside 304), yet in *Buddha*, it is

described as the most politically intensive and active. In Kureishi's literary portrayal,

therefore, the result is a highly acute image of Penge as an area which seems prone to

concentrating chaos and disruption:

> The area in which Jamila lived was closer to London than our suburbs,
> and far poorer. It was full of neo-fascist groups, thugs who had their own
> pubs and clubs and shops. On Saturdays they'd be out in the High Street
> selling their newspapers and pamphlets. They also operated outside the
> schools and colleges and football grounds, like Millwall and Crystal Palace.
> At night they roamed the streets beating Asians and shoving shit and
> burning rags through their letter-boxes. Frequently the mean, white, hating
> faces had public meetings and the Union Jacks were paraded through the
> streets, protected by the police. There was no evidence that these people
> would go away – no evidence that their power would diminish rather than
> increase. The lives of Anwar and Jeeta and Jamila were pervaded by fear of
> violence. I'm sure it was something they thought about every day. Jeeta
> kept buckets of water around her bed in case the shop was fire-bombed in
> the night. Many of Jamila's attitudes were inspired by the possibility that a
> white group might kill one of us one day. (56)

As this passage demonstrates, Karim's awareness of the political potential within

post-colonial discourse guides his mental quantification of racism within the city.

On the issue of racism, Karim's characterization as a *flâneur* is rather difficult to

situate, as Baudelaire really makes no indication as to how the *flâneur* deals with racism.

However, certain deductions and inferences could possibly be made on this point. Early

in the novel, Karim compares his attitude to racism to that of Jamila:

> Compared to Jammie I was, as a militant, a real shaker and trembler. If
> people spat at me I practically thanked them for not making me chew the
> moss between the paving stones. But Jamila had a PhD in physical
> retribution. Once a greaser rode past us on an old bicycle and said, as if
> asking the time, 'Eat shit, Pakis.' Jammie sprinted through the traffic before

> throwing the bastard off his bike and tugging out some of his hair, like
> someone weeding an overgrown garden. (53)

In certain situations such as this, Karim is notably passive. As the *flâneur* marvels at the beauty and multitude of life within the city, Karim, as a *flâneur*, should seemingly be disheartened. It is possible to read a disheartened attitude into Karim's passivity, especially when one considers that it would be a mistake to associate his passivity with unconcern as Jamila does. Karim does channel his concern for racism into artistic endeavours, and this especially supports the inference for Karim as a *flâneur*. Racism and ethnicity are more properly considered issues that Karim must learn to appreciate and deal with in a mature manner. When Karim is first asked to create a character for the theatre based on someone from his own life, he uses Anwar and the hunger strike against Jamila. The result is an artistic product that some characters in *Buddha* see as an insensitive treatment of race and ethnicity. As Tracy says, "'your picture is what white people already think of us. That we're funny, with strange habits and weird customs. To the white man we're already people without humanity, and then you go and have Anwar madly waving his stick at the white boys'" (180). By the end of the novel, however, Karim has been rewarded for his acting skills and accepts a part on a soap opera "which would tangle with the latest contemporary issues: they meant abortions and racist attacks, the stuff that people lived through but that never got on TV. If I accepted the offer I'd play the rebellious student son of an Indian shopkeeper" (259). Karim's acceptance of the part amounts to a fulfillment of his realization that "if I wanted the added personality bonus of an Indian past, I would have to create it" (213). Thus, while Karim's treatment of racism and ethnicity is misguided at first, it nevertheless matures into a highly productive and socially acceptable talent that Baudelaire would definitely

see as worthy of the *flâneur* – the ability to depict sensitive issues in an artistic manner and without being insensitive.

However, one must bear in mind that this is only Karim's political treatment of post-colonial and ethno-centric discourse. It is Karim's exact political and artistic treatment of important issues that causes him more serious problems when those issues require intimate or spiritual attention. Initially, Karim's sexual perception of London is a highly phallic projection of his own desire. Also in the final paragraph of "In the Suburbs," part of his fantasy of London is sexual: "there were parties where girls and boys you didn't know took you upstairs and fucked you; there were all the drugs you could use" (121). This final paragraph of the section is very revealing because it not only illustrates Karim's initial sense of artistry and pop culture but it also illustrates that he initially treats his own sense of self and sexuality with the same ease and youthful rebelliousness that he treats everything else. Early in the novel, for example, Karim's sense of sexual identity is not self-generated but borrowed from other people, Charlie in particular. When Charlie gives him advice on how to dress, for example, Karim minds the advice with the utmost reverence: "I, who wanted only to be like Charlie – as clever, as cool in every part of my soul – tattooed his words on to my brain. Levi's, with an open-necked shirt, maybe in a very modest pink or purple. I would never go out in anything else for the rest of my life" (16-17). Dress and fashion for Karim become requisite to obtaining sex. Following Charlie's advice, Karim is distraught by his current wardrobe and views it as anti-sexual while Charlie's sense of fashion becomes a point of sexual desire: "while I contemplated myself and my wardrobe with loathing, and would willingly have urinated over every garment, Charlie lay back with his eyes closed and

real sartorial understanding in his mind" (17). Thus, when Charlie does allow Karim

sexual contact, Karim treats it as a point of acceptance into a world of seemingly meta-

physical privilege: "I dashed for his belt, for his fly, for his cock, and I took him out into

the air to cool down. He made a sign! He twitched himself! Through such human

electricity we understood each other" (17). At the point of sexual climax, Karim directs

his elation and sense of intimate acceptance into one brief yet highly phallic urban image:

"when he came in my hand it was, I swear, one of the pre-eminent moments of my

earlyish life. There was dancing in my streets. My flags flew, my trumpets blew!" (17).

Karim's sense of sexual acceptance and elation is so great that it can only be represented

by the analogy of a street party.

Karim's sense of self and sexuality, however, is betrayed as less than secure. When

the city fails to live up to Karim's expectations, anxieties and misgivings about his

intimate security start to weigh on his mind. Karim's tendency to find self-security in

other people such as he does with Charlie is brought to a climax during his relationship

with Eleanor. Karim's most intimate and serious sexual relationship in the novel is with

Eleanor, and it is during his contemplation of her, therefore, that Karim experiences his

most intensive act of finding security within others. Very early in the relationship, Karim

reveals his misgivings: "I was terrified Eleanor would tell me she had fallen for someone

else, or would declare she was bored with me. Or I wasn't good enough for her. The

usual" (188). In fear of loosing Eleanor, Karim consciously compares himself with her

dead boyfriend, Gene. For Karim, Gene represents everything that Karim desires in

himself. Gene is a struggling actor and *flâneur* distraught and discouraged by political

forces such as racism:

> Gene was a young West Indian actor. He was very talented and sensitive, thin and kind and raunchy, with this beautiful face. He knew a lot about poetry, which he'd declaim wonderfully aloud at parties. [...] But he never got the work he deserved. He emptied bed-pans in hospital programmes. He played criminals and taxi-drivers. [...] The police were always picking him up and giving him a going over. Taxis drove straight past him. People said there were no free tables in empty restaurants. He lived in a bad world in nice old England. (201)

Issues such as skin colour, which Karim normally treats with political and artistic appreciation, now become a psychological burden to his sense of self. Karim romanticizes certain aspects of Gene's life that strike him as worthy of the *flâneur*. For Karim, being a struggling black actor oppressed by political forces is a lifestyle to be desired. Moreover, he believes that other people such as Eleanor seek that quality in him: "He'd known poetry by heart and was angry and never got any work, and I wished I'd met him and seen his face. How could I ever replace him in Eleanor's eyes?" (202). Karim learns, however, that his relationship with Eleanor has been carefully crafted by Pyke, "'my prediction is that Eleanor will fuck him, it'll basically be a mercy fuck, but he'll fall hard for her and she'll be too kind to tell him the truth about [Gene]. It will end in tears'" (245). The city – now New York – quickly becomes a scene of desperation for Karim who tries to grasp onto anything that will give him some sense of comfort: "I wished I was in London; I just wanted to be away from all these people" (245).

Even London becomes an object that must yield to Karim's self-loathing which is symbolized by New York: "when the others went back to London I ripped up my ticket and stayed in New York. There was nothing for me to do in London. [...] In New York I could be a walking stagnancy without restraint" (249). London and New York become two symbolic poles of Karim's sense of intimacy. New York is where sexuality is void of any sense of decency and London is where intimacy takes on a deeper significance

through the family unit. Karim, however, must sink to an absolute low of self-loathing before he can appreciate London from such a perspective. After watching a prostitute perform an act of sado-masochism on Charlie, Karim "flew back to London. I was glad to be doing it: I missed my parents" (258). Now Karim can finally view the city in much more realistic terms of intimacy: "I walked around Chelsea, happy to be back in London, relieved to rest my eyes on something old again" (258). Most importantly, however, Karim can now view the city without the psychological burden of "borrowing" security from other people: "it was terrific as long as you didn't have to hear the voices of the people who lived there" (258). In one of the final sexualized images of the city, Karim has a more matured sense of the city. He is able to keep the city separate from his own sexual desires and view its beauty and ugliness together: "I walked around Central London and saw that the town was being ripped apart; the rotten was being replaced by the new, and the new was ugly. The gift of creating beauty had been lost somewhere. The ugliness was in the people, too. Londoners seemed to hate each other" (258). Thus, Karim becomes more realistic as a *flâneur* than Baudelaire portrays in "The Painter of Modern Life." In this essay, Baudelaire's own notion of the *flâneur* often betrays itself as overly idealistic and Romantic. He never seems to suggest that the *flâneur* can be at odds with the city but can only find beauty, even in the ugly. Indeed, during the first half of the novel, Karim is never at odds with the city but instead idealizes it, even in all its degeneracy: "It would be years before I could get away to the city, London, where life was bottomless in its temptations" (8). Karim's matured sense of separating the beautiful from the ugly, however, does not lessen his characterization as a *flâneur*. Rather, it adds a sense of realism to the *flâneur* that is missing from Baudelaire's notion. As Karim

concludes, beauty and contentment can be appreciated so much more when it is contrasted against a matured perspective of the ugly and despairing: "and so I sat in the centre of this old city that I loved [...] and I felt happy and miserable at the same time."

