1995

Seen and Unseen Cities: Embodied Worlds in Epic and the Novel.

Eamon G. Halpin
Louisiana State University and Agricultural & Mechanical College

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.lsu.edu/gradschool_disstheses

Recommended Citation
https://digitalcommons.lsu.edu/gradschool_disstheses/5938

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by the Graduate School at LSU Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in LSU Historical Dissertations and Theses by an authorized administrator of LSU Digital Commons. For more information, please contact gradetd@lsu.edu.
INFORMATION TO USERS

This manuscript has been reproduced from the microfilm master. UMI films the text directly from the original or copy submitted. Thus, some thesis and dissertation copies are in typewriter face, while others may be from any type of computer printer.

The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted. Broken or indistinct print, colored or poor quality illustrations and photographs, print bleedthrough, substandard margins, and improper alignment can adversely affect reproduction.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send UMI a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if unauthorized copyright material had to be removed, a note will indicate the deletion.

Oversize materials (e.g., maps, drawings, charts) are reproduced by sectioning the original, beginning at the upper left-hand corner and continuing from left to right in equal sections with small overlaps. Each original is also photographed in one exposure and is included in reduced form at the back of the book.

Photographs included in the original manuscript have been reproduced xerographically in this copy. Higher quality 6" x 9" black and white photographic prints are available for any photographs or illustrations appearing in this copy for an additional charge. Contact UMI directly to order.
SEEN AND UNSEEN CITIES:  
EMBODIED WORLDS IN EPIC AND THE NOVEL

A Dissertation
Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the 
Louisiana State University and 
Agricultural and Mechanical College 
in partial fulfillment of the 
requirements for the degree of 
Doctor of Philosophy 
in 
The Department of English

by 
Eamon Halpin 
B.A., University College Dublin, 1987 
M.A., University College Dublin, 1988 
May 1995
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The completion of this dissertation would not have been possible without help from many quarters. My director, Professor Carl Freedman, has provided invaluable advice and considered my arguments with openness and generosity. Professors Bainard Cowan and Rick Moreland read portions of the dissertation and offered much needed guidance. The friendship and hospitality which they and their families have shown me over the years have been a blessing. Thanks are also due to Professors James Olney and Gale Carrithers for the encouragement which they have give me during my time at L.S.U. and to Professor Carolyn Jones for reading this dissertation.

My pursuit of this project has not been a solitary one. In fact, the camaraderie of my fellow students has been my most constant support. Special thanks are due to Paul Connell, Gregory Marks, Kathleen Kelly, Kristen Sifert, Beverly Arthur and Chris Kisling. They have provided me with food, drink, transport, books, conversation, advice, criticism and loyal friendship. They present yet another instance of the generosity with which Americans treat visitors to their country.
Finally, I owe an immeasurable debt to my parents, Eamonn and Margaret Halpin, for the unstinting support and love which they have always shown me.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACKNOWLEDGMENTS</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABSTRACT</td>
<td>v</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CHAPTER</strong>&lt;br/&gt;I</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II THE CITY AND EXILE&lt;br/&gt;Virgil's <em>Aeneid</em></td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III THE CITY AND FOOD&lt;br/&gt;Dostoevsky's <em>Crime and Punishment</em></td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV THE CITY AND KINSHIP&lt;br/&gt;Melville's <em>Pierre</em></td>
<td>159</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V THE CITY AND CLIMATE&lt;br/&gt;Faulkner's <em>Light in August</em></td>
<td>214</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WORKS CITED</td>
<td>243</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VITA</td>
<td>254</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ABSTRACT

By all accounts, the city has ceased to function as a cosmos, a coherent world which can offer meaning and validity to the lives of its inhabitants. If the ancient city presented the very image of order, the city since the advent of the Industrial Revolution has appeared to us as a jungle, a wilderness, a wasteland, an endless labyrinth—all images which suggest an essentially chaotic space, one which lacks any organizing principle or rationale. Moreover, if the city once offered the individual the greatest possible realization of his freedom, it now appears as the space in which he is most alienated, the space of a meaningless and unnoticed existence.

Perhaps paradoxically, the demise of the city as an ordered world has coincided with the birth of the field of urban studies. However, in their search to discern a rational law which governs the processes of city development, urban theorists—with their overwhelmingly empiricist assumptions—have tended to simply reinforce the impression of chaos. It is finally the novelist—with his focus on the invisible life of the city—who seeks out the essential meaning of the modern city.
Unlike the urban theorist, the novelist depicts the city not as a system which determines and delimits human existence but as a reality which is intimately bound up with human destiny itself. Feodor Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment*, Herman Melville's *Pierre* and William Faulkner's *Light in August* rediscover the city as the space of potentiality, as a dynamic reality which reflects the unfinalizability of human existence. Moreover, they show that the redemption of the modern individual lies not in his rejection of the city but in his reintegration with the human community that exists within it. In their themes and concerns, these novels find a paradigm in the *Aeneid*, Virgil's epic telling of the founding of Rome. Thus, they allow us to glimpse a continuity—which is typically unseen—between the ancient city and modern life.
I
INTRODUCTION

As an object of knowledge, the city has proven extraordinarily elusive. "No one seems to know what it really is," Marc Eli Blanchard suggests in the introduction to his book, *In Search of the City* (10). At least part of the difficulty stems from the apparently protean nature of the city itself. Even a cursory survey of its history reveals an immense diversity of social organization—from the imperial civilizations of the ancient Near East to the independent city states which emerged in Europe during the late Middle Ages to the vast industrial societies of our own age. But if there are many kinds of cities, the one constant which allows us to recognize each of them as distinctly urban is not immediately visible.

Perhaps the city has always been a mystery, extending beyond the full reach of the human intellect. However, only since the advent of the Industrial Age have we begun to sense with some anxiety that it is actually unknowable—and this despite an abundance of studies produced over the last century and a half. In fact, the growth of urban studies as a discipline parallels rather than alleviates our uncertainty about the nature of urban life. In his
prefatory remarks to Max Weber's pioneering work The City, Don Martindale complains that urban theorists have told us everything "except the informing principle that creates the city itself" (11). "One is reminded," he writes, "of Pirandello's piece Six Characters in Search of An Author. Everything is present except the one precise essential that gives life to the whole. When all is said and done the question remains, What is the city?" (11).

Most obviously, the confusion is an effect of the increased complexity of urban life itself. Cities, Richard Sennett suggests, underwent an unprecedented transformation at the hands of the Industrial Revolution:

They became immensely larger than anything known since the time of Rome, and their growth came not from within, through internal population change, but from without, as a result of agricultural changes that either encouraged or, in fewer cases, forced men of the countryside to move to town. This human migration, unsettling in itself, was conjoined to a new means of labor by which the experience of time, motion, and human relatedness became altered in men's lives. (3-4)

In fact, it was as a result of these changes that the field of urban studies emerged in the first place. Sennett notes that the city--while one of the oldest artifacts of human civilization--was not regarded as an object of study in its own right until the nineteenth century. It was taken by most thinkers "to be the mirror of a broader reality, more

1. Martindale's remarks include a useful survey and evaluation of the major schools of urban theory. Blanchard also has insightful comments about the sociological approach to the city in the introduction to his book.
appropriate as a focus of thought" (3). Only with the radical changes wrought on the urban environment by the Industrial Revolution was a different perspective deemed necessary. As Sennett puts it, the complexity of the new environment was "something to be explored as a problem of itself, something that could not be understood by the use of a few easy labels or categories" (4).

Underlying this evaluation is the assumption that the mode of understanding of earlier thinkers was not sufficiently rigorous for the purpose of investigating the complexities of the changed world. The new discipline would approach the city not as a vague image of some larger reality but as a strictly empirical phenomenon with its own laws which—like those of nature itself—could be observed with scientific objectivity.

As Eric Voegelin reminds us, however, to approach the human world is never to approach a world of raw fact: "man does not wait to have his life explained to him, and when the theorist approaches social reality he finds the field pre-empted by what may be called the self-interpretation of society" (New Science 27). Moreover, in the case of the cities of archaic culture, that self-interpretation is precisely the reverse of the empirical understanding which urban theory has tended to bring to the city.
Sacred and Profane Space

Archaic man, Mircea Eliade notes, built his cities according to celestial models. The Babylonian cities, for example, "had their archetypes in the constellations; Sippara in Cancer, Nineveh in Ursa Major, Assur in Arcturus, etc." (Cosmos 8). By repeating the archetype, the city is constituted as sacred space. It becomes something altogether other than the profane, manifesting the presence of a transcendent reality which is opposed to the empty homogeneity—the unreality—of profane space. For archaic man, in other words, the "participation by urban cultures in an archetypal model is what gives them their reality and their validity" (10). The city is more than an empirical phenomenon. Its very form—that is, its innermost reality—is a consequence of the city's relation to a world that transcends itself.

Seen in this light, the city cannot be taken as simply an object of knowledge, something to be observed from the outside. Moreover, from its inception, Lewis Mumford suggests, the city enlarged all the dimensions of life. Beginning as a representation of the cosmos, a means of bringing down heaven to earth, the city became a symbol of the possible. . . . It brought into existence realities that might have remained latent for an indefinite time in more soberly governed small communities, pitched to lower expectations and unwilling to make exertions that transcended both their workaday habits and their mundane hopes. (City 31)
The city, Mumford implies, effects a defamiliarization of reality, an opening up of the imagination to previously unseen or forgotten dimensions of existence. Its status is not that of an inert body which can be viewed from the objective standpoint of the external world. Rather, the city itself is an embodied world, a concrete universe which gives its inhabitants a reality larger than that of their individual lives. As Bernd Jager suggests, "a city, when properly inhabited, will not merely remain something seen, it will itself become a source of vision and light according to which we see" (241).

As these remarks imply, a constitutive—if not definitive—element of urban culture is its capacity to represent a reality other than itself. The city offers a sign of another world, a world not immediately apparent when we are immersed in the mundane activities of everyday existence. It is perhaps misleading, however, to call the city a symbol. Most obviously, it is a concrete reality, whereas the symbol tends to be understood as insubstantial, a mere sign of something which is itself entirely absent. It was this misconception which Samuel Taylor Coleridge attempted to counter when he offered his account of the symbol: "it always partakes of the Reality which it renders intelligible; and while it enumerates the whole, abides itself as a living part in that Unity, of which it is the representation" (30). If we accept Coleridge's definition,
the city—or a least that which Eliade describes—is indeed symbolic. That is, it expresses its participation in a whole which transcends its own particular existence. The city is an embodied world.

Urban space which possesses this symbolic quality exhibits a qualitative difference from mere empirical space. It is a product of what Gaston Bachelard has called the material imagination: "Space that has been seized upon by the imagination cannot remain indifferent space subject to the measures and estimates of the surveyor" (xxxii). Once imagined, space is opened up, taken beyond its natural, quantifiable dimensions. It reveals a reality which exceeds its own empirical boundaries. Such space, Ivan Illich remarks, "sings reality":

The classical town is first and foremost a ritual song of this sort. Its wellspring is dreams. Every urban culture seems to have its own ritual proceedings through which this dream of "life as an indwelling flow" is reflected in the social representation of inhabitable space. An agglomeration of huts or tents turns into a settlement or town only when its space has been recognized ceremonially as substantially other than the rural expanse, when it is opposed to the "outside," when the paths that transverse its space are recognized as roads. (12)

It is the ritual creation of space which makes the city more than an arbitrary or random entity, which gives it an

2. In fact, Voegelin uses precisely this notion of symbol to describe the order of representation of archaic civilization: "Cosmological symbolization is neither a theory nor an allegory. It is the mythical expression of the participation, experienced as real, of the order of society in the divine being that also orders the cosmos" (Order and History 27).
orientation. Through the ritual of founding, Eliade notes, the city is established as the "axis mundi," the center of the universe, the meeting point of heaven and earth (Sacred 36-47).

Although the conception of space was modified with the emergence of both Greek philosophy and Christianity, it retained its symbolic or ritual quality through the Middle Ages and into the Renaissance. Only with the advent of modern science in the seventeenth century did space come to be understood in an entirely new way. Of course, the empirical sciences existed before then, but as a subordinate part of an entire body of knowledge that was given direction by the principles of philosophy. By contrast, the new epistemology— as Nicholas Berdyaev suggests— means "carrying the criteria of science over into other spheres of spiritual life quite foreign to science" (Meaning 24). It assumes that there is a single method for everything, that "science is the supreme criterion of the whole life of the spirit, that everything must be subject to the order established by science, that its permissions or prohibitions have decisive meaning, everywhere" (24).

With this new epistemology came a view of the physical universe that was radically different than that of the older cosmology. As Alfred North Whitehead states, it posited the ultimate fact of an irreducible brute matter, or material, spread throughout space in a flux of
configurations. In itself such a material is senseless, valueless, purposeless. It does just what it does do, following a fixed routine imposed by external relations which do not spring from the nature of its being. (23)

Thus, the kind of space which for archaic culture was unreal—homogeneous, unformed, chaotic space—was taken by science as the only valid reality. For archaic man, space had to be founded before it could be lived in; that is to say, it had to be differentiated. As Eliade remarks, "it is the break effected in space that allows the world to be constituted, because it reveals the fixed point, the central axis for all future orientation" (21).

The homogeneous space which arises with the new science, Illich indicates, "constitutes a continuum which was formally not experienced, a continuum that is neither interior nor exterior, neither right nor left" (21). Within this geometrical continuum, "'Home' and 'abroad,' 'dwelling' and 'Wilderness' are nothing but regions or areas or territories selected from the same expanse" (21).

It was just this kind of undifferentiated space which Charles Dickens attempted to represent in Coketown, his imagined archetype of the nineteenth-century industrial cities of northern England:

You saw nothing in Coketown but what was severely workful. If the members of the religious persuasion

3. Illich offers a description of the founding or inauguration ritual, as does Joseph Rykwert in The Idea of a Town: the Anthropology of Urban Form in Rome, Italy and the Ancient World.
built a chapel there—as the members of eighteen religious persuasions had done—they made it a pious warehouse of red brick, with sometimes (but this is only in highly ornamented examples) a bell in a birdcage on the top of it. The solitary exception was the new Church; a stuccoed edifice with a square pinnacle like four florid wooden legs. All the public inscriptions in the town were painted alike in severe characters of black and white. The jail might have been the infirmary, the infirmary might have been the jail, the town hall might have been either, or both, or anything else, for anything that appeared to the contrary in the graces of their construction. Fact, fact, fact, everywhere in the material aspect of the town; fact, fact, everywhere in the immaterial. (17)

If space that has been imagined "concentrates being within limits that protect," as Bachelard suggests, Coketown appears endless like the "interminable serpents of smoke" which trail "forever and ever" from its tall chimneys (xxxii). Its infinite quality, however, does not mean that it is ontologically substantial. In fact, Coketown is the most closed and delimited of worlds, its homogeneous expanse the effect of a radical reduction, a collapsing of the immeasurable forms of reality into a sea of gray matter. Its lack of delineation means that it is a space in which everything is interchangeable and nothing possesses its own value. It is at once city and wilderness, savage and civilized. As Illich suggests—and Dickens illustrates—to attempt to dwell in this kind of space is a "nightmare" (21).

Dickens, however, locates the radical nature of the new industrial cities not so much in changes at the strictly empirical level—size, population composition,
economic conditions—as in the absence of form which resulted, at least in part, from those changes. The same point is implicit in Mumford's prefatory remarks to The City in History: "This book opens with a city that was, symbolically, a world; it closes with a world that has become, in many practical aspects a city" (xi). Although the city has grown as a fact—a growth which has been called urbanization—its capacity to offer its inhabitants a coherent world has declined.

An obvious factor in this decline is the rise of nationalism.4 "The modern city," Martindale indicates, "is losing its external and formal structure. Internally it is in a state of decay while the new community represented by the nation grows at its expense" (62). In fact, Christopher Dawson has argued that the industrial cities which arose in the nineteenth century were themselves mere "organs of a nationalist-imperialist movement of economic expansion" rather than "self-conscious and self-determining societies" (192).5 With the revolution of transportation

4. In Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism, Benedict Anderson links the rise of the nation with the replacement of the older cosmology by a scientific one and, in particular with the emergence of a secular understanding of time: "The idea of a sociological organism moving calendrically through homogeneous, empty time is a precise analogue of the idea of the nation, which also is conceived as a solid community moving steadily down (or up) history" (31).

5. In The Human Condition, Hannah Arendt argues that the terms nation and economy are almost synonymous for modern people: "we see the body of peoples and political
and communication in the middle of the nineteenth century and the consequent realization of the *laissez faire* ideal of the world market, the character of the industrial city was complete:

All the ancient limitations in the size of the city were removed, and the last links that bound the industrial town to its rural environment were broken. The city now lived entirely for and by the world market. It drew its food from one continent, the raw materials for its industries from another, and exported the finished product, perhaps, to a third. (193)

However, Illich notes that in the classical tradition the site of the city is essentially a *revealed* location: "Most founders are led by a sign in a dreamlike state to the site where the new town will be. Sometimes a wounded game animal, a strange bird, a cloud, or lightning takes him to the spot chosen by the gods" (13). Whatever the case, the "dream of foundation is always pregnant with destiny, though only obscurely" (13). The industrial city, by contrast, appears to be an entirely arbitrary reality, which lacks the rootedness of older cities. Whereas cities like Rome and Athens are inseparably linked to place (we can not imagine them in other locations), the industrial city can appear anywhere--from the midwestern United States to Central America to the Siberian hinterland--without communities in the image of a family whose everyday affairs have to be taken care of by a gigantic, nation-wide administration of house-keeping" (29). As Arendt indicates, the science "that corresponds to this development is no longer political science but 'national economy'" (29).
surprising us. In other words, whereas the ancient city is
informed by place, the industrial city is merely located.

The City as Empirical Object
Perhaps, then, the modern city is unknowable because it has
no essence, because there is no informing principle which
can be discerned beneath its sprawling expanse. If older
cities offered their inhabitants a coherent world or
cosmos, the modern city may be simply a chaos.

Paradoxically, in their efforts to present a
rigorously objective response to the changed urban
environment, urban theorists have tended to reinforce this
very impression. Don Martindale singles out the ecological
theory of the city for particular mention in this regard.

It was governed, he suggests,

by a sort of injunction: Go ye forth and gather facts.
This favored the accumulation of a wide variety of
data. Of course, this was an advantage won only at a
great price, for ever and again the study of the city
reduces to a mechanical inventory, the social problems
of an urban environment. (30)

In fact, from the beginning the ecological theory was
oriented not toward the social life of the city but toward
its geo-physical aspects, "to the establishment of the
properties of various zones--natural areas, habitats, and
what not--too little attention to the life that produced
these properties" (29).

The psychological theory of the city, Martindale
argues, is no less mechanistic. It tends to adopt
a simple-minded psychological approach just as ecology led to an over-simplification on a physical level. There is a strong tendency for the relevant world of action to be reduced to mere matters of increase, density, and heterogeneity of population which have psychological effects. (42)

Ultimately, the outcome of both theories is the same. The city is reduced to isolated facts and statistics, to that portion of reality that can be quantified on pie-charts, overlay maps, diagrams and tables. Indeed, the empirical approach to the city appears to be informed by the very epistemology which so profoundly influenced the emerging cities in the first place. The reconceptualization of space as homogeneous, geometric expanse which science effected in the seventeenth century has been uncritically accepted, in many cases, by urban theorists.

However, if urban theorists have reduced the city to an inventory of facts, they have not been able to decide which facts are relevant for its definition. As we have just seen, some have foregrounded the geophysical aspects of the city, while others treat demographics as the determining factor in urban life. Blanchard points to similar differences within the sociological approach to the city:

As a socioeconomic system, it warrants purely sociological or economic interpretations emphasizing the existence and power of groups and reading the city as the sum of interrelated contexts for these groups. . . . Other sociologists yet use the urban phenomenon merely as a political or cultural background to the study of the evolution of family units. (3-4)
That "sociologists can never agree on a set of common criteria for the study of the city," as Blanchard suggests, is hardly surprising (4). Facts themselves do not reveal their own significance. Rather, they take on meaning from a context, a coherent whole within which each element acquires its proper value. Yet, it is that context which is ignored when sociologists and urbanists approach the city in its own right, as an object isolated for the purposes of scientific investigation.

Not all urban theorists, however, have accepted the dictates of science at face value. In fact, over the last few decades, some have shown a willingness to criticize the kind of positivist assumptions which have tended to mark the genre of urban theory as a whole. Among the most notable of these is Jane Jacobs.

In her first work, *The Economy of Cities*, Jacobs questions the unique status usually attributed to the changes which cities underwent in the nineteenth century. In particular, she challenges the notion that the kind of exponential growth which they experienced was entirely unprecedented in the city's history. That a city is "large," Jacobs argues, is a reflection not so much of its actual size but of the fact that certain serious practical problems in its economy have been greatly intensified by size (103). Thus, the great cities of the nineteenth century were deemed large because "without electricity,
with their high infant death-rates and their tremendous number of orphans, with their immense number of dray animals, their stinking stables, their flies, streets running with horse urine and manure, they were highly impractical settlements" (103). However, Jacobs suggests, they were no more impractical than "the cities of the fourth or fifth millennia B.C. must have been when their population outgrew the water supplied by streams and springs" or than "the Renaissance cities" must have become when "they experienced a population explosion of draft animals at a time when Europe was not yet cultivating foddercrops" (103-4). Those cities were as "large" as the ones of more recent times because they were equally impractical.

Jacobs goes on to suggest that impracticality is not only a constant feature of developing cities, but the very means which enables that development: "Moderate-sized cities--what are now deemed to be 'cities of practical size'--are practical only because problems were solved in the past in cities that had grown to 'impractical' size" (104). Large and rapidly growing cities, in other words, are not in themselves problems. While such cities "magnify" the practical problems that already exist in an economy, "they can also solve them by means of new technology" (104). Thus, against the commonly held opinion
of urban planners, Jacobs maintains that expanding cities are "uniquely valuable to economic life" not "in spite of their inefficiency and impracticality but rather because they are inefficient and impractical" (86).

As an isolated fact, then, the size of a city reveals little or nothing: "What seems big for one period is small for another" (20). Moreover, the city may seem bewildering when "too large," and may also provoke solutions which ultimately stifle rather than ameliorate urban life. It is only when the whole economy of the city is placed in an analogical relation to the economies of earlier cities that the real significance of its size emerges. What we find, Jacobs shows, is not simply that size is relative but that a large city is "always an impractical settlement" (103).

6. Raisa Broner-Bauer offers an insightful discussion of the origin and nature of urban planning in her essay "Lost Utopia: Thoughts on the Dilemma of the Modern City." She notes that modern urban planning was born not at the same time as industrial society but afterwards. In its early stages, it "was typified by the fact that it proposed improvements only at the moment when, as a consequence of a massive transformation process, industrializing urban societies had been driven into an intolerable and virtually insoluble state of crisis" (16). As a result, nineteenth-century urban planning reflects a crisis mentality. On the one hand, there were those like Robert Owen, Charles Fourier and Jean-Baptiste Godin who wanted to transcend industrial society altogether and build an ideal society. On the other hand, in the latter half of the century, city officials attempted to control urban development with laws which placed restrictions on the right to build, density, building height, etc. As Broner-Bauer indicates, "the effect of this legislation was rather depressing—the formation of monotonous housing areas, the beginning of a certain kind of urban development process, the final results of which are all too familiar to us today" (19).
Of course, in and of itself this knowledge does not make the problems of a large city disappear. But it does put them in perspective and allows for solutions more creative than that of simply limiting urban growth.

Although Jacobs's discussion is limited to a particular aspect of urban life—its economy—it suggests an important general principle for the study of the city. The nineteenth-century industrial city is typically understood as a radically new phenomenon. When viewed analogically, however, its shared characteristics with cities with which it might otherwise appear to have nothing in common are revealed. Analogy, in other words, allows one to identify a historical precedent for cities which at first glance may seem entirely new. In fact, Jacobs suggests that the city of the present always contains traces of past cities:

> every city has a direct economic ancestry, a literal economic parentage, in a still older city or cities. . . . The spark of city economic life is passed from older cities to younger. It lives on today in cities whose ancestors have long since gone to dust. (179)

For Jacobs, then, the city is never an orphan, isolated in the historical present. Its very life is the effect of a prior genealogy, of ancestral cities, the traces of which it still carries within itself.
The Invisible City

According to Oswald Spengler, it is "the presence of a soul" rather than size which distinguishes the city from the village:

Every primitive population lives wholly as peasant and son of the soil--the being "City" does not exist for it. That which in externals develops from the village is not the city, but the market, a mere meeting point of rural-life interests. Here there can be no question of a separate existence. (91)

Of course, to suggest that the city has a soul is--to a certain extent--to speak analogically. If the city shapes and forms the inner worlds of its inhabitants, it also reflects and expresses their collective psyche. Indeed, one could hardly posit the soul of the city apart from the soul of man. The two exist in a relation of symbiosis, each inhabiting and informing the other.

In fact, it was Plato who first drew the analogy between the city and the soul of the individual. According to his familiar formulation in the Republic, the city is man writ large: "Societies aren't made of sticks and stones, but of men whose individual characters, by turning the scale one way or another, determine the direction of the whole" (Bk. 8, 1). Thus, the character of the city can be understood analogically, as an extension of the type of individual who prevails within it.

Plato's theory amounts to a historicization of the city. In its earliest form, as we have seen, the city is essentially a utopian conception, an attempt to manifest an
ideal order in the here and now. With Plato comes the recognition that the ideal is only ever imperfectly realized in human societies, that the city is as much a reflection of the fallen human condition as of a celestial paradise. Thus, in the Republic, Plato provides a typology of imperfect societies—each of which corresponds to a type of flawed individual. However, he did not completely sever the link between the ideal and historical city. Rather, as Voegelin indicates, Plato measured the different human types that find expression in different social orders against the true type of humanity, the wise man (62). In fact, it is only because of "the discovery of a true order of the human psyche" and "the desire of expressing the true order in the social environment of the discoverer" that "differences of social order come into view as differences of human types at all" (62).

Thus, Plato did not discount the notion of the ideal city. On the contrary, he articulated a more comprehensive ideal, one founded not simply on the order of the visible heavens but on an invisible order within man himself. The cities of history—although they fall short of this ideal, are nevertheless linked to it by way of analogy. Moreover, they are linked to each other, since each of them reflects a human reality which—although it shifts and modifies itself with each passing era—in some sense remains fundamentally the same.
Plato's perspective on the city bears an important resemblance to that of the novelist. Unlike the natural scientist, who works to establish the laws of the external world, the novelist offers a view of reality which is fundamentally anthropological. Thus, the city he represents is not a world which transcends man—although in actuality it may appear to do just that—but one which is intimately bound up with him. As a system, the city may lack a human face. But for the novelist, its deepest reality is irreducibly human, a complex manifestation of the invisible life within man himself.

The business of the artist, D.H. Lawrence suggests, "is to reveal the relation between man and his circumambient universe, at the living moment" (108). Thus, the poet's focus is neither the city-in-itself nor man-in-himself but the relation between man and the city or, as Plato might say, the city within man. In the modern city, however, that relation is hidden, a secret which its stony facades seems to withhold, a riddle whose answer lies buried beneath its monumental structures. The city appears to us as precisely that environment from which humanity is alienated, and with which it has no living relation. But to treat the city as a system independent of man, as urban theorists have tended to do, is to render it entirely arbitrary. It is to accord the city a life wholly its own,
a life which supersedes and controls man own's existence, leaving him helpless, a victim of his own creation.

For the novelist, however, the city is never arbitrary. If it is disordered, it is because it reflects a confusion within human beings themselves. It is tempting to suggest, as Oswald Spengler does, that the cities of our time are soulless, that they represent the denial, the annihilation of the life within. But, as Michel de Certeau has suggested, the totalizing strategies of the urban system never quite complete themselves:

Beneath the discourses that ideologize the city, the ruses and combinations of powers that have no readable identity proliferate; without points where one can take hold of them, without rational transparency, they are impossible to administer. (15)

It is this subterranean reality—the invisible city—which the novelist seeks out. This poetic movement constitutes a kind of archaeology or, as Jacques Maritain suggests, "a kind of divination, . . . that intercommunication between the inner being of things and the inner being of the human Self" (3). Thus, the reality which the novelist presents is not the visible structure of the city—its sociological composition, the interactions between its classes, its economic exchanges, its system of laws—but its inner form. He finds that form in a human soul—a soul alone, restless, fragmented, suffering, often sinful, yet searching for a reality which can endow its existence with meaning and validity.
This mode of understanding, however, is not characteristic of every novel which deals with the city. "Realism," as Elizabeth Lowe notes, "is the predominant mode of city fiction" (44). Of course, to the extent that every novelist is concerned with the representation of reality, all novelists are realists. But as Flannery O'Connor suggests, "the realism of each novelist will depend on his view of the ultimate reaches of reality" (40).

In its pure form, realism offers a view which is essentially historical in nature. It attempts to produce a complete and faithful depiction of a particular society at a particular moment in time. "What is demanded," Donald Fanger—citing Guy de Maupassant—notes, is an imaginative synthesis of the facts of life ... in which imaginative selection of "facts of a constant and unimpeachable veracity" is the means, but the synthesis itself is the end, "the complete illusion of the real." (11)

For the nineteenth-century novelist, the European city—which at the time was experiencing an influx of population from all quarters—provided an ideal topos for this kind of synthesis. Encompassing every class, profession, age, and character, the city presented a microcosm of society as a whole.

A hallmark of the realistic novel, then, is its concern with "contemporaneity," a concern which Fanger notes is reflected in the titles of "nineteenth-century
realism's typical productions, from Balzac's *L'Envers de l'histoire contemporaine* through Stendhal's *Le Rouge et le Noir: Chronique du XIXe siècle* to Trollope's *The Way We Live Now* (9). Of course, comedy— itself an important source for the novelistic tradition—"had always worked with the familiar detail of contemporary mores" (9). But with the novel, Fanger suggests, contemporary society is no longer simply "a norm against which to measure individual comic aberrations, but a subject calling in its own right for investigation; not a milieu, but an aspect of character" (9).

Thus, the realistic novel attempts on a literary plane what the urban theorist attempts from the standpoint of science— to represent "a particular social reality in its uniqueness" (9).  

7. The link between these two "genres" becomes even closer in the light of one of the primary characteristics of the realistic novel, its attempt to efface its status as literary. See Fanger 5-7. But for a more comprehensive discussion of this aspect of realism Roland Barthes's essay "The Reality Effect" and his longer work *S/Z*, a reading of Balzac's classic realist narrative "Sarrasine," are important sources.

8. As Fred Schwarzbach indicates, much of the criticism on the relation between the city and literature shares this epistemology: "there is a 'real' entity, the city and the essential experience of its residents at some particular historical moment, which is represented and commented on in some works of literature" ("Victorian" 330). Elizabeth Lowe identifies the same "realist" epistemology in two of the major approaches to the study of the city: "The historical approach uses fiction to supplement nonliterary sources for historical information. The sociological approach uses the novel as an illustration of the nature of urban society" (43).
A central category in the novelist's attempt to achieve this kind of representation is the "typical." As Fanger notes, comedy—especially in its satirical vein—"found types in the unrelieved presence of certain traits" (9). Such traits, in other words, were typical not of a particular society but of a human condition—a very fallen one—which transcended time and place. But with realism, the typical becomes the mark or symbol of those traits which are unique to the society the novelist represents. Whereas comedy found the typical in universal qualities, the realistic novel makes the type the individual stamp of a whole society. Thus, Fanger notes, "a favorite device for entitling a realistic novel" is the name: from Moll Flanders through Anna Karenina, "it suggests a unique phenomenon, an unrepeatable individual" (10).

In comedy, the type is easily identified because it is universal. But for the realistic novel it is something which must to be discovered. The type embodies everything which makes a society different from other societies. Thus, it can only be discerned with difficulty. "What makes a type a type," George Lukacs writes,

is not its average quality, nor its mere individual being, however profoundly conceived; what makes it a type is that in it all the humanly and socially essential determinants are present on their highest level of development, in the ultimate unfolding of the possibilities latent in them, in extreme presentation of their extremes, rendering concrete the peaks and limits of men and epochs. (6)
In the realistic novel, then, the type represents the essence, the very core which exists at the heart of a society or epoch. But that essence is the ultimate outcome of a historical process, an unfolding which transcends the lives of individuals. While the type expresses the individuality of a society, it posits that quality as the product of history rather than of men.

Clearly, the category of the typical in the realistic novel differs significantly from Plato's use of it. In *The Republic*, as we have seen, the type is used to identify differences between societies. But those differences only become evident in the light of an ideal society which transcends the processes of history. In the realistic novel, by contrast, history itself is the ultimate horizon. The typical character is understood not as the analogue of a more perfect type but as the embodiment of the historical forces which produced the society he represents; history exhausts his existence. Thus, the realistic novel expresses a new type of man, the man of the masses, the man whose life ends rather than begins with the limits of history.

*Dostoevsky, Melville and Faulkner*

This study offers readings of three novels which depart in significant ways from the tradition of pure realism. My argument is that these works—Feodor Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment*, Herman Melville's *Pierre* and William Faulkner's
Light in August—are among those which best express the essential meaning of the modern city, which uncover its hidden reality, a reality which the purely realistic novel--because of its own inherent limitation--cannot acknowledge. That limitation is the same one which has frequently prevented the social sciences from fully grasping the nature of the city--a skepticism about anything which does not lie within the bounds of the empirically possible or which is not reducible to some historical or narrowly psychological determinant.

Dostoevsky, Melville and Faulkner are essentially explorers of the real. They uncover dimensions of reality which the scientific epistemologies of the last two centuries have dismissed, but which have remained present to the consciousness of the artist and the poet. This visionary capacity enables them to present an understanding of the modern city which is more global than that usually allowed for by the field of scientific knowledge. Each of these novelists effects a destabilization of the city, or of our typical perceptions of it. The city is no longer seen as a static entity, isolated in time and space. It is placed in new, dynamic relations with other aspects of reality, new contexts--both temporal and spatial--which shed light on its nature. Most importantly, the city is given meaning. It emerges not as an arbitrary system which transcends the lives of its inhabitants but as a reality
whose future is intimately bound up with human destiny itself. Admittedly, the depiction of the city which these novelists offer often seems bleak. But it is not one which leads us into despair. Quite the reverse, the city is presented as a space still to be determined, whose status is that of a continual becoming. The city can either go forward or backward, grow or stagnate, condemn or renew itself. Its destiny is not fixed but lies in the hands of men and the gods.

Critics of the novel have not agreed on a single term to express the difference of novelists like Dostoevsky, Melville and Faulkner from those who belong to the purely realistic tradition. Fanger argues that Dostoevsky represents the culmination of a "romantic realism" which was "developed separately by Balzac, Dickens and Gogol" (ix). What distinguishes the romantic realist from the realist is that the former's attempt "to record the real world"—an attempt which he shares with the realist—"is shaped by his vision of that world, and his vision is inevitably a function of his autobiography—as personal and inimitable" (15). "The result," Fanger suggests, "is a principled deformation of reality; its familiar contours are presented to us, but in a new manipulated light" (15).

Melville's Pierre has puzzled generations of critics because it does not conform to the conventions of realism. Its "deformation of reality" has typically been understood
not as "principled" but as insane, bizarre, morbid and perverse. Some critics, however, have argued that Melville was actually satirizing the conventions of popular fiction and, in particular, those of the Gothic romance. Brian Higgins and Hershel Parker, for example, point to the overblown style of the novel's opening lines:

In Book I, "Pierre Just Emerging from His Teens," the first words of dialogue are ludicrous, by realistic standards, and there seems some fairy-tale quality about the whole situation. The style is often pseudo-Elizabethan bombast, often near the cloying romanticism of female novels of Melville's own time. (245)

More recently, the insights of deconstruction have led critics to argue that the novel's concern is a more fundamental one—whether art can ever adequately represent reality. My own view is closer to that of Rowland Sherrill, who identifies a "prophetic" quality in all of Melville's fiction, a quality which suggests not so much a capacity for clairvoyance as an attempt by Melville "to issue a radical critique of the cultural alternatives of his time and to penetrate to the fundamental levels of human nature and experience" (3).

Faulkner is most often identified with the tradition of high modernism, a tradition which—with its stylistic innovations—represents a radical departure from the depoeticized fiction of realism. However, for the purpose of characterizing the nature of Faulkner's vision, it is perhaps more useful to see him—as he has been seen in
recent years—in relation to the magical realism of the Latin American novelists. The expanded reality which they depict seems more akin to Faulkner's world, with its mythic proportions, than does the kind of self-referential world typically associated with the modernist novel.

