

T.C.
ATILIM UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE
ENGLISH CULTURE AND LITERATURE DOCTORAL PROGRAM



**CONSTRUCTING MODERNIST POETICS: TRANSNATIONAL
REPRESENTATIONS OF LONDON IN THE POETRY OF EZRA POUND
AND T.S. ELIOT**

Doctoral Dissertation

Seda Ően Alta

Ankara – 2018

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ACCEPTANCE AND APPROVAL

This is to certify that this thesis/dissertation/report titled “Constructing Modernist Poetics: Transnational Representations of London in the Poetry of Ezra Pound and T. S. Eliot” and prepared by Seda ŐEN ALTA meets with the committee’s unanimous approval as Doctoral dissertation in the field of English Culture and Literature following the successful defence of the thesis conducted on 21 June 2018.

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ÖZ

Şen Alta, Seda. Constructing Modernist Poetics: Transnational Representations of London in the Poetry of Ezra Pound and T. S. Eliot, Doktora Tezi, Ankara, 2018.

Tarih boyunca Londra, İngiliz edebiyatında birçok yazarın eserlerinde betimlediği ve çoğu kez bir sembol olarak kullandığı bir kent olmuştur. Küçük bir tüccar kasabası olarak kurulan Londra'nın, çokuluslu bir metropole dönüştüğünde edebiyat metinlerindeki işlevinin ve taşıdığı anlamların da değişime uğradığı görülmektedir. Kent, yazarların betimlemeleri sayesinde yeni anlamlar kazanırken, öte yandan da kentte meydana gelen çeşitli değişiklikler kentin görünüşünü ve dolayısıyla yazarların kenti eserlerinde kullanma biçimlerinin değişmesine neden olmaktadır. Diğer bir deyişle, edebiyat ile kent arasında yakın bir ilişki bulunduğu görülmektedir. Bu bağlamda yirminci yüzyılın ikinci yarısından itibaren çağdaş kuramcı ve eleştirmenler kent anlatısı içeren edebi eserleri mekân odaklı okuma yöntemleriyle incelemeyi önermişlerdir. Ayrıca bu eleştirmenler bir kentin bir metne dönüşebileceğini, edebi metinlerdeki kent anlatısının ise okuyucunun zihninde kenti yeniden kurabileceği ve yaratabileceği, anlatım yöntemlerine göre yazarın kent ile ilgili izlenimleri değiştirebileceği ve hatta şehrin fiziki yapısını bile etkileyebileceği öne sürmektedirler. Söz konusu eleştirmenler, yazarların kent ile ilişkilerini konu eden edebi anlatılara kent edebiyatı, bu çerçevede kent ile ilgili şiirlere kent şiiri adını vermişlerdir. Bu yöntem, şiirlerdeki kent imgelerinde kentteki tarihsel, toplumsal ve ideolojik değişimlerin tespit edilebilmesinin yanı sıra modernizm gibi edebiyat akımlarının ve bu akımların içinde yer alan yazarların ve eserlerinin de mekân odaklı okumalarının yapılabilmesini sağlamıştır. Ayrıca mekânsal eleştiriye savunan eleştirmenler kentin yerlisi olan yazarlar ile yabancı yazarların kenti farklı yöntemlerle betimlediklerini öne sürmüşlerdir. Bu tezde, yukarıda belirtilen mekân odaklı eleştiri yöntemleri ışığında, birçok eserlerinde Londra kentini konu ve izlek edinen Amerikalı asıllı modernist şairler Ezra Pound ve T. S. Eliot'ın Londra'yı temsil etme biçimleri incelenecek ve bu iki şairin Londra temsillerini, Londra'nın daha önceki edebi temsilleriyle nasıl bir araya getirerek modernist şiir tekniklerini oluşturmada kullandıkları tartışılacaktır. Kenti bir yabancımanın gözünden anlatarak, ulusaşırı bir bakışla eski ve yeniyi kaynaştıran Pound ile Eliot'ın şiirlerindeki Londra kenti imgeleri yoluyla modern dünyanın karmaşasını çeşitli yönleriyle ortaya koymaya çalıştıkları vurgulanacaktır.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Kent şiiri, ulusaşırı, modernizm, Ezra Pound, T.S. Eliot

ABSTRACT

Şen Alta, Seda. *Constructing Modernist Poetics: Transnational Representations of London in the Poetry of Ezra Pound and T. S. Eliot*, Ph.D Thesis, Ankara, 2018.

Literary representations of London have changed over the centuries as it changed from a merchant town into a cosmopolitan metropolis in the late-nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and have shaped the meanings the city attained. Accordingly, images of London portrayed by native and foreign writers, attached new meanings to the city. After the mid-twentieth century, the rise of the spatial turn in literary theory and criticism made a spatial reading of these representations possible for critics, leading to a re-evaluation of the poetics of certain literary movements such as modernism, a movement, one characteristic feature of which was a preoccupation with urban life. Thus, a spatial reading of modernist works in which a spatial awareness in terms of their subject, themes, and style was present, suggested a link between the representations of London in these works and modernist poetics. Viewed from this perspective, it can be claimed that modernist writers experimented with portrayals of the city in order to explore the meaning of twentieth century modernity to manipulate the meanings the city had attained over the years and construct a modernist poetics. The aim of this dissertation is to examine the works of two leading figures of the modernist movement, Ezra Pound and T. S. Eliot, in the light of spatial theory to argue that representations of London play a significant role in their efforts to construct a transnational modernist poetics. By employing foreigner personae, their portrayals of the city establish London as the representative of a globally influential cultural centre. Additionally, their city poems not only demonstrate the influence of the city in constructing their modernist poetics but also reveal that the image of a *real* modern city is a harmonious blend of its architecture, its people, and its memories created by past representations and first-hand experiences.

Keywords: City poetry, transnational, modernist poetry, Ezra Pound, T.S. Eliot

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INTRODUCTION

In the twentieth century, the relationship between works of literature and the city as a spatial element has become the focus of recent critical approaches. The foregrounding of such spatial elements have led to “the spatial turn” as defined by various critics including Doreen Massey, Robert Tally Jr., and Richard Lehan, and has generated discussions on the role of space in literature. The spatial turn has enabled a re-evaluation of movements such as modernism and writers that include Ezra Pound and T.S. Eliot, who have transgressed borders of nationhood due to their extensive use of sources from world literature, which established them as transnational writers. Pound’s and Eliot’s poetry can be read as exemplary of modernist works that are influenced from the city; their works illustrate the ways that the image of the city and their viewpoint as foreigners in describing it have inspired them to reshape the conventions of literature by using the city as their model. Pound and Eliot are such poets who contributed to modernist poetics through their use of the representations of London in poetry. Therefore, the aim of the present study will be to explore Pound’s and Eliot’s poetry and essays from a spatial perspective in order to assess the extent and significance of their involvement in the foundations of modernist poetics. Their poems that contain urban images may be regarded as the poet’s response to modernity, the final product of the complex relationship between the poet and the city. In order to demonstrate that Pound’s and Eliot’s representations of London may be read the poetics of modernist poetry *in praxis*, their poems will be studied with particular attention to their portrayals of the city and their use of personae. These poems will be compared to earlier poems about the English capital in order to draw attention to the ways in which they established their modernist poetics on these earlier images of the city. By experimenting with the conventions of literature and the representations of the English metropolis, both poets made a substantial impact on the ways literature was written and perceived. In other words, by contributing to the literature of the city, they also became a part of, changed, and controlled the literary circle and the literary canon respectively. The aim of the present study is to explore the ways in which their representations of London and their American perspective intertwined, which opened up a dialogue with the British literary tradition and shaped the poetics for a transnational modernism in English. It

may be claimed that this recipe was a part of Pound's and Eliot's search for new modes of writing that would respond to and represent the nature of modernity as perceived by the two poets and their contemporaries in the early twentieth century. In order to explore this, the representations of London in the poetry of Pound and Eliot will be traced as a means of illustrating the ways in which this city has influenced their construction of modernist poetics. To establish this argument, a theoretical framework and historical background to the spatial approaches to literature, the historical development of the city with its representations in literature, and possible definitions for city literature will be provided in the following.

In the Introduction, the evolution of the city, its literature, definitions of city poetry, and the role of the persona will be discussed to explore the various representations of a city in poetry. Emerging out of topographical poetry, city poetry or urban poetry takes the relationship between man and the land he treads as its subject, and any alteration in the urban environment finds its place in these poems about the city (Johnston 5-7). Therefore, in the Introduction possible definitions of city poetry and the various types of *personae* used in city poetry will be investigated. Moreover, the relationship between modernism and the city will be discussed in order to lay the foundation for the ways in which Pound and Eliot have contributed to English modernism with their representations of London. In order to explore the function of the urban elements and representations of the city, Pound's and Eliot's poems in which a city is described will be focused on.

In the first chapter, to investigate the changes in the representations of London and its role in the development of modernism in England, a historical survey of the representations of London by English and American writers will be studied as a means of establishing a foundation for modernist poets Pound and Eliot who generated a dialogue between these earlier texts in their works. This survey of the representations of London and its history in which some of the major themes and images foregrounded by the earlier writers and poets are illustrated will be used to establish a comparison with the second and third chapters on Pound's and Eliot's poetry respectively. Pound and Eliot as American-born poets described London in their poems in the early twentieth century and contributed to an English literary tradition of writing about the metropolis and altered this tradition by introducing a

foreigner's perspective as a response to these representations. As the American poet Jim Wayne Miller illustrates, in the early nineteenth century the American identity was largely shaped by the works of writers, poets, and story-tellers (Miller 12). Miller's point may be adopted to the discussion of this dissertation to argue that it was Pound's and Eliot's American background that enabled them to follow a similar plan to re-shape the English literary conventions and aesthetics by foregrounding in their works the finest specimens of English literature which represented the English character. One way of doing this was by using the image of London as a microcosm for the country, its culture, and its literature and reshaping it meant, on a larger scale, a reshaping of world literature and culture. Thus, it may be argued that Pound and Eliot played an important role in modelling English literature after the image of the city, a cosmopolitan, comparative environment of literary discussion that enabled every voice to be heard, by planting the early seeds of a transnational, multi-voiced perspective into the representations of the city.

In the second chapter Pound's contribution to the literary experimentations in London will be explored by discussing his essays and poetry that shed light on his views on English and American literature, the conventions of writing literature, and his studies on language which he regarded to be the source of all the problems any culture suffered from. To explore this, his published verse collected in *Collected Early Poems of Ezra Pound* (1976), *Personae* (1990), and *The Cantos of Ezra Pound* (1999) as well as his essays will be studied in terms of his use of personae and depictions of the city to explore the possible connections between them and his poetics of modernism. As it will be discussed in the chapter on Pound, he believed that by innovating the ways in which the literary canon was established, the literary conventions, and language, a decaying culture could be revitalised. The early twentieth century London, for Pound, was the "vortex" of literary experimentation for the English speaking world and metaphorically representative of the English culture; yet, his essays also reveal his disillusionment with the culture in England in the early twentieth century (Pound, "How to Read" 17; Eliot, "Social Function" 25). Therefore, in the second chapter, in order to illustrate how Pound challenged what he regarded as a blind acceptance of traditional forms of composing poetry in English, his poetry and essays that address these issues will be discussed in terms of their

emphasis on the necessity for a transnational literature in the English speaking world. His poetry in which he describes his life in London will be of particular importance, along with his essays in which he puts particular emphasis on the need for a new approach to writing literature. In his poems this need for a new approach is demonstrated by depicting London through the eyes of a foreign poet-persona. This semi-autobiographical poet-persona stresses the discrepancy between the poet's expectations of the city and his actual experience of it. It may be argued that his emphasis on the necessity of finding innovative ways to express this modern condition is manifested in his poetry with the use of this new technique to convey a sense of alienation which is one of the central themes of modernism. Furthermore, his essays on the elements of modernism and poetics of writing poetry will be discussed with regard to the themes of alienation and urban images to find out whether a link between his representations of the image of the city and his modernist poetics can be found. In other words, by making use of an unfamiliar city in which the persona feels alienated from his environment as a metaphor, his poems illustrate the poet's search for new ways of expression.

In the third chapter Eliot's descriptions of landscapes and explorations in narrative techniques in his essays and poetry will be discussed to investigate his role in the revaluation of the English literary canon. While Pound never distinctly presented himself as a London poet, it will be illustrated in the third chapter that Eliot writes like a Londoner by describing the city meticulously. In fact, he devises a composite of the earlier representations of the city by English and American writers in such a way that his poems transcend national boundaries, which position his representations of London on a global scale and transform them into representations of *any* city. In order to demonstrate this, his essays on English poets and the conventions of poetry will be examined in relation to his poetry, and the function of the persona in his urban poems will be traced. His unpublished poems like "Interlude in London" and "So through the evening, through the violet air" and published poems including *The Waste Land* (1922), *Four Quartets* (1943) will be discussed with regard to the urban references in the poems to illustrate the ways in which his poems blend together the influence of his experiences of various cities with earlier representations of London.

The Spatial Turn and Transnational Literatures

Since the second half of the twentieth century, a group of critics have focused on the significance of space, the city, and the rural landscapes in their works¹. Similarly, by responding to and continuing the discussions of these pioneering critics and their works, recent critics including Doreen Massey, Kenneth Mitchell, Ian Davidson, Merlin Coverley, Jahan Ramazani, and Robert Tally Jr., have increasingly taken interest in the use of spatial elements in works of literature, an approach which has been defined as the “spatial turn” in literary criticism. These critics and their discussions will be explored in relation to the argument of the present study in the following pages of the Introduction. Namely, geography and regional studies scholar Doreen Massey describes the “spatial turn” as a shift of emphasis in criticism; which enables a discussion on the role of space and the foregrounding of spatial elements in literature and argues that these questions have eclipsed earlier criticism that once only focused on temporality, resulting in a re-evaluation of modernity and its representations (Massey 64). Moreover, the spatial turn has also led to further explorations on the definitions of these spatial phenomena including space, place, landscape, border, and the relationship of the individual to them. To illustrate, as Massey states, space is a broad term that encompasses both “the landscape outside the window” on a microcosmic level and “the surface of the earth” on the macrocosm, whereas the term place emerges out of the interaction of individuals and the space they inhabit (Massey 117-118). This material relationship between space and the individual, Massey argues, generates “place” as a phenomenon which also accumulates a “collection of interwoven stories of which that place is made” (Massey 119). Accordingly, the spatial turn in literary criticism not only provided an environment for these above-mentioned definitions to be addressed, but also for the

¹ Some of these critics include:
 Benjamin, Walter. *The Arcades Project* (1982)
 Debord, Guy. *The Society of the Spectacle* (1967)
 De Certeau, Michel. *The Practice of Everyday Life* (1984)
 Frank, Joseph. *The Idea of Spatial Form* (1945)
 Lefebvre, Henri. *The Production of Space* (1974)
 Lynch, Kevin. *The Image of the City* (1960)
 Mumford, Lewis. *The History of the City* (1961)
 Simmel, Georg. “Metropolis and Mental Life” (1971)
 Williams, Raymond. *The Country and the City* (1973)

discussion of the significance of the relationship between the individual and his environment, the history and memory of place, landscape, and the city.

The concerns with spatial phenomena, as Canadian poet and playwright Kenneth Mitchell argues in his essay “Landscape and Literature,” were a result of the differentiation between urban and rural landscapes in the nineteenth century. Especially after the Industrial Revolution, due to the increasing interest in living in the city the social gap between the rural environment and the urban setting had widened, which he believes to be the reason for the emergence of a spatial turn in literature (Mitchell 23-24). Moreover, as in the case of England, he claims that the rise of the city made “a romantic celebration of pristine Nature” in the nineteenth century impossible since it resulted in the dissolution of the rural landscape (Mitchell 23-24). In other words, as the disparity between rural and urban settings widened, writers and artists chose the relationship of the individual and his environment as their subject and explored the effects of place on the individual. Therefore, as suggested by Mitchell and Massey, spatial criticism was a result of the changes brought by the Industrial Revolution, which led writers from the nineteenth century onwards to take the significance of the landscape and place as their subject matter. Thus it may be deduced that the “spatial turn” in literature and its criticism flourished after the rise of the city in the early nineteenth century.

Although spatial criticism has emerged in the mid-twentieth century, Ian Davidson *Ideas of Space in Contemporary Poetry* (2007) argues that the gradual awareness of the role of space may be traced in the works of artists and writers from the early modern period to the Victorian, well into the modern and contemporary periods (I. Davidson 26). In his opinion, the studies on spatial phenomena have also generated discussions about the various spaces used by artists and writers. These spaces, he claims, were not only the landscape or the city, but also the page or the blank canvas, the space with which writers and artists interacted. He suggests that since the early modern period artists and writers were already experimenting with space in its various forms which included the space on the canvas or the page, and depicted not only the external spaces around them but also the internal spaces such as the mental and emotional spaces of the artists and writers:

Spatial aesthetics will work on a number of different levels. It will be concerned with, and draw upon, ideas of physical space and representations of space, and transfer ideas from the concrete to the abstract and the conceptual via the use of spatial metaphors. Artists and writers have used spatial practices in the spaces between, and the cracks around, bureaucratic regulation, working in the space of the multiple possibilities of the relationship between symbol and object and signifier and signified. (I. Davidson 23)

Particularly modernist writers and painters, he claims, experimented with spatial aesthetics “to create ‘free’ space in which new ideas could be developed and explored through the combination of ideas and objects otherwise held apart” (I. Davidson 23). It may therefore be inferred that these experiments with the space of the blank page or canvas have been influenced from the spatial awareness pointed out by Massey and Mitchell.

These spatial investigations on the relationship between the individual and the spaces he occupies were not limited to the physical space of the environment or of the blank space as suggested by Davidson, but also to the abstract spaces of the mind explored in literature. To illustrate, in the second half of the twentieth century, under the leadership of Guy Debord and the Situationists, the relationship between psychology and geography was investigated through the psychogeographical approach. Psychogeography, by compounding these two fields of study, explores the role of the psychology of the individual on his perception of the city. Merlin Coverley, the author of *Psychogeography* (2010), claims that this interdisciplinary field in fact, had examples that dated earlier than the Situationists:

[...] psychogeography is retrospectively supported (or undermined) by earlier traditions and precursors that have been neglected or wilfully obscured. When we focus upon the predominant characteristics of psychogeographical ideas – *urban wandering, the imaginative networking of the city, the otherworldly sense of spirit of place, the unexpected insights and juxtapositions created by aimless drifting, the new ways of experiencing familiar surroundings* – one can soon identify these themes in the examples of earlier figures whose work pre-dates the formal recognition of the Situationists. (Coverley 31-32; emphasis added)

From Coverley’s words it may be deduced that psychogeography acknowledges the existence of a dynamic relationship between the individual and his environment (the urban setting) and that these “psychogeographical ideas”

underscore the ways that this relationship may be detected. In the light of Coverley's words, it may further be argued that by studying a literary work in which the writer makes use of the representation of a city, similarly, would illustrate the relationship between the individual and the urban setting. That is to say, an investigation on the representations of the city in a literary work written by a particular writer would show traces of his perception of the city, if not his intentional portrayal of it. As Coverley asserts, psychogeography has today evolved to encompass more than the physical relationship of the individual and his environment. Psychogeography today involves,

[...] the mental traveller who remakes the city in accordance with his own imagination is allied to the urban wanderer who drifts through the city streets; the political radicalism that seeks to overthrow the established order of the day is tempered by an awareness of the city as eternal and unchanging; and the use of antiquarian and occult symbolism reflects the precedence given to the subjective and the anti-rational over the more systematic modes of thought. (Coverley 41-42)

As Coverley points out, writers who write about the city do not limit themselves to its physical representations but also investigate, by using psychogeography, the psychological, emotional, and intellectual responses of the individual which in turn may affect the individual's spatial perceptions and "modes of thought" (41-42). Accordingly, it may be argued that the role of space for writers who depict these spaces have led to the exploration of metaphorical borders as well. For instance, Merlin Coverley argues that Thomas de Quincey is an example to this type of writer by stating that in *The Confessions of an English Opium Eater* (1821) the character's wandering in the street is accompanied by his mental diversions, which later influenced writers including Edgar Allan Poe and Charles Baudelaire on their use of the *flâneur* image (41-44). As another example, the representations of the city may be regarded as a metaphor for the boundaries of literary and artistic conventions. Apart from these metaphorical borders of literary conventions, other borders may include notions of identity and nationhood as symbolic boundaries to be transgressed.

One such investigation on transgressing borders of identity and nationhood has led to the transnational approach which explores the boundaries of nationhood

and transgresses the nationalities of writers, enabling a broadened view of certain movements like modernism². To this end, a transnational approach to modernism illustrates the extensive allusions from around the world in the works of modernist writers as an attempt of breaking free from these borders. Transnationalism, as Jahan Ramazani describes in *A Transnational Poetics* (2009), enables a crossing of the borders of nationhood and nationalities in the works and lives of modernist writers, and can be regarded as a more inclusive term that acknowledges the placelessness of writers or their cosmopolitan backgrounds including writers such as Gertrude Stein, Joseph Conrad, and Claude McKay (Ramazani, *Transnational* 29). To the aims of this dissertation, Ramazani's comments are relevant in the emphasis he puts on a transnational perspective to explore the works of writers who have transgressed borders of nationhood and have instead turned to cosmopolitan representations of modernity. Additionally, a transnational perspective that benefits from psychogeographical approaches would contribute to the understanding of the ways in which such writers have used the representations of the city and perceptions of the city as responses to the unfamiliar environment to which they responded. As Pound and Eliot were such writers, it may be argued that using transnational and psychogeographical approaches would shed light on their influence from the change of place in their lives and would help to explore whether their use of the representations of London and other cities have contributed to their poetics of modernism.

The spatial turn in literature has generated a re-evaluation of the role of space in the formulation of various literary movements, especially modernism. The relationship between modernism and the city, has led to the reassessment of the term "Modernism" to incorporate modernism not only as a Eurocentric but also a global movement that responded to modernity. *Geomodernisms*, for instance, coined by the literary critics Laura Doyle and Laura Winkiel foregrounds "a locational approach," which dwells on social and political issues in particularly local settings, and

² In fact, the spatial turn has generated new ways of making sense of the world of the twenty first century. The works of recent critics such as Irene Ateljevic, who explores in her essay "Visions of Transmodernity: A New Renaissance of our Human History?" what she describes as transmodernity reveal that while the early twentieth century needed a crossing of national borders, the early twenty-first century needs a transgression of all borders of humanity for a better understanding of the world (Ateljevic 201).

articulating them in “the local-global dialectic of inside and outside, belonging and exile” which challenge and dislocate conventional poetics of modernism (Doyle and Winkiel 3). The term *geomodernisms*, as they claim, attempts to “un-discipline modernist studies” and to “collapse the margin and the center,” by establishing the notion of “a web of twentieth-century literary practices” through the interplay of “race, gender, ethnicity, nativism, nationalism, and imperialism in modernity” (Doyle and Winkiel 6-7). In other words, *geomodernisms* as a term, may be considered as a reassessment of modernism not as a particularly Eurocentric literary movement but as a global movement so as to include what was formerly considered “the periphery” of modernist experimentation and appropriate it as a “global, complex, and multidirectional set of projects” (Doyle and Winkiel 13). This inclusive approach, similar to transnationalism in literature, may be regarded as another way in which spatial borders are transgressed so as to break away from the conventional views of differentiating between movements.

Moreover, as Robert Tally Jr. in *The Geocritical Legacies of Edward W. Said: Spatiality, Critical Humanism, and Comparative Literature* (2015) illustrates, the concerns of transnational literature and its use of spatial elements seek to unsettle and “defamiliarize” the reader and his preconceptions of literary movements and national literatures:

Transnational literature necessarily involves displacements, border crossings, and translations (or, from the Latin root, the ‘carrying across’) from one site to another. Although literary works commonly represent their time and place, sometimes embodying an *ethos* or identity of its local or national condition, more frequently literature wanders across boundaries, utters foreign words and speaks in strange accents, defamiliarizing things as it discloses to the reader novel ways of seeing, where even the most homey scene can become exotic, and the experience of reading not uncommonly involves metaphorical travels into foreign lands. (Tally, *Geocritical Legacies* 209-210)

As Tally remarks, the spatial turn in literature has led to the reassessment of literary works which cross not only physical borders of countries but also of the metaphorical borders of language, race, and nationhood. This foregrounding of real and metaphorical borders enables works that are not initially considered to be within the Western literary canon to be incorporated into the conventionally Eurocentric

literary movements like modernism. The emphasis on a transnational perspective, in other words, shifted the term “Modernism” from a singular and definite term into the plural, “modernisms” which emancipated the movement from the clear-cut definitions based on nationality and location.

Another outcome of the spatial turn is to view the city as a text that renders multi-layered, subjective narratives. Literary cartography, for instance, categorises city literature as a type of literature that creates maps of the environment it describes. The following remarks made by geocritic Robert Tally Jr. in *Literary Cartographies: Spatiality, Representation, and Narrative* (2014) are illuminating in bridging the gap between spatiality, representation, and narration:

In recent years, as part of what has been called the spatial turn in the arts, humanities, and social sciences, literary scholars have focused greater attention on the relations among space, place, or mapping literature. A number of critics have drawn attention to the ways in which narratives produce maps of the real and imaginary places represented, in both the form and content of the narratives. (Tally, *Literary Cartographies* 3)

The relationship between space and narrative, then, according to Tally, is a product of the spatial turn. This cartographical approach views the city, and any space in general, to be “embedded with narratives” that “organize spaces” into narratives by selecting, juxtaposing, and arranging specimens from the city as perceived by the writer, the narrator, the characters, or personae (Tally, *Literary Cartographies* 1-2). Consequently, narratives function as “mapping machines” that maintain a “dynamic tension” between what it maps, and its relation to other maps (Tally, *Literary Cartographies* 3). This role of narratives as mapping devices may be applied to the literature of the city; the city attains new meanings due to the personal narratives created by each city-dweller walking in its streets. As Tally points out, these imagined cartographies of the city may be traced in the representations of the city.

The literary text about the city, therefore, becomes a medium in which the representations of the city in earlier texts, the real city, and the way the writer perceives and writes about the city may be collected. As Pierre Nora claims in *Realms of Memory* (1996) the topographical “lieux” (realms) are embedded with different connotations from monumental structures:

Other lieux are topographical: what matters is their specific location, their rootedness. [...] Some sites are monumental, not to be confused with others that are architectural. Statues and monuments to the dead, for example, derive their significance from their very existence. Although location is by no means unimportant with such monuments, they could be placed elsewhere without altering their meaning. *Structures that develop over time are different: their meaning stems from the complex relationship of their component parts, so that they become mirrors of a society or a period, like the cathedral of Chartres or the palace of Versailles.* (Nora 18; emphasis added)

In the light of Nora's description of the unique nature of topographical realms of memory, it can be argued that the fictional and experiential narratives of the city are intertwined with the reality of the city (of the landscape, geography, or the region), which, in turn, conveys multitudinous representations of the city, and adorns the city with a literary history. That is to say, the city itself also becomes a "structure" that "develop[s] over time" and reflects the modes of thought of a society or a period. Nora's statement on realms of memory may be adopted for the purposes of the present study to argue that the representations of London in Pound's and Eliot's poetry contributed to the meanings of the city. By such similar contributions to the meanings of the city, the literature of any place produces, in Tally's words, "dynamic" meanings of the city in the mind of the reader (Tally, *Literary Cartographies* 3-6). Furthermore, Ian Davidson claims that these literary representations of place are interconnected with the changes in the city, and are at the same time attempts of recovering history:

[...] in an increasingly spatialized world, notions of place have to change, so too will notions of poetry. If a place is traditionally characterized as a bounded community with its own history, then a 'poetry of place' frequently sought to identify the nature of a place through an exploration and recovery of its past. (I. Davidson 31)

From the assertions made by Davidson, Tally, and Nora it may be argued that poems about the city are not only representations of the city and its inhabitants, but also a clue to the complex relationship between the poet and the city which the poet attempts to reclaim by portraying the 'unofficial history' of the city.

In the beginning of the twentieth century, the changing panorama of the city also meant that the city's social strata were undergoing through a transformation which led to the increasingly variegated representations of the city. As such, when

cities like London and Paris were evolving into metropolises, writers and artists from around the world gathered in these cities that were gradually becoming cosmopolitan spaces in which a wide range of ideas were voiced. In order to portray these multitudinous perspectives, they experimented with narrative techniques. Giddens and Paterson argue that transnationalism also enabled an “oscillation between local and global points of view that was brought on enhanced mobility,” the shifting perspective, then, makes it possible to embrace these multi-voiced narratives (Giddens 108-109; Paterson 2). Their elucidation of the transnational approach in analysing modernity may be applied also to modernist literature in terms of their narrative techniques to argue that the writers and poets in the early twentieth century established a link between the narrator of prose fiction or persona in poetry and the landscape they were portraying in order to represent these diverse groups in the society. To depict this versatility of perspective and voices as a response to the cosmopolitan city, in the early twentieth century, modernist writers and poets experimented with the use of narrators in prose, and made use of the persona as a device.

It can be claimed that a reason for Pound and Eliot's interest in London as a subject matter was their belief that this city's ever-changing fabric provided them with an analogy for the poetics of modernism as a movement which challenged the conventions of literature. To this end, the multifarious voices and numerous perspectives to describe London presented a kaleidoscopic and archival experience of the city which they believed could echo the changes they wanted to achieve in poetic expression. The personae employed in the London poems of Pound and Eliot depict the city in attempts of constructing not only a new aesthetic that would determine the revolutionary way of writing poetry but also an early endeavour at constructing a transnational movement in literature.

The Significance of the Persona

Pound's and Eliot's search for new narrative techniques to portray the city led to the versatile characterization of personae in their poetry. Their personae were at times deeply rooted in their personal lives, and at others were derived from various sources which included historical figures and fictional characters; all of which were

blended in their poems by ascribing the persona a modernised role more important than the ones encountered in the dramatic monologue. They experimented with classical texts and their methods of employing the persona and studied the dramatic monologue through the works of English poets and devised a modernised role for the persona in their poetry. Robert C. Elliott's discussion about the significance and historical development of the persona in *The Literary Persona* (1982) is illuminating for the present study as both Pound and Eliot make use of various personae that range from Classical figures to their contemporaries. As Elliott demonstrates, the various characterizations and the ways of using personae was a substantial way of experimenting with the narrative techniques in modernist poetry.

Throughout its history the Latin word for mask, *persona*, had been used for different purposes which varied from entertainment, to dramatic characterization, to rituals; all of which served the purpose of transforming one individual to another (Elliott 18-27). Due to the wide-ranging meanings the word attains, Elliott claims that the most significant characteristic of the persona is that it is "polysemous" in nature, and "contradictory" in its range of references (Elliott x). As he points out, it entered literary criticism as a term only in the 1940s, as a means to differentiate between the poet and the fictional speakers he created (Elliott 31). In his opinion, its etymological history dates back to the Classical age, its use and significance were explored only at the beginning of the twentieth century, when the "confessional style of writing" was challenged by the modernist poets through their insistence upon an impersonal poetry (Elliott 13). One of the central issues in twentieth century modernist works, he states, was the attempt to distance themselves as composers of the poem, from the fictional 'I,' and the persona became the device to "perpetuate that distance" between the poet, the real person, and the fictional "I" (Elliott 84):

In the 'modernist' literature of the first half of the twentieth century the idea of the persona is everywhere. Popularized by Ezra Pound, given impetus by Yeats, institutionalized by Eliot in his poetry and criticism, the notion of the persona is at the center of that phase of modernism which holds that the 'I' of a poem is always a dramatized 'I,' no more to be identified with the actual poet living in history than the Bishop ordering his tomb is to be identified with Robert Browning. (Elliott 16)

In the poetry of Pound and Eliot, the emphasis on the dramatization of the fictional “I” of the poem instead of using the personal “I” of the Romantics suggests that these poets were not only challenging the conventions about the content of poetry, but also the ways in which they were described had become equally significant. Michael Hamburger, likewise, agrees with Elliott’s emphasis on the role of persona in the poetry of Pound and Eliot. As Hamburger states, for Pound and Eliot, the experiments on the use of the persona was both a continuation of and a break from the conventional uses of the persona:

Both Pound and Eliot used *personae* with a freedom unprecedented either in the dramatic monologues of the late nineteenth century or in the twentieth-century adaptations of that mode, including those by Pound himself in his *Personae* proper. In these some kind of historical background and unity had to be maintained. In *The Waste Land* and the *Cantos*, on the other hand, Imagist technique – originally devised for the short poem only – was extended to the long poem. The *personae*, too, became multiple and fluid within a single poem, shifting and switching freely in time and space. Yet whereas Eliot’s *The Waste Land* had a centre outside the poet’s self – a centre that may or may not be personified in the character of Tiresias – the centre if the *Cantos* remains a basically personal one, despite the even wider store of *personae*, historical instances and topographical fragments drawn upon. (Hamburger 114-115)

As Hamburger remarks, their adaptation of the *personae* of the dramatic monologue enabled a way to depict the twentieth century with its numerous representations. Therefore, the wide-ranging types of personae in their poems created a multi-voiced medium which also may be said to have changed the way in which they perceived their environment. Although to some extent Hamburger asserts that these personae were a means of establishing unity in the poems, they may also be regarded as a way of constructing a cognitive map of the city that encompasses not only the present form of the city but also its history and its past representations.

In addition, Lawrence Jones describes Hardy’s fluctuating narrative technique from a spatial perspective in his analysis of Thomas Hardy’s *The Dynasts* (1904-1908), “Thomas Hardy and the Cliff without a Name,” which presents a diversified perspective of the significance of the narrator (Jones 176). His classification of Hardy’s “idiosyncratic mode of regard” may also be used in explaining the varieties of personae employed by modernist poets and their poems about the city:

[...] Hardy's 'idiosyncratic mode of regard' in that it embodies (1) the way he saw things (his mode of perception); (2) what he saw; and (3) the primary elements in his response to what he saw. The way of seeing is that of the Spirits' spectatorial detachment, with a variety of shifting perspectives: spatial (the near and the far); temporal (from a focus on the immediate moment to a widened focus taking in the wide sweep of historical or even geological time); and psychological (the detached view of the character seem from the outside and the sympathetic or even empathetic view from within). Viewing life from these shifting perspectives, Hardy saw both the particulars of life – both physical things in their sensuous concreteness and inner feelings in their immediacy – and the coherent pattern that included those particulars. (Jones 176)

In Lawrence Jones's words, the experiments with the speaker and his shifting "spatial," "temporal," and "psychological" viewpoints in narration enabled Hardy to create a cognitive map of the city (Jones 176). Jones's analysis of Hardy's work in terms of these shifting viewpoints may be applied to Pound's and Eliot's poetry in order to discuss how their use of the shifting persona similarly creates a cognitive map of the city. This cognitive map, it seems, was the only way of depicting the city so as for the reader to imagine the city in its entirety. As Charles Molesworth argues, the urban experience, in its vast and cosmopolitan nature, had become impossible to describe in "a strongly body-centered consciousness" without the fragmentation and marginalization of the character (Molesworth 21). Therefore, it may be suggested that it was through narrations about the experience of the city that the city could be imagined in the mind. The recurrent emphasis on the viewpoints in describing the city links it to narrative (Caws 8-9) and in poetry, different from that of the narratological styles of prose fiction, the persona and his characterization becomes crucial for the ways in which the city is described. The use of the persona thus provides a way of exploring the relationship of the poet and the city which also reveals the extent of the inspiration that the poet derived from the city. As each individual would have a different perception of the city, the representations would also vary accordingly. The city becomes, as Molesworth describes, "an aesthetic object [...] not only for those who live in it but for those who try to 'view' it from some safe and significant distance" (Molesworth 18). In the light of Molesworth's definition, either from within or from a distance, the way the city is presented in poetry is determined by the persona describing it. That is to say, in Johnston's words,

“point of view, perspective, distance, proximity, selection,” and “focus” may be considered fundamental when analysing representations of the city in poetry (Johnston 45). These perspectives, according to Laura Doyle and Laura Winkiel, establish a “geographical consciousness,” of positioning the persona in relation to his geographical surroundings, whether he is “speaking from outside or inside or both at once, of orienting toward and away from the metropole, of existing somewhere between belonging and dispersion” (Doyle and Winkiel 4). Moreover, analysing poems about the city to see whether the persona is a visitor or a local; whether they describe the city from a panoramic distance or by walking in the streets, provides an insight into how the city attains multi-dimensional representations through the use of the personae in city poetry. Depending upon the characterization of the persona, then, the city may be either portrayed as celestial or infernal. These images of the city can be grouped by the three characteristic features of the persona employed by poets who describe the city.

The first feature is the identity of the persona used in the poem; he may be characterised as a foreigner or a local, which affects his perception and experience of the city. As Steven Miles and Malcolm Miles likewise state, the city perceived by a foreigner would differ drastically from the experience of the citizen (Miles and Miles 66). The foreigner, either a short-time visitor or an immigrant, feels already in conflict with the city while he struggles to adapt to his environment. The city might appear as an attractive place for the visitor, whereas the citizen might focus on the unattractive aspects. Since it is the persona who describes the city in the poems, it is essential to point out if the persona appears to be a native who knows the city by heart or just a passer-by who is seeing the city for the first time. As the city changes from day to day, the foreigner’s adaptation to his surroundings, compared to a local, becomes more difficult since he can never completely be a part of it which leads to an unending double-disorientation in the city. Eliot’s and Pound’s descriptions of the city are complicated as they are neither tourists nor entirely locals. Hence, their descriptions of London are different from that of a true Londoner, which arguably causes a blurring of the distinction between outsider and insider, foreign and local. The different rendering of the theme of alienation in their poems compared to those

of British writers will be explored by studying their alienated personae in relation to their representations in London.

Secondly, the persona's vantage point, whether he is describing the city from street view or a panoramic distance, becomes equally important for the construction of the image of the city. Seen from a distance, a city may appear as a pleasant, beautiful place but when walking in the streets the morbid details may dominate the overall impression of a city. The opposite is equally possible. When describing a city some poets use a persona that stands in the outskirts of the city to describe it from a distance whereas others use personae that walk in the city to describe it in detail. For example, poets of the nineteenth century, such as Wordsworth and Baudelaire, are able to depict the city in its chaotic details, whereas from a distance, they choose to portray it by employing celestial or infernal metaphors (Molesworth 18). Viewing the city from a distant, "belvedere" point enables the viewer to see the city in its entirety (Miles and Miles 73). However, the persona would be an "outsider" that would not enable him to be a part of the city. On the other hand, describing the city from within, the persona is able to depict the city in detail and be a part of the city, but the result becomes a fragmented, incomplete representation of the city.

A third point to consider would be the position of the persona; the mobile or fixed position of the persona also shapes the way in which the city is portrayed. When the persona walks in the city throughout the course of the poem, his perception of the city is reconstructed in every step he takes, whereas the persona describing the city without moving would imitate an "image" of the city as unchanging. As literary critic in urban literature and Victorian studies William C. Sharpe in *Unreal Cities: Urban Figuration in Wordsworth, Baudelaire, Whitman, Eliot, and Williams* (1990) claims, the "passing stranger" who becomes the focus of the poem functions as a mediator between stability and mobility, "the re-marking of something in a face that flits by in the crowd" (Sharpe, *Unreal Cities* xiii). In his opinion, the persona is usually portrayed as a "stranger in the crowd" who situates himself in relation to the faces he sees in the crowd (Sharpe, *Unreal Cities* xiii). He argues that this positioning of the persona and the people around him account for the varied depictions of the city in urban literature and transforms the poet into a "stranger in the crowd" (Sharpe, *Unreal Cities* 2). Likewise, what Roger Gilbert identifies as

“walk poems,” include a walking persona who alters the static representation of the city into the “experience” of walking in the city as the poem tracks the responses of the persona throughout its progress (Gilbert 8). The preoccupation with movement in such poems may be argued to blur the lines of the distinctions between insider-outsider, panoramic and the close-up depictions by the persona. Thus, it may be argued that the modernist pursuit of multi-dimensional representations of the city enabled them to use the city as a blueprint for changing the conventions of writing literature by experimenting with the narrative techniques.

Overall, this analysis of the persona’s features allows an assessment of the significance of the persona in city poems and, in turn, helps to explore the ways in which the city has inspired modernist poets in their new aesthetic. Using the persona as a device in their poems, poets who write about the city are able to describe the city as an attractive, idyllic place that allows them to participate in the urban experience or as a dangerous, unattractive place that builds walls, forbidding any inclusion. As foreign poets in England, Pound and Eliot described London from fluctuating perspectives; their descriptions of the city shift from that of a foreigner’s perspective, to that of a person on the threshold, and in Eliot’s case, even that of a Londoner. These shifting perspectives they employed in describing London, arguably, rendered a multi-voiced perspective and constructed a fragmented city image in which the persona is alienated from his environment. Moreover, Pound’s and Eliot’s poems about the city make use of a “poet-persona” in describing the city, thus, their use of the persona becomes crucial for understanding the ways in which they depict the city by emphasizing the distinction between the real poet and the “poet-persona.”

History of the City

In their poems, Pound and Eliot describe London in fragments. One of the reasons for this was because in the early twentieth century, London was under the process of urban reconstruction. Another reason for the fragmented appearance was due to the overflow of immigrants into the city, which gradually transformed the metropolis into a cosmopolitan location where individuals tried to make their way in the bric-a-brac heap of architectural structures. Additionally, England was transforming from an Empire into a nation in fragments (Esty 39). To a certain

extent, their depictions imitate the chaotic nature of the city and may be argued to exemplify the ways that modernist poetry derived its material from the city. For instance, as a result of such literary works about the city London famously became the “Unreal City” where the poet struggles to survive in a “half savage country” (Eliot, *The Waste Land* 56; 1.60; Pound, *Hugh Selwyn Mauberley* 185; 6). This relationship between the poet and the city also illustrates the ways that the people and the architecture of the city meet in the medium of the city where these two elements are in constant interaction with each other. Although the city by its nature is an ever-changing, transient, man-made structure that makes it impossible to arrive at a definitive, static definition, its development throughout history demonstrates certain patterns that foreground the relationship between the individual and the city. In particular, urban historians and architects including Kevin Lynch, Lewis Mumford, and David Watkin have traced the relationship between the city and society from various perspectives.

A city may mirror the culture of a society. Kevin Lynch in *The Image of the City* (1960), for instance, regards the city as “a powerful symbol of a complex society” and states that the combination of the city’s architecture and its people make up the meanings of a city. (Lynch 5). In his opinion, any person viewing the city attaches subjective meanings to the city and connects these meanings to make it a “place” of his own memories (Lynch 92). In the light of Lynch’s definition of the city, it may be argued that these subjective meanings of the city attached by its citizens or travellers visiting the city would make up a series of meanings or narratives about the city. Moreover, the physical elements such as the streets, buildings, bridges, and monuments in a city contribute to the ways in which these people may perceive the city. To illustrate, Lynch says that the urban developments in cities convey an overall impression of the city in the minds of people who view it, which he calls as the “imageability” of the city (Lynch 9). These impressions associated with the city, he maintains, are established by the use of multiple images of the city through the differentiations of time of day, season of the year, distance, and attentiveness of the viewer or his mobility (Lynch 109). In other words, the city is not only the sum of its architecture, its history, its records of urban development,

or its demographics, but also the relationship between these components which can be traced in the responses of people as described in the representations of the city.

Alternatively, Lewis Mumford in *The City in History* (1961) argues that a city is a place that reflects the two extremes, the good and the evil, of humankind. As he observes, after its separation from the rural landscape, the city has attained fluctuating meanings; from the idealised, “Celestial City” to the apocalyptic “City of Death,” the city came to be the embodiment of various dualisms (Mumford 232-233). He regards this dualistic vision of the city to have emerged during the Classical period when Athenians imagined the city to have a religious significance by founding a city around the temple while Romans demonstrated military and political authority by planning a city that situated the torture chamber, i.e. the circus, at its centre (Mumford 232-233). These contrasting images of the city, he claims, continued throughout the development of other cities in different periods, as in the case of London (Mumford 237).

Even after the demolition and/or desertion of these Classical cities, the monasteries of the Middle Ages preserved a similar vision of the city by means of the translation of classical texts (Mumford 247). In Mumford’s opinion, aside from the dualism of good and evil, in the Middle Ages the urban developments in the medieval cities, such as the construction of continuous blocks of houses surrounded by city walls, the paving of streets, and arcades at the end of these streets emphasised the limits of the city which led to further divisions between insider and outsider, local and foreign (Mumford 299). These medieval cities were gradually associated with notions of “authority,” “withdrawal,” “security,” and “filth,” which, in time were gradually replaced with “freedom,” “involvement,” “challenge,” and “adventure” as the medieval city transformed into larger and more populated cities in the following centuries, as seen during the Elizabethan Age in London (Mumford 299). At the end of the Middle Ages, Mumford points out that almost every country had such cities that stood out for their unique urban design such as “red Siena, black and white Genoa, grey Paris, variegated Florence, and golden Venice” (Mumford 321). In the light of Mumford’s words, it may be argued that at the close of the Middle Ages, apart from economic, political, and intellectual reasons, it was these distinct

architectural characteristics that differentiated these cities, which may have resulted in the use of such cities as the subject of literature.

As Mumford states, from the end of the Middle Ages until the nineteenth century a new urban form, the Baroque style of city planning, dominated the designs of most European cities which transformed these unique cities into common places as they underwent a standardised reconstruction during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries (Mumford 394). The importance of the Baroque style implemented in city planning, he claims, was its effect of uniformity on the image of the city due to the tendencies of using the same type of material for the exteriors of buildings, the geometrically shaped gardens, the straight-lined streets, and the construction of squares (Mumford 398). Moreover, the incorporation of nature by way of the artificial gardens into the city blurred the differentiation between the urban and rural landscape once again (Mumford 398).

In the nineteenth century, after the Industrial Revolution, with the introduction of railroads and factories that connected the periphery of the city with its centre, Mumford observes that a new type of city came into existence (Mumford 447). The new industrial cities, which Dickens named as ‘Coketown,’ led to the rapid expansion of the city; makeshift urbanization, the overflow of population, poor housing and sanitary conditions became the norm of these metropolitan areas (Mumford 447). This new type of city as Mumford argues, was much different from the previous models of the city as it depended greatly on the exploitation of other cities, and of other countries (Mumford 447). Even the developments in housing, electric energy, and underground railways, the city, he claims, did not rid itself from the threatening conditions for its citizens until after the mid-twentieth century. Such was the case with London, and it was this “bleak” and “ugly” city to which Pound and Eliot, among many other artists and writers responded to in their works.

On the other hand, architect and urban historian David Watkin in *A History of Western Architecture* (1986) argues that the history of architecture demonstrates the reciprocal influence between movements of thought and the construction of cities. For instance, he claims that the construction of town halls, guild halls, storehouses, market buildings, and shops in medieval cities pointed to the gradual decline of

religious authority (Watkin 207). Moreover, during the Renaissance, he argues, while the texts of the Classical period “served as a model for a modern cultural rebirth” that led to the emergence of Renaissance humanism, in architecture and urban planning, the innovative “town square” was constructed with the desire of reviving the Forum of the Roman civilization (Watkin 280). These examples demonstrate that the state-of-mind of the age was applied to the urban developments as well. Furthermore, as Watkin observes, when religious authority was revived in Catholic cities in Europe, Baroque architecture reproduced the same ideology with its controlled, unified, standardised buildings (Watkin 283). In the light of Watkin’s examples, it may be inferred that the dominant ideologies in the history of nations have influenced the changes in architecture and the planning of cities. Additionally, Watkin claims that especially after the eighteenth century, architecture came to be regarded as a powerful narrative technique which influenced the ways in which the city was perceived in the following centuries. To this end, he states that the eighteenth century may be considered as a time of exploration based on the search for intellectual and physical ‘taste’ (Watkin 373). That is to say, during the age of Enlightenment, the interest in other cultures led to the “systematic exploration of Greek antiquity” which evoked an admiration for ruins (Watkin 373). In his opinion this encouraged architects to depict models of their buildings in the form of ruins which showed that architecture could be used to narrate more than the “fulfilment of the function for which it was designed, or the visual effect intended by its architect” (Watkin 373). As Eliot’s and Pound’s relationship to London will be explored in the present study, it may be argued that David Watkin’s analysis of the relationship between architecture and movements of thought is significant because it demonstrates that a city may be read as an indicator of how intentionally designed cities may also influence the modes of thought, and narrative techniques, of a particular period.

As the above survey of the development of cities indicate, the literature of the city, then, registers the ways in which poets and writers have responded to the changes in the city and how the city has attained new meanings through their work. As Gary Bridge and Sophie Watson remark, the metropolis contained complex relations that could not be described with one single image that created a sense of unity and harmony (Bridge and Watson 13). Hence it can be concluded that in the

beginning of the twentieth century, this was the type of city that the modernist poets were describing; a fragmented city that was the sum of all civilizations that could not become unified again.

City Literature

In literature, the city and the changes it underwent have been frequently used as a literary symbol for the human condition by narrating the experience of the individual in the urban setting. For instance, the changes taking place in the city may stand for a transformation the character undergoes, or the disorientation one feels in the changing city may be used to describe the confusion one feels in society. However, what is often overlooked is that these representations of the city also create and shape the image of the city in the mind of the readers, and therefore, any written text that describes a city in a particular way, also contributes to the reputation of this city. That is to say, the effect of the changing city on the individual also works in the opposite direction; a literary work may also impose on its readers how a city should be perceived. Thus, the representations of a city in literature may influence the modes of envisioning the city as they complement the experience of other people living in a city. In this respect, poets throughout history have sought to describe the place they inhabited, in georgics, topographical poems, pastoral poems, and urban poems. Since any change in the landscape affects the way in which this landscape is represented in literature, their attempts in capturing the true nature of the city has been an unending task.

City literature can be defined as any literary text that foregrounds the importance of the city by describing its architecture, its citizens, and its cultural significance. As a result of the “spatial turn” the changing meanings of the disparity between rural and urban, has generated the term “city literature.” The interdisciplinary nature of city literature has positioned it between architecture, urban studies, geography, sociology, cartography, and literature, among many other fields of study. Therefore, the genre itself may be said to have oscillating boundaries that make it a subject of study by various scholarly disciplines. In literary criticism, the city has been often analysed in terms of its significance as a setting, a character, a metaphor, or a symbol. Most of the questions raised on the explorations about the

role of space in general, and the city in particular, dwell on issues about the development of their representations in literature and their relationship to what Jim Wayne Miller describes as the “dominant intellectual view[s],” by tracing the historical development of these representations (Miller 14). The “lack of orientation” or limitations of space that Miller suggests, have triggered a re-evaluation of numerous works which were earlier not accounted for in terms of the role of place and its representations in literature (Miller 14). Hence, recent critical approaches have acknowledged a need for further explorations and assessments of the link between literary movements and their choices of depicting the city in a particular way. For this reason, a reassessment of Pound’s and Eliot’s poetry would contribute to this discussion as their representations of the city may have influenced their poetics of modernist poetry.