Spirituality in *Buddha* is more difficult to locate than in *Dubliners* because in *Dubliners* it is consistently associated with institutions such as the Catholic Church. In *Buddha*, on the other hand, spirituality is effectively disengaged from institutional religion. In the first chapter, for example, Karim questions the authenticity of his father's Buddha routine: "His magic had worked on them and I'd given him the 'God' moniker, but with reservations. He wasn't yet fully entitled to the name. What I wanted to see was whether, as he started to blossom, Dad really did have anything to offer other people, or if he would turn out to be merely another suburban eccentric" (22). For Karim, spirituality is not found within traditional indicators such as the word "God." Karim treats religious indicators (i.e. "God") as flexible signifiers and as inherently literary, capable of being re-written and applied in non-traditional or radical contexts. Furthermore, it could not be said with any certainty that the characters of *Buddha* systematically take drugs or alcohol to replace any lost sense of spirituality. Drugs and alcohol are certainly present in the novel, but the novel does not significantly explore the psychological nuances of Karim's character while he takes drugs or alcohol. Instances of substance abuse are much more fleeting and transitory in significance than they are in *Dubliners* or *Glue*. Karim treats the use of intoxicants as merely another part of 1970s popular culture, while in *Glue*, for example, "we hud aw grown up oan bevvy, n our whole culture was saturated in the fuckin drug" (272).

Karim's sense of spirituality is much more appropriately revealed through cultural elements that surround his intimate self-worth such as family and friends. As *Buddha* is a narrative of maturation, it should not be surprising that Karim's sense of spirituality is more closely connected with his sense of self and well-being than with institutional religion. *Dubliners* is structured to incorporate institutional religion as an influence on the Dubliner partly because Joyce used a traditional Christian structure for the Dubliner's spirituality: the "soul." As Joyce structured the Dubliner as having a "soul," the Dubliner's subjectivity is always given by something or someone else, whether the Catholic Church, or God through the omniscient narrator. Kureishi, on the other hand, works toward a different structure of spirituality: "the heart." As Karim says in his conclusion, "I could think about the past and what I'd been through as I'd struggled to locate myself and learn what the heart is." Absolute subjectivity can belong to Karim exclusively. Thus, Kureishi uses a physical body part which can symbolize such absolute subjectivity and spirituality. Similarly, Karim's discovery of his spirituality comes through elements which are closer to the creation of his personality. During his stay in New York, for example, one is struck by an odd paragraph that seems to have replaced a description of Karim while on drugs or alcohol. Karim mentions that "my depression and self-hatred, my desire to mutilate myself with broken bottles, and numbness and crying fits, my inability to get out of bed for days and days, the feeling of the world moving in to crush me, went on and on. But I knew I wouldn't go mad, even if that release, that letting-go, was a freedom I desired" (249-50). Karim's depressive state in this instance would be commonly responded to by some with drugs or alcohol, providing the desired release if only for a moment. Karim moves on instead with a paragraph about his father:

> I was waiting for myself to heal. I began to wonder why I was so strong –
> what it was that held me together. I thought it was that I'd inherited from
> Dad a strong survival instinct. Dad had always felt superior to the British:
> this was the legacy of his Indian childhood – political anger turning into
> scorn and contempt. [...] I didn't want Dad to see me like this, because he
> wouldn't be able to understand why I'd made such a mess of things when
> the conditions had been good, the time so opportune, for advancement.
> (250)

As a *flâneur*, Karim's spiritual self-awareness almost speaks for itself. As Baudelaire

says, the *flâneur* makes it his concern "to distil the eternal from the transitory" (12).

Performing a self-reflective activity, Karim maintains a certain level of narrative

consciousness throughout the novel that the Dubliners, for example, are most often at a

marked distance from. By design, therefore, Karim consciously seeks out more

significant elements such as family and extracts their importance from the more transitory

activities such as drug usage.

Since the *flâneur* makes it his concern "to distil the eternal from the transitory," it is

not entirely surprising that Karim even questions the role that his family plays in his life.

He does question his father's authenticity at certain times, "what I wanted to see was

whether [...] Dad really did have anything to offer other people" (22). While in New

York during his state of depression, Karim does acknowledge his family is the most

influential presence in his life. In order to question his family, therefore, he must contrast

them against the most enduring indicator of all: the physical environment. Early in the

novel, when Karim feels shame in the slow and heavy pace of his family, he can only

contextualize it through location: "[Haroon] still stumbled around the place like an

Indian just off the boat, and asked questions like, 'Is Dover in Kent?' [...] I sweated with

embarrassment when he halted strangers in the street to ask directions to places that were

a hundred yards away in an area where he'd lived for almost two decades" (7). In this

instance Karim is implicitly suggesting that his father cannot even grasp a fundamental concept such as geography. Karim is always compensating for his familial shame by highlighting how knowledgeable and secure he is about his surroundings. When describing the trip to Eva's house, for example, Karim states "it wasn't far, about four miles, to the Kays', but Dad would never have got there without me. I knew all the streets and every bus route" (7). The mention of bus routes and streets is a foreshadowing of Karim's physical navigation through the city and psychological navigation through his familial shame.

In this manner, Karim initially treats the city and his suburban family lifestyle as two extremes within a spectrum of security: on one hand, there is security within the family unit that helps create Karim's sense of love and intimacy, and on the other hand there is Karim's sense of self and independence which is contextualized by his knowledge of the city. Karim puts forth this deep emotional dilemma early in the first chapter: "Divorce wasn't something that would occur to [my parents]. In the suburbs people rarely dreamed of striking out for happiness. It was all familiarity and endurance: security and safety were the reward of dullness. I clenched my fists under the table. I didn't want to think about it. It would be years before I could get away to the city, London, where life was bottomless in its temptations" (8). The urban imagery contained within this statement acknowledges the conflict as occurring deep within the subconscious core of Karim's personality. There is a great sense of closure, therefore, in one of the final images of London, when Karim reconciles the dilemma between his parents and the city. As he says of his reason for flying back to London, "I missed my parents."

I would like to conclude this chapter by highlighting some of the similarities and differences between the image of the city in *Dubliners* and *Buddha*. Similar to the Dubliner, Karim creates and quantifies a multiplicity of urban images in relation to his sense of socio-economic worth: the city is where Karim draws his artistic material as a *flâneur* from; it is the scene of fleeting and transitory ideals of pop culture; it is the scene of radical and violent shock of pop culture on Karim's senses; it is the scene of dull suburban existence in relation to the exoticness of India; finally, it is the scene of intensive, brutal racism and corresponding political activism. Also similar to the Dubliner's, Karim's sense of intimacy creates a much more singular and unified image of the city. As I demonstrated in the previous chapter, the image of the city is singular in that it becomes progressively desexualized in relation to the Dubliner's progressively waning sense of intimacy. The image of the city in *Buddha* is likewise singular in that it follows the development of Karim's own sense of intimacy and sexuality. There is a significant difference, however, between the Dubliner's and Karim's sense of spirituality. In *Dubliners* the city is only objectified for the reader as a place of broken spirituality. For the Dubliner, whose spirituality is broken, the city and physical world is vague and indistinct. By the end of "The Dead," Gabriel cannot mentally construct a spiritual image of the city: "the solid world [...] was dissolving. [...] His soul swooned" (152). The city in *Buddha* becomes more solidly objectified in both the reader's mind and Karim's mind, whether Karim views it as a place where he can indulge in temptation or where he can find stability in his family. Nevertheless, in *Buddha* as in *Dubliners*, the quantification of the city occurs deep within the character's personality and not merely at the surface of his consciousness. As I stated in my original argument, "the urban" is an attitude conveyed

by the character and which also structures the literary image of the city. In comparison to

the Dubliners, Karim is much more open and fluid in his characterization, as

demonstrated by his ability to transcend and negotiate with various cultural discourses.

For this reason, Kureishi's portrayal and usage of twentieth-century London is much

more dynamic than Joyce's portrayal and usage of 1900 Dublin.

Chapter Three

Late Twentieth-Century Edinburgh:
Irvine Welsh, Social Class, and "the Scottish Divided Self"

In the last chapter I tested my model of analysis by applying it to the psychological

formation of a single character. In this chapter, I wish to test the model further and

explore the literary image of the city when a single literary theme pervades the entire text

and its characterizations. In Irvine Welsh's *Glue*, the issue of social class permeates all

three levels of the characters' subjectivity. Karim's first person narration and story of

individual maturation allowed me to illustrate the existence of the urban attitude deep

within the literary character. What happens to that attitude, however, when an issue such

as social class deeply influences a character's sense of socio-economic worth, intimacy,

and spirituality? Does the urban attitude still exist or does it become subsumed within a

larger thematic structure? Moreover, what is the resulting image of the city? As I started

arguing in the last chapter, much post-modern literature has placed a stronger emphasis

on a dynamic location and setting to reflect the "enlightened" subjectivity of the post-

modern individual from issues such as social class or ethnicity. As Irvine Welsh

demonstrates in *Glue*, however, subjective control is not necessarily absolute as

twentieth-century "enlightenment" literature often proposes. As I will demonstrate in this

chapter, Welsh writes with awareness that subjectivity comes partially from the

individual and partially by unexplained omniscient forces. Reflected in the text, the

image of the city is in a constant fluctuation and tension between the first-person

subjective (often portrayed as the sensual and physical or bodily) and the omniscient. I will begin this chapter with a discussion of the relevant historical circumstances of Edinburgh; then I will discuss how these circumstances relate to Welsh, his literary style and relationship to the Scottish urban canon; finally, before I proceed with my own analysis, I will discuss the narrative structure of *Glue* and its four central.

The physical nuances of the geographical area where Edinburgh is located have played a much more influential role in the social development of the city than those of Dublin or London have played in theirs. The city is located in what Harry Richardson characterizes as "'a gap within a gap', being situated within a strategic position between the Pentland Hills and the Firth of Forth, which in turn are found between the Highlands and the Southern Uplands of Scotland" (3). The valley itself is marked in the south, west, and north-west by slight hills with a single mass of rock jutting into the sky in the approximate centre of the valley. A wide channel of level ground, carved out by the Water of Leith, cuts through the hills from the west to the north-east. To the north-east of the castle rock a river, the Water of Leith, has created a vast delta of flat land. Politically speaking, these are the districts of Leith and Granton. Richardson argues that this geography "has been crucial in determining the location of the city centre, industry and communication routes and these elements of the spatial structure have repelled wealthy households to more environmentally attractive residential areas" (162). During Scotland's industrial revolution of the mid-nineteenth century, "the city's new railways satisfied the interests of factory owners by supplying the transport facilities to promote industrial expansion. Thus, the railways, being cheaper to construct on level ground, reinforced industrial concentration on low ground, a tendency which persists in modern

Edinburgh" (10). This channel of industry, as may be expected, also concentrates the

majority of the city's working-class residents.