Perhaps "visionary" is the term which best encompasses the three novels discussed in this study. But whatever their designation, they share a number of characteristics which deserve mention.

1. The hero is not obviously typical of his society. In fact, he is defined precisely by his eccentricity, by an action or mark which has placed him outside the bounds of the "usual" or the "familiar." Either an exile from the city like Faulkner's Joe Christmas or a wanderer within it like Dostoevsky's Raskolnikov, the hero is someone who has transgressed the social code, a criminal who has been rejected by the community or who has rejected it. Their crimes—Raskolnikov's murder, Joe Christmas's mixed blood and Pierre's illicit relationship with his half-sister—make these heroes the possessors of a secret knowledge, a knowledge which—because it cannot be revealed—only increases their isolation from others. The paradox of the hero, however, is that his very estrangement from society makes him a more profound symbol of its inner fragmentation and disorder than its more typical representatives.
2. More than simply an embodiment of the historical conditions of his particular society, the hero is an analogue of certain archetypal outsiders. In Raskolnikov, we find echoes of Cain, the founder of the first city and the first murderer; in Pierre's blindness and in the incestuous quality of his relations with his mother and half-sister, we are inevitably reminded of Oedipus; and the sacrificial murder of Joe Christmas makes him a version of the Christ-figure. Although none of these heroes are straightforward repetitions of their originals, their experience acquires coherence and unity in relation to the archetypal patterns of action. In fact, as a result of this relation, the figure of the hero is universalized. He becomes the representative not simply of his own epoch but of common humanity.

3. The hero's status as outsider places him on the threshold of two worlds, between the familiar and the strange, the known and the unknown, the routine and the unexpected, the rational and the mysterious, the actual and the ideal. Thus, his experience is understood within the

9. Fanger notes that the recourse to archetypes was a characteristic feature of Romanticism which "had made much of the outlaw, the noble criminal, of whom the first claimed ancestor was Milton's Satan and the first nineteenth-century exemplars the rash of Byronic heroes" (21). What Dostoevsky and the Romantic realists achieved, "while preserving both the type and its mythical aura, was to renew its appeal and deepen its relevance to contemporary life, by discovering a milieu that would give it support and substantiation" (21).
context not simply of his own social world but of that other world upon the verge of which he continually stands. As the Russian critic Mikhail Bakhtin has indicated, time on the threshold "is crisis time, in which a moment is equal to years, decades, even to a 'billion years'" (169). At the threshold, the hero must act--either for change and rebirth or stagnation and death. Pierre and Joe Christmas are tragic figures because at crucial moments they can only repeat the gestures of the past; they are incapable of the renewal which the threshold holds out to them. But for Raskolnikov and Gail Hightower--one of the other two protagonists in Faulkner's *Light and August*, the threshold represents the turn toward comedy, a movement from isolation to community, decay to regeneration, death to new life.

4. The city points beyond itself. In its own right, it is radically incomplete, a foreshadowing or prefiguring of things to come. Thus, like the hero himself, the city exists on the threshold, at the moment of crisis. "The modern vision of the city," Elizabeth Lowe writes, "is apocalyptic" (46). What this means for novelists like Dostoevsky, Melville and Faulkner, however, is not that the city faces inevitable decline or destruction but that it stands on the verge of its own fulfillment, a fulfillment--either positive or negative--which depends on the responses of the hero himself. The realism of these novelists,
then, is essentially prophetic. Its purpose is to represent the city not simply in the static present but at the point of its ultimate self-realization. According to Lukacs, the realist "radically thinks through to the end the necessities of social reality, beyond their normal limits, beyond even their feasibility" (31). For these novelists, however, that "end" is not so much a historical as a metaphysical realization. They depict the city as it passes into eternity.

5. The fate of the city depends in a special way on its relation to the feminine. Thus, women occupy a central role in these novels, carrying within themselves the seeds of an unrealized future, a new life rooted in compassion, forgiveness, community and love. In Lena Grove, who is literally pregnant with destiny, Faulkner gives us perhaps the most dramatic embodiment of these qualities. But they are also vividly presented in Sonya, the selfless prostitute who helps save Raskolnikov and, in more complicated ways, in Isabel, the half-sister of Pierre. The very centrality of women in these novels, however, is paradoxically a sign of the displacement of the feminine in the societies their authors seek to represent, societies whose mode of existence had become excessively abstract, atomistic and inward-looking. The fragmented personality of the hero offers the principal sign of that displacement; we see it in Raskolnikov's refusal to eat, in Pierre's
inability to love anyone outside his own circle of kin, and in the desperate wanderings of Joe Christmas. The condition of their reintegration—and of the societies they represent—is their acceptance not simply of women but of the qualities they embody.

The City in History

The image of the city is strangely bifurcated. On the one hand, it suggests a reality which transcends historical time, an ideal world, a locus of perfection, a celestial paradise. On the other hand, the city is the very mark of history, a radically fallen world, a locus of corruption, a hell on earth. "In modern times," Burton Pike indicates, "the real cities of Western Europe and America have generally tended to be associated with the evils of human nature; ideal cities, on the model of Revelation, have been put off to some vague future time" (7).

Archaic cultures, however, attempted to resolve the tension between the actual and the ideal in origin myths which effaced the reality of history itself. According to Eliade, "every new appearance"—whether it be an animal, a plant, a house, a temple, or a city—is presented in the origin myth as a continuation of the cosmogony, of the pre-eminent act which created the world (Myth 21). Its mythic presentation, in other words, makes the "new appearance" simultaneous with the time of the Creation. Thus, the effect of the origin myth is precisely the abolition of
history. The man of archaic society, "emerges from profane, chronological time and enters a time that is of a different quality, a 'sacred' time at once primordial and indefinitely recoverable" (18).

For archaic cultures, as we have seen, the city is by very definition an ideal reality, a reality which transcends the processes of history. However, even in the origin myths, its ambiguous character is not entirely effaced. As Eliade indicates, archaic man regards the cosmogony as the exemplary model for every kind of doing or creating; whatever he does is "in some way a repetition of the pre-eminent deed, the archetypal gesture of the Creator god, the Creation of the world" (32). Through that repetition, however, he not only enters into the presence of the gods but becomes their rival. By founding the city, he creates the world anew; but his own creation stands— at least potentially—as an alternative to the divine creation itself. Pike notes that the founding of the ancient city "represents a separation from the world of nature, the imposition of man's will on a natural order created by divinity" (5). Thus, because it is "an act of interference in the divine order," the founding "involves a sense of guilt" (5). The city, in other words, both unites and separates men and the gods.

For modern man, the burden of history is arguably even more unbearable than it was for his archaic ancestor, not
simply because of his own violent past but because the epistemologies of his age have made him skeptical of the possibility of other realities. Whereas archaic man saw only the ideal city, his modern counterpart finds himself imprisoned in the city of history with all its flaws and imperfections. Thus, the temptation he suffers is to simply reject the city—and therefore humanity itself—either by recreating himself as a man-god or by establishing a myth of earthly paradise. Both attempts constitute a return of sorts to the archaic cosmology.

In each of the novels discussed in this study, we witness this kind of return—in Raskolnikov's aspiration to superhuman status, in Hightower's belief in the inherent superiority of his race, and in Pierre's attempt to live a paradisal existence at Saddle Meadows. However, the presentation of these heroes ultimately links them with both the Hebraic and the Greco-Roman traditions rather than with the archaic myths.

What is involved in the archaic cosmology, Eliade remarks, "is creating a new man and creating him on a super-human plane, a man-god, such as the imagination of historical man has never dreamed it possible to create" (159). As we have seen, however, there is an inherent contradiction in this act. In his very attempt to place himself in the company of the gods, archaic man threatens to usurp their position and, therefore, to alienate himself
from them. In fact, the myths themselves are an attempt to resolve precisely this—presumably irresolvable—contradiction.

In the fourth chapter of Genesis, which records the founding of the first city, the contradiction is exposed. "The city," Jacques Ellul comments, "is the direct consequence of Cain's murderous act and his refusal to accept God's protection" (5). Thus, the sense of guilt associated with the city-founding, a sense which is implicit in the archaic myths, is openly acknowledged in the biblical narrative. The founder of the city is a criminal, an outcast from the world created for him by God. The account in Genesis has remarkable parallels in the Greek and Roman myths. Theseus, for example, is a parricide-founder. In the City of God, Augustine is struck by the "reflection" which the fratricidal origin of the first city finds in the founding of Rome, the city which occupied such a central place in his own thought: "For this is how Rome was founded, when Remus, as Roman history witnesses, was slain by his brother Romulus" (15. 5).

In both the biblical and the classical traditions, then, there is an implicit criticism of the archaic cosmology. The status of the city as a parallel creation, as a repetition or refounding of the cosmos, is taken as a sign of man's revolt against the gods, as an assertion of his independence from his creator, of his desire to become
a power unto himself. It is in this light that the heroes of Dostoevsky, Melville and Faulkner are cast. Their attempts to create alternative worlds for themselves not only make them criminals but leave them suffering in the most deeply human way. Like Cain, they are outcasts, cut off from their fellow men and from the sources of life itself.

Thus, although these novelists make profound criticisms of their civilizations, they do not finally seek to evade the historical landscape itself. In fact, their central concern is how modern man can accept history as his mode of existence, as the mode in which he lives in communion with others. In this regard, their works find an important precursor in Virgil's epic account of the founding of Rome. Unlike the origin myths of archaic culture, the Aeneid foregrounds rather than effaces the ambiguous character of the city, a fact which is reflected in the disagreement among critics over the meaning of the poem. While some have read it as a panegyric of an ideal Roman order, others--especially in our own century--have argued that it calls into question the terrible price which civilization demands for its realization. Adam Parry suggests that the two views correspond to the "two voices" of Virgil himself, one the "public voice of Roman success," the other a "personal voice" which laments the limitations of human action in the world (61).
Virgil's grim presentation of the events preceding the Roman founding—the war with the Italians and the killing of their leader, Turnus—makes the *Aeneid* a powerfully resonant work for modern and especially twentieth-century readers, whose own experience of the devastating effects of war has shaken their faith in the value of civilization itself. But Virgil's epic does not serve as a signal to despair. On the contrary, in its depiction of the perilous journey which Aeneas and his small band of men undertake from Troy, it invokes an ideal order above and beyond that of the Rome of history. It is an order founded on self-sacrifice, loyalty, courage and love, and one which—although it belongs to a distant future—spurs men on in their attempt to create the good city.

The themes of Virgil's poem, which are laid out in the first chapter of this study, make it a paradigmatic text for the three novels discussed in the subsequent chapters. First, there is the theme of exile. Like the protagonists of the novels, Aeneas is a wanderer, an exile in search of a new future. Second, the poem offers us—most obviously, in the image of the fall of Troy—that apocalyptic vision of the city which is so central to modern city fiction. Third, the centrality of the poem's female figures—namely, Dido and Juno—suggests that it has as one of its

principal concerns the role of the feminine in the life of civilization.

In one of his last books, Civilization and its Discontents, Sigmund Freud draws a remarkable analogy between the "history of the Eternal City" and psychic contents of the mind (16). Just as not a little of the remains of ancient Rome are preserved beneath the buildings of the modern city, so "in mental life nothing which has once been formed can perish—that everything is somehow preserved and that in suitable circumstances...it can once more be brought to light" (17). Although the focus of the analogy is the mind rather than the city, it implies that the city itself—and Rome, in particular—serves as the collective memory of a people, as a vital link between past and present, the living and the dead. In fact, Freud himself goes on to render this vision of Rome in more explicit terms:

suppose that Rome is not a human habitation but a psychical entity with a similarly long and copious past—an entity, that is to say, in which nothing that has once come into existence, will have passed away and all the earlier phases of development continue to exist alongside the latest one. (17)

However, almost as soon as he has allowed himself this "flight of imagination," Freud dismisses it—"for it leads to things that are unimaginable and even absurd" (17). Nevertheless, as Pike remarks, "the analogy has been made, and it has been made with the evocative power we might expect from a poet" (18).
The image of Rome has always held a central place in Western consciousness. Indeed, Freud's own text is evidence of the power which it has continued to exert in the twentieth century. What Freud allows us to suggest is that the exploration of that image involves us in some sense in an exploration—or more properly an archaeology—of the modern mind itself. In fact, it was precisely this kind of rationale which led Fustel de Coulanges in the middle of the nineteenth century to undertake his study of the earliest stages of the societies of ancient Greece and Rome. While at first glance those societies could hardly be more different than their nineteenth-century counterparts, de Coulanges hoped that their traces still existed in modern life:

the past never completely dies for man. Man may forget it, but he always preserves it within him. For, take him at any epoch, and he is the product, the epitome, of all the earlier epochs. Let him look into his own soul, and he can find and distinguish these different epochs by what each of them has left within him. (14)

Keeping in mind, then, the hidden continuity between the ancient city and ourselves, we turn to Virgil and his tale of Rome's founding.
II
THE CITY AND EXILE
Virgil's Aeneid

At the beginning of Virgil's poem, we find Aeneas and his men just a short distance from the coast of Sicily—having wandered from sea to sea for years, their journey prolonged by the vengeful actions of the goddess Juno. At this moment, however, Juno herself is desperate. Despite all her efforts to keep them from Italy, the Trojans are now perilously close to their destination. So, in a last ditch attempt to prevent their passage, she visits Aeolus, the ruler of the winds, and begs him—with the help of a bribe—to drive the Trojans off their course. As a result of Juno's pleas, Aeneas's ships are engulfed in a whirling tempest and dispersed far and wide over the water.

Amidst all this commotion, Neptune—Juno's brother—realizes that his own jurisdiction over the ocean has been usurped by the wind god: "Power over the sea and the cruel trident / Were never his by destiny, but mine" (1. 188-9). After sending an angry message to Aeolus, "he quieted / The surging water, drove the clouds away, / And brought the sunlight back" (1. 193-5). At this point, Virgil offers us a striking image:

When rioting breaks out in a great city,  
And the rampaging rabble goes so far  
That stones fly, and incendiary brands—
For anger can supply that kind of weapon—
If it so happens they look round and see
Some dedicated public man, a veteran
Whose record gives him weight, they quiet down,
Willing to stop and listen.
Then he prevails in speech over their fury
By his authority, and placates them.
Just so, the whole uproar of the great sea
Fell silent, as the Father of it all,
Scanning horizons under the open sky,
Swung his team around and gave free rein
In flight to his eager chariot. (1. 201-15)

What is remarkable about the simile is not so much its characterization of Neptune as its depiction of urban space. For a brief moment we see the city on the verge of crisis, about to be overwhelmed by a sea of unrestrained emotion. If the act of founding the city is a movement from chaos to a cosmos, Virgil gives us this movement in reverse—a reversion to chaos, the onset of catastrophe. Its source is not the flawed action of an essentially noble individual—as it is in tragedy—but the irrational anger of the masses.

The image which Virgil presents—of a civilization under threat—bears an extraordinary resemblance to the image which modern peoples have of their lives. As Mircea Eliade notes, "we speak of the chaos, the disorder, the darkness that will overwhelm 'our world'" (Sacred 49). Moreover, we sense that such a threat emanates not from some external source but from ourselves. Freud, who was profoundly influenced by Virgil's writings, expressed precisely this sentiment in the closing remarks of Civilization and its Discontents: "The fateful question for
the human species seems to me to be whether and to what extent their cultural development will succeed in mastering the disturbance of their communal life by the human instinct of aggression and self-destruction" (92).

In Virgil's simile, the city is the locus of the crowd, a trope which becomes increasingly important for modern writers from about the middle of the nineteenth century. As Burton Pike notes, in the city of nineteenth- and early twentieth-century literature, the crowd loses its neutral sense—a gathering of individuals with a common interest—and becomes "an undifferentiated mass, acting as a depersonalized collective character and forming a peculiar kind of anti-community within the dissociated culture" (110). Typically, the sole locus of individuality is an alienated and isolated figure who by himself is incapable of ameliorating his life: "there is a whole parade of small men in the novels of the period who are unable to cope with their urban environment or with themselves and whose attempts to cope lead to constant frustration" (101).¹

The scenario which Virgil paints is not so bleak the one Pike suggests. Unlike the hero of the novel, who

¹. A list of such figures, Pike suggests, "would include Flaubert's Frederic Moreau, Dostoevsky's underground man and Raskolnikov, Hardy's obscure Jude, Joyce's Bloom, Kafka's two K.s, Howells's Silas Lapham and Eliot's Prufrock, as well as Biely's Nikolai Ableukhov" (101).
appears helpless in the face of the crowd, a "dedicated public man"—perhaps a Cicero or an Augustus—is capable of placating the anger and fears of the people with calming words. The crowd can still be reached. Nevertheless, the simile presents us with a remarkably unidealized and, therefore, contemporary image of urban life, one which surely reflects the civil unrest which Virgil knew in his own time. The city is not the utopian conception which archaic culture gave us. It is the city in history, embodying the flawed nature of humanity itself.

Of course, Virgil's simile is not primarily a discourse on the city; its purpose is to convey the commanding presence of Neptune before the turmoil of the seas. Moreover, the poem as a whole appears to locate the origins of Rome not in the historical past but in the mythical age of the Homeric hero. At the same time, however, Virgil's evocation of the Homeric age is not empty of allusions to the Rome of history. As Robert Fitzgerald indicates, Virgil deliberately echoed Homer in many details of narrative, in many conventions and features of style. But his purpose was totally un-Homeric and drastically original: to unfold in the mythical action of The Aeneid foreshadowings and direct foretellings of Roman history. Most of all the apparent Homeric pastiche, the ancient story, was to refer at times explicitly but more often by analogy to the latter centuries of that history, to the immediate past and present, and to such hopes and fears for the future as the record might suggest. (405)

In fact, T. S. Eliot suggests that it was through
their constant adaptation and use of the discoveries, traditions and inventions not simply of the earlier stages of their own literature but of Greek poetry, that the Roman poets—and Virgil, in particular—developed a sense of history (61).

According to Eliot, this sense is most fully awake where there is consciousness of a history other "than the history of the poet's own people," another history which is necessary in order to see our own:

There must be the knowledge of at least one other highly civilized people, and of a people whose civilization is sufficiently cognate to have influenced and entered our own. This is a consciousness which the Romans had, and which the Greeks, however much more highly we may estimate their achievement—and indeed, we may respect it all the more on this account—could not possess. (61)

The subject of Virgil's poem, then, is not simply the founding of a civilization but, as Eliot indicates, the "development of... one civilization, in relation to another" (61). "In Homer," he remarks, "the conflict between the Greeks and the Trojans is hardly larger in scope than a feud between one Greek city-state and a coalition of other city-states" (61). By contrast, "the story of Aeneas" is marked by "the consciousness of a more radical distinction, a distinction, which is at the same time a statement of relatedness, between two great cultures, and finally, of their reconciliation under an all-embracing destiny" (61-62).
Thus, while Virgil appears to situate Rome's origins in a mythical past, he does not present them as simultaneous with the "absolute beginning," with the creation of the world. Quite the reverse, in fact: the new world begins with the apocalyptic destruction of an older one, the world of the Homeric hero; Rome begins where Troy ends. For archaic man, we have seen, the founding of a city is an act which transforms chaos into a cosmos. For Aeneas, by contrast, the journey from Troy to Rome begins with the loss of an ordered world, with a reimmersion into a state of formlessness. "Any destruction of a city," Eliade notes, "is equivalent to a retrogression to chaos" (48). Thus, the simile which Virgil presents at the outset of the Aeneid is a reflection not simply of Rome's recent history but of its very origins. In its fleeting depiction of a city in turmoil, it anticipates the account which Aeneas himself will later give of the fall of Troy, the event which marks the beginning of the journey towards Italy. Rome is, in other words, a city born in the midst of crisis.

The city which Eliade describes is essentially a static entity. It exists outside time or—more properly—at the primordial time of beginnings, in sacred time. The exit of Aeneas and his men from the mythical world of Troy is an exit from this mode of existence. The beginning of
their journey towards the new city marks their entrance into history. But herein lies a peculiar paradox. On the one hand, Rome appears as a city which is engendered within the span of historical time. It is a city with an actual past (both immediate and distant), a past which is alluded to throughout Virgil's poem. On the other hand, it is a reality which is never fully presented. "The city, as goal of the wanderer's quest," Elizabeth Lowe remarks, "is . . . a future event. Aeneas's Rome is prophesied, not realized, in the Aeneid" (47). Thus, the city is at once far and near, present and absent, an actual reality and an ideal conception.

So, what finally is the status of Rome in Virgil's poem? Is it the contemporary reality which we see in the simile, or a future utopia which is glimpsed from a distance but never reached? Or is it somehow both? It seems that the meaning of the city in the Aeneid is inextricably bound up with the meaning of exile. The

2. Lowe notes that there is "a noteworthy resemblance between the story of Exodus and the Aeneid. In both narratives a divinely inspired leader shepherds his people to a promised land that was also the home of their distant ancestors" (46). In addition, both leaders--Aeneas and Moses--die before the realization of the promised future. According to Voegelin, "Israel . . . constituted itself by recording its own genesis as a people as an event with a special meaning in history, while the other Near Eastern societies constituted themselves as analogues of cosmic order. Israel alone had history as an inner form, while the other societies existed in the form of the cosmological myth" (Order and History 124).
founding of Rome appears to require that Aeneas and his men become fugitives, that they wander far from home for years, "buffeted / Cruelly on land as on the sea / By blows from powers of the air" (1. 5-7). Exile, however, is not a senseless trial arbitrarily imposed upon men by the gods. Undergone by a community united in their striving for a common goal or end, it plays a crucial role in their achievement of identity. Exile anticipates and prepares the way for the promise which the future holds. As Louise Cowan suggests, this sense of exile is fundamental to the world depicted by the epic poet: "Exodus and the Aeneid, containing the most telling examples of the formation of a people into a nation, depict the movement towards a destiny of fulfillment--towards a New Jerusalem or New Troy" (Introduction 9). Accordingly, the hope of this chapter is that in understanding the nature of the journey undertaken from Troy, we will more completely grasp the image of Rome itself.

Leaves and Trees

The difference between the old order which Aeneas leaves behind and the new order which he is destined to found is a difference between the relation each bears toward history. The very mark of the transition from Troy to Rome, in other words, is the emergence of a historical consciousness.

According to Erich Auerbach, the Homeric heroes live in an eternal present; their destiny is "clearly defined"
and they "wake every morning as if it were the first day of their lives" (12). For them, the present neither lies "open to the depths of the past" nor hints at a future yet to be realized, but is "brought to light in perfect fullness" (6-7). One of the clearest expressions of the Homeric hero's experience of time occurs in the sixth book of the Iliad, as the Trojan and Greek armies first encounter each other on the battlefield. A Trojan, Diomedes, calls out to his opponent, Glaukos, and inquires of his birth. The reply which Glaukos offers is one of Homer's best-known similes and one which—as we shall later see—Virgil himself repeats in the Aeneid:

High-hearted son of Tydeus, why ask of my generation? As is the generation of leaves, so is that of humanity. The wind scatters the leaves on the ground, but the live timber burgeons with leaves again in the season of spring returning. So one generation of men will grow while another dies. (6. 145-50)

As C. A. Patrides has indicated, the "idea of recurrence" underlying Glaukos's simile "is one of the most splendid commonplaces of ancient Greek thought" (1). Men's lives, like the leaves of a tree, come and go in a perpetual cycle of spring and autumn, of death and rebirth.

At first glance, the simile appears to dismiss men's lives as insignificant. Just as the leaves which burgeon each spring are merely short-lived products of the life-stock of the tree, so men's lives are merely transient effects of an eternal cause; like the leaves, they will fall away and be replaced. As G. S. Kirk suggests, the
"likening of human generations to the fall of leaves in autumn and their growing again in spring . . . means that life is transient and one generation succeeds another" (176).

Seth Schein, however, has pointed out that "Glaukos puts his emphasis as much on the stock that survives to put out new leaves as on the leaves that bloom and are poured to the ground like dead warriors" (70). In this light, the focus of the simile is not so much the transience of men's lives as the permanence of the source from which they derive their meaning. It is only because the leaves are attached to the tree that they have life—nourished and sustained by the strength of its sap. By analogy, the significance of men's lives is to be found not in their individuality but through their link with a common origin or ancestor. In fact, it is this identification that allows the Homeric hero to efface from his consciousness the essential transience of historical existence. Glaukos understands his life not as a unique event that occurs within the span of chronological time but as a repetition of the exemplary lives led by his heroic ancestors. Thus, the "idea of recurrence," far from emptying human lives of their significance, is what enables them to remain present to those primordial origins which endow them with meaning in the first place.
The Homeric hero's need to preserve contemporaneity with his ancestral past is not afforded by linear time, since its apparently endless succession of moments actually takes one further and further away from one's origins. It is only "by conferring a cyclic direction upon time," as Eliade indicates, that man annuls its irreversible, onward march:

Everything begins over again at its commencement every instant. . . . In a certain sense, it is even possible to say that nothing new happens in the world, for everything is but the repetition of the same primordial archetypes; this repetition, by actualizing the mythical moment when the archetypal gesture was revealed, constantly maintains the world in the same auroral instant of the beginnings. (Cosmos 89-90)

However, the cyclical movement which Glaukos attributes to time does not proceed with the same inevitability which appears to characterize the movement of the seasons. In fact, Page DuBois has argued that the view of time as a process of "regeneration which must be enacted by a human or divine agent" is actually more characteristic of the Iliad than that of an inevitable process of cyclical repetition (9).³

"Trees, in the Iliad, are not immortal," DuBois suggests in her discussion of the leaf simile:

---

³ Eliade himself suggests that societies for whom time is not allowed to become "history" feel the need to "regenerate themselves periodically through expulsion of 'evils' and confession of sins" (75).
Again and again a falling hero is compared to a falling tree, one whose leaves will not burgeon again in the spring. . . . If human generations are like the leaves of the tree, and the tree is like a hero, then the possibility of a tree's destruction threatens the organic continuity of men's shared existence. (10)

Glaukos's own actions on the battlefield are part of the process of regeneration required for the preservation of that fragile continuity. After recounting his genealogy, he tells Diomedes that he has been sent to Troy by his father, Hippolochos, and urged by him "to be always among the bravest," so as not to shame the generations of his ancestors, "who were the greatest men in Ephyre and again in wide Lykia" (6. 208-10). By carrying out his father's injunction, Glaukos recreates for the present the heroic deeds of the past, thus making time new again.

Jasper Griffin has suggested that the "development of feeling" in Glaukos's speech "runs from humility to pride" (72). When first asked by Diomedes to reveal his origins, Glaukos declines, apparently interpreting the question as a request for an account of his own personal history. For Glaukos, the individual life, seen in isolation from the archetypal category of the ancestor, is wholly transitory and insignificant; it represents the fatality and irreversibility of historical time. However, the man who initially declines to speak of his birth boasts of it in the end. But the account which Glaukos gives Diomedes is not a personal biography. Rather, it celebrates the essential unity of that life which far surpasses the extent
of his own limited existence. It is that larger life which enables Glaukos to imagine his own as meaningful, transforming his fatality into a continuity with both past and future.

In book six of the Aeneid, Virgil repeats the Homeric simile. The repetition, however, ultimately serves to emphasize the difference rather than the similarity between the experience of the exiled Trojans and that of their Homeric counterparts. Like Glaukos, Virgil compares the souls of the dead with the "leaves that yield their hold on boughs and fall through / Forests in the early frost of autumn" (6. 419-420). But the occasion for the comparison is entirely different than that in the Iliad. Whereas Glaukos is on the battlefield at Troy, Aeneas has descended into the underworld in order to visit his father's ghost. It is in part this difference in setting which accounts for the fact that whereas Glaukos turns immediately to the renewal of life that comes with spring, Virgil continues to dwell on the fate of the deceased.

The souls whom Aeneas encounters waiting on the banks of the river Acheron—and to which Virgil's simile refers—are those of the unburied dead. The account of their fate which the Sybil offers Aeneas is a reformulation of the ancient belief that funeral rites properly performed are a prerequisite for the restful abode of the soul in its after-life:
All in the nearby crowd you notice here
Are pauper souls, the souls of the unburied.
Charon's the boatman. Those the water bears
Are souls of buried men. He may not take them
Shore to dread shore on the hoarse currents there
Until their bones rest in the grave, or till
They flutter and roam this side a hundred years;
They may have passage then, and may return
To cross the deeps they long for. (6. 439-447)

The analogy which Virgil draws between these souls and the
autumnal leaves is both more limited and more specific than
the Homeric simile. While Glaukos takes the falling leaves
as an image of the death which all men experience, Virgil
adapts the image to distinguish the plight of the unburied
dead from those who have already found their rest in Hades.

Both similes offer an image of the separation which
death brings. For Glaukos, however, that separation is
mitigated--if not abolished--by the fact that he
participates in a larger life which continues even after
his own has ended. As DuBois indicates, the new leaves
which appear on the tree each spring "are the same as last
year's, part of the larger structure of the tree" (9). It
is by virtue of such cyclical repetitions that the dead
live on, not as historical individuals, but--as Eliade has
suggested--"through their reidentification with the
impersonal archetype of an ancestor" (47).

In Virgil's simile, by contrast, the kind of cyclical
continuity to which Glaukos points remains incomplete.
Just as leaves which are not returned to the soil cannot
again become part of the organic structure of the tree, so,
without the ritual of burial, the dead cannot regain that link with those who are still living. The souls who crowd Acheron's banks exist in a state of limbo, having left the community of the living but not yet reached the final resting place of the dead. Their experience, like that of Aeneas and his men, is essentially one of exile. Thus, if on one level, Virgil's simile serves to distinguish the plight of the buried from the unburied dead, on another, it distinguishes the fate of the Virgilian hero from that of his Homeric precursor.

The identification of the exiled Trojans with the souls of the unburied is at once literal and symbolic. A literal affinity exists because among the souls of "unhonored dead" whom Aeneas encounters on the banks of Acheron are those of three men who had undertaken with him the journey from Troy: "Leucaspis and the Lycian fleet's commander, / Orontes, who had sailed the windy sea / From Troy together, till the Southern gale / Had swamped and whirled them down" and Aeneas's helmsman, Palinurus, who on "course from Lybia, as he watched the stars, / Had been pitched overboard astern" (6. 451-59). Thus, although death at sea, unwept and unburied, is feared as much by the Homeric as by the Virgilian hero, it is far closer to the reality of Aeneas's experience than to that of Glaukos. That Aeneas is acutely aware of this distinction is never more evident than when his own life is threatened by
Aeolus's winds. Faced with the imminent prospect of death at sea, he laments the separation of his own fate from that of those Trojans who were afforded an honorable death in the war against the Greeks:

Triply lucky, all you men
To whom death came before your fathers' eyes
Below the wall at Troy! Bravest Danaan,
Diomedes, why could I not go down
When you had wounded me, and lose my life
On Ilium's battlefield? Our Hector lies there,
Torn by Achilles' weapon; there Sarpedon,
Our giant fighter, lies; and there the river Simois washes down so many shields
And helmets, with strong bodies taken under!
(1. 134-143)

Like Glaukos, Aeneas knows that to die honorably on the battlefield—although terrible in its own way—is not to be eternally separated from the living but rather to achieve an even closer identification with them. On account of their exemplary deeds, Hector and Sarpedon remain present to the memory of the Trojans. By contrast, Aeneas himself faces the prospect of the oblivion that results from an ignoble death.

The fate of the unburied dead, however, is more than simply a possibility which awaits the Trojans in their afterlife. On a symbolic plane, the fate of the unburied dead is analogous to their present existence, a fact which Virgil stresses through the addition of a second simile, entirely absent from Glaukos's speech, comparing the unburied dead to "migrating birds from the open sea / that darken heaven when the cold season comes / And drives them
overseas to sunlit lands" (6. 421-423). Even more than that of the unburied dead, the fate of Aeneas and his men—to wander for years from one sea to the next in search of a new homeland—finds a concrete reflection in the winter flight of birds across the oceans to warmer territory. This close identification—albeit unstated—between the migration of birds and men serves to strengthen the already implicit analogy between the experience of the souls who await their final passage to Hades and that of the exiled Trojans themselves.

Like the unburied dead, Aeneas and his men have been separated from the community of the living, cut off from the security of home and hearth; "tossed about / From one coast to another on the high seas," their wanderings appear to be characterized by the same aimlessness with which the pauper souls flutter and roam before gaining entrance to Hades (1. 912-913). Just as the pitiful crowds on Acheron's banks reach out longingly for the far shore, the Trojans, weary from years of hardship and forced exile, crave "the firm earth underfoot" (1. 236).

Of course, the crew of Trojans has not endured literal death. However, their experience of separation is arguably even more intense than that felt by the pauper souls. Not only have they been exiled from the living world of Troy, they have witnessed its very destruction. If the pauper souls are like the leaves which fall in the course of the
natural movement of the seasons, the Trojans are like those which scatter when the life of the tree itself is violently cut short. Indeed, it is this image that Aeneas himself employs to recall the memory of Troy's demise:

I knew the end then: Ilium was going down In fire, the Troy of Neptune going down As in high mountains when the countrymen Have notched an ancient ash, then make their axes Ring with might and main, chopping away To fell the tree--ever on the point of falling, Shaking through all its foliage, and the treetop Nodding; bit by bit the strokes prevail Until it gives a final groan at last And crashes down in ruin from the height. (2. 816-25)

The simile is charged with an intense emotion. According to Viktor Poschl, it "quite unHomerically, does not illustrate an event, but expounds a destiny. The suffering of the tree--its 'tragedy' is the main thing" (46). Although Aeneas does not describe his feelings as he witnesses Troy's destruction, he shares in a profound way in its suffering. In fact, it is in the image of the dying tree itself that his own heartfelt sorrow finds its most adequate expression.

Of course, the remembrance of the fall of Troy is not unique to the Aeneid. It lies at the very "core of the Homeric poems," as George Steiner has noted:

A city is the outward sum of man's nobility; in it, his condition is most thoroughly humanized. When a city is destroyed, man is compelled to wander the earth or dwell in the open fields in partial return to the manner of a beast. That is the central realization of the Iliad. Resounding through the epic, now in stifled allusion, now in strident lament,
is the dread fact that an ancient and splendid city has perished by the edge of the sea. (3)

It is Virgil's hero, however, who experiences the full effects of the loss which Steiner describes. Both Hector and Sarpedon go down with the city and, as a result, remain eternally identified with it; it is their closeness to Troy which Aeneas envies as he faces the prospect of an unheroic death far from Trojan shores. Aeneas himself, by contrast, must endure the reality of a world without Troy. It is he rather than the Homeric hero who is "compelled to wander the earth" with the knowledge that the world of his ancestors can never be recovered.

According to Eliade, the myths which describe the primordial situation "express its paradisiac character simply by depicting Heaven as, in illo tempore, very close to the Earth, or as easily accessible, either by climbing a tree or a tropical creeper or a ladder, or by scaling a mountain" (59). By corollary, the felling of the tree indicates man's exit from paradise into history: "When heaven had become abruptly separated from the earth, that is, when it had become remote, as in our days; when the tree . . . connecting Earth to Heaven had become cut; . . . then the paradisiac stage was over, and man entered into his present condition" (59-60).

Of course, the Homeric world is not situated in the age of paradise--far from it, in fact. However, as we have seen, the Homeric world achieves a continuity with the
primordial beginnings through an active process of regeneration which resists the onset of time. With Troy's destruction—symbolized in the axing of a tree—that continuity is ruptured. Those who remain behind, having lost their contemporaneity with primordial man, are faced with the inevitable historicity of their existence.

That the exiled Trojans experience the fall into history as a profound loss is evident. It is Aeneas, however, who feels that loss most acutely. Not only has he been cut off from Troy; his emergence as leader of his men has separated him from them also. Virgil calls him "a man apart" (1. 16). Although the other Trojans feel the loss of their homeland, they at least can share their sorrow among themselves: "When hunger had been banished, / And tables put away, they talked at length / In hope and fear about their missing friends" (1. 294-6). Aeneas, by contrast, must disguise his emotions; "Burdened and sick at heart, / He feigned hope in his look, and inwardly / Contained his anguish" (1. 284-6). In fact, it is only because he is willing to bear the burden of loss that his men can relieve themselves of it. While they enjoy the oblivion of sleep, he remains "thoughtful through the restless night" (1. 412).