In terms of its classification, Miller suggests city literature to be a continuation of regionalism due to their shared interest in the relationship between the landscape and people living on that particular terrain (Miller 5). However, he also suggests that this new form of regionalism should be “a cosmopolitan regionalism” which,

[...] does not exclude a knowledge of the wider world, but is concerned with and appreciative of the little traditions within the great traditions of human history, and of ways in which small and great traditions are connected [...] (Miller 13)

to underline the significance of place in literature. In his opinion, the influence of place and landscape in literature illuminates the “collective needs, tastes, predilections, values, and attitudes of people” by reflecting the layers of cultural landscapes imposed on natural landscapes, which consequently positions it closer to regional studies with the common questions about the relationship between place and literature (Miller 15). In this regard, the literature of the city, or city literature may be broadly defined as the type of literature which focuses on the description of, or the experience of, being in a particular urban location, which plays a larger role in the body of the text than simply being the backdrop in which the plot is set.

City poetry, or urban poetry, may be defined as a subgenre of city literature which describes as well as imitates the city in terms of form and content. It usually

refers to particular physical locations, landmarks, monuments, or neighbourhoods of a city and foregrounds these urban elements to address broader issues of class, gender, race, history, nationhood, administrative power, politics, and aesthetics among many others. As Johnston observes, the tradition of writing poetry about the city, has been linked with the eclogue, georgic, and the topographical poems (Johnston xvii). These poems date back to the Classical period and were originally used to describe the relationship between man and the agrarian environment. However, as cities expanded these poems were adopted to describe other forms of landscapes inhabited by men such as the urban setting (Johnston xix; Thesing 191). This revision of the traditional forms opened a way for poets that include Alexander Pope, Jonathan Swift, and John Gay to write about the city in which they lived and enabled them to criticise the values of the society by the use of the image of the city. Like the cities that are continuously under development, demolishing, and reconstruction, city poetry also undergoes constant changes, and as in any city, its poetry incorporates its history, through its past representations and compounds these representations with contemporary ones. It may be argued that each new representation of the city changes the inherent meanings of the city by merging with the fixed, already-established literary representations of a city.

In particular, city poetry becomes a medium in which the poet's experience of the city and the city's literary representations are negotiated, through the use of the persona of the poem. Additionally, in Davidson's words, the poem also becomes a "representation of space" due to its "verbal description *of* the landscape" (I. Davidson 12, 38; emphasis added). Thus one may deduce that one of the essential components of city poetry is the persona since he conveys more than the experiences of the poet in the city. That is, the poet is able to dramatize his experiences of the city and juxtapose them to interact with and respond to past representations by devising a fictional persona. Therefore, due to the multitudinous ways in which the city may be represented in literature, the role of the persona, as mentioned in the previous pages, becomes significant in exploring the ways in which the poets chose to depict the city from the viewpoint of the personae characterised in a particular fashion.

Themes of City Literature

Although there are numerous ways to portray the city in literature, some recurring themes may be found in these representations. In order to praise or condemn it, over the centuries writers and poets have chosen the city as their material, by comparing it to the rural landscape or other cities, including cities of the imagination. Most of these writers regarded these representations as a means of commenting on the issues in society, in politics, or a way of devising a new aesthetic for literature. The inspiration derived from the city led writers to also imagine the city as a metaphor for the workings of the mind of the writer. The labyrinthine streets of the city, as Caws argues, represented the “mazes of the mind,” and by giving voice to their characters, narrators, and personae they were able to express their artistic views through the image of the city (Caws 2, 7-8). Their frustration with the changing city was also reflected in the psychology of their characters; as Augustine claims, the changing scenery, for instance, paralleled the character’s mental fluctuations (Augustine 74). For some, the city transgressed its conventional role as setting and became a character actively involved in the plot, while for others it treated other characters in an apathetic fashion to make them feel alienated or oppressed, or sometimes “targeted” based on their genders (Preston and Simpson-Housley 10-13).

One of the most common ways of writing about the city was by contrasting the rural landscape to the city. Initially, writers adapted earlier forms of topographical poetry, the eclogue, the georgic, and the pastoral to describe the city (Johnston 5-7). In “The Cosmopolis of Poetics: Urban World, Uncertain Poetry” Michael Heller argues that especially in Romantic poetry, poems about the city were modelled after pastoral forms of descriptions of their environment which made use of “cyclical rhythms, seasons,” to avoid the “noise and filth” of the city (Heller 87-88). This type of representation can be regarded as one of the most fluid forms because it is highly dependent upon the writer or poet’s stance with regards to the city. While on the one hand some of the writers treated nature as supreme in terms of its order and regenerative system, in other words, the mirror image of God undermining the city as the uncivilised and chaotic, on the other hand some regarded nature as the wilderness, contrasting it to the genius of man to create ever-evolving cities that were

the product of their civilization (Hamburger 269). These two perspectives are usually paralleled at times with the socio-economic and political status quo of the country. In the case of nineteenth-century England for instance, while the rural countryside may suggest a simpler, agrarian life or the declining aristocracy, the city may be regarded as the embodiment of economic opportunities or the exploitation of the working class. In Heller's opinion, as the urban and the rural setting shifted apart from each other, in order to "enact a mimesis" of the world they inhabited, writers abandoned the "harmonious" pastoral vision of "reality" and sought for ways of describing the "disorder" of the city (Heller 88-89).

When depicting a particular city, writers highlighted the city either as a celestial place to be desired, or an infernal, apocalyptic place to be avoided, by building their images on comparisons and contrasts with other cities across the globe or with cities of the imagination, including cities from myths and literature. One of the prevalent outcomes of the comparison between actual cities was to highlight the importance of the depicted city on a socio-economic, political, and artistic level. To illustrate, in poems about London, as it will be demonstrated in the following chapter, poets compared the capital to other cities of great civilizations in history like Athens, Rome, Vienna, and Amsterdam in order to render the global influence of the British Empire that followed the examples of Classical civilizations and challenged other contemporary nations.

On the other hand, the cities were also depicted by comparing the actual cities to their fictional models. Accordingly, these images of the cities created a continuation of the archetypal cities of Eden, Babylon, and New Jerusalem³. These representations accentuated the celestial or infernal significance of real cities as incarnations of these fictional cities. Consequently, the religious and fictional cities of the imagination played an important role in real cities attaining heavenly or hellish attributes; enabling the writers to depict the city as places of human fulfilment or corruption respectively. While the celestial image modelled after Biblical places such as Eden and New Jerusalem conveyed the city as the embodiment of hope, perfection

³ Peter Preston and Paul Simpson-Housley's *Writing the City* (1995); David Weimer's *The City as Metaphor* (1966), William Thesing's *The London Muse* (1982), and William C. Sharpe's *Unreal Cities* (1990) can be named as some critical studies in which the distinction is made.

and development, the infernal city modelled after the infamous cities Babylon, Nineveh, Sodom, and Gomorrah was used to render it as a place that lurked with moral decay and corruption.

Particularly in the nineteenth century, due to the changes in the urban scenery the city, instead of the rural setting, became the material for most writers which resulted in the modernity of the city to be reflected by “strains of realism” that would depict the modernity of the city (Chilton 152). Although the early examples of the urban setting influencing a new aesthetic in literature commonly point to the works of French writers including Baudelaire, Zola, Balzac, and others, Chilton underlines that it was not until the beginning of the twentieth century when the great capitals expanding into metropolises such as Paris and London influenced modernist writers to use the physical impossibility of remaining in the limits of the city, and preoccupied themselves with movement and limitations, in art, literature, and literary tradition (Chilton 153). Before Baudelaire, the poets who wrote about the city aimed at commenting on important social events taking place in the town; city poetry, at the time, was, in Thesing’s words, a “witty” and “delicate” way of observing their environment (Thesing 151). The city, though festering with immoral acts and corruption, was portrayed to be uniquely beautiful and a place of inspiration. To illustrate especially after Baudelaire, as Thesing and Hyde remark, the city inhabited with rogues, beggars, and prostitutes became a way of establishing a new concept of Beauty that would accentuate the unpleasant aspects of the city and portray it as an alluring place for the poet. In their opinion, Baudelaire redefined the aesthetics of poetry as he highlighted the unpleasant details of Paris to emphasise that it was these unpleasant features that gave the city its unique beauty. In the nineteenth century, with the influence of Baudelaire on the English poets, city poetry became a way of expressing, in Thesing’s words, the “artificial and impressionistic aspects” of a city (Thesing 152). Baudelaire’s portrayal of Paris as an attractive, “unpoetical” place also influenced modernist poets who would write about the city (Hyde 341; Thesing 152). That is to say, the hostility of the city which caused the suffering and alienation of the individual from his society inspired the poet to talk about the ‘reality’ of the human experience in the urban environment and rendered the city as a place of inspiration.

As cities transformed into the industrial metropolises, the poems about the city emphasised the poet's feelings of estrangement from the environment. Consequently, city poetry became an effective way of describing the poet's estrangement from his society particularly after Charles Baudelaire's poems. To this end, in Hamburger's opinion, Baudelaire was the first poet to "grapple" with the psychogeographical issues of the metropolis and he would later influence English-language poets ranging from T.S. Eliot to William Carlos Williams, Philip Larkin to Charles Tomlinson (Hamburger 27-28). Baudelaire's use of the unattractive elements of the city to describe the alienation the poet felt in the modern world. He used the image of the *flâneur* in the society as a social critique to describe, in Fowlie's words, "the difficulty of existing as an artist in the modern world, the inevitable clash between the artistic temperament and the conventions of society" (Fowlie 2). To illustrate, in "The Swan," Baudelaire articulates this estrangement of the poet from his society by depicting the poet as a swan disoriented in the city:

A swan which had escaped from its cage,
 And, with its webby feet rubbing the dry pavement,
 Was dragging its white plumage over the level ground.
 Near a stream without water the bird opening its beak
 Nervously bathed its wings in the dust
 (Baudelaire, "Le Cygene" 75; 17-21)⁴

One may infer that the swan in the poem searching for water in the dry, dusty city is like the poet who tries to adapt in vain to the environment he inhabits. Like the swan, the poet feels alienated from his surroundings. Moreover, Baudelaire portrays the city in the poem as a place that changes rapidly creating in the persona a sense of alienation.

Suddenly enriched my fertile memory,
 As I crossed *the newly built Carrousel*
Old Paris is no more (the form of a city
Changes more quickly, alas, than the heart of a man);

...
 Paris changes! But nothing in my sadness
 Has moved! *New palaces, scaffoldings, blocks,*
Old suburbs, everything becomes an allegory for me,

⁴ All translations of Baudelaire unless otherwise stated are by Wallace Fowlie, the editor and translator of *The Flowers of Evil and Other Works* (1964) the dual language book.

And my dear memories are heavier than rocks.

(Baudelaire, "Le Cygene" 75; 5-8, 29-32; emphasis added)

The rapid change in the city evokes in the speaker a feeling of disorientation like the swan. The memories that the speaker associates with the landscape disappear, "[o]ld Paris is no more" as it undergoes vast changes. These developments in the physical appearance of the city detaches the speaker and positions him as an exile who has been separated from the city in which he used to feel at home.

In front of the Louvre an image vexes me:
I think of my great swan, with its mad gestures,
Like exiles, ridiculous and sublime,
And devoured by an unrelenting desire! ...

(Baudelaire, "Le Cygene" 76; 33-36)

The swan struggling on the pavement searching for water reminds the poet-persona of the struggle he feels adapting to his environment in the rapidly changing metropolis. Baudelaire's portrayal of the "unpoetical" city as pointed out by Hyde and Thesing, is demonstrated in "Le Cygene" in which the poet merged together and problematized the celestial and infernal cities and highlighted the influence of the urban scenery for the poet by celebrating, in Hamburger's words, the "prostitutes, beggars, drunkards, underdogs and criminals" of Paris (Hyde 341; Thesing 152; Hamburger 267).

In contrast to Baudelaire's poem which describes Paris, the following poems written by Tennyson illustrates the use of fictional cities. For instance, Tennyson's poems "Babylon" (1827) and "Timbuctoo" (1829) describe cities of the imagination; he makes use of the biblical city Babylon to describe the desolation of human beings and the city is depicted as a sinful place. His perception of Babylon is that of a city on the verge of destruction:

Weep, Babylon, weep! for thy splendour is past;
And they come like the storm in the day of the blast.

...

Though thy streets be a hundred, thy gates be all brass,
Yet thy proud ones of war shall be withered like grass;
Thy gates shall be broken, thy strength be laid low,
And thy streets shall resound to the shouts of the foe!

(Tennyson, "Babylon" 155-156; 3-4, 9-12)

Babylon is described as a city in decay, a place that has lost its glory. The gates of the city are broken, and the city is destroyed into pieces. The streets echo the sounds of enemies, emphasizing the hostility of the people in the sinful city. This image of Babylon in Tennyson's poem suggests that the city is a metaphor for moral decay and corruption in the society which conveys a desolate image of the city. In contrast, in "Timbuctoo" he constructs a celestial city by evoking the myth of great cities such as Atlantis and El Dorado and compares them with the real city Timbuctoo:

Divinest Atalantis, whom the waves
Have buried deep, and thou of later name
Imperial Eldorado roofed with gold:
Shadows to which, despite all shocks of Change,
All on-set of capricious Accident,
Men clung with yearning Hope which would not die.
As when in some great City where the walls
Shake, and the streets with ghastly faces thronged
(Tennyson, "Timbuctoo" 191; 22-29)

The poem describes the city as a place of hope, filled with beauties from all around the world. The two poems reflect how the city has been perceived in poetry both as a disaster-prone and an auspicious place for humankind. Likewise, in *Maud* (1855), his monodrama, Tennyson describes the speaker's relationship to a girl named Maud and makes use of the city to describe "the nightmarish state of mind" of the speaker (Thesing 28-29):

Below me, there, is the village, and looks how quiet and small!
And yet bubbles o'er like a city, with gossip, scandal, and spite;
And Jack on his ale-house bench has as many lies as a Czar;
And here on the landward side, by a red rock, glimmers the Hall;
And up in the high Hall-garden I see her pass like a light;
But sorrow seize me if ever that light be my leading star!
(Tennyson, *Maud* 528-529; 1.4.2.107-112)

The speaker of the poem describes the city as a beautiful place from a distance which evokes a feeling of sorrow in the heart of the persona. The city is a place where "gossip, scandal, and spite" hangs in the air (*Maud* 528-529; 1.4.2. line 108). Although these poems are categorised as city poems by Thesing, as the present study will examine the influence of real cities, these cities of the imagination will not be studied in detail.

On the other side of the Atlantic poets like Whitman and Sandburg were depicting real cities as a means of commenting on the American society. In the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century, Walt Whitman's "Crossing Brooklyn Ferry" (1856) and Carl Sandburg's "Chicago" (1914) refer to real cities in the United States by describing certain landmarks in the city and illustrate the relationship between the individual and the city. In "Crossing Brooklyn Ferry" (1856) Whitman's persona declares his admiration for the citizens of Manhattan as they walk in the streets of the metropolis and feels that he is spiritually connected to every individual:

The similitudes of the past and those of the future,
 The glories strung like beads on my smallest sights and hearings, on
 the
 walk in the street and the passage over the river,
 The current rushing so swiftly and swimming with me far away,
 The others that are to follow me, the ties between me and them,
 The certainty of others, the life, love, sight, hearing of others.
 (Whitman, "Crossing Brooklyn Ferry" 8-12)

For Whitman's persona, New York is the cradle of civilization and a place where generations of Americans build together an idyllic city. Manhattan is a place in the poem where the past, present, and future co-exist simultaneously; it becomes a medium in which past and present generations meet. That is to say, the city becomes a shared experience between the persona and the people he observes in the streets. He feels connected to the other citizens of Manhattan as he was once part of the same community: "I too lived, Brooklyn of ample hills was mine, / I too walk'd the streets of Manhattan island, and bathed in the waters around it" (Whitman, "Crossing" 57-58). The references to the real city serve as an indicator of a shared experience of the city; like the people he observes the persona has tread the same paths, experienced the city in the same manner. By depicting the real city, the poet evokes a sense of belonging in the mind of the reader. Additionally, Whitman's persona views the city not only as the sum of its people and architecture, but as the future of the nation; the development of the city means a stronger economy and in turn a powerful nation: "Thrive, cities – bring your freight, bring your shows, ample and sufficient rivers, / Expand, being than which none else is perhaps more spiritual, / Keep your places, objects than which none else is more lasting" (Whitman, "Crossing" 123-125). In other words, Whitman constructs a hopeful, model image of Manhattan Island that

embodies physical descriptions of the city filled with people from all ages. In other words, his New York becomes a celestial city.

However, American poets did not always praise their cities. Carl Sandburg, for instance, viewed the city as a sinful, dangerous place in which innocent country boys are lured by the “painted women” in the city filled with corruption: “They tell me you are wicked and I believe them, for I have seen your painted women under the gas lamps luring the farm boys. / And they tell me you are crooked and I answer: Yes, it is true I have seen the gunman kill and go free to kill again.” (Sandburg 6-7). Sandburg’s persona addresses a hellish industrial city in which citizens are swallowed up by its cunningness. Moreover, the constant “Building, breaking, rebuilding” (Sandburg 17) of the city and its urban development may be regarded as a reference to the ongoing cycle of people arriving to the city only to end up being consumed by it.

Overall, these representations of the city may be regarded as a reconstruction of the city and each new representation seems to accumulate and form new meanings of the city. As Eluned Summers-Bremner in her essay “Unreal City and Dream Deferred” argues, the representations of any city, once expressed, transform all “geographies” into “psycho-geographies,” interactive settings that are shaped by the cultural history and myths and the experiences of the writer-traveller (Summers-Bremner 262). Pound and Eliot may be regarded as such poets who implemented their psychogeographies of London into their poetry which, in Heller’s words, moved away from the “mostly agrarian” and “pastoral allegorical gentility” viewpoint of their contemporaries and re-introduced the modern city into modernist poetry (Heller 92).

Modernism and the City

In the twentieth century cities occupied the minds of intellectuals, writers, and artists from around the world and were centres for numerous movements, including modernism. These “polyglot cities,” in Bradbury’s words, played an important role in the formation of modernism as they attracted intellectuals from around the world; they were places where cultural and intellectual interactions were highest in this historical period (Bradbury, “The Cities of Modernism” 96). In the twentieth century,

as Heller argues, especially with the rise of modernism, the city was no longer in conflict with the creative forces of the rural setting (Heller 94). Instead, it was regarded as “continually generative” and the home of a “plethora of poetics;” the flourishing of new movements including Imagism, Vorticism, Dadaism, and other -isms, poetic experiments, genres and perspectives which showed writers and artists that the city could be a place where possibilities were open-ended and the tradition of “non-tradition” could be practiced (Heller 94). In Harding’s opinion, one of the reasons for the popularity of the cities was the existence of printing culture which facilitated the printing of numerous periodicals that were associated with modernist literature (Harding 226). These cities not only harboured the “traditional cultural and artistic centres, places of art, learning and ideas” but also became places that new ideas and artistic movements could be generated and shaped (Bradbury, “Cities” 96-97). That is to say, these “polyglot” cities became places in which old and new ideas could be juxtaposed, challenged, and re-evaluated, which arguably was the way modernist poetics was established in most cities. This cultural interaction enabled cities such as Berlin, Vienna, Moscow, St. Petersburg, London, Zürich, Chicago, New York, and Paris, among many others, to become “polyglot” cities of modernism, which were cosmopolitan in nature, and transnational in their influence.

In fact, in the 1890s, London had already become a meeting point for poets as it was teeming with poets who reacted against the Romantic and Victorian poetry and advocated instead new modes of writing poetry. As Perkins remarks in *A History of Modern Poetry* (1976), while American poets in the 1890s predominantly followed the Romantic and Victorian traditions, England had “a strong, rebellious, avant-garde poetry” (Perkins 4). These avant-garde poets which included the Aesthetes, Decadents, Symbolists, and Impressionists may be regarded as the foundations for the flourishing of modernist poetry as they all rejected the “nineteenth century mentality and the habits of verse associated with it” (Perkins 4).

The prevalent poetic tradition of the nineteenth century echoed the mainstream mid-Victorian belief towards human progress and the supremacy of nature; thus, in poetry, nature was depicted as inspirational, aesthetically appealing, and celestial and the personal utterance of the poet was valued over poetic tradition (Perkins 5, 30). In contrast, in the 1890s, the Aesthetes maintained that art was not a

complementing element of nature as the Romantics claimed but was in conflict with nature. In other words, their motto “art for art’s sake” not only argued for the supremacy of art but also claimed that its artifice was in opposition with nature and that its goal was not to imitate the latter (Perkins 32, 36). Thus Gautier could imagine red prairies or blue trees which stressed the contrast between nature and art (Perkins 36). Decadents on the other hand reacted against Victorian optimism with their choice of depicting ugly, morbid, or perverse subjects to construct a “strange new beauty” as seen in Baudelaire’s *Les Fleurs du Mal* (Perkins 33, 44). Perkins argues that the decadent writer regarded himself “as the late product of an overripe civilization, jaded, bored, and no longer capable of natural emotion” (Perkins 44). Thus, he sought after depicting “monstrous, or perverse emotions and sensations” in his poetry (Perkins 44). As Perkins points out, after the publications of *The Symbolist Movement in Literature* (1899) by Arthur Symons and *Ideas of Good and Evil* (1903) by W. B. Yeats, the French *Symbolistes* such as Baudelaire and Mallarmé had an impact on British writers (Perkins 47-48). While Yeats claimed that the symbol was an accumulation of a word’s inexhaustible meanings, Symons argued that their use of symbols was an attempt of making evident “the soul of things” by juxtaposing inherent connotations and associations of words (Perkins 50-51). In the light of Perkins’s analysis of the works of Yeats and Symons, it may be inferred that Pound’s use of ideograms followed the Yeatsian interpretation of symbols and Eliot’s use of mythic method and the objective correlative made use of Symons’s explanation. Another late-nineteenth-century poetic mode was Impressionism which, like Symbolism, was listed under the Decadent movement in 1893; however, at the end of the 1890s both movements had branched out and formed distinctive features (Perkins 52-53). Similar to the claims of Aesthetes on art being in conflict with nature, Impressionist poets chose the “artifice and perversity” of the urban setting over a wholesome portrayal of nature (Perkins 54). As Perkins remarks, Impressionists sought after portraying a visual impression without commenting on it or revealing the poet’s emotions (Perkins 57). Moreover, he further underscores the similarities between Impressionism and Imagism. Accordingly, poets in both movements strove for direct presentation by the use of accurate, concrete descriptions and economy of language and made use of free verse (Perkins 59). On the other hand, they differed in

their choice of subject matter. While Impressionists presented an impression of a scene in motion, Imagists focused on a single, static image (Perkins 59). Taking into account Perkins's detailed descriptions of these movements, one may infer that the literary scene in London was a vivid and active one in which Pound and Eliot may have found the latent foundations for innovating poetic diction by using these earlier models and juxtaposing them to various other movements in literature. In other words, the London literary circle from the 1890s onwards was already responding to and reacting against the mainstream Romantic and Victorian modes of writing poetry which allowed Pound and Eliot to likewise criticize. As it will be discussed in the second and third chapters, Pound and Eliot not only reacted against the Romantic and Victorian poetic modes, but also against these –isms discussed above as well as the American Genteel tradition (Perkins 138). That is, they blended all these poetic modes to construct their vision for a new modernist poetics.

Therefore, at the end of the nineteenth century, London had become a meeting point for intellectuals and for the English-speaking world; it was *the* capital city to be in as an artist or writer. As Perkins asserts, unlike in the United States, writers in England were able to gather in a particular city:

By the end of the century, [...] virtually the whole literary life of England was concentrated in London. Hence the poets came into contact, and were well aware of each other's work. In the United States, on the other hand, there was no literary center in the same degree, and the better poets tended to form their styles on their own. (Perkins 14)

As Bradbury remarks in "London 1890-1920," at the end of the nineteenth century London was "a city of radical contrasts" where stability was on the surface and "fluidity and strangeness" beneath (Bradbury, "London 1890-1920" 180). This conflicting nature of London made it a popular city to be represented in literature:

[...] the London cityscape, as a scene and a set of social contrasts, becomes important literary subject-matter and the source of new forms. One reason for this was that, like many of their fellow men, writers were being urbanized, following the tide of metropolitan migration, feeling those emotions of isolation and separation, despair and hope that characterize the city life. (Bradbury, "London" 181-182)

Bradbury further claims that the urbanised artist turned to the city in his subject matter as a form of “reading” the modern culture (Bradbury, “London” 182). The urban artist was “encapsulated” in the city - and planned to stay in it - and attempted to “catch” the city “at its mixture of onerous reality and strange unreality, its unexpected forms and masses; its odd disjunctions, fleeting exchanges, inviting corruptions” (Bradbury, “London” 182). In the light of Bradbury’s remarks, it may be argued that London became a popular city also for writers arriving from other countries and they described the city through the eyes of a foreigner trying to make his way in this vast metropolis. Especially for American writers and poets, London and Paris were the two cities in which they resided in search for innovation. As Bradbury underscores, self-imposed or forced emigration and exile have been one of the criterions to have been considered as “modernist” as most members travelled extensively for artistic purposes (Bradbury, “Cities” 101).

As Augustine remarks, even though the city had always been partly used as a setting and “topos” in nineteenth-century literature, it was not until the twentieth-century modernist writers that the city was re-introduced as a subject to explore the psychological effect of the relationship between the individual and the city (Augustine 73). Moreover, in the early twentieth century, as Jessica Berman points out, the developments in cultural geography as a field of study led to the emergence of questions about space to be explored (Berman 281). Thus, the nineteenth century era of exploration and mapmaking addressed questions of “human-landscape interaction, migration, and the relationships among human developments over time” which positioned geography as a science of “temporal and spatial dimensions” when high modernists were exploring issues of race and identity (Berman 281-282). Particularly between 1910 and World War II, as Berman illustrates, modernists voiced concerns over “location, mapping, center and periphery, and race and identity” which were similar to the inquiries of cultural geographers (Berman 285). She argues that modernist writers made use of geography in general to “escape the constraints of borders,” borders of nationhood, race, identity, gender, and including, the limits of literary conventions, creating a sense of a “cosmopolitan geography” (Berman 296).

These developments in cultural geography and the rise of cities as cultural centres led modernist writers to swarm into these modern capitals; but the spatial turn, for them, also became a way to explore the conventions of writing literature. They took the city as their example for revolutionising language and poetics. For instance, Monroe Spears in *Dionysus and the City* (1970) underlines the significance of the city for modernist writers. In his opinion, poets like Pound and Eliot regarded the physical city as a potential poetic device which enabled a break from conceptual borders, namely traditional forms of art and literature (Spears 20-22). As Spears points out, for modernism, “discontinuity” is a keyword that refers to the break from the past, experimentations in narrative techniques, deviations from accepted notions of time and space and the moving away from the aesthetic understanding of the past (Spears 20-29). Accordingly, one of modernism’s defining elements was its use of juxtaposition, which in Brian Robinson’s opinion was rendered by the fragmented experience of the setting. This image of the fragmented city in his opinion assisted writers to transgress national and locational borders. As Robinson remarks in the following passage:

In a nutshell, modernism’s main characteristic is that it pluralizes by means of juxtaposition and, in order to do this, it relies less on experience in a defined environment than on fragmentation of experience in settings that may be difficult to define. (Robinson 187)

It can be inferred from Robinson’s words that modernist literature made use of the city because it was a powerful symbol that inherently embodied the “discontinuities” modernists tried to describe. In Spears’s opinion, the city was an important symbol of modernity that reflects the experience and emotions of the modern man (Spears 74). It is the embodiment of his anonymity, rootlessness, anxiety, insecurity; in other words, the modern man feels he is cut off from his human relations, his past, and his belief (Spears 74). Thus, the modern man is, in Spears’s words, “the typical citizen of Megalopolis, where he enjoys lethal and paralyzing traffic, physical decay and political corruption, racial and economic tension, crime, rioting, and police brutality” (Spears 74). He maintains that it was this atmosphere that influenced writers to write about the city, the literal and fictional impressions of the city blended into one another to convey an ambiguous representation (Spears 74). It may be inferred from Spears’s remarks that one of the main concerns of modernist writing was about the

physical vastness of the metropolis in which people worked and lived in masses, diminishing their individuality; hence, they felt alienated from the city that was, as Johnston rightfully remarks, indifferent to the sufferings of the individual (Johnston 162).

One may therefore, argue that specifically making use of city poetry, or poetry of place, modernist poets addressed the relationship between man and his environment. Moreover, their portrayal of this relationship may have enabled them to explicate the principles of modernist writing. To this end, the multitudinous ways of depicting the city in poetry, as Davidson maintains, could only be combined with the urban experience of the modernist writers through the use of “collage” as it enabled them to represent simultaneously the history of the city, its literature, and the impressions of the modernist writers, aspiring to become the most recent representation of the city (I. Davidson 8). In his opinion, modernist poets used techniques such as collage and cut-ups to defamiliarize the readers and force them into re-examining the pre-established “paradigmatic and syntagmatic relationships” (I. Davidson 11). In other words, the aim of modernist experimentation was to manipulate readers into questioning the conventions of literature, and it may be claimed that this process of defamiliarization was similar to the changes in the urban environment, which led modernists to use the city as their material. The process, as Davidson states, affords a break from the conventions of literature and to re-evaluate new ways of “presenting knowledge about the world” for the writer (I. Davidson 11). Thus, the term spatial aesthetics may be defined as a blending of the physical space and the representations of space which Davidson argues to be a piecing together of concrete and abstract spaces by the use of spatial metaphors, thus enabling artists and writers to express the possibility of various spaces to coexist and overlap (I. Davidson 23).

In order to express these concerns, modernist writers and painters experimented with spatial aesthetics, and in Davidson’s words, sought “to create ‘free’ space in which new ideas could be developed and explored through the combination of ideas and objects otherwise held apart” (I. Davidson 23). In Lehan’s opinion, the search for new methods to express “subjectivity” led modernist writers to explore their relationship to their environment, which resulted in multi-layered

histories of narratives about the cities (Lehan 5). In the works published in the early twentieth century, Davidson draws attention to the use of fragmentation implied by the collage technique, which helped writers to juxtapose new connections within language (I. Davidson 14). Davidson's remark is especially valid in relation to Pound's and Eliot's work as their experiments in language by using collage, similarly, enabled them to make language and literary conventions new. Their use of fragments from various sources convey a polyphony of voices and perspectives that are also present in what Davidson calls "the process of collage" that imply a "lost and discoverable unity" in their poems (I. Davidson 14). It may be argued that Pound and Eliot in addition to other modernists included images of the city and urban forms into their poems as a means of representing a whole culture and its history.

In the beginning of the twentieth century, as Daiches remarks, the expectations of the readers were conventional; they would expect poems to be dream-like contemplations that painted an image of the poet's emotions in the mind of the reader, or about traditionally "poetic" subjects, by using "beautiful-sounding words" (Daiches 107). In Daiches's opinion, it was the Georgians and the Imagists, early in the twentieth century who had at first challenged these ideas, but it was not until modernist writers that the poetic tradition was openly attacked (Daiches 107). The poets who made use of the spatial aesthetics, as Davidson claims, are usually involved in "international and specifically internationalist movements" due to their active involvement with social and political issues (I. Davidson 27), as seen in Pound's and Eliot's case.

London in the twentieth century had already entered the novels of British writers which included Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway* (1925), E. M. Forster's *Howard's End* (1910), and Ford Madox Ford's *The Soul of London* (1905), as will be discussed in Chapter One. Pound and Eliot contributed to this new image of London with their representations and used it as part of their modernist poetics. It may be argued that mode of writing poetry did not only illustrate the break from earlier techniques in writing poetry but also a break from the traditional responses to the city. As Spears remarks, by the time modernist poetry emerged in London, late Edwardian poetry was still using conventional form and subject matter and was popular among readers, and the change brought with modernism, therefore, Pound's

and Eliot's poems about London would present a stark contrast (Spears 111). One may argue that when Pound and Eliot moved to London, they were exposed to the twentieth century London which English novelists were already describing and responded to this image of the city. What Bradbury defines as the "grafting" of European and American tendencies of writing onto "the English tradition," may thus be followed in their works (Bradbury, "London" 175-177). Thus, their representations of the city in their poetry may be a demonstration of the "grafting" of their impressions of the city, the works of their English contemporaries, and the literary history of the city through the use of collage and fragments, which reshaped the poetics of modernist poetry. Although Pound and Eliot were neither the only literary figures of influence nor the only foreigners in London, in their essays they seem to intentionally emphasise what they regarded to be an urgent need to replace older, traditional ways of expression with new ways in order to revolutionise poetic language and thus to attribute great significance to their experiments and their own poetics. In the light of spatial approaches, Ezra Pound's and T. S. Eliot's representations of London in their poetry and their use of the persona will be studied as a means to discuss the ways that their own aesthetic has shaped their modernist poetics. Therefore, the texts in the following chapters have been selected for their use of physical references to London in order to trace the influence of the city in poetry.

CHAPTER ONE: LONDON IN LITERATURE

1.1 “London, thou art of townes A per se⁵” Poetry of London

The poem “London, thou art of townes A per se” portrays London in the early sixteenth century as an unmatched city among its rivals, which may be regarded as exemplary of the prevalent attitude towards the city. The representations of London in poetry date back to the Middle Ages, and they have continuously changed as the city underwent its transformation. These representations of the city, taken together, map out a literary cartography of the city. From mercantile to metropolis, London would be rebuilt and reassembled for centuries until it became the ‘living archive of English culture.’ When Pound and Eliot arrived in London, they would retrieve and re-construct this culture for the purpose of devising a new poetic language. In the present chapter a review of the history of London and a chronological survey of the representations of London by English and American writers will be provided. This survey will not only show the ever-changing nature of the representations of London in literature but also demonstrate how these changes are related to the urban development of the city. As such, it will establish a foundation for the discussion of how Pound and Eliot made use of these representations and altered them as a means of demonstrating the need for new modes of expression in the twentieth century. They believed that such a process of alteration, in turn, would not only incorporate modernist representations of London and English society in poetry, but would also metaphorically re-establish the English literary tradition through a reassessment of the English language. As their essays reveal, Pound and Eliot argued that the language of poetry belonged to the Victorian age and needed to be modernised (Pound, “How to Read” 17; Eliot, “Social Function of Poetry” 25). Pound’s interest in Imagism and Vorticism and Eliot’s emphasis on a mythical method may be regarded as products of these experiments in revolutionising language. Their essays, as well as their poetry, which will be explored in the second and third chapters, may be regarded as a demonstration of their endeavours in re-shaping literary representations, the literary tradition, and the English language.

⁵ The quotation is taken from “London, thou art of townes A per se.” *London: A History in Verse*, pp. 56-58.

To this end, the focus of the survey that follows will be the representations of London in poetry and the urban developments of the city, which will reveal the major thematic and symbolic meanings the city attains during the course of its history. The representations used in the present chapter will be used to establish the ways that the various themes in city poetry discussed in the Introduction may also be traced in the representations of London. The urban history of London's development from a small town to a great, cosmopolitan, transnational metropolis demonstrates some of the significant historical changes the city has undergone and is juxtaposed with the poems written in the same period to show the ways that the meaning of the city oscillates in different centuries from celestial to infernal, by foregrounding either its architecture, its people, or its cultural significance as the heart of the nation.

The poems selected for the present chapter are poems written by English poets as well as American writers and those which depict London by referring to the physical characteristics of the city. These American writers, which include Edgar Allan Poe, Washington Irving, Nathaniel Hawthorne, and Henry James, may be regarded as the initiators of a long tradition of American intellectuals writing about London. They represent, for the present study, the transnational feature of London which differs from the perspective of the English writers. Since Pound and Eliot were not the first Americans who visited London and their foreign perspective is subject to examination, the aforementioned writers will be used to illustrate the ways Pound and Eliot infiltrated the English tradition with the American perspective in writing about the city in their poetry. Thus, Pound and Eliot were able to capture the essence of the cosmopolitan, transnational metropolis London had become. That is to say, Pound and Eliot were introducing another layer to the already existent literary cartography of the city in poetry, namely that of the foreigner's perspective to the representations of London in modernist poetry.

1.2 From Merchant Town to Metropolis: History of London and its Literary Representations

Medieval historian David M. Palliser and urban historian Derek Keene maintain that the urban heritage of London owes much to the urban infrastructure established by the Romans, even though there are traces of ancient forms of

settlement where London is situated today (Palliser 24; Keene 187). From the Roman settlements until the declaration of Westminster as the true capital of the English nation in the Middle Ages, London transformed from a merchant's town into a cosmopolitan medieval city. From all around Europe, French, Italian, Scandinavian, and Jewish merchants, among many others, traded goods on the shores of Thames (Keene 197-198). In addition to the merchants, London received groups of craftsmen, manufacturers, goldsmiths, sculptors, die-cutters, metalworkers, embroiderers from Europe (Keene 200). Initially prohibited from settling into the inner quarters of the city, by the end of the fourteenth century, these foreigners had gained privileges, including residential rights and citizenship, and even established quarters and neighbourhoods in the City (Keene 198-201). Especially between the fourteenth and sixteenth centuries, as London historian Caroline Barron observes, although only two percent of the population were foreigners, they played a significant role in the development of culture (Barron 402). Moreover, some of these foreigners, especially Italians, provided finance to the royalty and contributed to the establishing of foreign affairs (Barron 401). London by the mid-sixteenth century had not only become the capital of finance and politics, but also of entertainment and culture for English society and travellers from Europe (Barron 410). London's cosmopolitan nature was therefore already established in the Middle Ages, and for these foreigners it had become in Keene's words a "meeting place" and a land of opportunities (Keene 216). Apart from the changing demographics in the city, by the end of the Middle Ages, the panorama of London was already displaying signs that the city had become a unique place. In addition to famous landmarks like Westminster, St. Paul's and London Bridge, new buildings including the Tower of London, Guildhall and Leadenhall (the arcades of London), Benedictine abbeys, Augustinian houses, friaries populated the skyline of the city (Barron 398). It may be argued that London was depicted as a place of celestial beauty in literature due to all these developments in the city, in addition to political and historical developments. Especially in the early sixteenth century, during Henry VII's reign, London was depicted as unmatched among other cities. To illustrate, "London, thou art of townes A per se" (c1500), contrasts London with its ancient and contemporary rival cities and likens it to the most valuable flower, the rose, among other flowers:

Gemme of all joy, jasper of jocunditie,
 Most mighty carbuncle of vertue and valour,
 Strong Troy in vigour and in strenuytie;
 Of royall cities rose and geraflour;
 Empresse of townes, exalt in honour,
 In beawtie beryng the crone imperiall,
 Swete paradise precelling in pleasure:
 London, thou art the flour of Cities all.

(“London, thou art of townes” 56; 17-24)

The use of flowers instead of urban images, demonstrates the presence of pastoral imagery in depicting the city. For a long time credited to William Dunbar⁶, “London, thou art of townes A per se” refers to London as a unique place compared to its rivals Paris, Venice, and Florence (“London thou art” line 51). The poem praises London as the “New Troy,” which links the city to its mythical past⁷ (“London thou art” 9) which distinguishes the city from others and foregrounds some of the significant features and landmarks including the London Bridge, the river Thames, its churches and swans (“London thou art” 9, 25, 28, 33).

Although the poem does not explicitly reveal the persona’s relationship to the city, Ralph Hanna claims that the presence of “Scots language” in the poem suggests that the persona is a visitor who is from “outside the realm itself” (Hanna 21-22). In the light of Hanna’s words, it may be argued that the poem depicts the city through the eyes of an outsider who admires not only the landmarks but also the people within the city and foregrounds the mercantile culture by listing and praising the merchants and the riches of the city (Hanna 21-22). Moreover, the virgins, women, and knights are mentioned to as the most frequent groups of people that live in London which, in Hanna’s opinion, is a unique representation of the city as it draws attention to regular people living in the city, the Londoners, as the true owners of the city instead of royalty (Hanna 22).

Although in the early sixteenth century London was portrayed as a beautiful place by describing its citizens and its important landmarks, Edmund Spencer, in the

⁶ Ralph Hanna underscores that the text used to be associated with William Dunbar, but recently his authorship on the text has been discredited. For further information; see Hanna 19.

⁷ Gillian Tindall in her review of *Brutus of Troy and the Quest for the Ancestry of the British* (2016) by Anthony Adolph remarks that Brutus of Troy is regarded as the founder of London.

late sixteenth century depicted a celestial city by foregrounding the river Thames and its surroundings in “Prothalamion” (1596):

Along the shore of silver streaming Thames,
 Whose ruddy bank, the which his river hems,
 Was painted all with variable flowers,
 And all the meads adorned with dainty gems,
 Fit to deck maidens’ bowers,
 And crown their paramours,
 Against the bridal day, which is not long:
 Sweet Thames, run softly, till I end my song. (Spenser 76; 11-18)

Spenser describes the Thames riverbank surrounded with beautiful flowers as if it was a wedding day. This image of London as a perfect city creates a celestial setting for the poem which is reminiscent of pastoral poems of the past. Like “London, thou art of townes,” the flowers convey the city as an Edenic place. Although Spenser’s selection of pastoral images to describe the city may be said to be avoiding the description of the urban landscape, the city decorated with flowers shows its significance as the heart of the nation.

On the other hand, Robert Herrick, in the mid-seventeenth century, at the time of the Commonwealth, depicted London by foregrounding urban elements to portray the city as a unique, idyllic place. His poems “His Tears to Thamasis” (1648) and “His Return to London” (1648), in particular, foreground the significance of London for the Londoner. To illustrate, in “His Tears to Thamasis” he describes the city through the eyes of a Londoner who longs to see the prominent landmarks of the city once again:

I send, I send here my supremest kiss
 To thee, my silver-footed Thamasis.
 No more shall I reiterate thy Strand,
 ...
 No more shall I along thy crystal glide,
 In barge (with boughs and rushes beautified)
 With soft-smooth virgins (for our chaste disport)
 To Richmond, Kingston, and to Hampton Court.
 (Herrick, “His Tears” 148; lines 1-3, 7-11)

The persona lists a number of landmarks and locations in the city to declare that he will miss seeing these attractions when he leaves London. The persona who is exiled from the city bids farewell to the renowned places of the city to show the devotion he

feels for the city. In contrast, the second poem “His Return to London,” describes the Londoner returning to the city and depicts his eagerness he “flies” back to his homeland after being in exile (Herrick, “His Return” 1766; 3-4). He describes how he has missed the place, the people, and the manners that are all designed to please people (Herrick, “His Return” 1767; 9). From his portrayal one may deduce that London is comprised of its landmarks, its people, and their mannerisms, which are the things that make London a place to be longed for. Moreover, the persona’s attitude positions the city as an exemplary city for the rest of the world. For instance, the Londoner describes himself to be “a free-born Roman” and claims that he has the birth right to call himself a Londoner. Additionally, the way in which the persona describes London is noteworthy in the sense that he personifies the city as an enchanted being and desires to be “repossessed” by it:

I am a freeborn Roman; suffer then,
That I amongst you live a citizen.
London my home is, though by hard fame sent
Into a long irksome banishment;
Yet since called back; henceforward let me be,
O native country, repossessed by thee!

(Herrick, “His Return” 1767; 11-16)

For the persona, London is a magical, bewitching place that “possesses” its citizens as if they are under a spell. To show his admiration for the city, he declares that he prefers death over returning to Devonshire, his place of exile. In other words, the persona is ready to sacrifice his life for the city. As the preceding poems indicate, before the Great Fire, the representations of London portrayed the city as a celestial place either by comparing it to other cities or by likening it to nature. In the following centuries London was envisioned differently as the city attained complex characteristics.

From the mid-sixteenth century to the beginning of the eighteenth century, London evolved, in social historian Jeremy Boulton’s words, from “a modest capital city” into the largest metropolis in Europe (Boulton 315). During this transition, Britain had become one of the most powerful empires and had acquired its significant position in global politics (Boulton 315). Moreover, London was also becoming one of the intellectual capitals of Europe. Especially during the

Restoration, the printing of books and newspapers had become cheaper, which enabled a larger part of the population to access pamphlets, periodicals, newspapers, and other literary sources. Furthermore, the coffee houses enabled not only the literate but also the illiterate to participate in the “metropolitan cultural life” in the city (Boulton 330).

Another significant modification in the city was due to a fire that led to the redevelopment of London. In 1666, the Great Fire of London was one of the most significant changes to the image of the city; as James Kunstler remarks in *The City in Mind* (2001), two-thirds of the city was reduced to ashes (Kunstler 226). After the fire, London underwent long years of urban development, a period which, as he claims, was an immense “opportunity to reorder urban life” (Kunstler 227). As architectural historian David Watkin states, the new plans for the city were designed by Sir Christopher Wren, who modelled the city after the Baroque style of Versailles, which Charles II admired (Watkin 335). However, most of Wren’s designs were abandoned for being “too radical” and the city became a combination of the old narrow streets and new buildings (Watkin 336). Even though Wren’s initiation of Baroque planning was not immediately implemented, over the years, Baroque architecture in London was used by other architects like Nicholas Hawksmoor who combined architectural elements of the antique world with Baroque architecture to remove its Catholic presence (Watkin 349). These changes in London may be said to illustrate the extent in which the city was redesigned in a way that differentiated it from other European cities with its unique English-Baroque style after the Great Fire. This uniqueness was later used as a metaphor for the growing power of the British Empire in the world. Therefore, in *Annus Mirabilis: The Year of Wonders, 1666* (1667) John Dryden portrayed London as unmatched on a global scale.

The poem continues in the tradition of depicting London as a beautiful and attractive city. Dryden describes London as “the city of the universe” by mentioning its growing economic and political presence in the world and envisions London to be peerless among other cities (Dryden 57; 163.651). In the poem, he likens London to a phoenix which will arise from its ashes even stronger than before and alludes to the Great Fire:

Yet, London, empress of the northern clime,
 By an high fate thou greatly didst expire;
 Great as the world's, which at the death of time
 Must fall, and rise a nobler frame by fire. (Dryden 65; 212.845-848)

The reconstructed city, according to the persona, will be a much nobler and more beautiful city; more valuable than gold and silver (Dryden line 1172). Moreover, he states that New London will see service by the east and west, meaning that the East and the West will be her servants which emphasises England's growing imperial power due to its crucial role in the discovery of new places and establishing of settlements around the world. To demonstrate this, Dryden makes use of comparisons between London and other cities in Europe, and describes Thames as having more trade ships than Tagus, Rhine and Seine all joined:

The wealthy Tagus, and the wealthier Rhine,
 The glory of their towns shall no more boast;
 And Seine, that would with Belgian rivers join,
 Shall find her luster stained and traffic lost.

(Dryden 78-79; 299.1193-1196)

London is depicted as an immortal phoenix ready to rise from its ashes to its utmost potential to become the centre of the world. Additionally, Dryden reassures the reader that the newly constructed city would prove to be greater than its previous state and the city shall be admired and will surpass any other city. Furthermore, not only will the newly constructed London be a city everyone envies, but also it will be the centre of power due to the mercantile opportunities it offers. One may deduce from this example that the development of the city parallels Britain's increasing significance in global politics and economy, which is demonstrated by a comparison with other great cities of powerful countries in the poem.

The growing economic and imperial power of Britain also resulted in the changing demographics of the city. From the seventeenth century onwards, London continued to receive immigrants who were settling in particular neighbourhoods based on their nationalities, which formed, as Schwarz describes, a "kaleidoscope of neighborhoods" and in Boulton's words, fragmented "cultural ghettos" in the city (Schwarz 647; Boulton 332). As Boulton remarks, London was the "melting pot" of the nation where "localism and provincial insularity" could be appropriated with the cosmopolitan culture of the metropolis (Boulton 343). However, this was also the

time when the London was economically divided into the West and East sides which reflected class inequality in the city (Boulton 320). Additionally, due to the rapid expansion of the city, especially after the eighteenth century, the city was depicted as a chaotic place by poets who highlighted the poor infrastructure of its filthy streets and its immoral citizens. These changes in the new city resulted in critiques of city life during the age of Enlightenment by poets like Jonathan Swift, Alexander Pope, John Gay, and Samuel Johnson.

In addition to the urban development the city underwent and the demographic changes, the literary conventions of the nation were also changing. To illustrate, the Neoclassical age translations of Classical works introduced English writers to earlier examples of describing the landscape; the georgic, the topographical poem, and the eclogue were used to depict these atrocities of London by filtering, in Brean Hammond's words, "the rural, agricultural sensibilities of those genres through urban templates of experience" (Hammond 76). These Classical forms of poetry depicted man's relationship with the land he inhabited and his agrarian experience became the model for the eighteenth century poets to reflect on their urban experience (Johnston 6-7). In other words, these poets would make use of the city as their subject and use these earlier poetic forms of describing the landscape to address the problems of urban life. Hammond argues that satire and the city are "in natural alliance" because the physical deficiencies of the city provided a ground for the critique of the human condition (Hammond 71). Moreover, in his opinion, London's rising population, socioeconomic relations and rising domination over other towns enabled writers to regard the city either as a place to be praised for its beauties or a place to be criticised for its inherent problems resulting from class inequalities, poverty, filth, and sinful ways of living (Hammond 71).

