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Representing Urban Space in the Twentieth-Century Scottish Novel

Dizertační práce

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ZÁSADY PRO VYPRACOVÁNÍ:

Práce se zabývá skotskou prózou zasazenou do prostředí města, kdy toto prostředí figuruje jako významný prvek v tematické výstavbě díla. Úvod práce vymezuje a odůvodňuje její téma, použitou terminologii a metody; dále poskytuje přehled dosavadní odborné literatury k dané problematice. První část práce se věnuje chronologickému přehledu relevantních děl a charakterizuje specifická vývojová období: společensko-kritický román 30. let, introspektivní romány let 50. a 60. a tzv. druhou skotskou renesanci let 80. a 90. Druhá část práce se zaměřuje na společná témata a motivy analyzovaných děl.

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Prohlášení

Místopřísežně prohlašuji, že jsem dizertační práci na téma „Representing Urban Space in the Twentieth-Century Scottish Novel“ vypracovala samostatně pod odborným dohledem vedoucí diplomové práce a uvedla jsem všechny použité podklady a literaturu.

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Podpis

Poděkování

Za povzbuzení a podporu děkuji své školitelce, dr. Emě Jelínkové, členům oborové rady, prof. Josefu Jařabovi, prof. Marcelu Arbeitovi a prof. Michalu Peprníkovi, a členům katedry.

A place belongs forever to whoever claims it hardest, remembers it most obsessively, wrenches it from itself, shapes it, renders it, loves it so radically that he remakes it in his own image.

—Joan Didion

Contents

1 Introduction

1.1 Topic and Thesis

> Man is the measure of all things. . . .
> Space is humanly construed space.
>
> —Yi-Fu Tuan[1]

Scottish writing occupies an uneasy place within the misleadingly labelled canon of English (rather than British) literature. The English nation dominates the political body of the United Kingdom, hence it tends to assimilate the cultures of the other constituent nations under a single simplifying heading. The position of Scotland differs from that of Wales, which never constituted a strong sovereign state, as well as from the Republic of Ireland, which regained political independence for the Irish nation in the course of the twentieth century. Scotland formed an autonomous kingdom up to the 1707 Act of Union with England, and as evidenced by its history of Jacobite Risings in the eighteenth century, of two devolution referendums in the twentieth century and of the independence referendum in the twenty-first century, Scottish independence has never ceased to be a subject of serious debate. Michael Gardiner points out the complexity of what is collectively known as English literature—a complexity springing from 'the UK's status as a nationless and to a degree citizenless, classifying, managerial state'—and cautions against an indiscriminate use of the attribute 'English', which 'has a Teflon existence within

[1] Yi-Fu Tuan, *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2011), 34–35.

university departments, not only in the UK but around much of the world, and has often silently clung on to the "British state–English culture" imperial bind'.[2]

Scottish literature, as part of the culture of a stateless nation, inclines to define itself in opposition to English or anglicised literary tradition rather than as a self-standing entity. A sense of defiant Scottishness combined with the foregrounding of regionalism constitute salient features of Scottish writing, which often struggles to establish a sustainable identity and a place of its own. Up to the twentieth century, the reputation of Scottish literature rested chiefly on the historical novel represented by Walter Scott and on Scots dialect poetry composed and collected by Robert Burns. The speedy progress of industrialisation and urbanisation of Scotland, disproportionately intense in the Central Belt area stretching from Glasgow to Edinburgh, did not start to be reflected in Scottish literature until the 1930s. Since then, the urban novel has played an increasingly significant role in the Scottish national literature. The Scottish urban novel arose from the need to grapple creatively with the actualities of contemporary Scotland and began as a negation of the earlier withdrawal of writers into the nation's past and/or into rural idyll. Throughout the twentieth century, Scotland has been wrestling with major problems in the city rather than in the country: the decline and fall of heavy industry, the lack of housing and the creation of slums, the high rates of urban unemployment and poverty. Statistics indicate that at the beginning of the twentieth century, the majority of Scottish population lived already in towns of five thousand inhabitants or larger, hence the urban novel came to serve not only as a tool to tackle the public issues of urban life, but also as a medium to narrate more intimate stories of characters who simply happen to live in the city.[3]

In the twentieth century, the Scottish experience became for the first time mostly an urban experience. Urban space does not occur spontaneously, it is consciously created and recreated by the society which occupies the space. In a capitalist society, as pertinent to Scotland, social inequity exists at all levels, including the ownership of the means of production of space. The social class that

[2] Michael Gardiner, introduction to *Scottish Literature and Postcolonial Literature: Comparative Texts and Critical Perspectives*, ed. Michael Gardiner, Graeme Macdonald, and Niall O'Gallagher (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2011), 6–7.

[3] See T. M. Devine, 'Industrialisation', in *The Transformation of Scotland: The Economy since 1700*, ed. T. M. Devine, C. H. Lee, and G. C. Peden (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2011), 39.

owns the means of production imposes hegemony of space on the subordinate class in that the space produced caters to the needs of the dominant section of the society, often to the disadvantage of the less privileged. An instance of such a one-sided production of space is the central Glasgow part of the M8 motorway, whose erection in the 1960s and 1970s most affected the poor inner-city areas where car ownership was limited and so was the usefulness of this specific structure to the locals. Social space, however, does not remain stable: as Tim Cresswell explains, it is, 'once established, a tool in the creation, maintenance, and transformation of domination, oppression, and exploitation'.[4] Even the dominated section of the society has some space to negotiate, since existing space can be used either in compliance with or in resistance against its intended purpose. Illustrated by the example of the M8, an uprooted working-class dweller of Cowcaddens will not drive on the motorway because he does not own a car but will vandalise its bridge pillars with graffiti, making a subversive use of the space available. Unconstructive though such undertaking is, it constitutes a symbolic act of resistance and, as Dick Hebdige contends, stands as 'an expression both of impotence and a kind of power—the power to disfigure'.[5]

Class struggle, in the sense of the conflict of interests of the wealthy and the less fortunate, does not hover as an abstract concept in an imaginary spaceless and timeless dimension, rather, it comprises a number of actual actions anchored in physical space. Not only does class struggle occur in space, it can also be enacted as a struggle *for* space. Struggle for space takes on particular resonance in the case of a nation which does not ultimately own and rule the space it inhabits. The Scottish urban novel thus encapsulates a struggle for a national as well as an individual space. The development of the urban novel includes several distinct stages, based on the type of space that the novelists seek to represent. The early phase in the genre development is rooted in the acute realities of the 1930s: social realist writers like George Blake, James Barke and Dot Allan depict struggle in workplace, struggle for work and struggle over the use of public space in hunger marches; whereas naturalist writers like A. McArthur and H. Kingsley Long dwell on the despair and violence inherent in the struggle of overcrowded slum dwellers

[4] Tim Cresswell, *Place: An Introduction*, 2nd ed. (Chichester: Wiley, 2015), 46

[5] Dick Hebdige, *Subculture: The Meaning of Style* (London: Routledge, 2003), 3.

for the most elementary living space. The post-World War II period brings more diversity and cements the status of the urban novel as an essential instrument for exploring the experience of contemporary Scotland: Alexander Trocchi copes with a sense of displacement and dispossession, Archie Hind dramatises the plight of the working-class artist to write a great urban novel and William McIlvanney taps into the urban crime scene, prefiguring the boom of the Scottish detective novel in the late twentieth century. Since the 1980s, urban Scotland has been treated with immense variety and creativity, be it the unique mix of realism and fantasy in Alasdair Gray, the unapologetic vigour of down-and-out characters in James Kelman or the seedy and murky subculture communities in Irvine Welsh.

1.2 Structure and Method

> There is nothing that is not social and historical . . .
> Everything is 'in the last analysis' political.
>
> —Frederic Jameson[6]

The present work strives to achieve a balance between the chronological and the thematic approaches to literature by giving space to both in its two main parts. Part one (that is, chapter 3), 'Dialogic Imaginings', identifies major topics in the discourse of space and illustrates the diverse ways in which they are interpreted in representative novels. Part two (that is, chapter 4), 'Scottish Cities', starts with preliminary observations and then branches into two sections, devoted to Glasgow and Edinburgh respectively. The Glasgow section is the most extensive one, owing to the existence of the previously critically mapped genre of the Glasgow Novel. In contrast, works set in Edinburgh are not only fewer in quantity but also qualitatively fail to manifest a sufficient sense of shared concerns and shared development to justify their inclusion under the label of an Edinburgh urban school of writing.

[6] Frederic Jameson, *The Political Unconscious* (Oxon: Routledge, 2002), 5.

Within the thematic sections of this work, the novels for discussion are ordered chronologically so as to reinforce the notion of a distinct development of the urban novel in the course of the twentieth century.

Altogether, fifteen literary works (one of which, by Lewis Grassic Gibbon, is a trilogy considered as a whole) are selected for detailed analysis based on combined criteria including their originality and relevance to a particular space-related topic, their aesthetic merit and their previous critical coverage. For instance, to represent the 1930s proletarian novel, Dot Allan's *Hunger March* (1934) is preferred to two better-known books, George Blake's *The Shipbuilders* (1935) and James Barke's *Major Operation* (1936), because Allan's relatively modern and tentatively experimental narrative achieves more enduring value than Blake's and Barke's schematic stories and also because Blake and Barke have both become subjects of numerous critical treatments, unlike the neglected Allan.[7] Since a significant body of enumerative accounts and bibliographies of the British urban novel already exists—as apparent from the section 'Literature Overview'—the main thrust of the present work is the analysis of the individual novels in terms of the discourse of space and place.