History and Loss

Eliade suggests that "the desire felt by the man of traditional societies to refuse history, and to confine
himself to an indefinite repetition of archetypes" is not a nostalgia for a "lost paradise of animality" in which humanity and nature were inseparable (90). Rather, it testifies to "his thirst for the 'ontic,' his will to be, to be after the fashion of the archetypal beings whose gestures he constantly repeats" (90). For Aeneas and his men, the exile from Troy seems--at least initially--to involve a separation from the ontology of the ancestor. Their existence in history appears to be the very existence which archaic man attempted to refuse--a mode of non-being, a dwelling in unreality.

Whether the sense of loss which the exiles feel is the definitive mark of their existence after Troy, however, remains to be seen. It has certainly been accorded a central place in twentieth-century readings of the poem. Adam Parry, for example, suggests that "the sense of emptiness is the very heart of the Virgilian mood" (63). He points to "the frequent elegiac note so apparently uncalled for in a panegyric of Roman greatness" and "the continual opposition of a personal voice which comes to us as if it were Virgil's own to the public voice of Roman success" as evidence against "orthodox interpretations" which "take the poem ultimately as a great work of Augustan propaganda" (61).

Parry's case is not that Virgil simply rejects the glory of the Roman achievement. In fact, he maintains that
"Virgil continually insists on . . . the establishment of peace and order and civilization, that dominion without end which Jupiter tells Venus he has given the Romans" (73).

"But," Parry suggests,

he insists equally on the terrible price one must pay for this glory. More than blood, sweat and tears, something more precious is continually lost by the necessary process; human freedom, love, personal loyalty, all the qualities which the heroes of Homer represent, are lost in the service of what is grand, monumental and impersonal: the Roman State. (71)

Essentially, Parry presents Virgil as a proto-Freudian who recognizes that civilization is only made possible by individual renouncement. Virgil's hero is a man who bears his people's destiny at the expense of the fulfillment of his own desires—the most obvious of which is his love for Dido: "An agent of powers at once high and impersonal, he is successively denied all the attributes of a hero, and even of a man. His every utterance perforce contains a note of history, rather than of individuality" (68).

That there should be a resemblance between the view of civilization presented in the Aeneid and that of Freud is not coincidental; Freud himself inscribed Juno's invocation of the underworld from Book Seven of the Aeneid—Flectere si nequeo Superos, Acheronta movebo—as an epigraph on the title page of The Interpretation of Dreams. Indeed, it

4. Fitzgerald translates this: "If I can sway/No heavenly hearts I'll rouse the world below" (7. 425-6). Jean Starobinski's essay "Acheronta Movebo" provides an extensive discussion of Freud's use of the quotation: "the line twice cited in The Interpretation of Dreams . . . is
is in the writings of Freud, as Theodore Ziolkowski notes, that the modern appropriation of Virgil is exemplified—an appropriation which "differs strikingly from the view pervasive throughout the nineteenth century" and which "anticipates the 'dark' readings characteristic of recent decades" (4). In fact, Freud's Virgil is darker and less sentimental than the version Parry gives us. In Juno's attempt to summon the infernal powers of the underworld, Freud found an image of the analyst's attempt to uncover the repressed contents of the unconscious. However, as Ziolkowski indicates,

the words of the vengeful Juno also anticipate the ideological forces about to be unleashed on the modern world. In her implacable opposition to the progress of history embodied by Aeneas—from the semibarbarous tribal culture of Turnus and his Latin allies to the new Roman society governed by humane laws, pietas, and ordo—Juno prefigures the reactionary forces of totalitarianism that emerged from the chaos of World War I. (3)

It was precisely those forces which led Freud to recognize that the sufferings and renunciations which civilization demands of individuals were not wholly negative. Freud did not despair of the possibility of a better society; in fact, there is a utopian strain in his work which put forth as a condensed and figural interpretation of repression and symptom theory themselves. The quotation uses a cultural model in order to fully explicate the repression theory. It urges us to proceed along a Virgilian interpretation of Freudian knowledge, since the Freudian text itself establishes an isomorphism, or at least an occasional equivalence, between myth and psychological theory" (399).
counterbalances what is often perceived as an excessive pessimism. But if he recognized that "a person becomes neurotic because he cannot tolerate the amount of frustration which society imposes on him in the service of its cultural ideals," he did not infer from this that "the abolition or reduction of those demands would result in a return to happiness" (34). Quite the contrary: he maintained that "all the things with which we seek to protect ourselves against the threats that emanate from the sources of our suffering are part of that very civilization" which is held "largely responsible for our misery" (33).

According to Parry, Virgil presents the processes of history as inevitable while, at the same time, casting doubt on the value of what they achieve; civilization is realized only at the expense of individual fulfillment. For Freud, however, the relation between civilization and individuality is not one of simple opposition. Indeed, he maintains that "the process of human civilization and the developmental or educative process of individual human beings" are "very similar in nature, if not the very same process applied to different kinds of objects" (86-87). Although the main aim of "the developmental process of the individual" is the attainment of happiness, its realization can scarcely be brought about without the integration in, or adaption of the individual to a human community (87).
Thus, insofar as the process has union with the community as its end, it coincides with the process of civilization itself, the aim of which is "the creation of a unified group out of many individuals" (87).

For Freud, then, there is no pristine individuality which predates the structure of culture. The very process of individuation has as its condition the integration of the human subject into the communal life of society. Moreover, that integration is achieved through the kind of imposition of restrictions—the most fundamental of which is the taboo against incest—carried out, albeit on a far more extensive scale, by the process of civilization itself. In other words, the renunciations which civilization requires of individuals are themselves an elaboration of that primordial renunciation—the infant's separation from his mother—which initiates the developmental process of the individual. Thus, whereas Parry's reading of the Aeneid stresses the losses suffered by the individual at the hands of civilization, Freud suggests that individuality itself is structured on an originary loss.

Although Freud himself never produced a systematic interpretation of the Aeneid, his allusions to the poem suggest a reading which views it as an allegory of the Freudian model of ego-development. In Translations of Power: Narcissism and the Unconscious in Epic History,
Elizabeth Bellamy develops this view by applying the insights of the French psychoanalyst, Jacques Lacan. Lacan's innovation in the field of psychoanalysis was to reinterpret Freud's thought in the light of structural linguistics. Specifically, he argued that the division of the Freudian subject into the conscious life of the ego and the unconscious or repressed desire corresponds, in linguistic terms, with the entry of the subject into language. With the repression of the child's Oedipal desire, Terry Eagleton explains in his discussion of Lacan, the child

must now resign itself to the fact that it can never have any direct access to reality, in particular to the now prohibited body of the mother. It has been banished from this "full," imaginary possession into the "empty" world of language. . . . To enter language, then, is to become a prey to desire: language, Lacan remarks, is "what follows being into desire." Language divides up--articulates--the fullness of the imaginary: we will now never be able to find rest in the single object, the final meaning, which will make sense of all the others. To enter language is to be severed from what Lacan calls the "real," that inaccessible realm which is always beyond the reach of signification, always outside the symbolic order. (167-168)

In her reading of the Aeneid, Bellamy suggests that Troy is the city of the "Imaginary," the term which Lacan uses to indicate the subject's pre-oedipal experience of plenitude and unity. For Aeneas, the exile from Troy is the origin of the self in epic history, a self which Bellamy regards as inherently narcissistic because it seeks finally to recover the lost Troy as the "other" which will reflect its
own ego ideal. But, Bellamy suggests, "the narcissistic search for the other always exiles the subject from itself" (81). Applying Lacan's notion that loss is the very condition of language, she argues that Aeneas's own narration of his escape from Troy is the very moment of his "accession to subject-hood, the moment he becomes a subject 'speaking' from alienation" (80).

However, to argue, as Bellamy does, that Aeneas's identity is constituted entirely through loss is, perhaps, to mistake his impression of the exile from Troy for its deepest reality. It is true, as Bellamy indicates, that Virgil's hero is "haunted by the lost Troy as his 'other'" (34). Indeed, Aeneas feels that the exile from Troy has transformed his own life into that of a ghost, a shadowy remnant of the old order destroyed in the war against the Greeks. The pathos of his encounter with the unburied dead is only increased by the fact that the condition of those for whom he feels so much pity appears analogous to that of himself and the other exiled Trojans. That the analogy is never made completely explicit by Virgil, however, suggests that it may be more indicative of Aeneas's limited understanding of the reality in which he finds himself than of the reality itself. The point is not that Aeneas's experience of loss is unreal but that the overwhelming nature of his experience may blind him--if only temporarily--to its larger context.
Exile and Knowledge

If the exile from Troy is an analogue of history itself, then it may be better understood as a condition in which appearances and reality do not always correspond, rather than one which is predicated upon the loss of a prior state of imaginary plenitude. The historical order, the theologian Romano Guardini suggests, "signifies above all a state of being that is both shut off and obscure. The whole web of causes and effects can neither be surveyed as a whole nor can it be clearly grasped and understood" (79). The condition of history, in other words, is not the loss of reality but its withdrawal from view.

In fact, the breach between appearances and reality is a central motif in the narrative which Aeneas himself offers Dido and her court. As Aeneas recounts it, the immediate cause of Troy's downfall is the failure of the Trojans to understand the true nature of the gift presented to them by the Greeks. The wooden horse exemplifies the kind of deceptive appearances which will plague Aeneas both during and after Troy's fall. On the face of it, the horse is offered by the Greeks for "a safe return by sea" (1. 25). But "on the sly they shut inside a company / Chosen from their picked soldiery by lot, / Crowding the vaulted caverns in the dark— / The horse's belly— with men fully armed" (2. 26-9). Its presence has the immediate effect of dividing the Trojans among themselves:
Thymoetes shouts
It should be hauled inside the walls and moored
High on the citadel—whether by treason
Or just because Troy's fate went that way now.
Capys opposed him; so did the wiser heads:
"Into the sea with it," they said, "or burn it,
Build up a bonfire under it,
This trick of the Greeks, a gift no one can trust,
Or cut it open, search the hollow belly!"
(2. 46-54)

Thus, Aeneas remarks, "Contrary notions pulled the crowd
apart" (2. 55). With the appearance of Sinon, however, the
deception of the Trojans is complete. Apparently a traitor
to the Greek forces, Sinon claims that the Trojan horse has
been offered by his former comrades to Minerva in
reparation for the raid made on her shrine by Diomedes and
Ulysses. The punishment of Laocoon, a Trojan priest who
pierced the horse with his spear, seems to confirm Sinon's
story. Thus, as Aeneas himself records, "a tall tale and
fake tears / Had captured us, whom neither Diomedes / Nor
Larisaean Achilles overpowered, / Nor ten long years, nor
all their thousand ships" (2. 269-72).

Aeneas's narrative recognizes that the cause of Troy's
downfall is not so much its capitulation in the face of
physical force as the willing acceptance by almost the
entire community of a false account of reality:

on we strove unmindful, deaf and blind,
To place the monster on our blessed height.
Then, even then, Cassandra's lips unsealed
The doom to come: lips by a god's command
Never believed or heeded by the Trojans.
So pitiably we, for whom that day
Would be the last, made all our temples green
With leafy festal boughs throughout the city.
(2. 328-35)
When the Trojans breach the walls and lay open the city, they simultaneously create a breach in the city's own order of representation. With the reception of the wooden horse, the distinction between enemy and friend—a distinction essential to the city's integrity—becomes fatally blurred. In the battle which follows, the Greeks, led by Androgeos, mistake Aeneas and his men for their own comrades. After hailing them cheerfully, Androgeos immediately "knew himself / Fallen among enemies" and "recoiled / Like one who steps down on a lurking snake / In a briar patch and jerks back, terrified, / As the angry thing rears up, all puffed and blue" (2. 501-6). The Trojans themselves misread their enemies' fate, taking it as a sign that fortune is on their side. Supremely confident, they array their bodies with the armor of the men they have just vanquished so that they can pass unnoticed among the Greeks. The result of their ploy, however, is that they too become the victims of mistaken identity: "from the temple gable's height, / We met a hail of missiles from our friends, / Pitiful execution, by their error, / Who thought us Greek from our Greek plumes and shields" (2. 541-544).

The fall of Troy appears to take the form of what Rene Girard has called a "crisis of non-differentiation," a breakdown of the distinctions which form the basis of the social order. For Girard, those distinctions are essentially arbitrary, maintained only through the
mechanism of sacrificial violence. Aeneas's narrative, however, suggests that the disintegration of the Trojan order results from the eclipse of men's capacity to distinguish reality. The crisis of non-differentiation is not so much the dissolution of an arbitrary system of distinctions as a crisis within man himself.

Aeneas recalls that the Trojans resist the onslaught of the Greeks with the blind instinct of hunted beasts rather than with the precision of a rationally worked-out strategy:

like predatory wolves
In fog and darkness, when a savage hunger
Drives them blindly on, and cubs in lairs
Lie waiting with dry famished jaws--just so
Through arrow flights and enemies we ran
Toward our sure death, straight for the city's heart,
Cavernous black night over around us. (2. 475-81)

In Freud's mind, as we have seen, it was this kind of capitulation to the instinctual life which posed such a grave threat to the continuity of modern civilization. Indeed, Virgil himself--the poem indicates--would hardly disagree with Freud's contention that civilization "is built upon a renunciation of instinct, however much it presupposes precisely the non-satisfaction . . . of powerful instincts" (44). But whether Virgil would regard the process of renunciation as the sole basis of civilization is another question.

According to Freud, the beginning of civilized existence corresponds to that stage of libidinal
development when the infant's ego "detaches itself from the external world" (15). The advent of this stage means that "one can differentiate between what is internal—what belongs to the ego and what is external—what belongs to the external world" (14). "In this way," Freud indicates, "one makes the first step towards the introduction of the reality principle which is to dominate future development" (14). Prior to this mature stage of development, however, the "ego includes everything" (15). Thus, "our present ego feeling is . . . only a shrunken residue of a much more inclusive—indeed an all embracing one which corresponded to a more intimate bond between the ego and the world about it" (15). This original ego-feeling is similar to Hobbes's state of nature in which individuals exercise the right of all to all. Before it acquires the more sharply differentiated ego of maturity, the infant is entirely uninhibited in his search for pleasurable sensations; the lust for pleasure is so dominant, Freud suggests, that everything—both internal and external—becomes simply a means towards its satisfaction. For Hobbes, the renunciation of this powerful instinct is only made possible by the prohibitions of a coercive power. For Freud, by contrast, human evolution has led to the internalization of those prohibitions, the super-ego taking the place of Hobbes's absolute state.
Freud indicates, however, that the original ego-feeling of inclusiveness may persist in some individuals, alongside the narrower, "more sharply differentiated ego-feeling of maturity, like a kind of counterpart to it" (15). Such individuals experience a connection or bond with a world that exceeds the boundaries of their own limited egos, "a sensation of 'eternity,' a feeling as of something limitless, unbounded—as it were, 'oceanic'" (11).

Freud, however, tends to regard the oceanic feeling as reducible to the original ego-feeling, as a regressive pattern of ego-development, a recurrence of the infantile, unrealistic, and erotic wishes of early childhood. Jacques Maritain, by contrast, has suggested that the content of poetic knowledge is the kind of intimate bond between self and world that Freud identifies as a mere residue of infancy. The reality which the poet suffers is carried by means of emotion into the depths of his subjectivity. Thus, the world that he grasps is known not—according to the law of speculative knowledge—as something other than himself, "but on the contrary, as inseparable from himself and from his emotion, and in truth as identified with himself" (115). "The soul," Maritain writes

is known in the experience of the world and the world is known in the experience of the soul, through a knowledge which does not know itself... In poetic intuition objective reality and subjectivity, the world and the whole of the soul, coexist inseparably. At that moment sense and sensation are brought back to
the heart, blood to the spirit, passion to intuition. (124)

Maritain is careful to point out that poetic knowledge is not opposed to reason. Rather, "the realm of rational knowledge or logical consciousness is preceded by the hidden workings of an immense and primal preconscious life" which plays an essential part in the genesis of poetry (94). Thus, both poetic and intellectual knowledge share a common root in the "spiritual unconscious" where "the intellect and the imagination, as well as the powers of desire, love, and emotion, are engaged in common" (110).

The journey from Troy is not least a process which requires the renunciation of the hero's most human passions --his nostalgia for Troy, his grief for the mother and wife he leaves behind and the father who dies along the way, and his love for Dido. Indeed, after his killing of Turnus, one wonders if the huge task which Aeneas has undertaken has not deprived him of his humanity. "Too long a sacrifice / Can make a stone of the heart," Yeats writes in his poem, "Easter, 1916" (lines 57-58). By the end of the

5. Maritain credits Freud with "having obliged philosophers to acknowledge the existence of unconscious thought and unconscious psychological activity" (95). But he distinguishes his own notion of a "spiritual unconscious" from Freudian unconscious: "There are two kinds of unconscious, two great domains of psychological activity screened from the grasp of consciousness: the preconscious of the spirit in its living springs, and the unconscious of blood and flesh, instincts, tendencies, complexes, repressed images and desires, traumatic memories, as constituting a closed or autonomous dynamic whole" (91-92).
Aeneid, it is difficult to avoid the impression that the deprivations which Virgil's hero has endured have brought about the petrification of his soul.

But Aeneas's journey is more than simply a process which separates him from others. Certainly, he is "a man apart," a characteristic which makes him a prototype of the modern isolated individual. However, in his depiction of the hero's development, Virgil also shows us another movement, a counter-movement which leads Aeneas not into a state of isolation but towards a deeper recognition of his participation in a reality which transcends his own limited existence. It is a movement towards the poetic knowledge of which Maritain speaks, a knowledge of the world not as other than the self but as intimately bound up with its own reality.

Freud himself recognized that the boundaries of the ego are essentially fictitious. While it "appears to us as something autonomous and unitary, marked distinctly from everything," the ego actually continues "inwards, without any sharp delimitation, into an unconscious mental activity which we designate as the id and for which it serves as a kind of facade" (13). Thus, Freud's "reality principle" is actually predicated upon the repression of a whole other dimension of the real. For Freud, however, this repression is entirely necessary, even though it inevitably produces a certain amount of discontent in individuals. The
alternative is the anarchic reign of man's unconscious life, a life which Freud regarded as one of uninhibited aggression and egoistic self-satisfaction.

Clearly, Freud saw in Virgil's representation of the underworld an emblem of—and, indeed, a justification for—his own notion of the unconscious. But in the poem itself, the underworld is not exclusively the domain of those anarchic forces—namely, the fury Allecto—which Juno summons to wreak havoc on the peace established between the Trojan leader and King Latinus. Aeneas's descent to the realm of the dead represents the decisive point in his journey toward the reintegration of his own self. His development, however, does not leave him locked within a realm of interiority. "The shape of a man's life," Guardini suggests,

is not a growth and unfolding from within, culminating in a return upon itself; its figure, its symbol, is not the self-enclosed circle, but an arch that reaches out toward something that in turn comes to meet it.

For Aeneas, that encounter with the other finds its focal point in his reunion with his dead father, Anchises.

Fathers and Sons

Aeneas's descent to the underworld is preceded by his visit to the temple of Apollo at Cumae, a temple designed by the legendary craftsman Daedalus after his escape from Crete. It was Daedalus who had created the maze in which Minos, the king of Crete, kept the Minotaur. In revenge for the
death of his son, Androgeos, Minos had made war on the Athenians and eventually forced them "to pay in recompense each year / The living flesh of seven sons" (6. 32-3). Among the victims left to die at the hands of the Minotaur was Theseus, son of the Athenian king, Aegeus. Out of pity for Minos's daughter, Ariadne, who had fallen in love with Theseus, Daedalus provided a device—the thread—which would enable the Athenian to escape from the maze. This act, however, invoked the wrath of Minos and forced Daedalus to flee the island, a feat he achieved by his invention of wings.

Aeneas encounters the events of this drama depicted on the doors of Apollo's temple. As Page DuBois has noted, they differ markedly from those which the hero has previously seen on the walls of Juno's temple at Carthage:

they do not belong to the real history of Aeneas and the past of his people, but to the timeless realm of myth. The representations have an analogical rather than a historical relationship to the hero and his situation. Aeneas cannot see himself literally depicted, yet he is here in the silence in this verbal text. (36)

The scenes depicted on the first door, the death of Androgeos and the selection of the Athenian sons to be sent to Crete as tribute, offer images of the separation of father and son. It is a separation which Aeneas himself has endured, not as a result of his own death, of course, but of Anchises's. Unlike Androgeos, whose life is violently cut short, Aeneas remains behind to fulfill his
duty to his father. It is the theme of filial responsibility which underlies the scenes depicted on the second door. The focus has shifted from Athens to Crete and the legend of the Minotaur. While Theseus is not explicitly mentioned in the narrative, he is, as DuBois notes, "the link between the repeated action of the events at Athens, the choosing of the victims, and the single unwinding of the secret of the labyrinth" (38). Moreover, in Theseus, Aeneas finds an analogue of himself:

Theseus . . . penetrated the maze at Knossos, just as Aeneas will penetrate the maze at Hades. Both must enter a confusing, deadly place, undergo a trial, and emerge, symbolically reborn. Theseus, like Aeneas, benefited from the love of a royal princess, then abandoned her. He is the predecessor in the myth of Aeneas, who is soon to meet again with his Regina, Dido. (38)

The analogy between the two figures, however, is not one of direct correspondence. "Theseus," DuBois reminds us, "left his homeland, traveled to a deadly land, and returned, only to cause his father Aegeus's death through negligence" (38). Thus, while Theseus, like Aeneas, is a son who has out-lived his father, he also presents an example of the son's failure to carry out his filial duty. As such, he is a negative rather than an exemplary model for Aeneas.

With the mention of Icarus, Virgil gives us another figure whose story mirrors his own hero's life. Just as Icarus was entrusted by his father Daedalus with a vital task--the escape from Crete--so, too, Aeneas receives his mission from Anchises. Icarus, however, failed to heed his
father's words and flew too near the sun. As a result, the wax which fastened the wings to his body melted and he fell into the Aegean Sea and drowned. Icarus's failure accounts for his absence from the images depicted on the temple doors. It is that absence which Virgil as narrator draws to our attention when he addresses the unfortunate youth: "In that high sculpture you, too, would have had / Your great part, Icarus, had grief allowed. / Twice your father had tried to shape your fall / In gold, but twice his hands dropped" (6. 47-50). Icarus's voyage ends in disaster because his excessive trust in himself leads him to ignore his father's advice; his illusion—shattered by the failure of his mission—is the illusion of self-sufficiency. By implication, Aeneas's destiny depends not on the realization of his own autonomy but on his reunion with his father in Hades.

For Freud, it is the appearance of the father which signals the end of that intimate bond with reality—and specifically, with the mother's body—which the child experiences in the earliest stages of its development. The

6. de Certeau suggests Icarus is a prototype of the modern urban dweller who desires to transcend the maze of the city: "An Icarus flying above these waters, he can ignore the devices of Daedalus in mobile and endless labyrinths far below. His elevation transforms him into a voyeur. It puts him at a distance. It transforms the bewitching world by which one was 'possessed' into a text that lies before one's eyes. It allows one to read it, to be a solar Eye, looking down like a god. The exaltation of a scopic and gnostic drive: the fiction of knowledge is related to this lust to be a viewpoint and nothing more" (92).
threat of castration by the father forces the child to repress his incestuous desire for the mother; this repression prepares the way for his integration into communal life. Having relinquished the maternal bond, the child identifies with the symbolic role of the father, a role which he himself will be able to take up and realize in the future.

In some respects, Aeneas's encounter with Anchises corresponds to the Freudian model. It represents a crucial stage in the hero's development, the change which makes him a father rather than a son, and which confirms him in his role as father of the Roman people. But for Virgil's hero, the father represents more than simply a place—however central—in a system of social relations. Aeneas is, rather, the link between the dead and those yet to be born, between his ancestral past and his destined future, between the old world of Troy and the new world of the Roman city. Just before he is reunited with Anchises, Aeneas is shown "the ancient dynasty of Teucer, / Heroes high of heart, beautiful scions, / Born in greater days: Ilus, Assaracus, and Dardanus, who founded Troy" (6. 867-70). Subsequently, Anchises reveals to him the "glories" which will "follow Dardan generations / In after years" and the famous sons who will spring from "Italian blood" in his line (6. 1015-17).
Thus, the hero's encounter with his father is more than a reunion with his immediate ancestor. In the final stage of his journey through the underworld, Aeneas encounters a life which transcends that of any single individual, a common life shared by all the living, the dead and those yet to be born. The hero who has undergone physical separation from his Trojan homeland realizes his part in a larger community, a community which is made possible not by any social mechanism but by the transcendent nature of each human being. If Aeneas has experienced the duration of exile as a kind of isolation in the historical present, he now experiences a simultaneity of past and future, a glimpse of eternity.

The vision which Aeneas attains in Hades is a vision of a community which far exceeds that of the city which he is destined to found. Rome will be realized within the span of historical time; as such, it will always fall short of the ideal community which transcends the boundaries of the historical order. At the same time, however, Rome's founding depends on this sense of community with which Aeneas emerges from his descent to the underworld. While the ideal community can never be perfectly embodied in Rome, its anticipation provides the new city with the very condition of its existence. It is in this sense, as Barbara Bono remarks, that Virgil's poem "looks forward to Christian eschatology" (39). "The Aeneid," she suggests,
"exposes an intensity of longing more dynamic and creative than nostalgia, one in which Troy, Carthage, and even Rome itself function less as places, as a set of material conditions, and more as metaphors for the ideal" (40).

Rome anticipates an ideal world. However, unlike the cities of archaic culture, it does not represent an attempt to transcend the limitations of historical existence itself. On the contrary, the vision of community which Aeneas attains in Hades is made possible by the acceptance of those very limitations. It is instructive, in this regard, to contrast the symbolic movement of Aeneas's journey through the underworld with that of Icarus's flight from Crete. As we have seen, the latter journey ends in the son's fatal separation from his father; it represents an egocentric movement which denies the communal nature of human existence. Icarus's flight removes him not only from his father but from his earthly roots. Implicit in his attempt to fly near the sun is a rejection of the finite world of earthly existence for the infinite world of the heavens, the limitations of human time for the boundlessness of eternity. Icarus's journey represents a childish dream, the dream that man can ascend to the condition of the gods, that by leaving behind the created world he can realize his own freedom and autonomy.

Icarus's fate serves as a kind of caution for Virgil's hero. It warns him that his own growth in understanding
will not be served by the attempt to simply transcend the concrete actualities of existence. Hence, Aeneas's descent to the underworld is a movement not away from history but toward an apprehension of its deepest reality. It is a period during which the hero confronts the ghosts of his own past and moves beyond them. Unlike Icarus, whose flight from history ends in ignominious death, Aeneas descends into the depths of time and reemerges with an image of eternity. It is, in other words, precisely through the entry into the finite that Aeneas acquires a vision of the infinite.

Aeneas's journey through the underworld represents an intensification of rather than a radical departure from the nature of his experience of exile from Troy. In the midst of the confusion surrounding the old city's destruction, the hero's mother, Venus, promises to reveal to him the nature of his destiny: "I'll tear away the cloud / That curtains you, and films your mortal sight, / The fog around you" (2. 795-7). That revelation, however, does not come to Aeneas immediately; it is, rather, a gradual movement toward understanding which requires the hero's patient endurance of the trials of exile. Aeneas leaves Troy not with a map or blueprint of the new city but with only the knowledge that his ancient homeland will soon be destroyed forever. Thus, the founding of Rome is engendered in radical uncertainty. Indeed, it is Aeneas's courage in the
face of that uncertainty that makes him an exemplary hero: "We toiled / to build a fleet, though none could say where fate / Would take or settle us" (3. 7-9). It is only when he sees the story of the Trojans depicted on the walls of the great temple at Carthage that the hero's fears for the future are allayed; realizing for the first time the extent of Troy's fame, he takes "heart to hope / For safety, and to trust his destiny more / Even in affliction" (1. 612-14).

Model Cities

Aeneas's destiny, then, is revealed to him not in a single moment of insight but rather through the slow passage of time. That gradual revelation is frequently realized by means of indirection rather than by explicit messages from the gods. Just as the images carved on the doors of Apollo's temple provide the hero with analogues of his own destiny, similarly, the time of exile is the occasion for encounters with figures whose endeavors parallel that of Aeneas. Andromache and Dido are the most significant of these. Like Aeneas, they have been dispossessed of their native homelands and have taken on the task of building new cities. They are heroes in their own right and Aeneas is struck by the nobility with which they have borne their trials. Ultimately, however, both of these figures are more significant for the negative knowledge they provide the hero than for any example he can follow. Aeneas must
finally leave their cities behind, knowing that they do not offer him paradigms for the city which he is destined to found.

While Aeneas's experience of exile is one of profound loss, the fulfillment of his destiny requires that he not succumb to nostalgia, to that paralyzing homesickness for the lost world of Troy. Andromache's failure is that she has. She is a tragic rather than an epic figure because she has allowed herself to be completely overcome by her grief for her native city and, as a result, has rendered herself incapable of envisioning a new future for herself and her people. She appears driven by what Edouard Glissant has called reversion, "the obsession with a single origin," with "the absolute state of being" (16). The city over which she presides with her husband Helenus is the most visible sign of that ultimately destructive impulse. As Aeneas approaches the city gates, he finds before him a "Troy in miniature, / A slender copy of our massive tower, / A dry brooklet named Xanthus . . . and . . . a Scaean gate" (3. 477-80). Unable to come to terms with the loss of Troy, Andromache has given herself over to producing a scrupulously precise replica of it. Her nostalgia finds its outlet in imitation.

According to Glissant, "not only is imitation itself not workable but real obsession with it is intolerable. The mimetic impulse is a kind of insidious violence. A
people that submits to it takes some time to realize its consequences collectively and critically, but is immediately affected by the resulting trauma" (18). Virgil himself implies that the mimetic impulse is a kind of death drive. When Aeneas first encounters Andromache, she is offering libations at a replica of great Hector's tomb, a replica which is in truth nothing more than "an empty mound of turf" (3. 412). Thus, Virgil suggests that Andromache's Ilium is founded not on cherished values carried over from an older order but on absence. Her imitations are monuments to death, futile attempts to render permanent something which no longer exists.

According to Bellamy, "Aeneas' personal history of his own exile from Troy" is also "the larger narcissistic origin" of the imperial enterprise itself:

Tracing the westward movement of the signifying chain of empire, but ... seeking always to recuperate Troy as its origin, the displacement of energy that constitutes the translatio imperii is the narcissism of empire—a displacement that represses and flees from the destruction of Troy, even as it nostalgically yearns to recuperate the tragic Troiana fortuna into a narcissistic revision of imperial "wholeness." (34)

Bellamy, however, ignores the fact that the clearest instance of narcissism can be seen in the figure of Andromache herself. It is she rather than Aeneas who creates a world which serves back to her a reflection of her own private obsession. Andromache is locked within the deadly circularity of the narcissistic self, the self which insulates itself from the reality of history and change.
Aeneas's encounter with her serves to warn him against the futility of attempting to recreate the Trojan past. However, if the founding of Rome constitutes a new departure, it does not necessitate the complete repression of the memory of Troy. The hero's task is to found a new city not by imitation but by intertextuality, a city which will contain the "traces"—to use Glissant's term—of the old order but without being identical to it. Aeneas takes with him only those elements of his ancient home that can be carried across, that are capable of being translated into a new context. Thus, the household gods are brought to Italy's shores not because they are emblems of a local culture but precisely because of their universality. The new city will have as its basis not simply a past tradition but those qualities which are timeless.

Dido's Carthage appears to offer Aeneas a more vital model for his own endeavors than Andromache's little Ilium. As he descends the long ledge that provides a view of the city, he sees

where lately huts had been,
Marvelous buildings, gateways, cobbled ways,
And din of wagons. There the Tyrians
Were hard at work: laying courses for walls,
Rolling up stones to build the citadel,
While others picked out building sites and plowed
A boundary furrow. Laws were being enacted,
Magistrates and a sacred senate chosen.
Here men were dredging harbors, there they laid
The deep foundation of a theatre,
And quarried massive pillars to enhance
The future stage. . . . (1. 576-87)
Inevitably, the sight of the newly rising city reminds Aeneas of his own promised destiny and makes him long for an end to his difficult exile: "How fortunate these are / Whose city walls are rising here and now!" (1. 595-6). Thus, when Dido invites him to join her "realm on equal terms," he is understandably elated (1. 777). The fact that both leaders share in common the difficult experience of exile—as Dido reminds Aeneas—makes the idea of their union seem all the more natural: "My life / Was one of hardship and forced wandering / Like your own, till in this land at length / Fortune would have me rest" (1. 857-60).

While the attraction of Carthage for Aeneas is obvious, Virgil's account suggests from the beginning that Dido's city is somehow inimical to the Trojans' destiny. We are told in the poem's opening invocation how "hard and huge / A task it was to found the Roman people" (1. 48-9). Yet, Aeneas is struck by the ease with which Carthage is emerging. Its builders carry out their tasks as bees in early summer

In sunlight in the flowering fields
Hum at their work, and bring along the young
Full-grown to beehood; as they cram their combs
With honey, brimming all the cells with nectar,
Or take newcomers' plunder, or like troops
Alerted, drive away the lazy drones,
And labor thrives and sweet thyme scents the honey.
(1. 587-94)

It is not insignificant that Virgil should choose imagery from the natural rather than the human world to represent the efforts of the Tyrians. It suggests that the
The construction of Carthage is the result not of the willed effort of human beings but of the kind of instinctual behavior which is characteristic of creatures of nature. Aeneas's own task, Virgil implies, is radically different from that of the worker bees who carry nectar to fill their combs. The new city will be the product not of an exclusively natural response but of cooperation between the human and divine. Moreover, it will be characterized not by the sweetness of the honeypot but by the nobility that is borne out of the endurance of suffering.

However, it is only after Aeneas has reveled with Dido "all the winter long" that he realizes, aided by Mercury's admonition, the folly of remaining at Carthage (4. 264). Then, he "Burned only to be gone, to leave that land / Of the sweet life behind" (4. 384-5). Virgil's account of the ritual union of Aeneas and Dido allows us to understand the true character of that life:

Now to the self-same cave
Came Dido and the captain of the Trojans.
Prime Earth herself and Nuptial Juno
Opened the ritual, torches of lightning blazed,
High Heaven became witness to the marriage,
And nymphs cried out wild hymns from a mountain top.
That day was the first cause of death, and first
Of sorrow. Dido had not further qualms
As to impressions given and set abroad;
She thought no longer of a secret love
But called it marriage. Thus, under that name she hid her fault. (4. 227-38)

The ceremony that Dido calls marriage is in fact a mere parody of the city's sacred institution. It takes place not in a temple within Carthage's walls but in a cave
hollowed out by nature; a lightning storm substitutes for torches designed by human hand and the "wild hymns" of nymphs for sacred music. In Dido's mind, this simulated ceremony provides a cover for her own surrender to her passion for Aeneas.

The sorrow which Aeneas feels upon leaving Carthage is the result not so much of a desire to accept Dido's offer as of compassion for her grief at his impending departure. That compassion, Victor Poschl has suggested, is a manifestation of the hero's humanitas: "He suffers more because of the sorrow of others than for his own misfortune. His concern to protect those near to him from grief and pain never slackens" (44). Aeneas's duty, however, prevents him from relieving Dido's distress, despite the relentless pleas brought to him by her sister, Anna. His steadfastness in the face of those pleas is likened by Virgil to that of a tree which resists the assaults made on it by a violent storm:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{And just as when the north winds from the Alps} \\
\text{This way and that contend among themselves} \\
\text{To tear away an oaktree hale with age,} \\
\text{The wind and tree cry, and the buffeted trunk} \\
\text{Showers high foliage to earth, but holds} \\
\text{On bedrock, for the roots go down as far} \\
\text{Into the underworld as cresting boughs} \\
\text{Go up in heaven's air: just so this captain,} \\
\text{Buffetted by a gale of pleas} \\
\text{This way and that way, dinned all the day long,} \\
\text{Felt their moving power in his great heart,} \\
\text{And yet his will stood fast; tears fell in vain.} \\
(4. 610-621)
\end{align*}
\]
According to Poschl, the simile expresses "not so much the contest between Aeneas and Anna" as "the hero's divided heart and painful resignation" (46). Just as the falling leaves do not affect the stability of the tree, so, Aeneas's tears "have no effect on his unshakable resolution" (46). Like the tree, he suffers while remaining steadfast.