However, the channel of industry also runs near the castle rock, which forms the

centre of the downtown core and concentrates the city's professional, business, and

intellectual classes. Instead of the city existing as an upper-class suburban area which

surrounds a working-class industrial area, Edinburgh gives the impression of a city

pockmarked by discontinuous areas of social segregation. Richardson argues that "the

most striking feature" about Edinburgh "is the high overall degree of segregation"

between social classes (159). In *Glue*, the reader can consistently find characters that

seem to belong in certain areas of the city and are out of place in other areas. In the

second chapter of the novel, for example, Terry's father describes a group of

neighbourhood faces in a pub: "Old Doyle was there, with one of his laddies, Duke he

thought, and some other nutter. What a clan of gangsters; [...] Aye, Henry considered,

the best place for that crowd was out here; the scheme's loss was the toon's gain" (10).

Terry himself feels out of place while staking out an upscale neighbourhood for a

robbery: "casin this area, ah kin *feel* the curtains twitchin oan schemie alert every time

ah step oaf one ay the main roads" (240). In another example, while Billy is describing

Edinburgh in relation to Glasgow, he says "ye kin see how it is Glesgay people git aw

upset aboot Edinburgh, cause they've nowt like the castle, the gairdins n shoaps n that.

People say thir's slums in Edinburgh, n that's true, but the *whole* ay Glesgay's a slum, n

that's the difference. [...] Nutters like Doyle stand oot like a sair thumb through here, but

ye'd nivir notice them in Glesgay" (78). In this instance, Billy hits directly on the fact

that in Edinburgh the upper-class and the lower-class "schemies" are always highly

contrasted and identifiable from one another.

This social circumstance has been reflected in Edinburgh's history through a

multitude of channels. As Welsh establishes in *Glue*, two particularly important channels

are government and business, for example. During a meeting with an employment

officer Terry describes that "ehr nostrils wir twitchin in her beak tae see if she wis pickin

up the scheme offay me; the fags, the beer, wherever the fucker's prejudices took her"

(232). As Terry's character conveys, government officers have a personal hand in

perpetuating class antagonisms. The creation of Billy's "Business Bar" also reveals that

economic enterprise has a definite interest in taking part in the class antagonism and

helping to control and shape it. Power, Billy's partner and financial muscle, tells us that

> the West End, reaching right uptae what we used tae ken as Tollcross. [...]
> It's gauny be Edinburgh's new financial centre. So what happens here, tae
> aw they fine old buildings? [...] Becomes an entertainment centre. No like
> Rose Street, wi its tacky touristy pubs, n places for the suburbanites tae huv
> a toon pub-crawl doon. Naw, aw these punters that go oot ravin now, they'll
> be ten years aulder doon the line, n they'll want thir creature comforts. [...]
> Smart enough for a classy clientele, big enough tae be something else when
> licensing laws move wi the times. (203-4)

Perhaps the most significant channel for reflecting the class antagonism, however,

is in Edinburgh's literary history itself. Not only does literature have the obvious

potential for representing the class antagonism, but the literary and intellectual figures of

Edinburgh themselves have traditionally been viewed as upper-class and antagonists to

the lower classes. The literary history of Edinburgh is comparatively unique in modern

British literature for its primary focus on the theme of social class. Every scholar I have

encountered in the field of Scottish urban and Edinburgh literary history – i.e., Trevor

Royle, Gavin Wallace and Randall Stevenson, Patricia Horton, Edwin Morgan, Cairns

Craig to name only a few – has emphasized in one way or another that the literary history

of Edinburgh and urban Scotland more generally centres on the relationship between the

upper and lower classes. Glasgow-based writer James Kelman, the author whom Welsh

has been compared to most often, has said "ninety per cent of the literature in Great

Britain concerns people who never have to worry about money at all" (quoted in Craig

99). This may seem a commonplace observation, but certainly not without significance

and implication for Edinburgh's upper-class/working-class conflict.

As the majority of Scottish authors themselves have come from the upper class,

Kelman argues that the working classes have consequently been either stereotyped or

absent in Scottish literary history, "confined to the margins, kept in their place, stuck in

the dialogue. You only ever saw them or heard them. You never got into their mind.

You did find them in the narrative but from without, seldom from within" (81). Sandy

Mullay argues that this situation is unique for Edinburgh: "while so much of Glasgow's

prose fiction is grittily proletarian in subject and background [...] Edinburgh's has tended

to reflect the city's professional base. This is puzzling, since Edinburgh has

proportionately as much of a working class element to its demographic make up as its

western neighbour" (193). The tendency of Edinburgh literature to focus on perspectives

from the elite literati can likely be explained by the city's own position as Scotland's

political, imperial, and thus, intellectual and cultural capital. In the imperial capital of

Scotland, the literary elite have tended to repress or ignore the dark underside of

Edinburgh life. Scottish author Ian Rankin has argued that the Edinburgh literati have

consistently portrayed the city as a "schizophrenic city, the place of Jekyll and Hyde"

which often represses the working class voice (Rankin 193; see also Horton 222).

Trevor Royle and Gavin Wallace concur that throughout the twentieth century,

Edinburgh and Scottish authors more generally have increasingly begun to re-examine

the repressed aspect of the citizenry. Wallace argues that Scottish literature in the

twentieth century has gone through a phase he characterizes as a "new renaissance" (1)

whereby novelists have begun to use grass-roots forms and indicators of Scottish

nationalism, such as Scots dialect in prose. The "leader[s] of the so-called Scottish

renaissance," writers Hugh MacDiarmid and Edwin Muir in the 1930s, were the first

prominent literary figures to utilize Scots vernacular since its absence during the

Victorian and high-modernist period (see "Scottish Literature"). Scottish authors of the

later twentieth century, however, while still classified by Wallace as part of the "new

renaissance," have made drastic departures from renaissance traditions used by authors

such as MacDiarmid and Muir. Wallace argues that novelists of the late-twentieth

century "have, if anything, written in increasing opposition to Renaissance preoccupation

with myth, archaism and symbolic ancestral historicism," and instead, "those equally

potent Renaissance themes of language, nation and community have continually

resurfaced – albeit with a new and ironic urban emphasis" (2).

I now wish to discuss how the writing of Welsh fits into this tradition of Scottish

urban literature. I agree with Wallace that literature in general seems to be increasingly

set within the city. However, I would be reluctant to accept his argument that Scottish

authors such as Welsh are continuing the "new renaissance" initiated in the 1930s. In

novels such as *Glue*, Welsh has certainly caused "Renaissance themes of language, nation

and community" to resurface, but I would hardly argue that Welsh romanticizes or

glorifies them in any way characteristic of Renaissance traditions. If anything, I would

argue that Welsh is antithetical to the Renaissance tradition, and Wallace would be better

to extrapolate on his own notion that Scottish writing is now "alert in ways it has never

been before to issues of past political and historical experience; to the limitations in its

myths of dualism; to alternative representations of linguistic fissure; to ossified

stereotypes of community, class and gender" (5). Welsh's own awareness of history and

the implications of the "new renaissance" for later twentieth-century literature can be

understood from his standpoint on the renaissance impulse to glorify symbols of the past.

In one commentary on his own novel *Trainspotting*, Welsh has said

> Now most British city centres that escaped the ugliness of 1960s
> redevelopment look nice, but such places are not for the schemies. They are
> for yuppie incomers, shoppers and tourists. The 'city' (the city centre) is
> this alliance of new and old bourgeois, new and old puritans, and so
> therefore must its 'art' be. It has to be 'life-affirming', or, more accurately,
> reaffirm those liberal middle-class values that everything and everyone is
> jolly, decent and wonderful. Fuck that for a laugh; if we're truly a diverse
> multicultural society, and we are, let's have some diverse, multi-cultural art
> and art criticism (Welsh *City Tripper* 15).

In this instance, Welsh identifies a definite renaissance-type impulse on the part of

government and urban developers to harmonize the new with the old. More importantly,

Welsh demonstrates an awareness of the capacity for government development to

influence social narratives "that everything and everyone is jolly, decent and wonderful."

While Wallace may be correct to identify twentieth-century Scottish literature as having

gone through a phase of renaissance, Welsh is clearly hostile to the renaissance impulse

to create optimistic narratives about life within the city. Instead of depicting a harmony

within the city that early "new renaissance" writers represented through their use of Scots

vernacular, Welsh clearly emphasizes that, if anything, the class antagonism is as acute as

ever.

Welsh has a unique importance in his rejection of renaissance traditions; he is one

of only a few prominent contemporary Edinburgh authors to delve into the psyche of the

working class. Patricia Horton argues that while Scottish writing has moved on from

stereotyped depictions of the working class, the Scottish working-class experience is still

mostly Glasgow-centred with authors such as Alasdair Gray, Tom Leonard, Liz

Lochhead and James Kelman: "the working-class experience is seen as synonymous with

Glasgow" (221). In her discussion of *Trainspotting*, Horton argues that Welsh's writing

is clearly a response to Glasgow's hegemony over representations of the working class

experience (221). This may be true, but I would caution against misconstruing Horton's

argument as implying that Welsh writes in spite of Glasgow's hegemony. On the

contrary, I would extend Horton's argument by saying that Welsh takes various narrative

forms from Glasgow authors and adapts them to the experience of the Edinburgh

working-class. Instead of perpetuating any spiteful enmity between cities, therefore,

Welsh actively assists in creating a more complete picture of the working-classes in

Scottish literature generally. Welsh's picture of Edinburgh and its working-class

inhabitants helps re-establish the capital within the canon of urban Scottish literature.