Most of the novels under consideration intertwine the personal and the political, some of them to the point of presenting a personal story simultaneously as a political statement. It is indeed impossible to discuss the work of Lewis Grassic Gibbon, Alasdair Gray or James Kelman without continually coming across questions of individual and national identity, social and political hegemony, dependency and autonomy. The set of theories of space and place, as the most self-evident starting point to approach the subject of the urban novel, in itself manifests a definite political dimension. The alliance of human geographers like Henri Lefebvre, David Harvey or Edward Soja to the political left however does not imply programmatic propaganda; the version of Western Marxism practised by these writers comes across rather as elementary humanism. The bulk of the theoretical

[7] For dedicated criticism on Blake and Barke, see, for example, H. Gustav Klaus, 'The Shipbuilders' Story', in *British Industrial Fictions*, ed. H. Gustav Klaus and Stephen Knight (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2000), 54–70 and Manfred Malzahn, 'Coming to Terms with Industrial Scotland: Two "Proletarian" Novels of the 1930s (George Blake: *The Shipbuilders*, James Barke: *Major Operation*)', in *Studies in Scottish Fiction: Twentieth Century*, ed. Joachim Schwend and Horst W. Drescher (Frankfurt: Lang, 1990), 193–205.

and literary writings referred to in this work do not argue for a proletarian revolution, instead, the authors—and the present analysis of them—emphasise the human values of solidarity, sympathy and respect without necessarily offering a definite plan of how to achieve a more universal appreciation of these values in the society.

2 Literature

2.1 Space and Place

> Nothing can be taken for granted in space, because what are involved are real or possible acts, and not mental states or more or less well-told stories.
>
> —Henri Lefebvre[8]

Space, along with time, is an elementary ontological category by which human beings relate to the world. Despite the universality of space (referring to an abstract concept) and place (a concrete counterpart of space), there is a lack of a generally recognised unitary theory of either. Space and place as a subject of research can be approached from radically different perspectives based on the purpose of the study. Tim Cresswell distinguishes, on the opposite poles, 'a descriptive approach to place' suitable for disciplines such as geography and 'a phenomenological approach of place' adopted in fields such as philosophy. In literary criticism, assuming 'a social constructionist approach to place' is the most fruitful option in that it emphasises the interaction of nature and society in creating place. Place, like literature, is perceived by social constructionists as socially produced, or constructed, rather than as naturally given.[9]

Major theoretical sources published on the topic agree on defining space as abstract, boundless and mutable in contrast to place as concrete, limited and stable. In his concise guide to thinking about space and place, *Place: An Introduction* (2004), Tim Cresswell describes places as formerly indistinct 'spaces which people

[8] Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith (Malden: Blackwell, 1991), 144.

[9] Tim Cresswell, *Place: An Introduction*, 2nd ed. (Chichester: Wiley, 2015), 56.

have made meaningful'.[10] The human geographer Yi-Fu Tuan, to whom Cresswell acknowledges deep indebtedness, explains in his *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience* (1977) that 'what begins as undifferentiated space becomes place as we get to know it better and endow it with value'.[11] In Michel de Certeau's discursive treatment of the subject, *The Practice of Everyday Life* (1980), the human element is taken out of the definition, but place still remains stable and ordered where space is mobile and spontaneous. 'A place is thus an instantaneous configuration of positions,' Certeau writes. 'It implies an indication of stability. A *space* exists when one takes into consideration vectors of direction, velocities, and time variables. Thus space is composed of intersections of mobile elements.'[12]

Some authors, though working within the paradigm of space and place, prefer to introduce different labels for similar concepts. The urban theorist Edward W. Soja, for instance, speaks not of space and place, but of 'space *per se*, space as a contextual given, and socially-based spatiality, the created space of social organization and production'.[13] Soja's space and spatiality might not correspond in full detail to, say, Certeau's space and place, yet Soja, Certeau as well as the other theoreticians discussed meet in their central distinction between physical space and social space (the latter also known as place, or as spatiality for Soja).

Space and place do not constitute binary oppositions, rather, they form a scale underlining the process more than the product. The notion of processuality is particularly foregrounded in Henri Lefebvre's interdisciplinary project, *The Production of Space* (1974), which elaborates on the key proposition that '*(social) space is a (social) product*'.[14] Lefebvre conceives of the production of social space in terms of 'absolute', 'historical' and 'abstract space'. The process begins with absolute space, as yet perfectly asocial, 'made up of fragments of nature'. Absolute space then becomes 'populated by political forces' which transform it to such an

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[10] Cresswell, *Place*, 12.

[11] Yi-Fu Tuan, *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2011), 6.

[12] Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, trans. Steven F. Rendall (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), 117. Italics in the original.

[13] Edward W. Soja, *Postmodern Geographies: The Reassertion of Space in Critical Social Theory* (London: Verso, 1989), 79. Italics in the original.

[14] Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, 26. Italics in the original.

extent that absolute space only '[survives] as the bedrock of historical space'. Finally, abstract space (also representational space) evolves out of historical space, which goes on to serve 'as substratum or underpinning of representational spaces'.[15] To Lefebvre, social space is constructed through the destruction of natural space.

Abstract space overlaps with what Lefebvre calls '*representational spaces*', one concept out of the basic 'conceptual triad' that Lefebvre establishes for his research of the production of space.[16] Representational spaces bear particular relevance in literary criticism because they '[embody] complex symbolisms, sometimes coded, sometimes not, linked to the clandestine or underground side of social life, as also to art'. Representational spaces thus imply transgression, resistance and subversion. In contrast, '*representations of space*', another term of Lefebvre's triad, enforce compliance as they 'are tied to the relations of production and to the "order" which those relations impose, and hence to knowledge, to signs, to codes'.[17] The last concept of the triad is '*spatial practice*, which embraces production and reproduction and the particular locations and spatial sets characteristic of each social formation'.[18] Lefebvre observes spatial practice on the level of the society, as a set of indiscrete processes performed by and happening to the social body as a whole. Certeau offers a complementary view in that he focuses on the private rather than the public, the individual rather than the society, and examines 'everyday practices, "ways of operating" or doing things', as enacted by individuals in their everyday lives.[19]

Lefebvre's representational spaces express a '*sense of place*', which John A. Agnew characterises as a 'subjective orientation that can be engendered by living in a place. This is the geosociological definition of self or identity produced by a place,' Agnew contends.[20] In his carefully researched monograph *Place and Politics: The Geographical Mediation of State and Society* (1987), comprising, among others, case studies of Scottish regions, Agnew introduces two more

[15] Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, 48–49.

[16] Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, 48–49. Italics in the original.

[17] Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, 33. Italics in the original.

[18] Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, 48–49. Italics in the original.

[19] Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, xi.

[20] John A. Agnew, *Place and Politics: The Geographical Mediation of State and Society* (London: Routledge, 2015), 6. Italics in the original.

concepts that differ from the prevailing discourse in terms of space, place and its social production. These are '*locale*', which 'refers to the structured "microsociological" content of place, the setting for everyday, routine social interaction provided in a place', and '*location*', which 'represents the impact of the "macro-order" in a place (uneven economic development, the uneven effects of government policy, segregation of social groups, etc.)'.[21] While both locale and location will be implicitly present, it is the sense of place, the connection between place and person, that will prove to be most relevant for the purpose of this study.

Sense of place, as Agnew understands it, appears in works by other theorists of space typically under the label genius loci. Cresswell notes that genius loci, 'spirit of place', originates in 'the Roman belief that places had a particular spirit that watched over them', but in current Western usage genius loci is 'not far removed from the idea of "sense of place"'.[22] Unlike the ancient genius loci, which 'is both already there in the landscape and the potential product of judicious alterations', the modern sense of place is purely a social construct, a projection of human consciousness onto space.[23] A natural space used by human beings is transformed into a social space, but spatial practice does not stop here. David Harvey, in his insightful monograph *Justice, Nature and the Geography of Difference* (1996), highlights the temporal dimension of spatial practice by speaking of 'spatio-temporal' rather than simply 'spatial' practice. Harvey points out the continuing interdependence of places and practices: 'The worlds of myth, or religion, of collective memory, and of national or regional identity are space-time constructs that constitute and are constituted by the formation of distinctive places (shrines, places of worship, icons in stories, etc.). Places expressive of distinctive beliefs, values, imaginaries, and social-institutional practices have long been constructed both materially and discursively. The search to perpetuate such processes of place construction continues to this day.'[24]

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[21] Agnew, *Place and Politics*, 5. Italics in the original.

[22] Cresswell, *Place*, 129.

[23] Cresswell, *Place*, 129.

[24] David Harvey, *Justice, Nature and the Geography of Difference* (Malden: Blackwell, 2004), 306.

2.2 Discourse of Hegemony

> Today more than ever, the class struggle is inscribed in space.
>
> —Henri Lefebvre[25]

There are at least two contrasting approaches commonly adopted in the study of the relationship between space and society. A philosophical-poetic approach presumes a harmonic coexistence of place and person and concentrates on intimate places, as they are experienced in an individual's everyday life. Gaston Bachelard, the chief proponent of this attitude, describes his poetic, even oneiric method in *The Poetics of Space* (1958) as that of 'topophilia', a method designed 'to determine the human value of the sorts of space that may be grasped, that may be defended against adverse forces, the space we love'.[26] In his foreword, John R. Stilgoe aptly sums up the essence of Bachelard's text, observing that 'in the house Bachelard discovers a metaphor of humanness'.[27]

The inward-looking topophilia as practised by Bachelard, Tuan and partly Certeau is counterbalanced by a group of public-oriented, left-leaning social constructionist geographers for whom space is an arena of hegemonic struggle. Lefebvre identifies hegemony as a fundamental feature of capitalism: the ruling class seeks to perpetuate its dominance by exercising its influence 'over society as a whole, culture and knowledge included', and this 'by all available means', including a felicitous use of space 'in the establishment, on the basis of an underlying logic and with the help of knowledge and technical expertise, of a "system"'.[28] Although Lefebvre's main focus is on how 'the class struggle is

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[25] Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith (Malden: Blackwell, 1991), 55.

[26] Gaston Bachelard, *The Poetics of Space*, trans. Maria Jolas (Boston: Beacon Press, 1994), xxxv.

[27] John R. Stilgoe, foreword to the 1994 edition of *The Poetics of Space*, by Gaston Bachelard, trans. Maria Jolas (Boston: Beacon Press, 1994), vii.