In the early 1700s, in contrast to the earlier representations of London as an idyllic, celestial city described by Spenser, Herrick and Dryden, it was viewed as an unpleasant place filled with corruption in the poems of Jonathan Swift, Alexander Pope, John Gay, and Samuel Johnson. The latter group of poets described London overcrowded with people, lurking with sin, danger, and filth in the streets among many other atrocities. Jonathan Swift, for instance, in "A Description of a City Shower" (1710) portrays the sinful, filthy city by depicting the image of a rainy day

in London. The poem describes groups of people in London trying to get away from the rain. While a wide range of people from different occupations are listed in the poem, their shared desire of escaping from rain is emphasised (Swift, “A Description of a City Shower” 114; 50-52). As Johnston states, the poem can be regarded as an attempt to use the georgic form, which replaces the rural features of the georgic with urban elements (Johnston 42). Moreover, he claims that Swift’s poem is an attempt to represent the city in its entirety:

Swift has unlocked a moment in the street life of London – a typical moment which encompasses the morning “business” of people high and low, good and bad. Corruption and deceit abound in this quick glimpse of the awakened city, but their matter-of-fact intermixture with what might be thought of as “normal” or necessary activities [...] illustrates how completely this intermixture has been accepted by the actors as “normal” even routine in everyday life. (Johnston 43)

In the light of Johnston’s statement, it may be argued that Swift’s “A Description of a City Shower,” is an attempt of constructing a complete representation of London by foregrounding the citizens of London from various classes. In addition to the descriptions of the people, the filth-ridden aspects of the city depicted in the poem establishes an undivided image of the city. To illustrate, in the poem the heavy rain results in a flood and brings out all the filthy things hidden in the sewers of London to the surface. Swift’s use of the nauseating details of things including “dung,” “guts,” and “blood” from butcher shops and “dead cats” emerging from the sewers, constructs an unattractive image of the city as the rain, instead of cleansing the city, further contaminates it. One may claim that the persona is a Londoner as he claims that these items can be traced back to the street they originate from, and names a number of streets in the poem which suggests that he knows the city well:

Now from all parts the swelling kennels flow,
And bear their trophies with them, as they go:
Filth of all hues and odours seem to tell
What street they sailed from, by their sight and smell.
They, as each torrent drives with rapid force,
From Smithfield or St. 'Pulchre's shape their course,
And in huge confluence *joined at Snow Hill ridge,*
Fall from the conduit prone *to Holborn-bridge.*
Sweepings from butcher’s stalls, dung, guts and blood,
Drowned puppies, stinking sprats, all drenched in mud,

Dead cats, and turnip-tops, come tumbling down the flood.
(Swift, "A Description" 114; 53-63; emphasis added)

By tracing the items emerging out of the sewage system and following them into the Thames Swift draws a "complete" picture of London, which can be similar to walking in the streets of a city. Therefore, although in an unconventional fashion, representing London in its entirety becomes possible in Swift's portrayal of the city. It may be argued that the description of the flooded sewers connecting with the Thames as the main artery that runs through the city resembles a map of the city. This map, re-creates a cartographic image of London which leads the reader to imagine the city in its entirety from a spatial perspective. Moreover, Swift's poem may be regarded as similar to envisioning a map of the city. In contrast to Spenser's depiction of the river Thames ornamented with flowers, Swift replaces them with "dead cats" and "turnip-tops" swimming in the Thames (Swift, "A Description" 114; 63). Although Swift's poem portrays an unpleasant image of London, he achieves this by using the infrastructure of the sewage system, an urban element, to envision the city in its entirety.

Jonathan Swift's portrayal of London by highlighting its unpleasant features describes the city from a street-view perspective to construct the city in a single image, whereas Alexander Pope moves his persona away from the city to portray it from a panoramic distance to create a complete picture. In "Windsor Forest" (1713) Pope compares the forest with the city to claim that both share the "ravish'd" field as their foundation (Pope, "Windsor Forest" 39; 65-67). Similar to Dryden's *Annus Mirabilis*, he envisions London as a celestial city that will accommodate all humanity: "Unbounded Thames shall flow for *all mankind*, / *Whole nations enter with each swelling tide*" (Pope, "Windsor Forest" 49; 398-399; emphasis added). As Johnston remarks, Alexander Pope's "Windsor Forest" description of London shows that he sees the place as a microcosm for England (Johnston 36). In contrast to his utopic portrayal of London, a few years later, in "A Farewell to London in the Year 1715" (1776) he addresses London as a "dear, damned, distracting town" to foreground the misdemeanours and immoralities of the city and its people (Pope, "A Farewell" 694; 1). He bids farewell to everyone in the city, except for John Gay, whom he refers to as a person who loves all mankind without flattering anyone.

Adieu to all but Gay alone,
 Whose soul, sincere and free,
 Loves all mankind, but flatters none,
 And so may starve with me (Pope, "A Farewell" 696; 49-52)

He describes his feelings toward London as "starvation" and hopes that Gay shares the same kind of starvation for a better society which the city lacks (Pope, "A Farewell" 696; 49-52). His representations in the two poems despise and admire London at the same time, which suggests an ambiguous stance for the poet. Additionally, in his poem "The Alley. An Imitation of Spenser" (1736), Pope depicts the streets of the city by foregrounding the corrupt society:

In every town where Thamis rolls his tide,
 ...
 There oft are heard the notes of *infant woe*,
 The *short thick sob*, *loud scream*, and *shriller squall*;
 ...
 And on the broken pavement, here and there,
 Doth many a stinking sprat and herring lie;
 ...
 Such place hath Deptford, navy-building town,
 Woolwich and Wapping, smelling strong of pitch;
 Such Lambeth, envy of each band and gown
 (Pope, "The Alley" 258-259; 1, 5-6, 10-11, 46-48; emphasis added)

In order to describe the city as a chaotic place, Pope makes use of auditory images of the people shouting and crying out of despair in the city which is complemented with the olfactory imagery of odour lurking in the streets with "broken pavements" (Pope, "The Alley" 258; 10). One may argue that the woeful voice of the society, the architecture in ruins, and the atmosphere of the landscape reflects the corruption of the city. In the poem the river Thames may be regarded as a metonymy for Nature, which is portrayed as a witness to the failures of humankind. This portrayal suggests that London has become the new Babylon.

Similarly, John Gay envisions London to be made up of an immoral society that poses a threat to the well-being of the individual. In his poem *Trivia; Or, the Art of Walking the Streets of London* (1716) Gay describes London in minute detail through the eyes of a persona who walks in the streets of London. The poem begins with an invocation to the goddess Trivia; whose name not only refers to trivial, unimportant details but also to the Latin word *trivium* which means "crossroad,

gutter, or the junction of three roads” (“Trivium”). It may be inferred that Gay is evoking the muse of the city to write his poem about London. In the poem the persona is noted to be familiar with his surroundings which suggests that he is from London. He advises that the best way to get around the city is by walking, therefore, he walks in the streets as if he is a guide that shares the secret ‘tricks’ of surviving in the city to the reader. Moreover, the persona advises the reader on the proper attire one should wear while walking in the streets (Gay, *Trivia* lines 41-60). Furthermore, he gives information to the reader on the proper weather to be outside and the proper mannerisms to display when walking in the city (Gay, *Trivia* 327-346). Additionally, in the second book, the persona provides year-round advises for the readers which enables them to envision London in its entirety not only for a day, but for an entire year. This type of portrayal shows that Gay was making use of the georgic form which was used in the past to explain the year-round cultivating practices and adopting it to depict the walking practices in the city. This satire draws a vivid picture of London and Londoners. As Johnston argues, in *Trivia*, John Gay makes use of the “inverted georgic form” to include everything about the city in the form of mockery by relating it to “the art of walking” (Johnston 53). This use of the georgic may be interpreted also as an attempt to grasp the transient nature of the city. That is, by meticulously describing *everything* that makes up the city Gay is able to portray an absolute image of the city. The lively streets described in daytime in the first two books are contrasted in the third book with the dangers waiting in the city at night. Although the poem does not refer to particularly recognizable locations, the experience of walking in the streets of London is conveyed through the perspective of the walking persona, a vagrant, which later may be said to have evolved into the *flâneur* of the nineteenth century. The persona, unlike the nineteenth-century *flâneur*, underlines that his walk through the city is not without an aim:

Consider, Reader, what Fatigues I’ve known,
 The Toils, the Perils of the Wintry Town;
 What Riots seen, what bustling Crowds I bor’d,
 How oft’ I cross’d where Carts and Coaches roar’d;

*Yet shall I bless my Labours, if Mankind
 Their future Safety from my Dangers find.*

(Gay, *Trivia* 3.1265-1270; emphasis added)

Thus it can be concluded that the persona narrates his experiences in the city in order to warn future visitors about awaiting dangers in the city. Although the city is not explicitly described as a place filled with corruption, as in the poetry of Pope and Swift, the persona warns the reader of the potential dangers that one might encounter around the corner in the city. Assuming the role of a guide in the city, the persona enables the reader to envision what it would be like to walk in London in the 1700s. The detailed portrayal of Gay's London may be said to present a heterogeneous representation of the city.

In 1777, Samuel Johnson, said that if a man is "tired of London, he is tired of life" (S. Johnson "London"); however, in a poem written fifty years earlier than his statement, he boldly warns his readers about the sinister dangers in London. Thales, the persona of "London: A Poem" (1738) reveals his desire to leave the corrupt city and his longing to return to Scotland's "purer air" (S. Johnson, "London: A Poem" 61; 6). The persona is a young poet who leaves London because of its degenerate state; he is a city dweller who has become alienated from the urban setting which, in Johnston's opinion, is in contrast with the persona's "moral identity" (Johnston 55). Moreover, the persona disapproves London as the "Common sewer of Paris and Rome" and asks the reader to forgive his use of faulty language and his insults to London as "a French Metropolis" (S. Johnson 63; 91-98). Although the poem ends with a patriotic note by declaring that he has been raised as a proud Englishman, he reflects on the chaotic and disorderly crowd in the streets of London and describes them to have awakened from a dream of richness and pleasure to a horrible, catastrophic London filled with hellish fires.

Another eighteenth-century poet, John Bancks similarly confesses his disappointment in "A Description of London" (1739) by listing architectural artefacts of the city including buildings, churches, and streets:

Houses, churches, mixed together,
 Streets unpleasant in all weather;
 Prisons, palaces contiguous,
 Gates, a bridge, the Thames irriguous.

(Bancks, "A Description of London" 337; 1-4)

In the second stanza the persona elaborates on the idea of a beautiful and attractive city to suggest that it is actually devoid of any essence and has no purpose for its existence. The poet then continues to list different occupations Londoners have and ends the poem by saying that the city is only pleasant when the right moment is seized. Thus the description of the city ends with a disappointed tone: “This is London! How d’ye like it?” (Bancks, “A Description” 338; 24). As Brean Hammond notes, until the 1750s the poetic responses to the urban experience could be divided into two: “the agitated satirical rejection of metropolitan vulnerability” and “the blasé celebration of urban opportunity” (Hammond 71). While London as the centre of mercantile and imperial life had connotations of an idealised place and was regarded as a model for all other nations to look up to in the earlier centuries, the unpleasant portrayals of London in the eighteenth century seem to dominate the poems about the city; portrayed either filled with harlots, paupers, and seldom by actual filth as seen in Gay’s *Trivia*. The idealised city image according to Pope, Swift, Gay, Johnson and Bancks as demonstrated earlier, is revealed to be “a mask” that hides the sinful reality of the city.

Similar to Swift, Gay, Pope, Johnson, and Bancks, at the end of the eighteenth century, William Blake also described London as a place that harbours the corruption of humankind. The persona of “London” (1794) walks through the streets of London and encounters members of the lower classes who are suffering from the poor living conditions in the city. The poem foregrounds the people living in the periphery of London and describes the harlots and chimney sweepers. Londoners, in the poem, are portrayed as weak and weary, which is then paralleled to the decay in the city:

I wander through each chartered street,
Near where the chartered Thames does flow.
And mark in every face I meet
Marks of weakness, marks of woe.

...

But most thro' midnight streets I hear
How the youthful Harlots curse
Blasts the new-born Infants tear
And blights with plagues the Marriage hearse

(Blake, “London” 320; 1-4, 13-16)

Blake's poem, as Sharpe argues, "looks ahead to Dickens's *Bleak House* (1853)" in the sense that it portrays the lower class people and their desolation in the capital city (Sharpe, "London" 123). Moreover, he claims that the poem anticipates Eliot's *The Waste Land*, as the personae similarly investigates the "hallucinatory unreal city" in which the persona is "the street-level" investigator (Sharpe, "London" 123):

The wandering poet launches the reader into a street-level investigation of urban misery, in a city where even the river is constrained by political force and the anguished, ban-ridden citizens are victims of their own "mind-forg'd self-imprisonment". (Sharpe, "London" 123)

Sharpe's comment on the similarity between Blake, Dickens, and Eliot seem to illustrate that all three writers have in common the grim outlook to the image of the city. From the eighteenth century to the mid-nineteenth century, London was considered by many as a centre of finance, fashion, business, employment, justice, manufacture, and culture among many others (Schwarz 649). However, especially after the Industrial Revolution it was also a place of misery and death because of the poor living conditions in housing and sanitation, inadequate infrastructure (like the lack of sewage lines, lighting, and water pipes in most neighbourhoods), and the smog (a hazardous combination of fog and steam coming from factories and overuse of coal) (Schwarz 650-670). In the nineteenth century, as Griffith Taylor points out, the West End became fashionable for the wealthy because at the time the winds from the west carried the smog in the air and odours from the sewers to the east, hence the districts situated in the west had cleaner air (Taylor 188). Apart from the dangers to the human health due to the smog and poor living conditions, the city had become a menace with its increasing crime rates. As James Kunstler remarks, even the parks which were filled with vagrants, thieves, and prostitutes were not a retreat from the dangers in the city (Kunstler 237). All of these issues seem to have played a significant role in the depiction of London as an infernal, nightmarish city especially in the nineteenth century.

Apart from the social changes in the city, London underwent one of the most extensive urban developments in the nineteenth century. As Schwarz remarks, this was the largest "building boom" since the Great Fire (Schwarz 663). This "building

boom” in the nineteenth century, according to Watkin, was in fact an extension of George IV’s interest in “image-making,” which led to a nation-wide urban development after 1815 (Watkin 459). Some of the most recognizable buildings in London which include the British Museum, the General Post Office, Custom House, Royal Mint, Covent Garden Theatre, and King’s College were built during this period (Watkin 462). Overall, by the end of the nineteenth century, only one of the five buildings built in 1855 had remained in 1901 (Dennis 129). These rapid changes in the appearance of the city may be another reason for the use of urban elements in poetry to describe the disorienting experience of the city.

Another significant development in this period was the increasing attention paid to the visual aesthetics of buildings. At the end of the eighteenth century, in England, architectural planning was regarded as a significant contributor to the meanings the city attains. For instance, as Watkin claims, a number of architects at the time were under the influence of the artistic movement known today as the Picturesque, which foregrounded the “narrative and evocative” potential of visual aesthetics (Watkin 373). That is to say, in the late eighteenth century, architects, rather than designing buildings based on “function,” were preoccupied with the visual aesthetics of the building. One such example was Sir John Soane (1752-1837), who argued that architecture should aim to convey a poetic effect on the viewer (Watkin 389-390). In other words, Soane believed that architects should intentionally design buildings to create a poetic effect. From the late eighteenth century onwards, if architects were increasingly becoming aware of the potential interrelatedness between constructing buildings and narrative techniques, it may be argued that writers in the following centuries may have recognised a similar connection.

To this end, in the nineteenth century the representations of London in poetry follow similar techniques used in the previous centuries. The search for a complete narrative for the city led by architects in the late eighteenth century may similarly be observed in the nineteenth century poetic representations of the city. These Victorian representations problematize the distinctive viewpoints, the comparison of cities and natural landscapes, and blend the celestial image of the city with the infernal image in order to portray an industrialised London. These changes in the city in the

nineteenth century may be regarded as some of the reasons for these experiments in poetic expression.

One of the ways in which poets of the nineteenth century described the city was by foregrounding the emblematic features of the city. The foggy image of London, for instance, becomes a frequent way of depicting London. One early example of this is Joanna Bailie's poem "London" (1790) in which the city is surrounded by the fog and described by a persona standing from the top of Hampstead Heath. In the poem, towers, buildings, and streets are depicted as "fair" (Bailie, "London" 325; 4) and the panorama of London is painted as a pleasant sight. The speaker then focuses on the fog and smoke of London which veils the city. London for the persona, is "sublime" with its floating appearance due to the fog. The persona regards London as a connecting point between heaven and earth as the lower parts of the city are concealed with mist, which seems as if it is hanging in the air. Bailie's poem demonstrates one of the key features, the fog, which is used in the representations of London in the nineteenth century. As Sharpe argues, the depiction of the fog in her poem conveys the city's disagreeable feature, the hazardous smog, as an element of beauty which remained an essential part of the representations of London throughout the century (Sharpe, "London" 121). In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, this foggy skyline of London became emblematic of the panorama of the city which may be said to have problematized the distinction between the celestial city and the infernal city. In the poem, London is also portrayed at night; when it is dark the city is lighted with gas lamps, which, as Schwarz notes, surrounded the city from end to end only at the end of the century (Schwarz 644). Moreover, as Sharpe underlines, London streets were lit with gas lamps for the first time in 1807, due to the long hours that covered the city in fog, streetlights were needed not only for illuminating the city at night but sometimes also during daytime (Sharpe, "London" 131). In Bailie's poem, the persona claims that an illuminated, celestial image of the city is misleading for a traveller, which is suggested by the scene where the traveller approaches the city and hears the wheels of carriages and swarms of people which evoke in the traveller a sorrowful feeling; melancholy sets in to the traveller's heart. While the first part of the poem depicts London as a land situated between divine and earthly worlds to convey a celestial image of the city, in

the second half of the poem the melancholic tone dominates the lines which seem to mirror the emotions of the traveller. This overall image of the traveller is presented in contrast with that of the city. It may be argued that the city from a distance gives the impression of a city of divine beauty but the “mask” of the city, the fog, hides the unpleasant characteristics of the city. The truth of the city, in other words, is hidden by the fog.

It was not only these newly introduced visual characteristics but also the ways in which the poets depicted the landscape using various narrative techniques that led to the emergence of the multitudinous representations of London. In the nineteenth century the poets explored various ways of describing the city by experimenting with the vantage point from which they would depict the city in their poems. Although there are examples of poets using walking personae who view the city from a distance or from a street-view perspective in earlier centuries, it was particularly in the nineteenth century that a number of poets including William Wordsworth, Arthur Hugh Clough and James Thomson who experimented with the viewpoints of the persona. As mentioned in the Introduction of the present study, the developments in visual arts, such as the emergence of dioramas, magic lantern shows, and stereoscopic slides, had influenced various ways of seeing and depicting their surroundings (Agathocleous 16). For instance, William Wordsworth, early in the century, describes London from a fixed position in “Composed upon Westminster Bridge, September 3, 1802.” In the poem, the persona depicts the city standing on the bridge where he praises the view of the city in the morning:

Earth has not anything to show more fair:
 Dull would he be of soul who could pass by
 A sight so touching in its majesty:
 This City now doth, like a garment wear
 The beauty of the morning
 (Wordsworth, “Composed upon Westminster Bridge” 574; 1-5)

From where the persona is standing, the city is described as an attractive place due to the silent, unpopulated streets and the smoke-free sky and likened to a beautiful woman. The reference to the sunny weather, arguably, also bears the implication of the divine beauty of the city. From the position of the persona, perceiving the city in its entirety becomes possible as the poem makes use of a

panoramic view of the city. As Sharpe observes, for Victorians, the poem itself had become the “nostalgic touchstone” for the representation of London (Sharpe, “London” 126). Like a diorama or postcard of the city, it may be drawn from the remarks of Sharpe that the poem assumed the role of a monument, and by reading the poem, London could be imagined. Thus, these panoramic viewpoints in depicting the city as a whole in literature, like a postcard, conveyed a sense of a unified city for the reader to enjoy.

In contrast to the fixed perspective of the persona in “Westminster Bridge,” in *The Prelude* (1850), Wordsworth makes use of the wandering persona in order to describe London from a street-view perspective. In “Residence in London,” after three years living in the country, the persona returns to London which is a shocking experience for the persona because of the chaotic life in the city. As the persona walks in the “endless streets” of London he feels grateful of living outside the city and is glad to be “a transient visitant” in the city (Wordsworth, “Residence” line 86). Yet, the persona also admits that there was a time when London held him in chains and when he felt imprisoned by the city (Wordsworth, “Residence” 86-87). At the end of the poem, the persona decides to leave the chaotic, busy city that resembles an “ant-hill” (Wordsworth, “Residence” 149-157). These lines in the poem illustrate how the vantage point draws a distinction between the images of the city. As the persona walks in the city, unlike viewing it from a distance, he draws a chaotic and unpleasant image of the city. Moreover, he focuses on the human traffic in the city to describe the overwhelming aspect of the city. In this description it is not only the inhabitants but also the visitors who populate Wordsworth’s London. The visitors, he says, wonder and awe at the busy, endless traffic of the city (Wordsworth, “Residence” 150-152). Yet, unlike them, the persona does not seem to be drawn into the city. Instead, as he advances into the inner quarters, he seems to be disturbed by what he sees. He walks from the city walls and advances into the streets, as if moving towards the heart of the city where he describes the strange, unpleasant people that one might encounter in the streets (Wordsworth, “Residence” 184-188). These people he sees are no other than the foreigners living in the city. For example, the persona lists groups of people including Swedes, Russians, Frenchmen, Spanish, Americans, Moors, Turks, Chinese, and Africans that make up the crowd in the city

(Wordsworth, “Residence” 215-229). Therefore, the persona foregrounds in his description is the cosmopolitan nature of London as a metropolis. As an Englishperson in London, also suggests that he feels intimidated by the crowd which implies his disapproval of foreigners inhabiting the city. The poem conveys the countryside to be more favourable than living in the city because, while the city is increasingly becoming cosmopolitan, the countryside remains ‘purely’ English. Although the persona acknowledges the significance of London as a cosmopolitan world metropolis he clearly states that he does not wish to be a part of it. London encompasses all nations, which makes the city a microcosm of the world:

Oh, blank confusion! true epitome
Of what the mighty City is herself,
To thousands upon thousands of her sons,
Living amid the same perpetual whirl
Of trivial objects, *melted and reduced*
To one identity, by differences
That have no law, no meaning, and no end—
Oppression, under which even highest minds
Must labour, whence the strongest are not free.

(Wordsworth, “Residence” lines 722-730)

The city, in short, is “blank confusion” for the persona who foregrounds the disorderly appearance of the city. All the people from different nations listed in the poem are “melted and reduced” to a single identity, that of the Londoner (Wordsworth, “Residence” 726). Moreover, these people living in London share the common aspect of leading their lives in a place devoid of “law” and “meaning” (Wordsworth, “Residence” 728). For the persona, living in the city equals to oppression and declares that the city imprisons even the highest minds and the strongest people. The persona’s disillusionment from the city is to the extent that he claims that if he had not carried within him “the spirit of Nature” it would have been impossible for him to survive in the city that oppresses and destroys the individual (Wordsworth, “Residence” 766). Consequently, it can be argued that in Wordsworth’s poem some of the ways in which the nineteenth century poets experimented with all the viewpoints to portray the ever-changing city is demonstrated.

Especially influenced from the realistic portrayal of the city by Victorian novelists, the poets of the century sought to reintroduce the city as their subject in order to convey the shared experience of metropolitan life and its social implications. The poets of the nineteenth century foregrounded some of the landmarks of the city which include the hazardous smog, new buildings, and juxtaposed them with the desolation of the hypocritical inhabitants to portray Victorian London much like the representations of London in the novels of Charles Dickens. In *Bleak House* (1853) Dickens graphically depicts London in the nineteenth century as a phantasmagorical city surrounded by fog, and uses it as a critique of the insincerity of individuals in society:

Fog everywhere. Fog up the river, where it flows among green aits and meadows; fog down the river, where it rolls defiled among the tiers of shipping and the waterside pollutions of a great (and dirty) city. Fog on the Essex marshes, fog on the Kentish heights. Fog creeping into the cabooses of collier-brigs; fog lying out on the yards, and hovering in the rigging of great ships; fog drooping on the gunwales of barges and small boats. Fog in the eyes and throats of ancient Greenwich pensioners, wheezing by the firesides of their wards; fog in the stem and bowl of the afternoon pipe of the wrathful skipper, down in his close cabin; fog cruelly pinching the toes and fingers of his shivering little 'prentice boy on deck. Chance people on the bridges peeping over the parapets into a nether sky of fog, with fog all round them, as if they were up in a balloon, and hanging in the misty clouds. (Dickens 1)

His vision of London in numerous novels including *Our Mutual Friend* (1865), *Great Expectations* (1861), *David Copperfield* (1850), and *A Tale of Two Cities* (1859) serve the similar purpose of conveying an urban society living in desolation and degradation, with a realistic backdrop of the city as the setting. His representation of the city even today is considered one of the trademarks of London not only in fiction but also its history as he was able to capture the essence of the Victorian society in which he lived and painted a realistic portrayal of London⁸. Similarly, after the second half of the nineteenth century, poets increasingly used London as their subject to comment on the significance of the metropolis as the

⁸ Some of the studies on Dickens's London include:
 Wolfreys, Julian. *Dickens's London: Perception, Subjectivity and Phenomenal Urban Multiplicity* (2015)
 Tambling, Jeremy. *Going Astray: Dickens and London* (2009)

microcosm for the contemporary English society. The influence of such Victorian novelists led Arthur Hugh Clough, Charles Kingsley, and F. G. Stephens to publish essays and works of fiction in which they urged the poets to abandon the cliché favouritism of the pastoral images and instead use their experience of the city as the material for their poems by foregrounding urban imagery.

Arthur Hugh Clough was one of the critics who urged poets living in cities to write about their urban experience rather than depicting imaginary pastoral scenes. He claimed in “Recent English Poetry” (1853) that the novels written in the 1850s were gaining popularity among readers because the novels were concerned with contemporary subjects which included a realistic portrayal of the city instead of the abstract, pastoral descriptions in poetry. As the novelists were using contemporary subjects and urban settings they had acquired wider acclaim and in contrast poetry had lost its readership due to the poets who were only concerned with ancient, classical and pastoral subjects. In order to become memorable poets, Clough urged poets to write about the contemporary issues in life; including the experience of the city. He argued that the pastoral setting was no longer “the lawful haunts of poetic powers” (Clough, “Recent English Poetry” 4) and that the streets and urban elements could be used as the material for poetry:

There is a charm, for example, in finding, as we do, continual images drawn from the busy seats of industry; it seems to satisfy a want that we have long been conscious of, when we see the black streams that welter out of factories, the dreary lengths of urban and suburban dustiness [...] (Clough, “Recent English Poetry” 4)

Clough likened the struggle of the poet writing poetry about the city to a persona being placed in the urban setting of the poem: both the poet and the persona aimed at making their way through the city, trying to survive and to make sense of their existence in the city. Thus, the poet needed to put effort into creating meaning from his experience with the city. This comparison was picked up by poets in the following decades when they explored in their poems the role of the city as a source of influence which was demonstrated by their use of a poet-persona to describe the setting.

Additionally, in order to illustrate his argument, he wrote poems embedded with descriptions of urban life. His poem “To the Great Metropolis” (1841), for instance, describes the city to be full of traffic, surpassing all cities in this aspect, but “True Royalty, and genuine Statesmanhood, / Nobleness, Learning, Piety was none” which are according to the persona the qualities that make up a great city (Clough, “To the Great Metropolis” 48-49; 7-8). The pessimistic tone of the poem sets a comparison between the country and the city at the end of the poem claiming that the latter cannot carry the essence of the former. Unlike writers of the earlier centuries, Clough seems to suggest that London cannot be the microcosm for the nation. To illustrate his argument, he juxtaposes his persona and a traveller in the poem. For a traveller, as the persona claims, London may seem like “[...] a huge Bazaar, / A railway terminus, a gay Hotel,” but never “a mighty Nation’s heart” (Clough, “To the Great Metropolis” 49; 12-14). Thus, according to the speaker the visitor would find London attractive because of the practical qualities he attributes to the city and not because of its national importance. This demonstrates that although Clough portrayed the city as an unpleasant place, he still used it as material for his poetry. It is important to point out that Clough draws a distinction of perception of the city by differentiating between the perspectives of the visitor and the local, which is one of the elements Pound and Eliot explored further in their poems about cities in the following century.

In another poem “Ye flags of Piccadilly” (1862), Clough makes use of the paving stones in Piccadilly to describe that the city evokes in its citizens a feeling of homesickness when they are away from the city. In the poem, the speaker longs for the paving stones he saw in the past and addresses the flagstones. The persona is nostalgic towards his life in the city:

Ye flags of Piccadilly,
Which I hated so, I vow
I could wish with all my heart
You were underneath me now!

(Clough, “Ye Flags of Piccadilly” 96; 21-24)

The speaker in the poem looks back at the times he lived in London and wishes he were in London and addresses the paving stones asking whether the people, the houses, and the park are the same. The poet also makes use of the

contrasts between pastoral and urban elements in the poem which generates a medium in which the inspiration of the poet may be discussed. This discussion about the source of inspiration for the poet would be picked up by poets in the 1890s and the following century when they introduced a poet-persona in their poems.

Similarly, another critic, F.G. Stephens, drew attention to the city for its unexplored potential as material for poetry. In “Modern Giants” (1850) he claimed that in order to evoke sympathy in the reader the poets needed to abandon their subject about the past and about the pastoral setting, and instead write about their experiences in the city where they could respond to contemporary issues. He urged poets to write about “the poetry of the things about us; our railways, factories, mines, roaring cities, steam vessels, and the endless novelties and wonders produced every day,” to underline the influence of the contemporary subjects for the poet (Stephens 170-171). Mainly, he claimed that subjects about the past and pastoral themes had become clichés in poetry:

[...]we are always looking for green grass – verdant meads, tall pines, vineyards etc., as the essentials of poetry; these are all very pretty and very delicate, the dust blows not in your eyes, but Chaucer has told us all this, and while it was new, far better than anyone else; why are we not to have something besides? Let’s see a little of the poetry of man’s works, - ‘Visibly in his garden walketh God’ (Stephens 172)

Like Clough and Stephens who argued that the poet needed to reflect the contemporary society in which he lived by using the experience of the city as his subject in poetry, Charles Kingsley illustrated this argument by devising Alton Locke as the embodiment of this ‘new’ poet. In *Alton Locke: Tailor and Poet* (1850), Charles Kingsley fictionalised the arguments of Clough and Stephens by creating Alton Locke as a poet-in-the-making who in the novel has difficulties in writing good poetry. His mentor, Mr. Mackaye, advises him to write poetry that is correlated with his life. He points out that the poet should write according to his background. For instance, if a poet lives in London, he should write poems about London (Kingsley 84-85). For Mackaye true poetry is inspired from where the poet is positioned; poetry must carry local elements and should represent everything about the city, even if it is about unpleasant experiences. Mackaye urges Alton Locke to become a “people’s poet” and to achieve this, he needs to be in the streets and

observant of everything he sees to be inspired by the city. In return, Alton Locke responds: “But all this is so – unpoetical” (Kingsley 86). As Mackaye leads Locke through the streets, he shows that there is nothing pleasant about the life in the city due to the destitute situation of the working class. As Locke follows his advice, he describes how his unpleasant experience of his surroundings is transformed into the appropriate frame of mind:

It was a dark, noisy, thunderous element that London life; a troubled sea that cannot rest, casting up mire and dirt; resonant of the clanking of chains, the grinding of remorseless machinery, the wail of lost spirits from the pit. And it did its work upon me; it gave a gloomy colouring, a glare as of some Dantaeian “Inferno,” to all my utterances. It did not excite me or make me fierce – I was too much inured to it – but it crushed and saddened me; it deepened in me that peculiar melancholy of intellectual youth [...] (Kingsley 92-93)

Alton Locke then concludes that the contemporary poets are more influential because they share the same experiences with that of their readers. Locke resolves that poetry “lives in common things” and that his inspiration to write good poetry derives from the commonality of his everyday experience (Kingsley 95-96). Alton Locke’s inspiration from the city results in a book of poems entitled *Songs of the Highways*, which makes use of an urban element, the highway, even in its title. It may be argued that Kingsley drew attention to the argument of Clough and Stephens in which they advised poets to use their experience of urban life as the raw material for their poems. In other words, the three critics drew attention to the realistic portrayal of the Victorian Age in the novels of nineteenth century writers and encouraged poets to likewise use the urban scene as a means of portraying the society. In order to illustrate this argument, they focused on the contrast of the country and the city, and praised the urban scene for its untouched material for poetry.

Therefore, one may argue that it was especially after such essays that the representation of London in poetry in the nineteenth century embodied a spatial awareness which resulted in the portrayal of the metropolis from a variety of perspectives. The city in these poems was likened to other real and fictional cities; it was described from various vantage points to depict the city as celestial or infernal. More importantly, the city was to be redefined as a place of inspiration by these

poets. For instance, Matthew Arnold's poems that are set in London are about the contrast between country and the city as well as the unpleasant, unattractive features of the city. The distinction between the country and the city, as in the case of Matthew Arnold, was used to criticise the social injustices of the city and its antagonistic nature for the influence of the poet. In "Lines Written on Kensington Gardens" (1852), Arnold praises the Kensington Gardens as a breath of fresh air in the middle of the chaotic city. The bird singing in the garden is contrasted to "the girdling city's hum" (Arnold, "Lines Written in Kensington Gardens" 263; 6). At the end of the poem the persona shows his preference of nature over the city and hopes to be a part of nature which is kept jarred in the city, not yet destroyed by humans.

Arnold's other poems "West London" (1863) and "East London" (1863), like the division between nature and city in "Kensington Gardens," seem to divide the city topographically into two. This time, however, the division is not between nature and the city, but a socio-economic division. Although "West London" does not foreground the urban features of the city, it describes the injustices brought about by the capitalist urban life by portraying the suffering of the working class and the working women in the streets (Arnold, "West London" 180; 6-8). Similarly, in "East London" a man belonging to the working class is depicted working inside a shop looking outside to the sunny, dirty streets of Bethnal Green (Arnold, "East London" 181; 1-3). The persona, then, addresses a Preacher to ask how he can survive in such a world (Arnold, "East London" 5-8). Although the poems do not make use of the architecture of the city, they both indirectly describe the city as a filthy place, filled with disgraceful acts by showing the suffering of individuals. In other words, even though Arnold's poems seem to topographically divide the city, it is the experience of the city rather than the urban elements that help achieve this portrayal of the city.

The experience of the city, in the works of Frederick Locker-Lampson, a contemporary of Clough, Stephens, and Kingsley, are correlated with the literary history of the city. Locker-Lampson published a ten-volume collection of poems about London named *London Lyrics* (1857-1893), which were collected in 1904. In one of his earlier poems, "St. James's Street" (1867), he reflects upon the reputation of the street and historicizes the street by listing famous literary figures associated with the street. According to the persona, St. James's Street is where "Sacharissa"

sighed, when “Waller” read his “ditty,” where “Byron” lived and “Gibbon” died (Locker-Lampson, “St. James’s Street” 14; 5-8). It may be inferred from the poem that a street attains its reputation from the events that take place and the people living in it. Consequently, the street that contains the collection of important historical figures and events attains its own significance. A particular location’s significance, according to the persona, then, is constructed through the various experiences it accommodates. Moreover, the persona calls the street “a lively tomb” (Locker-Lampson, “St. James’s Street” 15; 33) to indicate that people, history, and culture are permeated, compounded into the street so that the street and the meanings attached to it become inseparable. Locker-Lampson’s lines are relevant for the discussion of the significance of representations of the city as they demonstrate the ways that the landscape embodies the literature of place and the memories people attach to particular locations. In other words, it may be argued that the poet is not only evoking the writers but also their works by referring to them in his poem, constructing, in turn, a map in the mind of the reader which reflects more than physical locations but also alternative histories and memories. In addition, the persona describes the city as a transient place and likens the city to flowers that “die as fast as ever” (Locker-Lampson, “St. James’s Street” 15; 36). The ever-changing street, then, not only adds up to the image of the city as a vivid place, but also demonstrates the continuous change in the city. The familiarity of the street and the persona’s knowledge of its history, on the other hand, evokes in the mind of the persona an admiration for the street. This admiration also implies that the city is embedded with material for the poet to use in poetry as his new subject.

As an inspiring place for poets, London is depicted in Frederick Locker-Lampson’s poem “An Invitation to Rome, and the Reply” (1863), in which he constructs the poem in two sections to resemble a correspondence between separated lovers to contrast their experience and impressions of London and Rome. In the poem, the male counterpart is in Rome and invites his Londoner companion to enjoy the beauties of Rome.

O, come to Rome, it is a pleasant place,
 Your London sun is here, and smiling brightly;
 The Briton, too, puts on his cheery face,

...

Oh, come to Rome, nor be content to read
 Of famous palace and of stately street
 Whose fountains ever run with joyful speed
 (Locker-Lampson, "An Invitation" 62; 1-3, 17-19)

Accordingly, London is dark, filled with grim faces and the weather is always cold (Locker-Lampson, "An Invitation" 62; 13-15). Locker-Lampson's persona, who is an exile in Rome compares the two cities and depicts London as secondary to Rome's finest buildings, weather, and people. The reply from the Londoner woman is hesitant at first but then at the end of the poem she decides to go:

Rome sounded hot,
 I fancied I could live without it:
 I thought I'd go, I thought I'd not,
 And then I thought I'd think about it.
 ...
She ought to go. Of course she's going!
 (Locker-Lampson, "An Invitation" 69; 69-72, 80)

As it has been illustrated in the survey so far, in the representations of London, a comparison with other cities aimed at foregrounding the uniqueness of London. Similarly, Locker-Lampson's poem shows that this earlier technique of the comparison of two cities, despite London's unappealing appearance, continues to be an inspiration for English writers.

The city as a place of inspiration for the poet-persona, it seems, is not dependent upon the pleasant aspects of the city. For instance, Robert Buchanan was another poet who made use of the relationship between the poet and the city. In "Bexhill, 1866," published in *London Poems* (1866) describes London from a memory of the persona who is at the countryside. The persona who is a Londoner, has ambiguous feelings about London as indicated by the use of oxymorons like "melancholy happiness" (Buchanan 3; 12). The experience of the city for the persona is filled with unpleasant experiences; however, as soon as he leaves the city, he describes his memory of the city as "music" that echoes in his mind (10-11). Furthermore, the persona feels melancholic as he compares the sound of nature in Scotland with the "humming of the town" (Buchanan 4; 27). As the persona claims, the memories of the city follow him like "silent phantoms" to the country which in turn creates a sense of loneliness in the persona (Buchanan 5; 42). It may be argued

that these memories of the city demonstrate the continuing influence of the city, even when the persona is not in the city. He reveals himself to be a poet by explaining how he struggled to make his London experience “musical:”

Thereto, not seldom, did I seek to make
The busy life of London musical,
And phrase in modern song the troubled lives
Of dwellers in the sunless lanes and streets.

...

Which is the source of human smiles and tears,
And, melodised, becomes the strength of song

(Buchanan 5-6; 54-57, 64-65)

The poet-persona resolves in making London “musical” like the natural beauties of the country by presenting people walking in the shady roads of London in the poem. When urban images are used as material for poetry, as the persona argues, the poem becomes stronger; by presenting unpleasant, unattractive, “unpoetical” features of the city as poetical and inspiring. The persona tries in vain to write about the city while he is away from the city, trying to re-imagine and recollect the life in the city, yet, he is unable to express his impressions of the city on paper:

The souls of men and women in the streets,
The sounding sea, the presence of the hills,
And all the weariness, and all the fret,
And all the dim, strange pain for what had fled—
Turn'd into mist, mingled before mine eyes,
Roll'd up like wreaths of smoke to heaven, and died:
The pen dropt from my hand, mine eyes grew dim,
And the great roar was in mine ears again,
And I was all alone in London streets. (Buchanan 7; 97-105)

It seems that Buchanan’s poem raises another issue for the poet: when in nature, he cannot write about the city. The experience of the city can only be expressed if the persona is back in the city. As the pen drops from his hand, the memories come back, but in the country he cannot put his experience to pen and paper. The persona, after failing at his attempts to be inspired by the country, resolves that the “unpoetical” features of the city make it an alluring place to live: “It is the sad things in this life of breath / Are truest, sweetest, deepest. Tears bring forth / The richness of our natures [...]” (Buchanan 9; 133-135). Buchanan’s lines about London may equally be linked to Baudelaire’s notion of the ugly-beautiful as

discussed in the Introduction. One may suggest that by choosing a poet-persona to describe the city, he draws attention to a new perspective of regarding the city as an unappealing place that is transcribed in poetry into an inspirational subject.

Austin Dobson is another example of the ways that poets, by writing about the city, made use of material related to the urban setting. In “On London Stones” (1876), for instance, the persona longs for a life in the country. However, he realises that his inspiration for writing poetry is inseparable from the streets of London:

Mine is an urban Muse, and bound
By some strange law to paven ground:
Abroad she pouts; -- she is not shy
On London stones! (Dobson, “On London Stones” 225; 12-15)

As the above lines indicate, the inspiration of the poet depends on the urban experience rather than the rural countryside. What Clough, Locker-Lampson and Dobson have in common is their emphasis on the image of the city which establishes a new mode of poetic expression. In other words, their poetry, is formed through their experiences of the city which make their poems, truly, city poetry.

The urban setting for Dobson’s poem, unlike Clough’s and Locker-Lampson’s poems, do not always portray the city as an attractive place. Unlike them, Dobson also depicts the city as an uninspiring place. Dobson’s “Farewell, Renown!” (1884) depicts the city not as a source of inspiration but as a place that dries up the talent of the poet. In the poem the persona bids farewell to the “renown” city which is likened to a flower that grows for a year, to last, only an hour in bloom (Dobson, “Farewell, Renown!” 226; 1-4). Similar to Locker-Lampson’s poem in which he likened the city to a flower, this image too, reflects the transitory nature of the city. When compared to earlier depictions of the city as a flower in bloom, (as such in “London, thou art of townes A per se”), it seems that the flower image that symbolised uniqueness and celestial beauty in earlier poems is replaced with an unpleasant image, a flower that has withered; the golden age of London, then, accordingly may be said to have decayed. The urban material the city provides, according to the poet-persona is “a barren dower” (Dobson 226; 5). The poet-persona regards himself as inadequate for the position of representing the city when he compares himself to poets including “Dryden,” “Ben,” and “Gower,” which

illustrates the sense of decay and degradation not only of the image of the city but also of the literary tradition in the city (Dobson 6-7). The last stanza reveals the reasons for the persona's desolation; the rival poets who are critical of his work put him off from becoming a poet of the city. The poets, as he describes, are required to "please the street" which is compared to making wine with sour grapes (Dobson 13-14). The poet-persona is overwhelmed by the task of transforming the unpleasant features of the urban setting into artistic beauty in his poetry. Although Dobson reflects his disillusionment with the city, ironically, he continues to use the image of the city as his subject for the poem to demonstrate the uninspiring "barren"ness of the city for the poet, rather than abandoning the subject (Dobson 5).

The hostility of the city, especially near the end of the century became the fashionable way to respond to the image of the city as an uninspiring place. Dante Gabriel Rossetti's "Tiber, Nile, and Thames" (1881), for instance, also regards the city as an unpleasant place to be for a poet by giving examples from Rome, Ancient Greece and England. While these examples seem to be intentionally tracing a Western tradition in the poem, Rossetti explains how the city has antagonised poets throughout history; Cicero was hung from the city forum, Mark Anthony the orator was killed for a city, Keats "withered," Coleridge "pined" and Chatterton died "a pauper" in the city (Rossetti 429; 13-14). The examples in the poem, arguably, indicate that the poets are devoured by the hostile city.

This hostile city against the individual, as a theme, is also illustrated in James Thomson's *The City of Dreadful Night* (1874) in which the city is portrayed as an infernal place. As illustrated above, while discussions and meditations on the city as a place of attraction and inspiration were central discussions, more pessimistic and infernal visions of the city were also becoming increasingly frequent. In *The City of Dreadful Night* for instance, Thomson constructs an imaginary diabolical city in which the persona struggles to find meaning for his existence. His city is a city of the imagination that sheds light on the psychogeographical effects of walking in the city. The poem is controversial in its setting; while some critics regard the city described to be constructed in the image of London (Desmarais par.1; Thesing 141; Sharpe, "London" 132), others argue that Thomson builds an allegorical, phantasmagorical city (Sullivan par.4). The poem has been included in the study as it has sections that

render the relationship between the city and the individual and contains subtle images of London which categorises it as a city poem. The poem begins with an epigraph from Dante's *Inferno* that implies Thomson's poem to be 'a gateway' to the city of eternal torture. The city that Thomson describes is a city in which the dwellers feel an everlasting suffering. The persona describes himself to be isolated in his anguish, yet the following lines reveal that the city is peopled with fellow sufferers: "I suffer mute and lonely, yet another / Uplifts his voice to let me know a brother / Travels the same wild paths though out of sight" (Thomson lines 33-35). The city described in the poem is associated with night-time and death, unlike any other city, night does not leave its place for daytime and life because "the sun has never visited that city" (Thomson 1.6); it is a place made up of fog that disappears when the sun shines. The element of fog, as mentioned earlier, was closely associated with the London panorama, therefore, a relationship in the construction of the city and London might be drawn. After the city disappears, what remains of this city is the weariness it creates in the persona as he describes the city of fog reminiscent of a recurring nightmare:

But when a dream night after night is brought
 Throughout a week, and such weeks few or many
 Recur each year for several years, can any
 Discern that dream from real life in aught? (Thomson 1.11-14)

The city evokes exhaustion in the persona as the continuous experience of the fog-ridden, dark city constructs an illusion indistinguishable from reality, which resembles a recurring nightmare. It may be argued that the city is situated on a threshold that seems like a mirage for the persona. As the persona wanders in the city, he encounters a man and decides to follow him to find the meaning of life. The persona is led through the streets by the man who guides the persona as if to show some of the significant landmarks in the city: "Here Faith died, poisoned by this charnel air. / Here Love died, stabbed by its own worshipped pair. / Here Hope died, starved out in its utmost lair" (Thomson 2.12, 18, 24). Instead of seeing famous buildings or monuments, the guide and the persona walk through the streets of the nightmarish city to see the moral suffering which conveys a pessimistic atmosphere for the image of the city. The persona asks the guide how one can live, if faith, love and hope die in a city (Thomson 2.30). This infernal city, it seems, imprisons souls

due to the grim atmosphere it has. The portrayal of the city as a grim place which “poisons,” “stabs,” and “starves” any purpose to live, as explained by the guide, leads to a meaningless existence:

Take a watch, erase
The signs and figures of the circling hours,
Detach the hands, remove the dial-face;
The works proceed until run down; although
Bereft of purpose, void of use, still go. (Thomson 2.32-36)

As the guide explains to the persona, when the hour and minute hand and numbers on a watch are removed, it would keep working, likewise he suggests if everything meaningful is removed from the person’s life, he would lead a meaningless life, but continue to live. The watch metaphor used in the poem not only explains man’s life to be devoid of meaning in the modern age but also problematizes his meaningless existence in the city that robs the individual from the essence of being human. The guide keeps reaching the same point as they walk, as indicated from the repeating line “Here Faith died, poisoned by this charnel air” (Thomson 2.12). Thus the city becomes a labyrinth with no end, a vicious circle encountered in nightmares.

Although this nightmarish vision of the city seems like an everlasting inferno, the liminality of the city is also emphasised in the rest of the poem. This liminality is echoed in the confusion the persona feels for his environment. The persona states that the city is filled with such horrors that man can merely be an intruder, which emphasises a sense of alienation. As a visitor in the city he acknowledges that men can never belong anywhere: “Our destiny is fell; / For in this Limbo we must ever dwell, / Shut out alike from Heaven and Earth and Hell” (Thomson 6.55-57). The meaninglessness of man’s existence is reiterated in Book XIV, when the persona enters a cathedral in which a priest addresses a congregation full of city-dwellers who have lost their faith, love, and hope in life. The priest’s attempts of consoling the suffering individuals by declaring that there is no divine existence that will punish the individuals for their lack of faith, love or hope in their lives is in vain (Thomson 14.40-42). The priest asks them to endure the years that remain in their lives, and if not, the priest advises them to end their own lives, which will have no consequence since there is no place to be judged (Thomson 14.79-84). However, his

attempt to relieve the internal crisis the men feel is not received well as the city dwellers respond to the priest:

Speak not of comfort where no comfort is,
 Speak not at all: can words make foul things fair?
 Our life's a cheat, our death a black abyss:
 Hush and be mute envisaging despair—

...

My Brother, my poor Brothers, it is thus;
 This life itself holds nothing good for us,
 But ends soon and nevermore can be. (Thomson 16.39-42, 49-51)

A man from the congregation rejects the priest's consoling words which may be regarded as another image of a dreadful city that is indifferent to man's suffering. He believes that words cannot improve the unbearable condition of living in a city without hope, faith, and love: a truth that the individual cannot endure. Thus the relationship between the individual and the city is of a hostile nature as the individual is unable to accept the indifference of the city. As exemplified in Thomson's poem, London is an unfriendly place that prevents complete admission. In other words, the unpleasant characteristics of London as portrayed in the poem leads to the alienation of the persona. In Thomson's poem a hostile image of the city is constructed which works against the prosperity of the individual meanwhile imprisoning him in the city by consuming all human emotions, as suggested by the death of hope, love, and faith. Hence, the city becomes a purgatory, no longer heaven or hell, from which individuals cannot escape.

This liminal image of the city was later used by writers at the end of the century as they sought to problematize the significance of the city for the society and for the individual. For instance, at the end of the nineteenth century W. E. Henley published *London Voluntaries* (1890-1892) in which he presented contrasting images of London as both a utopia and a dystopia. To illustrate, in the third section of *London Voluntaries*, London is depicted as a golden city; El-Dorado or a promised land when the sky is clear:

For earth and sky and air
 Are golden everywhere
 And golden with a gold so suave and fine
 The looking on it lifts the heart like wine.
 Trafalgar Square

(The fountains volleying golden glaze)
Shines like an angel-market. (Henley 194; 3.43-49)

In contrast, when the city is surrounded by fog, the persona likens it to an act of murder. The fog approaches, “Out of the poisonous East, / Over a continent of blight, / Like a maleficent Influence released” (Henley 196; 4.1-3). London is suffocated by the fog coming from the east which afflicts the city. As the fog sets in, the city becomes a labyrinth with a dead-end, encountered in nightmares (Henley 197; 4.21-24). This portrayal of the city is different from early nineteenth century portrayals of Joanna Bailie since it depicts the fog as hazardous. On the other hand, likening London to El-Dorado, attaches the former a mythical, celestial meaning that is “hidden” by the fog.

Apart from such grim depictions of London as seen in Thomson’s and Henley’s poems, there were also poems in which the city was portrayed as a source of inspiration. Lionel Johnson, for instance, regarded the city as a source of inspiration for poets and drew a more hopeful image of the city in “London Town” (1891). Johnson’s persona declares that he prefers to be a city poet rather than a country poet like many others. He praises the city for being as “musical” as the country (L. Johnson 34; 5-6). Moreover, elements of nature which are associated with the country are used to point out that the city contains *more* features than the country has to offer. Thus the poet-persona presents a hopeful future for the city:

One day, perchance, the sun will see
London’s entire felicity:
And all her loyal children be
Clear of all gloom. (L. Johnson 36; 85-88)

The poet-persona believes that the sun will shine upon London one day and finally reflect all the beauties of the city which will shatter the unpleasant, gloomy, foggy descriptions of the city and claims that the poets who are loyal to the city shall be rewarded for their endeavours.