Two Glasgow authors that have influenced the narrative of *Glue* are Alan Spence

and James Kelman. While Spence has influenced the narrative structure of *Glue*, Kelman

has influenced the novel's use of realism. Edwin Morgan describes Spence's novel, *The*

*Magic Flute* (1990), saying

> Alan Spence [...] in the highly evocative, four stranded narrative of *The*
> *Magic Flute* (1990), tracing the early lives of four boys growing up in
> Glasgow in the 1960s and 1970s, works towards something of the harmony
> suggested by the title, though only by the device of having the 'bad' boy of
> the four go to Belfast to be killed, while the 'best' boy, into music, peace

and psychedelia, flies back to Scotland from America at the end with the
rising sun streaming hope and a new life through the plane window. (91)

*Glue* is likewise narrated primarily from the first-person perspectives of four boys.

Antithetical to the fantasy suggested by "The Magic Flute," however, Welsh works

toward a more realist vision of "harmony" with the title "Glue," suggesting that harmony

is rarely ideal or magical. By using the title of an industrial or household substance,

Welsh suggests that "harmony" in post-modern life is often makeshift or piecemeal. An

important part of Welsh's realism in *Glue* derives from his insistence on using working-

class and grass-roots images as symbolic and indicative sub-titles to chapters of the

novel. When *Glue* concludes, Welsh departs from this tendency, and in a seemingly

direct commentary on the Scottish renaissance impulse, titles the last chapter "Reprise

2002: The Golden Era." The chapter seems to be a commentary on the Scottish

renaissance impulse because it does not conclude with a renaissance sense of "streaming

hope and a new life." Instead, the novel simply concludes with a contented yet realistic

acceptance of the brutal present and with no glorification of the past or future. As Carl

responds to Terry's request for a favour, "a wee something. There was always a wee

something. And thank fuck as well" (556). For Welsh, the reprise and the "golden era"

is the ability of a person to live in the present without concern for the past. In this

manner, Welsh departs even further from the renaissance tradition of contemporary

Scottish writers by not subjecting his characters to nostalgic structures of time by

invoking idealized visions of the past.

Nevertheless, Welsh structures his characters as typical of urban Scottish literature.

He adheres to the character structure of Spence's novel with Andrew Galloway as the

"bad boy" who commits suicide and Carl Ewart as the "best boy" who is into music and

psychedelia. Wallace also argues that there are certain character-types typical of the new

urban renaissance:

> the novelists of the 1950s and 1960s challenged the Renaissance epic mythic
> impulse by means of a deliberate preoccupation with cynical and
> deterministic urban realism – a world from which the would-be artist fled in
> recoil from the absence of fulfilment and failures of idealism. The
> battlegrounds were left to that stubborn survivor, the 'hard man' – brutalised
> in the struggle against social injustice and industrial decline; sustained by
> loyalties to community, class and proletarian culture. (3)

One can clearly observe the hard man/artist conflict at one particular point in *Glue*.

When Terry, the self-proclaimed "fourth-hardest" man from school (94), takes American

singer Kathryn Joyner out for a night in Edinburgh, he confronts Rab Birrell, a

"schemie"-turned-intellectual. The scene seems to exude evidence that Welsh

intentionally constructed it to represent the "hard-man"-intellectual conflict:

> Rab was angry. Obviously at Terry, but also at himself. He'd picked up a
> load of jargon from the Media and Communication Studies Course he had
> enrolled on at the local FE college and he was tending to use it more and
> more in everyday conversation. He knew that it irritated and alienated his
> mates. It was just showboating, as he could express the same concepts
> adequately enough in words that were common currency. (424)

The four characters that Welsh creates are representative of different aspects of the

lower class. Carl represents a rebellious, artistic, and socialist side of the working class

that wishes to ascend from identification as a schemie. Billy is a determined, no-

nonsense professional and businessman who likewise wishes to ascend. Also typical of

urban literature more generally, Billy ascends as a boxer, turning his street-fighting

ability into a professional pursuit. Terry represents the sensual, debauched, indulgent,

and drunken aspect of Edinburgh. Gally represents what Andrew Monnickendam would

characterize in Welsh's and Kelman's writing as the underside of the underside: "Irvine

Welsh is someone different. The concept of the culture of the working class has been

replaced by culture of the underclass" (111). For Welsh, this is the world where all the

working-class psychological burdens of alcohol, drugs, and excessiveness are deposited.

For Andrew, it is a reality filled with existential angst, heroin, disease, and absolute self-

hate.[8] Welsh's four characters may be remarkably different but it is their difference that

ironically often makes them seem to be a single character with four sides to his

personality. This becomes especially apparent in the latter half of the novel following

Gally's death. Terry and Carl both feel individually responsible as though they have

polluted an aspect of their personality represented by Gally. Terry believes Gally drove

himself to death because of Terry's promiscuity: "'Gally jumped cause he kent aboot me

n [his wife]'" (542). Carl, who is also excessively into drugs, was the only one who

knew Gally was HIV positive. For Carl, Gally represents an extreme of his own drug

addiction: "'Eh topped ehsel cause he hud the virus. It wis his choice. It wouldnae huv

been mine, but it wis his'" (547). The impact of his death holds a powerful influence

over the responses from Billy, Terry, and Carl. As Carl says, Gally's death tears away an

important personality from the group, causing the other three to diverge: "after that we

kept away from each other. It was as if we learnt about loss too young and wanted to

take ourselves away from each other before the others did it first. Even though we

wirnae really that far fae each other; me, Billy, Terry and I suppose Gally became the

four corners ay the globe after that night" (492). It is through this "four-stranded

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[8]    There is one particular passage in *Glue* not immediately related to Andrew but which I believe nicely captures Welsh's sense of the underside of the Scottish working class. During the night out with Kathryn Joyner, Lisa describes the pub they visit: "The Fly's Ointment seemed to her like a clearing house for lost souls. Lisa fancied that she could see the dramas of future despair in pre-production: the rapist chatting to his victim; the crook drinking easily with the guy who'd eventually grass him up; the boisterous bosom buddies in the corner, waiting for the alcohol to eventually overload and overheat the brain, when, in rage or paranoia, one would be smashing fist or glass into the other's face, long before closing time. The ugliest and the scariest thing of all, she thought, looking round at her own company, was that you couldn't sit back smugly and exclude yourself from the equation" (481).

narrative" that Welsh depicts the schizophrenic "Scottish divided self" that has been at

the centre of Edinburgh literature in the twentieth century (Horton 220; see also Royle

180-1).

I now wish to begin a discussion of the psychological structure of *Glue*. Welsh's

"four stranded narrative" is indeed an artistic and highly creative method of depicting

"the Scottish divided self." As such, it makes a marked contrast to the realism of the

novel which, in comparison to Kelman's works, Cairns Craig would characterize as "a

fundamental commitment to realism in content and style" (100). In a general discussion

of Kelman's writing, Craig argues that

> Working-class fiction is dominated [...] by the implication of a lost
> potential, whether individual or social, and has to take its focus from
> characters whose experience is viewed as being [...] central to the whole of
> working-class life in that loss. It is for this reason that the protagonists of
> working-class fiction are often members of the skilled and politically aware
> 'labour aristocracy', or have a special talent that focuses some aspect of
> working-class interest outside of the life of the factory, some aspect which
> enforces the sense of community and solidarity which capitalism attempts to
> destroy.
>     Kelman's novelty in this context is that it is not the skilled, the
> potentially politically active working class, who are the location of his
> fiction; it is those who are marginalised from traditional working-class
> values, who do not believe in the possibility of communal political action,
> who do not believe in the viability of a personal escape from their
> conditions. (100-1)

I would argue that Craig's analysis of Kelman could easily serve as an accurate

description of Welsh's writing. *Trainspotting* is a particularly apt novel to fit this

analysis, as the book depicts various heroin addicts who "choose no tae choose life" and

anticipate rebuttals from upper-class social authority and labour aristocracy by adding "if

the cunts cannae handle that, it's thair fuckin problem" (188). The artistry and social

content of *Glue* become particularly clear when considered in this context. In *Glue*,

Welsh portrays two schemies who wish to ascend and two schemies who have no ambition for ascending whatsoever. In this manner, Welsh does more than simply represent the upper-class/working-class antagonism in Scottish urban literature. In Scottish urban literature, as I hope I have been able to demonstrate, the upper-class/working-class antagonism has existed as a binary discourse. That is, the working-classes have struggled against the upper-classes and vice-versa. *Glue*'s "four stranded narrative," on the other hand, moves the novel beyond the binary discourse and immerses it into the divided nature of the working-class itself. The result is no longer simply the "Scottish divided self" that Horton claims, but rather, the Scottish divided working class of post-modern times. By depicting the division within the working-class, Welsh gives the working classes a much more distinctive voice with their own set of internal problems beyond those of the simple antagonism against the upper-classes.

One important aspect in the representation of the working-class voice has always been the use of Scots dialect. Martin Bruggemeier and Horst Drescher point out several important points about the use of Scots in literature and in Welsh's writing:

> Scots was originally the general language of the Scottish Lowlands but was replaced by English in the course of the centuries.[9] Today, many people consider Scots not to be a language of its own but a form of spoken English, or even bad English. Scots is therefore used primarily in spoken language. This attitude towards the language is also reflected by the fact that in literature it is hardly ever used for third-person narrators. [...] Scots is used exclusively for first-person narrators and in direct speech, which is typical of contemporary literature; moreover, the characters who speak Scots are usually members of the lower social classes. [...] In *Trainspotting*, this kind of language usage marks the members of the social underclass and the subculture connected with it. (141-3)

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[9]    To this point I wish to add an observation by Roderick Watson. Watson notes that by the end of the nineteenth century, the Scots dialect "was especially associated with peasants in an almost exclusively rustic milieu, whereas by the end of the 20th century we might argue that [...it] has undoubtedly moved into the city" (27).