[28] Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, 10–11.

inscribed in space',[29] an abstraction often manifested as a struggle for actual, physical space, he also allows for the possibility of a less violent interaction between space and society. According to the degree by which a space has been altered to meet the requirements of a particular mode of production, Lefebvre distinguishes between 'dominated' and 'appropriated' spaces. A dominated space is 'a space transformed—and mediated—by technology', for example 'a slab of concrete or a motorway . . . [that] brutalizes the countryside and the land, slicing through space like a great knife'.[30] An appropriated space, on the other hand, is 'a natural space modified in order to serve the needs and possibilities of a group that it has been appropriated by', typically 'the indoor space of family life'.[31]

In order to maintain its hegemony, the ruling class produces and upholds ideology in the sense of Terry Eagleton's definition of the term as 'the way men live out their roles in class-society, the values, ideas and images which tie them to their social functions'.[32] Raymond Williams points out that 'the true condition of hegemony is effective *self-identification* with the hegemonic forms' on the part of the subordinate class on whom the ideology of the dominant class is imposed.[33] The dominated class is however not a mere passive recipient of ideological contents. A range of techniques can be employed to defy hegemony, including techniques that make a subversive use of space. In his treatment of space as a site of social conflict, *In Place/Out of Place: Geography, Ideology, and Transgression* (1996), Tim Cresswell contrasts the practices of 'transgression' and 'resistance'. While transgression refers to an act 'out of place' perpetrated perhaps inadvertently, resistance constitutes a deliberate act of defiance. 'Transgression is judged by those who react to it, while resistance rests on the intentions of the actor(s),' Cresswell explains.[34] Certeau introduces another helpful set of terms, which draws a distinction between the practice of hegemony and the practice of resistance. The

[29] Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, 55.

[30] Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, 164–65.

[31] Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, 165–66.

[32] Terry Eagleton, *Marxism and Literary Criticism* (London: Routledge, 2002), 15.

[33] Raymond Williams, *Marxism and Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 118. Italics in the original.

[34] Tim Cresswell, *In Place/Out of Place: Geography, Ideology, and Transgression* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996), 23.

dominant class possesses ‘strategy’, a dominating action on the home front, whereas the dominated class makes use of ‘tactics’, a subversive action in the foreign field. With respect to space, ‘strategies are able to produce, tabulate, and impose these spaces, . . . whereas tactics can only use, manipulate, and divert these spaces’.[35] The class that owns the means of production is able to set up and retain dominated spaces, as Lefebvre calls them. The dispossessed class is limited to making do with spaces that are already available. To cite Cresswell’s recurrent examples, a homeless person commits an act of transgression by seeking shelter in a public building simply for lack of other options, whereas protesters practise an act of spatial resistance by launching a sit-in in a deliberately chosen place.[36]

2.3 Scottish Urban Novel

> ‘Glasgow is a magnificent city,’ said McAlpin. ‘Why do we hardly ever notice that?’ ‘Because nobody imagines living here,’ said Thaw.
>
> —Alasdair Gray[37]

The Scottish urban novel remains an under-explored field whose treatment so far has been patchy and has not yet resulted in any major comprehensive monograph encompassing all essential aspects of the subject. Some aspects of Scottish urban fiction have been receiving steady critical attention since the 1990s, the decade when writers like James Kelman, Ian Rankin and Irvine Welsh gained international acclaim, or, in the cases of Kelman and Welsh, notoriety. Numerous book-length analyses dealing with these individual authors have appeared, but the spatial dimension of their work is mentioned at best in passing. The role of the setting in

[35] Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, 30.

[36] See Cresswell, *In Place/Out of Place*, 4–5, 163.

[37] Alasdair Gray, *Lanark: A Life in Four Books* (1981; Edinburgh: Canongate, 2007), 243.

writing so firmly rooted in a specific city as for instance Rankin's Rebus novel series is relegated only to occasional journal articles.[38]

The most thoroughly researched area of Scottish urban writing is the Glasgow Novel, a label introduced by Moira Burgess for the kind of 'novel which is set wholly or substantially in Glasgow (or in a quasi-fictional city readily recognisable as Glasgow) or which, though perhaps containing only a short Glasgow section, conveys a genuine picture of the life, character or atmosphere of the city'.[39] Burgess pioneered the study of the Glasgow Novel in her master's thesis submitted in 1971 and published a year later; since then, her work has been expanded for its current third edition published under the title *The Glasgow Novel: A Complete Guide* in 1999. While it contains a short survey of major themes and tendencies in the development of the Glasgow Novel, the core of the book rests in an annotated bibliography aiming to provide a complete list of all relevant novels from the earliest period up to the time of the book's publication. A companion piece to Burgess's bibliography is *Imagine a City: Glasgow in Fiction* (1998) by the same author, an extensive critical monograph examining novels 'not "about" Glasgow, but about Glasgow people' with the aim of revealing 'the interaction between place and people' which underlies as 'a dynamic force throughout'.[40]

Douglas Gifford, author of the foreword to *Imagine a City* as well as author and editor of several major general histories of Scottish literature, penned his own study of the Glasgow Novel in *The Dear Green Place? The Novel in the West of Scotland* (1985), an essay published in book form.[41] Owing to the very briefness of this account, Gifford's work has limited impact. No further published research of significance either on the Glasgow Novel or any other facet of Scottish urban fiction

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[38] See, for example, Sylvia Bryce-Wunder, 'Of Hard Men and Hairies: *No Mean City* and Modern Scottish Urban Fiction', *Scottish Studies Review* 4, no. 1 (2003): 112–25; Alison McCleery, 'So Many Glasgows: From "Personality of Place" to "Positionality in Space in Time"', *Scottish Geographical Journal* 120, nos. 1–2 (2004): 3–18; Stefani Sloma, 'The City as Character: Edinburgh in the Works of Ian Rankin', *Researcher* 25, no. 2 (2012): 53–91.

[39] Moira Burgess, *The Glasgow Novel*, 3rd ed. (Hamilton / Glasgow: Scottish Library Association / Glasgow City Council Cultural and Leisure Services, 1999), 7.

[40] Moira Burgess, *Imagine a City: Glasgow in Fiction* (Glendaruel: Argyll, 1998), 13.

[41] See Douglas Gifford, *The Dear Green Place? The Novel in the West of Scotland* (Glasgow: Third Eye Centre, 1985).

seems to exist. The Glasgow Novel does not have a literary match in other cities across Scotland, not even the Edinburgh novel constitutes a legitimate critical label, despite a substantial body of fiction that is set in the capital city and builds on its peculiarities. The relationship between Edinburgh and Glasgow however thrives on the cities' rivalry, captured by the poet and critic Robert Crawford in his groundbreaking cultural geography *On Glasgow and Edinburgh* (2013), which contains numerous references to literature.[42]

Within the broader framework of British literature, isolated studies of Scottish urban fiction can be found in monographs on the subjects of regional and working-class writing. In the volume *The Regional Novel in Britain and Ireland, 1800–1990* (1998), edited by K. D. M. Snell, Cairns Craig observes that 'simply by virtue of *being* Scottish, almost all Scottish novels will be identified as regional within the tradition of the *English* novel' and furthermore, that '"Scottishness" has been identified primarily with lower-class or working-class Scots', which explains the common inclusion of Scottish urban writing in works focusing on region and class.[43] The editor of this book, Snell, also compiled *The Bibliography of Regional Fiction in Britain and Ireland, 1800–2000* (2002), which, unlike Burgess's bibliography, is not annotated and so serves ultimately for reference only.[44]

At the intersection of Irish and British/Scottish literary studies stands Mary M. McGlynn's *Narratives of Class in New Irish and Scottish Literature: From Joyce to Kelman, Doyle, Galloway, and McNamee* (2008), whose chapters on the Scotsmen James Kelman and Janice Galloway provide a complex treatment of class-related issues, including the use of language and the role of women in the Scottish society.[45] More pertinent to the topic of urban space, Ian Haywood's *Working-Class Fiction: From Chartism to 'Trainspotting'* (1997) records major events in the history of the working class and illustrates them by analyses of novels

[42] See Robert Crawford, *On Glasgow and Edinburgh* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 2013).

[43] Cairns Craig, 'Scotland and the Regional Novel', in *The Regional Novel in Britain and Ireland, 1800–1990,* ed. K. D. M. Snell (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 221. Italics in the original.

[44] See K. D. M. Snell, *The Bibliography of Regional Fiction in Britain and Ireland, 1800–2000* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2002).

[45] See Mary M. McGlynn, *Narratives of Class in New Irish and Scottish Literature: From Joyce to Kelman, Doyle, Galloway, and McNamee* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008).

by Lewis Grassic Gibbon, James Barke, Raymond Williams and others.[46] Finally, the editors of *British Industrial Fictions* (2000), H. Gustav Klaus and Stephen Knight, collect critical treatments of the Glasgow Novel reaching from the Clydeside shipbuilding industry in the 1930s to the post-industrial fictions of Irvine Welsh, James Kelman and Ian Rankin in the 1980s and beyond.[47]

[46] See Ian Haywood, *Working-Class Fiction: From Chartism to 'Trainspotting'* (Plymouth: Northcote House, 1997).

[47] See H. Gustav Klaus, 'The Shipbuilders' Story', in *British Industrial Fictions*, ed. H. Gustav Klaus and Stephen Knight (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2000), 54–70; Ian A. Bell, '"Work as if you live in the early days of a better nation": Scottish Fiction and the Experience of Industry', in *British Industrial Fictions*, ed. H. Gustav Klaus and Stephen Knight (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2000), 181–92.

3 Dialogic Imaginings

3.1 City and Country

> Thus the town—urban space—has a symbiotic relationship with that rural space over which (if often with much difficulty) it holds sway.
>
> —Henri Lefebvre[48]

The relationship between the city and the country, like the relationship between society and space, cannot be reduced to binary oppositions, even though associations polarising the city and the country took root in popular imagination. In his influential exploration of the subject, *The Country and the City* (1973), Raymond Williams describes characteristics attached to the country as those of 'a natural way of life: of peace, innocence, and simple virtue' in opposition to the city as 'an achieved centre: of learning, communication, light'. Williams lists also negative qualities attributed to 'the country as a place of backwardness, ignorance, limitation' and to 'the city as a place of noise, worldliness and ambition'.[49] Dismissing the idea of the city and the country as a simple antithesis, Williams acknowledges 'the interlocking exploitation' manifested in the economic relationship of the two but identifies the country as the losing side when he concludes that in the last analysis, 'there is what can be seen as a factual exploitation of the country as a whole by the city as a whole'.[50] Out of the novelists chosen for this study, those who portray both the city and the country concur with Williams:

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[48] Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith (Malden: Blackwell, 1991), 234–35.

[49] Raymond Williams, *The Country and the City* (Nottingham: Spokesman, 2011), 1.