It is important not to forget, however, that Aeneas's tears are shed. While his duty prevents him from relieving Dido's distress, it does not prohibit him from expressing his compassion for her fate. If the hero has aligned his will with that of the gods, he has not—at least at this point—alienated himself from his fellow man. In fact, Virgil seems to draw attention to the very integrity of Aeneas's person, an integrity which finds its expression in the organic image of the tree. The fact that the tree sheds its leaves does not detract from its fundamental rootedness. Nor does the fact that Aeneas is moved by Dido's fate indicate that he is divided within himself. Just as the leaves themselves are products of the organic life of the tree, so Aeneas's tears are signs of the inner life of the man, a life which is as much the source of his steadfast will as of his compassion. The tree is an image, not simply of the hero's resolution, but of that part of his soul where feeling and thought and will and desire have their common root. If Virgil previously used the tree to
indicate the order of the Trojan world, he uses it here to represent the interior order of man. Moreover, it is precisely that interior order which will form the basis of the new Roman city. Aeneas, as Barbara Bono has indicated, is "the organic medium through which the past will finally be resurrected in a more universal form. He is a life-tree, uniting an archetypal primitive past with a more sophisticated, comprehensive culture" (36).

Like Plato, then, Virgil regards the order of the city as an analogue of an order within man himself. But Virgil reveals this truth to us, not in the form of a philosophical principle, but through the metaphor of exile. When we read the Aeneid, we witness the actual journey of a man towards interior order, his struggle in history to understand the true order of being. Plato's metaphysics tends to give us a vision of man in his purely spiritual aspects, removed from the body of the world. But, Virgil gives us an image of the whole man--body and soul, spirit and flesh, the human heart as it moves through the slow passage of concrete time.
In book seven of the *Aeneid*, the Trojans finally reach the shores of Italy, thus bringing to a close their long years of restless wandering. After mooring ship on the banks of the Tiber, they take repose beneath the boughs of a tall tree and make a feast,

Putting out on the grass hard wheaten cakes
As platters for their meal—moved to do this
By Jupiter himself. These banquet boards
Of Ceres they heaped up with country fruits.
Now, as it happened, when all else was eaten,
Their neediness drove them to try their teeth
On Ceres' platters. Boldly with hand and jaw
They broke the crusted disks of prophecy,
Making short work of all the quartered loaves.
(7. 142-150)

More than any other event, the celebration of the meal marks the end of exile, a time which the Trojans have experienced as a condition of profound rootlessness and disconnection. But if Aeneas and his men have long hungered "for the firm earth underfoot," now, through the medium of food—the earth's fruit—they establish their roots in the Italian soil (1. 236).

In fact, Virgil suggests that there is an intimate connection between the act of eating and the founding of a settlement. When Iulus, the hero's son, playfully remarks
that they have eaten even their tables, Aeneas suddenly recalls the prophecy of his own father, Anchises, who said:

My son, when the time comes
That hunger on a strange coast urges you,
When food has failed, to eat your very tables,
Then you may look for home: be mindful of it,
Weary as you are, and turn your hand
To your first building there with moat and mound.
(7. 164-169)

On the morning after the feast, Aeneas—mindful of his father's words—"marked his line / Of walls with a low trench, then toiled away / To deepen it, to throw an earthwork up / With palisades, camp style, around that post, / Their first, on the riverside" (7. 209-213).

Thus, the choice of site for the first settlement is the result not of a purely human decision but of a prophecy delivered by Anchises from the gods. However, if the Roman settlement is founded by supernatural sanction, it does not represent an arbitrary imposition on nature. On the contrary, the very medium of the prophecy which reveals its location is found in the platters which the Trojans produce—inspired by Jupiter himself—from the wheat of the fields.¹ Thus, the food which binds them to the earth also

¹ According to conventional wisdom, cities are dependent for their food upon rural economies which predate their own establishment. Jacobs suggests that the reverse is true, that "agriculture itself may have originated in cities" (17). The precursor of the urban settlement, she argues, is not the rural world of the farm but "a hunting and gathering world, sparsely dotted by small and simple hunting settlements" (36). Thus, cities emerged not after but as the same time as a people begins to produce its own food.
puts them in touch with the will of the gods. It is their link at once with the natural and the supernatural world.

When the Trojans devour the "crusted disks of prophecy," they literally embody the seeds of the new settlement. Unlike the cities of archaic culture, which represent an attempt to transcend the human condition, the Roman city, Virgil suggests, is a profoundly incarnational reality. Although established by divine sanction, it takes an unmistakably human form. Rome, as we have seen, appears to point towards a reality greater than itself, an ideal condition beyond the time of history. But if it faces into eternity, it does not lack earthly roots. In fact, perhaps more than any other city, Rome is an embodied world.

*Raskolnikov's Appetite*

The relation between the city and food which we see in the *Aeneid* is inverted in Feodor Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment*. One of the defining characteristics of Raskolnikov, the novel's hero and perhaps the quintessential urban man of modern literature, is his poor appetite. When we encounter him for the first time, we find that he has "eaten practically nothing for two days" (2). On an empty stomach he makes his way through the streets of St. Petersburg's slum district to the room of the pawnbroker, realizing as he walks that lack of food has made his body weak and his thoughts at times confused. We later learn that his landlady had actually "stopped
supplying him with food two weeks earlier" on account of his failure to pay the rent (23). The origin of Raskolnikov's weak condition, however, appears to be as much his own lack of interest in eating as the landlady's refusal to feed him. Although he had been left without dinner, "it had not yet occurred to him to go down and have things out with her" (23). In fact, it is only because the landlady's cook, Nastasya, saves him leftovers that Raskolnikov eats much of anything at all.

On the morning after his encounter with Marmeladov, a local drunk, Nastasya wakes him: "'Get up!--why are you still asleep?' she exclaimed, standing over him; 'it's past nine o'clock. I've brought you some tea; wouldn't you like some? You'll be wasting away!'" (23). On this occasion, Raskolnikov accepts the tea and cabbage soup. However, as the time of the murder approaches, his appetite deteriorates markedly.

On the morning of the fateful day, he is woken again by Nastasya with tea and bread:

"Do you want any tea?"

"Afterwards," he said with an effort, closing his eyes again and turning to the wall. Nastasya stood over him.

"Perhaps he really is ill," she said, turned on her heel and went out.

She came back at two o'clock with some soup. He was lying there as before. The tea was untouched. Nastasya was quite offended and began to shake him roughly.

"Whyever do you still go on sleeping?" she exclaimed, looking at him with positive dislike. He sat up and remained gazing at the floor without a word to her.
"Are you ill or aren't you?" asked Nastasya, and again received no answer.
"You want to go out for a bit," she said, after a short silence, "and get a bit of a blow. Are you going to have anything to eat, eh?"
"Later," he said feebly. "Clear out!" He waved her away. (57)

After she leaves, Raskolnikov picks up a spoon and some bread and confronts the soup. However, he eats only two or three spoonfuls and those, as Dostoevsky tells us, "without appetite, and quite mechanically" (58). His appetite is no better the day after his murder of the old pawnbroker.

After walking around the city for about six hours, he returns exhausted to his room where Nastasya brings him another plate of soup. Once again she remarks on his poor appetite: "I suppose you've had nothing to eat since yesterday. You've been wandering about all day, and you've got a fever" (98). Finally, Raskolnikov asks for a drink. But upon swallowing only a few drops of water, he falls into a delirium which lasts for several days.

When he regains full consciousness, he is visited by his friend Razumikhin, who informs him of the nature of his condition:

You've hardly eaten or drunk anything for three days. It's true they did give you tea in a spoon. I brought Zosimov to see you twice. Do you remember him? He examined you carefully, and said at once that it was nothing much—you've just been a bit queer in the head. Some sort of nonsensical nervous trouble, and the wrong sort of food, he says, not enough beer and horse-radish; that made you ill, but it's nothing—it will pass, and you'll be all right again. He's a clever chap, Zosimov. His treatment was capital. (100)
Razumikhin subsequently asks Nastasya to bring some soup, which she soon returns with along with "two spoons, two plates, and a complete set of condiments: salt, pepper, mustard for the beef, and other things that had not been seen on his table, in such neat order, for a long time past" (102). Then, he sits down beside his friend and begins to feed him: "Raskolnikov eagerly swallowed a spoonful, then a second and a third" (102). However, "after a few more mouthfuls," Razumikhin, always concerned for Raskolnikov's health, stops, "explaining that he must consult Zosimov about any more" (102).

His concern for the hero doesn't prevent Razumikhin himself from partaking of the food which Nastasya has prepared. After agreeing to allow Raskolnikov some tea, he draws over the soup and beef and begins to eat, as Dostoevsky indicates, "with as much appetite as though he had not broken his fast for three days" (102). The gentle irony of the last remark only serves to emphasize the difference between the respective attitudes of the two friends toward food. While Raskolnikov has been wasting away in bed, Razumikhin—far from fasting—has been a willing guest at the landlady's table:

"I've been having dinner here at your place every day, Rodya, my dear fellow," he muttered as clearly as a mouth stuffed with beef would allow, "and Pashenka, your nice little landlady, has provided it; she delights to feed me. I, of course do not demand it; but I don't, as a matter of fact, raise any objections either." (102-3)
When Nastasya brings in the tea, Razumikhin leaves his luncheon and returns to the sofa where Raskolnikov is lying: "As before, he put his left arm round the sick man's head, raised him, and began to feed him tea-spoonfuls of tea, again blowing on them fervently and incessantly, as if this process of blowing were the most important and salutary part of the treatment" (103). Not wishing to reveal the extent of his recovery, Raskolnikov indulges his friend's excessive attentions. However, he cannot "quite master his repugnance" (103). After "he had swallowed a dozen spoonfuls of tea, he jerked his head free, pettishly pushed away the spoon, and lay back again on his pillow" (103).

The rest of the novel is similarly characterized by abundant references to Raskolnikov's eating habits. Even in its closing chapter, as he lies imprisoned in a Siberian jail, we are reminded of the lack of interest in food which marks his behavior throughout: "And what did he care for the food--that thin cabbage soup with cockroaches in it? In his former life, when he was a student, he had often not had even that" (458).

The hero's relation to food alerts us to the radical shift which the status of the city undergoes in the novel, the most profound virtual expression of modernity. Urban life no longer offers a contrast with the nomadic existence which for the epic poet predates the city founding. Quite
the reverse, the very condition of the city is exile, its
typical representative the one most separated from the
living community of humanity. Whereas in the Aeneid the
celebration of a meal marks the beginning of a communal
existence rooted in the sacramentality of the earth, in
Crime and Punishment the hero's inability to partake of
food is a sign of his profound alienation, his isolation
within a culture which is grounded not in community but in
atomistic individualism. This chapter attempts to flesh
out the relation between the hero and his urban environment
through a more in-depth exploration of Dostoevsky's use of
the symbolism of food.

**Food and the Novel**

Gian-Paolo Biasin has argued that the representation of
food is actually central to the novel as a genre:

> If it is true that at the foundation of an entire
trend of the novel, intended as the bourgeois and
modern literary genre, there is the fiction of the
representation of reality, it is equally true that a
fundamental part of this reality is made up of food,
nourishment, meals, the various rituals that surround
and accompany the fulfillment of an elementary,
biological need like hunger. (3)

The most obvious function of food in the novel, Biasin
indicates, is the achievement of realism: "it produces the
verisimilitude of the text by guaranteeing its coherence at
the referential level and by intimately linking the
literary expression with the pretextual, historical or
sociological level" (11). Thus, the realistic novel
dictates that the food which its characters eat must be
true to life. That is, it must accurately reflect such determinants as their social and economic status, their country of origin, whether they are rural or urban and the time in which they live. A Moll Flanders eating pizza would be perceived as a historical and geographical incongruity—a lack of verisimilitude. Similarly, "a too-sumptuous meal for a poor character (unless it signals a great occasion)" or "a too-frugal meal for a noble or rich character (unless there is a moral or economic justification)" would make the novel less believable (11). By corollary, the "mimetic" function of food "allows the novel, in an immediately recognizable and evident manner, to reflect the changing contemporary reality" (12).

Dostoevsky, however, was not interested in achieving verisimilitude for its own sake. Indeed, the aim of simply reproducing the empirical reality of his time—an aim which, as we have seen, is characteristic of a large part of the novelistic tradition—was something of which he was profoundly skeptical. That skepticism, however, did not lead him to discount the artist's role as depicter of the real. Quite the contrary, Dostoevsky's criticism of his realist contemporaries was not that they were too realistic but that they were not realistic enough. "My idealism is more real than theirs," he wrote to his friend, Maikov: "Their realism does not know how to explain a hundredth part of the real facts that have actually taken place. But
we by our idealism have even prophesied facts. It has happened" (quoted in Mochulsky 358).

If Dostoevsky called himself "a realist in a higher sense," his view was not one which left out the realm of concrete actuality. As Donald Fanger has remarked, he "took special pains to keep within the bounds of the empirically possible, the outer limits of literary realism" (223). The food which Raskolnikov eats—or more often than not rejects—is not incongruous with the life of an impoverished student living in Petersburg in the middle of the nineteenth century. Konstantin Mochulsky also notes the presence of the empirical level in Dostoevsky's work: in him "the greatest flights of fancy are joined with a painstaking study of facts. He always began his ascent from the low grounds of everyday reality" (358). However, as Mochulsky implies, the "low grounds" are only the beginning for Dostoevsky. Indeed, if he was interested in the external world at all, it was only insofar as man was a part of it. "Nothing exterior," Nicholas Berdyaev remarks, "whether it belonged to nature, to society, or to manners and customs, had any reality in itself for Dostoievsky" (Dostoievsky 41). His work "knows nothing outside of man" (40). If "in all his novels, he shows us towns, with low taverns, and stinking tenements," it is because "a town is an environment in which man lives, an episode in his
history, impregnated by him, the painted scenery against which he moves" (40).

Mikhail Bakhtin makes essentially the same point in his discussion of Dostoevsky's poetics: "Dostoevsky never left anything of any real consequence outside the realm of his major heroes' consciousness . . . he brings them into dialogic contact with everything essential that enters the world of his novels" (73). As Bakhtin suggests, this is as true of Raskolnikov as it is of Dostoevsky's other heroes: "Everything that he sees and observes . . . is drawn into dialogue, responds to his questions, and puts new questions to him, provokes him, argues with him, or reinforces his own thoughts" (75).

For Dostoevsky, then, food is not simply a means of grounding the novel in the historical world. Far more important is the hero's relation to food, a relation which offers an index of his relation to reality itself. Food functions as a kind of medium through which Raskolnikov encounters—and either accepts or rejects—the world around him. It performs what Biasin calls a "cognitive" function: "food is used to stage the search for meaning that is carried out every time one reflects on the relationship among the self, the world, and others—or among the subject, nature and history" (17).

It is precisely this function which the French anthropologist Claude Levi-Strauss identifies in his
analysis of the role of food in the myths of the Bororo and Ge Indian peoples. In the myths, Levi-Strauss shows, food is used to distinguish between nature and culture. If raw food belongs to nature, "cooking brings about the cultural transformation of the raw" (142). As Octavio Paz indicates in his discussion of Levi-Strauss, "cooking is itself a myth, a metaphor of culture" (48). But why do men need to distinguish between nature and culture in the first place? "Men do not have to cook food," Edmund Leach remarks; "they do so in order to show that they are men and not beasts" (97). Like Freud, Levi-Strauss sees culture as the result of certain strictures--the incest taboo is a fundamental one--which regulate the kind of spontaneous behavior that is characteristic of animals. Both cooking and the incest taboo are "homologues of language," Paz notes:

The former is a mediation between the raw and the decayed, the animal world and the vegetable; the latter between endogamy and exogamy, wanton promiscuity and the onanism of a solitary individual. The model of both is the word, the bridge between the shout and silence, between the nonsignificance of nature and the insignificance of men. (50)

Clearly, then, the need to distinguish between nature and culture does not imply a need to separate them entirely. Although man sees himself as other than nature, in order to subsist he must retain relations with it. He does not want to eat like an animal, but he must eat nevertheless. Thus, cooking is an activity "which at once separates and unites the natural world and the human world" (50). It "is
conceived of in native thought," Levi-Strauss says, "as a form of mediation" (64).

Levi-Strauss identifies two strictly parallel mythological series among the Ge tribes: "In one series, culture begins with the theft of fire from the jaguar [which results in the first cooked food]; in the other, with the introduction of cultivated plants" (187). But in both series, Levi-Strauss indicates, "the origin of man's loss of immortality is linked with the advent of civilized life" (187). "Death," as Paz remarks,
is the real difference, the dividing line between man and the current of life. . . . To feel oneself and know oneself to be mortal is to be different: death condemns us to culture. Without it there would be no arts or trades: language, cooking and kinship rules are mediations between the immortal life of nature and the brevity of human existence. (51)

Culture itself, Paz implies, is a process of mediation, an attempt to introduce a middle term between opposite states, the raw and the decayed, the animal and vegetable world, cannibalism and vegetarianism, and most fundamentally, life and death.

In the myths which Levi-Strauss discusses, then, food takes on a cognitive role. It becomes a way of knowing reality. But the knowledge of which we are speaking is a knowledge which divides up the world, a way of knowing which depends on the possibility of making distinctions and identifying categories. Thus, it is precisely the differentiation of food that allows it to perform its
cognitive role. The distinction between the raw and the cooked allows reality to be known as both natural and cultural. When food is differentiated, though, it becomes something other than its actual reality. As the raw and the cooked, food becomes a sign of both nature and culture. Thus, its cognitive function has as its complement what Biasin calls a "tropological" function, a function which he suggests is inherent in literature. The tropological

is the analogic transformation (metaphor), or the displacement by contiguity (metonymy), or the linking by comparison or similitude . . . whereby a given food is also other than what it is literally, and this other (a rhetorical figure) often contains within itself an entire discourse. A discourse may be moral, ideological, affective, or social, but when it is expressed within a rhetorical figure it is first and foremost a literary discourse--that is, an inquiry, a knowledge, and an expression that are literature's own, and not historiography's or gastronomy's. (20)

Perhaps Biasin is too quick to reduce literature to simply the use of figurative language. After all, the poet does not create symbols ex nihilo. Rather, he has as his raw material the symbolic life of the culture in which he finds himself. From that culture he takes his symbols and refashions them for his own artistic ends. In fact, Biasin himself suggests this at an earlier point in his book:

"When the novel deals with food, a culinary sign, it adds richness to richness, it superimposes its own system of signs and meanings onto the signifying system, variously codified, of cooking" (4).
One could argue that anthropology deals with reality in much the same way. Paz notes that Levi-Strauss' book, *The Raw and the Cooked*, "is a metalanguage and simultaneously, a myth of myths" (77). It analyzes a symbolic system but at the same time recasts that system in the light of its own values, thus creating another system. If the anthropologist is a poet of sorts, the poet himself is something of an anthropologist. Indeed, Berdyaev suggests precisely this of Dostoevsky: he "devoted the whole of his creative energy to one single theme, man and man's destiny. He was anthropological and anthropocentric to almost inexpressible degree" (39). The point is not that the anthropologist is as subjective as the novelist, as some might have it. Quite the reverse, in fact; each, in his particular fashion, is a theorist of reality. To be sure, the anthropologist's emphasis is scientific, whereas the novelist's is poetic. One is primarily analytical, the other intuitive. But it is the fact that both present us with symbolic worlds that forms the basis of any comparison between them.

**The City and Nature**

Levi-Strauss provides us with an important pattern against which to examine Dostoevsky's use of the symbolism of food. But for the nineteenth-century novelist, the nature-culture contrast does not possess the epistemological validity which it clearly had for the recorder of tribal myths.
This is to some degree a result of the degeneration of the contrast into a simplistic opposition between country and city at the hands of the pastoral poets of the previous century. Country life, in eighteenth-century pastoral, is frequently presented as an existence in which man is wholly absorbed into an idyllic nature, into a life as innocent and carefree as those of the sheep who roam happily on the hillside or of the birds who sing from the branches. In other words, it is a life in which the arts of culture are no longer necessary.²

This kind of representation reflects the tendency of many in the eighteenth century to regard society itself as an essentially artificial entity, a tendency which found an earlier reflection in the political theory of Hobbes. If society is conceived as entirely separate from nature, then the appeal of a poetry which offers an escape to a wholly natural world is obvious. Of course, for Hobbes, nature is a state of war from which society is a necessary protection. In much of eighteenth-century pastoral, as well as in the writings of Rousseau, the terms remain the same but their content is reversed. Nature becomes a refuge from a society which is corrupt and warlike.

2. Richard Feingold discusses the divorce of art and nature in William Cowper's The Task in chapter five of his Nature and Society: Later Eighteenth-Century Uses of the Pastoral and Georgic.
Each of these versions of the contrast between nature and culture is a reduction of that which is most characteristic of the tradition of pastoral poetry, a tradition which, as Raymond Williams indicates, stretches back "many centuries beyond Virgil to the Works and Days of Hesiod, to the ninth century before Christ" (14). What we find in Hesiod, Williams notes, is not the depiction of a wholly natural world but "an epic of husbandry, in the widest sense: the practice of agriculture and trading within a way of life in which prudence and effort are seen as primary virtues" (14). Although inextricably bound up with nature, it is not the perfect life of a distant Golden Age. For Hesiod, at the beginning of country literature, the Golden Age is already far in the past. "It is," as Williams notes, "the character of his own 'iron age' that determines his recommendation of practical agriculture, social justice and neighborliness. It is from the 'life of pain' that these practices can deliver a working community" (14).

In Hesiod, then, there is clearly a tension between the natural and the human world, although they are at the same time connected. Nature proceeds inevitably, autumn following summer and spring following winter in a series of endless cycles. Man's life, by contrast, is one of toil and suffering. The land must be ploughed and crops sown before the harvest can be reaped. The fertility of summer
is preceded by the barrenness of winter. Nature goes on, but man's life ends with death. Thus, the earliest form of country writing is not simply an evocation of nature. Rather, one finds within the rural world itself precisely the kind of contrast between nature and culture that Levi-Strauss identifies in the tribal myths.

From the time that pastoral emerges as a literary form during the Hellenistic period, its depiction of the rural way of life begins to acquire an idealizing tendency. But, Williams remarks, "even in these developments . . . there is almost invariably a tension with other kinds of experience" (18). At the time Virgil was writing his Eclogues, the Italian countryside and its farmers—Virgil's father was one of them—faced the possibility of violence as war veterans were resettled by large-scale confiscation. Thus, "the contrast within Virgilian pastoral is between the pleasures of rural settlement and the threat of loss and eviction" (17). The pressures of history threaten to sever the connections which man has established with nature.

Williams's criticism of later pastoral poetry is that "these living tensions are excised, until there is nothing countervailing, and selected images stand as themselves: not in a living but in an enamelled world" (18). Williams himself, though, is too apt to criticize the idealizations of pastoral, and often appears to assume that its only
valid function is the depiction of the actual social conditions of country life. As a result, he is led to date the beginning of the genre's degeneration to as far back as the Renaissance. E. Kegel-Brinkgreve, however, has suggested that the very mark of pastoral is the tension it embodies between the ideal and the actual; the pastoral world is "contrast and simultaneously mirror of the urban or courtly one" (581). To simply excise the ideal, therefore, is to create a world as tensionless as one that is exclusively ideal.

The principal target of Williams's criticism, though, is eighteenth-century pastoral and, in that instance, the charge of excessive idealization is far from spurious. Two of the most influential treatises on the subject, which actually date from the latter half of the previous century, were written by Thoyras Paul de Rapin and M de Bernard Fontenelle—both Frenchmen. Although each represented a different school of thought, Rapin the ancients and Fontenelle the moderns, together they effectively effaced from the pastoral world the tensions of actual existence.

The main bone of contention, Williams notes, was whether such an idyll, the delightful Pastoral, should be referred always to the Golden Age, as Rapin and the neo-classicists argued; or to the more permanent and

3. Rapin's Eclogae sacrae cum Dissertatione de carmine pastoralli was published in 1659. In 1688 Fontenelle wrote his Discours sur la nature de l'eclogue. Both treatises were a significant influence on Pope, although his main allegiance was to Rapin's neo-classical outlook.
indeed timeless idea of the tranquillity of life in the country, as Fontenelle and others maintained. In the former case, because it was the Golden Age, there was really peace and innocence. In the latter, there could be an idea of these, a conventional literary illusion in native and contemporary scenes. (19)

The distinction seems moot, since in both cases the pastoral world is entirely separated from historical reality. As Kegel-Brinkgreve remarks, "its appeal is that of nostalgia pure and simple" (581).

With the enormous changes wrought on the urban environment by the industrial revolution, the capacity of the nature-culture contrast to explain reality was further weakened. Alexander Welsh has suggested that the "greatest single factor affecting nineteenth-century views of the city was simply its size" (19). London, for example, doubled in population between 1801 and 1841 to become a city of two and a quarter million people, a population which doubled again over the next forty years. As Welsh indicates, these kinds of statistics "readily confirmed what was palpable to the eye and measured by the fact of anyone born near the beginning of the century" (19).

Moreover, the result of this sort of exponential growth was that "the word 'metropolis' took on connotations of pride mixed with anxiety" (19).

That anxiety is reflected in the metaphors which the nineteenth century developed to express the changed reality of urban life. One was the idea of the city as a kind of organic system which had grown beyond the limits of human
control. The feeling that permeates Dickens's *Bleak House*, Fred Schwarzbach suggests, "is that London is a kind of cancerous growth irreversibly enveloping everything around it" (Dickens 146). Welsh remarks that such a view of the city was at once encouraging and frightening. On the one hand, "the monster . . . might be studied and somehow mastered" (29). On the other hand, it "seemed to exist for its own sake, obeying physical laws of its own and growing incessantly" (29). A similar metaphor is that of the prison. It figures strongly, for example, in Dickens's *Little Dorrit* and in Blake's poem "London," where the city is depicted as a kind of mental prison which imposes "mind-forg'd manacles" on its inhabitants. Whereas the city as system suggests a presence so invasive that it encompasses the whole of reality, the city as prison suggests a reality so closed as to make escape impossible. Both metaphors express the idea that the city cannot be avoided, that there is no natural world which can offer a contrast to the hellish urban environment. In fact, as Francoise Choay notes, in the "new mythology" of the urban imagination, the city itself occupies the part formerly played by nature:

In pre-industrial times the built up agglomeration—hamlet, village, town—was experienced as the reassuring element where man discovers himself in opposition to nature. Since the industrial revolution, the urban fabric itself, the big cities, conurbations, etc., have appeared to the collective consciousness as another nature, a mysterious wilderness, threatening man's existence. (171)
If the city is imagined as another nature, it is a nature gone bad—as in the city as cancerous growth—an abnormal nature which expresses the unnatural quality of urban life.  

That unnatural quality is one which Dostoevsky identifies in the life of Petersburg. Svidrigaylov, the bizarre suicide in Crime and Punishment, suggests that there "are few places which exercise such strange, harsh, and sombre influences on the human spirit" (394). The "absence of nature" in the city, Fanger notes, is evident from—among other things—the paucity of plant-life: "the only vegetation . . . are the pathetic geraniums in Raskolnikov's room and the pitiful spruce trees and two bushes of the 'pleasure garden'" (203). However, if the urban environment is wholly unnatural, Dostoevsky does not offer the rural world as an alternative. Crime and Punishment, Burton Pike remarks, "is so thoroughly a city

4. The value attached to the new and apparently all-encompassing urban reality was not always negative. Williams points out that for Baudelaire the sense of isolation and disconnection felt in the city were the conditions of a new and lively perception: "There was a new kind of pleasure, a new enlargement of identity, in what he called bathing oneself in the crowd" (234). In the twentieth century, Williams indicates, this response would become the dominant one: "There might still be a contrast of the city with the country, drawing on the older sense of rural settlement and innocence. But the contrast would work the other way: of consciousness with ignorance; of vitality with routine; of the present with the past or lost. City experience was becoming so widespread, and writers, disproportionately, were so deeply involved in it, that there seemed little reality in any other mode of life" (235).
novel that it allows of no Rousseau-like contrast between urban corruption and country idyll" (96). In fact, all of the major characters who at the outset of the novel are living in the country—Raskolnikov's mother and sister, Luzhin and Svidrigaylov—sooner or later come to the city. Not even when we hear of the society of the provincial town from which they come are we offered any real contrast with urban life. As Pike remarks, "it sounds as demented as the Petersburg we see" (96).

The Soul of the City

The very invisibility of a natural alternative to the degradation of the city allows the modern writer to turn his attention to the problem of man himself. As Lowe notes, the shift in modern literature "from the aesthetic aspects of earthly delights . . . to not only the antisocial, but the inhumane characteristics of the earthly city" involves a new sense of moral purpose: "By portraying society in the negative, the moral order yearned for by the modern writer is implicit by its ironic absence" (50).

For Dostoevsky, the unnatural quality of life in Petersburg is a reflection not so much of culture per se as of a disorder in the soul of its people. Escape from the city does not solve the problem of man's degradation precisely because the problem inheres in man rather than in the city itself. "Theories, like cities," Fanger remarks, "are made by men and their creators must come to terms with
them; escape cannot remove the problem of reconciling 'living life' with the conditions of city life" (194).

As Berdyaev indicates, Dostoevsky's anthropology does not posit man "as just a natural phenomenon, like any other though rather superior" (39). Of course, man's difference from nature, as we have seen, is precisely the focus of the thought of Levi-Strauss. But for Levi-Strauss, that difference is culture itself; language, cooking, the incest taboo--these attributes, which are entirely absent in nature, distinguish man from beast. As Edmund Leach has noted, Levi-Strauss tends to equate man's difference from nature with his very humanity: "the humanity of man is that which is non-natural" (121). However, recognizing those aspects of man which are absent in nature is merely a starting point for any investigation of what it means to be human. That man cooks his food is a sign that he is different from animals, but it does not define him. Not even the total sum of the differences between man and beast give us an adequate definition of humanity, since they clearly share many attributes.  

Of course, for Levi-Strauss, it is the fact of these shared attributes which requires men to distinguish themselves from animals in the first place. Man needs food, just as do animals. But precisely because eating is

5. William Irwin Thompson offers a provocative discussion of this issue in his Imaginary Landscape: Making Worlds of Myth and Science (144-146).
a constant reminder of his link with nature, it requires some form of mediation. Cooking, therefore, becomes the means by which nature is transformed into culture. But it is a transformation which is never complete. Cooking is a kind of compromise which at once separates and unites man and the natural world. That man's food is cooked is a sign of his difference from nature, but insofar as he eats at all, he resembles an animal. In "The Structural Study of Myth," Levi-Strauss maintains that the purpose of myth is to provide a logical model capable of resolving this kind of contradiction. He adds, though, that this is "an impossible achievement if, as it happens, the contradiction is real" (229). Paz remarks that the logic of myth, as Levi-Strauss defines it, "does not confront reality" and, thus "its coherence is merely formal." "I admit," he says, "that myth is logical, but I do not see how it can be knowledge" (37). If Paz is right, then the myths which deal with the origins of humanity, at least as far as Levi-Strauss interprets them, evade rather than answer the question of what it means to be human.

There is, however, another aspect of Levi-Strauss's work which takes us in a more promising direction. In his study of myth, Levi-Strauss rejects the semantic approach which remains at the level of manifest content. He seeks instead to uncover the hidden structure of unchanging patterns and regularities which informs the entire corpus
of apparently disparate myths. For Levi-Strauss, that structure is not the property of any single culture but a kind of collective unconscious or pensee sauvage shared by all human beings. Thus, if on the one hand, he suggests that the humanity of man is that which is other than nature, on the other hand, he points to the existence of a reality which is universally true of the human mind; and as Leach notes, what "is universally true must be natural" (121).

This is a paradox in Levi-Strauss's work, but a useful one, nonetheless, since it actually suggests a solution to the problem of man's difference from nature. If the difference is simply culture, then man's humanity is defined in wholly negative terms. Moreover, it is an entirely fraught definition, since culture itself requires for its continuity a certain relationship with nature; man's humanity—that which is non-natural—is forever threatened by his dependence on nature. But if anthropological research reveals a hidden stratum of meaning common to all cultures, as Levi-Strauss suggests it does, then culture itself can no longer be understood as the term which distinguishes man from beast. Culture does not make us human. Rather, it is a manifestation of the human spirit itself. Ultimately, it is that spirit rather than any cultural mechanism which distinguishes us from animals.
Like Levi-Strauss, Dostoevsky sought to delve beneath the surface phenomena of the empirical world to uncover the ultimate realities of human existence. For Dostoevsky, as Berdyaev indicates, those realities "are not the external forms of life, flesh and blood, but their inner depths, the destiny of the human spirit" (25-6). His themes inhere in the man-made world of the city rather than in nature precisely because the city is the place where the human spirit finds its expression. In *Crime and Punishment*, Fanger remarks, the city which is rendered with such "striking concreteness" is also "a city of the mind in the way that its atmosphere answers Raskolnikov's spiritual condition and almost symbolizes it" (194). Indeed, in some of his early sketches of life in St. Petersburg, Dostoevsky personifies the city—as a convalescent gentleman, a spoiled son and, perhaps most significantly, as a sickly child, an image which Fanger notes "recurs throughout his work, from *Netochka Nezvanova* to the Marmeladov children of *Crime and Punishment*" (145). Thus, Dostoevsky humanizes the environment of his hero. If the modern city appears to reduce man to isolated insignificance, in *Crime and Punishment* the world again becomes his. The city is presented not as a reality which determines and delimits human existence but as a projection of the human spirit itself.
For Dostoevsky, then, only man's spiritual regeneration can offer an alternative to the spiritual degradation of the city. His central concern, as Michael Holquist observes, is conversion:

in order to be reborn, the old self must die. We are here touching on the main theme of Crime and Punishment. . . . This radical break in identity is present in almost all accounts of conversion (even when they are "secondary conversions") experiences: Augustine, the rhetor, dies, as the future bishop of Hippo is born; Thomas Aquinas, after his experience, on the Feast of St. Nicholas in 1273, dies as a scholar . . . . In Raskolnikov's case this mystical suppression of self, the death of his old identity . . . is just as decisive as was the death of an even earlier self, the one that dies in the act of murder. Raskolnikov is a completely different person as the epilogue closes: "And what were all, all the torments of the past? Everything, even his crime, even his sentence and his exile seemed to him now . . . to be something external and strange, as if it had not happened to him at all." (94-95)

Thus, the ruling contrast in Crime and Punishment is not between nature and culture but between two conditions of the soul. It is a contrast, Vyacheslav Ivanov notes, "between alienation from Earth and oneness with it; between defection from men and union with them; . . . between the slow climb towards the light, and the sudden plunge into darkness" (73).

Unlike the contrast between nature and culture, which transcends the fact of the human psyche, the contrast which Dostoevsky draws exists within the hero himself. David Matual observes that Raskolnikov's behavior passes through two distinctly and seemingly contradictory phases, the one quickly succeeding the other: first he shows a profound sympathy toward those
in need and takes immediate steps to relieve their suffering; afterwards he feels disgust with himself for having betrayed his intellectual principles. (28)

That Razumikhin, Raskolnikov's only friend, can speak of "two opposite personalities" in the hero is evidence, Matual suggests, that his rise to new life in the epilogue is not "a deus ex machina" concocted by Dostoevsky "in order to save his hero from a permanent state of alienation and moral corruption" (26). The more human side of the hero, which we see at different moments throughout the novel, indicates that he "is psychologically capable of the extraordinary events that begin in the epilogue" (27).

However, as Matual notes, the "periodic manifestations of kindness in his behavior represent only the potential for rebirth" (30). For Dostoevsky, this potential is only realized in freedom; Berdyaev remarks that Dostoevsky's belief in man's freedom is directly associated with what has been called his cruelty:

He was "cruel" because he would not relieve man of his burden of freedom, he would not deliver him from suffering at the price of such a loss, he insisted that man must accept an enormous responsibility corresponding to his dignity as a free being. (67)

Thus, in Dostoevsky's novels, the hero's destiny is not decided from above. Nor is it pre-determined by his place in life--his family position, his social class and status, his age or his past. Bakhtin notes that in the socio-psychological, the everyday, and the family or biographical novel, the hero's humanity is revealed only within the
strict framework of these stable determinants. But, in Dostoevsky's novels, the hero is always represented "on the threshold of a final decision, at a moment of crisis, at an unfathomable--and unpredeterminable turning point for his soul" (61).