The use of Scots dialect and its significance to psychoanalysis and literary realism has been extensively debated. Roderick Watson, for example, argues that the use of Scots in literature is traditionally equated to both a social and psychological lower-class. He claims that the psychological structure of Welsh's narratives, represented through the Scots dialect, portrays "the marginalised and dismally tribal consciousness of Irvine Welsh's world of drug users and football hooligans" (35). The psychological structure represented by the dialect is small-mindedness or feebleness contrasted against the clearer logic of Standard English. In an essay titled "Remarkably Common Eloquence: The Aesthetics of Urban Dialect" (1995), Ronald Macaulay on the other hand has argued that Scots is often much more eloquent and poetic than Standard English. He says "I have become increasingly impressed by the rhetorical skills of ordinary Scots, many of whom left school at the earliest possible moment and most of whom had no formal education since then" (67). Terry, a high school drop-out, illustrates the English-Scot conflict by brandishing his own rhetorically devious approach. During his interview with the government employment officer, he is very conscious of his strategy and use of language: "draw them in by playin the daft laddie, sittin thair n noddin away like the fuckin village idiot, then they git jist that wee bit too wide n cocky. That's when ye lit the cunts huv it wi baith fuckin barrels" (233). After he receives an apology from the employment office, he makes a direct acknowledgment that the use of a particular language does not determine one's capacity for logic and reasoning: "A half-herted apology which makes nae sense. Alleged comments ma fuckin hole. Even wi ma Edinburgh School Leavers Certificate ah ken shite English when ah see it" (235).

Other scholars such as Matthew Hart have pointed out more fundamental literary and narrative implications about the use of Scots dialect in Welsh's writing. Hart argues that throughout Welsh's writing, "Scots is identified with spoken language, if not dialogue, then interior monologue, the speech of the thinking mind" (9). Hart also makes an important observation when he says that "it would be a mistake, however, to confuse the innately realist signifying-effect of Scots dialogue with a similar commitment to naturalist realism – telling it like it is, in the words of the street" (10). Hart is indeed correct to point out that Welsh's realism is very different from the naturalist realism characteristic of *Dubliners*, for example. A key principle of Joyce's realism in *Dubliners* is his use of an omniscient narrator who dictates, or as Edwin Morgan would say "colonises," the reality of the Dubliner (see Morgan 94). Welsh's realism, by comparison, is much more subjective to the characters within the narrative. As Monnickendam says, Welsh "distrusts the omniscient (or panoptic) narrator and tries to use the rhythm and cadences of the people who inhabit his fiction" (111). In *Glue*, Welsh does use an omniscient Standard English narrator at certain points though. He uses the omniscient narrator during the opening chapters while describing the familial situations of the four boys. While each boy has an introductory chapter in third-person, Andrew is the only character who has an additional introductory chapter told in first-person Scots. Welsh's reason for this is rather transparent: Andrew's first-person introductory chapter serves to portray him as a character without a stable family history. At least in the introductory chapters, the use of an omniscient narrator emphasizes that key points in an individual's psychological development are not entirely manifest but partially subconscious and best explained through an omniscient narrator. As Alan Freeman

argues "Welsh's fictional world is underpinned by the message at the heart of Western societies over the ages, the myth of individualism" (257). Indeed, the omniscient/first-person narrative alternation in *Glue* certainly indicates the novel's preoccupation with discovering an acceptable and stable proportion between these two narrative forms.

As one can observe in a comparison among *Dubliners, Buddha,* and *Glue,* the significance of this alternation for the image of the city is the conflict it represents between location and ideological thought, or in other words, between "the here and now" and socially constructed "truths" about reality. In *Dubliners,* there is no real conflict between ideology and location. In *Dubliners,* ideological narratives of class, family, and religion dictate the naturalist reality and perception of the city; the image of the city, in a sense, encapsulates the overwhelming psychological burdens of modernity. The city in *Dubliners* seems to take on a life of its own, as an omniscient entity, its subjectivity stolen from the child Dubliner. In *Buddha,* one can observe Karim's release from ideological colonization and his consequent matured sense of location and perception of the city. A comparison between *Dubliners* and *Buddha* would, therefore, seemingly support an argument that post-modern literature has been able to decode the colonizing effect of culturally constructed meta-narratives and proportion them in a psychological harmony with location. In a comparison between *Trainspotting* and another Edinburgh novel, Sir Walter Scott's *Redgauntlet* (1824), Monnickendam argues that, indeed, post-modern literature "seems to back up the increasingly important analysis of contemporary culture which stresses that geography, the sense of place, has replaced history as the metanarrative" (109). However, I would not go as far to argue that geography has definitely replaced history as the meta-narrative. As I wish to demonstrate in the

following analysis of *Glue*, the image of the city is in a constant flux between location

(i.e.: "the here and now") and historical and ideological influences.

Welsh has said in one interview that there are two character-types that generally

represent the working class: "there are two kinds of working-class philosophies, a radical

or revolutionary one that sees the middle and upper classes as enemies and another more

individualistic desire to escape from the working class and assimilate into the upper

classes. That antagonism is always going on in a working class head. It's wanting to be

in a different situation" (quoted in Berman 57). In *Glue*, evidence of this division can

certainly be seen within the four main characters, but it is much more complex than

Welsh conveys in the statement above. Terry is definitely a character type who views the

upper class as an enemy. As a self-defined "radical or revolutionary," he groups anything

associated with Standard English-speaking social authority under one entity to be fought

against. During his wait at the employment office, he says, "so ah'm waitin oan the red

plastic seats wi the rest ay the poor fuckers, tryin tae git comfortable. They aw look the

same; schools, polis stations, nicks, factories, DHSS and dole offices. Anywhere they

process the punters" (231). Most revealing about this perception of Edinburgh is his

loathing for the people who submit themselves to signified authority. Ironically, Terry

cannot see himself as one of "the punters." His role as the antithesis of the *flâneur* is

evident in his blindness to understand the plight of the unemployed, even when he is

unemployed himself.

Billy, Carl, and Andrew, on the other hand, do not fit so neatly into one of these two

character types. Billy, for example, does demonstrate a clear desire to escape from the

working class into the upper class. He remarks about himself and Carl that "goin roond

the shoaps wi him, the clubs, n ye kin see it's no two schemies anymair, it's N-SIGN the

DJ and Business Birrell, the boxer" (192). He debases working class people for their

tendency to fall victim to indulgence: "of course you can take the easy way oot and fill

yourself wi smack or bevvy like some ay them roond here. They gave up years ago, the

sad losers. Ye lose pride in yerself n you've goat nowt" (192). Further on, Billy even

acknowledges that he bases his friendships on the desire to escape working-class life. As

he tells Carl, "'Terry n Gally, thaire great mates, bit you're ma best mate. Mind that.

Sometimes ah'm harder oan you thin the rest, but that's cause you've goat it. You've

goat what it takes'" (321). However, Billy still feels guilt at denying his working-class

roots. Following his compliment to Carl, Carl can only remark "ah've never seen Birrell

like this in years. The pish has gone straight tae ehs heid and there's a mob ay demons

behind his eyes" (321). For Billy, the desire to escape the working class entails a

necessary repudiation of his own self-image as a working-class "schemie." When the

"demons" come back to haunt Billy, they return in the form of a realization of himself as

a schemie. Billy's place within the Stenhouse scheme has always been determined by his

toughness in comparison to Dozo Doyle and Marty Gentleman. However, Billy's

business partner, Power, lets him know his place exactly. When Billy tells Power, "'ah

come fae a scheme'" (204), Power responds by saying "'so do I, Billy, so do I. And a

*real* one as well, no some tarty wee Jambo homestead like Stenhoose'" (205). Billy's

world immediately tightens around him. He realizes that toughness exists beyond simply

Stenhouse and "for the first time in a long time, ah really feel scared" (205). It is a

dramatic realization that Stenhouse is not at the bottom of a working-class hierarchy and

that Billy has had a comparatively easy life in Stenhouse.

Andrew certainly fits into the character-type that views the upper class as an enemy, but since he has such low self-esteem, any enmity he directs against the upper class has very little impact, and it could hardly be argued that he is radical in any way. In the 1980 section of narration, Billy describes a brutal crime scene where he, Carl, Dozo, and Marty Gentleman rob a warehouse of copper wire. Further on, when the group is in downtown Edinburgh to watch a football match, Andrew watches while Dozo gives "something tae Billy, n it looks like some notes. Eh says something aboot coppers n nicked, so mibbe it's fir fines if wi git done! That'll be it, planning ahead. Real gangsters, us n the Doyles n that!" (95-6). As in this instance, Andrew can only feel like an enemy to society when he associates with other people. Thus, the impression and image of the city Andrew mentally creates is one where a mob of football hooligans terrorizes an otherwise peaceful downtown Edinburgh afternoon. A mob situation is ideal for Andrew who needs to be surrounded by large numbers of friends to feel accepted. When Andrew associates himself with the mob mentality, everybody in Edinburgh is the enemy if they are not with him and the group: "we git a wee bit carried away at the bus station. Its like any cunt oor age is gittin it now. Joe Begbie blooters a guy whae wisnae a Hun, or even gaun tae the fitba, jist a punk guy wi a mohawk" (97). When he leaves the group at the end of the night he mentally quantifies the break from the mob through an image of the city. Walking home Andrew sees "the toon change; the shoaps become the posh toon hooses, then it's the tenements, then it's like nowt for ages, then the dual carriageway n the lights ay the scheme" (118). The image is of Stenhouse completely isolated from the rest of the city. It reminds Andrew that no matter how much he may act as an enemy to society, he is always an insignificant schemie with no real impact on society.

Of the four friends, Carl's character plays the role of social-class consciousness in the group. Billy never questions the repression of his working class roots; Terry never questions his enmity against society; and Andrew never questions that he is anything but a lowly schemie. Carl, on the other hand, mentally engages with the issue of whether to escape the working class or hate the upper class. This is best demonstrated late in the novel by Carl's own internal struggle. While trying to regain sobriety, Carl faces his own psychological "demons" that tell him "WE KNOW YOU FOR THE USELESS CRAPIN, COWARDLY PIECE OF SHITE YOU ARE / YE DIDNAE WANT TAE WORK, YIR COMMIE FAITHER DIDNAE WANT TAE WORK" (458). As Welsh portrays here, the internal working-class conflict that Carl deals with is a fundamental issue relating to humanity very generally. Similar to any other social group, the working class must struggle with an antagonizing desire for leisure and the need to work for a living.