Laurence Binyon likewise describes in *London Visions* (1895) the double image of the city as a source of inspiration and destruction for the individual in “Songs of the World Unborn” which anticipates the twentieth-century modernist

representations of the city as a fragmented, hostile place. The first lines of the poem depict the city as a place of inspiration which is reminiscent of Clough's vision:

Songs of the World Unborn
Swelling within me, a shoot from the heart of spring,
As I walk the ample and teeming street
This tranquil and misty morn,
What is it to me you sing? (Binyon 94; 1-5)

London is described as a character that inspires the persona as he walks in the streets. However, in the lines that follow, the city is described in the poem to be made up of fog and the persona comforts himself with the thought that the city will be dissolved by the wind: "Embattled city, trampler of dreams / So long deluding, thou shalt delude no more" (Binyon 94; 17-18). The persona hopes that the city which is depicted as a place that destroys dreams and misleads people into annihilation, will be ruined instead of the individuals. Moreover, he believes that the city which is constructed in the imagination will disappear into dreams as if it never existed. He also thinks that this downfall will be caused by time which highlights the transient nature of the city; nature will overcome in time and demolish the city. Binyon's image of the city which his persona desires to see decaying into ruins may have inspired Pound and Eliot to make use of as material to reuse and reconstruct in their poems.

The fragmented representations of London demonstrate that by the nineteenth century the city had become impossible to represent as a whole in literature. The constantly changing city resists a full-blown, unified representation. On the one hand the city contrasted with the country contributes to the attempts of describing the city as a whole; on the other hand, the sharp contrast evokes a sense of division that results in a fragmented representation of London. One may infer that the image of the city as an idealised, undivided place at the end of the nineteenth century were being replaced with the image of a fragmented, desolate city in ruins where the individual is constantly in battle with the unpleasant, uninviting environment.

Aside from British poets, in the nineteenth century, London was also portrayed by foreigners. American writers and intellectuals in particular visited the capital of the British Empire and wrote extensively about London in their works as

they regarded it as a meeting point for intellectual activities⁹. A review article published in *The New York Times* in 1896 entitled “Our Authors in London” traces three generations of American intellectuals who visited or lived in London. In the article it is pointed out that at least a hundred Americans came to London each year “to visit the great centre of the literary traditions of the English-speaking races” (“Our Authors in London” par. 5).

A group of American writers which include Washington Irving, Edgar Allan Poe, Nathaniel Hawthorne, and Henry James depicted London from a foreigner’s perspective and described their responses to the city by foregrounding its architecture, its weather, and its people. Most of the nineteenth century responses to the image of the city by these writers reach similar conclusions about the city as discussed earlier in the present chapter. However, their addition is the foreign narrator which they all implement in their works. For instance, Washington Irving in *The Sketch Book of Geoffrey Crayon* (1819), Edgar Allan Poe in “The Man of the Crowd” (1840), and Hawthorne in *Our Old Home* (1863) make use of some of the popular representations of London such as describing the city as a fog-ridden, dark, grim, but inspirational place. On the other hand, Henry James in his short stories “The Siege of London” (1883) and “A London Life” (1888) underscores the sense of alienation in a foreign city. It may be argued that these representations of the city in prose by these four writers may have paved the way for Pound and Eliot to similarly depict their experiences of London and use them to construct their modernist aesthetic.

In the early nineteenth century, Washington Irving envisions London a place where national identity is constructed. To illustrate, in *The Sketch Book* (1819) Irving emphasises the importance of city representations in literature as a means of establishing a nation’s value. In “English Writers on America” he argues that a

⁹A review article published in *The New York Times* in 1896 entitled “Our Authors in London” traces three generations of American intellectuals who had visited or for a time lived in London. For further critical work on American writers in London see, James, Henry. “Our Artists in Europe,” Symons, Julian. *Makers of the New: The Revolution in Literature, 1912-1939*, Weintraub, Stanley. *The London Yankees: Portraits of American Writers and Artists in England 1894-1914*, White, Morton and Lucia White. *The Intellectual Versus the City: From Thomas Jefferson to Frank Lloyd Wright*, and Zwerdling, Alex. *Improvised Europeans: American Literary Expatriates and the Siege of London*.

nation's reputation is shaped by the "collective testimony" of other nations, which either glorifies a nation or puts into disgrace (Irving, "English Writers" 789). Moreover, Irving describes his impressions of London by accentuating the city as a vast metropolis with an extensive mythical past and Geoffrey Crayon as his narrator. Although he regards London to be the most inspiring city, in his short story "Sunday in London" he contrasts it to the countryside. In his opinion, the Londoner is "a poor prisoner of the crowded and dusty city," who tries to escape "the great Babel" whenever he can (Irving, "Sunday in London" 841-842). Irving's account of London is significant in the sense that it demonstrates how American writers, like their British counterparts, saw London as a source of history and culture and its influence on people.

In another short story, "London Antiques," the narrator Geoffrey Crayon portrays the city as the bearer of hidden secrets and depicts it as an enchanting place that draws people into it. In the story, the narrator reveals his interest in antiques as he searches for "reliques" in London and explains that one can find them "in the depths of the city, swallowed up and almost lost in a wilderness of brick and mortar; but deriving poetical and romantic interest from the commonplace prosaic world around them" (Irving, "London Antiques" 963). For the narrator, the city is uncommonly "poetic" in a world of prose which, to the unknowing visitor, may be lost among the buildings. As he reaches the heart of the city he finds a secret passage that leads him to the "gateway" of tradition: "[...] I behold before me a gothic gateway of mouldering antiquity. It opened into a spacious quadrangle forming the courtyard of a stately gothic pile the portal of which stood 'invitingly open'" (Irving, "London Antiques" 964). The port that allures the narrator to enter is described like a hidden passage to the city's mysterious past. It may be inferred from Irving's description that the gothic pile in the centre of the city is the paramount reason for the city's mystical power of attracting individuals.

It may be argued that finding London's centre is a common point which Irving emphasises in all three of his short stories. For instance, in the third story "Little Britain," entitled after a street in London, the narrator describes the street as the "heart's core of the city," where fragments of the city dating back to its foundation can be found. Accordingly, the street functions as the archive of the city

which contains many “wonders” of the past (Irving, “Little Britain” 971). Moreover, he explains that in the centre one can find famous landmarks that have their own individual myths:

Little Britain has its *long catalogue of city wonders*, which its inhabitants consider the wonders of the world; such as the great bell of St. Paul’s, which sours all the beer when tolls; the figures that strike the hours at St. Dunstan’s clock; the monument; the lions in the Tower; and the wooden giants in Guildhall. (Irving, “Little Britain” 971; emphasis added)

The myths of the city are kept in the centre hidden in the archives and await the visitors to discover these secrets of the metropolis. It is also significant that Irving is referring to some of the earliest structures in the city that date back to the medieval city. It may be claimed that Irving’s emphasis on these structures reveals the importance of the city and its representations in literature for the writer which complies with his earlier claim that cities build national character.

While Irving claims that any visitor may attain the “secrets” of the city, Poe’s character in “The Man of the Crowd” (1840) perishes while in pursuit of the mysterious Londoner. In the story the heterogeneity of the city is emphasised by the use of listing various groups of people living in the city. The narrator who happens to be an American, gazes out of a coffee shop window to the streets and is overwhelmed by the densely populated city:

At this particular period of the evening I had never before been in a similar situation, and the tumultuous sea of human heads filled me, therefore, with a delicious novelty of emotion. I gave up, at length, all care of things within the hotel, and became absorbed in contemplation of the scene without. (Poe 255)

The narrator walks all night long in the streets of London in pursuit of a strange man he sees in the crowd. At the same time, he describes the way that the thick fog leaving its place to heavy rain changes the behaviour of the crowd which draws an interdependent relationship between the behaviour of Londoners and the weather (Poe 259). Poe’s description of the city reflects the popular opinion of people who visited London in the nineteenth century in terms of the overwhelming effect of the crowd on the individual who is unable to blend in. To demonstrate this popular way of describing the city, Poe uses a narrator who is a foreigner. Even

though he walks with the crowd, the rendering is as if he is observing the crowd from a distance. To this end, this vagrant character is like a *flâneur*.

What Hawthorne, Poe, and Irving have in common is that they all acknowledge the significance of London in the nineteenth century as an inspiring place and describe it as foreigners from a distance without engaging with the city or the crowd. As such, Hawthorne visited London in 1857 and gave an account of his impressions of the city in *Our Old Home* (1863). He describes London as the “central spot of all the world,” and compares London and Rome in a formulaic fashion, as illustrated in the poems of Samuel Johnson, Frederick Locker-Lampson, and Dante Gabriel Rossetti (Hawthorne, *Our Old Home* 361). For Hawthorne, Rome is a city that belongs to the past, whereas London is the city of his age that embodies the past and the present “in the golden twilight” (Hawthorne, *Our Old Home* 363, 369). Unlike other nineteenth century American writers, he describes the architecture of the city with minute detail as he wanders in the streets of London. For instance, in *The English Notebooks* (1870), his first impressions of London are that it is the ugliest, “drabbest” city in the world (Hawthorne, *English Notebooks* 406). Moreover, referring to the Crystal Palace as a distasteful structure he wonders how the outcome of centuries of architectural development has had such a poor result (Hawthorne, *English Notebooks* 425). While Poe and Irving name a few landmarks in the city, Hawthorne describes the buildings, alleys, courts, lanes and squares he sees. More significantly, as he walks in the city, he compares his experience of the English capital to the literary representations he had read when he was young. He describes London to be more beautiful than the “dream-city” he had imagined it to be (Hawthorne, *Our Old Home* 362). His comparison between the representations of the city and his experience of it reveals the significant role of representations when it comes to building the image of the city. As another point of contrast, Hawthorne incorporates the element of sound to his representation of London to emphasise that the city is a place of attraction for a number of reasons: it is not only the visual appearance but also the auditory aspect that hypnotises the visitor. He depicts the city to have a “muffled” roaring sound which is a blending of a polyphony of voices that is modified into a quiet, soothing sound. These loud voices in the city “melt” and become one “grand and quiet sound” that keeps its visitors listening to it like the

flow of a river that mesmerises its spectators (Hawthorne, *English Notebooks* 23). In short, his London is a “Monster-city” that draws the visitor inside its jaws; as one walks in the city he is under a spell and finds himself “transported from the bustle, jumble, mob, tumult, uproar, as of an age of week-days intensified into the present hour, into what seems an eternal Sabbath” (Hawthorne, *English Notebooks* 434-435). Hence, the “Monster-city” for Hawthorne does not consume the visitor, but permanently changes him.

On the other hand, instead of describing Londoners or the city with meticulous detail like other American writers, Henry James makes use of the versatile descriptions of Americans as tourists and foreigners in London. It may be argued that his works set in London portray the city as a medium in which a transnational culture may be established. To this end, in order to depict London as a transnational meeting point, he makes use of American characters in his stories and presents them as unique individuals who have come to the English capital with different motives and juxtaposes them to the architecture of the city or English characters. One may argue that by doing so, he aims to demonstrate the discrepancy between the two nations and to blur and problematize the black-and-white differentiations of nationhood. In this respect, Henry James’s letters, essays, and short stories all point to his concerns of nationhood, alienation, and sense of belonging.

As his letters to his sister, Grace Norton, and Theodore Child and essay “London” reveal Henry James addressed his concerns about belonging and alienation to a particular society and city. In a letter to his sister Alice, he confessed that he already felt “domesticated and naturalized” in the “murky metropolis” (James, *Selected Letters* 20). Moreover, he compared London to Paris in his letter to Theodore Child to say that one felt always a foreigner in Paris while in London one felt at home (James, *Selected Letters* 193). Furthermore, over the years, as he admitted to Grace Norton, he felt that he was increasingly becoming British. In the letter, he claimed that to observe the English society, he needed to pertain a distance from them to draw attention to the incongruity between the observer and his subject, and believed that over the years he had fallen into “dull British acceptance and conformity” (James, *Selected Letters* 164). James’s comments on belonging to a

place are relevant to understand the ways in which Pound and Eliot might have felt when they were exposed to British culture. As their essays on Henry James reveal, the two poets both acknowledged James as one of the most influential and significant writers of American and English literature, and James's investigations on belonging and nationhood might as well have led them to similar explorations in their works (Pound, "Henry James"; Eliot, "In Memory of Henry James").

As James's letters demonstrate, he felt like a Londoner and claimed in his essay "London" (1888) that the process of "Londonization" was only possible through assimilation (James, "London" 11-12). Though James felt a sense of belonging immediately in London, he also admitted his bewilderment with the metropolis in his essay: "The place sits on you, broods on you, stamps on you with the feet of its myriad bipeds and quadrupeds. In fine, it is anything but a cheerful or a charming city. Yet it is a very splendid one" (James, "London" 20). Moreover, he pointed out how he had felt intimidated by the vastness of the city during his first visit to Piccadilly:

A sudden horror of the whole place came over me, like a tiger-pounce of homesickness which had been watching its moment. London was hideous, vicious, cruel, and above all overwhelming; whether or no she was "careful of the type," she was as indifferent as Nature herself to the single life. (James, "London" 6-7)

As James states, London feels threatening to a first time visitor and evokes a sense of homesickness due to its vastness. In his essay, he interprets the initial terror he felt of the city as his "first step in an initiation" that would lead him to a pleasant experience of the city. Moreover, he describes London as a "dreadful, delightful city" and emphasises the paradoxical feelings of attraction and repulsion he felt for the city. Furthermore, he maintains that London is not a place to be happy; rather, it is a place in which the prevailing atmosphere is of suffering which gives the city a sense of uniformity. In other words, he identifies London as the centre of the world to observe the cycle and process of human suffering (James, "London" 3, 7, 10, 28). Additionally, he compares and contrasts his first impressions of London with some of the earlier literary representations of the metropolis; such as Hawthorne's notes on London. James's reference to Hawthorne and other writers illustrates how, for him, a city is made up of not only its architecture or its people but is also haunted by its

literary representations. While he describes his promenade in the City, he evokes various literary works set in the area and compares them with his own impressions of the city and the places he visits. Thus he declares that London is a city which brings history back to life and establishes “a continuity of things” which “vibrates” through his mind (James, “London” 5). It may be argued that while walking in the city Henry James also traces the literary tradition of London. James claimed that a writer getting inspiration from the city he lives in to be the greatest tribute a city may receive (James, “London” 43).

[...] cumbrously vast as the place may be, I would not have had it smaller by a hair's breadth or have missed one of the fine and fruitful impatiences with which it inspires you and which are at bottom a heartier tribute, I think, than any great city receives. (James, “London” 43)

He maintained that as the centre of all humanity the city was impossible to describe in its entirety because of its vastness and diversity (James, “London” 27). Moreover, he asserted that this diversity and multitude in the city's architectural style can also be seen in the people inhabiting the metropolis which positions London as the “epitome of the round world” (James, “London” 12, 21, 9). To demonstrate this point, his stories that are set in London foreground the people, rather than the urban fabric and its effect on the individual. In his two London short stories, “The Siege of London” (1883) and “A London Life” (1888) James depicts American characters within the London setting. In “The Siege of London,” Mrs Headway is an American who tries to become a part of the English elite circle after failing to become a prominent figure in New York (James, “The Siege of London” 603). She confesses to another American, Littlemore, how she felt quite alone in her first days in the city because she knew no one: “I had a carriage of my own, and when I was not at my window I was driving all round. I was all alone; I saw everyone, but I knew no one – I had no one to tell me” (James, “The Siege of London” 584). Mrs Headway's seclusion from the public and her gaze to the crowd through the window symbolically illustrates the alienation and loneliness of an American in London and the difficulties of being a foreigner in the city. Mrs. Headway's difficulty in entering English society is further illustrated in the story by a contrast between her and the crowd to which she is introduced in a party:

They were all wrapped up in a community of ideas, of traditions; they understood each other's accent, even each other's variations. Mrs Headway, with all her prettiness, seemed to transcend these variations; she looked foreign, exaggerated; she had too much expression; she might have been engaged for the evening. (James, "The Siege of London" 616)

Mrs Headway tries to become part of English life, either through marriage or by connections. While she tries to infiltrate the society, Waterville, who is a visitor in London, prefers to keep his distance. He observes the city in an unaffected fashion and regards Mrs Headway's endeavours as unsuccessful, and likens her attempts to join the crowd to "a fly on a window pane" to point out her ignorance of English life (James, "The Siege of London" 634). Mrs Headway's struggle to fit in illustrates James's viewpoint that it was impossible for an American to maintain his or her identity and successfully integrate into English society.

In "A London Life" (1888) James further elaborates the issues of belonging and non-belonging by using American characters who live in London. He portrays a variety of perspectives that demonstrate the ways that London is perceived by Americans who are visiting or living in London and juxtaposes their viewpoint with that of English characters. For example, the protagonist Laura is an American woman who grew up reading English didactic novels, which led her to construct in her mind an immoral London filled with injustices. The literary representations of London in the novels Laura reads affect her behaviour; she is frightened by the dangers awaiting young women as portrayed by the novelists therefore, she feels unsafe and requires the company of Mr Wendover, a tourist from America, to visit Soane Museum (James, "A London Life" 488). She lives in London in order to be near to her sister Selina. Selina is married to an Englishman but has a secret affair with another man. While her sister Selina has become "one of the beauties of London" (James, "A London Life" 437), Laura does not feel that she can become part of English society like her sister and believes her life in London to be an artificial set from which she wants to get out:

I want to get out of it, please – out of the set I live in, the one I have tumbled into through my sister, the people you saw just now. There are thousands of people in London who are different from that and

ever so much nicer; but I don't see them, I don't know how to get at them [...] (James, "A London Life" 484)

While Laura believes she has difficulties fitting in, Mr Wendover is unable to distinguish her as American or English. He thinks that Laura assumes both American and English identities at times she sees fit; in a way, she becomes a character on the threshold being neither American nor English. In the story, James not only exemplifies the ways that English society is perceived through the eyes of Americans, but also illustrates how English society viewed these Americans. Though Mr Wendover regards Laura as British, an older Englishwoman, Lady Devenant, categorises her as American. As such, Lady Devenant asserts her opinions on the differences between Americans and the English and declares to Laura that she thinks Americans do not have "ancestresses," have a lot of "false delicacy," and exaggerate their facial expressions, which gives away their American origins and prevent them from fitting in civilized English society (James, "A London Life" 441-442). These four characters illustrate the various perspectives of the ways that being an American in London presented its challenges. To this end, "A London Life" may be considered as James's attempt in constructing types of American expatriates and their lives in a foreign country.

While James's critical and fictional works on London demonstrate social life in the city in the late nineteenth century as a mixture of English and Americans, British novelists in the early twentieth century portrayed cosmopolitan London as an evolved version of the British Empire. Though Joshua Esty points out that especially after the 1930s it was clear that the imperial culture was replaced with "a more national, more popular, more integrated culture," one may also argue that before this turn to a more confined nation-based structure in the society there is also evidence of a cosmopolitan culture in the early twentieth century (Esty 44). In the early twentieth century, English novelists were searching for ways to describe London as a vast, global metropolis. In this new century London was not only a meeting place but also a place that contained the spirit of the modern man, at least for Ford Madox Ford, who in *Soul of London* (1905) stated that whoever arrived in London was "converted" into the modern man:

[London] assimilates and slowly digests them, converting them, with the most potent of all juices, into the singular and inevitable product that is the Londoner – that is, in fact, the Modern. Its spirit, extraordinary and unfathomable – because it is given to no man to understand the spirit of his own age – spreads, like sepia in water, a tinge of its own over all the world. (Ford 12-13)

Ford suggests that the “Londoner” is a mixture of a cosmopolitan culture which he defines as “modern,” and like a drop of “sepia in water,” they spread London’s culture to their surroundings. Ford’s depiction of the city foregrounds the people and claims that they are the ones that shape the “soul” of London. For writers like Ford Madox Ford and Virginia Woolf, to see and hear the crowd meant that London was a capital overflowing with life and joy. As Woolf describes in *Mrs. Dalloway* (1925), London is a place where one enjoys life:

In people’s eyes, in the swing, tramp, and trudge; in the bellow and the uproar; the carriages, motor cars, omnibuses, vans, sandwich men shuffling and swinging; brass bands; barrel organs; in the triumph and the jingle and the strange high singing of some aeroplane overhead was what she loved; life; London; this moment of June. (Woolf 2)

From the descriptions of these modernist English writers, one can derive that London had all the attractions a writer was looking for in the beginning of the twentieth century. The city was no longer solely a Victorian city described in the novels of Dickens or other nineteenth century writers. Instead, it seems that writers were juxtaposing the earlier image of London with their own experiences. In *Howards End* (1910), for instance, Forster emphasises that describing London as an undesirable place had been a Victorian way of depicting the city:

To speak against London is no longer fashionable. The Earth as an artistic cult has had its day, and the literature of the near future will probably ignore the country and seek inspiration from the town. [...] Certainly London fascinates. One visualises it as a tract of quivering grey, intelligent without purpose, and excitable without love; as a spirit that has altered before it can be chronicled; as a heart that certainly beats, but with no pulsation of humanity. (Forster 115)

For Forster and his contemporaries including Ford and Woolf, London drew people in. The vivid portrayal of the city for these modernist writers was a combination of the city’s history, architecture, and its people. London in the twentieth century was a cosmopolitan city, and although Forster’s words seem to

reflect his hesitance in embracing this aspect which Gervais and McNaughter claim to be stemming from his strong belief in London as a place of “belonging [...] based on shared morality” though he feels this connection to only exist with people who remain purely British (Gervais 79; McNaughter 82). Accordingly, Forster’s attitude in *Howards End* demonstrates that early in the twentieth century one of the common viewpoints for English writers was to see London as an increasingly diversified place, which gradually shrunk “British” London. Therefore, one may argue that in an increasingly diversified environment, Pound and Eliot also perceived these ongoing changes in the city and used them as material for their poetry.

1.3 Conclusion: Whose London is it?

From its first separation from nature the city has been a place of contrasts between the old and new; the attractive and the repulsive, a place of construction and demolition. These inherent contrasts seem to have found their way in the poetry of the city. The representations exemplified in this chapter depict London either as a utopic city or a threatening, dystopic city. Moreover, as the city developed into its metropolitan form the representations of London also changed. For instance, London was first a merchant town which later attained political and economic power. Hence, initially in poetry London was depicted as a celestial city. During the Middle Ages, London became the centre for arts and social life. However, becoming the centre of the whole nation did not necessarily present a pleasant portrayal of London. Especially after the Restoration London’s representations depicted the city as a place of contrasts, class inequalities and sometimes a place filled with sin.

Additionally, in the earlier representations specifically, the poets aimed to describe London as a whole; while doing this, they either chose a persona that walked in every street or viewed the city from a distance. While most of the poets employed a persona local to the city to aptly describe the “secrets” of London, some chose visitors who depicted London as a land filled with opportunities. The poets, in an effort to portray the city in its entirety, have used a persona that walks in the streets, giving minute details about the life in London, while others have chosen to place the persona at a distance to portray the panorama of the entire city like a postcard. The persona’s attitude and perspective from which he depicts the city as

discussed in the chapter, established a map that also explained the relationship between the poet and the city. In the nineteenth century, London had become a fallen city that drew visitors into its centre. Similar to British writers, American writers who visited London in the nineteenth century responded to the changing city and the society. In their short stories and essays, American writers which include Irving, Poe, Hawthorne, and James focused on the discrepancies between Londoners and Americans and the ways that the settings of the two nations differed from each other and made use of foreign narrators in portraying the city. Although they were visitors, most felt “at home” in London. From their descriptions, one may argue that when modernist poets Pound and Eliot arrived, they derived their representations of the city both from English and American representations to initiate a different aesthetic for modernism.

Any new representation of a city resists or responds to past representations. To this end, the representations of London in modernist poetry to a certain extent exemplifies the “grafting” of native tradition with foreign innovation which is demonstrated by the relationship between the representations of the city, the real city, and the first-hand experience of foreign poets. When Pound and Eliot arrived, they made use of these earlier representations of the city and blended them with their own impressions to portray the disillusionment they had of the condition of literature and culture in the early twentieth century.

One may claim that Pound’s and Eliot’s poems about London contain evidence of the ways that they constructed their poetics of modernism by using past and contemporary representations of London as a model. Viewed in contrast to the conventional representations of the city, the modernist poems demonstrate the nature and the extent of innovations made by modernist poets who sought to provide artistic inspiration for modernism and generations that follow who, in fact, devised a critical perspective by making London new. Due to their foreign stance, Pound and Eliot were able to describe London in a way that the British were unable to see due to their familiarity and deep connection with the city’s history. The modern man was in crisis with the city and this experience needed to be conveyed by using a persona that maintained the distance of a foreigner’s perspective and yet had the knowledge of the minute details of the city that would express the urban experience of the individual.

CHAPTER TWO: EZRA POUND AND MAKING IT NEW IN LONDON

2.1 “To build the City of Dioce¹⁰.” Ezra Pound’s London

Ezra Pound’s depiction of building the visionary “City of Dioce” in *The Pisan Cantos* forms a powerful metaphor for his dream of constructing a new poetic language for the twentieth century. During his years in London, Pound was regarded as one of the central figures of modernist poetry. He was not only a poet but also a critic who was involved in the publication of the works of many of his contemporaries including James Joyce, T.S. Eliot, H.D., and William Carlos Williams. As it will be discussed in the present chapter, Pound was convinced that it was necessary to respond to the new century in which they lived and pointed it out in his essays¹¹. Accordingly, he urged the use of a revolutionised language for a new poetic expression as a foundation for experiments in form and subject matter (“How to Read” 23-25). He believed that art and literature had become commodified in the United States, and the readers and publishers were prejudiced against innovation and experimentation, which hindered the development of language, literature, and the aesthetic taste of the society, resulting in a deterioration of culture (Pound, “National Culture” 133). As such, in his essay “How to Read” he gives a retrospective account of his explorations and reveals significant insights into his attitude towards the establishment of a new poetics for poetry. Accordingly, as a young poet, he searched for a place where he could find the greatest examples of literary expression and experiment with literary forms to innovate the poetic language (Pound, “How to Read” 15-17). In his opinion, Europe was the new environment for his search for novelty in poetry. He believed that he could change the literary taste of American readers by going abroad and finding new ways of writing poetry. Therefore, when he left his country, he travelled extensively in Europe including Italy, France, and England. At the time of his arrival in London in 1908, the metropolis was a publishing centre for the English speaking world and the meeting point for intellectuals from around the world (Bradbury, “London” 184).

¹⁰ The quotation is taken from Pound, “Canto 74” (Pound, *Cantos* 445)

¹¹ Some of these essays, namely, “The Renaissance,” “National Culture,” “How to Read,” and *ABC of Reading* will be discussed further in this chapter.

As Pound further asserts in his essay “The Renaissance,” which he wrote in 1914, “the city” was the key to an understanding of a nation’s culture. He regarded it as a place where artists, writers, and thinkers from all around the world could interact (Pound, “The Renaissance” 214, 220-221). It may be argued that London enabled him to experiment with literary forms and language. It was a place for him where new art forms could emerge and spread to the world. To this end, both as a city and as the representative of a literary tradition, London provided him with the inspiration he was searching for. He regarded London as the microcosm of English culture and used the representations of London to reflect what he believed to be the shortcomings of the modern city by employing foreigner personae in his poetry. His new approach to the representations of London, was to introduce a persona alienated from his environment which was the unfamiliar city. In other words, by portraying a persona in a foreign city he intended to depict a sense of alienation to illustrate his departure from the conventional poetic expression. In other words, the representations of London in his poems, in which an alienated persona is the central figure, became a way for Pound to express the dissociation he felt from the conventional modes of the poetic language.

2.2 Towards a Transnational Culture

As his essays reveal, Pound claimed that the literature of any society should be contemporaneous with other nations and influence literature on a global scale (Pound, “National Culture” 118-126; *Spirit of Romance* 8). In other words, it may be argued that he believed a national culture owed its longevity to becoming transnational and authentic. Moreover, he underscored the fundamental relationship between the advancement of a nation and the importance attributed to the artist (Pound, “The Renaissance” 226). Furthermore, he concluded that the decline of literature in a nation also meant the degeneration of its culture (Pound, *ABC of Reading* 82). Therefore, he emphasised the importance of artists and writers for the enrichment of national culture and claimed that the livelihood of a nation’s culture depended on the artist:

When a civilization is vivid it preserves and fosters all sorts of artists – painters, poets, sculptors, musicians, architects. When a civilization is dull and anemic, it preserves a rabble of priests, sterile instructors,

and repeaters of things second-hand. If literature is to reappear in America it must come through, but in spite of, the present commercial system of publication. (Pound, "The Renaissance" 226)

So, for him, it is obvious that culture and literary taste was in decay in America, and was in need of a cultural rebirth. In his opinion, publishers and readers did not appreciate the works of innovative writers, which led writers including himself, T.S. Eliot, H.D., John Gould Fletcher, and Robert Frost to leave the country (Pound, "Robert Frost" 384). Additionally, he claimed that the U.S. had lost the opportunity to establish New York as the publishing capital of the world. To illustrate, he maintained that for a brief period between 1917 and 1919, New York had become the centre of publishing for the English speaking world, but after 1919 had lost its position first to Paris and then to London. He stated that this lost opportunity for the nation was one of the reasons why prodigious writers like himself and many others, left American soil and went abroad to get published and appreciated (Pound, "National Culture" 132-133). One may deduce from Pound's claims in his essay "National Culture" that he sought to build a new model for a national culture that was *transnational* in its influence. For him, this new national culture would be contemporaneous with Europe and would have a unique voice in the international cultural scene. He maintained that America, if it was to become a globally influential country, it needed to establish a "national mind" which not only was contemporaneous with and knowledgeable of the intellectual developments in Europe, but also had the ability to express its unique voice by transcending the national borders of culture (Pound, "National Culture" 118-126). He argued that this national mind was to be formed on a national culture in which works of art and literature did not need to "ask favours" for their production from other nations (Pound, "National Culture" 131). As Jahan Ramazani maintains, Pound's interest in the Chinese ideogram along with "Euroclassicism" and other sources similarly exemplifies his emphasis on establishing a transnational culture as a model for the "modernist literary revolution" (Ramazani, "Transnational" 335). As Rebecca Beasley likewise argues, Pound wanted to establish a transnational "comparative literature" which transgressed spatial and temporal borders (Beasley 656). Ramazani's and Beasley's comments on Pound's emphasis on transgressing the formal and contextual borders of literature and culture may also be observed in his

Cantos in which he blended various global sources to construct a model for a unified culture that would be of transnational influence, a point that will be explored further during the discussion of *The Pisan Cantos* in this chapter.

In his poems “In Durance” and “Epilogue” he addresses the same problem in which his personae resolve to search for a place where innovation is welcomed. As the poems suggest, Pound’s discontent with America evoked in him the desire to leave and seek a new cultural milieu in which he would find fellow innovators in art and literature. To illustrate, in his poem “In Durance” he reveals his conviction that he did not belong to the United States and felt he needed to find other people who thought like himself: “I am homesick after mine own kind, / Oh I know there are folk about me, friendly faces, / But I am homesick after mine own kind” (Pound, “In Durance” 86; 1-3). In the poem, the people his persona encounters are either artists preoccupied with making a profit from their artwork, or people who do not share his aspirations in revolutionising poetry (Pound, “In Durance” 86; 3-5). Pound’s search for like-minded people therefore is reiterated in the poem; the people he searches for are only to be found in the “shadows” who are in pursuit of beauty “untouched by echoes of the world” (Pound, “In Durance” 87; 35). “In Durance” and “Epilogue” then, may be read as confessions of the mind of the poet, which reveals his hope to find like-minded people across the Atlantic:

Oh ye, my fellows: with the seas between us some be,

...

Yea thou, and Thou, and THOU, and all my kin

To whom my breast and arms are ever warm,

For that I love ye as the wind the trees

(Pound, “In Durance” 87; 36-44)

Like Pound and his persona, the “fellows” and his “kin” are the upcoming generation of poets who are, undertaking the task of innovating art and literature. By addressing such intellectuals, it can be argued that he conveys both a criticism of America as a conservative land where artists do not feel they belong and also reveals this as one of the reasons for his departure from his country. By the use of apostrophe addressed to his fellow artists in the poem he declares that although born in other countries they shall eventually meet in the same ground which may be regarded as a metaphor that links the physical city to the grounds of innovation.

For Pound, leaving the United States would enable him to learn and observe other cultures where cultural activities were still productive. This would be the source of innovation he was searching for. In his opinion, in order to become a poet, one had to set on a pilgrimage by travelling to other countries and discover ways of bringing a renaissance to a decaying culture. Early in his career, then, it can be drawn that he believed that it was only by leaving America that he could influence American writers to write new poetry. His poem “Epilogue” (1912) may be read as a reiteration of this vision, as he devises a persona who has successfully completed this pilgrimage and who returns as the new bard of the nation. The persona in his poem announces that his task of innovating poetry by leaving his country has been completed:

I bring you the spoils, my nation,
I, who went out in exile,
Am returned to thee with gifts.

I, who have laboured long in the tombs,
Am come back therefrom with riches.

...

Here are my rimes of the south;
Here are strange fashions of music;
Here is my knowledge. (Pound, “Epilogue” 209; 1-5, 8-10)

The self-imposed exile as expressed in the poem, enables the persona to travel in foreign cities and the opportunity to develop as a poet. He declares in the poem that he has returned “with gifts” that are not valuable spices and trinkets but new forms of “rime,” “music,” and knowledge of “patterns” and “devices” that would innovate American poetry by introducing them to the literary trends in Europe (Pound, “Epilogue” 209; 3-12). The literary pilgrimage of the poet-persona in the poem is reminiscent of Pound’s travels to Europe where he was also searching for new literary modes. Thus, the physical journey is used as a metaphor for a literary pilgrimage as seen in the poem. One may suggest that in Pound’s opinion this cultural pilgrimage, or the search for innovation was a way for him to find like-minded people who also aspired to a cultural revolution in poetic expression.

It was not only the conventional form and content that Pound criticised in American poetry but also his conviction of the old-fashioned literary taste of

American readers, editors, and political figures, and their failure to appreciate younger generation of innovative writers, and their deification of long-gone writers such as Whitman (Pound, “Ulysses” 409 and “Robert Frost” 384). As a young poet, he believed that the American readers and writers had been praising Walt Whitman as the greatest American poet, who, according to Pound, was a waning figure in his literary influence for the twentieth-century poets. The way the American reading public viewed Whitman’s achievements, he argued, hindered the advancement of American poetry as they expected poets to conform to verse written in the style of Whitman (Pound, “The Renaissance” 218). Namely, Whitman’s use of free verse, repetition, and cataloguing methods were the focus of Pound’s criticism of Whitman. As such, in *Spirit of Romance* he mocked Whitman’s style by writing a poem about watermelons: “Lo, behold, I eat water-melons When I eat mater-melons the world eats water-melons through me. / When the world eats water-melons, I partake of the world’s water-melons” (Pound, *Spirit of Romance* 168-169). Moreover, he claimed that Whitman could be appreciated when one focused on what he meant, rather than how he expressed his argument:

The only way to enjoy Whitman thoroughly is to concentrate on his fundamental meaning. If you insist, however, on dissecting his language you will probably find that it is wrong NOT because he broke all of what were considered in his days ‘the rules’ but because he is spasmodically conforming to this, that or the other; sporadically dragging in a bit of ‘regular’ metre, using a bit of literary language, and putting his adjectives where, in the spoken tongue, they are not. His real writing occurs when he gets free of all this barbed wire. (*ABC* 192)

For Pound, Whitman represented the American literary tradition and by criticising Whitman’s work, Pound believed that he was challenging traditional forms of writing poetry and American readers for blindly attaching themselves to these conventional models. To illustrate, in the final lines of “Song of Myself,” Whitman states that he will “stop somewhere” and wait for younger poets who will follow the same path: “Failing to fetch me at first keep encouraged, / Missing me one place search another, / I stop somewhere waiting for you” (Whitman, *Leaves of Grass* 104; 1341-1346). The famous lines from “Song of Myself,” declares that the poet will be waiting for the young poets to follow his footsteps. As a response to Whitman’s lines, in his poem “Fifine Answers” Pound wrote, “I meet you there

myself" (Pound, "Fifine Answers" 19; 28). That is, instead of Whitman waiting as a mentor who would lead the path for later poets, Pound's inversion, arguably, underlines his emphasis on the distinctive voice of the young poet rather than a fulfilment of the expectations of preceding poets. It can be inferred that as a young poet, Pound did not desire to be like Whitman but wanted to devise his own style. Although in poems like "Redondillas, or Something of That Sort" and "From Chebar" essays like *ABC of Reading* and *Spirit of Romance* he criticised Whitman, he appreciated his work later on, as revealed in "A Pact" which marked his coming to terms with his importance as one of the most influential poets of the nineteenth century.

The literature of a society, Pound argued, needed to have a social function; it should reflect the people's aspirations, thoughts, and visions. That is to say, various groups and their ideas that made up the society were reflected in literature:

[...] this function is not the coercing or emotionally persuading, or bullying or suppressing people into the acceptance of any one set or any six sets of opinion as opposed to any other one set or half dozen sets of opinions.

It has to do with the clarity and vigour of 'any and every' thought and opinion. (Pound, "How to Read" 21)

Thus, the function of literature was not to "educate" people or to persuade them to fit into a certain ideology but instead to verify their existence in the society by representing them (Pound, "How to Read" 21). Similarly, Pound regarded Whitman as the poet who was able to portray a realistic image of the nineteenth century and delivered what was expected of him as a people's poet and succeeded in depicting more than prose writers were able to convey (Pound, *ABC* 192). Though Pound claimed that he did not admire Whitman, he underscored his success in setting an example for representing a nation's culture:

He *is* America. His crudity is an exceeding great stench, but it *is* America. He is the hollow place in the rock that echoes with his time. He *does* 'chant the crucial stage' and he is the 'voice triumphant.' He is disgusting. He is an exceedingly nauseating pill, but he accomplishes his mission."(Pound, "What I Feel About Walt Whitman" 115)

Even though Pound acknowledges Whitman's significance as stated in the quotation above, he disagrees with his poetic style and argues for innovative poetic expression for the new century. Moreover, he remarks that Whitman did not see himself as the apex of literary achievement, but the beginning of a long line of innovation, and blames the American readers for their uncritical admiration and deification of him as the *only* greatest poet of America even in the early twentieth century (Pound, "What I Feel" 115 and "The Renaissance" 218). As a means of demonstrating his point, in his poem "Redondillas, or Something of That Sort" he imitates the cataloguing style of Whitman, and deviates from the content of Whitman's lines to voice his critique of American readers. Instead of singing about the splendours of America, as a means of reversal, he "sings" a song that contains fragments of a "cosmopolite civilization," and criticises the world he lives in as filled with "crudities" and "banalities" (Pound, "Redondillas" 215; 1-2). He makes use of the repetitive phrase "I would sing" as a continuation of Whitman's list of praiseworthy elements about America but deviates from this context to lament the lack of beauty and culture in the world:

I would sing the American people
 God send them some civilization
 I would sing of the nations of Europe,
 God grant them some method of cleansing
(Pound, "Redondillas" 216; 22-25)

As the lines suggest, Pound believed that America lacked a refined culture and Europe, in turn, was unable to differentiate the quality of works published and needed a method of selection and simplification, that is, a distinction between "good" and "bad" writers. It can be argued that his imitation of Whitman in the lines above are not to condemn the poet but to criticise American and European readers for causing the deterioration of culture. Therefore, it may be deduced that Pound was critical of the self-absorbed cultures on both sides of the Atlantic.

When Pound arrived in London, he found the English literary scene to be, as in America, in decay (Pound, "How to Read" 17). He believed that he had discovered the reasons for England's old-fashioned taste in art and literature and claimed in his essays "The Renaissance" and "How to Read" that many English writers, like himself, had left their homeland, or, the ones that remained had died of old age or

had abandoned writing for more “practical” fields due to the rejection from English publishers (Pound, “The Renaissance” 223 and “How to Read” 32). Pound noted that contrary to his expectations the once state-of-the-art little magazines that “served to break the monopoly” in letters were no longer encouraging innovative writers and that the critics, did not support them nor publish them in esteemed magazines (Pound, “The Individual in his Milieu” 242 and “Praefatio Aut Cimicum Tumulus” 361). Moreover, he also disagreed with the literary taste of the reading public. He claimed that British taste for literature had not changed since the early decades of the nineteenth century (Pound, “How to Read” 17). Furthermore, he claimed that Britain was flourishing with a type of critic who drew attention away from the work of the writer and instead promoted his own criticism of these works (Pound, “Praefatio” 361). For him, the outmoded taste in English society stemmed from the “ignorant” British critics who did not even know “half a dozen kinds of the best literature,” and were unaware of the latest trends in literature of art, which affected the writers, readers, and publishers (Pound, “Mr. Housman at Little Bethel” 66-67). For this reason both America and England, he claimed, were covered in “a dust heap of bigotry,” since they put mediocre examples of literature on a pedestal and overlooked the works of innovative writers (Pound, “Provincialism the Enemy” 170).

The discrepancy between the two cultures is further illustrated in his poem “From Chebar,” in which he contrasts America and Europe. In the poem, America is not where everything, human history, begins nor ends (Pound, “From Chebar” 269; 1-4). His American identity is the surface of his deeper understanding of culture. From the lines that follow, one may claim that for him, nationality was a mask that confines the individual to a particular culture and history from which one may be alienated: “Out of the old I was, I held against the Romans, / I am not afraid of the dark, / I am he who is not afraid to look in the corners” (Pound, “From Chebar” 269; 23-25). It can be argued that Pound regards America as a new land which *pretends* to have a long history of literature and culture. At the time, Pound had already settled in London and the particular reference to Romans is reminiscent of the comparison between London and Rome as discussed in Chapter One, when the Roman Empire was the most powerful civilization it had reached even the “dark corners” of England. The dark corners referred to in the poem therefore, may be seen as the dark

corners of London and its literature that awaits to be rediscovered by the newly arriving poet. The poem in general may be read as a discourse of how America represents the conventional viewpoint on the position of the poet and his value, which, for Pound, can only be described as mediocre:

I do not join in the facile praises,
In the ever ready cries of enthusiasms.
I demand the honesty of the forest, I am not
To be bought with lies. (Pound, "From Chebar" 270; 35-38)

Moreover, his critique of American literary taste alludes to the time of the frontier when the frontiersmen were faced with the harsh survival conditions of the forest instead of the comfortable city life modern people are accustomed to live (Pound, "From Chebar" 270; 37). It can be drawn from the poem that like the frontiersman, Pound desired to make his way into the literary canon instead of being a part of it just because there is no one else. Thus, he calls America as a land of lies where the poet is not encouraged to advance himself. In addition, in his search to become a revolutionary in poetry, he refers to his self-imposed exile:

You may ignore me, you may keep me in exile,
You may assail me with negations, or you
 may keep me, a while, well hidden,
But I am after you and before you,
And above all, I do not accede. (Pound, "From Chebar" 270; 30-34)

America in the poem is depicted as a land that suppresses and silences innovation and changes in the literary canon. He criticises this tendency by commenting upon the "puritanical" vision of American taste (Pound, "The Renaissance" 219). The only reply seems to be people quoting Whitman against him, to which he responds as: "There is no use your quoting Whitman against me, / His time is not our time, his day and hour / were different" ("From Chebar" 271; 57-59). From these lines one may deduce that for him, the era in which Whitman was the greatest American poet had passed. Thus, he concludes that a young poet struggling to innovate poetic expression should not have to comply with the style of former poets but discover ways of becoming a great poet of his era because,

There is only the best that matters
Have done with the rest. Have done with
 Easy contentments.

Have done with the encouragement
of mediocre production. (Pound, "From Chebar" 271; 46-50)

Pound believed that America only applauded mediocre works written by mediocre writers and did not encourage people who wanted to experiment with the ways poetry was composed which would change the currents in literature. One may adopt his lines to comment on his leaving the U.S. as an act of abandoning the "idle" land and going to London where perfection would be on demand, which is described in the poem as a place where people are "not afraid of the dark" (Pound, "From Chebar" 270; 24). His preconception of London, then, is that "they" sought perfection and innovation in poetry unlike Americans and "they" set the barrier for good art (Pound, "From Chebar" 271; 64-70). Although he had perceived London as one of the centres of the publication of good literature, his years in London and his experience of the city resulted in a sense of disappointment which he reveals in his poems about London like *Hugh Selwyn Mauberley* and the critical work *ABC of Reading* on the literary tradition in England.

Furthermore, Pound claimed that him, or his contemporaries including Eliot, did not "look UP to [their] British contemporaries" and that apart from Eliot, they preserved, like Henry James, their "essential Americanness" in their works (Pound, "National Culture" 133). He argued that one of the most significant deficiencies of English verse was its inability to express genuine subjects and give voice to every individual in the society. In other words, he was convinced that English verse lacked realistic portrayals of the human condition and used vague expressions (Pound, "The Rev. G. Crabbe, LL. B." 276). By responding to and criticizing some of the most canonical writers, including Chaucer, Shakespeare, Swinburne, Tennyson and many others, he believed that he could re-evaluate the English literary tradition in the hopes that it would change the way his contemporaries viewed literature.

In several essays¹², he maintained that English literature, was filled with bad imitators of the past, and was not contemporaneous with its time. Moreover, he claimed that the newest fashions of writing poetry arrived decades later into Britain. In the 1890s, for instance, England was following the French writer Gautier's

¹² Some of Eliot's essays including "Swinburne and His Biographers," "Landor," "How to Read," and "A Retrospect" address these issues and will be discussed in the chapter.

innovative style sixty years behind and lacked the finesse of the original (Pound, “Landor” 354). Furthermore, he argued that the poetry of some of the famous English poets were filled with ambiguous expressions for the sake of musicality. For example, Pound maintained that Swinburne, who regarded poetry as “an art of verbal music,” had become unfashionable in the early twentieth century, due to his foregrounding of the “value of sound” instead of the “value of words as words” (Pound, “Swinburne versus his Biographers” 292).

One of the ways to discover new ways of direct expression was to criticise the conventional, embellished use of language. In Pound’s opinion, Swinburne was one of the representatives of the poets who used vague expressions in their poems. In his poem “Swinburne: A Critique” Pound likens Swinburne’s poems to paintings that are formed of “intermingled,” unclear colours and images and even though he uses intricate patterns, he accuses him of not including any purpose in the poem (Pound, “Swinburne: A Critique” 261; 1-2). For Pound, Swinburne’s poems have musicality in its use of language, but the music does not help to determine a tone for the poem. Moreover, the dramatic quality, the use of action and characterization in the poem are not clear and his “knights [...] ride in a dream” (Pound, “Swinburne: A Critique” 261; 4). Furthermore, he claims that Swinburne is the “ruler in mystery” to suggest that his vague lines express, for the unlearned, the misconception of good poetry (Pound, “Swinburne: A Critique” 261; 8). From these lines, it may be argued that his critique of Swinburne explicates Pound’s passion to strip language of its elaborate and oblique form and discover clear, direct expressions in language to create good poetry.

In addition to Swinburne, Pound also criticises the style of Robert Browning in “Paracelsus in Excelsis,” Pound makes use of Paracelsus, the Swedish alchemist who was the subject of one of the poems of Robert Browning. In the poem, Pound’s epiphany of true art is revealed through the image of the mirror clearing of mist:

The mist goes from the mirror and I see!
Behold! the world of forms is swept beneath –
Turmoil grown visible beneath our peace,
And we, that are grown formless, rise above –
(Pound, “Paracelsus in Excelsis” 148; 6-9)

The obscurity of language that Pound disliked is likened to the mist that prevents the persona from seeing himself clearly in the mirror. It is only after this revelation that the persona Pound employs can truly realise the artificiality of the world; human beings appear as soulless and motionless statues in a world in which rivers “run mad” (Pound, “Paracelsus” 148; 12). By portraying the discrepancy between the individual and the environment, Pound highlights the chaotic, hellish environment in which the persona is “no longer human” but a statue that is unable to adapt to his environment. Thus the poem illustrates how Pound makes use of the image of the statue, an urban object, and the overflowing river to foreground a time when the individual felt alienated from his environment, the hellish city, which needed new ways of rendering experience rather than the conventional ways of expression. Additionally, he argued that English poetry between 1890 and 1910 lacked the harmonious union of meaning and musicality in poetry and instead was “a horrible agglomeration compost, not minted, most of it not even baked, all legato,” an undercooked “doughy mess” which tried to imitate the greatest works of the past including the poetry of Keats, Wordsworth, and writers of the Elizabethan age (Pound, “Hell” 205). He believed that literature of the twentieth century should be the harmonious balance of meaning and music that reflected the modern modes of thought.

He maintained that in the early twentieth century English literature had been conquered by non-British writers, especially after Henry James, English prose writing was dominated by the Irish, namely Joyce and Yeats, and Hardy was replaced by American poets (Pound, “How to Read” 34). Therefore, he asserted that all innovations in English verse since 1910 were the contributions of foreign writers and concluded that there was “no longer any reason to call it English verse,” as it had become a mixture of nationalities (Pound, “How to Read” 34). From such statements it can be inferred that Pound excluded most of the British writers of his time and instead named himself and fellow American writers including Eliot as the *only* innovators in literature. This emphasis may have stemmed from his opinions on a literary tradition that incorporated foreign influences on national ones.

As he observed in *ABC of Reading*, this change in English literature did not happen overnight and similar foreign influences could be observed in the literary

history of England. Unlike the conventional classification of literary periods based on centuries, Pound categorized English literature into four periods shaped by literary influences. As such, the first period, which he roughly associated with the Middle Ages, was when English literature was cognizant of the literary modes of Europe, the second was when England praised and supported its national writers, which he associated with the Elizabethan age. The third period was when England cut the umbilical cord from its most acclaimed writers, forcing writers like Landor, Beddoes, Byron, Keats, Shelley, and Browning to leave for European countries. Finally, Pound marked the fourth period, the “exotic injection,” with the arrival of American writers like Henry James and W. H. Hudson and artists like Whistler who permeated into English literary tradition and began the “American colonization” of Britain (Pound, *ABC* 132-133).

Pound was firmly convinced that all literature had to break away from national borders to become part of world literature. By giving the example of English literature, he argues for a transnational literature. To illustrate, in *ABC of Reading*, he states: “Chaucer wrote while England was still a part of Europe. There was one culture from Ferrara to Paris and it extended to England. Chaucer was the greatest poet of his day. He was more compendious than Dante” (Pound, *ABC* 100-101). Chaucer’s poetry, Pound asserted, was a part of the European literary canon that was not only influenced from European literature, but was also influential in return to the literary tradition of Europe. Additionally, he claimed that by the time Shakespeare was producing his greatest works, the European tradition had already become “exotic;” which meant that it had separated from the literary canon of the continent, a change which he believed was the starting point for the decline of England’s literary influence on the European literary canon (Pound, *ABC* 100-101). This argument shows that Pound had in mind a scheme of reconstructing a literary canon in English that would be once again a part of the European literary tradition:

IF Chaucer represents the great mellowing and the dawn of a new *paideuma*, Villon, the first voice of man broken by bad economics, represents also the end of a tradition, the end of a mediaeval dream, the end of a whole body of knowledge, fine, subtle, that had long run from Arnaut to Guido Cavalcanti, that had lain in the secret mind of Europe for centuries, and which is far too complicated to deal with in a primer of reading. (Pound, *ABC* 104)

Accordingly, he believed that the new “paideuma¹³,” the new literary tradition that reflected the intellectual climate of his age, would re-establish English literature as part of European literature, modelling it to become a *transnational* literature in its influence and significance. It may be argued that one way to demonstrate the necessity for this transformation for him was by using the city in his poetry as a metaphor for a decaying national culture.