Dostoevsky does not discount the reality of social determinants, as the radical existentialists of our own century have done. On the contrary, these external determinants constitute forces which appear to be overwhelming, and give much of the novel the flavor of tragedy. But for Dostoevsky, man is not finally reducible to the framework of his society. In fact, it is his excess over that framework which Dostoevsky attempts to represent when he depicts his hero on the threshold. His method, which Bakhtin explains so well, was not least a means of countering the mechanistic psychology of his own day, a psychology in which he saw "a degrading reification of a person's soul, a discounting of its freedom and its unfinalizability" (61). In Dostoevsky's works, Bakhtin indicates, "the hero is not 'he' and not 'I' but a fully valid 'thou,' that is, another and other autonomous 'I' ('thou art')" (63).

The Two Cities
As Lowe observes, the nature of urban life and the predicament of modern man encourage an apocalyptic vision of the city in modern literature: "The very speed with
which time passes in the modern city creates a sense of urgency. Violence is the usual corollary to this state of mind" (63). Raskolnikov's murder of the pawnbroker and her sister constitutes a desperate attempt to escape the urban wasteland. But the very act is both a profound symbol of the city's degraded life and a prophesy of its ultimate self-destruction.

The "counterpoint to the threat of the City of Dis," Lowe remarks, "is the vision of the heavenly city" (63). Although this ideal condition is not realized within the time-span of Dostoevsky's novel, it finds its human embodiment in the person of Sonya. If Raskolnikov's crime is an emblem of the falling city, an image of degeneration and decay, she offers a symbol of the New Jerusalem.

Of course, the most famous presentation of the idea of the two cities is found in Augustine's The City of God. It is important to note that Augustine identifies neither the heavenly nor the earthly city with any single human society. They are essentially mystical entities that originated in the choice of the angels to serve or rebel against their Creator: "there is no need to suppose four cities, two of angels and two of men. We may speak of two cities, or communities, one consisting of the good, angels as well as men, and the other of evil" (12. 1).

For Augustine, then, the city of history is a dynamic reality, one which is continually becoming. Insofar as it
is oriented towards love of God, it moves towards its fulfillment in the heavenly city. Insofar as it is self-oriented to the point of contempt for God, it becomes an image of the earthly city; it is either Babylon or Jerusalem. The city, in other words, is never static. It is always in motion towards either peace or war, love or hate, redemption or destruction.

Augustine, to be sure, reserves the metaphor of the journey for those who are citizens of the City of God in this life: "in their persons the City is on pilgrimage until the time its kingdom comes" (15.1). Abel, he tells us, was one of these citizens, "a pilgrim and stranger in the world, belonging as he did to the City of God" (15.1). Cain, by contrast, founded a city which had "its beginning and end on this earth, where there is no hope of anything beyond what can be seen in this world" (15.17). Thus, if Abel is the archetypal pilgrim, Cain is the archetypal settler. However, for Augustine, the idea of earthly settlement is ultimately an illusion. The city which identifies its ultimate end in this life will not enjoy the stability it desires. In fact, Augustine says that "the earthly city is generally divided against itself by litigation, by battles, by the pursuit of victories that bring death with them or at best are doomed to death" (15.4).
Like Augustine, Dostoevsky presents the city as a mode of existence which is always at the point of transition. As Bakhtin indicates, the city in Crime and Punishment is shown on the borderline between existence and nonexistence, reality and phantasmagoria, always on the verge of dissipating like the fog and vanishing. Petersburg . . . is devoid, as it were, of any internal grounds for justifiable stabilization. (167)

Its indeterminate quality reflects its essentially human character. As Berdyaev suggests, Dostoevsky's work is "an anthropology-in-motion" which seeks man out at the point of crisis, the moment when he is confronted most clearly with the responsibility of his freedom (45). For Dostoevsky, that aspect of man cannot express itself in the stable conditions of everyday life. Hence, the life that he portrays occurs, not in the insulated world of the urban bourgeoisie, but in the city's subterrain—in stinking taverns, amidst the jostling crowds of the streets, in the dilapidated tenements of the poor. As Bakhtin remarks, "Dostoevsky 'leaps over' all that is comfortably habitable, well-arranged and stable, all that is far from the threshold" (169).

For Augustine, the two cities are defined by their respective desires: the earthly city by self-love (amor sui) and the heavenly city by love of God (amor Dei). As Charles Cochrane explains, "amor sui, accepted as a principle of order begins with an assertion of the animal
right to live which resolves itself basically into a satisfaction of belly and loins" (489). In fact, in the Confessions, food itself is the most common image for the objects of selfish desire, "a symbol," as Maggie Kilgour notes, "for all earthly substances that prevent man from reaching God" (48). Augustine recalls how the Israelites in the desert substituted for the glory of God "idols and various images 'in the likeness of corruptible man and birds and beasts and serpents,' that is the Egyptian food . . . for which Esau lost his birthright" (7.9). As Kilgour suggests, Augustine presents food as "the quintessential temptation that offers instant gratification and easy physical satisfaction as a substitute for more difficult spiritual fulfillment" (48).

But in the Confessions, food is more than simply an image of the material objects which tempt man. It is also an image of God himself. In book seven, Augustine recounts the vision in which God invites him to feed on his divine being:

I found myself far from you "in the region of dissimilarity," and heard as it were your voice from on high: "I am the food of the fully grown; grow and you shall feed on me. You will not change me into you like the food your flesh eats, but you will be changed into me." (7.10)

Although satisfied in a radically different way, spiritual desire finds its analogue in bodily hunger. The literal act of eating, Augustine implies, is a model for man's spiritual fulfillment in God.
According to Louis Bouyer, eating belongs to that realm of "natural symbolism" which brings the ordinary actions of human life within the sphere of the sacred (63). In fact, Bouyer suggests that the meal is the richest instance of this kind of symbolism. In it, man sees the sacredness of life, of his own life, and as a result apprehends himself as being dependent upon one who is almighty and all good, or, to express it more accurately, upon the singular and superabundant fruitfulness of the divinity. To recognize the sacredness of a meal as being the highest form of human activity is to recognize man's total dependence, both for his creation and his continued existence, upon a God who is at the same time apprehended as the one who possesses the fullness of life. (84)

Thus, the religious symbolism of eating was not something which developed only after the institution of the Christian sacrament of the Eucharist— as book seven of the Aeneid demonstrates. The Fathers of the Christian Church, Bouyer suggests, never thought that the rite of eating was "a profane action, bare of any religious significance before Christ's intervention, but one upon which He bestowed a particular meaning by a purely arbitrary decision" (64). Rather, it "gave a new meaning to rites already charged with meaning. And the new meaning was not forced upon the natural meaning but rather amplified and enriched by it" (64).

It is only when the natural symbolism of eating is denied that food becomes an image of something other than its divine source. When that happens it loses its character as a gift which issues from the abundance of God
and becomes simply a means of satisfying the bodily appetite, a substitute for divine food rather than its natural analogue. As Kilgour suggests, it is precisely this desacralization of eating that Augustine identifies as "a form of idolatry" which "prevents the end to exile that is achieved through the return to one's proper home" (48). Eating is no longer a ritual through which man recognizes his dependence on the creator. It becomes instead an image of his lust to incorporate the created world unto himself.

As Cochrane suggests, "the point of real significance" for Augustine "is not so much the goods of secular life as the attitude which secularism adopts towards them" (491). In The City of God, he explains that divine providence has furnished man with certain goods which are suitable to his mortal life. Among them are "light, speech, air to breathe, water to drink, and whatever is suitable for the feeding and clothing of the body, for the care of the body and the adornment of the person" (19.13). Food becomes a negative symbol only when it is regarded in the wrong spirit, when the satisfaction of the bodily appetite is accorded a greater value than spiritual nourishment. But even then, food remains intrinsically good.

In the myths which Levi-Strauss describes, the differentiation of food into raw and cooked allows it to signify both nature and culture. But for Augustine, the same substance signifies radically different realities.
Food offers both a sign of the objects which lead man away from God and a sign of God himself. The source of differentiation, however, is not the appearance of the food itself but the inner disposition of individuals. The attitude which they bring to eating determines whether it is a profane or a sacred activity.

Eating places us on the threshold, most obviously on the border between life and death. To eat is to live; to refuse to eat is to reject life. But for Augustine, the crucial difference is between spiritual rather than physical life and death. The implication of the Confessions is that one cannot remain neutral towards food, that one either eats like an animal or like a human. In the tribal myths, the determining factor is whether food is raw or cooked. But for Augustine, the difference is whether one eats only with an eye to filling the belly or with a recognition of the essential sacramentality of food. Eating, Augustine suggests, places us not between nature and culture but between two kind of worlds, one founded on self-gratification (the earthly city), the other on love (the heavenly city).

The City as Community of Eaters

In the opening chapter of Crime and Punishment, Raskolnikov visits a public house a short time after leaving the room of the pawnbroker: "On the bar were sliced cucumbers, rusks of black bread, and fish cut into small pieces, all very
evil-smelling" (8). At first glance, this brief account of the fare of the house seems like the kind of naturalistic detail that is the hallmark of the realistic novel. We are made to feel almost physically present to the stench of the apparently rotting food. But Raskolnikov's surroundings are almost too literal. When he enters them, he seems to descend into a realm of sheer materiality, a realm which is so utterly carnal that it is revolting: "The atmosphere was unbearably stuffy and so saturated with alcohol that it almost seemed that five minutes in it would be enough to make one drunk" (8).

In fact, Raskolnikov had shrunk from the same atmosphere earlier that day, as he walked through the city's slums on his way to the pawnbroker's:

The heat in the streets was stifling. The stuffiness, the jostling crowds, the bricks and mortar, scaffolding and dust everywhere, and that peculiar summer stench so familiar to everyone who cannot get away from St. Petersburg into the country, all combined to aggravate the disturbance of the young man's nerves. The intolerable reek from the public houses, so numerous in that part of the city, and the sight of the drunken men encountered at every turn, even though this was not a holiday, completed the mournfully repellent picture. (2)

As Bakhtin indicates, "absolutely nothing" in Crime and Punishment "ever loses touch with the threshold" (170). In "the space of the novel" there is "no interior of drawing rooms, dining rooms, halls, studios, bedrooms where biographical life unfolds and where events take place in the novels of writers such as Turgenev, Tolstoy, and
Goncharov" (170). Thus for Raskolnikov, there is no escape from extremity. Both at the bar and in the streets, he stands at the threshold, between life and death, between rebirth and degeneration, between the ideal world of his own imagination and the actual world of corruption and decay.

Man's relation to food, as we have seen, is an index of his relation to reality as a whole. If he sees food as simply a means to self-gratification, then he degenerates to the level of a cannibal. Everything in the world, not least his fellow human beings, becomes mere fodder for his own satisfaction. Both Marmeladov and Luzhin are characters who—in different ways—have reached this extreme. In fact, everything in Crime and Punishment, as Bakhtin notes, "the fates of people, their experiences and ideas— is pushed to its boundaries . . . everything is taken to the extreme, to its outermost limit" (167).

Marmeladov presents an obvious contrast to Raskolnikov himself. If one attempts to deny the appetite altogether, the other has become completely enslaved to it. Entirely lacking in self-control, Marmeladov will do almost anything to satisfy his thirst for alcohol. His weakness, though, is not something which he denies. On the contrary, he proclaims it—in "his florid way"—to everyone who comes in contact with him (10). In fact, it is the subject which
occupies the whole of his conversation with Raskolnikov at the public house.

Marmeladov's open confession that he is "'an abject and useless creature'" appears to have its basis in the Christian idea of humility (10). Ultimately, however, there is something self-serving about his self-lacerating rhetoric. His acknowledgement of his utter dependence on divine assistance seems to be more an excuse for continuing in his present condition than a sincere plea for help to overcome it. Moreover, his sense of dependence is so great that it seems to blur any distinction between himself and the external world. Indeed, his name, Marmalad-ov, suggests a jelly-like substance, an identity which lacks any clear shape or definition. The effacement of any distinction between self and other is the very mark of Marmeladov's drinking. It is an activity which consumes not only himself but also those closest to him—namely his wife and children, a fact which he acknowledges to Raskolnikov:

Do you know, sir, that I have drunk her very stockings? Not her shoes, for that might have some small resemblance to a natural action, but her stockings, I have drunk even her stockings, sir! And I have drunk her mohair shawl as well, and it was her own, a gift made to her in the old days, not mine; and the room where we live is cold, and this winter she caught a chill and began to cough and even to spit blood. We have three small children and Katerina Ivanovna is working from morning till night, scrubbing and washing and bathing the children, for she has become accustomed to cleanliness from a child; but her chest is weak and she has a consumptive tendency.
As Marmeladov himself implies, the uninhibited rule of the bodily appetite is ultimately cannibalistic. While he attempts to satisfy his endless thirst for drink, his wife and children waste away before his eyes. The more he takes into himself, the less they become—as if he were actually feeding off them.

Ultimately, Marmeladov's selfishness is forgivable because it proceeds from a weakness of the flesh. He does not set out to deprive his family of their needs. Rather, their sorry condition is the result of actions which are, in some sense, involuntary. Moreover, Marmeladov himself suffers deeply from the knowledge of the distress which he has brought upon his family; his sense of remorse is so great that, as he informs Raskolnikov, he thirsts "not for merriment" but "for affliction and weeping" (19).

It is Luzhin who most clearly embodies the principle of self-love in the novel. He "was full of almost morbid admiration for himself, set a high value on his own brain and capabilities and sometimes, when he was alone, even admired his own face in the mirror" (259). As Dostoevsky implies, there is something joyless in Luzhin's selfishness. Marmeladov, at least, is overtaken by an object which gives pleasure and which is intrinsically good. Luzhin, by contrast, lusts after something which is essentially abstract: "more than anything in the world he loved and prized his money, got together laboriously and by
every means in his power; it raised him to the level of
everything that had been superior to him" (259). His greed
is motivated not by the thought of any immediate bodily
pleasure but by egoistical pride. Money is the means by
which he separates himself from and elevates himself above
those around him.

Luzhin's attitude toward the goods of the world is
precisely the attitude which Augustine identifies as the
distinctive mark of the earthly city: greed or lust for
possession. As Cochrane explains, the earthly city "treats
those goods as 'private'. . . claiming a right to make
them its own for distribution within the group . . . a
claim which presumes at the same time the right of
exploitation" (492). As a result, conflict is an inherent
feature of the earthly city; "its ideal of independence is
at the same time an ideal of isolation, the isolation of
economic and moral self-sufficiency. Furthermore, the
greed for property in temporal goods is inevitably
exclusive and monopolistic" (492). Thus, the earthly city
"becomes the theatre of a struggle for survival, the law of
which is 'fish eat fish'. 'This world,' says Augustine,
'is a sea wherein men devour one another in turn like
fish'" (492).

If cannibalism is the metaphor for a society which is
founded on economic self-interest, then it finds its human
embodiment in the character of Luzhin. Money is something
which completely permeates his view of reality, governing all of his relationships with people and things. The hero quickly identifies this aspect of Luzhin's character in the letter which his mother and sister receive from him upon their arrival in Petersburg: "it is a legal or a business style . . . It is not perhaps very illiterate, but it is not highly literary; it is commercial" (198). It is the same style which characterizes Luzhin's betrothal to Dunya, an arrangement which Raskolnikov dismisses as nothing more than "a common commercial transaction, an undertaking for mutual profit, with equal shares, and that means expenses shared equally too" (35). Luzhin himself confirms Raskolnikov's impression of him when he professes his belief that the world is based on self-interest:

If you love yourself alone, you will conduct your affairs properly, and your cloak will remain whole. Economic truth adds that the more private enterprises are established and the more, so to say, whole cloaks there are in society, the firmer will be its foundations and the more will be undertaken for the common good. That is to say, that by the very act of devoting my gains solely and exclusively to myself, I am at the same time benefiting the whole community, and ensuring that my neighbor receives something better than half a torn cloak. . . . (126-127)

After listening to this theory triumphantly proclaimed to the company in his room, Raskolnikov reveals to Luzhin the real meaning of his rhetoric: "Carry to its logical conclusion what you were preaching just now, and it emerges that you can cut people's throats" (129). Of course, Raskolnikov himself has reached the same conclusion by
other means. But, at least he has thought his theory through with some rigor and accepts the license to murder as a logical consequence of its founding premise. By contrast, Luzhin's ideas are, as Razumikhin indicates, wholly received and unexamined, "monotonous repetitions over and over again of the same old commonplaces" (127).

John Crowe Ransom has suggested that when man's relationships with others are based exclusively on "economic forms," then he becomes "a predatory creature to whom every object is an object of prey and the real or individual object cannot occur" (34). Luzhin is such a predator and Raskolnikov's sister and mother are his prey. In them he sees not the genuine individuality of real human beings but simply a means of furthering his own advantage and prestige. While they seem all too ready to accept his motives at face value, Raskolnikov recognizes that Luzhin's willingness "to take a wife out of poverty" is based on his desire to "dominate over her afterwards" and "reproach her with the benefits . . . heaped on her" (129). In fact, he seems to physically thrive on their helplessness and dependence on him. At one point, we find him inspecting "his pale and distinguished face" in the mirror and noticing that it "had of late grown rather fat" (304).

Luzhin's cannibalism is the result not so much of overwhelming sensuality as of a mind which knows the world in exclusively rational terms. Significantly, the
sociologist Georg Simmel suggests that the dominance of the intellect is intrinsically connected with the money economy:

They share a matter-of-fact attitude in dealing with men and with things; and, in this attitude, a formal justice is often coupled with an inconsiderate harshness. The intellectually sophisticated person is indifferent to all genuine individuality, because relationships and reactions result from it which cannot be exhausted with logical operations. In the same manner, the individuality of phenomena is not commensurate with the pecuniary principle. Money is concerned only with what is common to all; it asks for the exchange value, it reduces all quality and individuality to the question: How much? All intimate emotional relations between persons are founded in their individuality, whereas in rational relations man is reckoned with like a number, like an element which is in itself indifferent. (411)

Luzhin's tendency to see everything in monetary terms, then, is the very mark of a mind which has lost its roots in the deepest recesses of the soul. Unlike Marmeladov, who knows no distinction between himself and the world, Luzhin knows only a world which is other than himself, a wholly objectified world—emptied of its rich individuality—which he manipulates and exploits for his own ends.

Perhaps paradoxically, the cannibalistic quality of life in the city is not evidence of a return to a state of nature. For Dostoevsky, as we have seen, man is always more than just a natural phenomenon. If his actions resemble those of animals, it is because his soul is disordered—a condition of which animals themselves are incapable. In fact, the cannibalism of the city is evidence of its very alienation from the natural world.
Dominated by rational relations, it knows that world—and by extension the world of human beings—as something wholly other than itself, as pure object. It is this reified world—which includes both man and nature—upon which the city preys. When the city becomes "wholly intellect," Oswald Spengler indicates, then the "Culture-man whom the land has spiritually formed is seized and possessed by his own creation, the City, and is made into its creature, its executive organ, and finally its victim" (99).

Luzhin, however, does not represent the soul of the city. In his author's note to The Brothers Karamazov, Dostoevsky remarks that

Not only is an eccentric "not always" a particularity and a separate element, but, on the contrary, it happens sometimes that such a person, I dare say, carries within himself the very heart of the whole. (xvii)

Thus, in Crime and Punishment, it is Raskolnikov, the one who has "cut himself off from everybody and withdrawn . . . completely into himself," who presents the sign of the new epoch (1). It is he who embodies in the most complete and profound way the awful suffering and torment which the urban environment produces in its inhabitants.

When Raskolnikov rejects food, he appears to reject the cannibalistic world of the city, a world which reeks of corruption and death. In fact, he does something else. Man's need for food is a constant reminder that he has a body and that he is rooted in the earth. "As our
most basic need," Kilgour indicates, "eating ... reveals the fallaciousness of the illusion of self-sufficiency and autonomy" (9). When Raskolnikov refuses to eat, then, he severs himself from his earthly roots and locks himself in the prison of his own self. Repeatedly we find him lost in thought, incapable of focusing his attention on the world outside himself: "He kept relapsing into abstraction, and when he again raised his head with a start and looked around, he could remember neither what he had just been thinking nor which way he had come" (45).

Food is a medium through which man encounters reality. It places him upon the border between consciousness and world, self and other. As Kilgour indicates, "taste," as a mode of knowing, "is not only the most basic and bodily way of making contact with the world outside of the individual but also the most intimate and intense way" (9). The rejection of food, therefore, is also a rejection of the possibility of communion with others. Indeed, both eating and human fellowship find a common etymological root in the word *companion*, the Latin derivation of which is *com* and *panis*, to share bread with. Eating is an inherently communal activity and communion itself find its central expression in the ritual of the meal.

When Raskolnikov rejects the corruption of the city, he simultaneously cuts himself off from the realm of the human itself. The New Jerusalem of which he speaks is
essentially an idea, a wholly mental construction which transcends the body of man and of the world. Moreover, by severing his relations with others so completely, he comes to regard them as less than human, as beings emptied of individuality who can be dispensed with for the sake of his grand design. Raskolnikov regards the life of his victim as no "more than the life of a louse or a cockroach--less, indeed, because she is actively harmful" (56). But if he sees in the pawnbroker the embodiment of the city's corruption, by murdering her he makes himself its most profound symbol. Indeed, in his confession to Sonya, he suggests the essentially cannibalistic nature of his crime:

I did not commit murder in order to use the profit and power I gained to make myself a benefactor to humanity. Rubbish! I simply murdered; I murdered for myself, for myself alone, and whether I became a benefactor to anybody else, or, like a spider, spent the rest of my life catching everybody in my web and sucking the life-blood out of them, should have been a matter of complete indifference to me at that moment! (354)

However, that Raskolnikov comes to symbolize the deepest reality of the city is the result not simply of his crime but of its effects on his soul. If before the murder he is alienated from the world outside himself, after it he experiences a "new and irresistible sensation of boundless, almost physical repulsion for everything round him, an obstinate, hateful, malicious sensation" (93). His sense of repulsion extends not least to his family members: "My mother, my sister, how I loved them! What makes me hate
them now? Yes, I hate them, hate them physically; I cannot bear them near me" (234). Even in the course of his confession to Sonya, "a bitter hatred" for her suddenly and unexpectedly "seemed to flood his heart" (345).

Raskolnikov's rejection of food, however, does not define him completely. As Bakhtin has noted, Dostoevsky's heroes are always in a state of unfinalized transition: "They all acutely sense their own inner unfinalizability, their capacity to outgrow, as it were, from within and to render untrue any externalizing and finalizing definition of them" (59).

Raskolnikov cannot completely deny his bodily appetite, realizing that he must eat if only to muster up the strength necessary to carry out his murderous plan. As early as the opening chapter, we find him entering a tavern to stave off the weakness which has overcome him on his way through the city streets:

He felt a need for cold beer, especially as he now attributed his sudden weakness to having had nothing to eat. He sat down in a dark and dirty corner behind a small sticky table, ordered his beer, and drank the first glass thirstily. He began to feel better at once, and his thoughts grew clearer. "This is all nonsense," he said to himself hopefully, "and there was no need to get so agitated. It was simply physical weakness. One glass of beer and a rusk and my mind grows keen, my thoughts clear, my resolution firm. Bah, how paltry it all is!" (7).

Implicit in Raskolnikov's concession to his appetite is the recognition that he cannot exist apart from the world outside himself.
Raskolnikov's dependence on the external world, however, extends to more than simply the need for bodily nourishment. He also feels the need—albeit infrequently—for communion with others, despite his recent avoidance of all social contacts. In fact, it is precisely because "he suddenly felt drawn to people" that he visits the public house on his way home from the pawnbroker's:

Something as it were new had been accomplished in his soul, and with it had come a thirst for society. He was so weary after a whole month of concentrated misery and gloomy agitation that he longed to breathe, if only for a moment, the air of some other world, and so, in spite of the filthy surroundings, he took pleasure in this visit to the public house. (8)

In his desire for "some other world," Raskolnikov reveals his own potential for regeneration. He recognizes—at least implicitly—that the world of the isolated self is a deadly one. In fact, Raskolnikov's thirst for company increases after he has carried out his crime. At the same time as his sense of "almost physical repulsion for everything round him" reaches a new extreme, he feels an inexplicable desire to communicate his secret to others (93). However, if he occasionally escapes from the private world of his own tormented mind, Raskolnikov finds the space of the city equally claustrophobic. Thus, by himself, he appears incapable of making the transition from death to life. "Something more powerful," Matual indicates, "is required to arouse him from his spiritual
lethargy and lead him towards the events of the epilogue" (30).

**The City and the Feminine**

If Levi-Strauss suggests that the role of culture is to mediate between man and the natural world, Dostoevsky gives us an image of a culture which has forsaken that role. The city in *Crime and Punishment* is a deracinated world. It lives an entirely separate existence, having no roots in the earth or in the surrounding landscape.

This aspect of the city is reflected in the historical Petersburg which presented Dostoevsky with the raw materials for his literary creation. As Pike notes, St. Petersburg was essentially a planned city which "sprang like a latter-day Minerva from the head of Peter the Great" (89). Although situated on the periphery of Europe, in a country whose culture and traditions hearkened back to a distant past, it was patterned "on Western rather than native models" and "intended as a window on the west for a backward and profoundly non-European culture" (89). While at one stage Dostoevsky seemed to embrace Petersburg's westernizing influence, he later came to regard the city, like the narrator of *Notes from Underground*, as "the most abstract and intentional . . . in the whole world" (I.2). It was a product of the random imposition of mind over matter and its arbitrary character that made it a prototype
of the rootless—and therefore interchangeable—cities which seem so typical of modern life.6

In Crime and Punishment, perhaps the most important sign of the city's alienation from nature is the displacement of the feminine. The fertility of women—their capacity to bear and nurture new life—suggests a stronger link with the generative processes of nature than men possess. Woman, Eliade remarks,

is mystically held to be one with the earth, childbearing is seen as a variant, on the human scale of the telluric fertility. All religious experiences connected with fecundity and birth have a cosmic structure. The sacrality of woman depends on the holiness of the earth. Feminine fecundity has a cosmic model—that of Terra Mater, the universal Genetrix. (Sacred 144)

This is not to say that the difference between masculine and feminine corresponds with the difference between culture and nature. On the contrary, if the role of culture is to mediate between the human and the natural worlds, as Levi-Strauss suggests, then it is precisely in women that that role is most clearly realized. Women, in a sense, are the very bearers of culture. Of course, culture

6. Holquist notes that one of the most profound symbolic acts of Peter was his introduction of the Julian calendar on January 1, 1770. It marked "the end of an old chronology that dated events from the creation of the world, and the first day of a new epoch. . . . The new calendar was another of Peter's attempts to break down the differences between Russia and the West, and its adoption is perhaps the most comprehensive symbolic act of his reign. It is an emblem of Peter's attempt to Europeanize not only Russian culture and space—to change the course of history, in other words—but to change the native sense of time itself" (3).
also requires the kind of rational qualities that are typically associated with masculinity. But it is defined in a more profound way by its relation to the feminine, since its very existence depends on its connection with the life-giving processes of nature—a connection which women themselves embody. Once it loses that link with the natural world, culture atrophies and dies.

That the ancient Romans were aware of this is evident from the sanctity they accorded the realm of the hearth, the symbolic locus of the values of the feminine. In Crime and Punishment, though, the hearth is the realm not of life and unity but of sickness and division. It is represented most significantly in the Marmeladov household. When Raskolnikov visits there for the first time, he finds living quarters that are as cramped and stifling as his own:

The grimy little door at the head of the stairs stood open. A candle-end lighted up a poverty-stricken room about ten paces long; all of it could be seen from the landing. It was disordered and untidily strewn with various tattered children's garments. A torn sheet was stretched across the corner at the back of the room. The bed was probably behind it. There was nothing in the room but two chairs and a sofa covered with ragged oilcloth, with an old deal kitchen table, unpainted and uncovered, standing before it. On the edge of the table stood the stump of a tallow candle in an iron candlestick. (20)

The squalor in which the family lives indicates not only their material deprivation but the lack of value accorded to the domestic sphere by the culture of the city. Indeed, the atmosphere of the cramped room is as profane as that of
the public house from which Raskolnikov and Marmeladov have just returned: "The room was stuffy; . . . a foul smell came from the stairs, but the door to the landing was not shut; clouds of tobacco-smoke blew in from the other rooms through the half-open door" (21).

But the desacralization of the household realm is most evocatively symbolized in the figure of Katerina Ivanovna, Marmeladov's wife:

She was terribly wasted, a fairly tall, slender, shapely woman with still beautiful dark-brown hair and cheeks flushed with hectic red. She was walking up and down the little room with her hands pressed to her breast. Her lips looked parched and her breathing was harsh and uneven. Her eyes had a feverish glitter, but their gaze was fixed and hard. The consumptive and agitated creature was a painful spectacle, with the last light of the guttering candle flickering on her face. She appeared to Raskolnikov to be about thirty years old, and she and Marmeladov were certainly ill-matched . . . She did not hear or notice them as they entered; she seemed to be in a sort of stupor, deaf and blind to everything. (20-1)

In her, Dostoevsky presents a sign not of the abundance of nature but of its scarcity in a culture which has alienated itself from the generative processes of the earth.

Katerina Ivanovna's consumptive body is the most obvious index of that scarcity. Over the course of the novel, she grows progressively thinner and the red stains on her cheeks--a symptom of her fatal condition--appear even brighter than before. As a result of her illness, she is incapable of nourishing her emaciated children and her agitation with them increases daily.
The failure of the child-mother relationship in the Marmeladov household is itself a symptom of the breakdown of communal relations which we witness in the city generally. Indeed, one of the central images of that breakdown is the meal which Katerina Ivanovna hosts to commemorate her husband's death. Typically intended as a sacred ritual to mark the passing of a loved one from this life to the next, the funeral meal on this occasion turns into a fractious encounter between the widow and her neighbors. In fact, Dostoevsky suggests that Katerina Ivanovna hosts the meal precisely to draw attention to her difference from those around her:

most probably Katerina Ivanovna wished . . . just at this moment when she seemed to be abandoned by everyone on earth, to show all these "nasty contemptible lodgers" not only that she "knew how things ought to be done, and how to entertain guests," but also that she had not been brought up for her present lot in life, but in the "household of an officer and a gentleman, in what might almost be called aristocratic surroundings," and had never been meant for sweeping floors, or washing her children's rags at night. (319)

Of course, the final irony of the meal is that it becomes the occasion for the eviction of the widow and her family. The woman who had boasted of her aristocratic origins ends up a pathetic beggar in the filthy streets of Petersburg.

One of Katerina Ivanovna's most marked characteristics is her obsessive cleanliness. Dostoevsky tells us that she "was willing to wear herself out with work that was beyond her strength, at night, while everybody was asleep, so as
to be able to dry the wet things by morning and give them back clean, rather than see dirt in the house" (153). That she "could not tolerate dirt" suggests, at first glance, that she is the very emblem of modern civilization.

According to Freud,

Dirtiness of any kind seems to us incompatible with civilization. We extend our demand for cleanliness to the human body too. We are astonished to learn of the objectionable smell which emanated from the Roi Soleil; and we shake our heads on the Isola Bella when we are shown the tiny wash-basin in which Napoleon made his morning toilet. Indeed, we are not surprised by the idea of setting up soap as an actual yardstick of civilization. (40)

It may be more accurate, however, to suggest that dirt itself is an invention of modernity, a devaluation of the natural fecundity of the earth. In fact, for Dostoevsky, Katerina Ivanovna is a figure of Mother Earth, Russia's most ancient and revered deity, who is reduced to impoverishment and despair by the forces of modernity. In this light, Katerina's intolerance of dirt is precisely a rejection of the reduction of earth to mere dirt.

Like her stepmother, Sonya is a sign of the displacement of the feminine within a culture which locates all of its values in rationality. Her body, the symbolic

7. Illich remarks that complaints "that cities can become dirty places go back to antiquity" (46). But, "the perception of the city as a place that must be constantly washed is of recent origin. It appears at the time of the Enlightenment. The reason most often given for this constant toilettte is not the visually offensive features of waste or the residues that make people slip on the street but bad odors and their dangers. The city is suddenly perceived as an evil-smelling place" (47).
locus of love, has been transformed into an object of exchange in the cruel economy of prostitution. However, although she is the victim of a system which is founded entirely on the principle of rational self-interest, Sonya never allows that principle to take over her own being. In her, the values of the feminine remain untainted. The prostitute, John Layard suggests,
is the archetype of the free woman, the woman untrammelled by man's laws. For dreams are on this level the complementary opposite of life in the flesh. In external life she has to pay a price much heavier than that paid by the man, but in dreams she represents the bountiful earth-mother, uncontaminated by thinking, who offers good things to all men and who is to be had for the asking, though the asking involves toiling with the sweat of one's brow, to dig, harrow, manure, and plant the soil. She is in fact, the ultimate anima, the temple priestess who marries the god and bestows her favors upon devout men, thus raising them also to semi-divine status. On this spiritual level she is also Our Lady, who showers her gifts freely upon all men and who is profligate (note the word) with her divine favors. In fact she is the psyche, the Virgin Unspotted, pregnant with the boundless pregnancy of nature, translated into this spiritual sphere. (178)

Raskolnikov himself recognizes precisely this virginal quality in Sonya: "All her shame had obviously touched her only mechanically; no trace of real corruption had yet crept into her heart" (273). If at a literal level the act of prostitution is a moral evil, at a symbolic level it becomes an image of the kind of unselfishness which is the very mark of Sonya's character. Within the cannibalistic space of the city, where—as Raskolnikov suggests—people "eat one another alive," she freely gives her body over to
others (43). Within a system which is rooted in the rational relations of the money economy, she offers a sign of the giftedness of creation.

It is in Sonya, more than any other character, that Dostoevsky shows us a mode of knowledge that is fundamentally different from the epistemology of the city. She knows others not as objects wholly separate from herself but as beings whose nature she shares in the depths of her own person. Although she suffers terribly, she does not allow her suffering to alienate her from those around her. On the contrary, it gives her a knowledge of them which has its source within herself. The very mark of Sonya is compassion—the capacity to suffer with others. When Raskolnikov asks her whether she loves the stepmother who used to mistreat her, she reacts not with anger but with sorrow at Katerina Ivanovna's sad fate:

"Love her? But of course!" Sonya almost wailed, clasping her hands together in distress. "Oh, you speak of her . . . If only you knew! She is really just like a child . . . I suppose she has lost her reason . . . from grief. But how clever she used to be . . . how generous . . . how good! You know nothing, nothing at all . . . Oh!"

Sonya said this almost despairingly, wringing her hands in excitement and distress. Her pale cheeks had flushed again, and her eyes looked full of anguish. She was plainly very deeply moved, and longing to speak, to plead, to find expression for something. An almost insatiable compassion, if one can use that expression, was depicted in every feature of her face. (268)

It is exactly her capacity for compassion which enables Sonya to reach the alienated soul of Raskolnikov. In him
she recognizes not simply a murderer—although she doesn't deny that he has committed a terrible evil—but someone who has suffered in the very depths of his soul: "There is no one, no one, unhappier than you in the whole world!" (347). As he confesses his crime to her, Raskolnikov repeatedly draws attention to their separate natures: "Oh, we are such different people!" (350). But Sonya keeps urging him to confess, saying "I shall understand, I shall understand it all inside me!" (350).

Sonya's is a connatural knowledge, a knowledge from within which, as Karl Stern indicates, is possible because "we share our human nature with other human beings" (51). This connatural knowledge is an epistemology which Stern suggests is basically feminine in its aspect: "All knowledge by union; all knowledge by incorporation (incorporating or being incorporated); and all knowledge through love has its natural fundament in our primary bond with the mother" (54). However, although in Crime and Punishment it finds its principal expression in Sonya, connatural knowledge is not exclusive to women. In fact, it is precisely Raskolnikov's rejection of connaturality which alienates him so profoundly from his fellow human beings, a rejection which, as we have seen, finds its symbolic expression in his refusal to eat.

In the midst of the degradation of the city, Sonya offers the sign of the New Jerusalem--not the abstraction
upon which the mind of Raskolnikov has seized—but a community founded on a love which is selfless. Through her, and together with Razumikhin, Nastasya and Raskolnikov's mother and sister, the seed of that community is planted within Petersburg itself. Their presence in the city implies that the hegemony of ideological systems is never quite complete; there is always something left over, something which remains unaffected by the prevailing urban reality. In Sonya, though, this contradictory movement does not represent an alternative operation of power, a movement of resistance which seeks to gain control for itself. On the contrary, it manifests itself precisely in her acceptance of suffering and her self-abnegation, in her meekness and her compassion for others. Although opposed to power, those qualities alone have the capacity to move the estranged and hate-encrusted heart of Raskolnikov.