[50] Williams, *The Country and the City*, 51.

Lewis Grassic Gibbon in his trilogy *A Scots Quair* (1932–34) and marginally also Gordon M. Williams in his novel *From Scenes like These* (1968), while regarding the process of urbanisation and industrialisation as inevitable, observe this transformation with a pervasive air of wistful sadness.

Raymond Williams points out the inadequacy of 'most description and analysis, [where] culture and society are expressed in an habitual past tense', so that 'relationships, institutions and formations in which we are still actively involved are converted . . . into formed wholes rather than forming and formative processes'.[51] Williams then seeks to pinpoint and bring to the foreground the 'particular kind of reaction to the fact of change', for which he proposes the term 'structure of feeling'.[52] Such structures of feeling, representing a shift away from the broadly social towards the closely personal experience, most readily occur in novels following the protagonist's journey from the country to the city, in the best case combined with the protagonist's coming of age. In fiction set squarely in the country, there is little hope for a portrayal of significant structures of feeling because, as Alison McCleery argues, 'in rural novels the emphasis is on the horizontal—a slice of tradition in time; in urban novels the emphasis is on the vertical—vectors of transition through time and space'.[53] Williams notes another major distinction in the nature of the country versus the city novel. 'Most novels are in some sense knowable communities,' he contends. 'The novelist offers to show people and their relationships in essentially knowable and communicable ways.' In this respect, the country novel views community as 'essentially transparent', whereas the city novel as 'essentially opaque'.[54] One reason for this difference is obviously practical: the inhabitants of any city are too numerous to form a coherent community, less so a community to be encompassed by the novelist. Another reason, a less tangible one, lies in the fluidity and hence opaqueness of the structures of feeling inherent in what seems to be a typically mutable nature of the city novel.

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[51] Raymond Williams, *Marxism and Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 128.

[52] Williams, *The Country and the City*, 35.

[53] Alison McCleery, 'So Many Glasgows: From "Personality of Place" to "Positionality in Space and Time"', *Scottish Geographical Journal* 120, nos. 1–2 (2004): 10.

[54] Williams, *The Country and the City*, 165.

3.1.1 From the Country to the City and Back: Lewis Grassic Gibbon's Structures of Feeling

> Why did folk waste their time in touns, in filth and stour and looking at shadows when they might have slipped away up the Howe and smelt the smell of the harvest—oh! bonny lying somewhere on a night like this!
>
> —Lewis Grassic Gibbon[55]

Lewis Grassic Gibbon's *A Scots Quair* (1932–34) epitomises the concept of structures of feeling in that its three books consciously map the transition from the way of life of rural crofters to that of labourers in an industrial city. The novel is set in the Mearns, starting with the tightly-knit crofting community of Kinraddie in *Sunset Song* (1932), moving to the small town of Segget in *Cloud Howe* (1933) and ending in the restless city of Duncairn in *Grey Granite* (1934). The setting of Grassic Gibbon's trilogy draws on the area of and around the author's native village, Arbuthnott, while the fictional city of Duncairn appears to be modelled on Aberdeen.[56] The geography of the novels is as specific as it is universal: covering the period from before World War I to the early 1930s, the books document the disappearance of the self-sufficient farming lifestyle, show a land torn by the war and trace escalating social problems culminating in hunger marches.

The female protagonist, Chris, who serves as the unifying element of the trilogy, and from whose point of view the story is seen, undergoes radical changes that correspond to her changing environment. *Sunset Song* begins as a growing-up novel, with young Chris just finishing school, considering the idea of becoming a teacher and reaching maturity at the point when her father dies and she decides to stay working on her inherited farm rather than leave to pursue higher education.

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[55] Lewis Grassic Gibbon, *Grey Granite*, in *A Scots Quair: Sunset Song, Cloud Howe, Grey Granite*, ed. Ian Campbell (1934; Edinburgh: Polygon, 2006), 564.

[56] See Ian Campbell, introduction to *A Scots Quair: Sunset Song, Cloud Howe, Grey Granite*, by Lewis Grassic Gibbon, ed. Ian Campbell (Edinburgh: Polygon, 2006), xxx.

The first part of the trilogy concludes with the death of Chris's husband in the war and leads to her second marriage and move from the farm to a mansion in the town in *Cloud Howe*. The second book of the trilogy closes conveniently with Chris's second husband's death and ushers the protagonist to her new role as a boarding-house keeper in the city in *Grey Granite*.

The shifts in Chris's circumstances and surroundings epitomise the structures of feeling as defined by Williams, who comments on *A Scots Quair* in *The Country and the City*, noticing that in Chris's 'move to borough and city the spiritual inheritance is seen as surviving, in the radically altered conditions. . . . The spiritual feeling for the land and for labour . . . is made available and is stressed in the new struggles'.[57] Chris adapts to the changes around her in order to survive and firmly believes that so will her land, a motif that recurs throughout the trilogy. 'Scotland lived, she could never die, the land would outlast them all,' Chris insists in response to her brother's dismissal of the country after the end of the war, when he tells the shocked Chris about Scotland that '*it's dead or it's dying—and a damned good job!*'[58] Chris is linked to her homeland to the point of being identified with it, most directly by her second husband, who addresses her as '*Oh Chris Caledonia, I've married a nation!*'[59] The ending of the trilogy, despite its ambiguity, depicts Chris becoming one with the land. A middle-aged woman, drifted apart from her son and estranged from her third husband, Chris comes to a full circle when she leaves Duncairn and rents the farm where she grew up. The last sentences of *Grey Granite* picture Chris resting after a walk and taking in the view of her beloved country: 'Time she went home herself. But she still sat on as one by one the lights went out and the rain came, beating the stones about her, and falling all that night while she still sat there, presently *feeling no longer the touch of the rain or hearing the sound of the lapwings* going by.'[60] Chris no longer feels the rain or hears the birds, she has achieved a moment of transcendence—possibly a

[57] Raymond Williams, *The Country and the City* (Nottingham: Spokesman, 2011), 270.

[58] Lewis Grassic Gibbon, *Sunset Song*, in *A Scots Quair: Sunset Song, Cloud Howe, Grey Granite*, ed. Ian Campbell (1932; Edinburgh: Polygon, 2006), 214. Italics in the original.

[59] Lewis Grassic Gibbon, *Cloud Howe*, in *A Scots Quair: Sunset Song, Cloud Howe, Grey Granite*, ed. Ian Campbell (1933; Edinburgh: Polygon, 2006), 401. Italics in the original.

[60] Grassic Gibbon, *Grey Granite*, 672. Italics added.

transcendence in death, after which her body will mingle with the soil and literally become identical with the land.

The very structure of Gibbon's carefully built trilogy invites interpretation in terms of multiple simultaneous structures of feeling which find their artistic expression not only in the protagonist's journey from the country to the city and back but also in the developments of some minor characters. Thomas Crawford notices how the division of *Cloud Howe* into four parts named for 'increasingly sombre cloud formations—cirrus, cumulus, stratus, nimbus'—reinforces the darkening nature of Chris's second husband.[61] Chris's second husband, Reverend Robert Colquhoun, struggles with increasing difficulty with the disappearing interest in and prestige of the church and eventually dies at the pulpit after delivering his last powerful sermon. The four sections of *Grey Granite*, Crawford continues, 'bear the names of minerals arranged in ascending order of hardness and purity—epidote, sphene, apatite, zircon'—qualities which indicate the gradual hardening of Chris's son Ewan as he becomes involved in communist political activities.[62] Chris's pantheism in *Sunset Song*, and not the institutionalised religion in *Cloud Howe* or the political programme in *Grey Granite*, remains the most convincing of the worldviews provided. Nevertheless, as Margery Palmer McCulloch hastens to add, 'there are no lasting ideological positives . . . All political parties are found wanting, including nationalists and socialists; religion is again seen as providing no answers to earthly problems.'[63] Grassic Gibbon does not presume to provide answers, instead, he concentrates on capturing the various evolving structures of feelings that present themselves as material for his panoramic trilogy.

Appropriately for the first book of the trilogy, *Sunset Song* puts emphasis on an underlying sense of history, tradition and continuity. It opens with a prelude, 'The Unfurrowed Field', which recounts the history of the Mearns from the period of Norman Conquest to the year 1911. The Kinraddie estate, where Chris's croft is

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[61] Thomas Crawford, 'The View from the North: Region and Nation in *The Silver Darlings* and *A Scots Quair*', in *The Literature of Region and Nation*, ed. R. P. Draper (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1989), 117.

[62] Crawford, 'The View from the North', 117–18.

[63] Margery Palmer McCulloch, *Scottish Modernism and Its Contexts, 1918–1959: Literature, National Identity and Cultural Exchange* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009), 139.

located, is characterised as 'the Scots countryside itself, fathered between a kailyard and a bonny brier bush in the lee of a house with green shutters'.[64] The thinly veiled allusions in this sentence refer to the parochial kailyard school of writing, which produced sentimental fictions of idealised Scottish country life; to Ian Maclaren's *Beside the Bonnie Brier Bush* (1894), a once popular kailyard novel that typifies the genre; and to George Douglas Brown's *The House with the Green Shutters* (1901), a naturalistic novel reacting against the kailyard tradition by drawing a raw picture of rural decay and corruption, physical as much as moral. Grassic Gibbon's introductory description of Kinraddie prefigures his realistic approach in the trilogy to representing rural Scotland, which avoids the excesses of both kailyard and anti-kailyard.

The sense of a continuing tradition in *Sunset Song* is established by a seamless interweaving into the plot of local myth, oral storytelling, community rites and festivities and by the circular structure of the book based on the natural seasons of a farmer's year, from 'Ploughing', to 'Drilling', 'Seed-Time' and 'Harvest'. In *Sunset Song*, Chris seeks tranquillity and strength at the site of Kinraddie's standing stones, which serve as a link between the past and the present, as well as between nature and man, and symbolise the power of history and tradition. The ending of the novel details the unveiling of a memorial to local men killed in the Great War: the names of the dead are engraved in a standing stone, where the very act of carving the stone, which necessitates the use of force, reflects the violation of and the permanent damage to the landscape and the people caused by the war.