Because Carl engages with the issue, his perception of the city is much broader than that of Terry, Billy, or Andrew. In a working-class character such as Terry, it is easy to read social disobedience as a method of re-claiming authority over a city he has worked so hard for as a juice-lorry attendant. Carl, however, who does not fit into either reductive category of working-class character but questions both instead, does not subscribe to the idea that Edinburgh belongs to him by right such as Terry does. Instead, as the intellectual and considerate conscience of the group, he views Edinburgh within a broader perspective of the city as the site of human culture and social organization. His sense of labour is very non-traditional. Where Carl's father had to struggle to "make it [his] own world [...] from nine till five thirty" (13), Carl seeks to adapt his own world into work: he loves music, so he makes music his occupation. As this perception of

labour does not fit into the traditional division of either hating or assimilating into the upper class, his perception of Edinburgh is not restricted in the way Terry's is. Terry maintains a very limited view of the world and has very little realistic ambition beyond crime within Edinburgh. Carl's sense of music, however, allows him to feel in touch with the entire world: "In Geography ah forget aboot the Ganges delta, in order tae pen some lyrics for a new song. And Geography's the best subject ever. Aw they places tae go tae and see. One day ah'll visit them aw. But now I'm in a songwriting mood" (168). While in Munich he comments that "that's the thing aboot music, if yir really intae it, ye can go anywhere in the world and feel like you've goat long-lost mates within a couple ay hours" (276).

Baudelaire's notion of the *flâneur* is well-suited for a critical consideration of these four socio-economic characterizations. Moreover, a consideration of these characterizations against Baudelaire's notion of the *flâneur* reveals great insights about their calculative minds. As Baudelaire argues, the *flâneur* is not only a product of the city, but also a "*man of the world* [...]. His interest is the whole world; he wants to know, understand and appreciate everything that happens on the surface of the globe" (6-7). By this description, the four characters can be judged for their ability to look beyond Edinburgh as their domain or place of residence. Even though Terry considers the city of Edinburgh with enmity, it is still his home. Before Kathryn Joyner meets Terry, she simply considers Edinburgh just "another city" where "the view from the window had assumed the same dulled and flattened aspect of one of the pictures on the wall" (364). Terry, however, insists on showing her "'the real Edinbury'" (380). Terry's knowledge of the city and its internal socio-economic division is actually quite impressive. He

consistently tries to impress Kathryn by displaying his knowledge of Edinburgh and his

awareness of the social division: "'[The Sheraton is] doon the other end ay Princes

Street, Lothian Road likes. Ah'm no that keen oan that part ay toon, bit thir isnae as

much bother thair as ye used tae git'" (378). Even though his sense of popular culture

within the city may be rather outdated and comical, one is certainly impressed by his

deeply emotional and grass-roots connection to the underground culture of the city:

> ma main music wis disco [...] we hud it here better; Pipers, Bobby
> McGee's, The West End Club, Annabel's...the lot. Edinburgh wis the *real*
> home ay disco. Cunts in New York tend tae forget that. Here it wis much
> mair...undergroond...but at the same time mainstream, if ye ken what ah'm
> drivin at. [...] Ye'd huv hud tae huv been thaire tae git what ah'm talking
> aboot. (403)

Terry fits Baudelaire's description of the *flâneur's* opposite: "highly skilled animals,

pure artisans, village intellects, cottage brains. Their conversation, which is necessarily

limited to the narrowest of circles, becomes very quickly unbearable to the *man of the*

*world*, to the spiritual citizen of the universe" (197). By comparison, Carl is quite

obviously a *flâneur* for his capacity to extend his mental capacity beyond Edinburgh.

Carl views himself more as a citizen of the world instead of Edinburgh specifically.

While Andrew may have the emotional care and concern for humanity to potentially

extend his mental capacity beyond Edinburgh, he simply does not have the self-

confidence. While Billy may have his goals set on succeeding financially in Edinburgh

alone, he does imagine Edinburgh and his Business Bar in terms of worldliness and

wonderment worthy of the *flâneur*: "The Business Bar was crowded. Festival punters

and office workers merged easily in a smug but probably unfounded complicity,

imagining that they were in a place which was at the centre of the world for those three

weeks of the year. Billy Birrell was standing at the bar, holding court" (496).

Each character's sense of socio-economic worth, as influenced by the class division within Edinburgh, extends into their intimate lives and self-perception. An important part of Carl's engagement with social class in Edinburgh, for example, is his self-perception as a revolutionary. Carl is not a revolutionary in the way Welsh describes the working-class division, however. As one who questions the two categories of working-class character, Carl is inimical to both. Carl is more appropriately seen as a revolutionary against any type of reductive categories within social-class discourse. Not relegating himself to either category, Carl finds a suitable alternative in music because music in itself can have revolutionary qualities. Moreover, it can offer an intimate connection to humanity that Carl does not see in the traditional labour division: "all I'm aware of is the bass throbbing away, that pulse of life, the steady boom-boom-boom of the beat. I'm alive" (383); "sometimes I feel like I'm seeing through my ears instead of my eyes" (495). In a state of drug-induced hallucination, Carl mentally invokes a character named Breath who deals with the traditional issues of social class for him. As Carl tells himself, "I'm a threat. [Breath] says wordlessly: you're the deejay, play the music. Don't challenge me, don't think, relinquish all thought, I can do that for all of us" (386).

Carl's biggest problem, however, is that he falls into a trap of being a revolutionary for its own sake. He often treats friends and intimate relationships with contempt or disdain and often moves quickly between one group of friends and the next: "I was never much cop at picking friends" (386). During one opportunity for him to explore true sexual intimacy, he can only think about the act as though it makes him part of a select group of rebellious teenagers: "Fuckin brilliant though! Fifteen! Still under the age! [...] Imagine bein a virgin. The likesay me n Billy though, we ken the score" (176). Carl

sacrifices intimacy with his surroundings and with important people around him so that

he can feel "mair like a man" (177). When Carl walks Sabrina back to the bus stop, he

meets his mother and father who are just getting off the bus. The scene has the potential

for a mood of pleasantness, as Sabrina says, "'your mum looks really nice, ah like the

way she's dressed'" (177). Carl, however, responds tersely: "how the fuck can your Ma

look nice?" (177). In a reflection of Carl's transient use of people in his life, therefore,

Welsh ends the section with one brief yet powerfully cold image of Carl walking back to

his house alone: "then a wet drizzle starts up so ah'm hame and I'm waiting for my Ma

and Dad to come back wi the chips" (179).

Just as Carl acts as the class conscience of the group, Terry acts as the libido or

sensual and physical awareness of the group. Terry's enmity towards social authority and

the upper class comes partially because he views social-class divisions as unnatural. As

he says of social authority, it is an "academic fuckin debate cause tae me it's aw part ay

the same shite; cunts that want tae poke thir fuckin nose intae yir affairs" (231). His

enmity against the state and those who want to assimilate into the upper class is often

accompanied by sexual innuendo, vulgarity, and what he sees as a more natural and

instinctive response. As he imagines himself saying to one woman: "sorry, missus, ah

ken the juice you're needin pumped intae you n it disnae come in fuckin boatils" (37).

He is the most sexually active and gluttonous of the four friends, and by the end of the

novel, his physical state reflects this. He becomes an overweight "waster" (414) and

alcoholic that enjoys his own foulness and physicality. Lying in bed, "he arched his back

and pulled his buttocks apart to let out a fart at full force. Settling back down and

savouring the creeping, warm, sour odour, Terry propped himself up on his pillows"
(352).

Terry's self-perception as a sexual dynamo and antagonist to social authority
influences his mentally calculated perception of Edinburgh. Because Terry believes
Edinburgh social authority is an enemy out to get him, he vindicates himself by holding
sexual power over the city. For Terry, Edinburgh is often only bearable when it is
countered by sexual opportunity. Terry's job as a juice lorry attendant, for example,
brings him into contact with the entire city. The work is often tiresome, "oot in aw
weathers humpin fuckin crates oaf the back ay this lorry in the rain, stoapin at the clubs,
then door-tae-door back roond the schemes here" (36). The opportunity for sex,
however, makes it worth Terry's time: "cannae complain mind you; thir's loads ay birds
gaun past, and bein oot here n the fresh air, checkin them oot, it's the spice ay life. Too
right" (36). Moreover, he drops out of school just so he can take advantage of more
sexual opportunities within the city: "what dae ye want tae stey oan at school fir when
yuv already rode jist aboot every bird thair that'll go? Waste ay fuckin time" (36). Terry
also associates particular locations with sex. When Maggie Orr tells Terry that her
parents have gone to Blackpool for a week, Terry instantly associates Blackpool with his
sexual experiences there: "Blackpool. Fuckin barry doon thaire oan that Golden Mile,
aw the pubs n that. Plenty fuckin shaggin doon thaire" (38). When Terry breaks off
foreplay with Gail, he puts her underwear in his pocket and again recalls his experience at
Blackpool: "Souvenir. Like ah did wi that Philippa fae Huddersfield ah shagged in that
guesthouse. A souvenir ay Blackpool" (49). His experience of social class within

Edinburgh and his mental construction of the city are primarily based on the sexual

memory he can take with him.

While Terry's work ethic helps provide him with sexual opportunity, Billy's work

ethic and sense of professionalism often interferes with his sense of intimacy and his sex

life. For Carl, Terry, and Andrew, sex is often the object of competition between them

during their teenage years. Billy, on the other hand, consciously avoids sex when the

opportunity presents itself. His reason for avoiding sex is just as illogical as Carl's for

obtaining sex. While Carl wants to have sex because everyone else seems to be having

sex, Billy avoids it because he believes it will interfere with his athletic performance:

"Ah've goat the match the morn's morning. Dinnae want ma legs fucked" (59). As the

reader can sense, however, the deeper reason is a fear of intimacy. When Yvonne,

Terry's sister, knocks on Billy's door for an unexpected rendezvous, Billy admits that he

would rather spend his time alone: "it's barry sittin here in the hoose oan ma ain. Ah

love Friday dinnertimes, comin hame n huvin the place tae masel. Rab at the school

dinners, muh Ma n faither baith at work. It gies ye time tae think" (58). To rationalize

his fear of intimacy, Billy mentally constructs an image that the scheme is too small for

intimacy to exist within it. He says of Yvonne that "ye dinnae want [to be] tied doon.