2.3 Significance of the City

Pound maintained that any civilization in decay was in need of an understanding of history and in order to re-explore a nation’s history, one had to initially understand the developments in architecture, as he regarded it to be “the first arts to arrive” in the history of humankind (Pound, “The Renaissance” 219). In his opinion, architecture was the “first branch of advertisement” for a nation’s success and it was the physical proof of the existence and advancement of a nation (Pound, “The Renaissance” 219). In other words, by looking at the architecture of the city, one could understand how a culture had developed into its present form. Moreover, he claimed that the metropolis was the source of the advancement of civilization for human beings:

Ultimately, all these things proceed from a metropolis, Peace, our ideas of justice, of liberty, of as much of these as are feasible, the immaterial, as well as material things, proceed from a metropolis. Cities of the Italian Renaissance, London, Paris, make and have made us our lives. (Pound, “Provincialism the Enemy” 170)

A river that changed its colour depending on the “substance” in the riverbed in his opinion was similar to the production of art in a particular cultural environment (Pound, *Spirit of Romance* 7). That is to say, art and the society in which it was produced were interdependent of each other. His analogy of the river and the riverbed, may also suggest that a spatial awareness was an important component for an understanding of the development of various cultures.

Moreover, he believed that the city provided the artist with innumerable opportunities for recognition which included the capital he needed to produce art

¹³ For Pound’s definition of the term *paideuma* see “For a New Paideuma” 254. This is a term coined by Pound and is explained further in the chapter.

(Pound, “The Renaissance” 222). The economic value of the city, according to Pound, was not solely related to employment opportunities, but also to the value a particular city attributed to art and literature. He further noted that cities in which good writing and specimens of good art existed, attracted people from around the world and the economic value of the city thus increases (Pound, “The Renaissance” 222). Hence, he believed that if the state would provide better living conditions for the artist in the capital city, it would contribute to the livelihood and wealth of the city, and consequently of the nation (Pound, “The Renaissance” 221). Therefore, he maintained that art and literature would change the society not only by contributing to the nation’s culture, but also its economy, which would enable the country to occupy a place in global discussions.

More importantly, Pound emphasised the similarities between the construction of a city’s architecture and of language. In *Spirit of Romance*, he underscored the relationship between ideology, architecture, and language. He argued that in the Middle Ages, while the intellectuals and leaders formed legislation in accordance with the ideologies of the time, the architects fashioned their buildings so as to reflect the same vision, and the troubadours, he said, were “fashioning” language “into new harmonics” by “melting the common tongue” (Pound, *Spirit of Romance* 22). From his observation it can be inferred that Pound believed when ideology, architecture and language worked together, they could be re-ordered and changed once more, so as to revolutionise the ways in which literature was perceived. It may further be argued that Pound’s motto “make it new,” was modelled after the revolution of the Middle Ages; like the medieval mind-set, he believed that in the twentieth century, literature needed a revolution that would only be influential and enduring when ideology, architecture, and language could work together. This vision of the city as utopia may be found in *The Pisan Cantos* in which he uses the image of “the City of Dioce” to refer to Mussolini’s project of building a new world order, a dream which he shared as well (Pound, “Canto 74” 445).

He acknowledged in his essays “Provincialism the Enemy” and “The Renaissance” the close relationship between the urban fabric of the city and the construction of language and in his poems discussed in this chapter Pound combined the two in the common component they shared; namely the people, instead of

describing the city in terms of its physical components as nineteenth century British poets discussed in Chapter One¹⁴ did. Thus, cities were not only places where national culture could be displayed but also, as it will be pointed out in the discussion of his poems, a medium in which the versatile components of national culture could be represented by using an assortment of people. In other words, one may argue that he sought to show the representations of the city by portraying its inhabitants, instead of relying on the description of buildings. In fact, Pound's foregrounding of people may be regarded as was a means of following the steps of Henry James since he praised him for his excellence in showing the discrepancies between the two cultures:

His art was great art as opposed to over-elaborate or over-refined art by virtue of the major conflicts he portrays. In his books he showed race against race, immutable; the essential Americanness, or Englishness, or Frenchness – in *The American*, the difference between one nation and another; not flag-waving treaties not the machinery of government, but 'why' there is always misunderstanding, why men of different race are not the same. (Pound, "Henry James" 298)

Like Henry James's stories discussed in Chapter One, the majority of Pound's poems under discussion foreground *the experience of the city* rather than the physical description of it. It may be suggested that this experience highlights the sense of alienation and the feeling of non-belonging which leads to the portrayal of ambiguous cities of the memory that tends to fluctuate towards unidentifiable cities which conveys a universal experience of placelessness. One may argue that even in places where he found fellow artists and writers like himself, Pound could not make peace with the cities he lived in and foregrounded alienation in his poems. Thus, in his early poems the urban images that he constructs explore the themes of non-belonging and alienation, and the desire to leave home for a better place which may be claimed to be a metaphor for a critique of the conventions in literature and the search for discovering innovative ways of writing literature respectively. In his opinion, since the city was made up of people and their culture, his city descriptions were not strictly architectural; he either gave voice to the people living in the city or the representations of the city contained personified images that pointed to his

¹⁴ See the poems of Austin Dobson, Arthur Hugh Clough, and Robert Buchanan discussed in Chapter One for such physical descriptions of the city.

conviction that the meanings a city attained were linked to its people. The city, for him, contained fragments of its history which people preserved as part of their culture. For instance, in his poem “Rome” his persona addresses a visitor who expects to see artefacts of the city that belong to the Roman culture. The persona’s speech draws the visitor’s attention to worn arches and common, inauthentic palaces which do not reflect the genuine Roman culture but are ruins that have no historic significance. The persona in the poem reveals his frustration with what is lacking in the city in the following lines:

O thou newcomer who seek’st Rome in Rome
 And find’st in Rome no thing thou canst call Roman;
 Arches worn old and palaces made common,
 Rome’s name alone within these walls keeps home.

(Pound, “Rome” 154; 1-4)

Rome, once famous for its great power and for being the centre of culture, has been transformed in the poem into a place of the past, in which nothing of its former reputation remains. Moreover, he claimed that these artefacts, either in ruins or well-preserved buildings and landmarks, created a misleading notion of history due to the dysfunctional attachment to archaic forms. It can thus be drawn that Pound makes use of a city in ruins as a metaphor for a decaying culture. Similarly, he believed that the literary tradition and intellectual circle that he expected to find in the metropolis was just like the laudatory representation of Rome that the addressee of the poem hears of; a city that was portrayed as a glorious place in literature, but in reality, a place that had perished.

In his poems “N.Y.” and “Portrait D’Une Femme,” he personifies cities so as to demonstrate the ways that the perceptions of the individuals influence the image of the city by attaching it new meanings, instead of depicting the physical changes made by urban development. In “N.Y.” for instance, the poet-persona, promises to give life to a city through his representation. Like god breathing life into Adam, the persona breathes life into the city so that a city attains a soul. One may suggest that for Pound, writing about a city was like giving life to a city. To this end, the representation of a city in literature may be regarded as a powerful way of attributing a city a new meaning that develops in each representation:

My City, my beloved,
 Thou art a maid with no breasts,
 Thou art slender as a silver reed.
 Listen to me, attend me!
 And I will breathe into thee a soul,
 And thou shalt live for ever. (Pound, "N.Y." 185; 8-13)

In the poem the persona depicts New York City as a beautiful, slender androgynous being, or a woman with no breasts that can only achieve immortality by way of its representation in literature given by the poet. In the light of these lines it may be inferred that the image of the city was constructed by the people who view the city which included artists and writers. Consequently, it may further be claimed that Pound emphasised the significance of the writer for the society and the prosperity of the city by portraying a city in need of its artist.

Like the image of New York in "N.Y.," London is personified as a socialite in "Portrait D'Une Femme." In the poem, Pound depicts a Londoner woman who becomes the inspiration for a great many thinkers and artists. Her body becomes the combination of thoughts, ideas, and gossip of these intellectual circles (Pound, "Portrait D'Une Femme" 184; 4). The socialite in the poem may be read as a personification of London where people gather and exchange ideas. Thus, the body of the woman, just like the city, may be regarded as a meeting place for people who are attracted to the city for the same reasons for artistic development.

In such poems like "The White Stag" and "Piccadilly," Pound regarded the city as a place of inspiration for artists and writers. In "The White Stag," for instance, he draws an image of a beautiful white stag that attracts "hounds" from all over the world which may be read as a metaphor for London as a place of attraction (Pound, "The White Stag" 98; 7). In another poem entitled "Piccadilly" the setting of the poem is given in the sub-title, but rather than depicting the urban setting Pound foregrounds the crowd that forms Piccadilly:

Beautiful, tragical faces,
 Ye that were whole, and are so sunken;
 And, O ye vile, ye that might have been loved,
 That are so sodden and drunken,
 Who hath forgotten you? (Pound, "Piccadilly" 98; 1-5)

The “tragical” faces that are seen in the crowd have sunken from misery, even though they did not necessarily live their lives in woe. It can be inferred that the persona Pound employs feels sympathy for these miserable people who are but a few out of the many that exist around the world. Accordingly, for him, London was a city that was made up of its people, whom he regarded as suffering individuals. Thus, the city in the poem is portrayed as a meeting place for sufferers, instead of a beautiful, celestial place.

Therefore, it can be drawn that for him, the urban landscape was an important meeting place for fellow sufferers of the human condition. In “Aux Belles de Londres,” for instance, the focus is similarly on the people who live in London. The persona declares: “I am aweary with the utter and beautiful weariness / And with the ultimate wisdom and with things terrene / [...] / And the sun and winds again” (Pound, “Aux Belles de Londres” 120; 1-2, 4). The “beauties” of London in the poem, do not refer to the beautiful women but to the weary people in the city which, to the persona, is the reason why the city is an inspiring place. The persona draws a similarity between the fluctuating weather of London and the shifting moods of people from gaiety to weariness which consumes the soul of the persona (Pound, “Aux Belles de Londres” 120; 4-5).

It can be further claimed that as his career developed Pound built a more complex relationship with the city; as a poet who left his home for almost forty years he created pleasant images of cities as well as images that reminded him of his foreignness and alienation from his environment. Additionally, Herbert Schneidau claims that one of the reasons for Pound moving to London was his desire to be in a city where he could observe the juxtaposition of the historical past and the modern present:

It now becomes apparent that he stayed in London, and perhaps went there in the first place, because for him it was a city of the dead as well as of the living, and there is abundant evidence that at this time the living were important to him in proportion to their contact with the past. (Schneidau 222-223)

Although he left America in search for a place where he would meet like-minded people, as he admits in his poem “Plunge,” his London experience was not a

pleasant one. In search of the new, he used of the image of bathing to illustrate his desire to integrate a change in perspective. Contrary to being cleansed, in the poem, his persona feels smothered and scalded in this bathing water (Pound, “Plunge” 194; 1-3). It can be inferred from the poem that for him, new friends, new faces, and new places smothered him and diverted him from his intention of searching for the new. The persona of the poem becomes a mouthpiece for Pound’s claims that his years in London has been an overwhelming experience:

Do I not loathe all the walls, streets, stones,
 All mire, mist, all fog,
 All ways of traffic?
 ...
 And sun,
 Oh, sun enough!
 Out and alone, among some
 Alien people! (Pound, “Plunge” 194; 11-13, 17-20)

London has become a place that he wants to escape from: nothing about the city including the fog, the traffic, the people, or the crowd is appealing to the persona. What affects him the most is the scarcity of sunlight. Whenever he is outside, he feels alienated from his surroundings (Pound, “Plunge” 194; line 20).

Pound frequently used the image of integrating into a crowd, as seen in his poems “Plunge” and “Fortunatus.” As such, in “Fortunatus” he describes the city as a densely populated place and relates his impression of delving into the crowd. The poem begins with a reduplication of the word irresistible: “Resistless, unresisting” to describe the way that he slips into the crowd in the London streets like a “swift spear” (Pound, “Fortunatus” 69; 1). One can infer from this image that he regarded his arrival into the city as a potential threat that would startle the literary tradition that had remained intact for a long time. The persona of the poem refuses to become drowsy and affected by the city as he promises to be alert of his environment:

So towards my triumph, and so reads the will,
 ‘Gainst which I will not, or mine eyes grew dim,
 And dim they seem not, nor are willed to be.
 For beauty greet’th them through your London rain,
 That were of Adriatic beauty loved and won,
 (Pound, “Fortunatus” 69; 4-8)

In the poem, London is portrayed as an attractive, beautiful city that resembles an Adriatic city under rain. Although his depiction draws a pleasant picture, the persona's resistance to become part of the city is clear from the way in which London is *not* his city but "their" rainy city. The attempt to distance himself is clearer in the following lines: "And though I seek all exile, yet my heart / Doth find new friends and all strange lands / Love me and grow my kin, and bid me speed" (Pound, "Fortunatus" 69; 9-11). It can be inferred from the lines that Pound, unlike some of his fellow American writers, would never feel at home but always in exile and in search for new circles that would understand and share his artistic vision.

Pound's city image, as illustrated in the preceding poems, foreground the people living in the city. By portraying the relationship of the persona to the people in the crowd he constructs a city which evokes a sense of alienation for the persona. This, in turn, may demonstrate that the city is an unfamiliar place to which Pound had difficulty adapting and metaphorically illustrated for the reader that poetic expression had become alien to the poet. The persona's estrangement from the crowd and his search for new places may be regarded as a metaphor for Pound's disillusionment from poetic expression and his search for innovation.

2.4 The Use of Persona

Pound asserted that each man in the society was unique in their way of thinking, and these individual voices accumulated and formed the society (Pound, "I Gather the Limbs of Osiris" 28). It may be argued that Pound sought to represent these voices in the society by devising a diverse range of personae. In *ABC of Reading* he claimed that the conventional use of personae in Ovid's and Theocritus's works could no longer be used in twentieth-century verse as they were formerly used to create an illusion for the reader (Pound, *ABC* 78). Pound asserted that each man in the society was unique in their way of thinking, and these individual voices accumulated and formed the society (Pound, "I Gather the Limbs of Osiris" 28). It may be argued that Pound sought to represent these voices in the society by devising a diverse range of personae. In *ABC of Reading* he claimed that the conventional use of personae in Ovid's and Theocritus's works could no longer be used in twentieth-

century verse as they were formerly used to create an illusion for the reader (Pound, *ABC* 78).

Alternatively, in *Spirit of Romance*, Pound's critical study on the origins and influence of Romance, he argued that *Poema del Cid* influenced Western Literature with its portrayal of vivacious, true-to-life depictions of individuals. Pound's enthusiasm over the "crowded streets" filled with colourful paraphernalia of the people in the city in *Poema del Cid* is noteworthy as his poems also depict personae and characters when describing the urban setting in his poetry (Pound, *Spirit of Romance* 70). On the other hand, he claimed that *Chançon de Roland's* influence stemmed from its impersonal narration in the epic (Pound, *Spirit of Romance* 70). In the light of his comments on these works one may argue that his preoccupation with personae, either derived from history or fictional, were attempts of reintegrating these texts as sources of influence. Like Browning's use of the dramatic monologue, Pound's emphasis on the use of personae in these works suggest that he was searching for ways to devise his characters and personae from the examples in these texts. As Robert Elliott pointed out, after Browning and Yeats's initial endeavours on the literary device, Pound's experiments on the use of personae would popularize its varieties in dramatization and characterization for the new century (Elliott 8).

Thus, especially Pound's early work may be said to have responded to the conventional use of the persona. To illustrate, in "Plotinus" he experiments on the Roman philosopher's concept of "one" by associating it with the feeling of loneliness (Pound, "Plotinus" 36; 1). The persona describes himself as a single atom that wanders on its own, "unconquered" and independent, and likens his loneliness to that of a lonely child that cries and rids himself of his sorrow. This image may be viewed as a manifestation of a new self, emerging out of the shattered fragments of the single atom into an eternal entity:

And then for utter loneliness, made I
 New thoughts as crescent images of *me*.
 And with them was my essence reconciled
 While my fear went forth from mine eternity.

(Pound, "Plotinus" 36; 11-14)

It may be argued that these “crescent images” of the persona demonstrate the significance of the persona for Pound as they register the kaleidoscopic viewpoints of the twentieth century. One may also claim that this was, in his opinion only possible by the use of different personae. It was a way to realistically portray the fragmented experiences of people in the twentieth century rather than a single speaker describing an absolute impression. In *Personae* (1909) especially, as the title of the collection indicates, Pound made use of various personae which, as Hugh Witemeyer remarks are “vital historic and pseudohistoric figures” which range along “a Yeats-Browning spectrum” (Witemeyer 46). In *Personae* (1909) his explorations with the dramatic speaker demonstrate his experiments with the poetic device. It may further be argued that Pound’s experiment with the use of personae demonstrated a separation between the real poet (Ezra Pound), the fictional poet-persona, and other characterized fictional personae. Moreover, in “Masks,” for instance, he explains how the personae (masks) are used for disguising the truth in art.

These tales of old disguisings, are they not
Strange myths of souls that found themselves among
Unwonted folk that spake an hostile tongue,
Some soul from all the rest who’d not forgot

(Pound, “Masks” 34; 1-4)

The art of telling “tales” about “old disguisings” by the troubadours, is likened to the poet’s attempts of constructing a fictional world by the use of personae. Additionally, Pound’s emphasis on a foreigner’s perspective suggests that he was in search of a persona that would resemble Henry James’s distanced narrators who would attain a perspective that transcended the borders of nationhood and the limits of a particular culture. To this end, he praised William Carlos Williams for his ability to transcend his national identity when he described the American landscape by employing the perspective of an “observant foreigner” and emphasised the importance of the Jamesian dualism of American and European identities in poetry (Pound, “Dr. Williams’ Position” 391, 397). Moreover, Pound praised *Ulysses* for James Joyce’s ability to unite detailed local street maps of Ireland with an omnipresent, universal character as Leopold Bloom, which suggests that Pound sought to achieve in his poetry a similar combination of the local with the global, and his use of landscapes

along with various personae was a way of reflecting this dichotomy (Pound, "Ulysses" 407).

Pound experimented with the characterization of the persona as well as the position from which the persona described his surroundings. In "Dans un Omnibus de Londres" (In a London Omnibus), for instance, the persona is a passenger in a London bus. The speaker in the poem travels in the omnibus and views the city through the windows of the transport (Pound, "Dans un Omnibus de Londres" 156-157). The contents of the poem suggest an imitation of the route of the bus, which start with the dead eyes of the woman. The poem advances by listing the things the persona sees, and ends by returning to the same eyes (Pound, "Dans un Omnibus" 157; 30-31). The circular route of the narration conveys an impression of London from one end to the other, which is reminiscent of the earlier representations of the city in which the poets attempted to portray London in its entirety. The persona travelling in the bus also demonstrates the use of urban developments in the poem, and due to his position, the persona appears to be part of the city. Although he travels in the city by bus, he is separated by the glass window of the bus and he remains an outsider who is unable to infiltrate the city.

A more conventional take on the viewpoint of the persona may be found in "Provincia Deserta," in which the persona of the poem walks in Provence, a region in France, and revisits the literary works set in that particular landscape. Walking in the city and being acquainted with its history are likened to each other in the poem as the persona walks in the region and points out some of the significant locations for literary history and recalls them. It can be argued that Pound saw the potential of a landscape evoking in the mind of the traveller the literary and cultural history of a nation, which led him to attach significant meanings to the city. The poem, to a certain extent, has psychogeographical tendencies as the persona responds to his environment and spawns the literary tradition to add to the earlier responses to the landscape his new impressions of the setting. Hence, in the poem the landscape reminds him of poets who were closely associated with the landscape, the troubadours, who, like Pound's persona, travelled and sung the stories of the region. It can thus be drawn that in the poem, Pound is intentionally evoking the troubadours

to compare them with his persona who similarly practices singing the history of the region:

I have said:

“Here such a one walked.
Here Coeur-de-Lyon was slain.
Here was good singing.

(Pound, “Provincia Deserta” 126; 42-45)

It is not the regal but the literary history of the landscape that is described in the poem. By evoking troubadours like Coeur-de-Lyon and others, he laments the loss of an age filled with good verse:

That age is gone;
Pieire de Maensac is gone.
I have walked over these roads;
I have thought of them living.

(Pound, “Provincia Deserta” 127; 78-81)

By walking in the city, the poet-persona revives the verse of the landscape and alludes to them which suggests that his journey is also a metaphorical journey for the search of making tradition new. Additionally, he marks urban artefacts like churches with “long minarets” castles and roads as milestones in literary history and traces the achievements of the troubadours as he did in *Spirit of Romance*.

These explorations with point of view and the characterization of personae to depict the experience of the city can be interpreted as metaphor for his experiments with poetic expression. That is, the relationship between the persona and the landscape is metaphor for Pound’s search for a new poetic expression. The claims of Pound are reminiscent of David Watkin’s influential analysis on the close relationship between modes of thought and urban development as discussed in the previous chapters (Watkin 373). In this regard, the city, for the poet, was a model for the construction of a new understanding of language and literature, namely, the modernist approach to poetic expression.

2.5 Making it New: Pound’s Revolution

In order to innovate language and poetic expression, Pound underscored the importance of re-establishing the literary tradition of a nation by selecting the greatest examples from literature as a way of “return[ing] to nature and reason”

which would lay foundations for experimentation for the writer (Pound, “The Tradition” 92). He asserted that literary tradition referred to a collection of the greatest examples of literature which were assembled for the writer to learn what has already been done, and use his knowledge to experiment on these texts and create things anew (Pound, “A Retrospect” 10-11). Moreover, he argued that by this new selection of the greatest examples of literature, their timelessness would enable an everlasting influence for writers. To this end, in *Spirit of Romance*, he maintained:

“All ages are contemporaneous.” This is especially true of literature, where the real time is independent of the apparent, and where many dead men are our grandchildren’s contemporaries, while many of our contemporaries have been already gathered into Abraham’s bosom, or some fitting receptacle. (Pound, *Spirit of Romance* 8)

For this purpose, Pound chose as his motto, “make it new,” which may be regarded as an explanation of his belief in the correlated relationship between tradition and innovation. That is to say, he claimed that by studying earlier works of literature, a writer would have an insight to what has already been done, so as not to repeat them (Pound, “A Retrospect” 10). Moreover, he stated that the best examples of poetry appealed to the reader for its truth, subtlety, and its “refined exactness” (Pound, *Spirit of Romance* 116). He claimed that the subject of poetry as well as the way it was described needed to be changed; in other words, he believed that “the beauty of the means” was equally crucial as “the beauty of the thing” (Pound, “I Gather the Limbs of Osiris” 41).

In Pound’s opinion, one of the ways in which the decay of culture could be avoided was by modernizing language; by doing so, he believed that literature, politics, and everything that made up the society could be changed. For his revolution, he situated the poet at the centre as the “antennae of the race” who would set an example for the society (Pound, “Henry James” 97). The function of the poet, Pound claimed, was to “new-mint the speech, to supply vigorous terms for prose,” from which one may deduce that he regarded poetry as a means for the innovation of language (Pound, “The Wisdom of Poetry” 331).

Accordingly, Pound argued that this type of revolution in poetic expression would create a new *paideuma*. In his essays he coined the term *paideuma* and

defined it as "...the sense of the active element in the era, the complex of ideas which is in a given time germinal, reaching into the next epoch, but conditioning actively all the thought and reaction of its own time." (Pound, "For a New Paideuma" 254). In other words, the term *paideuma* may be described as the prominent features of a particular literary movement that incites the emergence of new ideas, in which its influence continues in the subsequent periods, and embodies "all the thought and reaction" of the era in which it was formed (Pound, "For a New Paideuma" 254). Thus, he believed that a new *paideuma* would enable a cultural Renaissance which could only be achieved by a revolution in language.

Therefore, Pound claimed that for literature to improve in the society, language, the means of expression, needed to be innovated. For him, poetry contained language in its most condensed, impressionable, powerful form compared to other genres (Pound, "How to Read" 23). He asserted that language used by writers, and especially by poets, needed to be charged with meaning to the utmost possible degree. In order to do so, he argued that the best forms of expression in language had to have three properties which namely are *melopoeia*, *phanopoeia*, and *logopoeia* (Pound, "How to Read" 25). To charge language with the paramount possible meanings, he maintained that the writer had to "charge it by sound" (*melopoeia*), "throw a visual image on the reader's imagination" (*phanopoeia*), or "use groups of words" (*logopoeia*) that would convey the layers of meaning the writers try and achieve (Pound, *ABC* 37).

To elaborate, he described *melopoeia* as the musical property of language, which could be achieved by the use of either inherently musical words, the "cadence" of the word which induced "emotional correlations" in a speech created by the "sound or rhythm" of language, or by the singing, intonation, and utterance of the word (Pound, "How to Read" 25, "A Retrospect" 5, "Marianne Moore and Mina Loy" 394, and *ABC* 61-63). As an example, he observed that Greek, Persian, Arabic, and the provençal of the troubadours had laid the most importance to the music of poetry (Pound, *ABC* 42).

The second property of language, *phanopoeia*, which he described as the use of words that evoked in the mind of the reader an image of the object depicted, which

needed to be “presented” like a scientist conveys data (Pound, “A Retrospect” 6). Pound argued that the Chinese ideogram was the perfect example of how the “greater cultural energy” of a nation in a particular historical period may be contained in a single phrase (Pound, “For a New Paideuma” 255). As Pound maintained, taking the example of the Chinese ideogram of dilution, selection, and clear cut expression and adopting it to the English language would evoke in the mind of the reader an image of the aimed impression. In his search for a similar pictorial foregrounding in English, he was involved in the Imagist movement. He described Imagism as

[...] poetry wherein the feelings of painting and sculpture are predominant (certain men move in phantasmagoria; the images of their gods, whole countrysides, stretches of hill land and forest, travel with them) (Pound, “Marianne Moore and Mina Loy” 394)

In Imagism the direct treatment of the subject (subjective/objective: not representation but presentation) was crucial; all words that were used needed to contribute to the presentation or the composition of the poem which followed a musical sequence and not the metric system of traditional poetry (Pound, “A Retrospect” 3). In his later essays in which he emphasised the tripartite elements of language (melopoeia, phanopoeia, and logopoeia), he underlined the shortcomings of imagism and stated that one of the reasons for his coinage of the term *phanopoeia*, was to isolate his concept of the image from that of the Imagists (Pound, *ABC* 52):

The diluters took the handiest and easiest meaning, and thought only of the STATIONARY image. If you can't think of imagism or *phanopoeia* as including the moving image, you will have to make a really needless division of fixed image, and praxis or action. (Pound, *ABC* 52)

Pound maintained that while Imagism drew attention to using series of images in describing an object, it fell short of depicting the element of movement, which he claimed *phanopoeia* inherently embodied. In other words, *phanopoeia* incorporated not only the visual description of the object but also the fluidity of the image through its movement, change over time, and the transformation it undergoes could be reflected with the use of the shifting of the personae. During Pound's interest in Imagism, he thought language contained sound and sense, music and meaning, to which he later added a third element which would be used in Vorticism

as the foundation for the “vortex.” In other words, Pound believed that it was the purest form of energy that created art and which relied on a vortex, an immediate

[...] picture that means a hundred poems, the music that means a hundred pictures, the most highly energized statement, the statement that has not yet SPENT itself its expression, but which is the most capable of expressing. (Pound, “Vortex” par.8)

Vorticism was a movement Pound coined with Wyndham Lewis and claimed that it was the form of “art before it has spread itself into a state of flaccidity, of elaboration, of secondary applications” (Pound, “Vortex” par.18).

Logopoeia is the third property of language which refers to the intellectual or emotional association of groups of words which attain multiple meanings and perform “a dance of the intelligence among words and ideas and modification of ideas and characters” (Pound, “Marianne Moore and Mina Loy” 394, “How to Read” 25, and *ABC* 63). These associations stimulated by the choice of words of the poet, he claimed, would enable poetry to become a medium in which language could be innovated and the way in which poets express themselves in the English language could be revolutionised.

This new revolutionised language, he argued, would rid poetic expression from the “rhetoric and frilled paper decoration,” that is, the clichéd “ornate” language as it would treat contemporary life, “liv[ing] again ‘close to the thing’,” by using “simple and direct language” (Pound, “I Gather the Limbs of Osiris” 41). This clarity in language Pound aimed, however, differed from colloquial language. He argued that poetic language needed to contain the best examples of expression that was “‘curial’, more dignified” (Pound, “I Gather the Limbs of Osiris” 41).

There are few fallacies more common than the opinion that poetry should mimic the daily speech. Works of art attract by assembling unlikeness. Colloquial poetry is to the real art as the barber’s wax dummy is to sculpture. In every art I can think of we are damned and clogged by the mimetic; dynamic acting is nearly forgotten; the painters of the moment escape through eccentricity. (Pound, “I Gather the Limbs of Osiris” 41-42)

This way, he claimed, poetry would be taken seriously as a literary form and not as a pastime of non-poets, and would enable the reader to “feel that he is in

contact with something arranged more finely than the commonplace” (Pound, “I Gather the Limbs of Osiris” 41).

To charge language with the utmost possible meanings, Pound proposed a method called “Luminous Detail” which may be defined as a technique of presentation that selectively foregrounds, or sheds light on features of an object without revealing every detail, by abstaining from the vague, abstract definitions of the poets of the nineteenth century (Pound, “I Gather the Limbs of Osiris” 21-23). This selective viewpoint, in the 1920s, associated him with other forms of extreme, clear-cut ideals in politics and economy, and linked him to Fascist ideologies. As Cary Wolfe remarks, one of the reasons for Pound’s interest in Italian Fascism was due to his disillusionment with the capitalist economy:

By helping the struggling artist buy time, food, and tools, the patron creates not art, but what makes art possible. He creates, in other words, the conditions of invention which capitalist economy could not provide. [...] what Pound’s writings on patronage reveal is that his early politics, when pushed to pragmatic, positive application, are dangerously regressive and undisturbed about the binding logic of political structures and the way in which cultural practices reproduce these structures. (Wolfe 34, 40)

Pound’s model for artistic production and economy, in which he claimed that a new understanding of patronage would support the artist to contribute to the economic progress of the nation, led him to the conclusion that capitalism would never allow him to establish such a system. Hence, his leaving London in the 1920s may be regarded as another instance in which Pound was following his dream of constructing the embodiment of a new national culture in another city. As such, William Pratt claims that Pound was interested in carrying his influential position to the world and that he wanted to be not only “an English poet,” but “a world poet on the scale of Homer or Dante” (Pratt 21).

Frequently noted by critics including Larry Scanlon, Julian Symons, Gavin Selerie, and William Pratt¹⁵ as Pound’s farewell to London, *Hugh Selwyn Mauberley* (1920), is made up of a series of shorter poems in which he makes use of the city

¹⁵ See: Scanlon, Larry “Modernism’s Medieval Imperative: The Hard Lessons of Ezra Pound’s *Hugh Selwyn Mauberley*,” Symons, Julian. *Makers of the New*. pp.109, Gavin Selerie, ““And now, why?”: London Ghosts and Their Haunts,” Pratt, William, “Odi et Amo: Pound’s Love-Hate-Love Affair with London.”

image and various personae to describe the poet's disillusionment from his dream of innovating poetic expression in London. In the first section of the poem, his persona, E. P., who shares the same initials with the poet, resolves in leaving his country, the "half savage country" (Pound, *Hugh Selwyn Mauberley* 185; 6): "No, hardly, but, seeing he had been born / In a half savage country, out of date; / Bent resolutely on wringing lilies from the acorn" (Pound, *HSM* 185; 5-7). The lines allude to Whitman's poem "When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom'd" with the words "wringing lilies," which may be read as a reaction against tradition and a decision to leave his country (Pound, *HSM* 185; 7). Like Pound, his persona E. P. is noted to have arrived in a new place to revolutionise poetic expression. E. P.'s arrival in the new city is justified through the lines from *The Odyssey*; "ἴδμεν γὰρ τοι πᾶν πᾶνθ', ὅσ' ἐνὶ Τροίῃ," roughly translated as "For we know all the toils that [are] in wide Troy," which draws similarities between Troy and the setting of the poem and suggests that the latter setting contains hidden riches and opportunities like the ones found in Troy (Pound, *HSM* line 9; Ruthven 129). As such, the city in the poem represents a promised land for the aspiring poet who comes from "a half savage country;" however, this reputation of the city is described to be long gone as indicated by the first two stanzas:

For three years, out of key with his time,
 He strove to resuscitate the dead art
 Of poetry; to maintain "the sublime"
 In the old sense. Wrong from the start –

(Pound, *HSM* 185; 1-4).

He has spent three years to revive the "[...] dead art/ Of poetry" (Pound, *HSM* 185; 2-3). However, as the lines indicate, the persona is revealed to be ahead of his time, so he considers his attempts to be "Wrong from the start," which may be read as Pound's confession of giving up his task of changing poetic language. In the poem, Pound likens the literary pilgrimage of the poet-persona to the journey of Odysseus; like Odysseus overcoming difficult obstacles by fighting monsters and immortal creatures, the poet faces the literary critics that were resisting innovative verse and confesses that his deeds were in vain and thus forgotten.

Like his attempts of reforming literature, the persona states that "The age demanded an image / Of its accelerated grimace," which may refer to a new form of

poetic expression that would reflect the intellectual climate of the twentieth century and replace earlier verse filled with “obscure reveries” which expressed “inward” emotions of the poets of the Romantic era (Pound, *HSM* 186). Accordingly, E. P. claims that in order to innovate poetic expression, the poets must free themselves of “Pisistratus,” the patrons and editors who only published and supported mainstream artists and instead “choose a knave or an eunuch” that would invest in young poets who wanted to experiment with poetic expression (Pound, *HSM* 187; Ruthven 131). One may suggest that Pound’s life in London and the struggles of E.P. in the lines given are complementing each other and that Pound was relating an account or a self-critique of his agenda in the poem. Although William Pratt claims Pound’s farewell to London in *Hugh Selwyn Mauberley* to be a deliberate act of the poet to establish himself as a world poet, he also underlines that Pound would realise the significance of London only after it was too late, and would remember his years in London in *The Pisan Cantos* (Pratt 27).

In the poem, Pound’s disillusionment with the London literary circle is expressed through the ways in which the younger generation of poets are defeated against the mainstream publisher’s expectations, forcing them to give up experimenting from “fear of weakness” or “fear of censure,” and eventually disappear from literary history, symbolically dying (Pound, *HSM* 187),

believing in old men’s lies, then unbelieving
came home, home to a lie,
home to many deceits,
home to old lies and new infamy;
usury age-old and age-thick
and liars in public places (Pound, *HSM* 188)

This land, filled with lies and deceit, may be regarded as a description of the London literary circle, which consumes young poets and forces them into oblivion, and into accepting the conventions of poetry in terms of form and subject matter. As a solution, the poet-persona contends this annihilation by insisting on

frankness as never before,
disillusions as never told in the old days,
hysterias, trench confessions,
laughter out of dead bellies (Pound, *HSM* 188)

As the above lines indicate, E.P. the poet-persona becomes the mouthpiece of the poet. One may suggest from the lines above that the freeing of poetic expression from the conventions of Poetry, became the sole struggle for Pound and the only way to resist the mainstream literature was to “confess” the struggle itself in “frankness” and unsettle the readers by voicing the “laughter” of the poets of the past and subverting them to express new things (Pound, *HSM* 188). Due to the similarities between the poet’s life and the account of the persona, the two figures gradually blend into each other in these sections. However, in the section entitled “V” the persona dissociates himself from the events in the poem and narrates the struggle of poets who sought to reform poetic expression. The failure of these poets result in the death of a “myriad” of poets and what is left of them is “a few thousand battered books” that they have written, and two heaps of broken statues, which arguably represents the literary canon and the literary conventions which they had deconstructed (Pound, *HSM* 188). In addition, the broken statues in the poem may be read as a metaphor for the English literary canon, as Pound illustrates in the following section, the works of renowned English poets like Swinburne, Rossetti, and Gladstone are used so frequently to the extent that their stance no longer holds, they have lost their position as exceptional writers (Pound, *HSM* 189). Moreover, as the persona states, famous works like the English Rubaiyat are “still born / in those days” and depicted to be no more than “pickled foetuses and bottled bones” which conveys an image of a rigid literary canon (Pound, *HSM* 189-190). Furthermore, the English poets he reads of are not portrayed for their experimental verse, but rather for the strange ways in which they die, as in the case of Lionel Johnson falling off of a “high stool in a pub” (Pound, *HSM* 190). The literary canon, like the remains of a culture holding up space in a museum, is depicted as a culture long lost. Hence, poetic expression and the literary canon as mentioned in the poem emphasises that meaning in language and the merit of poets may dissolve in time. The poet-persona E. P. seems to be a foreigner, namely an American, which is revealed through his conversation with Mr. Nixon in the section entitled after the politician. In this section, Pound assumes the identity of a young poet to whom Mr. Nixon advises that he should submit to the expectations and criticism of reviewers (Pound, *HSM* 191). It can be argued that Nixon’s image of the conformist mentor may be read as a

metaphor for the voice of the reader who advises the poet not to question the authority of critics. As a response, at the end of the section, Pound draws a parallelism between this poet-persona and the poets of the “Nineties” who tried the “game” of resistance, and have failed (Pound, *HSM* 192). As Perkins remarks, Hugh Selwyn Mauberley reflected his discontents with the late-nineteenth-century verse (Perkins 482-483). One may infer that this defeatism in the poem is a portrayal of Pound’s own failures which, to reiterate the first lines of *Hugh Selwyn Mauberley*, was “Wrong from the start,” to aspire to change the conventions of literature (Pound, *HSM* 185). In other words, the fictional persona E.P. seems to be derived from Pound’s own life and the failures in the poem are in fact related to the life of the poet in London. According to Perkins, Pound “saw himself in Mauberley, but a self he wanted to reject” due to the failures iterated in the poem (Perkins 480-481).

In the second part of the poem, Pound replaces the persona E. P. with Mauberley, a minor poet to whom Pound likened to himself (Ruthven 126-127). Like the former persona, Mauberley too has struggled for three years to succeed as a poet. Upon failing to make “immediate application” of his experience in verse and being unable to grasp the frame of mind of his age, he feels increasingly isolated from his surroundings. Consequently, Mauberley is out-bested by his peers which leads “To his final / Exclusion from the world of letters” (Pound, *HSM* 200). Exiled from everywhere he goes, Mauberley’s end is reminiscent of Odysseus’s final journey in which he sacrifices for Poseidon to atone for his foul actions. Thus, on Mauberley’s oar, is engraved:

I was
And I no more exist;
Here drifted
An hedonist. (Pound, *HSM* 201)

The end of E.P. and Mauberley suggest that Pound viewed himself as a defeated poet in his final years in London, having been unable to continue his literary authority. *Hugh Selwyn Mauberley* draws the attention of various critics in terms of its form and use of persona. Larry Scanlon, for instance, argues that Pound is using the Troubadours as his model for the lyric poet in the poem (Scanlon 841). Moreover, he claims that while at first E.P. and Mauberley may seem to be contrasted with each

other, it is more likely that the latter “conflates” the former persona (Scanlon 842). In the light of Scanlon’s claims, one may infer that these poets in exile were intentional portrayals that would present a similarity between the troubadours and Pound. The use of these personae, as Walter Sutton rightly observes, may also be regarded as proof of Pound’s experiments in the role of the persona:

One is tempted to wonder whether, at some stage in the gestation of *Mauberley*, Pound may have been experimenting with two ways of treating his subject (one from a relatively objective viewpoint; the other from a viewpoint expressive of Mauberley’s subjective responses) and decided, somewhat unwisely, to issue both as a single work, distinguished only by the “Envoi (1919)” which closes the first group and the “Mauberley/1920” which introduces the second. The resulting confusion of dramatic voices or personae need not in itself be considered a serious flaw since the metaphoric shifting of narrative personae is often appropriate to the viewpoint of the modern poet [...] (Sutton 22-23)

Sutton’s words may be applied also to the argument of the present chapter; as such, Pound’s experiments with the role of the persona, as seen in *Hugh Selwyn Mauberley*, reveals that one of the ways of exploring narrative techniques was not only by the use of the viewpoint and position of the persona but by the use of multiple personae to give voice to every individual in the society. As mentioned earlier, Pound argued that poetry should have the purpose of giving voice to every voice in the society. To this end, he believed that one of the ways of demonstrating this was by using various personae and shifting their narration from one to the other. Though William Pratt argues that the defeatism of Pound in *Hugh Selwyn Mauberley* was an intentional act for him to establish himself as a poet of international significance, David Moody in his critical biography of Pound points out that he was disillusioned with the disagreements he was having with the literary circle (Pratt 21; Moody 357-358).

The waning presence of Pound in literary London, as Zwerdling and Symons underline, began with his association with the vorticist journal *Blast*, which, gradually barred the doors of publication for the poet (Zwerdling 232; Symons 107-108). He was unable to publish most of his works in esteemed magazines and periodicals, which led him to publish in London’s renowned political periodicals, the ideas which he agreed with, especially after his involvement with Vorticism

(Zwerdling 245). Wyndham Lewis and Pound's Vorticist magazine *Blast* led him to become one of the most controversial figures in the literary scene and when he left, he left for Italy to follow his ideals in a place where art would be appreciated by stricter regimes. (Zwerdling 232-233)

*The Pisan Cantos*¹⁶ can be regarded as a turning point in Pound's career in multiple ways: firstly, they were initially composed during his imprisonment in the gorilla cage in Pisa where he was captured for treason against the United States, secondly because these poems also pinpoint to the shattering of his plans of revolution in art and society, a dream that he had for decades. Thirdly, *The Pisan Cantos* also illustrate the ways that the memories of his life in London still haunted him and in the poems are rendered into an elegy for a city, a position, and people he had lost in exile. In terms of its style, it is regarded as one of the most complex pieces of the *Cantos*, a project Pound started when he was still in London. In the *Cantos* he incorporates the ideogrammic method which is comprised of fragmented memories of London along with many other cities, texts, and events that serve to illustrate his defeatism with the image of a descent into the underworld. According to William Pratt, the image of London would continue to haunt him and would resurface in *The Pisan Cantos*:

His highly public departure was in fact more symbolic than real. He left London physically in 1920, but poetically, he never left there. The Modernist movement which he started in London went with him, and twenty-five years later, in 1945, he returned to London in memory, this time via Rome and Pisa, where in the American prison camp at the end of the Second World War, he wrote his most personal and most moving set of poems, *The Pisan Cantos*. (Pratt 22)

In *The Pisan Cantos* in general, the representations of London are constructed with allusions to people Pound knew in London and the references to the architecture of the city. Particularly, he refers to his life in London before his involvement with Vorticism in 1914 and depicts, in Schneidau's words, his "most serene, lyrical and nostalgic memories" of the city (Schneidau 237). It may be argued that these representations of the city serve as a metaphor for the failure to establish a long-lived

¹⁶ All quotations for *The Pisan Cantos* are from *The Cantos of Ezra Pound* 9th edition. The in-text citations will indicate the number of the Canto and the page number since the inaugural line numbering of the *Cantos* are currently part of an ongoing project carried out by Ezra Pound Society's "The Cantos Project." For more information: <http://thecantosproject.ed.ac.uk/index.php/about>

as a poet, a journey which started in the United States and ended in the gorilla cage in Italy. Therefore, one of the personae used in the *Cantos* is Odysseus, as a mask for Ezra Pound. For instance, in “Canto 74” Pound alludes to Odysseus’s trick on Polyphemus in which Odysseus introduces himself as “No Man,” stripping himself of his personality to devise his escape.

“of sapphire, for this stone giveth sleep”
not words whereto be faithful
nor deeds that they be resolute
only that bird-hearted equity make timber
and lay hold of the earth
and Rouse found they spoke of Elias
in telling the tales of Odysseus

Oÿ TΙΣ
Oÿ TΙΣ

“I am noman, my name is noman” (Pound, “Canto 74” 446).

“No-Man,” Oÿ TΙΣ, then, may be read as an endeavour to remove oneself from the voice of the poet and using various personae as disguises in the poem. Moreover, the incident leads him to make up stories and identities to disguise his true identity. After this episode in *The Odyssey*, Odysseus begins his journey at the end of which he loses all his comrades. Similarly, the London fragments in *The Pisan Cantos*, by alluding to the numerous people Pound met in London may be read as a lamentation for all the people he had lost over the years.

Additionally, the image of a journey is repeated in the *Cantos* at times to reflect the sense of alienation felt by the poet due to the physical and emotional disillusionment with his condition. Likewise in the poem, the persona’s disorientation from any identifiable location suggests that the *Cantos* blend landscapes to emphasise that regardless of the city, the persona feels a strong disenchantment and alienation, and conveys the city as a place that transgresses national borders and regards it as a transnational, universally absolute place.

I have forgotten which city
But the caverns are less enchanting to the unskilled explorer
than the Urochs as shown on the postals,
we will see those old roads again, question,
possibly
but nothing appears much less likely, (Pound, “Canto 74” 448)

Hence, Flack argues that all these names mentioned are reverberations of Odysseus according to Pound. This association, he claims, was Pound's effort to demonstrate his political and economic agendas for a new national culture (Flack 116).

Like the continuous line of leaders mentioned by Flack, the destruction and reconstruction of cities in the line "4 times was the city rebuilt" in "Canto 74" seems to be written in the same effort to build an ideogram of the "City" that would represent each and every city in history (Pound, "Canto 74" 450). The image of the city built and rebuilt may be read as a tracing of history from the age of Homer to Pound's time in Italy. The vortex in this section is made up of fragmented images of cities layered over one another which accumulate into the ideogram of the city can be traced to illustrate this repetition. Additionally, the image of the city being built and rebuilt also suggests an attempt of reconstructing the city in the mind of the persona (Pound, "Canto 74" 450). Similar to Pierre Nora's realm of memory, these lines exemplify the close connection between memory and landscapes. As Pound's persona struggles to build an image of the city by using its fragments, in the meantime his memory acts against the endeavours of the persona to rebuild the memory of the city.

One of the ways in which London appears in the poem is through the relating of memories about the people Pound had met when he lived in the city. For instance, in "Canto 74" he likens the image of war to the intellectual discussions in London which were caused by the puritanical vision of critics and poets:

privately printed
 to the shame of various critics
 nevertheless the state can lend money
 and the fleet that went out to Salamis
 was built by state loan to the builders
 hence the attack on classical studies
 and in this war were Joe Gould, Bunting and Cummings
 as against thickness and fatness (Pound, "Canto 74" 451-452)

In the lines above, the struggle to get through and change the mind and attitude of critics against publishing new writers in London is illustrated. While Pound and Eliot were in search of innovation and experimentation on traditional forms, John Gould Fletcher and Basil Bunting were fighting for the importance of "classical studies"

(Pound, "Canto 74" 452). According to Terrell, Pound's allusion to these names are significant because they were imprisoned in the First World War and the poet wanted to draw a similarity between these events and his imprisonment (Terrell 369-371). Another point Pound emphasises in this section is his reiteration of his solutions for the economy. He remarks the struggle of the artist and incorporates his economic solution into these lines. According to his plan in his essay "The Renaissance," the state should help writers and artists to get by so that they would not have monetary issues which seems to be reiterated in the poem (Pound, "The Renaissance" *LE* 222).

Apart from his designs for the prosperity of the artist and solutions for the declining economy in the world, Pound also remembers his compatriots who, like himself, had visited and lived in London. Among the people he describes Americans to be infrequent members of the crowd and refers to Henry James and Henry Adams:

and La Marquise de Pierre had never before met an American
"and all their generation"

...

Mr James shielding himself with Mrs Hawkesby

...

Said Mr Adams, of the education (Pound, "Canto 74" 453)

As the lines indicate, Pound's sense of alienation in London was to a certain extent the result of his nationality; as an American, he remarks that he has encountered the issue of being the *only* American which is depicted as something exotic at the time in the London literary circle (Pound, "Canto 74" 453). Moreover, by referring to Americans who visited or inhabited London in the past, i.e. Henry James and Henry Adams, who were both prominent Americans in nineteenth-century London, he suggests that he represents the continuation of this tradition (Pound, "Canto 74" 453).

Although *The Pisan Cantos* may be regarded as a journey back in Pound's memories about London and about his fellow Americans, London is not the only city that is depicted. As mentioned during the discussion of Pound's cities, he layers many locations and links them to the shared experiences of these landscapes. For instance, like the episodic journey of Odysseus in which he encounters adventures in different locations one after the other, Pound lists names of places, all of which may be read as indicators of "refinement, pride of tradition" (Pound, "Canto 74" 467).

Tower of Pisa
(alabaster, not ivory)

coloured photographs of Europa
 carved wood from Venice venetian glass and the samovar
 and the fire bucket, 1806 Barre Mass'chusetts
 and the Charter Oak in Connecticut
 or to begin with Cologne Cathedral
 the Torwaldsen lion and Paolo Uccello
 and thence Al Hambra, the lion court and el
 mirador de la reina Lindaraja
 orient reaching to Tangier, the cliffs the villa of Perdicaris
 Rais Uli, periplum
 Mr Joyce also preoccupied with Gibraltar
 and the Pillars of Hercules
 (Pound, "Canto 74" 467)

The places mentioned in the above lines present the reader a series of images of these places and conveys a map of Pound's fallen civilizations. One may deduce that the Tower of Pisa, where Pound was held prisoner, refers to the defeat not only of himself but of the Italians in the Second World War, from which he moves to Venice, one of the oldest medieval cities, to America referring to the Charter Oak to imply that American civilization has failed. From the metaphorical "fall of civilizations" he advances to the physical demolition of the Second World War and alludes to the bombing of Cologne Cathedral. Moreover, in the lines he refers to a series of lion images which suggests that the Torwaldsen lion in Germany and the lion court in Al Hambra, Spain have similarities: both are proof of refined civilizations and thus when juxtaposed to the fallen cities that follow these two images conveys the idea of a loss of civilization.