In lieu of the standing stones in *Sunset Song*, in *Cloud Howe* Chris turns in search of solace to the ruins of a castle on a slope above the borough of Segget where she finds her new home. Not only does the medieval castle date to a more recent history than the ancient standing stones, also the fact that the building is in ruins suggests a growing disconnection from the past. While *Sunset Song* encompasses a knowable community which remains coherent despite occasional disputes, the characters in *Cloud Howe* stand as isolated individuals who share too little to come together and their differences create the impression of enmity instead of community. Similarly to the war memorial that utilises the standing stones, in *Cloud Howe* there is a strongly symbolic instance of human activities scarring the

[64] Grassic Gibbon, *Sunset Song*, 32.

face of the landscape. A tract of land is sold to two different owners, who mark their property with fences that split a hill into two halves and destroy a historical landmark on the way:

> As they climbed in view Chris saw two lines of fencing climbing each slope of the hill, new-driven and stapled, the fences, they met and joined and ended up on the crest. But before that meeting and joining they plunged through the circles of the ancient camp that had been, the turf and the stones had been flung aside, Robert told her that the hill had been recently sold and the lands on either side as well, and two different landowners bought the hill and set up those fences to show their rights—what were dirt like the old heathen forts to them?[65]

Geographical division occurs alongside with and reinforces the social division absent in *Sunset Song* and introduced as a major motif in *Cloud Howe*.

Segget, the setting of *Cloud Howe*, consists of Old Town and New Town, the former a slummy area occupied by spinners labouring at the Segget Mills, the latter a respectable middle-class neighbourhood. The church and the minister's mansion are located at the outskirts of the town, physically separating the reverend from his congregation and underlining his peculiar status, springing from his profession that sets him above and apart from the rest of the society. Corresponding to her spatial position with respect to the town, Chris is regarded by the inhabitants of Segget as detached and aloof. Although she is resented by some as a social climber, her role as the minister's wife protects her from open ostracism. Lacking such advantage, the spinners of Segget are physically as well as socially segregated and become a target of unabashed hostility. When Chris wonders at their impoverished dwellings, mistaking them for 'abandoned byres or pig-styes', she learns from a local that the slums are '*good enough for the dirt that's in them. If you gave good houses to rubbish like them, they'd have them pig-rees in a damn short while. They're not Segget folk, the spinners, at all.*'[66] The spinners are 'not

[65] Grassic Gibbon, *Cloud Howe*, 404–5.

[66] Grassic Gibbon, *Cloud Howe*, 297. Italics in the original.

Segget folk', they are the other, newcomers who only arrived to the town to fill vacancies at the newly set up mills, intruders whose poverty disturbs the moderate affluence and complacency of settled citizens.

Grassic Gibbon establishes a sense of place by evoking not only the sight, but also smell and sound of a particular setting. Chris's first husband, Ewan, is shot as a deserter in France when he recalls the Blawearie croft and the wife that he lost and walks away in an irrational attempt to reach home. Before he is executed, he tries to explain to his fellow Kinraddie native and soldier Chae: '*It was that wind that came with the sun, I minded Blawearie, I seemed to waken up smelling that smell. . . . Mind the smell of dung in the parks on an April morning, Chae? And the peewits over the rigs? Bonny they're flying this night in Kinraddie, and Chris sleeping there.*'[67] The song of the peewits recurs as a motif throughout the trilogy with associations of home, it is also the last sound that Chris hears in the earlier quoted concluding sentence of *Grey Granite*, where peewits are referred to by the synonymous word 'lapwings'. In *Cloud Howe*, instead of with the peewit song, Chris rises in the morning with 'a screech like a hungered beast in pain' which is emitted from the hooters summoning workers to the Segget Mills.[68] Another unnatural noise wakes Chris in *Grey Granite*, where 'at half-past five the clock would go *birr!* . . . no cheep of birds here on Windmill Brae, clatter of the clock as it started again with a hoast and a rasp'.[69]

The lack of peewits in the city is symptomatic of larger absences and may be extended to the very absence of life. In *Grey Granite*, Chris is the first to get up in her boarding house which feels as 'the morning's morgue' and prepares breakfast in a kitchen with 'cold prison walls'.[70] To get her groceries, she walks 'across the Meal Market where they didn't sell meat, sold nothing, old, a deserted patch, dogs and unemployed squatting in the sun', a desolate cityscape conveying a lack of purpose, lack of jobs, lack of life.[71] Grassic Gibbon perceives the country as a source of strength, communality and regeneration, whereas the city as a site of despair, isolation and death. The idea of absence is developed in *A Scots Quair* on

[67] Grassic Gibbon, *Sunset Song*, 243–35. Italics in the original.

[68] Grassic Gibbon, *Cloud Howe*, 299.

[69] Grassic Gibbon, *Grey Granite*, 490–91. Italics in the original.

[70] Grassic Gibbon, *Grey Granite*, 490.

[71] Grassic Gibbon, *Grey Granite*, 507.

several levels, including the use of a shifting narrative voice. Cairns Craig argues that the trilogy's 'explicit theme may be the destruction of the peasantry and the development of an industrial society, but it is dramatized as the loss and recovery of a communal voice'.[72] *Sunset Song* characteristically employs the second person pronoun 'you' to speak on behalf of the community, a device which, as Craig notices, is severely limited in *Cloud Howe* and re-established in *Grey Granite* to give expression to the consciousness of the unemployed united in a hunger march.

Grey Granite brings to the fore Chris's son Ewan, whose devotion to the communist cause echoes his parents' passion for the land both in its intensity and lack of specific direction. Ian Bell observes that Grassic Gibbon's 'rhetoric is always inspirational rather than detailed or programmatic' and that his 'fiction gives great space to the intuitive, to the voice of feeling, to irrational impulses and commitments which cannot fully be articulated'.[73] The last part of Grassic Gibbon's trilogy thus hardly qualifies as a piece of tendency writing: the hunger march is dispersed, Ewan is arrested and beaten by the police and instead of hopeful prospects for the future, the novel ends with a nostalgic withdrawal into the past found in the countryside of Chris's childhood.

3.1.2 The Country under Siege: Gordon M. Williams's *From Scenes like These*

From scenes like these old Scotia's grandeur springs,
That makes her lov'd at home, rever'd abroad;
Princes and Lords are but the breath of kings,
'An honest man's the noblest work of God'.

—Robert Burns[74]

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[72] Cairns Craig, 'Scotland and the Regional Novel', in *The Regional Novel in Britain and Ireland, 1800–1990*, ed. K. D. M. Snell (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 237.

[73] Ian A. Bell, 'Lewis Grassic Gibbon's Revolutionary Romanticism', in *Studies in Scottish Fiction: Twentieth Century*, ed. Joachim Schwend and Horst W. Drescher (Frankfurt: Lang, 1990), 258, 264.

[74] Robert Burns, 'The Cotter's Saturday Night', qtd. in Gordon M. Williams, *From Scenes like These*, in *Growing Up in the West*, by Edwin Muir, J. F. Hendry, Gordon M. Williams, and Tom Gallacher (Edinburgh: Canongate, 2003), 317.

Where Lewis Grassic Gibbon in *Sunset Song* consciously turns against the sentimental kailyard tradition in his description of the Kinraddie estate, Gordon M. Williams in *From Scenes like These* (1968) wryly mocks the romantic heritage of Robert Burns by his choice of the novel's title and epigraph. 'From scenes like these old Scotia's grandeur springs' is a line from Burns's pastoral poem 'The Cotter's Saturday Night', which praises the impeccable virtue, piety and morality of a poor peasant's family sitting down to a simple meal and reading from the Bible.[75] The last three stanzas of Burns's strongly idealised didactic poem serve as the novel's epigraph and stand in stark contrast to Williams's brutally unsentimental depiction of rural and urban life alike. Later in the novel, Williams also alludes to Burns's well-known poem, 'To a Mouse', whose speaker inadvertently overturns a mouse's nest while ploughing and is struck by sorrow and sympathy for the 'wee, sleekit, cowerin', tim'rous beastie'.[76] Williams subverts Burns's deeply humane poem in his own crude version of the encounter of a ploughman with a mouse: 'A mouse ran under the swathe, his eye catching the dark movement, his heel on it almost without breaking stride, a second downward hack crushing it. Dark blood mixed with earth. Why did I do that? Because you always killed mice, or rats, or rabbits. Wee sleekit cowrin timorous vermin.'[77] Williams makes it clear throughout his book that there is no place for sentiment when coping with the harsh realities of farming life.

From Scenes like These is a growing-up novel focusing on a teenage protagonist, Dunky Logan, who develops, or perhaps regresses, from a clever and perceptive boy into a deliberately dull, violent and heavy-drinking hard man. Impatient with learning and eager to start earning wages, Dunky quits school and finds a job at a farm, out of convenience rather than out of love for the land. While Grassic Gibbon's *Sunset Song* emphasises a transcendental bond with the land as the reason for Chris's choice of farming over studying, Williams's *From Scenes like These* speaks of utility: the farm owner hires Dunky to replace a dismissed adult

[75] Robert Burns, 'The Cotter's Saturday Night', in *Poems and Songs* (London: Bell and Daldy, 1858), 8.

[76] Robert Burns, 'To a Mouse', in *Poems and Songs* (London: Bell and Daldy, 1858), 23.