What Sonya sees in Raskolnikov more than anything else is the deep suffering of another soul. It is the same suffering that leads Svidrigaylov—who, as Bakhtin notes, "is one of Raskolnikov's parodic doubles"—to the despair of suicide (89). Sonya's compassion for the suffering hero gives us the very mark of the spirit in which the novel itself depicts him. Dostoevsky's task was not simply to expose the folly of the rationalistic ideologies which
prevailed in the Petersburg of his own day. As N. Strakhov notes, it was a task
very much deeper and more difficult than that of ridiculing the ugliness of empty and anemic natures. His Raskolnikov may suffer from youthful depression and egoism, but he represents a man gifted with a strong mind and warm heart. He is not a phrase-monger devoid of blood and nerves; he is a real man. This young man also constructs a theory, but a theory which because of the force of his greater vitality and larger power of mind runs more deeply and more definitely counter to life. . . . For the first time, an unhappy nihilist, a nihilist suffering in a deeply human way is depicted before us. (485)

Like Sonya, Dostoevsky knows the hero within himself. The knowledge he gives us is the knowledge which, Maritain suggests, all great novelists give us—"that poetic knowledge of other subjectivities in and through his own, that knowledge through affective connaturality which makes him penetrate his characters and foresee their actions through the medium of his own inclinations" (397).

Dostoevsky's Petersburg is a place where people only suffer, and Raskolnikov, who suffers more deeply than anyone else, is its most profound symbol. He is saved by Sonya, who makes only one request of him:

Go at once, this instant, stand at the cross-roads, first bow down and kiss the earth you have desecrated, then, bow down to the whole world, to the four corners of the earth, and say aloud to the whole world: "I have done murder." Then God will send you life again. (355)

When Raskolnikov performs this symbolic act, he acknowledges the fundamental reality of the world outside himself. As George Gibian indicates, it marks
the beginning of his change into a complete, organic, living human being, rejoining all other men in the community. By his crime and ideas, he had separated himself from his friends, family, and nation, in one word, he had cut himself off from Mother Earth. By the gesture of kissing the earth he is reestablishing all his ties. (538)

An onlooker who witnesses the gesture mistakes Raskolnikov for a drunk and ridicules him saying, "he's going to Jerusalem, lads, and he's saying goodbye to his family and his country" (445). As Gibian indicates, however, the mocking words are deeply ironic;

Raskolnikov is indeed saying goodbye—to Petersburg, for he will be sent to Siberia. At the same time he is taking farewell of his false ideal of the new Jerusalem. In another sense, he is now about to embark on a search for a new ideal, another New Jerusalem—and in this sense he will be a pilgrim, seeking personal regeneration which is to replace his earlier social-rationalistic ideal. (539)

Although Raskolnikov's pilgrimage is initiated at the crossroads, he does not come to a full awareness of its meaning until several years later. Indeed, his life in Siberia appears to be marked by the same alienation which marked his Petersburg existence, an alienation which—as before—is symbolized by his lack of interest in food: "He was almost indifferent to what he ate" (457). We are told that a "terrible unbridgeable chasm" separated him from everyone, "as if he and they belonged to different races" (460).

Only after he has spent eight years in Siberia does Raskolnikov reach an awareness of the new life that lies before him. It is an awareness, however, which comes not
from within himself but through an image revealed to him on
the bank of the river where he happens to be working one
morning during the season of Easter:

From the high bank a broad landscape was revealed. From the other bank, far away, was faintly borne the sound of singing. There, in the immensity of the steppe, flooded with sunlight, the black tents of the nomads were barely visible dots. Freedom was there, there other people lived, so utterly unlike those on this side of the river that it seemed as though with them time had stood still, and the age of Abraham and his flocks was still the present. (463)

The image, which recalls the nomadic existence of the Hebraic people of the Old Testament, suggests that Raskolnikov's final destiny lies not in this world but the next. Like the onlooker, who mocked him many years before at the crossroads, it indicates that his earthly life is essentially a pilgrimage, a time of exile which lasts as long as earthly life itself. The character of that exile, however, is fundamentally different from the exile which Raskolnikov has previously endured within the space of the city. If the latter meant alienation from the earth, the former means a closeness to it which is even greater than that felt by the settler.

There is, of course, a certain paradox here. One would think that the settler who tills and sows the land has deeper earthly roots than the nomad whose existence is characterized by constant movement. But precisely because he never settles the nomad experiences a greater sense of dependence on the earth than the farmer. He does not have
the advantage of the relatively permanent structures which mark the settled way of life. Unlike the farmer, who works to protect himself against the unpredictable realities of nature, the nomad is more frequently left exposed and vulnerable. The farmer subdues the earth and harnesses its productive powers for his benefit. But the nomad simply works alongside it, tending its creatures but not transforming it in any way.

Because the farmer has a greater dominion over the earth, he may be tempted to think that he actually owns it and that its fruits are his own creations. In fact, as the fourth chapter of Genesis suggests, it is to this temptation that Cain, the elder son of Adam, succumbs. Cain, who is a tiller of the land, makes an offering of his produce to God. That the offering is rejected is a sign, as various ancient interpreters of the account indicate, that it was made in the wrong spirit. Augustine suggests that Cain "gave to God something belonging to him, but gave himself to himself" (15. 7). In fact, he raises the possibility that Cain may even have kept "back for himself the choicer portions" of his produce (15. 7). Augustine implies, then, that the offering is not freely given, that Cain measures out that portion which he thinks is God's due. As Lewis Hyde has noted, the failure to perceive the giftedness of creation results in the loss of the organic connection between man and the world: "To count, measure,
reckon value . . . is to step outside the circle, to cease being 'all of a piece' with the flow of gifts and become instead, one part of the whole reflecting upon another part" (152). Thus, Cain's treatment of the things of the earth as possessions suggests that he is actually less rooted in them than is Abel. He knows them as other than himself, as a reality to be dominated and possessed rather than a reality which includes him as part of an organic whole. Abel, the younger son of Adam, lives the nomadic life of a shepherd. That his offering, the first of his flock, is accepted suggests that, unlike Cain's, it is freely given. Abel recognizes that the creatures of the earth, although under his care, are not his own; rather, they are a manifestation of divine superabundance, a gift from God to man which can never be taken for granted. When God accepts Abel's offering, Cain becomes jealous and murders his brother. As a punishment for this sin, Cain himself is condemned to a nomadic existence.

But that existence is only superficially similar to that which his dead brother led. In fact, it is the very inverse of the life of Abel. Cain is a different kind of nomad, a dark figure whose crime makes him "a fugitive and a vagabond" on the earth (4. 12). Outcast from the life of the community, Cain fears his exposure to those dangers to which the outsider is especially subject. Thus, God places a mark upon him, "lest any finding him should kill him" (4.
15). He is separated not only from the community of men but from the earth itself; God tells him that when he tills the ground, it shall not henceforth yield unto him her strength" (4. 12). Of course, the most obvious difference between the lives of the two brothers is that Cain eventually founds a city, Enoch, a city which Augustine suggests "was the earthly city . . . the city which is not just a pilgrim in the world, but rests satisfied with its temporal peace and felicity" (15. 17).

Until he bows down and kisses the earth at the crossroads, Raskolnikov is a figure of Cain, a murderer, an outcast from the community, a hater of the earth and a constructor of utopian system—the very symbol of the earthly city. However, the image revealed to him on the river bank in Siberia suggests that his ultimate destiny lies in the heavenly city. Like Abel, the spiritual ancestor of the people of Abraham, Raskolnikov is to be a pilgrim in the world. But if the life of the pilgrim is a journey, it is not a journey which separates him from the things of the earth. As the life of Abel suggests, it is precisely those earthly things which at once unite him to the human community and remind him of his true home.
At the end of his journey through the underworld, Aeneas is reunited with his dead father who reveals to him the "Dardan generations" of the future and the "famous children" who will follow in his line (6. 1015-17). Of the descendants he sees, the first is a "young man leaning on a spear unarmed . . . his allotted place nearest the light" (6. 1021-22). Aeneas is told that the boy will be the first to take the upper air, Silvius, a child with half Italian blood
And an Alban name, your last born, whom your wife, Lavinia, late in your great age will rear
In forests to be king and father of kings. Through him our race will rule in Alba Longa.
(6. 1023-28)

Thus, the hero learns that the future Roman people will not simply be transplanted Trojans but the product of an alliance—a marriage—with another people. Unlike Andromache's city, which is a scrupulous imitation of the lost world of Troy, Rome will constitute an authentic beginning, a metamorphosis of the old into something new.

The alliance which Aeneas and his men propose upon reaching Italy, however, is more than simply a means to guarantee their own future. In the Laurentines, Virgil gives us an image of a people whose own culture appears to have run its course. Their king, Latinus, "had no son or
male descendant, / Death having taken one in early youth" (7. 68-69). Hence, "A single daughter held that house's hopes, / A girl now ripe for marriage, for a man" (7. 70-71). But while Lavinia's affections have been widely sought by the sons of Latium, Latinus has learned from the oracle of his father that the renewal of his people will come not from within his own circle of kin but through contact with foreigners:

Men from abroad will come
And be your sons by marriage. Blood so mingled
Lifts our name starward. Children of that stock
Will see all earth turned Latin at their feet,
Governed by them, as far as on his rounds
The Sun looks down on Ocean, East or West.
(7. 127-132)

In fact, the Trojans themselves promise the same benefits in their first meeting with the Laurentines. As Ilioneus, one of Aeneas's men, tells Latinus, "Ausonians who take Troy to their hearts / Will not regret it" (7. 311-12).

Even before the arrival of the Trojans, Latinus's queen, Amata, has been working against the prospect of an alliance. Among her daughter's suitors, "the handsomest by far / Was Turnus, powerful heir of a great line" (7. 73-4). Amata, we are told, "pressed for their union,/Desiring him with passion for a son" (7. 75-6). In fact, Juno finds in Amata a ready instrument to realize her own plans to disrupt the progress of the Trojans in Italy. When Allecto--Juno's assistance from the underworld--finds Amata, she is "Burning already at the Trojan's coming,
After she has been infected with the fury's venom, her opposition to the Trojan leader sends her into an uncontrollable frenzy, a frenzy which paradoxically recalls the grief of Dido after she learns of Aeneas's impending departure from Carthage.

At first, though, Amata attempts to reach her husband with a mother's soft words:

Have you no pity for your daughter,  
None for yourself? No pity for her mother,  
Who will be left alone by the faithless man,  
The rover, going to sea at the first north wind  
With a girl for booty? Was that not the way  
The Phrygian shepherd entered Lacedaemon  
And carried Helen off to Troy's far city?  
What of your solemn word, your years of love  
For your own people, your right hand so often  
Given to Turnus, our blood-kin? (7. 497-506)

The queen's desperation becomes evident when, having just reminded Latinus of his duty to his own kin, she attempts to suggest that Turnus himself is as much a foreigner as Aeneas: "I maintain that every separate country / Free from all rule of ours, is foreign land, / And this is what the gods mean. Turnus, too, / If we seek origins, had Inachus / And Acrisius as forebears at Mycenae" (7. 510-14). Her husband, however, stands firm against her barrage of arguments and, as a result, "the poor queen, now enflamed / By prodigies of hell, went wild indeed / And with insane abandon roamed the city" (7. 518-20).

In the person of Amata and, of course, in Juno herself, Virgil appears to represent an impulse which is
inimical to the very processes necessary for Rome's founding. According to Robert Parks, a leading member of the Chicago School of urban studies, the development of civilization not only militates against the conservation of racial differences but may be said to flourish at their very expense:

if it is true that races are the products of isolation and inbreeding, it is just as certain that civilization, on the other hand, is a consequence of contact and communication. The forces which have been decisive in mankind are those which have brought men together in competition, conflict and co-operation. (132)

It is precisely those forces which Amata and Juno oppose. Although their respective plights elicit our sympathy, their fierce loyalty to their own kin makes them obstacles to the realization of the Roman ideal. At the very core of civilization, Virgil suggests, is a movement beyond the narrow confines of kin, a movement towards the other. The founding of Rome is made possible not by the preservation of an original purity but by the creative mixing of peoples and cultures.

The City in America

The development of American civilization, a development which would hardly have been possible without the influx and intermingling of countless peoples from Europe, Africa America itself and elsewhere, presents perhaps the clearest latter-day instance of the process which Virgil suggests in the Aeneid. In fact, as Theodore Ziolkowski notes, it is
in America rather than Italy that the Virgilian epic has had the most profound influence. In comparison "with the cooptation of Virgil as a national property in Italy" during the regime of Mussolini in the 1930s,

we can observe a process of popularization in the United States, where ever since the beginning of the republic Virgil had belonged among the most beloved school-authors, where his epic about "the pilgrim fathers of the Romans" was regarded as the archetype of every voyage of discovery, where twenty-two states could boast of a town named Troy, and where even the dollar bill bore Latin phrases based on quotations from Virgil (novus ordo seclorum, annuit coeptis, and e pluribus unum). (19)

However, if America has welcomed the archetype of its own experience in the image of exile from Troy, it has not accorded the same reception to the image of the city itself. In fact, at times America appears to be characterized by a peculiar ineptitude for the urban way of life. As Leo Marx suggests, "an inchoate longing for a more 'natural' environment enters into the contemptuous attitude that many Americans adopt towards urban life (with the result that we neglect our cities and desert them for the suburbs)" (5).

As Lewis Simpson has observed, American popular mythology views "the English people who began to make their homes in Massachusetts and Virginia in the first half of the seventeenth century" as "the advance guard of the radical forces of modernity," "a brave and restless progeny who during the new three centuries transformed a huge expanse of virgin continent into . . . the first fully
modern nation" (1). According to Simpson, this image of
the first settlers is entirely misleading:

The settlements they made in a "new world" were in one
way or another responses to the dispossession of the
integral and authoritative community of an "old world"
by modern history. If they sowed the New World
gardens with the seeds of modernity, the initial
makers of these gardens did so unwittingly. They
intended to make their new homes in Massachusetts and
Virginia--save of course for their possible
destruction by the hand of Providence--places of
permanence, not jumping-off places for something else.
This at any rate is what the Massachusetts and
Virginia plantings are conceived to be in the writings
of those who attempted to imagine what these novel
places meant. (2)

Thus, the American founding--or this version of it--was
precisely an idealized reaction to the historical forces
which modernity represented. The New England settlers
brought with them a vision of America as a second paradise,
a new Garden of Eden, in which the American Adam could live
out his existence free of the trials and evils of past
history. Whereas Virgil's Rome is founded through contact
and communication with other peoples, the New World is
understood as a virgin land, unspoiled and untainted by
human presence. Like the societies of archaic man, it is
situated at the primordial time of beginnings, the locus of
an original innocence and purity.

With the arrival of industrialization in America in
the nineteenth century, the lure of an idealized pastoral
world was given new life. Christine Bolt notes that urban
growth which
occasioned only moderate hostility in the first half of the nineteenth century aroused increasing alarm from the 1880s. The speed of urbanization then seemed threatening, and the process was more than formerly associated with social segregation and class conflict, with a massive immigrant influx, commercialized vice and political corruption, and with the alienation of the individual from the supports and restraints provided by traditional societies. (13-14)

By the early twentieth century "a diverse nation which shared many of the social evils and ambitions of the also urbanizing Old World" had developed in the place of "a relatively homogeneous rural 'utopia'" (14). The "industrial cities" which formed the center-piece of this new reality, Bolt remarks, "were often seen as symbols of the loss of American youth and innocence" (14).

In 1851, the year he began writing Pierre, his seventh book, Herman Melville already sensed the immensity of the gap between the emerging urban reality and the pastoral ideal which had been present in the American consciousness since its inception. In fact, the idyllic world of Saddle Meadows, the rural home of his young hero Pierre, is defined precisely by its distance from the vulgar life of the city. The difference between the two worlds, however, is not simply a difference between reality and fantasy. On the contrary, for Melville, the very isolation of Saddle Meadows makes it a more profound symbol of the deepest tendencies of his society than he could find in the city itself.
Like the society of the Laurentines, Saddle Meadows is a world which clearly requires regeneration. Pierre, its representative, is "not only the solitary head of his family, but the only surnamed male Glendinning extant" (7). A family which was once "powerful and populous," we are told, "had by degrees run off into the female branches; so that Pierre found himself surrounded by numerous kinsmen and kinswomen, yet companioned by no surnamed Glendinning, but the duplicate one reflected to him in the mirror" (7-8). In Saddle Meadows, then, Melville provides a symbolic representation of a culture of isolation, a culture which—because it has severed its links with the outside world—has become introverted and narcissistic.

In the Aeneid, of course, the impediment to the renewal of Latin society is ultimately overcome, and a new life with the Trojans begins. But the very existence of that impediment means that the future is realized only at a great price. In her resistance to her daughter's marriage to Aeneas, Latinus' queen brings about both her own destruction and a bloody war between the Trojans and the forces of Turnus. Pierre is ultimately a tragic novel because the psychic obstacles which prevent regeneration cannot be removed, because the inward turn of the hero's society is so deeply ingrained that catastrophe is the only possible outcome. As Myra Jehlen indicates, the world which Pierre has inherited is "already ideal" (218). As a
result, "the confrontation of ideal world and ideal hero is apocalyptic, a final apocalypse of which even the record disappears" (218).  

In his young hero's relentless progress towards self-destruction, Melville revealed the catastrophic potential latent in his own society. Thus, Pierre is not simply an account of the author's contemporary social world but a projection of that world to the point of its ultimate self-realization. Unlike the Aeneid, which prophesies an ideal future, Pierre brings us to the brink of the abyss, to the nothingness which is glimpsed when a stagnant and decaying society collapses in upon itself.

In Pierre, however, Melville was looking not only toward the future but back to the origins of American civilization. In fact, one of the definitive marks of Pierre's world is its sense of proximity to those beginnings. The very landscape of Saddle Meadows makes present the historic past, "the popular names of its finest features" appealing to "the proudest patriotic and family associations of the historic line of Glendinning" (6). A

1. Chapter six of Jehlen's American Incarnation: the Individual, the Nation, and the Continent provides an excellent discussion of the tragic aspects of Pierre. She notes that the hero's tragedy "produces no catharsis, has no purgative effect, implies no later resumption of even a diminished order. It is literally, as Isabel says, all over in the end, and we know him not: that is, not even his story is left, the tragedy itself has been destroyed. Not just a hero, but the all-representative American man in a universal Gaza, he has pulled down the pillars of the universe" (217).
day's walk beyond the mansions and the village brought Pierre into contact with the "storied heights, where in the Revolutionary war his grandfather had for several months defended a rude but all-important stockaded fort, against the repeated combined assaults of Indians, Tories, and Regulars" (6). All these associations, we are told, "were full of pride to Pierre" (6).

For Melville, however, what makes Pierre the very incarnation of America is not so much his link with its revolutionary past as his contemporaneity with it. For Pierre, there is no past—or future for that matter. Like the man of archaic societies, he lives only at the primordial moment, at a beginning untainted by the processes of history. Thus, as a symbolic world, Saddle Meadows does not simply represent those tendencies which Melville saw latent at his own historical moment; rather, it roots those tendencies in the paradisiac myth which America's first settlers brought with them to the New World, the myth of an absolute beginning, of a return to the Edenic state which preceded the fall of man.

Of course, nearly one hundred and fifty years after the publication of Pierre, Melville himself is regarded as perhaps the quintessential American writer. That fact alone suggests that the world of Pierre Glendinning does not by any means exhaust the content of America's psychic landscape. Both Pierre and Nathaniel Hawthorne's The
Marble Faun, Diane Long Hoeveler suggests, are themselves "particularly American works in criticizing the notion that a new order can replace the corrupt and rejected world of the fathers" (247). But if Melville questioned the false optimism of the American ideal, he did not neglect to hope for the renewal of his people. D.H. Lawrence, who himself professed a deep admiration for Melville's work, remarks that "underneath, and contrary" to America's "open ideal" are

the first hints and revelations of it. It, the American whole soul. You have got to pull the democratic and idealistic clothes off American utterance, and see what you can of the dusky body of It underneath. (Studies 18)

In Pierre, Melville gives us the image of an alienated and fragmented soul. But in Moby Dick--where a redemptive future for society is foreseen--he gives us another America, an America which is founded not on the denial of the fact of man's baser nature but, to cite Lawrence again, on the "the deepest whole self of man, the self in its wholeness, not idealistic halfness" (17). Ultimately, this America is equally if not more significant than the version which is represented in the overwrought world of the Glendinnings.

Incest and Civilization

Perhaps the most definitive characteristic of the world of Saddle Meadows is the incestuous quality of its familial relations. Critics, however, have disagreed on the meaning
of incest in the novel, a fact which may reflect the paradoxical quality of the concept itself. While its common definition is straightforward—incest means sexual intercourse between persons so closely related that they are forbidden by law to marry—a deeper analysis yields two apparently opposed meanings. Its Latin derivation is incestum, the noun use of the adjective incestus (in-not + castus pure) which means unchaste or impure. On the one hand, then, incest is the violation of something untainted, a pollution or mixing of categories which ought to be separate precisely because they are already closely related. It is an instance of what Levi-Strauss calls "the underrating of blood relations" ("Structural Study of Myth" 215). Incest implies an entirely undifferentiated state, a state in which anyone—kin and non-kin—can be chosen as a mate. It results, as its Latin root implies, from a lack of sexual restraint or chastity, an uninhibited desire which ignores socially-sanctioned boundaries. It is this sense of incest which Freud identified as antithetical to civilization; "incest," he wrote, "is anti-social and civilization consists in a progressive renunciation of it" (quoted in Strachey 6).

On the other hand, incest suggests an excessively strict differentiation between kin and non-kin, what Levi-Strauss calls an "overrating of blood relations" (215). It is the result of an overly developed sense of exclusivity,
a fear of the other or the stranger; a person within the family circle is chosen as a mate precisely because of the horror of mixing with those outside it. Thus, if incest suggests the pollution of relations within the circle of kin, it also suggests the fear of pollution from sources outside that circle. This meaning is also present in the Latin derivation. _Castus_, the Latin word for pure, is the root of the word _caste_, commonly defined as a hereditary social class or unmixed race. Thus, if the incest taboo is the very mark of civilization, as Freud and Levi-Strauss suggest, civilization itself can appear to be incestuous when it becomes a system of rigid social stratification. Incest, in this sense, is the result of an intellectual rather than a sensual disorder, a disorder which causes the mind to sever its connections with the world outside itself —with both the human body and the body of humanity. When incest is understood as not simply a literal but a symbolic condition, it is this latter sense which is most frequently invoked. We see it not only in the tragedies of the ancient Greek dramatists but in a wide array of modern literary works— in Edgar Allan Poe's "The Fall of the House of Usher," in W. B. Yeats's _Purgatory_, in Faulkner's _Absalom, Absalom_, in Gabriel Garcia Marquez's _One Hundred Years of Solitude_, as well as in _Pierre_ itself.

Many critics, however, have interpreted the incest motif in _Pierre_ in a more or less literal fashion. In
fact, S. Foster Damon, an early critic of the novel, argues that literalism is the very mark of Melville's treatment of incest. For Hawthorne, he suggests, it was merely a symbol of sexual sin, "made specific only because incest was literary, unreal, and mystifying" (15). Melville, on the other hand, "was interested in the thing for its own puzzle" (151). His treatment of incest, Damon remarks, "is such that Pierre takes its place in literary history as the first novel based on morbid sex" (149).

Thus, while Damon recognizes the presence of incest as a specifically literary theme in Hawthorne, he praises Melville for his non-literary—that is, his realistic—approach to the subject. His remarks, however, imply a misunderstanding of the nature of literature itself. As Victor Shklovsky suggests, an image in a literary work is "not a permanent referent for those mutable complexities of life which are revealed through it; its purpose is not to make us perceive meaning, but to create a special perception of the object" (18). It is this mediated quality of the literary work—its deformation of lived reality—which Damon dismisses in Hawthorne and fails to recognize in Melville.

In fact, a literal interpretation leaves Melville open to the charge which many reviews raised against him when the novel was first published, that is, that he had a
prurient interest in "morbid sex." A review in Graham's

Magazine, for example, announced that

the spirit pervading the whole book is intolerably unhealthy, and the most friendly reader is obliged at the end to protest against such a provoking perversion of talent and waste of power. The author has attempted seemingly to combine in it the peculiarities of Poe and Hawthorne, and has succeeded in producing nothing but a powerfully unpleasant caricature of morbid thought and passion. Pierre, we take it, is crazy, and the merit of the book is clearly presenting the psychology of his madness; but the details of such a mental malady as that which afflicts Pierre are almost as disgusting as those of physical disease itself. (55)

The American Whig Review called the plot of the novel
"repulsive, unnatural and indecent" (58). It went on to suggest that

there are certain ideas so repulsive to the general mind that they themselves are not alone kept out of sight, but, by a fit ordination of society, everything that might be supposed to even collaterally suggest them is carefully shrouded in decorous darkness. Nor has any man the right, in his morbid craving after originality, to strip these horrors of their decent mystery. But the subject which Mr. Melville has taken upon himself to handle is one of no ordinary depravity; and however he may endeavor to gloss the idea over with a platonic polish, no matter how energetically he strives to wrap the mystery in a cloud of high-sounding but meaningless words, the main conception remains still unaltered in all its moral depravity. (60-61)

If Melville was interested in the fact of incest simply for its own sake, then the charge of prurience might not be altogether inappropriate. But as Hoeveler reminds us, some critics have asserted that "there is no actual physical incest between Pierre and Isabel" (251). Of course, this omission might simply be the result of Melville's
unwillingness to risk offending his readers even more than the published novel actually did. But the lack of direct evidence of incest in the novel does present a problem for those who interpret the motif in a purely literal fashion.

A literal interpretation also raises the problem of reconciling the various aspects of Melville's hero. If Pierre's desires are incestuous, they have as their object the kind of disembodied feminine ideal which is typically associated with the tradition of courtly love. Faced with what seems like a contradiction, critics have tended to dismiss the hero's idealizations of his mother and half-sister as simply disguised manifestations of an unconscious incest relation. The hero's "romanticism," Damon suggests, "constitutes the visible plot" only (149). If that were all,

the book could easily be forgotten. But that was not all: the real plot is invisible. The cause of all this intense behavior is a sexual complication involving living and dead, the real facts of which are unknown to all four antagonists. This hidden motive is incest. (149)

For Damon, incest is the secret cause of everything that happens to Pierre rather than a symbol of his actual condition. Lewis Mumford, whose comments on the novel

2. It was precisely this kind of hermeneutics that Lawrence criticized as the craze for "the dirty little secret," a craze which he—perhaps unfairly—saw as typical of all French literature. Gilles Deleuze and Claire Parnet, who have drawn extensively on Lawrence's insights, argue that American literature, unlike its French counterpart, is marked precisely by the absence of psychological introspection: "American literature operates
are generally insightful, also suggests this view: "in Pierre's relations with his mother, and in his espousal of Isabel he is driven by an unconscious physical passion - in both cases a disguised incest relation" ("Catnip" 153).

While Melville hints that Pierre experiences some degree of physical desire for Isabel, his treatment of incest—as more recent critics have indicated—ultimately implies a psychological condition rather than an actual sexual relation. Jehlen, for example, suggests that incest between brother and sister, "through which a man may reproduce himself in union with the female version of his own body, has a strictly individualist logic; it incarnates the self-made man" (185). Similarly, Gillian Brown links incest with the denial of man's need for community, his refusal of the fact that human existence is by definition a coexistence:

according to geographical lines: the flight towards the West, the discovery that the true East is in the West, the sense of frontiers as something to cross, to push back, to go beyond. The becoming is geographical. There is no equivalent in France. The French are too human, too historical, too concerned with the future and the past. They spend their time in in-depth analysis" (37).

3. Other critics have expressed similar views. Hoeveler, for example, suggests that "the relationship between Isabel and Pierre can best be described as psychological incest, a love affair between the ideal light and the actual or masochistic dark elements in Pierre's mind" (251). Warner Berthoff argues that "the situation of incest, curiously underplayed, is principally a sign of the fearful tautologies of consciousness as it goes its natural course, and especially of its bottomless capacity for self-violence" (220).
Incest and parricide are crimes against relation, violations of the social . . . boundaries defining the family. Pierre would destroy these boundaries to rid himself of these relations, of the very idea of relationship. (163)

As these critics imply, the motif of incest was not simply an emblem of the hero's condition but the very means which Melville used to criticize the ideological content of the American ideal.

In the imaginary worlds which works of literature offer us, the locus of incest is typically the ancestral house of an aristocratic or noble family, a family which either by design or default has severed its links with the common body of humanity. As the French philosopher Gaston Bachelard has indicated, however, the image of house does not immediately suggest alienation. In fact, at the heart of his exploration of the house-image is Bachelard's rejection of the Heideggerean notion that man inherits a world into which he has been cast:

Before he is "cast into the world," as claimed by certain hasty metaphysics, man is laid in the cradle of the house. And always, in our daydreams, the house is a large cradle. A concrete metaphysics cannot neglect this fact, this simple fact, all the more, since this fact is a value, an important value, to which we return in our daydreaming. Being is already a value. Life begins well, it begins enclosed, protected, all warm in the bosom of the house. (4)

For Bachelard, then, the house is a vital image of the fact that human life is rooted in the world from the start:

"Without it, man would be a dispersed being. It maintains him through the storms of the heavens and through those of
life. It is body and soul. It is the human being's first world" (7).

Only within the landscape of tragedy does the image of the house take on an entirely different—almost juxtaposed—aspect to that which Bachelard identifies. Instead of rooting its inhabitants in the world, it separates them from it, presenting an image not so much of shelter as of isolation. For Bachelard, there is "a dynamic rivalry between house and universe" (47). Like the human body itself, the house enables man to confront the cosmos: "It braces itself to receive the downpour, it girds its loins. When forced to do so, it bends with the blast, confident that it will right itself, again in time, while continuing to deny any temporary defeats" (46). It allows us to say: "I will be an inhabitant of the world, in spite of the world" (47). In tragedy, by contrast, the house no longer exists in a relation of tension with the universe. Its role is not to mediate between man and the world but to insulate him from it. The house becomes a wholly alternative world, an idealized sanctuary where man can have the illusion of a life apart from actual historical existence. As such, it loses its humanity. The house is no longer "body and soul," as Bachelard suggests, but a disembodied abstraction. Its maternal qualities, its capacity to nourish and protect, are replaced by features which manifest themselves when the world becomes
exclusively patriarchal--alienated from the earth and a morbid obsession with the purity of origins. It is into this world--severed so completely from the sources of its possible regeneration--that Melville's young hero is born.

**Pure and Impure Worlds**

Saddle Meadows, the Glendinning ancestral home, is situated away from the city, the very locus of civilization. The eccentricity of Saddle Meadows, of course, is more a matter of psychological than physical separation from the reality which the city presents. In short, if the Glendinnings are different, it is because they think they are other than common humanity. The very linchpin of their aristocratic society is a belief in the purity of their origins, a conviction that they are untainted by relationships with the world beyond their own circle. "Pierre's pedigree," Edgar Dryden notes,

> seems straight and unflawed. We meet the young hero "issuing from the high gabled old home of his father" and entering a world where the "very horizon [is] to him as a memorial ring," where all the "hills and swales seemed as sanctified through their long uninterrupted possession of his race." Unlike the orphaned Ishmael, he seems to find himself in a world where he truly belongs, a world where his identity, place, and destiny are confirmed by the self-reflecting environment of a "powerful and populous family." (77)

As Dryden suggests, Saddle Meadows constitutes a kind of closed system, an entirely self-referential world which signifies nothing beyond itself--precisely because it
thinks that it is already complete, that it is a total world.  

Melville's narrator acknowledges—with some irony, of course—that genealogical purity of the kind which the Glendinnings represent is not typically regarded, particularly by monarchical Europe, as a characteristic of the New World. In "demagoguical America," it is generally imagined, "the sacred past hath no fixed statues erected to it, but all things irreverently seethe and boil in the vulgar caldron of an everlasting crystallizing present" (8). Of course, that perception, the narrator concedes, is undoubtedly true of the common body of men:

In our cities families rise and burst like bubbles in a vat. For indeed the democratic element operates as a subtile acid among us; forever producing new things by corroding the old; as in the south of France verdigris, the primitive material of one kind of green paint, is produced by grape-vinegar poured upon copper plates. (9)

4. The implicit analogy here is between kinship and language, an analogy which Levi-Strauss explores in much of his work. See Structural Anthropology 31-96. Simply put, both kinship and linguistic systems establish relations between different parts of reality. Language itself allows us to see the world akin, as a reality knitted together by intricate analogies and correspondences. Fred See, in chapter three of his book Desire and the Sign, argues that Melville calls into question this notion of language: "Pierre . . . is a text which turns language back upon itself, in order to discover the point at which man may recommence to think, and to write, free of the illusion of metaphorical affinities" (90). The model for language, in other words, is not exogamy but incest. See's remarks are illuminating; but my own view is that the discontinuity of language, its inability to signify beyond itself, is more specifically a characteristic and, indeed, Melville's indictment of Pierre's self-enclosed world.
However, if the life of "the commonality" appears to be governed by the natural processes of death and decay, there are, we are told, "things in the visible world, over which ever-shifting nature hath not so unbounded a sway" (9). While the "grass is annually changed," the "limbs of the oak, for a long number of years, defy that annual decree" (9). The great mass of families is like the blades of grass. But there are a few which, like the oak, "instead of decaying, annually put . . . forth new branches; whereby Time, instead of subtracting, is made to capitulate into a multiple virtue" (9). The estates of such families "seem to defy Times's tooth, and by conditions which take hold of the indestructible earth seem to cotemporize their fee-simples with eternity" (11).

The condition of purity, the narrator implies, can only be maintained by the abolition of history itself. To subject oneself to the processes of time is to depart from the origin, to open oneself up to the possibility of change, to the onset of corruption and decay. When archaic societies attempted to purify themselves through the "annual expulsion of demons, diseases and sins," they were essentially attempting to rid themselves of the effects of history itself, to return to the sacred time of beginnings (Eliade Cosmos 53).

Saddle Meadows, of course, is one of those family estates which "seem[s] to defy Time's tooth" (11). We
first meet Pierre on the kind of summer morning "when he
who is but a sojourner from the city shall early walk forth
into the fields, and be wonder-smitten with the trance-like
aspect of the green and golden world" (3). If the city is
the very embodiment of temporality, the countryside, the
narrator suggests, is the locus of "a wonderful and
indescribable repose" (3). It displays not the ongoing
processes of life and death but the unchanging face of an
Edenic nature; "Not a flower stirs; the trees forget to
wave; the grass itself seems to have ceased to grow" (3).

However, if on the one hand, the world of Saddle
Meadows seems to exemplify the kind of atemporal, rural
existence which the narrator describes, on the other hand,
it seems to undercut the very validity of that life.

Richard H. Brodhead suggests:

When cattle become "brindled kine . . . followed, not
driven, by ruddy-cheeked, white footed boys," the
golden haze is, we must feel, being laid on rather
thick; when horses are "kind as kittens" we can
suspect that nature has been too thoroughly
domesticated, too easily humanized. This place is too
soft a pastoral; like the paradise of Blake's Book of
Thel, it seems overripe, its very lushness a symptom
of unresolved and unrecognized problems. (226)

In fact, the overripeness of which Brodhead speaks conceals
its very opposite—a scarcity of growth, an infertility.
While the Glendinning lineage may be one of those which
"stand as the oak," it hardly perpetuates itself by putting
forth new branches each year (9). Indeed, as we have
already seen, Pierre himself is the last surviving
representative of the ancient family, "the only surnamed male Glendinning" (7). The world of Saddle Meadows, it seems, is on the verge of extinction.

By contrast, life in the cities, while subject to the corrosive processes of history, is at the same time the beneficiary of a complementary process of regeneration:

Now in general nothing can be more significant of decay than the idea of corrosion; yet on the other hand, nothing can more vividly suggest luxuriance of life, than the idea of green as a color; for green is the peculiar signet of all-fertile Nature herself. (9)

This paradoxical quality, suggesting both decay and rebirth, makes the democratic element in America seem to be governed by the processes of nature herself. Whereas in other lands political institutions "seem above all things intensely artificial," in America they "seem to possess the divine virtue of a natural law" (9). For, the narrator concludes, "the most mighty of nature's laws is this, that out of Death she brings Life" (9). Thus, if the contrast between life at Saddle Meadows and life in the cities is a contrast between pure and impure worlds, at a deeper level it suggests a contrast between fertility and stagnation.