Additionally, *The Pisan Cantos* are not only an elegy for Pound's lost dreams and destroyed civilizations but also for the decay and oblivion of modernism. As such, one scene in the poem states: "The best" And the moderns? "Oh, nothing modern / we couldn't sell anything modern" (Pound, "Canto 74" 448). Moreover, the loss of modernism, in another fragment in "Canto 76," is likened to the aftermath of the Second World War. The destruction of cities evokes in his persona an image of a broken ant-hill: "As a lone ant from a broken ant-hill / from the wreckage of Europe, ego scriptor" (Pound, "Canto 76" 478). One may argue that Pound regarded himself as the last witness of the European culture, the last poet that will give account of what has taken place, the last man standing to narrate the events after the war. War-

stricken Europe, represented by the “broken ant-hill” may also be viewed as an indicator of the loss of civilization in the face of war which demolishes the hope of the cultural renaissance Pound was hoping to achieve. Thus he remains a “lone ant” among the rubbles of a destroyed civilization. For Pound, it seems that worse than failure, the unknown, the limbo of the future, conveys a deeper sense of alienation and defeatism: “in limbo no victories, there, are no victories – / that is limbo; between decks of the slaver / 10 years, 5 years” (Pound, “Canto 77” 490). It may be argued that Pound believed himself to be trapped in a limbo of his future. The unknown, the “limbo,” is further illustrated with the image of a journey into an unidentified location:

“Prepare to go on a journey”
or to count sheep in Phoenician,
...
Old Ez folded his blankets
Neither Eos nor Hesperus has suffered wrong at my hands
(Pound, “Canto 79” 488)

Pound’s journey to the States where his future would be determined is likened to the journey of Odysseus in which he prepares for a final journey before Ithaca. When he was arrested, he was initially put into a cage, after which he was transferred to the prison camp and hospital from which he was taken to the United States with the charges of treason (Perkins 488-489). Therefore, the uncertainty of the future as portrayed in the poem seems to reflect Pound’s experience.

While in the beginning of *The Pisan Cantos* the city is portrayed as an idealized place through the depiction of the City of Dioce, in “Canto 80” it is either depicted as a *once* significant meeting place for intellectual activities or a place that has been dominated by ignorance and oblivion:

This affair of a southern Nancy
and as for the vagaries of our friend
Mr Hartmann,
Sadakichi a few more of him,
were that conceivable, would have enriched
the life of Manhattan
or any other town or metropolis
the texts of his early stuff are probably lost
with the loss of fly-by-night periodicals (Pound, “Canto 80” 515)

The metropolis as the heart of publishing of texts and “fly-by-night periodicals” that would normally enrich “any town or metropolis” are declared lost and forgotten in this section. Their disappearance suggests that Pound regarded the fragments of culture to be irretrievably lost, and the national culture to be irredeemable. This pessimistic outlook to the loss of culture in these lines evoke the beginning of Pound’s journey which may be argued to have anticipated the ending:

so that leaving America I brought with me \$80
 and England a letter of Thomas Hardy’s
 and Italy one eucalyptus pip
 from the salita that goes up from Rapallo
 (if I go) (Pound, “Canto 80” 520)

The ideogram that combines three countries and the three objects Pound possesses serve to illustrate an immediate image of the gradual collapse of Pound’s dream of reinventing a literary tradition. Pound’s travels, traced from America, to England, to Italy, Rapallo demonstrate the gradual failure of the poet as his material possession of 80\$ is first replaced with a letter of recommendation and then the seed of a eucalyptus which represents the last seed of hope. Pound’s journey summarized in these three lines also exhibits a persona who can travel instantaneously in the poem temporally and spatially.

One of the clearest images of London in which particular locations are referred to serve to illustrate the image of the city as the centre of a decayed civilization. Similar to *Hugh Selwyn Mauberley*, in *The Pisan Cantos*, Pound remarks that London is a place of ignorance and of a decaying culture. Thus he bids farewell to parts of the city including “Piccadilly” and Leicester Square:

and when bad government prevailed, like an arrow,
 fog rose from the marshland
 bringing claustrophobia of the mist
 beyond the stockade there is chaos and nothingness
 Ade du Piccadilly
 Ade du Lesterplatz
 Their works like cobwebs when the spider is gone
 encrust them with sun-shot crystals
 and in 40 years no one save old Bellotti
 “There is no darkness but ignorance”
 had read the words on the pedestal
 The things I cd/ tell you, he sd/ of the Lady de X

and of how he caught the Caressor's about to be
 Imperial coat tails
 and only twice had rec'd 3 penny bits
 one from Rothschild and one from DeLara
 and brought in about 2 ounces of saffron
 for a risotto during the first enormous war
 Jah, the Bard's pedestal ist am Lesterplatz
 in the city of London
 but the trope is, as the accurate reader will have observed,
 not to be found in Sam Johnson's edition
 The evil that men do lives after them" (Pound, "Canto 80" 521)

Pound's lines may be read as a conventional image of London in which the fog in London is the indicator of a "bad government" which smothers the city into "chaos and nothingness." The image of the city disappears in the mind of the persona, as he bids farewell to the famous landmarks of the city. Bellotti, the Italian Restaurant, as Terrell remarks, was a meeting place for Pound and his friends (Terrell 435). It may be argued that the only significant place that is left of the memory of the city is the restaurant where once ideas about art and literature could be exchanged. The following line, "there is no darkness but ignorance" alludes to one of the famous landmarks in the city, to Shakespeare's statue in Leicester Square (Pound, "Canto 80" 521; Terrell 435). Moreover, for Pound, the literary centre of the city is this statue, which make the words written on Shakespeare's statue ironic. Although the statue is portrayed in the poem as the meeting point for literary circles, the "true" location seems to be the restaurant in the preceding lines. About the final lines of the given quotation, Terrell notes that Pound refers to Samuel Johnson's edition of Shakespeare, which does not include the "clown" (Terrell 436). From Terrell's remarks it can be drawn that Pound compares the censoring of the clown which speaks the truth in Shakespeare's plays to his condition; that his achievements will be re-written to foreground the "evil" he has done by literary historians. Another London memory of Pound illustrates the sense of alienation for the poet when he was identified as a foreigner in the city:

It is said also that Homer was a medic
 who followed the greek armies to Troas
 so in Holland Park they rolled out to beat up Mr Leber
 (restaurantier) to Monsieur Dulac's disgust
 and a navy rolls up to me in Church St. (Kensington End) with:
 Yurra Jurrmun!

24 E. 47th,
with Jim at the checquer board by the banana cage

“Funny looking wood, James,” said Aunt F.
“it looks as if it had already been burnt”

[Windsor fire]

“Part o deh roof ma’am.”
does any museum
contain one of the folding beds of that era?
And now, why? Regents Park
 where was the maison Alma-Tadema
 (with a fountain) or Leighton House
 for that matter?
and the mass of preraphaelite reliques
 in a trunk in a walled-up cellar in Selsey
“Tyke ‘im up ter the bawth” (meaning Swinburne)
“Even Tennyson tried to go out
through the fire-place.”

which is what I suppose he, Fordie, wanted me to be able to picture
when he took me to Miss Braddon’s
 (I mean the setting) at Richmond
But that New York I have found at Périgueux
 si com’ ad Arli

(Pound, “Canto 80” 528)

In the light of the lines above, it may be argued that the loss of buildings being burnt down or demolished also results in the loss of memory, tradition, and of the literary circle. In this section of the poem, Pound mentions a number of London locations: Starting from the familial residencies (Mary Weston, maternal grandmother, lived in Lexington Avenue, the numerical address belongs to Aunt Frank, with whom Pound stayed as a child), he then refers to the houses of Alma-Tadema, the painter’s mansion and Leighton house, well known for its Arab Hall decorated with blue Persian and Saracenic tiles from the sixteenth century. All of these images of luxurious houses are contrasted with Ford’s house in Selsey, who took Pound to Richmond, the elite neighbourhood of London, to show the wealthy life led by Mary Elizabeth Braddon novel characters (Terrell 442). On the other hand, Gavin Selerie remarks in his essay that Terrell’s remarks seem to miss the detail of Pound’s reference to pre-Raphaelite writers and the buildings that reflected their artistic vision (Selerie 30-32). Moreover, he underlines that Pound did not visit all the locations in the *Cantos* but some of them were related to him by other people’s

memories, which he made use of in the poem (Selerie 30). Although Pound mentions the names of the houses and memories about the locations one by one, he does not seem to remember “where” exactly these locations are. In other words, although the memory of these particular locations are still recognizable fragments of the memory of the place, the exact cartographic location is lost. Pound can only imagine travelling to the city in his memories which is reminiscent of the psychogeographical attachment to the city as mentioned in the Introduction. Due to his inability to remember actual locations instead of only fragments of memories, it may be said that constructing the city in the mind is only possible through the psychogeographical connections to the city. Hence a disorientation from one’s memories is illustrated by this confused passage to convey a sense of alienation.

Oh to be in England now that Winston’s out
 Now that there’s room for doubt
 And the bank may be the nation’s
 And the long years of patience
 And labour’s vacillations

...

[Only shadows enter my tent
 as men pass between me and the sunset,
 (Pound, “Canto 80” 534-535)]

One may infer from the lines that Pound was nostalgic of London because now, after many years, he realised that he was there at the wrong place at the wrong time and now after the war, when economy had improved, a movement as revolutionary as his could gain acceptance. Thus it was only after the Second World War that he believed he would be better off in England which may be the reason for his nostalgia, depicted here as an alternative path he never took. The shadows in the poem may be regarded as his acquaintances in London that haunt him in his tent in Pisa. This shows that, the city image in his mind is not underscoring its architecture, but its people that remind him of the city itself and his life in it:

as the young lizard extends his leopard spots
 along the grass-blade seeking the green midge half an ant-size
 and the Serpentine will look just the same
 and the gulls be as neat on the pond
 and the sunken garden unchanged
 and God knows what else is left of our London

my London, your London
 and if her green elegance
 remains on this side of my rain ditch
 puss lizard will launch on some other T-bone

sunset grand couturier. (Pound, "Canto 80" 536)

The lines above from "Canto 80" reveal that the memory of London is fragmented in the mind of the persona. The image of the city belongs to the past when Pound spent his years in London; however, this version of London no longer remains and the persona is doubtful whether he will find the London he has in his mind if and ever he returns. It is also significant to point out that the memory of the city as evoked by the persona, reveals that his memory is not the only memory of the city. As he emphasises with the possessive pronouns "my" and "your," different versions of the city exist for ones who experience the city. All of these memories collected establishes a sense of collective memory of the city which make up a kaleidoscopic image of the city as stated with the plural: "our London" in the preceding line. In other words, the persona's London, the reader's London, the poet's London all mix to create "our London." For Pound, then, the city becomes a place to which he can travel in his mind and remember the once vivid experience through its fragmented memory. These images convey the idea that a single image of the city is impossible, rather, there can only be partial images of the city. Additionally, James Longenbach acknowledges the importance of the cities for Pound, and emphasises that his vision of cities did not change and claims that he registered the homesickness he felt for Crawfordsville to other cities he left and devised his frequent image of the alienated poet (Longenbach 156).

As *The Pisan Cantos* illustrate, Pound made use of various fictional and historical personae to describe the defeatism he felt for his failed project as well as the nostalgia he felt for the people he lost over the years. As Peter Nicholls points out, Pound layered various texts along his memories to establish a shift between the personae and the people addressed in the poem ranging from the reader to fictional characters to institutions in *The Pisan Cantos* (Nicholls 46). These personae seem to demonstrate Pound's unchanging emphasis on the theme of alienation as a means of dissociating the poet from his surroundings.

2.6 Pound's Lost Cities

From the points emphasised throughout the chapter, it may be thus concluded that Pound's cities may be divided into three complementary components. The first is the city of a decayed culture or a city in ruins, which may be seen in some of his earlier works represent the past or history of a city. Secondly, the more frequent representation of the city is one in which the persona feels alienated and one in which the people and their relation to their environment is explored which reflects Pound's experience of the city. Thirdly, as seen in the *Cantos*, is the unattainable city which represents both the past (because it is no longer attainable) and the future (the continuation of an unattainable ideal). These cities appear in fragments in his poems. These fragments, as Robert Gregory claims, was what made Pound a modern poet of his time:

For Pound to be a modern poet in his time, it was necessary to gaze at the idea that poetry was no longer in predication but in fragments, that it was not any one thing, but the relations between things, relations whose exactitude depends on the non-consummation of the text, which supplies the tension. (Gregory 104-105)

All of these cities, as demonstrated, may be found in *The Pisan Cantos* that in fact blend into one another to create a universal, absolute image of the city that Pound was trying to achieve. In other words, Pound's representations of London and other cities aimed at creating a permanent, universal image of the city which earlier writers sought to portray in their poems. Although Pound was unable to complete the *Cantos* and create a complete image, the fragments of the images of the city may be considered as a bold attempt in achieving this ideal.

CHAPTER THREE: ELIOT'S LONDON IN RUINS

3.1 “These fragments I have shored against my ruins”¹⁸: T.S. Eliot's Unreal Cities

In *The Waste Land* T. S. Eliot depicts a city in ruins which may be regarded as the remains of a culture's past. Eliot's poetry, like that of Pound's, provides ample evidence of the modernist concern with cities in general, London in particular. Eliot came to London in 1914, when Pound had already become what Rainey called, the “cultural impresario” of the London intellectual circle and a well-known American poet (Rainey 88). Following their encounter, Pound recommended Eliot's poem “The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock” to the *Poetry* magazine for publication, after which Eliot gradually established himself as one of the “fathers” of high modernism (Rainey 88; Ricks and McCue 365). As mentioned in the Introduction, cities were places where writers and artists from different backgrounds could meet and become a part of the ongoing and recent cultural debates. Additionally, as Bradbury remarks, these “polyglot” cities which include Paris, London, and Zurich contained the cultural specimens from various parts of the nation which provided artists and writers to come across a variety of people and their cultures (Bradbury, “Cities” 96). As such, Pound's and Eliot's relationship which started in London exemplifies this significance of the city as a junction for modernist writers. Accordingly, these cities were places where tradition and innovation could be juxtaposed, which enabled a medium for the emergence of new movements in art and literature. Therefore, London, like other cities of modernism, became the centre for the cultivation and promotion of modernist culture. In fact, for English literature, London had for a long time been the literary and artistic centre not only because the metropolis was a cultural meeting point, but also because it had become, since the end of the fifteenth century, the publishing capital for the English-speaking world, which enabled movements like modernism to flourish (Barron 438). In fact, London had attained different meanings throughout its development and to a certain extent represented English culture which may be one of the reasons for Eliot's use of the city image in his poetry. It can be argued that for him, the city was the physical evidence of the developments in culture and in order to re-discover its origins, one needed to trace

¹⁸ The quotation is taken from Eliot, *The Waste Land* (Eliot, *The Waste Land* 71; 5.430)

back the representations of the city in literature. In other words, he believed that he could re-assign the value given to literature and to the poet both of which he claimed was in decay. Therefore, it may be argued that his experience of the city and his knowledge of the earlier representations of the city blended to create a new understanding of the city, and hence culture, in his poetry.

In short, Eliot believed that in order to change the ways poetry was written and appreciated, he needed to become an authority of literature at the *source* where it was produced, which was London in his opinion. Throughout the years he spent in London, he wrote not only poems and essays, but also became an editor in the publishing company *Faber and Faber* and selected the works that were to be published (Perkins 523). By becoming a prominent editor to whom younger poets sent their works, one may argue that he was able to shape a new style of writing poetry. Like Pound, he was in search of re-inventing tradition, by a re-evaluation and reinterpretation of the literature of the past. In other words, for Eliot, it was a time to “murder and create” (Eliot, “The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock” 6; 28)¹⁹. As it will be argued in the present chapter, to demonstrate this, as seen in *The Waste Land* (1922), he depicted a city in ruins as a metaphor for the decaying literary tradition; the fragmented representations of the city became a means of re-evaluating tradition and classics in literature, and presented a new perspective on composing poetry. That is, as it will be illustrated in the pages that follow, he used the city as a metaphor for his search of a new aesthetic for poetic expression, because like the ever-changing city, he emphasized the importance of the advancement in literature and culture.

3.2 Two Sides of the Atlantic: A Critique

As his essays illustrate, both in America and in England, the value of literature was a reason of discontent for Eliot. For instance, in his review of Van Wyck Brooks’s *The Wine of the Puritans* published in *The Harvard Advocate* in 1909, he praised the author for accurately reflecting the “reasons for the failure of American life (at present) – social, political, in education and in art,” all of which could be read as “a confession of national weaknesses” (Eliot, “Review” 18). This

¹⁹ All poems of T. S. Eliot discussed in this chapter are taken from the recent and authoritative edition of *The Poems of T. S. Eliot*, edited by Ricks and McCue in two volumes. The notes by the editors will be cited using their last names and page numbers from the same volumes.

review which applauded the book for revealing the deficiencies and disappointments of American life can be seen as one of the early indicators of how Eliot was dissatisfied with America and what it represented.

In fact, early in his career, Eliot sought to critically re-evaluate American writers of the nineteenth century so as to differentiate himself from them. To this end, he claimed that America caused a set back to the talents of American writers. In his essay "The Hawthorne Aspect" (1918), for instance, though Eliot acclaimed Hawthorne for his ability to reach "critical greatness" and his evaluation of the past and write with a historical sense, he pointed out that the American landscape "stunted" Hawthorne's talents (Eliot, "The Hawthorne Aspect" 740). Moreover, in such reviews including "Tennyson and Whitman" and "American Literature" he severely criticised the ongoing popularity of Poe and Whitman, and evaluated these writers and Hawthorne as "pathetic creatures" who took advantage of the "lack of intelligence" of the readers and of "the starved environment," or the scarcity of good writers in the literary scene (Eliot, "American Literature" 22-24). Furthermore, in "Whitman and Tennyson" (1926), he claimed that Whitman had lost his significance in the early twentieth century, because in his opinion he was the representative of "certain notions, and many illusions" of the American people, "which [were] now untenable" (Eliot, "Whitman and Tennyson" 876). In the same essay, he maintained that Whitman was "a great representative of America [...] which no longer exists," and instead claimed that writers such as Dos Passos, Fitzgerald, and Hemingway should be the new representatives of literary America (Eliot, "Whitman and Tennyson" 878).

Apart from these nineteenth century writers which Eliot criticised, he regarded Henry James to be the most significant American writer and insisted that he should be categorised as American and not British in his essay "The Hawthorne Aspect" (Eliot, "The Hawthorne Aspect" 736). He pointed out that the fiction of James made use of the American landscape which was diffused into the characters he constructs in his fiction, and that these characters can never be fully understood by his English readers (Eliot, "Hawthorne" 736). Hence, he claimed, James's work could only be fully understood and appreciated by Americans due to his detailed portrayal of American characters. Eliot maintained that European readers were

unable to draw extensive connections that American readers took for granted, which resulted in the former's inability to fully understand the characteristics of Americans as portrayed in James's works (Eliot, "In Memory of Henry James" 648). Moreover, in "American Critics" (1929), he added that in order to understand James as a writer, one needed to follow James's footsteps and acquaint himself not only with England, but also with America. In his opinion, to understand and adequately evaluate a writer, one needed to learn about the cultures to which the writer was exposed (Eliot, "American Critics" 570). Eliot further underlined that in order to write about American literature, the author needed to be a "cosmopolitan-American, with equal knowledge and understanding of the whole country" (Eliot, "American Critics" 570). In the light of Eliot's statements, one may argue that by emphasizing a cosmopolitan perspective for authors, Eliot was validating his reason for remaining in Europe. Additionally, from his claims on Henry James one may deduce that part of his agenda was to become a "cosmopolitan" poet influenced from English and American cultures.

One of the ways in which Eliot established himself as one of the prominent figures in the English literary circle was by criticising the English literary canon. Like Pound, by pinpointing and comparing traditional forms and styles from English literary history, Eliot sought to draw similarities and differences between different ages that would enable him to criticise the society in which he lived. As he puts it, "We must try to find out in what ways the poets of that century are like ourselves; but we cannot do so without recognizing the ways in which they were more like each other than like us" (Eliot, "Thinking in Verse" 52). He maintained that the early twentieth century writers needed to find similarities with past writers, which was only possible if one did not focus on a particular writer of the past, but understood the age they lived in from a macrocosmic perspective (Eliot, "Thinking in Verse" 52). Eliot believed that readers mostly praised a poet's work for its differences from preceding works and therefore, he urged poets to situate themselves within the literary tradition of the language in which they were writing. "Traditional," he maintained, should not mean simply to follow the footsteps of the predecessor by copying, rather it meant for a poet to have an understanding of "not only of the pastness of the past, but of its presence" (Eliot, "Tradition" 4). In other words, by

acquiring a sense of historical development of literature one could understand the contemporaneity of past literature and the work of the young poet would be the evidence of his knowledge of this development. This critique not only aimed to educate the general reading public into having a refined taste, but was also a way of teaching upcoming poets how literature ought to evolve to keep up with the changes brought by modernity. For instance, in his essay "John Ford" he pointed out that Elizabethan and Jacobean drama lacked the vision of presenting a critique of the society (Eliot, "John Ford" 178-179). Moreover, he claimed that even when Elizabethan and Jacobean drama portrayed characters who had important names or families derived from the City families, they were "treated lightly as a foible of the age, and not as a symptom of social decay and change" (Eliot, "John Ford" 178-179). Eliot's critique of Elizabethan and Jacobean drama in which he pointed out that they lived in a time when it was impossible to stay indifferent to the problems of the age, resulting in their inability to focus on "the common characteristics of humanity" suggest that he may have found similarities between their age and the one in which he lived (Eliot, "John Ford" 178-179). Hence, a critique of Elizabethans would implicate a critique of the twentieth century as well. Moreover, in his criticism of English writers he pointed out some of the elements they introduced to show the developments in literary history. By doing so, it can be argued that one of his aims was to educate and familiarize the general reading public with the culture and language in which they were living. For example, in his essays "Thinking in Verse" and "Dryden the Poet," he remarks that the sixteenth century was a time when England was under the threat of foreign enemies, and also the time when English poets borrowed from foreign influences and when Donne introduced the conversational style into his verse that was against the development of blank verse (Eliot, "Thinking in Verse" 49 and "Dryden the Poet" 266-268). That is to say, by linking the history of the country with that of literary history, Eliot pointed out the ways that foreign influences and their contrasting styles with the native influences were juxtaposed to contribute to the conversational style in English language. By using this as his example, he seems to be demonstrating the influence of foreign literatures on shaping the state of mind of people in a particular century. In "Thinking in Verse" he further observes that in the seventeenth century, the sixteenth

century conflict between native and foreign powers, was replaced with a more complicated viewpoint which incorporated the conflicts of numerous classes during the Civil War, which voiced “every man in England” that had a “viewpoint” (Eliot, “Thinking in Verse” 49). In his essays “Dryden the Poet” and “John Dryden” he argues that one of the successes of the seventeenth century was its ability to produce opinionated literature that could give voice to every single group in a society. In short, he claimed that seventeenth-century literature was able to reflect its own time. Secondly, in these essays on Dryden he asserted that Dryden had revolutionised literature by stripping poetry of its artificial style and had blended prose with poetry which enabled him to portray “the trivial into the magnificent” and prepared the English language to the poetry of the nineteenth century and the literary experiments of the early twentieth century (Eliot, “Dryden the Poet” 266-267 and “John Dryden” 265-269). “No one,” he stated, “in the whole history of English literature, has dominated that literature so long, or so completely. And even in the nineteenth century the language was still the language of Dryden, as it is to-day” (Eliot, “Dryden the Poet” 272). In the light of his statements on Dryden, one may argue that he regarded Dryden as one of the most important writers to be studied for his success in innovating language. Furthermore, in the eighteenth century, Eliot maintained that the courtly verse of the sixteenth century was replaced with English poetry that belonged to the “retired country clergymen and schoolmasters” after Pope, Swift, Gay, and Prior, which, for him, resulted in the conversational style in language to become more widespread (Eliot, “Introductory Essay to *London*” 171).

These observations Eliot made over the years shows that he identified a number of problems in the modern English society and the way literature was written. First of all, he stated that the twentieth century was still overshadowed by the nineteenth century, and lacked “its own character” (Eliot, “John Dryden” 264). Secondly, he argued that the English language at its present condition was devoid of expressing the climate of thought of the twentieth century. For instance, he asserted in “Social Function of Poetry” that the modern man did not experience life as his ancestors did, and using archaic forms of expression, distanced people from their own language (Eliot, “Social Function” 25). Thirdly, he stated in his March issue of “London Letter” series which appeared in the form of epistolary articles in *The Dial*,

his dissatisfaction with most of the writers of the twentieth century who were writing without any cultural background, and were not critical in their evaluation of literature, which resulted in their inability to trace the development of literature (Eliot, "London Letter: March, 1921" 336). Fourth, he emphasised that particularly the Georgian poets, were not curious about the "technical matters," and did not have the technical knowledge of the ways to write good poetry (Eliot, "London Letter: March, 1921" 337). He further stated that this lack of culture was not limited to the writer himself but to the "General Reading Public" who knew "no tradition" and admired "staleness" (Eliot, "In Memory of Henry James" 650 and "London Letter: March, 1921" 336). Moreover, he claimed that the deterioration of English verse was in need of experimentation to free the verse from the "staleness" of "a mentality which [had] remained in the age of Wordsworth or in the age of Tennyson, with a technique which [was] actually inferior to that of either of these" (Eliot, "A Note on Ezra Pound" 749). Furthermore, he described the early twentieth century English literature as "lifeless" which could only be tackled by "an enquiry which might help to stimulate the worn nerves and release the arthritic limbs of our diction" (Eliot, "Isolated Superiority" 324). In the light of these essays discussed above it may be argued that Eliot seems to have emphasised the need for a similar advancement in literature and insisted on the need to re-explore the literary history of England in order not be engrossed with the nineteenth century poets in writing verse (Eliot, "Swinburne as Poet" 282 and "In Memoriam" 292).

To this end, Eliot's critique of British society was not limited to his essays but extended also to his poems such as "Interlude in London" (1911) in which he mocks the British by assuming the voice of the society as a whole by employing the first person plural pronoun, describing them as "hibernat[ing]" individuals who live in brick houses and sit in front of window-panes (Eliot, "Interlude in London" 260; lines 1-2). Their daily routines are described in a stereotypical fashion which include drinking tea and eating marmalade for teatime, and gardening in their yards (Eliot, "Interlude in London" 260; line 3). Just as they have these practices, they are described in the poem as "indifferent" and careless to the sudden changes in weather, suggesting as a whole a sense of indifference towards the world around them which the poet criticised.

Eliot saw similarities between American and English readers in terms of their admiration for nineteenth-century writers. In “The Three Provincialities” for instance, he compared the two nations for their clichéd use of language and emphasised that the “lesson of language” had to be “learned on both sides of the Atlantic” (Eliot, “The Three Provincialities” 392). Moreover, in the March and April issues of his “London Letters” he described literature produced in both countries as “timid” and “conventional” and ridiculed the readers for constructing “the Established Church of contemporary literature,” to underscore their uncritical admiration for the contemporary poets (Eliot, “London Letter: March, 1921” 334 and “London Letter: April, 1921” 394-396). Furthermore, he criticised the London literary circle for their conservative attitude, and described them as “lazy” people without ambition who refused to acknowledge foreign writers in the “competition” to join the literary circle, and pointed out their “moral cowardice” towards new ideas and new members (Eliot, “London Letter: April, 1921” 394). For this reason, he compared other cities with London: “Other cities decay, and extend a rich odour of putrefaction; London merely shrivels, like a little bookkeeper grown old” (Eliot, “London Letter: April, 1921” 394). By comparing London to an “old bookkeeper” who “shrivels” instead of growing rich with history, he seems to imply that London had become an arid land for writers, which was the result of the conservative attitude of English writers and critics. His remarks can be regarded as a severe critique of the London literary circle for being closed to new ideas, as well as a struggle to be acknowledged as a foreign writer. It can therefore be argued that especially early in his career, Eliot felt as an outsider and worked his way into this literary circle by re-evaluating English writers and by redefining poetry and the qualifications of a poet. It may also be inferred that these claims Eliot asserted were a means to challenge English writers and critics and reposition himself in their place.

Eliot occasionally contrasted American and English writers. Mainly, he was concerned over the fact that when he criticised one of the two nations, the other would fall into a “hostile sympathy;” instead, he emphasised, one should consider English literature as an umbrella term that would include American and Irish as well as English writers (Eliot, “London Letter: March, 1921” 333). That is to say, what he named as English literature incorporated writers from three groups: the Irishmen, the

English, and the Americans and underlines that English literature was in fact a mixture of these literatures (Eliot, “The Three Provincialities” 390). One of the reasons for his emphasis of literature based on a language instead of one based on nationhood was his belief that good literature transcended the boundaries of nationhood and developed itself through the common use of language (Eliot, “The Three Provincialities” 392). For this reason, in his opinion, England stood at a crucial point as it was not only the centre of literature in English, but also a “bridge” between Europe, America, and the rest of the world. In other words, for him, Britain had a world-wide significance, and changing the way literature was written in England also meant the potential for a global transformation:

To our mind, the peculiar position of Britain is this: that she is on the one hand a part of Europe. But only a part, she is a mediating part: for Britain is the bridge between Latin culture and Germanic culture in both of which she shares. But Britain is not only the bridge, the middle way, between two parts of western Europe; she is, or should be, by virtue of the fact that she is the only member of the European community that has established a genuine empire – that is to say, a world-wide empire as was the Roman empire – not only European but the connection between Europe and the rest of the world. (Eliot, “A Commentary (Mar. 1928)” 366-367)

He believed that England and particularly London could be viewed as the source of influence, and by reshaping literary tradition, one had the opportunity to influence literature on a global scale. Thus, in the light of his statement, it may be deduced that he regarded that establishing a transnational understanding of literatures in English was necessary for the revival of culture and of literature. As Jahan Ramazani claims, Eliot’s “polyglot and jaggedly transcultural” experience that combines “cockney gossip and Sanskrit parable” in his poetry could be viewed as a demonstration of this emphasis on establishing a transnational poetics (Ramazani, “Transnational” 335).

3.3 Eliot and Modernism

Eliot stated that the ways in which poetry was written, its function in the society, and the role of the poet needed to be redefined and repositioned in order to re-evaluate poetic expression and the value of literature. He observed that poetry in ancient times operated as the memory of a culture and claimed that this function in

literary history in time was replaced with a new function. For him, poetry was a means of communicating a familiar experience in an unfamiliar way in a society that sought to define their undetermined emotions and experiences. In “The Social Function of Poetry,” for instance, he argued that in the early twentieth century the new function of poetry had become to communicate a familiar experience in an unfamiliar way and to define undetermined emotions and experiences of the society (Eliot, “Social Function” 16). Furthermore, he believed that Poetry could not be used to express “the truth” but only create “a variety of wholes” that reflected the diversity of thought and provided intellectual and emotional “sanction” (Eliot, “Poetry and Propaganda” 30). Therefore, it can be inferred that Eliot regarded poetry as a medium in which a range of emotions and ideas could be portrayed as coexistent, and one that provided the reader the comfort of shared experience and introduced him to those emotions and experiences that were unfamiliar. This, in turn, suggests that Eliot’s use of the cosmopolitan and multifaceted image of the city may be read as a metaphor for these diverse depictions of emotion and thought.

Likewise, in “Poetry and Propaganda” (1930), Eliot asserted that literature was closely linked to the society and was under its influence; in short, literature could not exist in a “vacuum” (Eliot, “Poetry and Propaganda” 25). Hence, in his opinion, the interests of the poet, like those of the society, could not be separated from the poem. In turn, he claimed that poetry affected the society through its “speech and sensibility;” its use of language, and its reflection of the spatial-temporal climate of thought of a nation (Eliot, “Social Function” 22). For him, poetry’s national and local function was not to divide, but to unite people through the common aspect of language by the portrayal of expression and experience, which he believed were the two aspects that were relatable by all members of the society (Eliot, “Social Function” 23). Therefore, it can be argued that in Eliot’s opinion, poetry was a medium in which the modes of thought in the society in a particular time and place could be reflected, as well as a means to *change* the way they thought. In fact, in a review on Peter Quennell’s *Baudelaire and the Symbolists*, he praised Baudelaire for revealing “the troubles of his own age” and his ability to express “more of the past and more of the future” in his “present” (Eliot, “A Review of *Baudelaire and the Symbolists*” 13).

He claimed that Poetry, or the expression of experience, would never perish as it contained a constantly evolving language which was dependent upon time, location, and the individuality of the poet (Eliot, "Social Function" 21). Moreover, he argued that any language under constant evolution would develop according to the ways that people expressed their feelings. In other words, the evolution of language could also be observed in culture and one may argue that a reason for Eliot's emphasis on the need for poetry was to relate the experience of an individual who lived in a particular place and time. Thus he claimed that without good poets contributing to the development, preservation, and extension of language, it was bound to deteriorate which would result in the eclipsing of a culture by another dominant culture (Eliot, "Social Function" 21). Therefore, he maintained that the poet needed to continually train himself, by way of good workmanship and by studying the poets that came before him, so that he could change the way poetry was written and the ways that it was valued by the readers (Eliot, "Introduction to *Selected Poems*" 525).

On the subject of the recent currents in poetry, Eliot described modernism as a "tendency [...] away from freedom, towards a newer form or a revival of older forms," and named Ezra Pound, William Butler Yeats, and Gerard M. Hopkins, as "the three best modern English poets" who were particularly influential in this change to take place (Eliot, "The Tendency of Some Modern Poetry" 841). Literature of the twentieth century, as Eliot pointed out, moved away from "realism and purely personal expression of emotion" of the past and emphasised the role of form and the ways in which it could be manipulated to express experience. He further stated that the early twentieth century literature manifested itself with its disapproval of the "dilettantism" and the "aestheticism" of the nineteenth century (Eliot, "Syllabus of a Course of Six Lectures on Modern French Literature" 472). Even though he defined modernism as a movement in reaction to the immediate past, namely the nineteenth century aesthetics, he traced the early twentieth century to be under the influence of the "ideals" of the seventeenth century and of the eighteenth-century classicism, and formulated a new way of writing poetry that derived its material from the past to reconstruct the present (Eliot, "Syllabus" 471-472).

To this end, he asserted that the most important characteristics of poetry were authenticity and lucidity which were achieved by the use of an unadorned, clear, and correct use of language and unity in the text instead of a strict imitation of form, scansion, and rhythm (Eliot, "Philip Massinger" 187). In order to achieve this straightforwardness in poetry, he emphasised the use of clear-cut images, rather than obscurity which worked around a "hidden" message. He stated that rather than an emphasis on searching for the underlying meaning of the images presented in a poem, one should be aware of the poet's intention of expressing an idea through the use of images. For instance, in his essay "Dante" he claims that these "clear visual images" are more important for an understanding of the intention of the poem, rather than the search for a "message" (Eliot, "Dante" 204). Moreover, he pointed out the significance of the image because, "Speech varies, but our eyes are all the same" (Eliot, "Dante" 205). This argument on the use of images in the poem is reminiscent of Imagism and of Pound, whom Eliot may be said to have been influenced from when he was asserting his ideas on the use of the objective correlative. As he describes in "Hamlet and his Problems" an "objective correlative" would guide the poet to rid himself of stereotyped phrases that express emotion and instead would incite him to structure his poem by positioning "a set of objects, a situation, a chain of events" that formulated a new way of expressing emotions to be evoked in the reader (Eliot, "Hamlet and his Problems" 125). Furthermore, as one of the most obscure and most discussed terms, Eliot sought to redefine the "objective correlative" at times along his career:

The work of poetry is often said to be performed by the use of images; by a cumulative succession of images each fusing with the next; or by the rapid and unexpected combination of images apparently unrelated, which have their relationship enforced upon them by the mind of the author. (Eliot, "John Webster" 329)

In his second definition of the term, the poet's use of sequential images is emphasised. This would encourage the reader to construct a link between these images that reveal the connections in the mind of the poet, where every image is associated. One may argue that he advised the reader to focus on the images presented for the reason that they led the reader to the poet's struggle to express an idea through images. To illustrate, a poet portraying an image of a city in ruins,

would evoke in the mind of the reader the feeling of loss, i.e. a lost civilization, or a grand city that has decayed into a place of ruin.

To this end, in “Tradition and the Individual Talent” (1919) Eliot asserted that the task of the poet “[was] not to find new emotions, but to use the ordinary ones and, in working them up into poetry, to express feelings which are not actual emotions at all” (Eliot, “Tradition and the Individual Talent” 10). Hence, he likened the mind of the poet to a “receptacle” that was able to “seize and store numberless feelings, phrases, images, which remain[ed] there until all the particles which can unite to form a new compound [were] present together” (Eliot, “Tradition” 8). That is, the poet needed to express the emotions that already existed in poetic diction by observing his surroundings and studying poets of the past to see how they describe their environment, rather than expressing new emotions which he invented. In his opinion, the more important business of the poet was not creating new ideas but experimenting with existing ideas and expressing them in a new fashion. Thus he emphasised the importance of articulation rather than subject matter in his essays discussed above. Furthermore, Eliot maintained that for the poet to describe the contemporary world, he needed to write with the intelligence and ability of dissociation like that of the metaphysical poets and blend it with the refined style of eighteenth century poets because in his opinion the world in which he lived was one of “great variety and complexity,” and the poet needed to experiment with this “refined sensibility” and “produce complex results” (Eliot, “The Metaphysical Poets” 248). In order to do so, he claimed, the poet needed to be “more allusive” and “more indirect” to change and at times “dislocate” language to fit the meaning he intends to convey (Eliot, “The Metaphysical Poets” 248).

Accordingly, Eliot argued that the primary responsibility of the poet was to preserve, extend, and improve language; instead of becoming a people’s poet, the poet needed to collect and preserve the characteristic developments of a given language, contribute to it by adding the features of that period, and improve language by adding his contributions to it for the following generations (Eliot, “Social Function of Poetry” 20). He claimed that by doing so a poet would be able to contribute to the livelihood of a language and consequently to that of culture.

Eliot argued that they lived in a time in which poetic diction needed to be renovated, and believed the time of Wordsworth (who gave the people back their poetry) to be exemplary of the kind of innovation needed (Eliot, “Music of Poetry” 35). However, he also felt that innovators were overrated and the developers were sometimes disregarded, which differed from the argument of Pound. As Eliot asserts:

[...] I do not believe that the task of the poet is primarily and always to affect a revolution in language. It would not be desirable, even if it were possible, to live in a state of perpetual revolution: the craving for continual novelty of diction and metric is as unwholesome as an obstinate adherence to the idiom of our grandfathers. (“Music of Poetry” 35)

He stated that pure innovation was “impossible” to achieve, as “...everything that one generation does is a development upon the work of the past” and this development could only be possible when past generations were unable to realise their task (Eliot, “Modern Tendencies in Poetry” 213 and “Introduction to *Selected Poems*” 519). That is, he claimed that the task of the poet was not only to innovate, but also to develop the already established forms of expression.

Eliot claimed that one way of changing the way literature was perceived and produced was through a process of “assimilation and imitation” that would manipulate English verse written in the past so that a poet “could produce a recognizable derivative” (Eliot, “Music of Poetry” 27). In order to have a “living tradition” that continued to influence the new generation of poets, he emphasised the necessity of “the good New” emerging out of “the good Old,” to lay importance on collecting the “good” specimens of past literature that would aid good literature to be written in a society (Eliot, “Reflections on *Vers Libre*” 511-512).

He further asserted in “Tradition and the Individual Talent” that “[t]he existing monuments form an ideal order among themselves, which is modified by the introduction of the new (the really new) work of art among them” (Eliot, “Tradition” 5). That is, each time a new work of art is produced, the existing order of works of art are re-evaluated. This suggests that each new work of art is affected by this existing order and the emergence of new art leads to a re-evaluation of the past. That is to say, the influence of old and new art is correlated.

He claimed that one of the hindrances to the development of poetry was because the greatest poets of his time were only read by “a cultural minority,” and most of the bad poetry was readily available in newspapers (Eliot, “The Tendency of Some Modern Poetry” 840). Moreover, he argued that the poets worth reading in the present age were those who attempted to innovate idioms, or those who were “conservative enough” to provide “an interesting variation on the old idiom” (Eliot, “Introductory Essay to *London*” 169 and “Tendency” 840).

He maintained that a poet needed to learn the literary and cultural history of his nation and relentlessly develop himself on an international scale. In his opinion, the poet should not limit himself to a particular writer or period, but should still be selective and conscious of the past. Furthermore, he asserted that the poet should be conscious of the main currents of his time, and be aware that art does not “improve” but evolve in time. Finally, the poet must educate himself in other countries and their climate of thought and not limit himself only to his culture (Eliot, “Tradition” 5-6). A serious poet, he maintained, should be well-read not only in verse written in his language, but also in the best prose and verse of other languages (Eliot, “Verse Pleasant and Unpleasant” 679). All these assertions made by Eliot on the role and task of the poet demonstrates that for him the poet was to set an example for the rest of the society in his understanding of art and language.

For that reason, he argued, the poet of the twentieth century needed to devote himself to the study of language and discover poets who “in their own day, made language new” to rid himself of the clichéd phrases (Eliot, “Social Function” 22). He believed that in order to innovate and improve his use of language, English poets needed to thoroughly study the past to learn the ways that language has been renovated by writers. Moreover, Eliot claimed that any revolutionary act in poetry was linked to common speech. As he put it, “Every revolution in poetry is apt to be, and sometimes to announce itself to be a return to common speech” (Eliot, “Music of Poetry” 31). In his opinion, this relationship between poetry and common speech was not based upon direct imitation, but upon idealization. The poet, he maintained, studied common speech in the streets and refined what he heard to transform it into poetry. According to him, when poetry achieved this, it became appealing to the reader.

On the subject of foreign influences in English literature, Eliot remarked that one of the most substantial contributions to English poetry was that of Baudelaire and the French Symbolists. In “A Review of *Baudelaire and the Symbolists*” he stated that before 1908²⁰ literature in England had “died,” and that in the past twenty odd years, French literature under Baudelaire’s influence had contributed to the revival of English literature (Eliot, “A Review of *Baudelaire and the Symbolists*” 13). Moreover, in his essay “Baudelaire” he asserted that because Baudelaire was introduced to English readers by Swinburne, his style was imitated by Swinburne and his followers (Eliot, “Baudelaire” 371). In time, he observed, the followers of Swinburne, particularly Dowson and Wilde, had been forgotten, whereas, Baudelaire’s influence on English literature remained (Eliot, “Baudelaire in Our Time” 71). In addition, he claimed that Baudelaire still remained a contemporary, rather than the poets who imitated him and further stated that although the meanings attached to him in the time of critics such as Symons had been different, Baudelaire’s significance for the early twentieth century had shifted so as to enable a reinterpretation of the past and present (Eliot, “Baudelaire in Our Time” 71). Furthermore, he asserted that Baudelaire was a great “landmark” of poetry because he was able to express the morbid in an aesthetic manner; his experience of pain, suffering, and morbidity appeared in the form of beatitude in poetry. As he further remarked: “Baudelaire is indeed the greatest exemplar in modern poetry in any language, for his verse and language is the nearest thing to a complete renovation that we have experienced” (Eliot, “Baudelaire” 375-377). One may argue that Baudelaire’s way of transforming the “morbid” into an element of “beatitude” showed Eliot a way to free English poetic expression from stereotypes (Eliot, “Baudelaire” 375). In his early poetry, he experimented with this idea. In “Second Caprice in North Cambridge” (1909), for instance, the city is described in ruins; the “vacant lots” attract the persona who observes the “debris of a city” made up of “tins, ashes, tiles, and bricks” (Eliot, “Second Caprice in North Cambridge” 235; 1, 6-8). These unattractive details of the city suggest that his vision of a city in ruins was one

²⁰ 1908 is significant because it was the year when Eliot read Arthur Symons’s book *The Symbolist Movement in Literature* (1895), which he states as a turning point in his life. It was thanks to this book, he confesses, that he was introduced to Laforgue, Rimbaud, Verlaine, and Corbière (“A Review of Baudelaire and the Symbolists” 11)

of the earliest influences he had in composing his poems. In the poem, it is revealed that the city in ruins is an unusual interpretation of beauty:

Far from our definitions
 And our aesthetic laws
 Let us pause
 ...
 With an unexpected charm
 And an unexplained repose (Eliot "Second Caprice" 236; 9-11, 14-5)

It may be inferred that the empty lots in the city which contain the waste of a city are presented as the attractive characteristics of the city in an unconventional way. The lines thus challenge the traditional norms of beauty by making use of the image of a heap of waste which is reminiscent of Eliot's essay on "Baudelaire" (1930) where he praises Baudelaire for presenting the unpleasant, the morbid in a new understanding of beatitude.

Eliot's remarks on the influence of French literature on English literature in the early twentieth century also emphasises one of the vital remarks he made on studying foreign literature: in his opinion, to re-evaluate English literature the young English poets, like "a good scientist" who cannot "ignore what is going on abroad" should study not only the developments in English literature but also in foreign literatures (Eliot, "Modern Tendencies in Poetry" 217). He claimed that by studying poetry written in a foreign language one could encounter unfamiliar words, yet, at the same time one could grasp an immediate, vivid impression (Eliot, "Social Function" 23). That is to say, for him, there was more to poetry than just the meaning of the words; language carried the essence of a culture which enabled the reader to grasp part of the culture of that country and "be" in it as a traveller.

3.4 Cities in Ruins

Like Pound, Eliot believed poetry and culture to be closely linked; by analysing the poetry of a nation, one could understand a nation and its culture. He claimed that poetry, being the oldest form of expression, carried the traces of its cultural background through the language employed by the poet (Eliot, "Social Function" 19). For him, then, it can be deduced that poetry was the most national form of expression for the reason that language and location could determine the

characteristics of a culture. As he observes in “London Letter: July, 1921,” art should provide “the strange, the surprising” that is “essential” for art, and that art needed to construct “a new world” (Eliot, “London Letter: July, 1921” 365). One way of setting up new worlds, he maintained, was by observing closely the material the environment provided for the poet (Eliot, “William Blake” 280). He named Baudelaire as an exemplary figure who was able to grasp “something universal in modern life,” which, arguably, could be rendered by a depiction of the city (Eliot, “Baudelaire” 377). Thus, he suggested that any representation of reality in modern life was made up of three aspects; the “imagery of common life,” of “the sordid life of a great metropolis,” and the “elevation” of this imagery to the utmost “intensity” (Eliot, “Baudelaire” 377). That is, in his opinion, by depicting the city and its crowd larger than life, Baudelaire succeeded in innovating poetic expression.

The city is never depicted as a whole, complete entity in Eliot’s poems, rather, it is an “Unreal” city,” made up of “A heap of broken images,” consisting of “half-deserted streets,” and “sawdust restaurants with oyster-shells” surrounded with “brown waves of fog” in which the smiles of people “hover” in the air and disappear into the roofs (Eliot, *The Waste Land* 55-56; I.22, 60, “The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock” 5; 4, 7, and “The Morning at the Window” 21; 5, 8). The images in his poems, especially early in his career, are that of the city. As David Watkin suggests, depicting buildings in decay enabled architects and urban planners to foreground particular “narratives” of the city which may be regarded as similar to Eliot’s use of fragmented cities; like Horace Walpole’s “succession of images” Eliot’s objective correlative made use of a series of images to portray the experience of the city (Watkin 373).

In his city poems Eliot reconstructs the city by making use of sets of objects, important figures, brands, particular buildings, and the earlier representations of the city. These ‘broken’ descriptions derive to some extent from Eliot’s influence from a variety of cities which merge into one metropolis used metaphorically to describe the decline of English culture. The city image, in other words, is not only influenced from London but a number of cities in which he lived. It can be argued that these descriptions of fragmented cities, in the mind of the reader, blend to create a fictional city whose characteristics may be applied to describe any city in the world. Hence,

due to its fragmented portrayal, Eliot's representation of London spawns other cities in ruins which link London and its decaying culture to other cultures in decline and suggests a shared emotion of loss caused by the outcomes of modernity across the globe. Thus, one may claim that his aim in using fragmented descriptions of the city as a metaphor, was to re-evaluate and provide a solution for this decline in English culture, which would give future poets a model that could later be applied to any culture in any part of the world.

Eliot lived and travelled to a number of cities, which resonate in his poetry. He spent his early childhood and teenage years in St. Louis, which he confesses was a city that affected him "more deeply than any other environment" and spent his summers in Maine and Massachusetts (Eliot, "To the Editor" 194). After he left St. Louis in 1905, he went to Milton Academy in Massachusetts and admits that rivers near these cities remained influential places for him:

[...] I feel that there is something in having passed one's childhood beside the big river, which is incommunicable to those who have not. Of course my people were Northerners and New Englanders, and of course I have spent many years out of America altogether; but Missouri and the Mississippi have made a deeper impression on me than any other part of the world. (Eliot, "To the Editor" 194-195)

In his essay it is clear that Eliot identifies himself as an American writer living in London, and although he was naturalised as a British citizen in 1927²¹ he remarked in a lecture his influence from the American landscape as well as the English landscape. As such, in his lecture entitled "The Influence of Landscape upon the Poet," which he delivered at the presentation of the Emerson-Thoreau Medal for Achievement in Literature in 1960, he stated that he was influenced not only from London but a "composite" of landscapes he had lived throughout his life (Eliot, "Influence" par.3). As he remarked, since the beginning of his career he was frequently asked whether he considered himself an American or an English poet. Accordingly, he claimed that there were two locations that manifested themselves in his poetry which dated back to his early childhood; the landscape of New England and the cityscape of St. Louis. However, he also acknowledged the influence of

²¹ See Perkins pp. 524 for his conversion to Anglicanism and naturalisation as a British Citizen.

London and Paris, “superimposing” themselves on his notion of the city (Eliot, “Influence” par.3):

English landscape has come to be as significant for me, and as emotionally charged, as New England landscapes. I do believe, however, that the impressions made by English landscape upon myself are different from those made upon poets for whom it has been the environment of their childhood (Eliot, “Influence” par.4)

Unlike English writers who depicted London as a familiar setting in their works, Eliot underscored that his American past had been fundamental in his perception of the English landscape. In the light of his words, it can be argued that he regarded himself as American. Like Pound, then, he observed the city from the position of an outsider. However, he differed from Pound in his use of images and his use of Londoners as his personae who felt alienated in the city. His allusions to earlier texts about London emphasise that he wrote not only through the eyes of an American, but also of a Londoner. Like an English poet, he depicted the landscape as a local would perceive the city while highlighting the estrangement one felt through an alienated persona. In other words, by employing personae with ambiguous roots to describe the city in fragments, his poems may be considered to be on the threshold that render the dichotomy of outsider-insider, and dissociate the poet’s nationality from that of the persona of the poem, which enabled Eliot to illustrate impersonality in poetry.