[77] Gordon M. Williams, *From Scenes like These*, in *Growing Up in the West*, by Edwin Muir, J. F. Hendry, Gordon M. Williams, and Tom Gallacher (Edinburgh: Canongate, 2003), 489.

labourer because the inexperienced youth will cost him less on wages. In *Sunset Song*, Chris's mother teaches her that '*there are better things than your books or studies or loving or bedding, there's the countryside your own, you its, in the days when you're neither bairn nor woman.*'[78] Contrasting to this lyrical passage is Dunky's vague appreciation of the outward impression that he makes with his new job which brings him closer to the coveted social status of a 'hard case, a real working man, not a silly schoolboy'.[79] Biking to work on a frosty morning, Dunky observes: 'At that time in the early morning the sloping streets of the Darroch scheme were almost empty. Men who worked in factories and engineering shops were only thinking about getting up. It made him feel tough and hard being a farmworker who had to be yoked by the time other men were only crawling out of their beds.'[80] Comparing *Sunset Song* and *From Scenes like These* in terms of realistic representation, Isobel Murray and Bob Tait conclude that 'Gibbon presented the work of the croft with anti-kailyard vividness and realism for his time, and was not afraid to underline the hardness of the life or the smells of the farmyard, but there is no scene in *Sunset Song* that is preoccupied with work and the hardness of physical labour to anything like the degree of the first or the twelfth chapter of this [Williams's] novel.'[81]

Williams contrives to poise his novel between the city and the country by locating the protagonist's home in a housing scheme at the urban periphery of Kilcaddie and sending him to work at an adjoining farm. The city and the country do not coexist peacefully here, on the contrary, the industrial sprawl encroaches on the farming land and gradually begins to subsume it. Influenced by his childhood experience of World War II, Dunky translates conflicts in his surroundings into the language of warfare: 'Dunky liked to imagine the farm was under siege, what with the burgh housing advancing up the hill towards the railway line and the new school taking up half the field on the other side of the embankment and talk of an annexe to the school to be built on the rest of the railway field, not to mention the factory

[78] Lewis Grassic Gibbon, *Sunset Song*, in *A Scots Quair: Sunset Song, Cloud Howe, Grey Granite*, ed. Ian Campbell (1932; Edinburgh: Polygon, 2006), 37. Italics in the original.

[79] Williams, *From Scenes like These*, 324.

[80] Williams, *From Scenes like These*, 319.

[81] Isobel Murray and Bob Tait, *Ten Modern Scottish Novels* (Aberdeen: Aberdeen University Press, 1984), 124.

going full blast on the west side of the farm; and there was talk that it would need to expand.'[82] Curiously, Dunky associates the war with having 'a good time in the air-raid shelter', where families used to 'spend the night drinking cocoa out of flasks, listening to the crump-crump of the big bombs and the lighter bangs of the ack-ack and the droning of the planes'.[83] In retrospect, Dunky thinks that he enjoyed staying in the air-raid shelter because it provided a welcome escape from the crammed two-room council flat occupied by his four-member family, with 'no room to move, no place you could hide away on your own'.[84]

Dunky recognises industrialisation as a struggle for space, a war between the city and the country in which the country is the losing side. There is a symbolic resonance in the connection that Dunky finds between the factory hooter and air-raid sirens: the factory emitted 'a deep, hooting wail which was exactly like the sirens in the war', thus anticipating that the industrial expansion will mark the landscape in ways comparable to shell bombing.[85] The farm where Dunky works is run by its ageing owner, Auld Craig, whose son Willie is looking to inherit the estate. As the novel progresses, however, the acreage as yet unclaimed by new industries is shrinking and bringing the farm to the brink of sustainability. Willie witnessed the conversion of a field into a site for a factory construction before, and this is how he describes the process:

> First they carted away the topsoil. For a year or so they'd drive in lorry-loads of rubbish from the Corporation destructor, tipping it on to the fields, bulldozing it flat, the dirty rubbish from the town, ash and cans and muck. They'd bulldoze the hedges. While the coup was being laid the sky would be dark with crows and seagulls. Packs of rats would swarm over the rubbish. The fields round about would be covered in dust and the roads littered with papers and cans and cardboard boxes off the lorries. Combustible waste would smoulder under the surface, its dirty, stinking smoke reeking the whole

[82] Williams, *From Scenes like These*, 324.

[83] Williams, *From Scenes like These*, 381, 349.

[84] Williams, *From Scenes like These*, 381.

[85] Williams, *From Scenes like These*, 349.

> countryside. The whole place would become an eyesore. Then one day they'd have levelled it up to their requirements and they'd begin to lay the foundations for the factories. And in two or three years you'd never even know that land had once been a farm.[86]

The requirements of industry transform soil that supported people into a wasteland that feeds scavengers and infects its surroundings. In Williams's bleak novel, the urban exploits the rural to the point of exterminating it.

3.2 Centre and Periphery

> What is socially peripheral is often symbolically central.
>
> —Peter Stallybrass and Allon White[87]

In order to promote one space as central and demote another space as peripheral, a relational framework from which to observe and identify these spaces must be established. There is no neutral vantage point, and the perspective to be assumed will most likely reflect the views of the hegemonic class. Terry Eagleton argues to this effect that 'in the last analysis, the dominant ideas of a society are the ideas of its ruling class'.[88] David Harvey concurs with Eagleton's proposition and illustrates how the ideas of the dominant class are integrated in the language of geography, for instance in the use of the labels Middle East and Far East, which derive from the standpoint of the imperial centre in London.[89] Harvey proceeds to explain how space under capitalism can be utilised to 'surmount crises of overaccumulation of

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[86] Williams, *From Scenes like These*, 471–72.

[87] Peter Stallybrass and Allon White, *The Politics and Poetics of Transgression* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1986), 149.

[88] Terry Eagleton, *Marxism and Literary Criticism* (London: Routledge, 2002), 5.

[89] See David Harvey, *Justice, Nature and the Geography of Difference* (Malden: Blackwell, 2004), 265.

capital . . . through geographical expansion' or 'through technological and organizational shifts' which radically reshape space relations.[90] A wide-spread manifestation of the latter is the process of deindustrialisation, which involves abandoning, demolishing or repurposing disused places.

The capitalist mode of production, characterised as it is by an uneven distribution of capital, fosters the production of uneven geographies, including the distinction between the prestigious centre and the undesirable periphery. In keeping with this line of thought, Edward W. Soja summarises 'that capitalism—or if one prefers, the normal activity of profit-seeking capitalists—intrinsically builds upon regional or spatial inequalities as a necessary means for its continued survival'.[91] Any society continuously shapes natural space to produce social space which in turn goes on to impact on the society, and if the society happens to be a capitalist one, space is exploited as a means of production. Some spaces tend to be more profitable than others, hence more attractive to the class that owns the means of production, and so these spaces become central, while the other spaces remain peripheral. What is central from the position of the dominant class may be peripheral from the perspective of the subordinated class and vice versa. Furthermore, the centre in political geography does not necessarily overlap with the centre in natural, descriptive geography. Harvey notices the evolving spatial pattern in the post-industrial Anglo-Saxon world characterised by 'a dissolution of that simple "doughnut" urban form of inner-city decay surrounded by suburban affluence (made so much of in the late 1960s), and its replacement by a complex checkerboard of segregated and protected wealth in an urban soup of equally segregated impoverishment and decay'.[92]

Writing in the mid-1990s, Harvey remarks that 'the unjustly famous "outer estates" of Glasgow are interspersed with affluent commuter suburbs', which is however not what Janice Galloway focuses on in her first novel, *The Trick Is to Keep Breathing* (1989).[93] Set in a fictional housing scheme at Glasgow's periphery, the novel shows the day-to-day struggle with a lack of transport and amenities on

[90] Harvey, *Justice, Nature and the Geography of Difference*, 295.

[91] Edward W. Soja, *Postmodern Geographies: The Reassertion of Space in Critical Social Theory* (London: Verso, 1989), 107.

[92] Harvey, *Justice, Nature and the Geography of Difference*, 405.

[93] Harvey, *Justice, Nature and the Geography of Difference*, 405.

an estate occupied by undesirables, where the exclusion is spatial as much as social. An even more heavily marked division between the central and the peripheral appears in Irvine Welsh's *Trainspotting* (1993), which pits against each other Edinburgh's touristy Old Town and the then disreputable Leith district at the outskirts of the city. Welsh's novel describes aspects of the use of space for tourism, in other words, the commodification of space and its marketing for consumption. Certeau regards consumption in a capitalist economy as '*another* production', one which 'does not manifest itself through its own products, but rather through its *ways of using* the products imposed by a dominant economic order'.[94] Edinburgh's glamorous city centre as portrayed in *Trainspotting* is a site designated for consumption, in contrast to Leith docks, where production happens in the form of actual tasks performed and commodities produced. This corresponds to Lefebvre's categorisation of capitalist space into 'regions exploited for the purpose of and by means of *production* (of consumer goods), and regions exploited for the purpose of and by means of the *consumption of space*'.[95] In the model situation offered by Welsh, Leith qualifies as an example of the former kind of region and Edinburgh's Old Town as an example of the latter.

3.2.1 In the Middle of Nowhere: Janice Galloway's *The Trick Is to Keep Breathing*

> Boot Hill is full of tiny, twisty roads, wild currant bushes to represent the great outdoors, pubs with plastic beer glasses and kids. The twisty roads are there to prevent the kids being run over. The roads are meant to make drivers slow down so they get the chance to see and stop in time. This is a dual misfunction. Hardly anyone has a car. If one does appear on the horizon, the kids use

[94] Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, trans. Steven F. Rendall (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), xii–xiii. Italics in the original.

[95] Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith (Malden: Blackwell, 1991), 353. Italics in the original.

> the bends to play chicken, deliberately lying low and leaping out at the last minute for fun.
>
> —Janice Galloway[96]

Joy Stone, the protagonist of Janice Galloway's *The Trick Is to Keep Breathing* (1989), lives in a council flat in what she declares to be 'an annexe of nowhere'.[97] She works as a teacher at a school 'in the middle of nowhere', and her commute, which requires more than an hour, involves walking, taking a bus and sharing a car ride.[98] By her own implication, Joy exists in a 'non-place', a label suggested by Marc Augé for 'the fleeting, the temporary and ephemeral', an abstraction of space so mutable that it resists physical containment.[99] Augé applies the term particularly to spaces of transition, from motorways to air corridors, and to spaces of consumption, from supermarkets to shopping malls. Joy seems to be constantly on the move, not for the enjoyment of travel, but in order to get to work, do her shopping or run her errands. She strives to assert her own space, yet she finds herself geographically as well as socially marginalised.

The physical place that Joy occupies epitomises her condition. Bourtreehill, dubbed Boot Hill by its inhabitants, 'is a new estate well outside the town it claims to be part of. There was a rumour when they started building the place that it was meant for undesirables: difficult tenants from other places, shunters, overspill from Glasgow. That's why it's so far away from everything.'[100] Joy is dismissed by urban planners as the city's overspill, she is the undesirable, the redundant. Her standing with the rest of the society is equally precarious. Throughout the novel, Joy struggles to come to terms with the death of her married lover, Michael Fisher, by drowning, which trigged in her the onset of depression accompanied by an eating disorder. Although Joy furtively attends Michael's funeral, she is not allowed to

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[96] Janice Galloway, *The Trick Is to Keep Breathing* (1989; London: Vintage, 1999), 13.