We have seen that for archaic man, life—in its most real sense—is only possible at the origin, at the primordial time of beginnings. That portion of his life which is passed in profane time, in the state of "becoming," is without meaning (Eliade, Cosmos 35). By contrast, the condition of the Glendinning family suggests
that to remain at the beginning—to attempt to preserve an original purity—is precisely to stagnate. To revert to a single origin, Edouard Glissant indicates, "is to consecrate permanence, to negate contact" (16). By corollary, the processes of history allow for the possibility of communion with others, a communion which is necessary for fruitful growth and development. Indeed, the generative quality of urban life, Melville's narrator implies, is precisely a consequence of the fact that the city is a "vulgar cauldron" in which "all things irreverently seethe and boil" rather than a pristine vessel which contains only pure elements (8).

Essentially the same point is made by Augustine in The City of God. Neither the earthly nor the heavenly city, he indicates, is fully realized within the span of history. In fact, the two cities "are interwoven and intermixed in this era, and await separation at the last judgement" (1. 35). Augustine's formulation seems to allude to one of the most well-known New Testament parables, the parable of the wheat and the tares (Matt. 13-24). According to Matthew's narrative, a farmer who has recently planted a field of wheat discovers that an enemy has come in the night and sown tares among the good seed. Thus, when the good plants—which stand for "the children of the kingdom"—eventually appear, so do the bad plants—"the children of the wicked one" (13. 38). Despite the wishes of his
servants, the farmer allows both crops to grow alongside each other until the time of the harvest—which represents "the end of the world" (13. 39). Only then are the two plants separated, the tares bound up and burnt while the wheat is gathered into the barn.

The City of God is in one sense an extended exegesis on this very short parable. Augustine recognizes that the citizens of the City of God in this life cannot live apart from the earthly city. In the first place, the goods of the earthly city are necessary to citizens of both cities. As Augustine notes, both kinds of men "make use of the things essential for this mortal life," although "each has its own very different ends in making use of them" (9. 17). But Augustine also recognizes that in the midst of Christians are some "who are united with her in participation in the sacraments, but who will not join with her in the eternal destiny of the saints" (1. 35). Yet he indicates that "we have less right to despair of the reformation of some of them, when some predestined friends, as yet unknown to themselves are concealed among our own open enemies" (1. 35).

Augustine's attitude towards the earthly city, then, is fundamentally one of hope. He sees it not as a predetermined reality but as the very space in which men work out their salvation. That the city is impure is not a reason for despair. On the contrary, it is a sign that it
is still becoming, that its ultimate destiny has yet to be realized. To attempt to purify the city—to purge it of its ambiguities—is essentially to deny man's capacity for growth and ultimately to despair of his redemption.

The debate over pure and impure cities is still played out in our own times. Jane Jacobs advances the argument that multiformity is an inherent feature of urban development. The cities which survive and develop, she suggests, are those which allow for diversification and complexity. Thus, the cities of the future will be "more intricate, comprehensive, diversified, and larger" rather than "smaller, simpler or more specialized" than those of today (249). In fact, the second set of attributes, although frequently advocated by city planners and urban designers, tends to be those of stagnant settlements: "Conformity and monotony, even when they are embellished with a froth of novelty, are not attributes of developing and vigorous cities" (249).

Of course, the increased complexity of the modern city brings its own problems. But to attempt to solve those problems by rationalizing or streamlining the processes of city development is, as Jacobs suggests, profoundly reactionary. Rationalization, however, has been the preferred solution ever since the industrial revolution began to effect its changes on urban life at the beginning of the nineteenth century. As Alexander Welsh notes, the
historical forces felt by the nineteenth-century mind—the exponential growth of the city, the displacement of the urban dweller, his loss of economic independence—led to a new "awareness of the city as a systemic problem, and therefore as a treatment or eventual cure for the city that is scientific" (25). That awareness continues to influence the analyses of urban sociologists. Whereas Freud held that a certain amount of discontent is inevitable in civilized life, sociologists have tended to assume that rational planning can create an environment free of psychological disorder.

The other response to the problems of the city is simply to abandon it. Although not an option available to most urban dwellers, escape from the city is given a symbolic expression, as we have seen, in the idealized rural world depicted in a certain kind of pastoral poetry. What is really involved in such poetry, as Raymond Williams has indicated, is an ideology of the country, an ideology which presents the rural world as an alternative to the human condition itself.

*Country Innocence*

It is Pierre's "fate," we are told, "to have been born and nurtured in the country, surrounded by scenery whose uncommon loveliness was the perfect mould of a delicate and poetic mind" (5). The very mark of Pierre's rural
upbringing is his innocence, a quality which--the narrator indicates--can only exist undisturbed in the country:

So choicely, and in some degree, secludedly nurtured, Pierre, though now arrived at the age of nineteen, had never yet become so thoroughly initiated into that darker, though truer aspect of things, which an entire residence in the city from the earliest period of life, almost inevitably engraves upon the mind of any keenly observant and reflective youth of Pierre's present years. (69)

On the one hand, the contrast between innocence and experience suggests the contrast between presence and absence. Innocence implies a fullness of vision, a capacity to perceive the world in its original freshness and beauty. Experience is the loss of that capacity. To be marked by it is to acquire a certain world-weariness, a lowered expectation of the potential of earthly life. Melville's narrator, however, suggests that if the city is the locus of dark experience, the innocence which the country allows its inhabitants is not entirely sweetness and light. In fact, it appears as a lack rather than an indication of the fullness of youth. If Pierre's mind is untainted, it is because it is cut off from the world. His innocence suggests the isolation of the self from others, the absence of community which will ultimately result in his own destruction.

On the surface, however, the self-enclosed world of the hero is one of blissful contentment. Pierre, as Dryden observes "seems to enjoy the security of a family circle within which he can define and fix himself and at the same
time remain free of any challenge to his originality and authority" (77). Yet as the only surviving male member of the Glendinning line, he sometimes experiences a strange feeling of loneliness, a feeling which the narrator speculates is at least in part the origin of his "yearning" for a sister:

So perfect to Pierre had long seemed the illuminated scroll of his life thus far, that only one hiatus was discoverable by him in that sweetly-writ manuscript. A sister had been omitted from the text. He mourned that so delicious a feeling as fraternal love had been denied him. (7)

Implicit in Pierre's sense of denial is the recognition that the world of self-sufficiency is finally characterized not by plenitude but by absence. If on the one hand, he luxuriates in his own idealized self-presence, on the other hand, his separation from others leaves him profoundly unfulfilled. Without community, the self knows only a world which is both empty and devastatingly silent.

However, Pierre seems fated to remain within the kind of closed world which belongs to him by virtue of the Glendinning name. If his yearning for a sister suggests an attempt to transcend the boundaries of his own ego, it also suggests incestuous desire. For in Pierre's mind, sister and wife are barely distinguishable categories, a confusion which the narrator indicates when he rather wryly states that

a gentle sister is the second best gift to a man; it is first in point of occurrence; for the wife comes after. He who is sisterless, is as a bachelor before
his time. For much that goes to make up the deliciousness of a wife, already lies in the sister. (7)

In fact, the narrator suggests that for Pierre a sister not only anticipates but actually fulfills the role of wife. Thus, his yearning for a sibling is precisely a denial of marriage and, thus, of contact with the world beyond his own family.

Until the appearance of Isabel, though, Pierre's desire remains unfulfilled. So, in an attempt to supply the "absent reality," he bestows the "fictitious title" of sister upon his mother (3). Their relationship, of course, is more like the courtship of young lovers than the friendship of siblings. While Mrs. Glendinning's unspoilt charms made it possible for her to choose from a train of infatuated suitors, "a reverential and devoted son seemed lover enough for this widow" (5). She tolerates Lucy only because she believes her marriage to Pierre will not change her own relationship with him. She reflects:

His little wife, that is to be, will not estrange him from me; for she too is docile,—beautiful, and reverential, and most docile. . . . How glad am I that Pierre loves her so, and not some dark-eyed haughtiness, with whom I could never live in peace; but who would be ever setting her young married state before my elderly widowed one, and claiming all the homage of my dear boy. (20)

Pierre is as possessive of his mother as she is of him. We are told that "the too ardent admiration of the handsome youths" who seemed to entertain the insane hope of marrying his mother caused him more than once to jealously swear
that the man who dared to propose marriage to her "would by some peremptory unrevealed agency immediately disappear from the earth" (5).

The community of mother and son is incestuous not so much because it is the locus of a socially-unsanctioned desire but because it is regarded by both as a wholly self-sufficient world. At least on the surface, Pierre and Mrs. Glendinning feel that they are completely fulfilled in each other's company. Their existence together is apparently one of "perfect confidence and mutual understanding at all points" (5). In their eyes, it represents not the pollution of the relationship between mother and son but an "unclouded love" which is free from the blemishes of earthly existence." For both, the narrator indicates, "the pure joined current of life" flowed on "freely and lightsomely" (5).

Their mutual fulfillment, of course, is ultimately narcissistic. There was, we are told, "a striking personal resemblance between them" and in "the clear-cut lineaments and noble air of the son," the mother "saw her own graces strangely translated into the opposite sex" (5). In the closed world of Saddle Meadows, mother and son reflect back to each other the pristine images of their own selves.

On the face of it, the world of Melville's hero is a highly--perhaps excessively--feminine one. Pierre is the only living male in his family and his closest relations
are with women: his mother, Lucy and Isabel (5). However, the object of his love in each instance is not the authentic reality of another person but a disembodied ideal which is ultimately unattainable. If women have frequently been reduced to the status of wholly bodily creatures, they have—under the influence of neo-platonism—been elevated to the status of exclusively spiritual ones. Both images entail the denial of the full humanity of women. It is the latter, though, that of woman as pure spirit, which dominates the mind of Melville's hero.

For Pierre, Lucy is an "invoking angel" whose delicate feet have never touched the earth (4). Indeed, at one point, in the early part of the novel, we actually find her "hovering near the door" of the Glendinning dining hall (58). With Pierre watching,

> the setting sun, streaming through the window, bathed her whole form in golden loveliness and light; that wonderful, and most vivid transparency of her clear Welsh complexion, now fairly glowed like rosy snow. Her flowing, white, blue-ribboned dress, fleecily invested her. Pierre almost thought that she could only depart the house by floating out of the open window, instead of actually stepping from the door. All her aspect to him, was that moment touched with an indescribable gayety, buoyancy, fragility, and an unearthly evanescence. (58)

While idealized images appear to pay homage to women, such images actually offer a sign of the absence of the very values of the feminine. When culture spiritualizes woman to such an extent that she appears unearthly, then she can no longer fulfill the role of mother—of giving birth,
nurturing, and providing shelter and protection. Indeed, without a body she loses her capacity to act as an independent human agent, becoming instead a static ideal removed from the reality of history. With the displacement of the maternal function, culture itself loses its vital link with the generative processes of the earth. As Brown indicates, Pierre eventually rejects his own mother, eschewing "the nurture of the maternal breast, for Isabel’s fare: poverty, anonymity, and finally her 'death-milk,' the vial of poison secreted between her breasts 'where life for infants lodgeth not'" (149).5

The psychologist Karl Stern has indicated that the role of motherhood "is not exhausted with sheltering, protection and dependence" (19). From the beginning the mother is involved in establishing the child’s relation with reality:

By the very act of birth she puts us into the world; you might almost say that the first encounter with her involves being pushed away by her. At birth the umbilical cord is severed, and if the mother’s love for the child is healthy, a gentle process of severing continues, not only physically but mentally. The mother shows the child that he is not the exclusive recipient of her love. She teaches him to share her affection with others. She turns his gaze away from her. He has to face reality. (19)

That Pierre appears incapable of making this turn is most obviously the result of the fact that his own mother has maintained him in a state of dependence and fixation.

But it is also caused by his transformation of the object of his affections into a celestial ideal which, as he puts it, belongs only to "the regions of an infinite day" (4). In fact, for Pierre the difference between men and women is the difference between the terrestrial and the celestial. Of course, such a polarized understanding of the relation between the sexes implies that real communion between them is impossible. Indeed, for Pierre, it is sacrilegious:

This to be my wife? I that but the other day weighed an hundred and fifty pounds of solid avoirdupois;—I to wed this heavenly fleece? Methinks one husbandly embrace would break her airy zone, and she exhale upward to that heaven whence she hath hither come, condensed to mortal sight. I can not be; I am of heavy earth, and she of airy light. By heaven, but marriage is an impious thing. (58)

It is precisely because he idealizes woman as the wholly other that Pierre condemns himself to the circle of the same. Far from being a cover for latently incestuous desires, his "romanticism" is what makes it impossible for him—and perhaps to his own ultimate satisfaction—to escape the self-referential world of Saddle Meadows.

If the world of Saddle Meadows has a feminine aspect, Melville's narrator indicates—in an account which is clearly satirical—it is that of the spotless queen whose purity places her above the reaches of common humanity:

the country is not only the most poetical and philosophical, but it is the most aristocratic part of this earth, for it is the most venerable, and numerous bards have ennobled it by many fine titles. Whereas the town is the more plebeian portion: which, besides many other things, is plainly evinced by the dirty unwashed face perpetually worn by the town; but the
country, like any Queen, is ever attended by scrupulous lady's maids in the guise of the seasons, and the town hath but one dress of brick turned up with stone; but the country hath a brave dress for every week in the year; sometimes she changes her dress twenty-four times in the twenty-four hours. (13)

There is, of course, something contrived in the version of femininity which the country presents. In fact, implicit in this account is a reversal of the conventional wisdom which suggests that the town is a more artificial mode of existence than the rural way of life. Whereas, in its grubby appearance, the town reveals its imperfections for all to see, the country presents a cosmetic face, a facade which through daily embellishments offers a veneer of perfection.

It would be a mistake, however, to regard this contrast too literally. The artificial quality which is frequently identified with modern urban life can hardly be denied. Nor can the rural world be literally understood as the locus of a reactionary ideology. But in the world of Melville's Pierre, the city and the country are more than simple reflections of actual historical realities. For Melville, the imperfections of the city make it a symbol of the human condition itself. By contrast, the country is the symbolic locus of a culture whose defining characteristic is the rejection of that condition. The world of Saddle Meadows is fatally flawed not because it strives for an ideal perfection but, as Lewis Mumford
indicates, because its aspiration causes it to forsake its earthly roots:

the effort to concentrate upon an ideal experience, that seeks no nourishment through these roots, may be quite as disastrous to spiritual growth as the failure to push upwards and to rise above the physical bed in which these roots are laid. In Pierre, Melville explored and followed such a fixation to its conclusion: disintegration and suicide. (Herman Melville 210)

In fact, the rejection of earthly existence for the sake of an ideal one is the characteristic of a culture which has become excessively masculine. Pierre's ambitious pursuit of the ideal is expressed with imagery which is distinctly phallic: "in the ruddiness, and flushfulness, and vaingloriousness of his youthful soul, he fondly hoped to have a monopoly of glory in capping the fame-column, whose tall shaft had been erected by his noble sires" (8).

As Fred See notes, the memorial which Pierre imagines involves "the optimism of a national history, the sanctity of a pastoral estate and the tradition for which it stands, and, especially, the unbroken sequence of a genealogy whose source is ultimately a divine paternity" (77). Perhaps most fundamentally, it involves the illusion that man can complete himself, that through his own efforts he can become a total architecture, a finished construction, that he can cap his own "fame-column." (8) The myth which the hero ultimately embodies is the myth of ideal selfhood. Thus, as Brown observes, Pierre attempts to deny not only
his relations with those outside his family but with the family itself:

He marries his "sister" to divest himself of his family, including his sister. A sister qua sister reminds her brother of parental origins, thereby checking the autobiographical fantasy of self-generation that subtends the myth of the author. Incest with the sister, violating sibling relation and family law, enables Pierre's renovation of family for the establishment of his literary economy, a mode of authorship embedded in a self-contained family, in the notion of the self as its own family. (159)

What Pierre finally seeks is to become "his own Alpha and Omega," to "feel himself in himself, and not by reflection in others" (261).

For Melville, this is a deadly illusion which can only lead to cultural disintegration. Among Palmyra's ruins, we are reminded,

is a crumbling, uncompleted shaft, and some leagues off, ages left in the quarry, is the crumbling corresponding capital, also incomplete. These Time seized and spoiled; these Time crushed in the egg; and the proud stone that should have stood among the clouds, Time left abased beneath the soil. Oh, what quenchless feud is this, that Time hath with the sons of Men!

As Fred See observes, "the architectural metaphor which Pierre's fancy uses to create a structure of the glorified self is negated by another voice which reduces the ideal of self . . . to zero" (78). Quite literally, the ruined shaft—like the tower of Babel which it resembles—stands as a monument to man's illusory hope for self-completion. In fact, it serves as an appropriate metaphor for the novel
itself which makes us witnesses to the apocalyptic destruction of a world.

*The Foreigner*

The term "creolization" has been used by Glissant to describe the phenomenon of the mixing and blending of cultures. Glissant makes it clear, however, that he is not simply speaking of those cultures usually designated as creole:

Creolization as an idea is not primarily the glorification of the composite nature of a people; indeed, no people has been spared the cross-cultural process. The idea of creolization demonstrates that henceforth it is no longer valid to glorify "unique" origins that the race safeguards and prolongs. . . . To assert peoples are creolized, that creolization has value, is to deconstruct in this way the category of the "creolized" that is considered as halfway between two "pure" extremes. It is only in those countries whose exploitation is barbaric (South Africa, for instance) that this intermediate category has been officially recognized. (140)

Creolization, then, is a generalized phenomenon which invalidates the notion of racial or ethnic purity. It is a sign of a reality which the multiplicity of the earth's peoples hold in common. The mere fact of contact between cultures implies that at some fundamental level they possess a shared nature. Thus, whereas racist ideologies are inherently dehumanizing, the phenomenon of creolization is a verification of the humanity of the other.

But when that humanity is not recognized—when the foreigner is not welcomed into the polis—then the other becomes uncanny and destructive, threatening to undermine
the very foundations of the world which refuses it. It is this function which Isabel fulfills in the world of Pierre. "In the charged atmosphere of Saddle Meadows," Jehlen indicates, "incest is in suspension, and Isabel is first the catalyst that causes it to precipitate, then a surrogate for its enactment" (191). In this fall from paradise, the "real drama" is "between Pierre and his godlike (though, perhaps ungodly) parents" (191).

Ultimately, Pierre's yearning for a sister represents a desire for completion, a desire to supply the "absent reality" which will render whole the almost total world of his own self. As Brown observes, "Pierre accepts Isabel as his sister because she makes the claim most appealing to his ideal of self-hood," embodying his hidden fantasy of removing himself from the family (137). But the face of Isabel, even before he learns of its identity, serves not to secure Pierre's identity but to divide it. It was "one of those faces," the narrator informs us,

which now and then appear to man, and without one word of speech, still reveal glimpses of some fearful gospel. In natural guise, but lit by supernatural light; palpable to the senses, but inscrutable to the soul; in their perfectest impression on us, ever hovering between Tartarean misery and Paradisaic beauty; such faces, compounded so of hell and heaven, overthrow in us all foregone persuasions, and make us wandering children in this world again. (43)

Thus, Isabel does not supply the "absent reality" for which the hero yearns. Rather, she unveils the emptiness vaguely sensed by Pierre at the heart of his existence. Her
"girlish shriek," which he first hears in the midst of merriment at the old spinsters' sewing meeting, affects him as no human voice had ever done before: "Though he saw not the person from whom it came, and though the voice was wholly strange to him, yet the sudden shriek seemed to split its way clean through his heart, and leave a yawning gap there" (45). In Isabel, then, all hopes which Pierre has had for a sister are reversed. In fact, Isabel might be seen as an agent of reversal--of what Aristotle calls peripety--because she appears opposite of what Pierre desires in a sister. While he yearns for someone who can complete his world, she appears to represent that foreign influence against which Saddle Meadows has defined itself. However, as Julia Kristeva states, the foreigner is never entirely other than ourselves; the foreigner is:

neither the romantic victim of our clannish indolence nor the intruder responsible for all the ills of the polis. Neither the apocalypse on the move nor the instant adversary to be eliminated for the sake of appeasing the group. Strangely, the foreigner lives within us: he is the hidden face of our destiny, the space that wrecks our abode, the time in which understanding and affinity founder. (1)

An essentially ambiguous phenomenon, the foreigner suggests both an identity separate from our own and a hidden aspect of our own identity.

It is this ambiguity which Pierre finds so perplexing in the mysterious face which he encounters amidst the company of the old spinsters:
What, who art thou? Oh! wretched vagueness—toofamiliar to me, yet inexplicable,—unknown, utterlyunknown! I seem to founder in this perplexity. Thouseemest to know somewhat of me, that I know not ofmyself,—what is it then? . . . Now, never into thesoul of Pierre, stole there before, a muffledness likethis! (41)

In his essay, "The Uncanny," to which Kristeva's owndiscussion of the foreigner is indebted, Freud shows thatthesimultaneous presence of the strange and the familiar—of the kind which Pierre identifies in the face of Isabel—is the very mark of das Unheimliche. Indeed, Freudattempted to demonstrate that this ambiguity was actuallypresent in the etymology of the German adjective heimlichand its antonym unheimlich. As Kristeva explains,

a negative meaning close to that of the antonym isalready tied to the positive term heimlich, "friendly,comfortable," which would also signify "concealed,kept from sight," "deceitful and malicious," "behindsomeone's back." Thus, in the very word heimlich, thefamiliar and intimate are reversed into theiropposites, brought together with the contrary meaningof "uncanny strangeness" harbored in unheimlich.(182)

At a literal level, heimlich means homely or belonging tothe house. Thus Isabel is a figure of the uncanny: she isneither wholly separate from nor wholly a part of Pierre'sancestral home. She exists on the border, an essentiallyliminal figure who, like a ghost, haunts the world ofSaddle Meadows without ever fully belonging to it.

For Pierre, the ambiguous quality which marks Isabelis confirmed when he discovers that she is his half-sister,the illegitimate daughter of his father and a young
Frenchwoman. Once her identity is revealed, he sees in her imploring face "not only the nameless touchingness of that of the sewing-girl, but also the subtler expression of the portrait of his then youthful father, strangely translated, and intermarryingly blended with some before unknown, foreign feminineness" (112). If Isabel disrupts the apparently harmonious world of Saddle Meadows, then, it is not because she is entirely separate from it. On the contrary, she is a threat because she embodies an unholy union between the purity of Saddle Meadows and the corruption of the world beyond. Or as Mrs. Glendinning puts it, a mixing of "the choicest wine with filthy water from the plebeian pool" which eventually turns "all to undistinguishable rankness" (194).

It is because she is not wholly other— but both strange and familiar— that Isabel threatens to blur the strict demarcation which Saddle Meadows has drawn between itself and the external world. Conversely, Lucy is unthreatening because she is idealized as the other, an idealization which makes the consummation of her relationship with Pierre impossible. As an entirely spiritualized creature, Lucy is at once at a safe distance from the world of Saddle Meadows and a projection of its most pristine self-image. Isabel, by contrast, "was not of enchanted air" but of "mortal lineaments of mournfulness" (43). Thus, if the image of Lucy shelters Pierre from the
knowledge of his own mortality—in fact, Lucy herself "rather cherished a notion that Pierre bore a charmed life, and by no earthly possibility could die from her, or experience any harm, when she was within a thousand leagues"—the face of Isabel serves as a reminder of a reality which his world has attempted to deny (22). It is this capacity which marks her out as a figure of the uncanny. As Freud indicates, the uncanny "is that class of the frightening which leads back to what is known of old and long familiar" (220). If Saddle Meadows is a society which has attempted to forget the fact of death, Isabel recalls to it the repressed knowledge of its own mortality.

The contrast between Isabel and Lucy, however, is not simply a contrast between the real and the unreal. It is true that those aspects of the feminine which are absent in Lucy are given expression in the figure of Isabel. If one is a disembodied creature, removed from her earthly and bodily roots, the other is a creature of the senses. However, it is the very sensuality of Isabel which makes her a figure of death in the eyes of the world of Saddle Meadows. Indeed, Isabel herself seems to have internalized this very notion:

Say, Pierre; doth not a funerealness invest me? Was ever hearse so plumed?—Oh, God! that I had been born with blue eyes, and fair hair! Those make the livery of heaven! Heard ye ever yet of a good angel with dark eyes, Pierre?—no, no, no—all blue, blue, blue—heaven's own blue—the clear, vivid, unspeakable blue, which we see in June skies, when all clouds are swept
by.—But the good angel shall come to thee, Pierre. (314)

In fact, both Isabel and Lucy are the symbolic creations of a culture which has rejected the qualities of the feminine. But while in Isabel those qualities are demonized, in Lucy they are excised. In their strict polarity, Melville gives us an image of the kind of psychic fragmentation which afflicts the society of Saddle Meadows itself, a society which has lost its sense of the correspondence between earthly and heavenly realities.

The Exile of Pierre

At first glance, the advent of Isabel at Saddle Meadows seems to offer Pierre an escape route from the closed world of his own consciousness. As Kristeva remarks, "uncanniness . . . is a destructuration of the self" which may, on the one hand, "remain as a psychotic symptom," but, on the other, constitute "an opening toward the new, as an attempt to tally with the incongruous" (188).

With the revelation of Isabel's origin, Pierre experiences the disintegration of the world of Saddle Meadows. At the center of that world—serving as its very linchpin—had been the cherished image of his dead father:

There had long stood a shrine in the fresh-foliaged heart of Pierre, up to which he ascended by many tableted steps of remembrance; and around which annually he had hung fresh wreaths of a sweet and holy affection. . . . In this shrine, in this niche of this pillar, stood the perfect marble form of his departed father; without blemish, unclouded, snow-white, and serene; Pierre's fond personification of perfect human goodness and virtue. (68)
As the narrator indicates, some diminution of this kind of idealization is brought about in the usual course of the child's progress towards adulthood: "The eye-expanded boy perceives, or vaguely thinks he perceives, slight specks and flaws in the character he once so wholly reverenced" (68). In Pierre's soul, however, the "venerated form" of his departed father remains wholly intact until the very moment of Isabel's self-revelation. Even the secret painting, which contrasts so obviously with the drawing-room portrait given pride of place by his mother, had not effected any change in his heart. The story of the portrait's origin and its depiction of the Glendinning patriarch as a gay-hearted young bachelor seems to Pierre to hint at undisclosed meanings and ambiguities. Yet, "his father's beatification remained untouched; and all the strangeness of the portrait only served to invest his idea with a fine, legendary romance" (85).

Because Pierre's image of his father remains untarnished for so long, he experiences the breach between the actual and the ideal brought about by Isabel's revelation as an "all-desolating and withering . . . blast" which "stripped his holiest shrine of all overlaid bloom, and buried the mild statue of the saint beneath the prostrated ruins of the soul's temple itself" (69). Although Pierre is dispossessed of his cherished paternal ideal, the discovery of his illegitimate half-sister does
not inspire him to reject his father. On the contrary, Pierre rebels against his mother for her intolerance of the illegitimate offspring of Ned and Delly, a peasant couple who live on the estate, and rejects the worldly-wise Reverend Falsgrave for his refusal to condemn Mrs. Glendinning's lack of charity.

Pierre's rejection of these two authority figures would seem to exile him from the world of Saddle Meadows. Yet his righteous attitude towards their human foibles only demonstrates his kinship with them: he is truly the product of a culture which cannot tolerate the imperfections of earthly life. Moreover, the break with his mother does not signify a movement toward a more communal form of existence, as one might expect. Rather, it marks the beginning of an isolation more profound than any he has yet experienced. With the "apparently wholly superegotary resolution to hold his father's memory untouched," Pierre decides not to reveal the paternity of Isabel to either his mother or any living person:

Unrecallably dead and gone from out the living world, again returned to utter helplessness, so far as this world went; his perished father seemed to appeal to the dutifulness and mercifulness of Pierre, in terms far more moving than though the accents proceeded from his mortal mouth. And what though not through the sin of Pierre, but through his father's sin, that father's fair fame now lay at the mercy of the son, and could only be kept inviolate by the son's free sacrifice of all earthly felicity;—what if this were so? It but struck a still loftier chord in the bosom of the son, and filled him with infinite magnanities. (177)
As the narrator implies, Pierre's compassion for his father only allows him to foster that sense of his own pure virtue which—in his mind—separates him from the rest of men. Indeed, since the moment of Isabel's revelation to him, Pierre "felt that deep in him lurked a divine unidentifiableness, that owned no earthly kith or kin" (89). If his resolve to defend his father's honor bolsters his own self-ideal, it also offers him a rationale for entering more fully into the kind of incestuous world which he has previously inhabited at Saddle Meadows. Having sworn his "lasting fraternal succor to Isabel," he finds that the only way he can fulfill his duty to her is through "the nominal conversion of a sister to a wife" (177).

Thus, Pierre's eventual departure for the city with Isabel represents not so much a break with the world of Saddle Meadows as the inevitable realization of its incestuous conditions of existence. In other words, the city does not initiate Pierre into a world of alienation; rather, it renders complete that with which he was marked from the very outset. In Pierre's case, the journey from the country to the city does not represent a movement from community to isolation. It represents the fulfillment of an isolation latent in him at Saddle Meadows. "The nature and speed of Pierre's response to X's disruptive note," Dryden observes, "makes explicit the status" of those "hidden desires" which he has fostered from the beginning:
In Pierre's mind the note completely undermines the dignity and authority of the father and forces him to abandon all the "hereditary beliefs" he has been unconsciously resisting all along. "I will have no more father," he says, as he rejects all "earthly kith and kin" and orphan like "stagger[s] back upon himself and find[s] support in himself." (79)

But in denying his kinship with the world outside himself, Pierre is ultimately repeating the deepest impulse of the closed society which has produced him. At the heart of Saddle Meadows—and perhaps at the heart of America's explicit ideal—is the myth of the self-made man.

Thus, although the city is the scene of Pierre's ultimate self-destruction, it is not the origin thereof. Even when the city threatens to become an impersonal system, it remains unmistakably human. As Blanche Gelfant indicates, the density of urban space makes it impossible to escape the presence of other bodies: "crowds of total strangers are herded together in a limited space, forced into a physical proximity that belies their social isolation" (25). While at a structural level the city may appear rigidly stratified, at a street level it denies the wish for exclusivity: "One shares a few feet of space with people with whom he may have no shared tradition or common background" (26). The city confronts one with the broadest possible spectrum of humanity. While the urban dweller can mentally refuse contact with others, his physical proximity to them is a stubborn reminder of their shared nature.

Even if the urban system is dehumanizing, the body of the
city remains irreducibly human. As Michel de Certeau
suggests, "urban life increasingly permits the re-emergence
of the element that the urbanistic project excluded" (95).
It is this re-emergence which ultimately transforms the
city into the space of comedy in Crime and Punishment. In
the stinking streets, taverns, and backrooms of Petersburg,
the hero's redemption depends upon his encounters with
others: Marmeladov, Razumikhin and most importantly Sonya.
Saddle Meadows, by contrast, is the locus of tragedy
because it has completely cut itself off from the other.
On account of its utter isolation, the redemption of Saddle
Meadows is impossible.

On Pierre's first night in New York City, the other
confronts him in the form of the corrupt body of humanity:

The sights and sounds which met the eye of Pierre on
re-entering the watch-house, filled him with
inexpressible horror and fury. The before decent,
drowsy place, now fairly reeked with all things
unseemly. Hardly possible was it to tell what
conceivable cause or occasion had, in the
comparatively short absence of Pierre, collected such
a base congregation. In indescribable disorder,
frantic, diseased-looking men and women of all colors,
and in all imaginable flaunting, immodest, grotesque,
and shattered dresses, were leaping, yelling, and
cursing around him. . . . On all sides, were heard
drunken male and female voices, in English, French,
Spanish, and Portuguese, interlarded now and then,
with the foulest of all human lingoes, that dialect of
sin and death, known as the Cant language, or the
Flash. (240)

If what Pierre sees in the "combined babel of persons and
voices" at the watch-house is the very embodiment of the
earthly city, the sense of utter revulsion which overcomes
him at that sight marks him as the product of a culture of isolation. His rejection of the earthly city—sordid though it may be—involves him in a rejection of the human condition itself and ultimately leads to his catastrophic demise.

Critics of the novel have frequently seen the prediction of Pierre's end in the pamphlet which he reads on his journey to New York. According to its author, Plotinus Plinlimmon, a "virtuous expediency" is "the highest desirable or attainable earthly excellence for the mass of men, and is the only earthly excellence that their Creator intended for them" (214). Moreover, for most men, "the highest abstract heavenly righteousness is not only impossible, but would be entirely out of place, and positively wrong in a world like this" (213).

Many critics of the novel have attributed this view to Melville himself. Raymond M. Weaver, for example, suggests that his intent was

to show that the more transcendent a man's ideal, the more certain his worldly defeat; that the most innocent in heart are those most in peril of being eventually involved in "strange, unique follies and sins, unimagined before." (98)

Like Weaver, J. W. N. Sullivan argues that Pierre points to the impossibility of idealism in this life: "The world is a lie, through and through a lie, is Melville's final conclusion. In this world it is hopeless to distinguish
good from evil, or even to know whether there is any distinction" (433).

At first glance, the fate of Pierre appears to support these views. However, Melville's narrator warns that Plinlimmon's lecture "seems more the excellently illustrated re-statement of a problem, than the solution of the problem itself" (210). Moreover, the reason he offers for including the lecture is not that it accurately foretold the final outcome of Pierre's life but that it may have influenced it:

Seeing then that this curious paper rag so puzzled Pierre; foreseeing, too, that Pierre may not in the end be entirely uninfluenced in his conduct by the torn pamphlet, when afterwards perhaps by other means he shall come to understand it; or, peradventure, come to know that he, in the first place, did—seeing too that the author thereof came to be made known to him by reputation, and though Pierre never spoke to him, yet exerted a surprising sorcery upon his spirit by the mere distant glimpse of his countenance;—all these reasons I account sufficient apology for inserting in the following chapter the initial part of what seems to me a very fanciful and mystical, rather than philosophical Lecture. . . . (210)

At first glance, the content of that lecture resembles the argument made in The City of God. Like Plinlimmon, Augustine recognizes that a gap exists between earthly and heavenly existence, between the imperfections of time and the state of perfect being which is eternity. As Romano Guardini indicates—in a remark which is Augustinian to the core—that separation is the mark of history itself: "the fact remains that as long as we live within the historical
order, the intended order and the actual order do not coincide" (83).

But for Augustine, the gap between the two orders is not absolute; that is, the relation between them is not one of opposition but of prefiguration and fulfillment. While earthly existence is clearly not given over to love, neither is it wholly dominated by selfishness. In fact, the impure nature of earthly existence—its status as a mixed reality—makes it a sign of a promised future. "History," as Guardini writes, "cannot . . . be its own fulfillment. It points beyond itself" (83).

Although superficially similar, Plinlimmon's argument is actually the reverse of Augustine's. Whereas Augustine argues that the earthly and the heavenly exist alongside each other in this world, Plinlimmon argues that the two realities must be kept entirely separate:

in things terrestrial (horological) a man must not be governed by ideas celestial (chronometrical); that certain minor self-renunciations in this life his own mere instinct for his own every-day general well-being will teach him to make, but he must by no means make a complete unconditional sacrifice of himself on behalf of any other being, or any cause, or any conceit. (214)

For Plinlimmon, then, man is condemned to act out of self-interest in his mortal life. Plinlimmon implies that an absolute breach exists between the actual and the ideal orders; there is no relation or kinship between the two. The total absence of love in the world means that it cannot present a sign of anything beyond itself. Thus, the
reality of historical existence, like Saddle Meadows, is essentially a closed system, a wholly self-referential world which, from its inception, is finalized and complete.

The content of the lecture is not entirely new to Pierre. The disparity between the official portrait of his father and the secret one given to him by his aunt has already alerted him to the separation between terrestrial and celestial realities. Like Plinlimmon, Pierre regards that separation as absolute. He recognizes no correspondence between the image of his father as a fallible human being and the idealized image presented by the drawing-room portrait.