No tae a lassie whae jist steys a couple ay streets away. Mibbe tae some bird fae Spain,

or California or Brazil. Even fuckin Leith or somewhere, but no fae roond here" (58). At

one point, Carl says of Billy, "Billy's a bit ay a dark hoarse whin it comes tae lassies.

[...] Whenever eh gits a new bird, eh nivir shows them oaf tae the likes ay us. [...] Eh

nivir stoaps tae introduce thum, n eh nivir, ivir talks aboot the birds eh's been wi" (309).

In the 1990 section of the novel, Terry's, Carl's, and Andrew's chapter each describe

their sexual relationships in considerable detail. In Billy's chapter, however, only half of a page is dedicated to a description of Billy's relationship with Anthea. In this brief description, the reader learns that Billy shares an apartment with Anthea but is very reluctant about visualizing himself within the apartment: "It's funny, but ah always think ay ma mother's hoose as home" (199). Instead, he visualizes Anthea and the apartment together as two transient things in his life: "that place that ah share wi Anthea, in that Lothian House complex wi the nice swimming pool, it's like her. It's nice, easy tae look at, but it doesnae feel permanent" (199).

The image of the city that is constructed in relation to Andrew's sense of intimacy is unique in *Glue*. It is indeed still influenced primarily by Andrew's social standing, but where the city becomes consistently objectified through Terry's, Carl's, and Billy's sense of intimacy, it becomes objectified in Andrew's mind only in sparse instances and only during moments of deep contemplation. The only point in the novel that Andrew mentally constructs an image of the city without deep contemplation is in the instance I have described above, in direct relation to Andrew's sense of socio-economic worth; it is during the football-hooligan scene and further on during his mental break from the mob. In Andrew's next and final chapter, Andrew only once recedes into a contemplative mode where images are allowed to form. After learning he is HIV positive, Andrew "sat doon again, thought aboot ma life. Tried tae think aboot ma faither. The fleeting visits ower the years" (212). The first image is of Andrew, Billy, Rab, and Sheena in the park with Andrew's father who is trying to light fireworks: "rockets were supposed to soar tae the skies, then explode, but we watched his yins burn oot and blow up, without leaving the cauld, hard groon. He knew nothing because he was always inside" (212). The image of

the children within the park is an allusion to Andrew's own sense of self and a foreshadowing of Andrew's suicide: Andrew will never succeed or make an impact.

The rest of the chapter proceeds by distancing Andrew from the image of the city which eventually only the reader can formulate. In contemplation he constructs an image of urban decay: "ah wis walkin along, lookin at the graffiti-covered waw, trying tae find oor auld efforts" (213). The writing on the wall conveys that Andrew's connection to the physical world is waning: "there they wir, slowly but surely fadin away: GALLY BIRO HFC RULE" (213). These names on the wall are highly significant. Biro is Billy's nickname and HFC stands for Hibernian Football Club, which is associated with Edinburgh's working class. The writing on the wall is an allusion indicating that Andrew's desire to maintain pride or a work ethic, like Billy, is fading. In the two final sub-sections of the chapter, the narration only proceeds through a description of Andrew's immediate actions and involvement with a group of heroin addicts. Only the reader can now formulate an image of Andrew and his relationship to the city: "we all got intae the car, which wis parked in Montgomery Street, wi Sharon drivin and Phil in the front passenger seat n the rest ay us in the back" (227). Where the reader is initially able to identify with Andrew and separate him from the image he constructs, now the image of the city entirely contains Andrew. Andrew himself alludes to this fact, "now I'm in this council flat, back in the scheme [...]. It's funny, but people say, aye, yuv ended up back here. But ah will, ah will *end up* here" (212).

Although the four characters vary in their ability to be intimate with friends, family, or lovers, the all share a common trait in their intimacy which restricts their ability to fully comprehend the city with awe and wonderment worthy of the *flâneur*. Masculinity

in the novel and in the minds of the four friends is hyper-inflated. In a discussion of

*Trainspotting*, Stefan Herbrechter says that Welsh's portrayal of masculinity is even

psychotic and self-destructive (109). In *Glue*, it would be appropriate to characterize

Welsh's portrayal of masculinity as an extension of the social code to which the four

friends subscribe. As schemies, the four friends must always exude an attitude of

toughness. Thus, the reader can see the limitations that their sense of intimacy and self

allows in the creation of urban images. Terry's womanizing binds his mental capacity to

Edinburgh. He is as dependent on Edinburgh as he is on women to take care of him.

Billy's extreme work ethic and fighting attitude keeps everything within Edinburgh aside

from his parents' home cold and impersonal. Andrew is a paradox by comparison to the

other three characters. Even though he has no self-confidence, he must still subscribe to

the schemie code of toughness. It is such a paradox that eventually he cannot even form

any perception of the city. Even Carl, who is so conscious of the class division in

Edinburgh, cannot look past the hyper-masculine attitude that social conditioning

induces. This is why Carl can only view himself as a citizen of the world and beyond the

borders of Edinburgh, because the masculine schemie code is too restrictive for his

inquisitive mind.

The spiritual connotations that Welsh includes in the narration make it most

apparent that the four friends resemble four personalities of a single individual or "the

Scottish divided self." While each of the four friends vary widely and are distinct

individuals in their sense of socio-economic and intimate self-worth, the sense of

spirituality exuded by each character is directly connected to that of the others. Because

of this, I will discuss the image of the city following my discussion of the sense of

spirituality held by all four characters. Carl's characterization as the social-class

conscience of the group becomes most apparent during his questioning of spirituality, as

each character's sense of spirituality is measured in relation to Carl. Like the Dubliners

and their use of alcohol, the four friends in *Glue* use drugs and alcohol to induce

heightened sensations of spirituality. Carl, however, is the only one who openly

acknowledges this fact:

> ignorant and enlightened. The ignorant will never stop the enlightened
> taking drugs. [...] That's why I remember the best piece of advice my auld
> man ever gave me: never trust a teetotaller. It's like saying: I'm an
> ignorant, small minded wanker. Awright if they tried to compensate for the
> lack ay drugs wi a brilliant imagination. But if they have one they keep it
> well-hidden. (457)

In the context of the novel's class emphasis, this is an acknowledgement that working-

class individuals take drugs and alcohol to feel part of something bigger than the scheme.

More than this, however, it is also an assertion by Welsh that the working class is privy to

grass-roots comprehension of reality in a way that the upper class is not. Carl is aware of

this: "thank fuck I'm a schemie. Much too fuckin cynical to be mesmerised by an idiot

who sounds like a fairy" (386). Carl conveys that it is better to be a working-class

schemie with a view into the upper class than an upper-class stoic who cannot fully grasp

grass-roots culture and reality.

Terry is physically aware of this privilege that the working class enjoys. He enjoys

his indulgences and is content with being a schemie for life. As the most physically

aware of the group, Terry is consciously distant from any acknowledgment of spirituality.

As Carl says of him, "he was a bevvy merchant, pure and simple [...]. The Munich

Oktoberfest was a pish-heid Lourdes, and Terry was determined tae take the healing

waters by the Steiner" (273). Not only is this description of Terry told by Carl, but it is

also told through the use of metaphors. Terry's moments of contemplation never go deeper than his sense of intimacy and usually center on the question of how to obtain sex. His sense of spirituality must be understood as a spirituality that is lived and acted upon instead of consciously acknowledged the way Carl does.

Billy does occasionally use drugs and alcohol to heighten his sense of spirituality, but his sense of spirituality is most effectively revealed in a more subtle manner. While Billy often represses his own self-image as a schemie, his sense of spirituality does mirror his work ethic and it does reveal a deeper dedication to the working class than he often leads the reader to believe. In one scene, Billy helps an elderly woman from the scheme with her groceries. The scene is brief and at first glance is seemingly insignificant, but it does reveal the extent of Billy's work ethic and desire to reward similarly strong values: "the perr auld girl's that grateful [...]. Perr auld doll, she never asks for much n she's jist ower the road fae ours. As if ah'm gaunny lit her struggle hame wi that weight" (209). Billy also demonstrates a parallel dedication to his friends. As Carl describes, Andrew's death touches an emotional depth in Billy that the novel never conveys through his sense of intimacy or socio-economic worth: "Billy's jist holdin Gally and sayin softly, wi a sad tenderness I've never heard before or since from anybody, 'What did ye dae that for, Andy? What fir? Surely it wisnae that bad. We could've sorted it oot, mate. The boys. What fir that but, Wee Man? What fir?'" (492). His dedication to the friendships created by life within the scheme is emotionally the opposite of his dedication and professionalism in the business world, as he is ruthless and cold in this area. It is the opposite, yet at the same time it is directly influenced by his

work ethic. His desire and motivation to escape the working class creates sympathy within him for working class individuals.

As the novel's depository for psychological burdens, Andrew is the most distant from Carl and the open acknowledgement of spirituality. The 1980 section of narration contains the only extensive religious imagery in the novel and it is concentrated primarily within Andrew's chapter. However, Andrew himself is not aware of the allusions and only the reader can view its symbolism. One of the most powerfully symbolic images of the novel, for example, comes when Blackie, the Catholic School truancy officer, questions Andrew about his tardiness. He knows Carl, Billy, and even Terry (who has stopped attending the school) by name, but he does not know Andrew. He knows that Billy is a boxer and athlete and he judges Billy by this standard: "'you of all people should be showing leadership, Birrell'" (83). The reader understands the insinuation that Andrew will be spiritually judged by his contribution to the working class of Edinburgh: "'what would have happened [...] if Jesus had been late for the last supper?'" (85). Unaware of his judgement by the chapter's latent omniscience, Andrew turns to intoxicants without a second thought as Carl does and also without the pleasure and indulgence that Terry finds in alcohol. By the time Andrew can consciously question his use of intoxicants and indulgence in the lifestyle, it is too late. When he does acknowledge his use of intoxicants it contains a disturbing undertone of despair, defeatism, and resignation: "the one ah hated most though, it wisnae [Gail], or even [Polmont]. It wis me: *me*, the stupid, weak mug. Oh, ah battered *that* cunt awright. Battered um wi everything; alcohol, pills, smack. [...] Ah sorted that cunt oot awright, ah pished all ower the bastard" (215-6). Indulgence no longer carries pleasure but becomes

an end in itself: "ah goat oot the boatel ay Grouse and poured masel a drink. It burned aw hoat n sour aw the wey doon. The second one was better, but the fear didnae leave ays. Ma skin wis clammy, ma lungs felt shallow" (211). Thus, Andrew's sense of spirituality is characterized by Welsh as absolute existential angst which directly leads to his suicide: "ye dinnae realise what an anchor hope is, until ye ken that it's really gone. You're gutted, disembowelled, and it's like ye jist arenae of this world anymair. It's as if thir's nae mass tae keep ye weighed doon tae this earth" (211).