[97] Galloway, *The Trick Is to Keep Breathing*, 37.

[98] Galloway, *The Trick Is to Keep Breathing*, 72.

[99] Marc Augé, *Non-places: Introduction to an Anthropology of Supermodernity*, trans. John Howe (London: Verso, 1995), 78.

[100] Galloway, *The Trick Is to Keep Breathing*, 13.

openly mourn him because his widow and children are present at the ceremony as the nearest of kin and there is no legitimate place for Joy to assume. Furthermore, Joy stays in a flat allocated to Michael and is threatened with expulsion as in legal terms, she has no relation to the deceased. After Michael's death, Joy's dwelling place becomes unstable and unsafe, and so does Joy's very body, which gets increasingly marked by her anorexia/bulimia and her inclination to self-harm. Regarding the neatly interwoven structure of *The Trick Is to Keep Breathing*, Mary M. McGlynn concludes that Galloway powerfully illustrates in her 'threatened spaces, from the female body to remote housing estates . . . how socioeconomic class can place restrictions on a woman's access to and use of space, assiduously linking homes, council housing, cities, nation, and body in her protagonists' struggles'.[101]

Where Gordon M. Williams's *From Scenes like These* (1968) documents the appropriation of rural space by the expanding industrial areas, Galloway's *The Trick Is to Keep Breathing* describes the opposite process, that of the natural space reclaiming man-made spaces. Joy used to live with Michael in a cottage with a view of a bus stop, an easily accessible mobility which Joy appreciated. The cottage however suffered from problems with dry rot: 'The house was being eaten from the inside by this thing. The spores could pass through concrete and plaster and multiplied by the thousand thousand as we slept. They could take over the whole structure if they wanted.'[102] The couple leaves the disintegrating cottage for the council flat, but natural forces catch up with them, as the wind-beaten porch of the scheme house is always heaped with dead leaves and plagued with slaters, which Joy finds disheartening. Later in the novel, Joy seeks treatment as a voluntary inmate of a psychiatric ward and is confronted with another instance of wilderness enclosing on civilisation when she takes a walk on the hospital premises: 'The path stops abruptly behind the maintenance block. Off the track the ground is marshy. There is a slow suck on the soles, and worms of fluid between my toes. One-legged, I stumble, bump into a wall in the dark: a low, flat building with no windows.

[101] Mary M. McGlynn, *Narratives of Class in New Irish and Scottish Literature: From Joyce to Kelman, Doyle, Galloway, and McNamee* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 134–35.

[102] Galloway, *The Trick Is to Keep Breathing*, 65.

MORTUARY.'[103] Trivial in itself as the incident might be, Joy's momentary loss of control in the marshy terrain around a mortuary carries a larger symbolic resonance, suggesting the ominous power of nature to destroy man-made creations and take human lives.

Places that Joy feels most comfortable to move around all qualify as non-places in Augé's definition. Joy likes to spend time in supermarkets, but she uses these quintessential places of consumption in a subversive manner. Since she hardly eats and has no money to spare, she buys little, what she does is to stroll in the aisles and examine goods with the scrutiny of a serious buyer. As I have contended elsewhere, by refusing food, hence opting out of consumption of an elementary commodity, and yet frequenting places intended for consumption, Joy perversely resists the consumer behaviour enforced on her by glossy magazines and ubiquitous advertisements.[104] Galloway's description of supermarkets subtly satirises consumption culture, for instance, neon signs are presented as a guiding light illuminating the path to the treasures stacked on the shelves: 'TESCOs. Red neon all the way to the other end of the precinct, pointing the way to lights, rows of pretty boxes, pastels and primaries, tinsel colours; tins, sealed packets, silver polythene skins begging to be burst.'[105] Galloway deliberately confuses the cult of consumerism and religious worship. On a weekend outing, Joy passes a church on her way to the shops: 'The corner church just off the shops has a new sign. CHRCH THIS SUNDAY? WHAT'S MISSING IS U. I walk past the church fast wondering what sort of people that is supposed to attract. I head straight for Marks and Spencer.'[106] As on other days, though Joy allows the church a brief judgemental thought, the idea of going in does not even occur and she '[walks] past the church fast' to get to a department store. Shopping centres to Joy mean literal centres of life and light, while her home and workplace remain physically and emotionally peripheral to her.

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[103] Galloway, *The Trick Is to Keep Breathing*, 116. Emphasis in the original.

[104] See Markéta Gregorová, 'Towards a Heteroglot Discourse: Representing Nonstandard Dialects in the Scottish Novel', in *Facets of Scottish Identity*, ed. Izabela Szymańska and Aniela Korzeniowska (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo Naukowe Semper, 2013), 207.

[105] Galloway, *The Trick Is to Keep Breathing*, 24. Emphasis in the original.

[106] Galloway, *The Trick Is to Keep Breathing*, 153. Emphasis in the original.

3.2.2 A Place of Dispossessed White Trash: Irvine Welsh's *Trainspotting*[107]

> The toon seems sinister and alien as ah pad it doon fae the Waverley. Two guys are screaming at each other under the archway in Calton Road, by the Post Office depot. Either that, or the cunts are screaming at me. . . . In terms ay probability, the further ye go doon the Walk at this time ay night, the mair likely ye are tae git a burst mooth. Perversely, ah feel safer the further doon ah git. It's Leith. Ah suppose that means hame.
>
> —Irvine Welsh[108]

Irvine Welsh's *Trainspotting* (1993) consists of a series of loosely interrelated sketches from the life of on-and-off heroin users in Edinburgh. All the major characters find themselves at the society's periphery, which is paralleled by the geographical location of their homes and favourite haunts at Edinburgh's outskirts, in Leith. The novel employs multiple narrative voices, which reinforces the disjointed nature of the drug addicts' experience as much as it emphasises the characters' existential loneliness and isolation from society and each other. Most of the numerous characters that populate the book are simultaneously known by several different nicknames, which in Cairns Craig's view provides a 'mirror image of the society of isolated, atomistic individuals of modern capitalism'.[109] Under its crude facade showing off a cynical worldview complete with exploitative relationships, unmotivated violence and foul language, *Trainspotting* turns out to

[107] This section incorporates selected material from my previously published article '"Ah don't hate the English, Ah hate the Scots": Scotland contra England in Gray's *1982 Janine* and Welsh's *Trainspotting*', *THEPES* 7, no. 1 (2014): 35–42.

[108] Irvine Welsh, *Trainspotting* (1993; London: Vintage, 2004), 305–6.

[109] Cairns Craig, *The Modern Scottish Novel: Narrative and the National Imagination* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1999), 97.

be a deeply troubled novel, which meaningfully explores themes of social exclusion and inclusion, conformity and resistance, commodification and consumption.

The novel opens in summer, during the annual Edinburgh Festival, which lasts three weeks and draws hundreds of thousands of visitors, making a city of less than half a million inhabitants feel crowded. For the dispossessed and uprooted characters, the tourists embody competitive capitalism and consumer culture, values that the characters cannot or would not partake in. The characters perceive the tourists as intruders who colonise their already limited living space: tourists swarm the streets, occupy seats in pubs and keep cabs busy. Regarding the lack of cabs or other means of transport from and to Leith, Peter Clandfield and Christian Lloyd comment that 'the shortage of transportation is especially ironic since Leith, as Edinburgh's port, has historically provided transport connections essential to the city's prosperity'.[110] While the Festival goers tend to remain in central Edinburgh and the Leith locals prefer to stay at the periphery, occasional clashes still occur. The characters venture into the tourist-ridden city centre with utmost disdain and solely for the purpose of begging or petty theft; they rightly feel excluded and unwanted there. One of the major characters, Mark Renton, regards central Edinburgh's picturesqueness and charm with bemused indifference: 'Ah remember walkin along Princes Street wi Spud, we both hate walkin along that hideous street, deadened by tourists and shoppers, the twin curses ay modern capitalism. Ah looked up at the castle and thought, it's just another building tae us. It registers in oor heids just like the British Home Stores or Virgin Records.'[111] Renton criticises the commodification, commercialism and exclusiveness of the space, yet at the same time he does not make any attempt to reclaim it because he fails to feel any connection to it. To the Leith youths, Edinburgh's Old Town represents a foreign soil, a site designed for the entertainment of tourists and for the use by respectable anglicised citizens, but not open to accommodating subversive individuals.

Renton feels at home neither in Edinburgh's centre, nor at Leith periphery, nor in Scotland at large. He dismisses Leith as 'a place ay dispossessed white trash in a trash country fill ay dispossessed white trash' and blames his countrymen for

[110] Peter Clandfield and Christian Lloyd, 'Welsh and Edinburgh', in *The Edinburgh Companion to Irvine Welsh*, ed. Berthold Schoene-Harwood (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2010), 102.
[111] Welsh, *Trainspotting*, 228.

resigning at their Scottish identity in favour of assuming the alien manners of the English coloniser.[112] The choice of setting in the underprivileged Leith highlights the novel's themes of dispossession, exclusion and disaffection in that Leith was historically a self-standing burgh until it was annexed to Edinburgh in 1920, despite the disapproval of the union by the majority of locals as expressed in a plebiscite. Lewis MacLeod observes that in the context of the novel, 'the discourse of colonialism extends to Edinburgh itself, insofar as the capital city has forcibly amalgamated Leith and re-figured it as the "outskirts of Edinburgh" rather than an autonomous space'.[113] The central metaphor of *Trainspotting* reflects Leith's loss of individual identity and fall into inconsequentiality: the characters stop at the once grand, now abandoned Leith Central Station not to watch trains that no longer come but to use the place as a urinal.

Alan Freeman points out the strength of the novel in that 'focusing on social margins not only affirms their inhabitants but illuminates the centre against which they are defined'.[114] Welsh exposes the disparity between the experience of central and peripheral space, the former used primarily by the city's visitors, the latter left for use by the locals:

> That's aw they tourist cunts ken though, the castle n Princes Street, n the High Street. Like whin Monny's auntie came ower fae that wee village oan that Island oaf the west coast ay Ireland, wi aw her bairns. The wifey goes up tae the council fir a hoose. The council sais tae her, whair's it ye want tae fuckin stey, like? The woman sais, ah want a hoose in Princes Street lookin oantay the castle. . . . Perr cunt jist liked the look ay the street whin she came oaf the train, thoat the whole fuckin place wis like that. The cunts in the council jist laugh n stick the cunt n one ay they hoatline joabs in West Granton, this

[112] Welsh, *Trainspotting*, 190.