While the ostensible purpose of the pamphlet is to discourage youthful idealism, its effect on Pierre is precisely the reverse. First, it confirms his impression that the world is completely given over to self-interest. But rather than adjusting his ideals to accommodate this reality—as Plinlimmon would apparently have him do—Pierre ends up rejecting the world itself. It is this very rejection which leads to his descent into an abyss of disillusion and despair. In Pierre, the narrator suggests, we see "the apparent anomaly of a mind, which by becoming really profound in itself, grew skeptical of all tendered profundities" (354). For in rejecting the world, Pierre simultaneously rejects any tangible sign of the very ideals to which he has fervently committed himself. In "the utter
isolation of his soul," he inhabits that absolute breach between the actual and ideal worlds which—in his eyes—exists between the two images of his father. Within this space, profoundly disconnected from both worlds, Pierre's idealism withers and dies.

Pierre's failure is ultimately a failure of perception. The blindness which begins to afflict him once he reaches the city is not a paradoxical symbol of the insight which comes with tragic suffering—as it is for Sophocles's Oedipus. His crisis, as recent critics suggest, is essentially a crisis of representation. Most fundamentally, Pierre cannot see that the earthly city—however corrupt and degraded—is a sign of something greater than itself. Because it signifies nothing in his eyes, Pierre can only experience the city as an earthly inferno, a prison from which the only possible escape—since the paradisal existence at Saddle Meadows has been obliterated—is suicide.
In the closing pages of Virgil's epic, we find Aeneas before Turnus, the leader of the Italian resistance against the Trojans. Burning for the fight, he shakes "his heavy pine-tree spear" and calls out to his enemy from "his hot heart":

Rearmed now, why so slow?
Why, even now, fall back? The contest here
Is not a race, but fighting to the death
With spear and sword. Take on all shapes there are,
Summon up all your nerve and skill, choose any
Footing, fly among the stars, to hide
In caverned earth. (12. 1206-12)

The note which Aeneas strikes is remarkable for its lack of hesitation. Gone apparently is the reluctance with which he has often moved to fulfill his duty in the past. This is not the man who prepared to leave Carthage, his "great heart" torn by the "moving power" of Dido's pleas, his tears falling even as he resigned himself to carry out the will of the gods (4. 620-21). At that moment, Aeneas's turmoil allowed us to see the humanity of a hero who has frequently been accused of emotional frigidity. We knew, then, that he was not cold-hearted.

But now Aeneas's "hot heart" is the very source of the speed with which he moves to consummate the final victory over his enemy. Nothing can inhibit him. While at
Carthage his passions have prevented him from too quickly moving to reject Dido, on the Italian battlefield they allow him to act directly, without delay. In his actions, we see an economy—a terrible efficiency—which makes him appear cruel and ruthless. The climate of Aeneas's heart has clearly changed since those early days at Dido's court.

In fact, in the battle which precedes their duel, both Aeneas and Turnus are likened to "fires begun / On two sides of a dry wood, making laurel / Thickets crackle (12. 708-10)." With no less devastating power," Virgil indicates,

Aeneas and Turnus cut their way through battle.
Now with fury rising, now again
With bursting hearts and reckless of defeat,
They spent their whole strength running upon danger.
(12. 713-17)

Of course, the devastation caused by the fires is a result of drought. With the prolonged absence of rain, heat easily bursts into flames upon contact with dry vegetation, wreaking destruction indiscriminately. But the hot fury of the two assailants is the result of an interior rather than exterior climate, an aridity which, as K. W. Gransden observes, makes them "alike in their destructive power, in their violence, in their lack of control" (204). "The whole emphasis of the paragraph," he remarks, "is on the indistinguishable conduct of the two sides and the two leaders" (137).
The medieval philosophers, Tom Moore reminds us, spoke of the "vegetative soul," a "plant psyche" made of those "unformed, unmoving, yet living green psychic realities beyond reason and beyond self-movement" (42). When it become arid, however, the soul's vegetative life withers and dies and, as a result, it loses its connection with the earth and with its fellow souls. The arid soul is static, finalized, no longer capable of becoming. It is this climate which seems to characterize the soul of Aeneas in this last section of the poem.

By the time the two leaders meet, Aeneas is still "blazing" (12. 1289). But Turnus has been abandoned by both the goddess Juno and his sister Juturna. As a result, he is essentially helpless in the face of Aeneas's wrath. Only when he attempts to hurl an enormous stone at his foe, however, does he begin to realize the fate which awaits him:

as he bent and as he ran  
And as he hefted and propelled the weight 
He did not know himself. His knees gave way, 
His blood ran cold and froze. The stone itself, 
Tumbling through space, fell short and had no impact. 
(12. 1226-31)

The cold shudder which runs through Turnus when he sees that his strength is gone anticipates the image of his dying moments in the poem's closing lines: "all the body slackened in death's chill, / And with a groan for that indignity / His spirit fled into the gloom below" (12. 1296-98). Virgil's imagery serves to accentuate the
radical difference between the conditions of the two men at this final moment; while the heart of the killer is overcome with a blazing fury, the chill of death overtakes the body of his fallen enemy.

As Gransden indicates, however, the dying Turnus actually recalls our first encounter with Aeneas when he was cold, tired, frightened and wishing he had died in Troy. "His limbs were numb with cold," soluuntur frigore membra: the allusion here, and in the speech which follows, the o terque quaterque beati, "o thrice and four times blessed," is to Odyssey 5, where Odysseus is also lost in a storm and far from the goal of his nostos. Odysseus wished he had died when the Trojans tried so hard to get him after Achilles' death. Aeneas wishes he had not survived Diomedes' onslaught, and died alongside Sarpedon and Hector, deaths closely linked with the sage of Achilles' wrath, deaths fated to be reenacted in the Italian Iliad. Those words far away in book 1, soluunter frigore membra, recur in the last line but one of book 12: now they describe Turnus, and the cold is not that of the elements, or of a wished for and elusive death, but of the thing itself, inescapably there. (210)

Of course, that this symbolic link between the two men is made immediately after Aeneas sinks "his blade in fury in Turnus' chest" makes it a terrible irony (12. 1295). But the irony lies not simply in the fact of Turnus's death but in the manner in which it is inflicted.

Aeneas has already severely wounded his enemy with a spear that flew "Like a black whirlwind bringing devastation, / Pierced the cuirass' edge, and passed clean through / The middle of Turnus' thigh" (12. 1256-59). As Turnus lies on the ground, he raises his eyes and makes a final plea to the Trojan leader. In fact, like Virgil in
the poem's closing lines, he attempts to draw an analogy between himself and the man upon whose mercy he depends:

If you can feel a father's grief—and you, too, 
Had such a father in Anchises—then 
Let me bespeak your mercy for old age 
In Daunus, and return me, or my body, 
Stripped, if you will, of life, to my own kin. 
You have defeated me. The Ausonians 
Have seen me in defeat, spreading my hands. 
Lavinia is your bride. But go no further 
Out of hatred. (12. 1268-76)

The plea is a powerful one, since it asks Aeneas to imagine himself in the place not simply of Turnus but of his father, Daunus. Thus, in this reversal of roles, Turnus himself becomes the son of the Trojan.

Until he recognizes the swordbelt on Turnus's shoulder—"the strap / Young Pallas wore when Turnus wounded him / And left him dead upon the field"—Aeneas appears to be swayed by his enemy's words (12. 1283-85). But the sight of the belt, "Shining with its familiar studs," rekindles his rage (12. 1283). Rather than taking on the role of Turnus's father, he takes on the role of the slain Pallas to exact revenge upon the killer: "This wound will come / From Pallas: Pallas makes this offering / And from your criminal blood exacts his due" (12. 1294-93). But Aeneas also occupies the role of Turnus himself: "You in your plunder, torn from one of mine, / Shall I be robbed of you?" (12. 1290-91). Just as Turnus robbed the life of Pallas, Aeneas himself will now kill Turnus. Thus, he makes the identification which his enemy has been seeking
from him all along. But there is a deadly symmetry involved here which makes it almost impossible for Aeneas not to take the life of the man who lies before him. If Turnus wants to be seen as son, Aeneas cannot see him as anything other than the thief who stole his young friend's life.

Aeneas may be a victim of his own strict economy of representation. But that economy is fundamentally a reflection of his own heart, a heart which has become unyielding, which has lost the capacity to alter or modify its response to others, which can no longer show mercy. Yet our sorrow at the end of Virgil's poem is with Aeneas as much as it is with the slain Turnus. It is he whom we have accompanied on the difficult journey from the lost world of Troy. We have seen how "hard and huge / A task it was to found the Roman People" and we have seen the nobility with which Aeneas has borne the struggle (1. 48-9).

The burden which Aeneas has carried for so long appears to have exacted the kind of price of which Yeats speaks: "a stone of the heart." The final images of the poem--Aeneas's deadly spear, the rim of sevenfold shield which takes the blow, the shining studs of Pallas's belt, the blade which sinks into Turnus's chest--suggest a hardness which makes them metonyms of the hero's heart.
For Aeneas, the experience of exile has involved a process of interior growth, a state of becoming which Rome requires for its realization. But now, as he stands on the verge of a new beginning, he is characterized by a finality, a rigidity which seems to contradict everything he has so far learned on his passage from Troy. It is as if the burden of history has hardened him, as if he has not been able to take its blows and remain open and vital. Perhaps this is not altogether surprising, since he has had to contend not simply with the obstacles posed by nature but by those presented by the gods themselves. Apparently, it has all been too much for one man.

Dry Towns

"Dry September," a short story published by Faulkner in 1930, presents many of the themes and concerns which are developed more fully in the novel Light in August, published two years later. At the heart of the story is a false rumor about an assault upon a white woman by a black man. The woman, Minnie Cooper, is an obvious anticipation of the novel's Joanna Burden, the middle-aged New England spinster who lives for some years with Joe Christmas before losing her life to him. Like Joanna, she is a symbol of sterility. A once "slender nervous" girl with "a sort of hard vivacity," she now wore a "bright, haggard look" and "went out in the evenings only with women, . . . neighbors, to the moving pictures (174-75). Unlike Joanna, though,
Minnie is never actually assaulted. Her rape, as Eric Sundquist indicates, "is clearly suggested to be a product of her own diseased imagination" (84). Minnie also prefigures Lena Grove in her violation of the town's strict social code. Minnie "had been relegated into adultery by public opinion" twelve years earlier as a result of her relationship with a local bank cashier, "a widower of about forty" (174-75). Her alleged rapist, Will Mayes, is a version of Joe Christmas. Mayes too becomes the town's scapegoat, eventually ending up in the hands of a crazed lynch mob which kills him and dumps his body in a vat of deep water.

Even more interesting than these analogues, however, is the preponderance of images of aridity which occur throughout the story.1 At the start, we hear that the alleged incident occurs after a long period of drought--"sixty-two rainless days"--and that the rumor "had gone like a fire in dry grass. . . . Something about Miss Minnie Cooper and a Negro" (169). The absence of rain has produced a lifeless atmosphere in the town. In the barber shop--the initial setting of the story--"the ceiling fan stirred, without freshening . . . the vitiated air,"

1. Gail Mortimer notes this in her book Faulkner's Rhetoric of Loss: "The portions of the story dealing with Will Mayes's murder and the passionate hatred leading up to it are saturated with references to the atmosphere (dry, rainless, dusty, suffocating) and to sweating, blood, intense smells, choking and ubiquitous dust" (55-6).
sending back upon the men of the town "their own stale
breath and odors" (169). The men, gathered there to talk
about the rumor, have—with the exception of Hawkshaw, the
barber—arbitrarily decided that Will Mayes is the rapist.
In fact, one of them speculates that the drought itself may
have caused his action: "It's this durn weather. . . . It's
enough to make a man do anything. Even to her" (170).

Later, we find Hawkshaw walking "swiftly up the
street where the lights, insect-swirled, glared in rigid
and violent suspension in the lifeless air" (175). It is
now evening, the day having "died in a pall of dust" (193).
As he walks, Hawkshaw overtakes a group of men—some of
whom were at his shop earlier that day—as they prepare to
seek out Will Mayes. He is hailed and eventually pressured
into riding with them. After the car stops at the iceplant
where Mayes works, "there is no sound save their lungs as
they sought air in the parched dust in which for two months
they had lived" (177).

Once seized, Mayes is driven outside the town
to an "abandoned brick kiln—a series of reddish mounds and
weeds and vine-choked vats without bottom" (179).
Recognizing the purpose of the journey, Hawkshaw jumps out
of the car after a brief struggle: "The impetus hurled him
crashing through dust-sheathed weeds, into the ditch. Dust
puffed about him, and in a thin, vicious crackling of
sapless stems he lay choking and retching" (179). We never
witness the murder itself. "Unlike Light in August,"
Sundquist observes, "the crisp power of 'Dry September'
derives from Faulkner's not depicting the 'attack' or the
lynching but dwelling instead on the surrounding actions"
(170n).

John B. Vickery argues that the story is "an ironic
rendering of the primitive scapegoat ritual" (202). In
ritual societies, he indicates,

the choice of victim was based on all the religious,
social and scientific knowledge possessed by man; a
catastrophe affecting existence itself--such as
drought or blight--demanded immediate and drastic
remedies. The contemporary crisis, on the other hand,
involves only society's mores, not its struggle for
physical survival. And not only is the occasion
intrinsically less significant, but there is even the
likelihood that it has not actually taken place. In
short, unlike primitive man, who could actually see
the disaster he was seeking to remove, "none of them
gathered in the barber shop . . . knew exactly what
had happened." (202-3)

In fact, the drought itself is more real than the alleged
incident. But since the purpose of the scapegoating is to
defend the town's honor--particularly that of its white
women--and not to dispel the bad weather, the meaning of
the drought motif in the story still needs to be clarified.

Most obviously, it provides the narrative with a kind
of mythic backdrop, linking the social world of Faulkner's
South with the ritual societies of the ancient past. But
as Mortimer suggests, it also presents an image of human
limitations:

The 'dust to dust' imagery of the Bible that reminds
us of our ultimate mortality and the vanity of those
distinctions that seem so important to us in life serves a similar function here by counterpointing the prejudice, hypocrisy, and violence—all based on the illusion of distinctions, of boundaries—that make up the story. (56)

But there is even more to it than this. If as an emblem of physical death the drought serves as a counterpoint to the false consciousness of the townspeople, as an emblem of spiritual death—or dryness—it encompasses their very condition. John McLendon, the leader of the lynch mob, is himself characterized in terms of aridity: "in his frothy beard he looked like a desert rat in the moving pictures" (170). As he and the other men await Will Mayes, we are told that "where their bodies touched one another they seemed to sweat dryly, for no moisture came" (177).

Vickery notes that "traditionally the scapegoat was beaten by the warrior priests who sought to prevent or dispel vegetative infertility such as drought" (201). In Faulkner's story, by contrast, Will Mayes's scapegoating is precisely a sign of a society which has itself become arid and infertile. The scapegoating, in other words, is merely the ultimate manifestation of a social disease rather than its cure.

The nature of that disease can be seen to a lesser extent in the treatment of Minnie Cooper. As Vickery notes, "she is the scapegoat in a minor key and suffers its rites in a more 'civilized' form." Moreover, the "rationale for her election to the role is social rather than
racial" (201). We are told that she "was of comfortable people—not the best in Jefferson, but good people enough" and that "she was still on the slender side of ordinary looking" (173-74). Because she was vivacious, she was able "for a time to ride upon the crest of the town's social life as exemplified by the high school party and church social period of her contemporaries while still children enough to be unclassconscious" (174). But as the children grew older, they began "to learn the pleasure of snobbery--male--and retaliation--female" (174). Minnie herself was the last to recognize their changed attitude towards her. It was only when one evening at a party "she heard a boy and two girls, all schoolmates, talking" that she understood that she was no longer one of them (174). As a result, she never accepted another invitation. Her "ritual punishment and expulsion," as Vickery remarks, is verbal instead of physical" (201).

The difference between moisture and aridity—as spiritual states—can be seen in the changed attitude of Minnie's contemporaries toward her. As children, they have yet to be initiated into the rigidly stratified world of Jefferson. Thus, they have no sense that Minnie is in any way their social inferior. But if as children their attitudes are essentially fluid and open, as young adults—when they begin to take up their own predetermined roles in the society's structure—their responses undergo a process
of hardening, an atrophication. As a result, they come to see Minnie not as their equal but as other than themselves. This transformation reaches its apex when—as an adult—Minnie is relegated to the status of adulteress by the very peers who accepted her when she was a child.

Mclendon, the leader of the lynch mob, presents the most vicious form of the kind of closed consciousness which seems to characterize the townspeople of Jefferson. When Hawkshaw suggests that Will Mayes was not actually the attacker, "Mclendon whirled upon him his furious rigid face" (190). It is the representative face of a town which is grounded not in the values of community—of openness toward the other—but in a set of strictly defined social demarcations. The alleged assault of Minnie Cooper is the most serious violation of this structure because it transgresses the always already fraught distinction between black and white. The act of miscegenation is understood as the ultimate threat to a society which has come to define itself by its own difference from the racial other. In fact, the scapegoating of Will Mayes has the paradoxical effect of placing Minnie Cooper back at the center of her society, as the symbol of pristine white womanhood. In the light of the more serious—albeit imagined—violation of racial boundaries, her own transgressions are forgotten.

The same reintegration is accorded Joanna Burden after her death at the hands of Joe Christmas. Like Minnie,
Joanna has lived in Jefferson as an outcast—in her case—because of her work on behalf of the oppressed black population. In fact, it is her advocacy of this cause that seems to lead her—perhaps at an unconscious or intuitive level—to befriend Joe Christmas in the first place. Their secret relationship would be a scandal to the townspeople. But once Joanna is murdered, she undergoes a metamorphosis from outcast to victim, "supplying the town at last with an emotional barbecue," an outlet for its own deep-seated need to see the reenactment of the scapegoat ritual (289).

The horrible castration of Joe Christmas toward the end of the novel indicates that his worst crime—like the alleged one in "Dry September"—is not murder but miscegenation. After Percy Grimm flings back "the bloody butcher knife," he announces: "Now you'll let white women alone, even in hell" (464). But Joe Christmas is clearly a more complex and developed symbol than Will Mayes, about whom we actually hear very little. Most obviously, Christmas actually commits the crime of which he is accused. His guilt, however, is not simply a matter of personal sin. More fundamentally, it indicates that Christmas is not outside the structure which has made him its scapegoat. In his criminal status we are given a sign of his own complicity in the very society which has victimized him.
Unlike Will Mayes, of course, Christmas is assumed to have mixed blood, as Joe Brown—his cabin mate—eventually convinces the men of the town after the murder of Joanna Burden. On the one hand, this is another sign of Christmas's entanglement with white society. On the other hand, it makes him the symbol of the very reality which most threatens that society. Not only in his relationship with Joanna Burden but in his actual person, Christmas embodies the transgression of the strict racial demarcation upon which the social order of Jefferson has based itself. "Being neither black nor white," Donald Kartiganer observes,

Christmas is doomed to indefiniteness. And yet he is more than blankness. On the one hand he is a life, a structure, a single character—difficult yet visible, lacking the clarity of Hightower and Lena and Joanna, yet capable of being summoned up in our minds by the words "Joe Christmas." On the other hand, he is the disorder that lives always at or near the surface of Light in August, the chaos of mixed bloods that brings forth from the life of Jefferson an inevitable violence. (10-11).

But if Jefferson cannot admit the mixture which Joe Christmas represents, neither can Christmas himself. In fact, the deeply stratified character of the town finds its most profound symbol in the fragmented consciousness of the scapegoat. What ultimately makes Christmas significant, as Andre Bleikasten observes, "is not at all his supposedly mixed blood, but his divided self, for it is through the splitting of his psyche . . . that he comes to stand as a
starkly truthful symbol of the tensions and contradictions of Southern society" (51).

The final act of Joe Christmas before he murders Joanna Burden is to visit the two sections of the town. He goes first to the white section which is mostly empty of people:

He went on, passing still between the homes of white people, from street lamp to street lamp, the heavy shadows of oak and maple leaves sliding like scraps of black velvet across his white shirt. Yet though he was not large, not tall, he contrived somehow to look more lonely than a lone telephone pole in the middle of a desert. In the wide, empty, shadowbrooded street he looked like a phantom, a spirit, strayed out of its own world, and lost. (114)

More usually a symbol of communication, in this instance the telephone pole indicates Joe's utter isolation from those around him. Indeed, Carolyn Porter suggests that Joe "constitutes one of the most alienated men in modern literature" (73). That the pole is in the desert is a sign of the aridity of the social world which he ultimately represents. There is no fertile ground from which he can begin to reintegrate his own self. Even if the telephone pole were replanted in fertile soil, it could not take root like a tree. Christmas, of course, is often identified as an analogue of Christ, who experienced his own exile in the desert. But whereas Christ is the Tree of Life, Joe is a lifeless tree, incapable of accepting nourishment from either the earth, the human community, or even— one is led to wonder— the divine. As Byron Bunch recognizes, "there
was something definitely rootless about him, as though no
town nor city was his, no walls, no square of earth his
home" (31).

If Christmas senses that there is no place for him in
the white community, he feels equally alienated when he
visits the black section of the town:

He was standing still now, breathing quite hard,
glaring this way and that. About him the cabins were
shaped blackly out of blackness by the faint, sultry
glow of kerosene lamps. On all sides, even within
him, the bodiless fecundmellow voices of negro women
murmured. It was as though he and all other manshaped
life about him had been returned to the lightless hot
wet primogenitive Female. He began to run, glaring,
his teeth glaring, his inbreath cold on his dry teeth
and lips, towards the next street lamp. (115)

Among the cabins of the black people, Christmas is
confronted with the reality which he seems to fear most--
the generative qualities of the feminine. Whereas he is
characteristically arid--his teeth and lips are dry--the
bodies of the women are moist.

"Moistening in dreams," the depth psychologist James
Hillman suggests, "refers to the soul's delight in its
death, its delight in sinking away from fixations in
literalized concerns" (152). To enter water "relaxes one's
hold on things and lets go of where one has been stuck"
(152). But this kind of self-abandonment is something
which Christmas appears incapable of realizing in his own
life. In his rigidity--also suggested in the image of the
telephone pole--he represents the town's prevailing
reality, its atrophied structure of social distinctions.
Perhaps the most profound sign of Joe's alienation is his hatred of his foster mother, Mrs. McEachern. His rejection of her is a rejection of the most fundamental human connection and the one in which all the others find their prototype—the bond between mother and child. In contrast with the brutality which her husband shows Joe, she "had always tried to be kind to him" (165). However, her attenuated body is a sign her own displacement within a body politic which places little value on the kind of acceptance which she accords her foster son: "she had been hammered stubbornly thinner and thinner like some passive and dully malleable metal, into an attenuation of dumb and frustrated desires now faint and pale as dead ashes" (165). Joe's own treatment of her is yet another blow to her already beaten self.

When he first arrives at the McEachern household, she attempts to bathe him:

Kneeling before him she was trying to take off his shoes, until he realized what she wanted. He put her hands away and removed the shoes himself, not setting them onto the floor though. He held to them. She stripped off his stockings and then she fetched a basin of hot water, fetching it so immediately that anyone but a child could have known that she must have had it ready and waiting all day probably. He spoke for the first time, then. "I done washed just yesterday," he said. (166)

"Contact with water," as Eliade observes, "always brings a regeneration—on the one hand because dissolution is followed by a new birth, on the other hand because immersion fertilizes and multiplies the potential of life"
(Sacred 130). For Joe, however, rebirth is impossible because he cannot allow the old self to be dissolved, to be washed away by the purifying waters which his foster mother attempts to bestow upon him. When he holds onto his shoes, he is refusing to let go of the brutalized existence which he has led up to this point.

In fact, Joe appears to prefer the kind of strict justice which McEachern metes out to him to the mercy shown him by his wife:

He was used to that before he ever saw either of them. He expected no less, and so he was neither outraged nor surprised. It was the woman: that soft kindness which he believed himself doomed to be forever victim of and which he hated worse than he did the hard and ruthless justice of men. "She is trying to make me cry," he thought, lying cold and rigid in his bed, his hands beneath his head, moonlight falling across his body, hearing the steady murmur of the man's voice as it mounted the stairway on its first heavenward stage; "She was trying to make me cry. Then she thinks that they would have had me." (169)

It is precisely Joanna Burden's misguided attempt to save Christmas—as his foster mother had earlier done—that causes him to kill her: "She would have been all right if she hadn't started praying over me. It was not her fault that she got too old to be any good any more. But she ought to have had better sense than to pray over me" (106). Joe's refusal of both her and his foster mother is a refusal of any external influence upon his own life, and ultimately of the possibility of redemption itself.

Joe Christmas is at once the scapegoat and the symbol of the social order of Jefferson. According to Rene
Girard, the purpose of the scapegoat ritual is to put an end to the reciprocal violence which breaks out when the crucial distinctions upon which society is founded disintegrate—the crisis of non-differentiation: "The sacrificial process prevents the spread of violence by keeping vengeance in check" (18). However, as Sundquist remarks, Christmas "is no more selected to die as a way of warding off further violence than he is, in his death, able to do. The violence continues to spread—in the lives of the novel and in Faulkner's novels of the next twenty years" (93).

Joe Christmas becomes Jefferson's scapegoat because he is the ultimate threat to the system of distinctions upon which its social structure is based. He embodies the disease of miscegenation. But for Faulkner, the disease is not the fact of Joe's impure blood but the societal structure which attempts to rigidly maintain the distinction between pure and impure in the first place. The disease, in other words, is the sacrificial mentality itself, a mentality which can only conceive of society as a structure founded on the arbitrary creation of a victim. As a scapegoat, Joe does not represent the panacea which will restore the town's self-identity. Rather, his own psychic fragmentation makes him a persistent sign of the sickness which exists at its heart. It is to another outsider, Lena Grove, that Faulkner looks for the cure.
City Expected

Like Joe Christmas, Lena Grove is an outcast from society, her illegitimate, unborn child a violation of its strict sexual mores. Both characters literally embody the reality which has set them apart from their communities—in Joe's case his blood and in Lena's her child. Only Lena's body, however, presents a visible sign of her transgression. When her brother finds out that she has been leaving the house at night, "he remarked her changing shape, which he should have noticed some time before" (6). Paradoxically, Lena does not attempt to hide "her swelling and unmistakable burden" as she moves along her route to Jefferson (9). Twelve miles outside the town, two farmers, Armstid and Winterbottom, spot her passing in the road: "They saw at once that she was young, pregnant, and a stranger. 'I wonder where she got that belly,' Winterbottom said" (9).

Joe Christmas has perhaps less reason to hide himself than Lena does, since his supposedly mixed blood does not manifest itself in his outward appearance. In fact, it is only when they hear his name that the other workers at the mill take notice of him, "as though there was something in the sound of it that was trying to tell them what to expect; that he carried with him his own inescapable warning, like a flower its scent or a rattlesnake its rattle" (33). Despite the augur, however, "none of them
had sense enough to recognize it," assuming that he was just "a foreigner" (33).

Nevertheless, Joe keeps a strict distance from the other men, living an essentially anonymous existence on the furthermost border of society. In contrast with the garrulousness of Brown, he

still had nothing to say to anyone, even after six months. No one knew what he did between mill hours. Now and then one of his fellow workers would pass him on the square downtown after supper, and it would be as though Christmas had never seen the other before. He would be wearing then the new hat and the ironed trousers and the cigarette in one side of his mouth and the smoke sneering across his face. No one knew where he lived, slept at night, save that now and then someone would see him following a path that came up through the woods on the edge of town, as if he might live out that way somewhere. (35-36)

The difference between Joe and Lena, however, is not simply that Lena's identity is visible whereas Joe's is hidden. Rather, the very mark of Joe's identity—much more than his mixed blood—is his invisibility. It is the most outward sign of the profound alienation which strikes at the core of his being. Virginia V. James Hlavsa observes that like Christ, Christmas lives for many years "in obscurity" (22). But Joe's obscurity is not a preparation for a public life spent in the service of others. His invisibility is a scar, the sign of a deep psychological wound which—sooner or later—will surface in the fatal violence inflicted upon Joanna Burden.

The paradox of Lena Grove is that while she bears the visible mark of her transgression, she is essentially
unmarked—or more properly, unscarred—by the society which has rejected her. While it has marked her out, she—unlike Christmas—does not bear its mark within herself. In fact, her visibility is precisely a sign that her sufferings have not alienated her from others. Although physically separated from the community, she remains, in some sense, at one with them.

"Her face," we are told, "is calm as stone, but not hard. Its doggedness has a soft quality, an inwardlighted quality of tranquil and calm unreason and detachment" (18). It is her invisible life—her inwardlight—which has prevented Lena's visible appearance from hardening, from taking on the rigidity which characterizes Joe Christmas. She also contrasts with the brother who calls her whore: "He was a hard man. Softness and gentleness and youth (he was just forty) and almost everything else except a kind of stubborn and despairing fortitude and the bleak heritage of his bloodpride had been sweated out of him" (6). Despite her rejection, Lena retains the hope which her brother has lost, even insisting that the absent father of her child, Lucas Burch, will eventually send for her: "unshakable, sheeplike, having drawn upon that reserve of patient and steadfast fidelity upon which the Lucas Burches depend and trust, even though they do not intend to be present when the need for it arises" (6).
In fact, the absence of Lucas Burch seems to have no reality for Lena. She can only foresee his imminent return. Although Lucas never marries her, her hope is, however, validated by Byron Bunch who, upon Lena's appearance, falls instantly in love. The world which Lena inhabits is a world founded not on loss but on the hope of its ultimate fulfillment. It is an expectant world and Lena herself, of course, is its very symbol. The visible mark of her transgression is not finally a stigma but a sign of new life, a life which she brings to a world which desperately requires regeneration.

The moment of the novel is a moment of anticipation. Its central events occur in August, calendrically the eighth month of the year and the threshold of fall. But for Lena it is the ninth month of pregnancy, marking not the end of the growth which began in spring but the onset of a new spring, the birth of a child. Thus, Lena carries over—translates—the moistness of spring to what might otherwise be a dry September.

In the face of its own downward spiral, the town sees its only recourse to be the ritual scapegoating of Joe Christmas. But Joe's death merely completes another revolution of the cycle of violence which threatens to extinguish the life of the community. Joe himself is caught within this cycle: "But I have never got outside that circle. I have never broken out of the ring of what I
have already done and cannot ever undo" (339). In the figure of Lena Grove, Faulkner reveals the counter-movement to entropy. She holds within herself the always awaited city, a city founded not on the sacrifice of the other but on the substance of things hoped for.

**Conclusion**

Toward the beginning of *Light in August*, Lena Grove is likened to "something moving forever and without progress across an urn" (7). As Louise Cowan observes, the urn image, which is taken from Keats's ode and which occurs in several of Faulkner's works, is "frequently interpreted . . . as representing a temptation to a platonic stasis, ideal and beautiful but far removed from life, implying, indeed, a rejection of life because of mortal imperfection" ("For Ever" 79). Cowan, however, argues that "the image is for Faulkner one of intense vitality, inclusive of the whole of 'motion,' consequently, holy, alive" (79). It is this motion which Lena herself embodies. Far from standing for an eternal stasis, her movement from Doane's Mill, Alabama to Jefferson, Mississippi and beyond is an image of life itself.

For archaic man, as we have seen, life is conceived of in essentially static terms. As Eliade observes, it is "reduced to the repetition of archetypical acts, that is, to categories and not to events, to the unceasing rehearsal of the same primordial myths" (*Cosmos* 86). It "does not
bear the burden of time, does not record time's irreversibility; in other words, it completely ignores what is especially characteristic and decisive in a consciousness of time" (86). For Lena, by contrast, life is essentially a movement, "swollen, slow, deliberate, unhurried and tireless as augmenting afternoon itself" (10). Moreover, while to others she appears burdened, she herself is entirely unconscious of bearing the weight of time. For her, "the evocation of far is a peaceful corridor paved with unflagging and untranquil faith and peopled with kind and nameless faces and voices" (7).

From the point of view of archaic cultures, Lena is a sign of contradiction. If archaic man rejects history because it appears to involve a falling away from the purity of origins, an irreversible process of corruption and decay, she has entered into time and yet appears to retain the freshness of beginnings. As Cowan notes, Lena "is essentially virginal, even if she does bear with her on her journey the evidence of her maternity" (79). Unlike Aeneas, who at the end of his journey appears to succumb to atrophication, she maintains the open and fluid disposition which we see in her from the start.

For Lena, time is not a relentless succession of moments which leaves her dislocated within the present, separated from past and future. Although she lives in anticipation of a promised event, she remains rooted in the
things of this life. Most obviously, she appears connected to the earth itself, while at the same time continually moving across it: "When she felt the dust of the road beneath her feet she removed the shoes and carried them in her hand" (6-7). Unlike Joe Christmas, whose shoes seem to insulate him from reality, Lena takes pleasure in the immediacy of the earth's surface.

But perhaps her most vital connection is with others, a connection which Lena feels despite her society's rejection of her. When she first meets Byron Bunch she tells him

more than she knows that she is telling, as she has been doing now to the strange faces among whom she has travelled for four weeks and with the untroubled haste of a change of season. And Byron in his turn gets the picture of a young woman betrayed and deserted and not even aware that she has been deserted. . . . (52)

Lena, as Byron suggests, seems fundamentally unaware that she is alone in the world with her child. However, this is not a naive misconception on her part. Rather, Lena recognizes, at a deeply intuitive level, a fundamental aspect of human existence: that it is always a coexistence. Her journey is "peopled" by others upon whom she depends for food, shelter and human kindness: "she had got along all right this far, with folks taking good care of her" (506). If we judge her by the ideal of self-sufficiency, then she seems infantile, not yet attuned to the harsh realities of adult existence. But if we recognize the
falsity of that ideal, then she embodies the spirit of community.

Although Lena holds new life for Jefferson, she represents a reality which is inimical to that which seems to prevail in the city itself. The cities of our time, in particular, seem to be places which militate against the growth of communal life. They appear precisely as anti-communities, as spaces in which men are alienated from each other, where isolation is the only possible mode of existence. It is this reality which Raskolnikov, Pierre and Joe Christmas embody. But it is also a reality which is reflected in a long tradition of myths which suggest that the origins of the city are murderous. The cities of Cain and Romulus and are founded on the bodies of slain brothers. Thus, from the beginning they are divided from themselves, worlds which have their source in the desire for power rather than the need for community. For Augustine, they are versions of the earthly city; "the quarrel that arose between Remus and Romulus demonstrated the division of the earthly city against itself; while the conflict between Cain and Abel displayed the hostility between . . . the City of God and the city of men" (15. 5).

The works of cultural theorists like Freud, Levi-Strauss and Girard are essentially descriptions of the mechanisms which operate at the heart of the earthly city.
They depict the city as a structure of prohibitions and strictures designed to curb man's instinct for aggression and self-satisfaction. As subtle and powerful as it is, this body of work tends to assume that man is driven exclusively by self-love, that he is incapable of the kind of communal existence which Lena Grove holds out for Jefferson. If we accept this view of man, then, we accept that he can only inhabit a world which oppresses and perhaps ultimately destroys him.

The novelists which I have discussed in this study lay bare that world at the point of its ultimate realization, allowing us to see all its deadly consequences. But it is precisely their knowledge of the totality of man—of his ontology—that allows them to expose the false structures which oppress him. It is that knowledge, Milan Kundera suggests, which has led the novel since the beginning of modernity "to scrutinize man's concrete life and protect it against the 'forgetting of being'; to hold 'the world of life' under a permanent light" (5). Without that light, the writer can only imitate the closed worlds within which man lives divided from himself and others. By that light, the poet envisions man writ large and the embodied worlds that are always motioning toward Jerusalem to be born.
WORKS CITED


___. *Herman Melville.* New York: The Literary Guild of America, 1929.


Weaver, Raymond M. *Herman Melville: Mariner and Mystic*. New York: George H. Doran, 1921.


VITA

Born in Dublin in 1966, Eamon Halpin has lived most of his life in his native Ireland. He was educated in local Dublin schools, first at Ballyroan Boys' National School and then at Rockbrook Park School. At the age of eighteen, he began attending University College Dublin from which he obtained a bachelor's degree in English and Greek and Roman Civilization in 1987. He went on to obtain a master's degree in Modern English and American Literature before moving to the United States in August, 1989. Since then, Mr. Halpin has been a doctoral candidate in the Department of English at Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge. For the past six months, he has taught English at L.S.U.'s regional campus in Alexandria.
DOCTORAL EXAMINATION AND DISSERTATION REPORT

Candidate: Eamon Halpin

Major Field: English

Title of Dissertation: Seen and Unseen Cities: Embodied Worlds in Epic and the Novel

Approved:

[Signatures]

Dean of the Graduate School

EXAMINING COMMITTEE

[Signatures]

Date of Examination: 12/15/94