As Eliot underscored, in the twentieth century, particularly due to migration and economic conditions, the society in London and hence the reading public had become a heterogeneous one, which made it impossible for the writer to address a uniform group of readers (Eliot, “Why Rural Verse” 589). In “Why Rural Verse” he stated that people, as well as poets, were “divided by space, by taste, by faction,” resulting in the “unintelligibility” of the public (Eliot, “Why Rural Verse” 589). He argued that twentieth-century writers, for similar reasons, were active in international capital cities and chose as their subject “metropolitan emotions and sensations” (Eliot, “Why Rural Verse” 589). He suggested that this provided the readers in the metropolitan areas, who were from different social and cultural backgrounds, to relate to these “emotions and sensations,” and enabled them to be represented accordingly in literary works. Therefore, he asserted that in the twentieth century the

“successful poetry” was the “metropolitan” type of poetry that derived its material from urban life, and even though rural verse was still being produced, he stated that urban literature had gained widespread readership (Eliot, “Why Rural Verse” 589). Moreover, he admitted that between the two types of poetry, urban and rural, he had difficulty relating to the latter, and considered himself to be more in accordance with the former type of poetry (Eliot, “Why Rural Verse” 589). In the light of his statements, one can argue that Eliot promoted poetry written with urban imagery or city poetry as it had the potential of bringing the readers in the metropolitan areas together through the shared experience of the city.

To further illustrate his argument on the existence and necessity of urban literature, he gave the example of Samuel Johnson, who once said that if one was tired of London, he was thought to be fed up with life (S. Johnson “London”). Eliot regarded Johnson to be the “last Augustan” and at the same time “the most alien figure” of the eighteenth century as he went against the current of pastoral verse at the time and remained a townsman, for which he described him to have a “common spirit” with his contemporaries and praised him for his “precise” portrayal of the city (Eliot, “Introductory Essay to *London*” 172). This precision, he argued, satisfied the reader as the poet was able to portray what the reader could not articulate, and voiced their “emotions and sensations” about the city (Eliot, “Introductory Essay” 173). Furthermore, he advised younger poets to closely study this element of “urbanity” to learn and compose poems with “the *minimal* quality of poetry” (Eliot, “Introductory Essay” 173). Therefore, it can be deduced that Eliot believed that urban verse enabled the poet to write with the sensibility of the city to produce minimal and clear verse. Thus, writing urban verse and using elements of the city showed the young poet the ways to rid his verse from the insincerity and obscurity of bad verse.

To illustrate his use of composite landscapes, in his poem *Landscapes*, Eliot describes American and English landscapes that make up the five poems. Unlike the usual setting in which he frequently refers to city images, the setting for all the five poems are of pastoral, rural descriptions. The first, “New Hampshire,” (1934) depicts a memory of an apple orchard filled with children’s voices and contrasts it with the present which suggests the loss of this memorable place after he visits it twenty years later and “the spring is over,” which suggests the loss of youth (Eliot, *Landscapes*

144; 1.6). The speaker of the poem is nostalgic and laments the loss of place and tries to capture it in his mind through the use of visual and auditory imagery. In the second poem, “Virginia,” (1934) he describes the river and its surroundings vividly as if painting in the mind of the reader a painting of the landscape. In the opening lines of the poem, the setting is described as,

Red river, red river
 Slow flow heat is silence
 No will is still as a river
 Still. ... (Eliot, *Landscapes* 145; 2.1-4)

The hot weather and the silence are the things that the persona remembers about the landscape, which, like the first poem, are encapsulated in the mind of the poet. In the final lines of the poem, the use of contrasting words such as “Delay, decay. Living living / Never moving. Ever Moving” may suggest the persona’s struggle to remember things as it were, which may be the reason why the setting is depicted in binarisms like “decay” and “living” (Eliot, *Landscapes* 145; 2.9-10). Finally, the persona concludes in the last couple of lines “And go with me: / Red river, river, river” (Eliot, *Landscapes* 145; 2.12-13) that he carries with him the memory of the landscape. The third of the series, “Usk” (1935) is set near a river in England near Monmouthshire, where the persona abstains from disturbing the silence by breaking branches under his feet, trying not to wake “old enchantments” hidden underground (Eliot, *Landscapes* 146; 3.5). As Ricks and McCue state, the poem also is an homage to King Arthur as Usk River was also the setting for the legends about him (Ricks and McCue 852). “Rannoch, by Glencoe” is the fourth poem in the series, in which the setting is described as Rannoch loch in Scotland, near Glencoe where “the crow starves [and] the patient stag / Breeds for the rifle” (Eliot, *Landscapes* 147; 4.1-2). The fourth of the series is intertwined with images of life and death, indicated also in the first lines of the poem: animals in nature reproduce, only to be killed by men (Eliot, *Landscapes* 147; 4.1-2). This image of death continues throughout the poem, by the use of images of the man-made history of the landscape. The location is described to be filled with “broken steel” and the roads are curved to illustrate the “Listlessness of ancient war” (Eliot, *Landscapes* 147; 4.6-7). The poem may be read as a continuation of the preceding poems in terms of memory being the only place for the persona to *preserve* the location and keep it safe, away from destruction. On

the other hand, the final poem in the series “Cape Ann” (1935), returns to the American landscape which is indicated by the use of birds native to the land. The persona hears the sound of nature and at times, and invents birds such as the “song sparrow / Swamp-sparrow, fox-sparrow, vesper-sparrow” which are all claimed to be singing birds which indicate the use of auditory imagery to describe the landscape (Eliot, *Landscapes* 148; 5.1-2). The final line of the poem, separated from the rest of the poem, suggests the end of a narration as the persona announces that his “palaver is finished” (Eliot, *Landscapes* 148; 5.13). Overall, *Landscapes*, then, imitates in the mind of the persona, a journey from America to England and back, through the memory of landscapes. It may be argued that Eliot experimented with the idea of journey of the mind by vividly portraying these landscapes. These impressions of the landscapes share one common characteristic: they are all locations situated near water. To remind Eliot’s essay “To the Editor” in which he admitted his influence of rivers in his life, these poems may be argued to be an attempt to blend these landscapes into each other which reflects the mind of the reader (Eliot, “To the Editor” 194-195).

In order to depict London, Eliot made use of a variety of sources. He not only made use of his own experience of the city but also made use of the earlier representations of the city. His perception of London was in fact initially shaped through literary works set in London. In a review written in 1929 on *The Complete Sherlock Holmes Short Stories*, he stated that he had been reading stories set in London at an early age and contrasted the new edition of the book with an earlier edition in which Sidney Paget’s illustrations for Doyle’s short stories appeared in *The Strand Magazine* between the years 1891-1892:

Sherlock Holmes reminds us always of the pleasant externals of nineteenth-century London. I believe he may continue to do so even for those who cannot remember the nineteenth century; though I cannot imagine what it would be like to read him for the first time in this volume, without the old illustrations. I wish that Messrs Murray would bring out another volume with the old illustrations: I cannot even remember the name of the artist: but I remember the hansom cabs, the queer bowlers, Holmes’s fore-and-aft cap, Holmes in a frock coat after breakfast, Sir George Burnwell when he ‘took down a life-preserver from the wall.’ (Eliot, “Sherlock Holmes and his Times” 602)

According to his review, it was Paget's illustrations combined with Doyle's descriptions that created an impression of London as an attractive city for him early in his life. That is to say, his first impressions of the city were initially constructed by literary works that described London. Although he had not yet seen London, he was well-read in some of the most famous works about the city, and alluded to these texts in his poems to reinterpret them through the use of his intricate personae who are neither Londoners nor tourists.

Similar to the effect of innovative literature altering the evaluation of earlier texts as mentioned in "Tradition and the Individual Talent," it may be claimed that the allusions to earlier works set in London in Eliot's poetry are used to reassess these earlier representations of the city (Eliot, "Tradition" 5). In his re-evaluation of earlier representations, he employed ambiguous personae to destabilize their meanings and problematized the viewpoint of earlier representations of London in poetry. His personae initially describe London as a Londoner would describe it; however, these earlier representations are later presented as decadent. This causes the alienation and dissociation of the persona from his environment which illustrates the struggle between belonging and non-belonging to the city. It may further be argued that Eliot described the city by mentioning easily recognizable locations for a Londoner; that is, he used his personae to portray the city through the eyes of a local, which separated the identities of the poet and the persona and exemplified an impersonal viewpoint. By referring to earlier texts set in London in his poetry, he constructs his persona as a Londoner which separates the poet from the setting he was describing.

As an illustration to this distinction between the poet and the persona, in "Burbank with a Baedeker: Bleistein with a Cigar," for instance, Eliot alludes to three important figures who were linked to the history of London: Burbank, Baedeker, and Bleistein. Luther Burbank was an American horticulturalist whose work aimed at cross breeding plants to perfection (Ricks and McCue 487). As Ricks and McCue note, Karl Baedeker was famous for his travel guides, one of them being a guide entitled *London and its Environs*, of which Eliot had a copy, and S. Bleistein was a fur trader and a prominent figure in London in the 1890s (Ricks and McCue 487). By referring to these characters from London life, it seems that Eliot employs a

Londoner as his persona, who is able to recognize them as he walks in the city. These characters that are associated with London suggest that the setting is London, and that the city is made up of these important figures. Later in the poem, due to the references to the gondola, bridge, and barges, one may infer that the poem is in fact set in Venice and the characters are, like the persona, strangers in the city. The discrepancy between the characters and the setting create a sense of ambiguity; the use of Londoners and the gondola distorts the setting of the poem and conveys it as a combination of cities. It can also be inferred that by referring to these three characters, who were prominent figures of London in the 1890s, the poem gives the impression that they are visitors in Venice. By using Londoners in the poem, Eliot portrays Venice, one of the oldest and most significant cities in urban history, simultaneously as an industrial, mercantile, and touristic centre for these figures to pay a visit. It can be deduced that for him a city embodies these three qualities to become a substantial metropolis that attracts people from around the world. Like souvenirs, the fragments of these two cities that appear in the poem evoke in the mind of the reader the sensation of walking in these cities. Hence, it can be argued that the poet constructs an experience of the city in the minds of his readers, by referring to locations and blurring them so that the poem imitates the memory of the city in the mind of the reader.

In order to give the impression of a Londoner, Eliot not only uses well-known figures from urban life, but also refers to objects and places that are particular to the city he describes. In “A Cooking Egg” (1919) for instance, he refers briefly to products that are directly linked with London. Even though there are references to street names such as “Kentish Town” and “Golder’s Green” which reveal the setting as London, the poem does not describe the city by using its architecture (Eliot, “A Cooking Egg” 39; 28). Instead, London is described by allusions to English companies and people, which mark the setting of the poem as London as an unattractive place,

Where are the eagles and the trumpets?

Buried beneath some snow-deep Alps.

Over buttered scones and crumpets

Weeping, weeping multitudes

Droop in a hundred A.B.C.'s. (Eliot, "A Cooking Egg" 39; 29-33)

These references are discreet to the extent that they would have been unfamiliar for an outsider. For example, A.B.C. refers to Aerated Bread Company, a popular tea shop in London, Exchequer Bond is cheque that was printed during wartime, and Sir Alfred Mond is an industrialist who was involved in a TNT explosion, and a prominent figure in East London (Ricks and McCue 510). In addition to these references, street names are also used in the poem. As was the case with numerous Blake poems about the city, the street names used in the poem describe the filth in the city, associating them with "scavengers" (Ricks and McCue 514). Eliot makes use of these references to describe London in decay. The city is not a place where industry and economy flourish, but a place where destitution is dominant; it is not a place comparable to Rome and its victorious eagle but a place where people are defeated, just like the soldiers of the Roman Empire who froze to death in the Alps (Ricks and McCue 515). It can be inferred that Eliot, like Pound, saw London not as the intellectual and economic capital of the world, but as a place that was in decline, filled with "weeping multitudes" (Eliot, "A Cooking Egg" 39; 32).

Similar to the fragmented city in "A Cooking Egg," his impressions of the city appear in fragments in "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock." The poem is loosely set in an unidentified urban location. The ambiguity of locations in the poem is reminiscent of his essay "The Influence of Landscape upon the Poet" where he reveals that he was influenced from composite landscapes (Eliot, "Influence" par.3):

Let us go, through certain half-deserted streets,
The muttering retreats
Of restless nights in one-night cheap hotels
And sawdust restaurants with oyster-shells:
Streets that follow like a tedious argument

(Eliot, "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock" 5; 4-8)

Eliot pieces together his influence from a selection of cities, including the literary works about the city to depict it in fragments, by making use of the fog that hides and disrupts the unified image of any particular city. The poem, first published in *Chicago* in June 1915, seems to be set in London owing to the recurring yellow colour of the fog-like cat and the sawdust restaurants in endless streets; in fact, the

poem was written before he came to London (Ricks and McCue 373). While critical works have been published on the fog and setting of “Prufrock” to be London²², Eliot explains in an interview that he had in mind the fog in St. Louis, his hometown, when he composed the famous lines in the poem (Ricks and McCue 380). Though his statement partly refutes these arguments, the common assumption that the fog refers to the London fog for the last hundred years in its critical reception brings up the question whether his “composite” notion of landscapes which he admits to have had an effect on him, and whether reading the representations about London and its fog early in his life had any influence on his devising the cat-like fog. As illustrated earlier in Chapter One, especially after the second half of the nineteenth century, the London fog was a common way to describe London, not only in the novels of Charles Dickens but also, in the poems about the city in the late nineteenth century such as Joanna Bailie’s poem “London.” While these earlier representations described the city’s attractiveness to be hidden under the fog, Eliot uses the same depiction to suggest that the fog hides a ruined, ghastly city which lures people into its centre. Like the evening sky that resembles a “patient etherized upon a table,” the fog suppresses the consciousness of the city, and the mind of the persona (Eliot, “The Love Song” 5; 3). By imagining a walk in the city, Prufrock tries to locate himself in a world he cannot make sense of, resulting in his alienation. It may thus be deduced that the horrific secrets hidden under the fog is the persona feeling alienated from his surrounding, be it a visitor or a local.

In “The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock,” although the setting is not clear, there are other references that demonstrate Eliot’s familiarity with English culture. The persona of the poem invites his addressee to go on a journey in his mind through the streets of the city, like a tourist guide. As Ricks and McCue remark, in 1910 Eliot had bought Karl Baedeker’s guide to London, in which oyster shops are mentioned for the visitor, which may be one of the reasons why critics have argued that the setting of the poem is London (Ricks and McCue 379). Whether or not his poem is set in London, the style in which the persona addresses his companion implies a visit taking place to the vague memories about the city in the persona’s mind. The persona

²² The following critical works assert that the fog in “The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock” marks the setting of the poem as London, Holdsworth pp. 14; Kettle pp. 155; Rummel 57-77; Carrey (2005).

invites his companion to imagine to walk in the streets in his mind and assumes the role of a tour-guide to his imagination.

One may therefore argue that Eliot described a ruined city by blending fragments from a variety of cities, and employed a walking persona to describe it from different perspectives to explore the mutual influence the persona and the environment. In “Mélange Adultère de Tout” (Adulterous Mixture of Everything²³) for instance, he depicts a persona who assumes different roles in different landscapes to show the relationship between the persona and his environment. These ruined cities the persona travels to are not necessarily European cities and the persona describing them is not always distinctly European; he attains a variety of roles in each city. The influence of the city is significant particularly when Eliot employs a persona whose identity undergoes a change, dependent upon the place he describes. To illustrate, in the poem, the persona travels across the world; first he is a professor in America, then a journalist in England (Eliot, “Mélange Adultère de Tout” 41; 2). The persona initially describes two cities; in London he is a banker and in Paris a critic who can detect good art, represented by the ability to easily detect a “black beret” in the poem (line 9). Zooming out of these two cities, the persona assumes the role of a philosopher in Germany, finally finds himself in a “cenotaph” in Mozambique (Eliot, “Mélange” lines 19-20). The twenty-line poem thus crosses between three continents; America, Europe, and Africa. Moreover, the persona states that he wanders from “Omaha to Damascus,” like a *flâneur* (Eliot, “Mélange” line 15). The persona’s identity becomes referential to where he is, which illustrates the ways that cities contribute to the identity of the individual. The poem describes a persona whose identity is reshaped and redefined as he travels from one city to another; he can transcend between identities, and even nationalities. Eliot, too, like the persona of the poem, has been categorized as either English or American throughout his career. Jahan Ramazani in his essay “A Transnational Poetics” suggests that since modernist poets derive their poetry from a variety of sources, they belong to a number of cultures, and that they should be considered as transnational poets. As Ramazani claims, the distinction between English modernism and American modernism, or differentiating between modernisms based on the

²³ Translation of the poem from French to English in Ricks and McCue pp. 518

nationalities of poets, and categorizing them accordingly problematizes the search of these modernist writers in terms of their exiled nature; writers like Joyce, Forster, Lewis, Pound, and Eliot did not belong to one particular nation, thus they should be considered “transnational” poets who worked together, and contributed to the same English language modernism by approaching it from different perspectives (Ramazani, “Transnational” 333-4). In the light of Ramazani’s words, it can be argued that in creating such ambiguous cities, Eliot was not aiming to describe London in its exact appearance, but pointing at its universal significance. His use of the city in these poems construct, a “transnational” city that is made up of the selected remains of not a single nation’s culture, but *cultures* on a global scale. Similarly, Eliot also maintained that literature was not “primarily a matter of nationality, but of language,” and that regardless of the nation in which a literary work was produced language was the meeting point for all literature written in the same language, which shows Eliot’s interest in perceiving modernism as a global movement (Eliot, “The Three Provincialities” 391).

3.5 The Personae of Eliot

Eliot underscored the crucial role of the persona in his essays “‘Rhetoric’ and Poetic Drama” and “Three Voices of Poetry” as a way for the poet to register the diverse range of thought and emotions experienced in the society. To describe the variety of experiences, he emphasised the use of personae in poetry rather than the single authoritative voice of the poet. He underlined that if a writer desired to convey the effect of speech rather than the artificial language of poetry, he must “give the effect of himself talking in his own person or in one of his rôles [...]” and adapt his “manner to the moment with infinite variations” (Eliot, “‘Rhetoric’ and Poetic Drama” 26). Additionally, in “Three Voices of Poetry,” he asserted that dramatic verse embodied three different voices; the poet talking to himself, to his audience, and the dialogues of the fictional character created by the poet:

The first voice is the voice of the poet talking to himself – or to nobody. The second is the voice of the poet addressing an audience, whether large or small. The third is the voice of the poet when he attempts to create a dramatic character speaking in verse; when he is saying, not what he could say in his own person, but only what he can

say within the limits of one imaginary character. (Eliot, "Three Voices of Poetry" 89)

These three different voices that he described, in fact, may be read as the private and public spaces of the poem; the poet talking to himself represents the most private, "confessional" voice, and the other two represent the public space of poetry. Like that of the city, then, a poem may contain both private and public spaces through the use of multiple voices used by the poet that co-exist in the poem. In dramatic poetry, he maintained, all three voices could be seen, and claimed that it was necessary for the modern poet to be able to embody all three voices in order to represent a kaleidoscopic view of the world he lives in (Eliot, "Three Voices of Poetry" 99-100). He asserted that in dramatic verse, various characters speak in turns and the way they speak differs from one another, which conveys the impression of *a group of individuals* speaking, instead of the impression of a single person's voice. Thus, the language presented in dramatic verse belongs not to a single person, but to "a world of persons," which he noted Shakespeare excelled in doing (Eliot, "Music of Poetry" 33). One may deduce from Eliot's statement that his multi-layered experience of the city could be described by using polyphonic voices in the poem and by employing a variety of personae in the poem.

Drawing upon the idea that absolute reality is unattainable, he argued that it was only possible through employing various personae that a poet could reflect the parts of different realities. To illustrate, in his Merton College essays, Eliot claimed that there was no objective, absolute reality that could be attained, but different ideals that could be grasped from different perspectives that are representative of a variety of realities (Eliot, "Objects: Content, Objectivity, and Existence" 166). Thus, he emphasised the importance of point of view which could never truly reflect "an individual human mind" in describing an object (Eliot, "Objects: Content, Objectivity, and Existence" 166-167). In other words, as Eliot suggests in the essay, since the world is constructed by points of view that exist in comparison of each other, it can be deduced that his poems also employ personae that reflect this kaleidoscopic vision of reality (Eliot, "Objects" 166-167). He further remarked that when describing an object, the different points of view assisted one to apprehend the object, not in its complete form, but a combined, complimentary view of the object

(Eliot, "Objects" 168). Moreover, in "Finite Centres of Point of View," he stated that these diverse points of view were voiced through the use of personae which may also be regarded as the sum of all views of an "articulated" world, which he calls the "finite centres of the world" (Eliot, "Finite Centres of Point of View" 174-175). That is to say, he claimed that each of these points of view may be contributing to our overall understanding of the world described so far, creating, to a certain extent, an archive that catalogues *all* viewpoints that are known to humankind. Consequently, it can be argued that Eliot's claims illustrate his style in poetry: by making use of a number of personae in his poems about the city, he offered a representation of London that aspired to voice every possible point of view that incorporated all past representations of the city all at once. The different "finite centres" of individuals, thus, present their own versions of the city, which add up to the representation of London that can be perceived by readers in the early twentieth century. As the city is impossible to be represented *in toto*, in a single absolute reality, he offered a solution to the problem of representation by suggesting that all versions of the city could be added up to voice all representations up to date.

It may be claimed that in Eliot's opinion these variegated depictions of human experience and emotions could only be portrayed by a dissociation of the poet's emotions and experiences from that of the personae. To this end, he maintained that the poet was able to give voice to these various personae only when he distanced himself from the poem. In "Tradition and the Individual Talent" (1919), his emphasis on impersonal poetry may thus be derived from his search to dissociate the poet from his poetry:

The mind of the poet [...] may partly or exclusively operate upon the experience of the man himself; but, the more perfect the artist, the more completely separate in him will be the man who suffers and the mind which creates; the more perfectly will the mind digest and transmute the passions which are its material. (Eliot, "Tradition" 8)

His emphasis on the disassociation of experience and creation of art may be said to have derived from his argument on the function of poetry as a medium of representing the contemporary world in which the poet, like a scientist, without prejudice, gives voice to all the different voices in the society. Although his idea of impersonality has been regarded as a complete disposal of the poet's personality, in a

later essay, Eliot redefined his argument to compare the impersonal poet to a scientist:

[The scientist] is continuing a work which will be continued after him. The great scientist submerges himself in what he has to do, forgets himself. [...] His personality has not been lost, but has gone, all the important part of it, into the work. [...] There is this same inevitability and impersonality about the work of a great poet. [...] the greater the poet, the more evident his hand in every line, the more elusive his personality. (Eliot, "Modern Tendencies in Poetry" 214)

It may be inferred that the poet should initially work, like a scientist, to remove his subjectivity from his work, later to include his voice, describing his experience, as if he is analysing, with his commentaries and conclusions, the data that he collected. To illustrate, Eliot named Thomas Middleton as the greatest example of an impersonal poet. He described him as a playwright whose tragedies and comedies are written as if they are by "two different men" (Eliot, "Thomas Middleton" 141). In his opinion he is "a great observer of human nature, without fear, without sentiment, without prejudice." (Eliot, "Thomas Middleton" 147) Rather than a commenter and a messenger, he is a "great recorder" (Eliot, "Thomas Middleton" 148). Eliot further claimed that unlike Jonson or Shakespeare he did not reveal a subjective, personal voice; instead, "he has no point of view, is neither sentimental nor cynical; he is neither resigned, nor disillusioned, nor romantic, he has no message" (Eliot, "Thomas Middleton" 141). Furthermore, in an essay on William Blake, he stated that the impersonal viewpoint and the various personae enabled the poet to represent these various realities (Eliot, "William Blake" 190). In short, for Eliot, impersonality of a poet referred to the poet's observation of his environment without any personal attachment, in which he used his own style to relate the material he was describing.

In Eliot's city poems, the use of personae observing the city, to a certain extent, is reminiscent of Baudelaire's use of the *flâneur*. To illustrate, Eliot's "Le Directeur" (The Editor) is a poem that alludes to Baudelaire's "To a Red-Headed Beggar Girl" in *Le Fleurs du Mal* in terms of its use of persona (Ricks and McCue 517). Eliot's poem mocks *The Spectator*'s Editor-in-chief Leo Strachey, like Pound's "Salutation the Second," which refers to the same editor (Ricks and McCue 517). After *The Spectator*'s revival, the motto for the new magazine appeared with an

epigraph from Addison and Steele: “I live in the world, rather as a spectator of mankind, than as one of the species...In short I have acted in all parts of my life as a looker-on” (Ricks and McCue 517). The quoted epigraph evokes the idea of a *flâneur*, a voyeuristic observer who does not become part of the crowd but simply observes his environment, a frequent persona Eliot employs in poetry. The *flâneur* detaches himself from his environment, which enables him to criticise it from a distance. In the poem, the persona’s attention is set on the “conservative” editor of *The Spectator*, who walks “arm in arm” with the “reactionary” shareholder (Eliot, “Le Directeur” 40; 1-6). As the shareholder and editor pass in front of a small girl in rags who “starves for love,” the persona emphasises the double standards of city life (Eliot, 40; 11, 20). Although the poem seems to focus on the editor initially, the poem ends with a striking image of the persona gazing at the beggar girl in the corner; she, unlike in Baudelaire’s poem²⁴, is not praised for her beauty, but is in the background who only appears as the final image in the poem.

The city in Eliot’s poem is described by the use of a persona who constructs snapshot impressions of the urban setting. The persona views the city as he walks in the city and does not attach himself to a particular location, like Baudelaire’s *flâneur*, the persona creates a sequence of images which disallows the reader to identify the setting with a particular city. The use of the walking persona, taken together with the ambiguous, fragmented representations of the city dissociate the setting from a particular landscape and portrays it as an elusive, fictional city; in other words, the city becomes a collection of numerous cities.

Although some of the city poems discussed in Chapter One similarly employed a walking persona, Eliot’s personae view the city from a more ambiguous perspective. This type of persona is not alienated from the society; rather, he acts as if he is an inhabitant of the city. This suggests that he shares the emotions of his fellow sufferers in the city. Consequently, his persona views the city as a place filled with despair and suffering. The walking personae employed in earlier representations of London viewed the city from a street-view perspective, whereas, Eliot’s personae simultaneously gaze at the city from a distance and walk in the streets; thus, they are

²⁴ The lines from Baudelaire’s poem “To a Red Haired Beggar Girl” were used from the translation in Ricks and McCue pp. 517.

able to view the city from a remote perspective and from close-up in the same poem, which blends the two types of personae used in earlier city representations into one. Compared to Pound's personae who were the embodiment of the isolated experience of the individual's alienation from the society, Eliot's personae describe the feeling of alienation as a uniting force for the society.

In "Preludes" (1915) in order to describe this shared experience of eternal human suffering in the city, Eliot employs a persona that walks in the city at different hours of the day and constructs a city that never sleeps. In the first section of the poem, he portrays the city on a winter evening. The streets smell of smoke and steam and streetlights are described to indicate the end of the day (Eliot, "Preludes" 15; 1.1-2). In the streets the persona sees what remains of the day; newspapers and leaves that fly by and the rain that hits the blinds and chimney pots of the houses to wash away these remains (Eliot, "Preludes" 15; 1.9). These references imply that the persona is in the streets walking at night which was a characteristic way of describing the city especially in the nineteenth century through the eyes of a voyeur as seen in James Thomson's *City of a Dreadful Night* (1874). In the second prelude it is early in the morning and the streets are already being populated by the people. Eliot's style in the poem, where he describes the streets trampled by the workers evokes John Davidson's London poems; in *Crystal Palace* (1910), for instance, Davidson describes the crowds in the Palace: "But come: here's crowd; here's mob; a gala day! / The walks are black with people: no one hastes; / They all pursue their purpose business-like —" (J. Davidson "Crystal Palace," 118; 42-44). While Davidson's lines in the above quotation foregrounds the crowd and their actions, in Eliot's poem the perspective is shifted from the crowd to the urban setting, the streets have been trampled by the crowd. Moreover, Eliot's description of the city is neither as vibrant nor as distinctive in terms of its portrayal of the setting in time or place compared to Davidson's poem which clearly states the setting in time and place. By the use of olfactory imagery Eliot's poem mixes night time and daytime using, the "faint stale smell of beers" as an indication of night lurking into the day by mixing with the scent of coffee (Eliot, "Preludes" 15; 2.2). Thus the city is portrayed as a place where evenings have residues of the day, and the morning has scraps of the night, to indicate the fluidity of time, and the everlasting motion of the city (Eliot,

“Preludes” 15; 2.1-3). Moreover, it is implied in the poem that the city is like a machine that never stops, which is indifferent to the individual who is suffering from insomnia or nightmares. As such, in the third prelude, the voyeuristic perspective this time gazes at another unknown character who has insomnia (Eliot, “Preludes” 16; 3.10-12). By depicting the walking persona following another character suffering from insomnia Eliot seems to be using, like a frame narrator, a frame persona who describes the sufferings of another character. The latter character feels alienated from his surroundings because of his condition and when he falls asleep, he is haunted by nightmares (Eliot, “Preludes” 16; 4.8-10). In the final prelude, the persona watches over the sleepless man heading into the street who hides his suffering “stretched tight” in order not to reveal his condition and tries to blend into the crowd (Eliot, “Preludes” 16; 4.1-2). The persona feels empathy for the man he stalks and points out their shared sense of suffering:

I am moved by fancies that are curled
 Around these images, and cling:
 The notion of some infinitely gentle
 Infinitely suffering thing. (Eliot, “Preludes” 16; 4.10-13)

Although the poem is not distinctly a depiction of London, the urban elements in the poem suggests that the setting is a metropolis from the indication that the city never sleeps. Moreover, the chase in the final two poems are reminiscent of Poe’s “Man of the Crowd” where the narrator follows the mysterious man day and night in the streets of London. However, Eliot’s persona and his characterization in the poem unlike Poe’s narrator, suggests a shared sense of alienation. Even though they suffer from the same condition, the personae in “Preludes” cannot act upon their shared emotions and remain separated, which creates another level of alienation. One may conclude that this alienation is not only caused by loneliness, but the inability to communicate the emotions of the persona with others around him.

In Eliot’s city poems the walking of the personae is at times likened to the wanderings of the mind, which renders the fragmented memories one has about the experience of the city. To illustrate, in “Rhapsody on a Windy Night” (1917) Eliot portrays an urban setting at night and compares trying to find one’s way to “a

madman shaking a dead geranium,” which suggests that wandering in the city at night and getting lost resemble the human mind “dissolving” into oblivion.

Every street lamp that I pass
 Beats like a fatalistic drum,
 And through the spaces of the dark
 Midnight shapes the memory
 As a madman shakes a dead geranium.

(Eliot, “Rhapsody on a Windy Night” 18; 8-12)

In the poem, the persona walks in the city to find a streetlamp gazing at a woman in the street. Similar to the poems written in the nineteenth century, in which the city at night time is described to reveal the secretive, unwanted, filthy things in the city, Eliot’s poem evokes a parallel image. In these nineteenth century poems, one of the most popular images is that of the working women who waits under the streetlamp²⁵. Usually in these poems the persona describes the woman to point out the immorality in the city, whereas in “Rhapsody” the street lamp is personified to draw the persona’s attention to the woman approaching him:

‘Regard that woman
 Who hesitates toward you in the light of the door
 Which opens on her like a grin.
 You see the border of her dress
 Is torn and stained with sand,
 And you see the corner of her eye
 Twists like a crooked pin.’ (Eliot, “Rhapsody” 18; 16-22)

The “twisted” corner of the eye of the woman suggests that all objects can be twisted in the memory, which exemplifies the physical wandering of the persona to be linked with the wandering of the mind. In the poem, the personified streetlamp symbolises rational thought and functions as a character who gazes and draws attention to what the persona should look at. In other words, although not mobile, the streetlight also becomes a ‘persona’ that gazes at the streets and observes its environment and shows the other persona what to look at, disallowing the persona to control what he sees with his own eyes. Moreover, in the poem the distinction between viewer and viewed is further problematized with the introduction of other “viewers.” The streetlamp functioning as the “eye” of the street for the persona is not the only character who gazes over the persona. As the persona indicates, there are

²⁵ William Blake’s and Thomas Hardy’s poems contain such images.

“eyes in the street” trying to “peer through lighted shutters,” (Eliot, “Rhapsody” 19; 41-42). While in the conventional depictions the persona views the city and the society, in Eliot’s poem, the people in return turn their gaze upon the persona. In addition, the moon also watches and “winks” at the persona (Eliot, “Rhapsody” 19; 52). Hence, the persona becomes another aspect of the city to be gazed upon when he walks in the street. Guided by the streetlamp, the persona walks in the city for four hours without knowing where he is going when finally, at the end of the poem, the lamp directs the attention of the persona to a door, to enter, it explains that the “key” is the memory of the persona (Eliot, “Rhapsody” 20; 73). Though the persona travels in a dream-like imagination or the memory of the city, the exploration on viewpoints and notions of the spectacle or the gaze in the poem, demonstrates Eliot’s experiment on the ways to depict objects in general, and cities in particular and to convey the sense of alienation.

A similar journey to the mind takes place in “So through the evening, through the violet air” (1913), in which the physical journey into the city is paralleled to a journey into the mind of a person. Like a visit to a town, the persona visits the mind of another person. The evening sky coloured violet suggests not only the end of the day but also the end of life. The persona, who says that he is suffering from “tortured meditation,” tries to find consolation by walking in the streets where the houses are “sullen,” only to be intimidated by his surroundings (Eliot, “So through the evening” 272; 1-5). As he walks, his mind wanders off, losing track of reasoned thought:

This wrinkled road which twists and winds and guesses:
 Oh, through the violet sky, through the evening air
 A chain of reasoning whereof the thread was gone
 Gathered strange images through which we walked alone:
 (Eliot, “So through the evening” 272; 9-12)

The train of thought of the mind, is likened to a road that “twists and winds,” that the persona walks along (Eliot, “So through the evening” 272; line 9). The solitary journey is soon accompanied by unearthly characters who haunt him in his journey, after which he narrates his observations in first person plural and the poem ends with the characters chasing him out of the town. Though his journey into the mind begins like a tourist visiting a city, the persona suddenly sees a man who creeps downward a wall from upside down towers. The mind that is likened to a town does not build

upon a realistic image of the city, rather it is a distorted, nightmarish city. It may be argued that this is the mind of a corpse and thus it is a distorted perception that builds this city, a place where the dead man loses all his connections. Instead of towers rising from its foundations upwards, the towers are hanging “upside down” from the sky, which resemble anti-monuments (Eliot, “So through the evening” 272; line 20). The violet sky in the beginning of the poem transforms into seaweed, detaching the persona’s vision with reasoned thought.

Whether a journey into the mind or a journey into the city, the personae of Eliot create a medium in which the reader can view the subject from a critical perspective and enable the reader an image of the city in fragments. The emphasis on fragmented depictions in his poetry suggest that the city may only be portrayed by the personae through the psychogeographical relationship between the persona and his environment which results in incomplete pieces rendered by memory instead of absolute, fixed images of reality. Thus, in a limbo of remembering and forgetting, the personae of Eliot try to re-imagine the city, which, ironically, further alienates his personae instead of providing him with a sense of belonging. By incorporating multiple personae and their viewpoints, Eliot portrays a three-dimensional view of the city. One may argue that all these explorations with the representation of the city and the point of view of the personae in his early poems paved the way for *The Waste Land* (1922) in which these ideas are blended.

Eliot’s description of London in *The Waste Land* (1922) integrates earlier representations of London in fragments as a metaphor for the decadent styles of writing poetry and the crumbling cultures of the previous centuries and rebuilds them using his modernist poetics, as suggested by the reconstruction of the city out of its ruins at the end of the poem. In order to depict this city that represents a declining culture, Eliot employs a walking persona who views the desolate condition of the city from various viewpoints and overhears and voices other inhabitants and collects specimens of a once great city. Hence, by making use of the walking persona, Eliot is able to map out a *real* city that was *once* an artistic and cultural centre.

Eliot’s use of the image of a fragmented city in *The Waste Land* differs from that of his predecessors discussed in Chapter One of the present study. The

representations of London in late nineteenth-century poetry described the city beautiful from a distance, but a desolate place from up close as seen in Wordsworth's poem "Residence in London." Instead, in *The Waste Land*, the decline of a city is portrayed from every direction. All past representations of the city co-exist in the form of fragments that are carried in this poem as souvenirs of eternal suffering in the city. Thus, *The Waste Land* may be regarded as the single poem which incorporates all past representations of London by the use of a persona who layers these varied perspectives of describing the city to establish a multifaceted image of the city. Therefore, Eliot's use of earlier representations of the city not only lays a historical foundation for the city but also enables a variety of experiences of the city to co-exist, without one superimposing the other. By using a persona who eavesdrops to conversations and shifts perspectives, Eliot enables the reader to do the impossible, to envision the city in one sitting. To this end, the persona of the poem not only describes the city by looking at it from a distance, but also by walking in the streets and becoming part of it, which allows the reader to view the city panoramically and from up close. That is to say, the persona of the poem is like a *flâneur* walking in the city, he visits various people and witnesses particular moments in their lives which accumulate into "a heap of broken images" of the city (Eliot, *The Waste Land* 55; 1.22). As such, the poem's focus shifts from the streets of London, to London Bridge, to a house, to a bar, and to the banks of the river Thames by the use of a walking persona who is able to infiltrate into the houses of the people suffering, by overhearing their conversations. Of all the poems about London, none establishes the ability of zooming into the city and out of the city in a single poem.

The epigraph of *The Waste Land* may be regarded as explanatory of the desolate condition of the city and its citizens. The lines taken from *Satyricon* depicts the suffering of Sibyl which can be read as the personified city who beseeches destruction: "I saw with my own eyes the Sibyl at Cumae hanging in a cage, and when the boys said to her: 'Sibyl what do you want?' / She answered 'I want to die'²⁶" (Ricks and McCue 593). According to Ricks and McCue, Sibyl is promised immortality, which is not a reward but a reason for suffering. She is given eternal life by Apollo, but she forgets to ask for health which leads to her misery (Ricks and

²⁶ Translation from Ricks and McCue pp 593.

McCue 593). In the poem, like Sibyl, the city has lost its beauty and vigour, it has become a desolate, infertile land; it is no longer in its heyday and cries for its destruction. Sibyl's curse of eternal suffering thus sheds light to the city becoming a waste land. As the title of the poem indicates, the city in *The Waste Land*, is not an inspiring city anymore, but a desolate, dry land. Eliot was inspired by James Frazer's *The Golden Bough* (1890) and Jessie Weston's *From Ritual to Romance* (1920) and incorporated this image, among others like the Fisher King, the cycle of life and death. According to Frazer, the death and revival of vegetation may be found in every stage of civilisation and its rites may be found in different forms around the world (Frazer 261). As Jessie Weston points out, the myth of the waste land originated from the ancient vegetation rituals which involved the symbolic death of the vegetation spirit (Adonis) whose resurrection restored the fertility of the land (Weston 40-44). The waste land myth later emerged in the narratives of the Grail myth. The Grail stories share similar plotlines and motifs. Namely, the main object of the quest which is to restore the youth and health of a sickly king, whose condition affects the fertility of the land (Weston 19). Secondly, the misfortune of the land can only be restored by the success of the hero, the Quester; if he does, he frees the waters and restores the land, if he fails, the king and the land are both destroyed (Weston 12-16). Especially the Bleheris text, in which the hero is Gawain, involves a waste land that will be restored by the quester knight Gawain when he asks the right question that will save the king from death and restore the land to fertility by the freeing of waters (Weston 11-12). The sections of Eliot's *The Waste Land* shares similarities with this version of the Grail myth. As such, the dead land suffering from a draught in the first section "Burial of the Dead" is followed by the freeing of waters in "What the Thunder Said." The Grail myth also incorporates the theme of life-in-death which Eliot similarly addresses as a means to portray the individual's response to modernity in the poem. As Weston asserts, vegetation gods like the lives of the Greek-Phoenician Adonis or the Sumerian Tammuz follow the process of nature, namely, life, death, and renewal of life, which have led to rituals that combine emotions of rejoicing and lamentation (Weston 32-34). Likewise, in *The Waste Land* the image of suffering individuals in an apocalyptic city evokes a sense of life-in-death experienced in the city. As Weston points out, these ancient vegetation rituals

later re-emerged in Romances, one of which is Sir Thomas Malory's *Morte d'Arthur* in which a barren land where no grass grows and no fish live is described:

[...] and so befell great pestilence and great harm to both realms. For sithen increased neither corn, nor grass, nor well-nigh no fruit, nor in the water was no fish; wherefore men call it the lands of the two marches, the waste land, [...] (Malory, *Morte d'Arthur* 17.3)

Eliot makes use of this image of a barren waste land to describe London as a deserted metropolis in decay. As the first lines of the poem indicate, the land depicted in *The Waste Land*, similar to the ones described in the myths about the Holy Grail, is a place that suffers from drought and disease, but London, for Eliot, is also a place that *forces* creation:

April is the cruellest month, breeding
Lilacs out of the dead land, mixing
Memory and desire, stirring
Dull roots with spring rain. (Eliot, *The Waste Land* 55; 1.1-4)

The Waste Land begins with a reference to April, which is usually regarded as the beginning of spring, when nature regenerates. Vegetation rituals in which the death of land is regarded as potent with life is similarly found in Eliot's poem. This idea of regeneration is linked to the idea of death through the use of a "dead land," juxtaposed with the month April when nature forcefully "breeds" lilacs out of this arid land. The images used by Eliot problematizes the relation between life and death, suggesting death to be the foundation for life; and without death, there can be no life. The image of the city is likened to a dry land out of which "lilacs" are forcefully bred suggests the city, though "forceful," to have attained the regenerative power of nature. Lilac seeds bear the potential for life but are useless and infertile without rain, the lines thus indicate a desolate land being forced into regeneration, making April the "cruellest month" which may be read as a critique of a decadent society. That is, Eliot seems to be complementing the already existent motif of draught in a once fertile land with his comments on the sterility of the London literary circle which was, in his opinion, *once* an artistic and cultural centre. The dead land can thus be inferred as a critique of London where literature and culture are in decline, and the lilacs that are forced out of land may be regarded as the artists and poets who forcefully create art in the uninspiring city. The mixing of life and

death in the first lines of the poem can thus be read as the attempts of artists trying to create art in an infertile land to ‘sick’ readers who are infected with bad taste.

The causal relationship between death and life also evokes John Dryden’s *Annus Mirabilis*, in which London is described after the Great Fire and compared to a phoenix that will be reborn from its ashes. It can be argued that in order to emphasise the decline of culture in the city, Eliot evokes Dryden’s phoenix to underscore the suffering of the city and portrays it as a heap of waste, which eventually leads to the destruction of the city at the end of the poem. Similar to Dryden’s poem in which the fire is the cause of the ending of the city and of its revival from its ashes like a phoenix, in Eliot’s poem, the fallen city will also be rebuilt from its ruins which suggests the dawn of a new movement out of classical works.

Apart from their views of the city as attractive or unattractive, the poets of the nineteenth century described the physical features of London as a device that underscored its inspiring aspect as a new form of aesthetic for poetry and contrasted the city to the descriptions of nature as seen in the poems of Robert Buchanan and Austin Dobson discussed in Chapter One. Similarly, in *The Waste Land* nature is contrasted to the urban setting: the lilacs being forced out of the dead land are replaced with the urban setting in which buildings are constructed. The physical features of the city such as the pavements, buildings, and the roads are reduced to the words “stony rubbish” and the image is juxtaposed with the fertility of nature:

What are the roots that clutch, what branches
Out of this stony rubbish? Son of man,
You cannot say, or guess, for you know only
A heap of broken images, where the sun beats,
And the dead tree gives no shelter, the cricket no relief,
And the dry stone no sound of water. [...]

(Eliot, *The Waste Land* 55; 1.19-24)

The dead land out of which lilacs are forced out implies that man has lost his connection to nature. The “stony rubbish” the persona describes evokes the impression of an urban landscape; the buildings that “branch out” to the sky are likened to “dead trees” that do not soothe the persona who tries to make meaning out of what is around him (Eliot, *The Waste Land* 55; lines 19-20, 23). This image of the

urban landscape that is devoid of the “sound of water” underscores the infertility of the land (Eliot, *The Waste Land* 55; line 24). This man made structure, the city, which is portrayed by its pavements and buildings are contrasted to nature to draw attention to the sterility of the city. In other words, the city becomes an uninspiring place for the persona. As the lines suggest, originally, man’s creativity which was linked to the fertility of the land seen in topographical poetry, seems to be replaced with the infertility of the urban landscape in *The Waste Land*. It may be argued that Eliot was commenting on urbanization as the ‘curse’ brought on a fertile land. The dead land covered in concrete, in the above lines thus might refer to the relationship between man and nature to be severed beyond repair, and to have replaced man’s resourcefulness with impotence. This implies that the persona regards the city as an uninspiring place.

The setting of the poem after Pound’s extensive editing is predominantly London as there are references not only to London Bridge, but also to various streets and buildings in the poem. Eleanor Cook in “T.S. Eliot and the Carthaginian Peace” argues that the poem contains maps of three cities; Rome during the Roman Empire, the second is Dante’s “map of the inhabited world” in which the centre is Jerusalem, and finally she states that the most predominant map is of London which is the focal point in the poem (E. Cook 341). London in the poem is described by the persona as “unreal” and surrounded by fog.

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

(Eliot, *The Waste Land* 56-57; 1.60-69)

Due to the fog, the city is reduced to a crowd walking towards King William Street over London Bridge which creates a fragmented image of the city and the crowd seen through the eyes of the persona appear to be flowing like ghosts. The clear reference to London as a setting in these lines situate the poem as a London poem,

even though the persona's vision is limited by the fog. The city lacks its connection to reality because it is hidden under the brown fog, which creates a lucid picture of the city in which only London Bridge and the crowds flowing on it are seen. Through this image, an unreal city is established which alludes to Baudelaire's "Fourmillante _cho." In "Les Sept Vieillards" (Seven Old Men) Baudelaire refers to the city as a place filled with ghosts and illusions, suggesting that the attractiveness of the city is like the fog that hides the hideous reality of the city: "Fourmillante _cho, _cho pleine de rêves, / Où le spectre en plein jour raccroche le passant ("O swarming city, city full of dreams, / Where ghosts accost the passer's by in broad daylight!," Ricks and McCue 613). As the scenes in *The Waste Land* indicate, it can be inferred that the crowd is formed of bank clerks walking to work crossing over London Bridge heading towards the City. The City in London is the centre of economy for Great Britain but by referring to Baudelaire's poem, Eliot emphasises that it is also a place of illusions that conceal the fatal ending; the clerks have wasted their lives in working in the machine-like metropolis. For Eliot, then, just like forcing the lilacs to bloom out of the dead land, exploitation becomes one of the means by which London consumes individuals.

Eliot alludes to other texts like Baudelaire's poem not only to refer to the overall image of the city, but also to contrast the earlier representations of the city with his impressions to illustrate the changing perceptions of its image. The third section of the poem, "The Fire Sermon," Eliot alludes to *Prothalamion*, in which Spenser depicts the banks of the river Thames adorned with flowers and nymphs, which resembles "a wedding day," and replaces Spenser's portrayal with a deserted riverbank. Instead of describing flowers like that of *Prothalamion*, Eliot's Thames is devoid of "empty bottles, sandwich papers, / silk handkerchiefs, cardboard boxes, cigarette ends, / Or other testimony of summer nights ..." (Eliot, *The Waste Land* 62; 3.177-179). By replacing the flowers with pieces of leftover objects and waste, Eliot makes use of Baudelaire's style of describing the city as an attractive, lively place by emphasizing its unattractive elements. Had the banks been filled with trash, it would indicate that London was still a city that was luring people into it, whereas for Eliot, "the nymphs have departed" which underscores that the city has become a deserted, uninspiring place.

As suggested in the poem, the city is a place where man is bound to decay, the vicious circle of the city acts upon the man, and causes his destruction. As illustrated in the scene from “The Burial of the Dead” in which the bank clerks are consumed by the city, the repetition of the word “unreal” suggests the city to be surrounded by the hidden malice of humanity symbolised by the brown fog:

Unreal City
 Under the brown fog of a winter noon
 Mr Eugenides, the Smyrna merchant
 Unshaven, with a pocket full of currants
 C. i. f. London: documents at sight,
 Asked me in demotic French
 To luncheon at the Cannon Street Hotel
 Followed by a week-end at the Metropole
(Eliot, *The Waste Land* 63; 3.207-214)

In the nineteenth century, poets which include W. E. Henley and Lionel Johnson wrote poems about London in which they described the city as phantasmagorical when hidden under a fog. However, their descriptions were of an attractive city that was hidden inside the fog. Eliot’s poem reverses these earlier representations and reveals a nightmarish city filled with sin under the fog as well. The nineteenth century poets like William Blake who described London as a sinful place typically used elements such as prostitution and child labour as atrocious crimes in the city²⁷. *The Waste Land*, contributes to this image by a description of prostitution taking place in broad daylight, beyond the heteronormative expectations, to further emphasise the unattractive qualities of the metropolis; Mr. Eugenides offers money to the speaker and invites him to spend a weekend with him at the Metropole Hotel. Eliot builds on the earlier image of a city filled with sin and accentuates it as a hellish place with this image.

The walking persona depicts the city from a variety of perspectives; he not only overhears conversations but also peeks through windows and balconies of other people as he walks through the city, it is as if he assumes the identity of a voyeur. Although there are studies in which *The Waste Land* is said to have multiple personae²⁸, it has also been argued that it is a central persona that presents himself at

²⁷ See Blake’s poem “London” discussed in Chapter One

²⁸ The following titles argue that *The Waste Land* makes use of multiple personae: Easthope pp. 172;

particular scenes in the poem. The critical work that focuses on a single persona agree that this central persona is Tiresias²⁹. It may be argued that by problematizing the number of personae in the poem, Eliot seems to replicate the polyphony of voices of individuals who are suffering in the poem which accumulate into the unanimous cries of agony in the city, as suggested also in the discussion of the epigraph of the poem. Eliot describes the blind prophet Tiresias as a voyeur who, instead of prophesizing the future, watches a typist's house and describes her lingerie hanging from her balcony:

The typist home at teatime, clears her breakfast, lights
Her stove, and lays out food in tins.
Out of the window perilously spread
Her drying combinations touched by the sun's last rays,
On the divan are piled (at night her bed)
Stockings, slippers, camisoles, and stays.
I Tiresias, old man with wrinkled dugs
Perceived the scene, and foretold the rest—

(Eliot, *The Waste Land* 63; 3.222-229)

Tiresias uses his prophetic vision not to reveal a truth about Oedipus's prophecy, but the lingerie of a typist woman. The predictions of the future based on the prophecies of Tiresias are replaced with tarot cards drawn by Madame Sosostris which suggest a forged future for the persona, instead of the revelation of true knowledge. The persona then gives an account of a horror in the typist's life; she expects a guest, probably a lover, but their encounter is not a pleasant one and results in Tiresias describing an apathetic fornication scene. Emotionless like the people crossing the bridge, the typist too becomes one of the people who has lost her soul and crossed over to the land of the dead Tiresias describes. The depiction of the city as a hellish place is thus achieved by not only by the visual descriptions of the city and its landmarks but also the use of a walking persona who overhears conversations filled with despair and witnesses horrific scenes. In other words, the poem may be regarded as an account of the simultaneous cries of anguish from the people living in the metropolis.