In the sub-section titled "The End," there are two images of the city created from the sense of spirituality that all four friends collectively exude. Both images are of Terry, Billy, and Carl in a park near the scheme trying to fit "the pieces of the circumstances of Gally's death" together (542). The two images are opposed to each other, however. The first is created through Billy's subjective view and contains a latent omniscient undertone similar to the latent omniscience in Andrew's encounter with Blackie. Terry, Billy, and Carl all feel some guilt and blame for Andrew's death. Although the circumstances of Andrew's death are revealed through direct conversation, therefore, the narrative still contains a latent tone of omniscience through the insinuation that subjective and individual choices are not without consequence in the metaphysical or spiritual world. The first image, created by Billy, reflects this conflict:

> They saw some young kids, they must have been about ten, playing football. Billy thought back to when they used to do the same. He considered time, ripping the guts out of people, then setting them in stone and just slowly chipping away at them. The newly cut summer grass had that sweet-and-sour whiff. The machines seemed to tear up just as much dogshit, ripping open toalied-over crusts. The kids were fighting with grass, stuffing it down each other's necks, just like they used to do, not even thinking about being smeared with canine shite. (539)

It is ironic that Billy and not Carl is the one who mentally constructs this image. While Carl may act as the class conscience throughout the novel, Billy's contemplation here is an assertion by Welsh that ethics are often more crucial to achieving a sense of reality than intellect and consciousness alone. As Welsh portrays in *Glue*, a true comprehension of reality is often only achieved by human faculties or drives that often transcend the parameters of logic and reasoning. The second image reverses the omniscient and subjective tones within the first image. In this image, the omniscient narrator is the immediate quantifier and the four friends' subjectivity rests beneath the surface: "they walked across the park, three men, three middle-aged men. One looked a bit plump, the other muscular and athletic and the final one was skinny and dressed in clothes some might have considered a bit young for him. They never said that much to each other, but they gave the impression of being close" (549). In this final image, the urban *flâneur* is not any of the three characters but rather the omniscient narrator who presents the picture of them. The omniscient *flâneur*'s own subjectivity in this case is created directly by the conflation of the three human faculties that the friends represent: intellect, ethics, and sensuality. The spiritual impact of subjective and individual choices made by the four characters within *Glue* indeed influences the characterization of the omniscient narrator. Thus, the omniscient *flâneur* himself demonstrates a calculative mind born within the spiritual depth of his subjectivity.

I would like to briefly summarize the image of the city in *Glue* by comparing it to that which I have identified in *Dubliners* and *Buddha*. In my first chapter, I demonstrated that the image of the city presented in *Dubliners* is of a paralysed city created by stifling ideological conditions of modernity. The influence of 1900 Dublin is limited in that it

merely provides a literary "grid" for such conditions to exist. The calculative mind that produces the paralysed image is entirely determined by ideological factors. In my second chapter, I demonstrated that the image of the city presented in *Buddha* is of an "enlightened" city calculated through Karim Amir's subjectivity. 1970 London plays less of a role as a "grid" and is constantly evolving strictly in relation to Karim's own development. The role of the city in *Glue* can be summarized as lying somewhere between the role of the city in *Dubliners* and *Buddha*. One aspect of Edinburgh life, the social-class division, can certainly be seen as part of a "grid" upon which Welsh has placed his characters. The social-class division of Edinburgh acts as an *a priori* force which guides the narrative. Thus, the surface of the narrative explores the subjective and psychological nuances of four characters as they often unknowingly interact with this force. This role of Welsh's characters is highly significant in at least two respects. The working class of urban Scotland and Edinburgh in particular have had little influence in portrayals of the city until recently. As I have demonstrated, Welsh's characters have a direct influence over the omniscient narrator's voice. By implication, therefore, Welsh's characters also have an influential role in the portrayal of the city. Welsh's characters inscribe their voice upon Edinburgh where the working class has previously been silent. Furthermore, as Welsh's characters help shape the image of the city in *Glue*, his characters are indicative that the two traditional discourses of urban literature can be drawn closer together. The individual and the city may be separate literary figures, but are not exclusive from one another within the discourse of urban literature.

Conclusion:

Re-Considering Urban Literature

I would like to conclude this thesis by briefly reiterating my original argument, objective, and method of analysis and then compare these to the analysis I have undertaken. I proposed that "urban literature" is defined as much by character as by the presence of the city. I argued that "the urban" is an attitude adopted by characters. The question has caused two opposing uses of the term "urban literature" to emerge from scholars who study literature set in the city. On one hand urban literature exists as a simple adjectival term denoting literature set within the city. On the other hand urban literature denotes a literary experience of the city. My objective was to reconcile and clarify these often overlapping uses of the term by demonstrating that the presence and image of the city is structured by the urban attitude adopted by the character. In order to demonstrate how such images are formed, I invoked Georg Simmel's notion of the calculative mind to argue that images of the city are quantified and calculated by the individual who is influenced by the ideological conditions of life within the city. In order to demonstrate that "the urban" is an attitude adopted by the individual, however, I needed to demonstrate that Simmel's notion of calculation exists within the entire subjectivity of the literary character. Therefore, I proposed a three-tiered model of analysis for exploring the subjectivity of the character. I explored the subjectivity of the character in terms of socio-economic worth, intimacy, and spirituality. I argued that

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Simmel's notion of the calculative mind exists and is part of a character's sense of intimate and spiritual self-worth and not simply manifested through his/her interaction with the socio-economic life of the city as Simmel suggests. In order to contextualize the literary portrayal of the calculative mind, I contrasted it against the theory of Charles Baudelaire and his notion of the *flâneur*. Baudelaire's notion of the *flâneur* accounted for the deficiency in Simmel's argument that the urban individual calculates only negative perceptions of the city. Unlike Simmel's calculative urban individual who maintains only cold impersonal relationships, the *flâneur* views the city and its inhabitants with warmth, wonderment, and awe. Moreover, Baudelaire's notion of the *flâneur* implicitly asserts that the entire subjective being of the individual is urban, not just his/her socio-economic interaction with the city. My analysis of the subjectivity of the Dubliners, Karim, Terry, Carl, Billy, and Andrew, therefore, proceeded by discussing their calculative minds and contextualizing them in relation to Baudelaire's *flâneur*.

In order to understand how my analysis of the character-city relationship has reconciled, clarified, or furthered the two uses of urban literature, I wish to consider how urban literature fares as a genre. A genre can reasonably be understood as a literary area in which forms, nuances, and conventions are well defined and established. Considering urban literature as a genre, therefore, will allow me to contextualize how the current understanding of urban literature can be furthered by the discoveries made in this thesis. As I indicated in my introduction, scholars have extensively identified various conventions and nuances characteristic to the current traditions of urban literary discourse. For example, Diane Levy has shown how the city often becomes "an active component of the action" (70). David Seed has shown how certain themes such as crime

and social change predominate to reflect the multitude of activity found within the modern and post-modern city. Indeed, the current discourse on urban literature fulfills the requirement that certain conventions and technical nuances must exist in order to consider the discourse a genre. The obstacle, therefore, with which this thesis has engaged, is the drawing together of the two separate discourses into a single comprehensive discourse.

I believe that this thesis achieves the first of at least three steps in that process. It is a fundamental part of literary analysis to state that the setting of a text is influenced by character or vice-versa. However, there is great significance when the setting-character relationship can be shown as unique. This thesis has shown that characterizations within three texts consistently produce a quantified and calculated image of the city which reflects the psychological and sociological burdens of modernity and post-modernity. A second complementary study would demonstrate how the modern or post-modern city setting consistently generates the calculative mind within the character. Together with this thesis, such a study would demonstrate that both the character and the city lend equal weight to the identification of an urban literary genre. A third study would make a final connection between the city-individual relationship and the conventions and literary nuances that urban literary discourse has already identified.

While urban literature cannot currently be identified as a genre, some initial conclusions about urban literature's progression can certainly be derived from this thesis. One conclusion that can be made is in respect to urban literature's positioning within modernism and post-modernism. I have shown that the calculative mind has the potential to draw together a very large number of emotional and discursive structures for the

purpose of generating urban images. It should be conceded, therefore, that urban

literature – using the calculative mind as a defining principle – has an inherent quality of

realism due to its capacity for representing and processing the complexities of modern

and post-modern life. Indeed, Simmel argues that this is the very purpose of the

calculative mind. Using the calculative mind as a principle of judgement, it would be

adequate to define urban literature as a literary form and sub-category of realism, much

as Joyce's naturalist realism, Kureishi's comedic realism, and Welsh's anti-Renaissance

impulse are forms of realism. A second conclusion I would like to draw about urban

literature's nuances is in respect to the discourse as a form of realism. As I have

demonstrated in this thesis, the quantification and calculation of urban images in each

text requires the respective narrative to process stimuli though the character. The

character, in a sense, acts as a vehicle for compressing and condensing psychological

burdens into an easily comprehensible representation of those burdens. The image of the

city is a product of the character's often subconscious tendency to make narrative sense

of overwhelming psychological burdens. Thus, a particular nuance of urban literature as

a form of realism, it can be argued, is that the calculative mind contains an inherent

literary quality that produces images of the city. The three texts I have examined in this

thesis offer insight on the nature of this literary quality. As I have shown through James

Joyce's *Dubliners*, the character is often at an ironic and unconscious distance from the

calculative mind and the mental formation of urban images. As I have shown through

Hanif Kureishi's *The Buddha of Suburbia*, the character can be directly aware of the

calculative process. As I have shown through Irvine Welsh's *Glue*, the character can

often alternate between states of conscious and unconscious awareness during the process

of mental calculation. In all three cases, I have shown that "the urban" exists within the

character and not only within the city setting.

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