Morrison pp. 36; Green Kaiser pp. 84.

²⁹ The following titles argue that Tiresias is the central persona: Sultan pp. 182; J. E. Miller pp. 99; McLuhan (1979)

Although London is presented in the poem as a city on the brink of destruction, there are still treasures hidden in the city. Like Irving's "Little Britain" discussed in Chapter One, in which Irving's narrator claimed the heart of the city to contain mysterious valuable architectural features, London is described in the following lines as a desolate place, yet with a glimpse of hope that still lingers in the city:

"This music crept by me upon the waters"
And along the Strand, up Queen Victoria Street.
O City city, I can sometimes hear
Beside a public bar in Lower Thames Street,
The pleasant whining of a *_choes_e*
And a clatter and a chatter from within
Where fishmen lounge at noon: *where the walls
Of Magnus Martyr hold
Inexplicable splendour of Ionian white and gold.*

(Eliot, *The Waste Land* 64; 3.257-265; emphasis added)

Unlike the beginning of "The Fire Sermon" in which the city was abandoned by nymphs, in this part of the poem the streets are portrayed to be teeming with people, filled with music, and St Magnus the Martyr Church glowing white and gold, which evokes an impression of celestial beauty serendipitously appearing in front of the persona. The bar flowing with the joyous chatter of the people also arouses a sense of attraction to the city, as if one encounters a gem inside a heap of waste. This glimpse of hope as depicted by the people, music, and architecture of the city make up a pleasant image of the city; however, this is immediately contrasted in the poem with an image of the river soiled with waste,

The river sweats
Oil and tar
The barges drift
With the turning tide (Eliot, *The Waste Land* 65; 3.266-269)

The river Thames, contaminated with oil and tar, welcomes imperial ships with "red sails" arriving from the colonies to Greenwich (Eliot, *The Waste Land* 65; 3.270). This image of London as the centre of industrialism as well as of the British Empire is invoked in these lines. Moreover, it is also implied that the city gains its strength from these ships since the city celebrates their arrival by the ringing of bells. Furthermore, the "White towers" at the end of this scene may be read as the

accumulation of the preceding lines; that is, the white towers in London may be built by the exploitations of the British Empire across the globe, as indicated by the oil and tar in the river and the red sails on the horizon. Thus, the development of the city is dependent upon the Empire's imperial dominance in the world (Eliot, *The Waste Land* 65; 3.270, 287-289). As Joshua Esty points out, especially later in his career, Eliot would play a significant role in reshaping this Imperial identity for the nation (Esty 39-40). These depictions of the city construct an image of London at its darkest moment that surpasses the depictions of the city filled with sin encountered in the nineteenth century city poems. However, this darkest moment of the city is not an end, rather it suggests the urgent need for a reconstruction. In order to illustrate this need for change, Eliot presents the image of an arid land being destroyed with rain and thunderstorms. That is to say, the cycle of draught giving way to rainwater, which represents death and life respectively, is broken as Eliot describes water to be equally destructive in the poem. To illustrate, while the Phoenician sailor dies from drowning in "Death by Water," in "What the Thunder Said" life leaves its place to death and rain provides no consolation to the arid land: "He who was living is now dead / We who were living are now dying / With a little patience" (Eliot, *The Waste Land* 68; 5.328-330). Although the persona desires "a new start" in life, it is too late, and life has no meaning he "can connect / Nothing with nothing" in a world that does not make any meaning (Eliot, *The Waste Land* 65-66; 3.298-306). Life has no meaning anymore for the persona, and he, like Sibyl, and like the city, craves to die:

Burning burning burning burning
O Lord Thou pluckest me out
O Lord Thou pluckest

burning (Eliot, *The Waste Land* 66; 3.308-310)

The image of fire and burning is reminiscent of John Dryden's *Annus Mirabilis*, in which London destroyed by the Great Fire is likened to a phoenix that will be reborn from its ashes. Both the draught and water images suggest destruction in the poem, whereas images of fire, especially in the last section of the poem, indicate that burning will result in regeneration. It is notable that the children's song "London

Bridge” (also known by the title “My Fair Lady”) is in the background³⁰: “Shall I at least set my lands in order? / London Bridge is falling down falling down falling down” (Eliot, *The Waste Land* 71; 5.425-426). The children’s song is about the destruction and rebuilding of London Bridge. These references imply that London, in *The Waste Land* will also be rebuilt out of its ruins.

By evoking former texts about the city and presenting them in a new context, it may be argued that Eliot re-imagines the traditional representations of London and places them as ghost-like figures lurking in the city. In other words, he carefully selects these representations to accompany his representation of the city in order to demonstrate that the city is made up of people and buildings, as well as the literary representations of the past, appearing as ghosts that haunt people:

Who is the third who walks always beside you?
When I count, there are only you and I together
But when I look ahead up the white road
There is always another one walking beside you
Gliding wrapt in a brown mantle, hooded
I do not know whether a man or a woman
—But who is that on the other side of you?

(Eliot, *The Waste Land* 69; 5.360-366)

It can be inferred that the third, ghostlike figure described by the persona is the embodiment of the earlier representations of the city that follows the people who walk in the city. These representations haunt the persona as he walks in the city and affects his judgment of the city. The persona’s experience of the city is mixed with the ghost-like representations and consequently his view of the city is blended with the earlier representations of the city and contributes to his overall perception of the city.

In the light of these representations, it may be argued that while London becomes a mythical, unreal city “over the mountains” it is a decaying one (Eliot, *The Waste Land* 69; 5.371). Just like any other capital of a long lost civilization, London is bound to be destroyed and perish into its fragments. Eliot refers to these

³⁰ As Brian Cookson argues in *Crossing the River: The History of London’s Thames River Bridges from Richmond to the Tower* (2006), the song dates back to the Norman reign, however, Eliot makes use of the seventeenth century version of the song which appeared during the seventeenth century after the Great Fire. It is the seventeenth century version of the song in which the lines “London Bridge is falling down falling down falling down” appeared for the first time (Cookson 268).

civilizations as “Falling towers” which builds upon his idea of the fall of civilization represented by the architectural structure of the tower image being destroyed. As mentioned earlier, *The Waste Land* does not only limit itself to London as its setting, it also refers to various places around the world. Most of these locations are not described in the poem in detail, rather, they are identified when their names are mentioned in the poem. The listing of these cities may be regarded as a historical record of great civilizations that are either destroyed, or are in decline:

Falling towers
 Jerusalem Athens Alexandria
 Vienna London
 Unreal (Eliot, *The Waste Land* 69; 5.373-376)

The juxtaposition of other destroyed cities and of London brings to mind the earlier representations of London in which the city was compared to other capitals of great civilizations³¹. In these past representations, London was likened to great cities such as Rome, Troy, and Paris and was foreseen to surpass their glory and become a greater and more powerful city, whereas in *The Waste Land*, the list of these cities suggests the idea that London and the British Empire are bound for ruin, just like these cities and the civilizations they represent. Eliot’s contemporary James Joyce in *Ulysses* referred likewise to places like Sodom, Gomorrah, and Edom, suggesting the idea that the image of a fallen city could be used metaphorically to refer to the decline of culture (Ricks and McCue 602; Joyce e.4). Moreover, it may be argued that the listing of these once glorious cities makes the setting of the poem indirectly about all great cities of the world. Eliot’s poem is at first ambiguous in its setting; even though the poem’s setting seems to be predominantly London, there are references to other places and cities, including literary representations of various places. While most of the references are to specific locations in London, there are references to other places around the world, suggesting either an attempt to locate London not only as the capital of a nation but also as a great metropolis for the world; or an attempt to create a universal metaphorical city that would serve as a model for any nation’s capital. It is only by these references to names of places or structures in the city that one is able to determine the setting of the poem. Except for

³¹ Such examples include Dante Gabriel Rossetti’s “Tiber, Nile, and Thames,” Pound’s “Rome,” Dryden’s *Annus Mirabilis* and “London thou art of townes A per se” all of which compare London with other great cities.

these names mentioned, the setting can be any city through which a river flows. Eliot's assertion on his influence from landscapes in his essay³² previously discussed may be a reason for the ambiguity of the location in *The Waste Land*. Therefore, it can be argued that Eliot's composite cities are incorporated in the poem to establish a vast metropolis and to construct a new understanding of London as city in decay. This underscores that his influence from the urban landscape is a blending of various cities he had lived in his life. Additionally, one may point out that Eliot was not only influenced from the places he had lived in but also from the cities he had read about. Thus in *The Waste Land*, he constructs an ambiguous city which is a combination of various locations and the persona he devises tries to "organize" them in his mind: "I sat upon the shore / Fishing, with the arid plain behind me / Shall I at least set my lands in order?" (Eliot, *The Waste Land* 71; 5.423-425). The persona tries to make meaning out of the places in his life as a means of establishing a sense of belonging. In other words, by putting his lands into order, the persona tries to reconstruct the connection that was lost between the land and man as a result of urbanization. Hence, there are ambiguous references to names of places without further explanation, most of which point out that the setting is London. One can deduce that Eliot's intention in blurring the setting of the poem was an attempt to globalise the idea of a culture in decay. That is to say, by implying that the poem is not strictly about London, the great metropolis in decay is an image of not only the British culture that is suffering but culture from a global perspective.

As argued earlier in the present chapter, in *The Waste Land* Eliot does not view the decay of a culture as an apocalyptic ending; rather, he points out its necessity for a culture to reinvent itself. As the persona collects fragments or "specimens" of culture, he slowly disintegrates in the poem; he is "jaded" in Highbury, "unnerved" in Richmond and Kew, his feet are left in Moorgate, stepping on his heart (Eliot, *The Waste Land* 65-66; 3.293-305). The fragmentation of the persona is complemented with the references to lines from other texts. The allusions to texts in other languages in the poem further emphasise the idea of a fragmented, cosmopolitan vision of the city as the persona shifts from one text to another, and hears conversations held in various languages. In addition to the fragments of

³² See Eliot, "Influence" par.3-4

conversations he hears, the persona remembers various classical texts which he invokes in the poem. Moreover, the use of languages other than English may be regarded as a foregrounding of London as a cosmopolitan city that encompasses specimens of cultures from around the world. Thus one may suggest that the city appears in its present condition as a place of ruins out of which culture needs to be reconstructed from its fragments. In other words, Eliot was asserting his solution for a decayed culture. To this end, in his opinion, for culture to survive, texts should be re-evaluated and be carefully selected and reconstructed out of these ruins. Thus, like Dryden's London which will be rebuilt after the Great Fire, Eliot's London, and hence British culture and literature, will be reconstructed by a careful selection and re-evaluation of classical texts. Eliot's search for innovation from the remains of a ruined culture is reminiscent of the myth of the waste land. According to Weston, the draught which was the destructive force for the land is followed by the freeing of the waters, which restores the land to fertility. The images of fire ("The Fire Sermon") and of water ("What the Thunder Said") in *The Waste Land* similarly follow the infertile land suffering from drought. Although the image of the fire seems also damaging, as pointed out earlier, it is also reminiscent of Dryden's city emerging from the ashes like a phoenix, which may be regarded as a restorative force. Similarly, the freeing of waters was a regenerative force in the Grail Myth, which to a certain extent is used in *The Waste Land*. As such, what seems to be a destructive force, the flood, the lines from "What the Thunder Said" suggests that it will transform into an invigorating force in Eliot's poem as well: "In a flash of lightning. Then a damp gust / Bringing rain" (Eliot, *The Waste Land* 70; 5.393-394). This apocalyptic image of the flood is thus followed at the end of the poem with a partial restoration of the land:

Poi s'ascose nel foco che gli affina
 Quando fiam uti chelidon—O swallow swallow
 Le Prince d'Aquitaine à la tour abolie
 These fragments I have shored against my ruins
 Why then Ile fit you. Hieronymo's mad againe.
 Datta. Dayadhvam. Damyata.
 Shantih shantih shantih

(Eliot, *The Waste Land* 71; 5.427-433)

The final lines of the poem suggest that fire is the precursor of the end of the life of the city and a new beginning not only for the persona, but also for the city, which metaphorically implies the reconstruction or a re-evaluation of culture. Additionally, the knight's search for the right question which will restore the land in the Grail myth may be regarded as similar to Eliot's search for meaning. Thus, at the end of the poem when Eliot gathers ruins against the shores, and the mantra "Shantih Shantih Shantih" is uttered, the land is partially restored, hence symbolically the construction of a new poetics for poetry restores language out of the old fragments. Therefore, by using the myth of the waste land and adopting it to the urban image to convey a new poetic tradition for the new century Eliot is able to accommodate the old and new together in his new poetics. The fragments the persona gathers may be regarded as an attempt to construct a new city, and not a lament for the destroyed city. Therefore, the ending of the poem with the peaceful mantra "Shantih, shantih, shantih" suggests that the apocalyptic vision of the destroyed city is in fact, unlike Thomson's *City of Dreadful Night*, not an infernal depiction, but a peaceful way of coming to terms with the end of an era. In Thomson's poem the persona is not admitted to the heart of the city, which is a place suitable only for apparitions, "The City rests for man so weird and awful, / That his intrusion there might see unlawful, / And phantoms there may have their proper home" (Thomson 8.19-21). Unlike Thomson's poem, Eliot illustrates in *The Waste Land* a persona who is able to enter into the city centre in which he collects pieces from the city, symbolically preserving the specimens of a culture. The apocalyptic, decayed city is destroyed and the fragments of the best and indestructible pieces of it remain, which will be used to create a new one. As Eliot notes in his essay "Dante," English poets initially had "a prejudice against beatitude as material for poetry," which, he declared, resulted in poets overlooking the fact that the "sweetest songs" in English verse were "those which sing of the saddest thought" (Eliot, "Dante" 225). In the light of his words, it may be argued that Eliot alluded to earlier texts in which beatitude was present and reorganised them to present it as a new field for the future of poets as suggested by the hopeful future expressed in the poem.

At the end of the poem, by gathering "shored" fragments of the city and "ruins" of memory, the persona is not mourning for the lost city, but in fact laying a

foundation for the construction of a new city from what remains of the celestial city. In other words, in the final lines Eliot promises a new beginning out of old fragments. To this end, the poem may be regarded as an act of establishing a new movement by destroying the concrete tradition as portrayed by the image of a city in ruins. Thus, the persona in the poem walks to gather the specimens of the city and finds the images of beatitude in the city to reuse them. It can thus be concluded that the poem becomes a means of tracing the process of giving birth to a new movement, the unpoetic city forces inspiration out of the persona. Like Eliot's statements on making new verse out of the old in "Tradition and the Individual Talent," the old city became the generative force to build upon with new things. This image of the city in his later poems is replaced with an altogether infernal city of sin.

Between *The Waste Land* (1922) and *Four Quartets* (1943), Eliot's "Choruses" from *The Rock* (1934), a part of his pageant play, bears traces of his changed vision of London after his conversion to Anglicanism. Accordingly, in the "Choruses" the vision of the celestial Biblical city is contrasted with the portrayal of London as an infernal city in the poem which is described from the eyes of a

_choes_er:

I journeyed to London, to the timekept City,
Where the River flows, with foreign flotations.
There I was told: we have too many churches,
And too few chop-houses. There I was told:
Let the vicars retire. Men do not need the Church
In the place where they work, but where they spend their Sundays.
(Eliot, "Choruses" 153; 1.19-24)

The persona describes the City as a static, "timekept" place that resists deterioration. The word "timekept" also suggests that this is a place where time is controlled, as well as being a time capsule, or an archive of history. The city contains the history of civilization, it is an archive that encapsulates a moment in history. In addition, the city, in the poem, is a place where foreign innovators and entrepreneurs gather which suggests the setting to be a cosmopolitan metropolis, where the foreign artists and writers contribute to the culture of the city. However, when the traveller arrives in the City, he is told by its citizens that the churches will soon be demolished, and the image of the "timekept" City is distorted for the traveller. This mention of the urban

development in the city disturbs the persona who becomes the mouthpiece for the people who are discontent with this change, including Eliot himself. In his essays “Lancelot Andrewes” and “London Letter: May 1921,” he revealed his discontent with the decision of the demolition of nineteen churches in the City: “[...] there are those for whom the City churches are as precious as any of the four hundred odd churches in Rome which are in no danger of demolition, and for whom St. Paul’s, in comparison to St. Peter’s, is not lacking in decency [...]” and claimed that the churches “give to the business quarter of London a beauty which its hideous banks and commercial houses have not quite defaced” (Eliot, “Lancelot Andrewes” 300 and “London Letter: May, 1921” 345). Due to the demolition of the churches, he associated the new image of the city to be filled with sin and in the poem, the religious struggle of evil and good are implemented in the poem through the image of the city:

The Word of the Lord came unto me, saying:
 O miserable cities of designing men,
 O wretched generation of enlightened men,
 Betrayed in the mazes of your ingenuities,
 Sold by the proceeds of your paper inventions:

(Eliot, “Choruses” 161; 3.1-5)

God addresses human beings and reproaches their sinful acts by calling them deceitful men who have built “miserable” cities and betrayed him in the “mazes” of the city and accuses them of refusing to build churches (Eliot, “Choruses” 161; 3.4-5, 18-19). Here, Eliot uses the city image as an indicator of a civilization infested with sins and this heresy is described as a city filled with sin. In the poem, god’s punishment is feared by the anonymous male voices who plead to god so that London does not share the same fate with demolished cities like Babylon, Sodom, and Gomorrah:

A Cry from the East:
 “What shall be done to the shore of smoky ships?
 Will you leave my people forgetful and forgotten
 To idleness, labour, and delirious stupor?”

(Eliot, “Choruses” 161; 3.20-23)

The first voice, asks god about the people working in the East of the city which is the entrance of the imperial port in the Thames that receives merchandise from the

imperial world. These lines are significant in the sense that Eliot links the destruction of the Biblical city with the urban developments in London which also suggests the fall of the British Empire. It is not only the East, but the rest of London suffering from the loss of faith and the threat of destruction:

A cry from the North, from the West and from the South
Whence thousands travel daily to the timekept City;
...
And the wind shall say: 'Here were decent godless people:
Their only monument the asphalt road
And a thousand lost golf balls.'

(Eliot, "Choruses" 162; 3.28-29, 34-36)

It may be argued that the people who "travel daily" into the city, the citizens, represent different groups of people in the nation who have all lost their faith. This departure from the road of religion, as stated in the poem, is contrasted to "asphalt roads" (Eliot, "Choruses" 162; 3.35). What remains of the people in London will not be the architectural landmarks of culture such as churches, but asphalt roads that clearly do not carry any in-depth significance. Eliot, after converting to Anglicanism, seems to have replaced his belief in a renewal and re-evaluation of culture with a return to religion which he believed would influence culture as he saw religion encompassing culture (Eliot, "Thoughts After Lambeth" 342). Hence, Eliot's use of the city in these "Choruses" from *The Rock* suggests that the urban imagery used in the poem functions as a critique of the hollowing of culture, and the loss of faith, and contrasts London as an infernal city to the celestial city. In this new infernal London, the citizens are contrasted to the travellers. This use of the traveller and citizens implies the image of the Second Coming when Jesus enters the sinful city disguised as a traveller and asks people to account for their sins:

When the Stranger says: 'What is the meaning of this city?
Do you huddle close together because you love each other?'
What will you answer?: 'We all dwell together
To make money from each other'? or 'This is a community'?
And the Stranger will depart and return to the desert.

(Eliot, "Choruses" 162; 3.52-56)

However, instead of asking about their sins, the Stranger asks about the meaning of the city. This emphasis on the meaning of the city illustrates to a certain extent, Eliot's argument of religion as a redeeming force for the renewal of culture.

Therefore, it can be deduced that London, therefore, remains to be a city infested with sin, as in the case of *The Waste Land*. In contrast to *The Waste Land*, the city, this time, bears no hope for the future as there are no ruins to be gathered. From the poem it can be deduced that Eliot believed that the city and its citizens would be forsaken if the Second Coming did take place in London. In the next chorus, he alludes to Nehemiah the prophet who grieves for the fallen city Jerusalem, and is given the permission to rebuild the city:

And he grieved for the broken city, Jerusalem;
And the King gave him leave to depart
That he might rebuild the city.

...

There were enemies without to destroy him,
And spies and self-seekers within,
When he and his men laid their hands to rebuilding the wall.
So they built as men must build
With the sword in one hand and the trowel in the other.

(Eliot, "Choruses" 164; 4.7-9, 16-19)

The example of Nehemiah may be regarded as a contrast to the demolishing of churches in London; as the new foundations for the construction of the celestial New Jerusalem are laid, the churches in London are destroyed which represents the loss of faith. As a solution, Eliot urges creation as a form of resistance to the demolition of the city:

The soul of Man must quicken to creation.
Out of the formless stone, when the artist unites himself with stone,
Spring always forms new life, from the soul of man that is joined
to the soul of stone;
Out of the meaningless practical shapes of all that is living or
lifeless
Joined with the artist's eye, new life, new form, new colour.
Out of the sea of sound the life of music,
Out of the slimy mud of words, out of the sleet and hail of verbal
imprecisions,
Approximate thoughts and feelings, words that have taken
the place of thoughts and feelings,
There spring the perfect order of speech and the beauty of
incantation. (Eliot, "Choruses" 173-174; 9.16-24)

One may infer that Eliot makes use of the architectural material, stone, to suggest a rebuilding of language and consequently of civilization. Pound's and Eliot's dictums of modernism, "make it new," or "a time to murder and create" ("Canto 53" 265;

Eliot, “Prufrock” 6; 28), are reiterated in the choruses discussed above, to demonstrate the ways that the metaphorical city may represent the crumbling civilization and suggests that it may be rebuilt through the re-evaluation of poetic expression. The pageant play of Eliot that draws an apocalyptic vision of London thus ends with hopes of the sinful city emerging out of its ashes as a celestial city that will shed light to the surrounding darkness.

In *Four Quartets* (1943), Eliot’s composite cities are used to explore notions of loss and alienation. The idea of a “timekept City” described in the “Choruses from *The Rock*” are reiterated in an image of London that encompasses in its future elements of the past and present in “Burnt Norton” (Eliot, *Four Quartets* 179; 1.1.1-5). Eliot describes London as a grim, shadowy, and unfriendly place in which the persona feels estranged from his environment: “Here is a place of disaffection / Time before and time after / In a dim light: ...” (Eliot, *FQ* 182; 1.3.1-3). In the poem, Eliot refers not only to various districts, streets, and buildings as in earlier poems, but also introduces another urban feature, the Underground. The portrayal of London as a place where no daylight enters is described as an infernal place through the use of the Underground station and the suburban districts, inhabited by souls “eructing” into the sky:

Eructation of unhealthy souls
 Into the faded air, the torpid
 Driven on the wind that sweeps the gloomy hills of London,
 Hampstead and Clerkenwell, Campden and Putney,
 Highgate, Primrose, and Ludgate. Not here
 Not here the darkness, in this twittering world.

(Eliot, *FQ* 182; 1.3.3.19-24)

These London districts refer to the railway stations that were still running at the time the poem was composed, as noted by critics, these stations convey an alternative view of the metropolis, that of the underground³³. Hugh Kenner remarks that Eliot confessed to his brother in a letter that the section of the poem was a reference to Gloucester Road Station with its spiral staircases, which Eliot occasionally took when commuting to Russel Square (Ricks and McCue 917). Another influence on the

³³ Several of these remarks on the use of the London underground stations in *Four Quartets* is made by Blanton pp.38; also David Ashford in *London Underground: A Cultural Geography* (2013) notes that Hugh Kenner points out in *The Mechanic Muse* that the tube station becomes a metaphor for the descent into the underworld for T.S. Eliot (84).

names of these districts in “Burnt Norton,” arguably, may be allusions to Sherlock Holmes stories, some of which take place in the same locations. As M. C. Bradbrook states in his essay “Kensington Quartets,³⁴” the poem, in its depictions of desolate souls inhabiting the city, resembles a hellish scene, evoking Dante’s *Inferno* (Bradbrook 143). Moreover, he claims that in 1939 particularly, a few years after the poem was composed, the “eerie darkness of railway stations, streets and ports” were common depictions of these locations due to the increasing hostility between citizens in the beginning of the Second World War (Bradbrook 146). Thus, it can be deduced that the infernal London Eliot describes is not only a metaphor for a religious nightmare, but also a realistic portrayal which derived its material from the dark, grim impressions he had of the city. Apart from the references to the *Inferno*, the poem also revisits Blake’s *Jerusalem*:

Highgate’s heights & Hampstead’s, to Poplar, Hackney & Bow;
 To Islington & Paddington & the Brook of Albion’s River.
 We builded Jerusalem as a City & a Temple; from Lambeth
 We began our Foundations; lovely Lambeth, O lovely Hills
 Of Camberwell, we shall behold you no more in glory & pride,
 For Jerusalem lies in ruins & the Furnaces of Los are builded there:

...

I see London blind & age bent begging thro’ the Streets
 Of Babylon, led by a child, his tears run down his beard.
 The voice of Wandering Reuben _choes from street to street,
 In all the Cities of the Nations, Paris, Madrid, Amsterdam.

(Blake, “Jerusalem” 323-324; Plate 83)

Eliot’s lines in “Burnt Norton” follow a similar order of districts in Blake’s poem, only to replace them with underground stations, and evokes the image of a city in ruins by further illustrating the suffering souls in the city. According to Giles Gunn, Eliot’s poetry may be divided into three categories in terms of his use of landscapes in his poetry; the early years he depicted it as an infernal place, in his middle years, marked by publications after *The Waste Land*, depicted it as purgatory, and in his later career, marked by the publication of *Four Quartets* he chose to use it as a symbol (Gunn 320-321). In the second poem in *Four Quartets*, the representation of the city focuses on the images of construction and deconstruction in the urban

³⁴ The allusion to Dante pointed out in Bradbrook pp. 155.

geography. This demonstrates one of the essential elements of modernism for Eliot; the idea of deconstructing and reconstructing language.

Additionally, in “East Coker” Eliot demonstrates the inevitability of innovation in poetry by making use of the city image and urban development. To this end, a city being demolished only to be rebuilt from the rubbles remaining from the previous city may be regarded as a metaphor for the poet’s collection of specimens from poetry which make up tradition, only to be used and re-evaluated to innovate poetry by making use of earlier verse. Like that of houses that are built, demolished and rebuilt, tradition undergoes revisions in time. As Eliot states in the poem, “[...] there is a time for building” but also “a time for the wind to break the loosened pane” (Eliot, *FQ* 185; 2.1.9-11). Like that of the house that requires building, the establishing of tradition, there is also a time when it needs to be repositioned in order to make room for innovation, and get rid of the “loosened pane.” Tradition, represented by the old stone, old timber, and old fire in the poem becomes the raw material needed to establish new poetry. Thus innovation for Eliot does not mean a break from the past but a reinterpretation of it:

... In succession
 Houses rise and fall, crumble, are extended,
 Are removed, destroyed, restored, or in their place
 Is an open field, or a factory, or a by-pass.
 Old stone to new building, old timber to new fires,
 Old fires to ashes, and ashes to the earth
 ...
 Houses live and die: there is a time for building
 And a time for living and for generation
 And a time for the wind to break the loosened pane
 And to shake the wainscot where the field mouse trots
 And to shake the tattered arras woven with a silent motto.
(Eliot, *FQ* 185; 2.1.1-6, 9-13)

As suggested in the lines above, Eliot argued that the conventional way of writing poetry needed to be changed like the urban developments described in the poem. Although he valued tradition and informed his reader in his essays on the significance of tradition, he also noted its inadequacy in depicting the world he and his contemporaries lived in. Thus he stated in “East Coker,” that language was “not very satisfactory” and the way in which poems were written were oblique and “worn-

out,” forcing the poet with an “intolerable wrestle / With words and meanings” (Eliot, *FQ* 185; 2.1.18-21). As Eliot maintained, language was unable to keep up with the changes in the contemporary world; just like the houses that needed to be demolished and made anew as a means of progress, the way in which poetry was written needed to be changed. Moreover, as he remarked in the lines that follow, this attempt was an ongoing task for the life of the poet; he needed develop himself throughout his career:

*So here I am, in the middle way, having had twenty years—
Twenty years largely wasted, the years of l'entre deux guerres
Trying to learn to use words, and every attempt
Is a wholly new start, and a different kind of failure
Because one has only learnt to get the better of words
For the thing one no longer has to say, or the way in which
One is no longer disposed to say it. And so each venture
Is a new beginning, a raid on the inarticulate
With shabby equipment always deteriorating
In the general mess of imprecision of feeling,
Undisciplined squads of emotion. ...*

...
There is only the fight to recover what has been lost
And found and lost again and again: and now, under conditions
That seem unpropitious. But perhaps neither gain nor loss.
For us, there is only the trying. The rest is not our business.

(Eliot, *FQ* 191; 2.5.1-11, 15-18; emphasis added)

One may argue that these lines demonstrate Eliot’s search for new ways of poetic expression, yet, in the poem, the search to describe his experience in an innovative fashion is in vain: although he finds the right way to say it, the feeling has already passed. Thus it can be inferred that the decadence of language causes the poet to be inarticulate. In a confessional manner, he seems to be revealing that the past twenty years of his life, spent in London between the two World Wars, has been “wasted” in an attempt to search for the right words to express past emotions. The life of the poet, he claims, is a constant struggle of experimenting with language, form, and content towards an exploration of finding new poetic expressions. This struggle, he concludes, has no winners, but produces craftsmen who contribute to the way in which Poetry is written.

As he articulates in “East Coker,” “Home is where one starts from,” and significantly enough, the following poem, “Dry Salvages,” is set in America. The

estrangement from language the poet feels in “East Coker” is followed by an exploration of physical estrangement in “Dry Salvages” in which Eliot returns to describe the loss of an American landscape. The poem may be regarded as Eliot’s coming to terms with his American identity and landscape which he condemned earlier in his essay “Hawthorne” discussed in the beginning of the chapter. The concept of home, for Eliot, seems to create in the poet’s mind a sense of belonging in order not to feel entirely alienated from the world. It can be argued that spending a long time away from one’s homeland or frequently changing locations, both applicable to Eliot and Pound, may have created in the poets a sense of non-belonging; and the only way to re-imagine the stability of “feeling at home” was by the use of these images of home that would shelter them from going astray.

Home is where one starts from. As we grow older
The world becomes stranger, the pattern more complicated
Of dead and living. Not the intense moment
Isolated, with no before and after,
But a lifetime burning in every moment
And not the lifetime of one man only
But of old stones that cannot be deciphered.

(Eliot, *FQ* 185; 2.5.19-25)

Like the longing for a place to call “home” in a world where one feels a “stranger,” one may infer that for a lifetime the poet feels alienated from his surroundings which he tries to describe. However, unable to articulate them, he feels that he is constantly “burning” with the urge to “decipher” the past to understand his present environs, and is in the need of re-exploring and innovating language, which becomes a life-long task, so that he can create a world that can be meaningful, a “home” that he can return to.

The individual poems in *Four Quartets* all refer to particular locations like Eliot’s *Landscapes* series. “Dry Salvages” refers to a well-known cluster of rocks near the coast of Cape Ann, Massachusetts, where the poem is set (Ricks and McCue 959). In the poem, Eliot contrasts the pastoral landscape with that of an urban setting. The river is described as “a strange brown god” who is regarded as an obstacle, a “frontier” to be passed by “worshippers of the machine:”

I do not know much about gods; but I think that the river
Is a strong brown god—sullen, untamed and intractable,

Patient to some degree, at first recognised as a frontier;
Useful, untrustworthy, as a conveyor of commerce;
Then only a problem confronting the builder of bridges.

(Eliot, *FQ* 193; 3.1.1-5)

The river may be regarded as an allusion to either the Mississippi or the Missouri (rivers that are frequently described as muddy in Twain's *Huckleberry Finn* and Langston Hughes's "The Negro Speaks of Rivers") (Ricks and McCue 963). It is part of a land to be conquered, a place to build over with bridges, yet, the "rage" and "destruction" of the river results in floods overtaking the landscape to "remind" men of its power (Ricks and McCue 963):

The problem once solved, the brown god is almost forgotten
By the dwellers in cities—ever, however, implacable.
Keeping his seasons and rages, destroyer, reminder
Of what men choose to forget. Unhonoured, unpropitiated
By worshippers of the machine, but waiting, watching and waiting.

(Eliot, *FQ* 193; 3.1.6-10)

The threat and eternal power of nature, iterated as "godlike," is presented as the antagonistic force that threatens the man-made structure, here the city, which may be argued to be a symbol for civilization. Similar to the images in *The Waste Land*, nature is a threat to the civilization, but this destruction is caused by man's ignorance of nature's powers.

In the final poem of *Four Quartets*, "Little Gidding," the poet returns to a distant village in England that gives the poem its title. Little Gidding, Huntingdonshire is a place where a religious community of composers lived and wrote religious harmonies (Ricks and McCue 989). As in the case with earlier poems, Eliot describes this village as a place where time has "suspended" life "Between melting" and freezing," suggesting that the loss of faith has also affected this religious community (Eliot, *FQ* 201; 4.1.11). This is, like the rest of England and rest of the world, a place where "sense" and "notion" are abandoned which constructs an apocalyptic vision of the world:

There are other places
Which are also the world's end, some at the sea jaws,
Or over a dark lake, in a desert or a city –
But this is the nearest, in place and time,
Now and in England.

If you came this way,
 Taking any route, starting from anywhere,
 At any time or at any season,
 It would always be the same: you would have to put off
 Sense and notion. ... (Eliot, *FQ* 202; 4.1.35-44)

England is an infernal place where one needs to survive without sense or notion. It is also a timeless place where “never” and “always” meet (Eliot, *FQ* 202; 4.1.53). In the poem, Little Gidding the village which can be regarded as the synecdoche for England, is described as a land in which air, earth, water, and fire have expired, which conveys an image of a dead land, similar to *The Waste Land* (Eliot, *FQ* 202-203; 4.2.1-24). Moreover, invoking Thomson’s *City of Dreadful Night* where the speaker is accompanied by a guide in the infernal city who shows where Faith, Love, and Hope die (Thomson 2.12, 18, 24), and also Dante’s *Inferno*, by the use of an infernal vision, England is portrayed as the concrete example of these apocalyptic places. Here again, like Thomson’s and Dante’s poems, the speaker encounters the soul of a dead man “Over the asphalt” where there is “no other sound,” who is “blown towards” him in the “urban wind” (Eliot, *FQ* 203; 4.2.30-36). As the speaker is guided through the smoke-covered city, his chthonic guide, a “dead master,” advises him on the necessity of innovation and tradition and shares his knowledge with the speaker:

For last year’s words belong to last year’s language
 And next year’s words await another voice.
 ...
 Since our concern was speech, and speech impelled us
 To purify the dialect of the tribe
 And urge the mind to aftersight and foresight,
 Let me disclose the gifts reserved for age
 To set a crown upon your lifetime’s effort.
 (Eliot, *FQ* 204-205; 4.2.65-66, 73-77)

Walking in the city, for the poet-persona, becomes a prophetic journey after which he learns the secrets of the dead master who represents tradition, advises him to rid his diction of “cold friction of expiring sense,” the outmoded ways of description, “the conscious impotence of rage / At human folly, and the laceration / Of laughter at what ceases to amuse,” of faded emotions which do not express the emotions of his contemporaries, and of “the rending pain of re-enactment,” repetition and imitation of what has already been done (Eliot, *FQ* 205; 4.2.75-93). The nightmarish encounter

with the dead master and the prophetic advises he gives to the younger poet-persona marks the end of the tour in the infernal city; after daybreak the experience the young poet-persona gains echoes the characteristics of modernist poetry as advocated by Eliot. As illustrated in the preceding paragraphs, the figure of tradition, the dead master, influences the younger poet-persona, argued here to be Eliot himself who devises the characteristics of the new way of writing poetry in the early twentieth century:

Attachment to self and to things and to persons, detachment
 From self and from things and from persons; and, growing between
 them, indifference
 Which resembles the others as death resembles life,
 Being between two lives – unflowering, between
 The live and the dead nettle. This is the use of memory:
 For liberation – not less of love but expanding
 Of love beyond desire, and so liberation
 From the future as well as the past. ... (Eliot, *FQ* 205-206; 4.3.3-10)

Impersonal poetry, as Eliot argued in his essay “Tradition and the Individual Talent” is not a loss of personality, but the mastering of personality so as to detach the poet’s subjectivity from the poem meanwhile maintaining his authentic style in composing the poem (Eliot, “Tradition” 8). The lines quoted above illustrate the “attachment” the poet has to his emotions, ideas, to objects, and to people who are “detached” during the process of composing impersonal poetry. What might be seen as a complete loss of personality, “death,” in fact, is an “expanding” of “life” though the seeming “death” of his subjectivity in the poem. Apart from Eliot’s theory of the composition of impersonal poetry, other modernist elements concerning innovation in language are restated in the poem:

... And every phrase
 And sentence that is right (where every word is at home,
 Taking its place to support the others,
 The word *neither diffident nor ostentatious*,
 An easy *commerce of the old and new*,
 The common word *exact without vulgarity*,
 The formal word *precise but not pedantic*,
 The complete consort dancing together)
 Every phrase and every sentence is an end and a beginning,
 Every poem an epitaph. ...
 (Eliot, *FQ* 208; 4.5.3-12, emphasis added)

Accordingly, it is revealed in the lines that in Eliot's opinion, in order to innovate the way in which poetry was written in the twentieth century, poets needed to clear language of the elaborate, stereotyped phrases that hollowed and obscured the meaning of words. Moreover, language was to be "exact," "precise," by a blending of the old and the new phrases, avoiding any "vulgar" or "pedantic" statements (Eliot, *FQ* 208; 4.5.7-9). By doing so, Eliot believed that language could be renewed, which in turn, would change poetic expression. Using the image of a deadened town in "Little Gidding," and landscapes in general in *Four Quartets*, it may be argued that Eliot likened them to archives into which the persona delves and finds a master that teaches him of the past, and influences him to write of the present. Therefore, it may be argued that in *Four Quartets*, by making use of the image of cities, he illustrates the struggle of the modernist poets to revive literature through an innovation derived from the past. Like the houses being demolished and rebuilt in *Four Quartets*, he rebuilds a new poetics for the poets of the English language.

3.6 Unreal Fragments

Eliot in his poems makes use of elusive depictions of the architecture of the city. He alludes to earlier representations of London which appear in his poems in the form of fragments and renders them to construct an overall image of the city that would be the sum of all its previous representations. The allusions to these earlier representations enabled him to convey an image that contained not only the essence of the earlier representations that contained the inherent meanings of the city but also innovated them by incorporating his experience of the city. Thus Eliot's poems are embedded with portrayals of London by writers of earlier centuries and London's cultural artefacts which distinguish his representations of the city from that of other cities. By commenting on, comparing, and contrasting these representations with his own descriptions, his poems may be regarded as texts in which the change in the representations of the city may be traced. Consequently, these depictions are accumulated in a single poem and a new image out of all these "unreal" cities of modernity in the Western world is constructed.

The use of fragmented representations of the city in Eliot's poetry make up ambiguous fictional cities that can be considered to share some of the common

concerns of modernism; the decay of culture and the urge to renew it by making use of the essence of the past. As argued earlier in the present chapter, the fragmented city becomes a device in which the modernist elements could be conveyed to the reader.



CONCLUSION

The spatial turn in literary theory and criticism, as pointed out by critics including Massey, Coverley, and Tally was a re-evaluation of spatial phenomena, which included spaces as little as the space between lines of poetry and as large as the distance between nations across the globe, and a questioning of the role and limits of such phenomena. This reassessment has also provoked new methods of exploring the poetics of literary movements and the cultural environment of writers. For instance, in *A Transnational Poetics* (2009) Ramazani emphasized that modernist writers could not be categorised based on their nationalities as neither their lives nor their influences could accommodate such rigid limitations. Thus, this spatial awareness has enabled critics to treat literary movements such as modernism as transnational movements instead of containing them into nation-based classifications. In the light of these spatial approaches, the present study has analysed the representations of London in the poetry of Ezra Pound and T.S. Eliot to demonstrate the ways that they made use of the influence of the city was used by the poets as a scheme for modernist innovation in poetic language. As Monroe Spears observes, modernist writers believed that they were “witnessing the end of an era” which would end the influence of “Western civilization” in the world (Spears 72). Although he claims that this led them to portray a world on the brink of an apocalypse, he maintains their belief in the future of “man in society, the image of the City” (Spears 72).

As it has been revealed through the discussion of their essays and poems in the previous chapters, Pound and Eliot were convinced that the new century needed a new poetic language because their conviction was that poets who imitated the style of nineteenth-century writers were unable to reflect the emotions and experience of the twentieth century. Accordingly, they maintained that for the revival of literature and national culture, language needed to be modernised. Thus, they believed that by constructing a new poetics for poetry they would be able to register their responses to the changing world.

The essays and poems examined in the present study show that Pound’s and Eliot’s search for a new poetics for the new century led them to use the city as their

model for innovating language derived from conventions. Like the constant evolution of language, the city also continuously transformed through a process of demolition and reconstruction by means of urban development. Thus, the ever-changing city was the physical evidence of a changing society, their literary taste, and of their values. In other words, T.S. Eliot and Ezra Pound's poetry and essays have demonstrated the ways in which they made use of landscapes to infiltrate English literature with foreign influences. Hence, their blending of foreign and native literary influences which were rendered by the image of the city in their poems suggest that their claims of innovating poetic language was also motivated by an intention to re-establish the global influence and transnational significance of literature in English. As a cosmopolitan metropolis, London became their model which exemplified their claims on a transnational literary revolution since the city, like language, was a mixture of foreign and native influences. The search to find good examples of poetic expression from literary history led them to use representations of London and other urban representations by writers of the preceding centuries.

As demonstrated in the first chapter, the representations of London evolved with the advancement of the city's urban history. Accordingly, while the initial representations of the city portrayed a heavenly, celestial city which charmed people as the centre for social, economic, and political life; after the Restoration it became a place that embodied radical contrasts. While some writers continued to depict the city as a place that allured people in, others chose to describe it as the embodiment of the debased condition of the society. Especially after the Industrial Revolution, writers portrayed London as an infernal place that consumed the people who entered the city due to the desolate living conditions and poor infrastructure. Unlike Londoners, American writers who visited London in the nineteenth century depicted the city from a foreigner's perspective. Particularly Henry James addressed the discrepancies between the two nations by exploring issues of identity and sense of belonging in his portrayal of characters. In the twentieth century, modernist British novelists rendered the city as the embodiment of the waning power of the British Empire and depicted a cosmopolitan city by foregrounding the changing demographics and experience of the city in the new century. Each writer discussed in Chapter One introduced a new element to the meaning of the city which not only

showed the development of the city's representations and its meanings but also provided a foundation for the following chapters in which Pound and Eliot made use of these 'ruins' of literary representations from which they could reconstruct poetic language. Their search for a true image and clear expression of experience led them to deconstruct the depictions of the city, especially that of London which at the end of the nineteenth century had become the symbol of the British Empire and the centre of the English literary canon. By dissecting the representations of the city, they problematized its fixed position and incorporated a foreign perspective so as to include a cosmopolitan, transnational impression of the city that reflected the true experience of modernity.

The city, for Pound, initially is a utopia to be realised, but when in ruins, ultimately becomes a dystopia in reality. In other words, Pound sees the city in ruins as the physical evidence of the loss of an ideal. In contrast, Eliot from the beginning observes the city as a disastrous place. Although in *The Waste Land* he imagines the city in ruins to be suggestive of a new beginning, in his later poems he replaces this hopeful vision with an apocalypse. Pound's poetry reveals that he imagined a unified and complete city, the "City of Dioce," which later crumbles into fragments of different cities, whereas Eliot portrays fragments of different cities including London to establish between them the common ground that they are places of desolation and suggest that they are bound for destruction. Both poets' use of composite cities blend the representations of London with other cities to reposition London as a transnational metropolis. By the use of fragmented portrayals of London and references to other cities they problematized the settings for their poetry and demonstrated their efforts to imagine London as a cosmopolitan metropolis which embodies not only British culture but also other cultures. Consequently, their images of London may operate as a model to depict each and every city suffering from the consequences of modernity. Their representations of London illustrate the simultaneity of past and present by juxtaposing historical and modern images of the city. In addition to the depictions of other cities mentioned earlier, this temporal emphasis renders cities to be ever-changing and multifaceted places that share the same ending: like every city, London must also fall.

The representations of the city in the poetry of Pound and Eliot alluded to these earlier representations which resulted in the fragmented descriptions of the chaotic, transitory city. They used these representations to render their estrangement as foreign modernists and to emphasise their relationship to the tradition in English literature. They were foreigners in London and thus, they described the city from a threshold; their personae were neither completely integrated nor excluded from the city which differentiated their poems from the traditional representations of London in poetry written by Londoners.

One of the factors that affected these representations was the vantage point and characterization of the persona. To this end, a psychogeographical approach has been adopted in the study in order to explore the relationship between the landscape and individuals. As such, psychogeographer Merlin Coverley has stated that the impressions of the individual about the city, either first-hand or triggered by memory, also played a significant role in attaching new meanings to the city. Moreover, he claimed that the psychology of the individual also determined the ways in which the environment is perceived by the individual.

Accordingly, in various centuries, when poets depicted the city they have made use of different vantage points for their personae. While some portrayed the city from a panoramic perspective, others placed their personae in the streets of London. The characterization of the persona also played a significant role in the portrayal of the city as a celestial or infernal place. As such, poets either selected Londoners as their personae to depict the city as a source of inspiration, or illustrated the city through the eyes of a visitor who was shocked by the chaotic streets. The representation of the city also depended upon the position of the personae; whether walking or standing from a fixed point, the portrayal of such viewpoints have shown that there are a wide range of possibilities in depicting the city. In addition to this psychogeographical exploration of the persona and the city, the physical journey in the city also raised questions on the similarities between walking in the streets and imagining a journey in the city. Moreover, drawing a map of the city whether by walking or by meditation has been detected in the present study as one of the recognizable features of city poetry. Pound's and Eliot's personae and representations of London have demonstrated that they have similarly addressed

these issues mentioned above and have compounded these various representations and personae in their depictions of the city in the new century as a form of new poetic expression.

While both Pound and Eliot made use of numerous personae for the common purpose of rendering the true experience of the city, their characterization at times differ from each other. By either imitating other poets or by making up fictional ones, Pound made use of poet-personae, that is, personae who were poets, to draw a parallelism between the sense of alienation from the city and the disillusionment the poet experiences with language. He used such personae as mouthpieces for his intentions of innovating poetic expression. On the other hand, Eliot's personae were seldom poets, and did not draw such a clear comparison between the city and poetic expression through the use of personae. Hence, his poetry did not have as many didactic manifestations like that of the former's. Their experiments with the use of personae, as Michael Hamburger states, enabled them to use poetic expression to its utmost potential:

[...] with a freedom unprecedented either in the dramatic monologues of the late nineteenth century or in the twentieth-century adaptations of that mode, including those by Pound himself in his *Personae* proper. [...] In *The Waste Land* and the *Cantos*, on the other hand, Imagist technique – originally devised for the short poem only – was extended to the long poem. The personae, too, became multiple and fluid within a single poem, shifting and switching freely in time and space. (Hamburger 114-115)

Both poets, derive their personae from historical or fictional figures, or from people they have met personally. While the origins of their personae are similar in terms of source, Pound's personae in his poetry are a product of the blending of autobiographical incidents with that of fictional accounts especially in his *Cantos*. Conversely, Eliot's personae, though at times contain autobiographical memories, are distinctly fictional and impersonal. Kyung-Sim Chung in "Ezra Pound the Imagist: Major Source of T.S. Eliot's Early Poetics" claims that Eliot and Pound were challenging the "Victorian assumptions about the author's personality hidden behind the work" and thus, their personae in "The Love Song of J Alfred Prufrock" and *Hugh Selwyn Mauberley* were a direct response to the Victorian use of personae. By bringing "an immature speaker" to "let him speak of some topic grand like a

Hamlet theme or history” in their poems, they aimed to make him “hit the point” of “mocking irony” that foregrounded the poet and not the fictional speaker (Chung 8). In other words, their personae are, as Chung argues, are intentionally dropping the mask to show that the Victorian personae are nothing but illusions (Chung 8). Furthermore, though both poets addressed issues of non-belonging and registered the sense of alienation, like Henry James Pound chose personae who were foreigners to explore, the similarities and differences between English and American societies. Equally so, Eliot at times made use of personae who were strangers in the city, but he also characterised Londoners as his personae to describe the inner workings of the city. The wandering persona, then, is a crucial figure in Pound’s and Eliot’s representations of London since the experience of these poets was that of foreigners who felt alienated and excluded from the city they were describing.

By using an assortment of personae who walked in the city or imagined travelling in their memories of the city Pound and Eliot created a psychogeographical map of the city which rendered the image of not what the city is, but what it should be. For instance, Pound viewed the city as a vortex, a centre in which the best examples of art and thought was gathered and disseminated the greatest amount of influence. Like the ideogram Pound sought to implement into poetic expression, the city embodied cultural meanings to the utmost possible degree. As discussed earlier, their use of past representations of London portrayed a city in ruins and envisioned the destruction of the city to show that it could transform into more than what it was. These fragmented cities in other words, not only exhibited a sense of loss and alienation but at the same time showed the possibility of other voices existing through their use of personae.

Eliot’s poems foregrounded the architecture of the city by referring to renowned buildings or locations in the city for the readers to map out the city in their imagination. These references to the real city are blended in his poems with literary texts about the city to attach new meanings to it. Consequently, his representations portray the city as a deserted waste land that is bound for destruction.

Pound’s depictions of the city have shown that cities are not always portrayed by a description of physical features but the experience of the city could also be

conveyed by a spawning of memories with other people. This has demonstrated that one of the ways of attaching new meanings to a city is by narrating subjective experiences and juxtaposing them to the real city and its past representations. Accordingly, these personal impressions shaped the representations of the city and attached them positive or negative connotations.

Similarly, then, it may be drawn from Pound's and Eliot's essays and poems that any memory of any city could transgress borders of locality and find itself in a mixture of the representations of cities that engage with Pound's and Eliot's essays and poetry. As Ron Bush underlines in his essay, Eliot emphasised the significance of experience falling into obscurity and ambiguity through the filtration of memory, a process which Bush points out to be a part of modernist poetics (Bush 718). Therefore, in the light of Bush's argument, the most significant function of the representation of the city in their poetry was to incorporate the memory of the city into their poetry that would become a representation of their response to modernity, which was in fact a characteristic feature of much modernist poetry.

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