[113] Lewis MacLeod, 'Wankers, and Tourists in Irvine Welsh's Trainspotting', *Studies in the Literary Imagination* 41, no. 1 (2008): 89.

[114] Alan Freeman, 'Ghosts in Sunny Leith: Irvine Welsh's *Trainspotting*', in *Studies in Scottish Fiction: 1945 to the Present*, ed. Susanne Hagemann (Frankfurt: Lang, 1996), 251.

> nea cunt else wants. Instead ay a view ay the castle, she's goat a view ay the gasworks.[115]

West Granton, even more than Leith, serves as the last resort of the undesirables and becomes the terminal also for Tommy, one of the novel's characters who finds himself dying of AIDS. The council house is fittingly described in terms of disease: 'This is one ay the varicose-vein flats, called so because of the plastered cracks all over its facing. Tommy got it through the council's hotline. Fifteen thousand people on the waiting list and naebody wanted this one.'[116]

Richard Skeates approaches the difference between the centre and periphery in term of authenticity: 'The centre . . . , identified with history and power[,] becomes an easily imaged and imagined place, an authentic *place*, while the periphery with its modernity, its lack of history and power, and its geographical diffuseness becomes or remains an inauthentic, hard to imagine *non-place*.'[117] Welsh indeed illustrates that the image of Edinburgh's centre is easy to conjure while the periphery remains often beyond imagination, yet he does not positively decide which of the two variants is more authentic. Ruth Helyer, in contrast to Skeates above, argues that tourist-oriented commodification of the city centre evacuates it of authenticity: 'Edinburgh's cultural status is objectified for ease of consumptions; moulded into a saleable commodity. Much like a theme park the city becomes archetypal simulacrum, created, self-reflexively, to fulfil certain purposes.'[118] In this view, which coincides with that of the novel's main characters, Edinburgh's centre is deprived of substance and transformed from an actual place into an abstract image of a place.

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[115] Welsh, *Trainspotting*, 115.

[116] Welsh, *Trainspotting*, 315.

[117] Richard Skeates, '"Those vast new wildernesses of glass and brick": Representing the Contemporary Urban Condition', in *Cities on the Margin, on the Margin of Cities: Representations of Urban Space in Contemporary Irish and British Fiction*, ed. Philippe Laplace and Éric Tabuteau (Paris: Presses Universitaires Franc-Comtoises, 2003), 35. Italics in the original.

[118] Ruth Helyer, '"It was a madhouse of assorted bric-à-brac": Urban Intensification in Irvine Welsh's *Trainspotting*', in *Cities on the Margin, on the Margin of Cities: Representations of Urban Space in Contemporary Irish and British Fiction*, ed. Philippe Laplace and Éric Tabuteau (Paris: Presses Universitaires Franc-Comtoises, 2003), 230.

3.3 In, out and beyond Place

> Personal space and time do not automatically accord, then, with the dominant public sense of either.
>
> —David Harvey[119]

Having established space as socially produced, it follows also that it is the society, more precisely the hegemonic class, that determines the use of space. Tim Cresswell observes that space possesses no natural, self-evident qualities which would dictate its use in one way rather than another: 'Value and meaning are not inherent in any space or place—indeed they must be created, reproduced, and defended from heresy.'[120] The dominant class employs ideology as one of its tools to enforce the desired use of space. Cresswell emphasises that 'ideology, then, is not just a set of ideas but ideas related to practices—ideas connected to what we do'.[121] Accordingly, Cresswell continues, 'our beliefs about place are usually indistinguishable from actions in place', so as we internalise an ideology, we seamlessly enact it in our everyday practices.[122] Such spatial behaviour complies with the normative geography established by the hegemonic class and perpetuated by conformist practices.

However, subversive practices going against the grain of dominant discourse occur and are manifested among others in a transgressive use of space. The practice of spatial resistance causes the dissenting person to appear out of place, as opposed to the consenting persons who stay in their place, to use Cresswell's

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[119] David Harvey, *Justice, Nature and the Geography of Difference* (Malden: Blackwell, 2004), 224–25.

[120] Tim Cresswell, *In Place/Out of Place: Geography, Ideology, and Transgression* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996), 9.

[121] Cresswell, *In Place/Out of Place*, 157.

[122] Cresswell, *In Place/Out of Place*, 157–58.

terminology. In analogy to 'ana*chron*ism', the condition of being misplaced in time, Cresswell introduces for the discourse of resistance the term 'ana*chor*ism', the condition of being 'in the wrong place'.[123] Cresswell's precarious use of the words 'wrong' versus 'right' refers to the perspective of the hegemonic class and should not therefore be understood to imply absolute values. A subversive practice of space can involve isolated individuals as well as organised groups and springs from the discord between dominant ideology and personal preference. 'Personal space and time do not automatically accord, then, with the dominant public sense of either,' David Harvey contends and concludes, 'The class, gender, cultural, religious, and political differentiation in conceptions of time and space frequently become arenas of social conflict.'[124]

Where resistance is enacted a premeditated and wilful act, its initiators get to choose the site on which to play out the conflict. The site to host transgressive acts bears a particular significance in that it determines the target of resistance and the impact of the action. For example, should an individual undertake subversive practice in a private space, his or her actions will go unnoticed and remain inconsequential. In contrast, when an organised group makes use of a public space to stage a protest, their resistance is visible and potentially influential. Instances of both appear in Dot Allan's *Hunger March* (1934), a novel which dramatises the feeble pretence of resistance on the part of a naive comfortably situated youth and the painfully actual struggle of the unemployed mass marching through the streets towards the city hall. Henri Lefebvre proposes a finer classification of spaces besides private and public ones in that he distinguishes between 'accessible space for normal use', 'boundaries and forbidden territories', 'places of abode' and 'junction points', the latter characteristic as 'places of passage and encounter'.[125] Commonly accessible spaces and junction points serve as the most suitable sites for a fruitful resistance.

Aside from deliberate practitioners of spatial resistance, there are persons who find themselves out of place in urban settings without intending to. Maria

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[123] Tim Cresswell, *Place: An Introduction*, 2nd ed. (Chichester: Wiley, 2015), 166. Italics in the original.

[124] Harvey, *Justice, Nature and the Geography of Difference*, 224–25.

[125] Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith (Malden: Blackwell, 1991), 193.

Balshaw and Liam Kennedy argue 'that urban space and subjectivity are intricately related and that . . . as psychic space the city resonates with not only conscious but also unconscious impulses; it is often figured as "uncanny", a space of displacement and dislocation in which repressed material erupts in paranoid or obsessional form.'[126] This description captures the essence of James Kelman's *How Late It Was, How Late* (1994), a novel whose protagonist incurs a loss of sight and becomes stranded in his now alien home city. Equally applicable to Kelman's novel, Michel de Certeau points out that movement in space brings about feelings of isolating detachment from one's environment: 'To walk is to lack a place. It is the indefinite process of being absent and in search of a proper. The moving about that the city multiplies and concentrates makes the city itself an immense social experience of lacking a place.'[127] An incessant movement prevents the travellers from mentally connecting with their surroundings and building for themselves a distinct sense of place.

3.3.1 Pitting Flesh against Stone: Dot Allan's *Hunger March*

> This homogeneous spate of flesh . . . was pouring towards the Council Chambers, a desperate current hurtling itself against granite rock. And all to no purpose. There was the tragedy. You cannot pit flesh against stone.
>
> —Dot Allan[128]

Dot Allan's kaleidoscopic *Hunger March* (1934) takes place in an unnamed but recognisable Glasgow during a single day in the early 1930s. The central large-

[126] Maria Balshaw and Liam Kennedy, introduction to *Urban Space and Representation*, ed. Maria Balshaw and Liam Kennedy (London: Pluto Press, 2000), 6.

[127] Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, trans. Steven F. Rendall (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), 103.

[128] Dot Allan, *Hunger March*, in *Makeshift and Hunger March: Two Novels by Dot Allan*, ed. Moira Burgess (1934; Glasgow: Association for Scottish Literary Studies, 2010), 323.

scale conflict of the novel relies on the unemployed marching in the city, and the stories of the novel's major and minor characters all directly or indirectly relate to and highlight the social issues incorporated by the marchers. The march figures in the book as a dark and threatening force, an indistinct mass rather than as a group of individualised human beings. This impression is underlined by the fact that despite the wide range of characters presented in the novel, none of them actively participates in the march. At various times of the day, the focus shifts from the merchant Arthur Joyce, who starts taking steps to close down his failing business; to his cleaner Mrs Humphry, who tries to delude herself about the honesty and dignity of her ill-paid hard work; to her unemployed son Joe Humphry, who sympathises with the marchers' cause while somewhat hypocritically enjoying the comforts of a home supported by his mother's wages. Joe's misled revolutionary eagerness culminates in his impulsive storming into Joyce and Son's offices and striking a petty clerk, whom he chances to come across in the corridor, as the embodiment of capitalism. The responses of other characters to the problems painfully forced on their attention by the hunger march are similarly inadequate.

The march tends to be observed from the position of the middle class, which foregrounds the breach between the classes and reinforces the physical displacement of the unemployed in the city. The protesters find themselves out of place as they march unseeing along streets lined with shops and cafes and not normally frequented by the impoverished working class: 'Driven from the rear, without pause, without fluctuation, it surged on—Black Care, Hunger, Revolt, shambling between stately frontages, between rows of lighted shops agleam with the tempting fruits of a luxury trade. Fine fabrics, velvet cushions, bedspreads of exquisite lace, bathed in the tropical sunlight of amber glass and roseate shades. . . . A place worthy of plunder, you might think, worthy of being the objective of this ragged throng; but Dull Care, Hunger and Revolt appeared as though they saw it not.'[129] This admittedly heavy-handed didactic passage illustrates the anonymity and the apparent dislocation of the fearsome but ultimately impotent crowd. The marchers, in transgressing into a foreign territory, seem as much at loss with the situation as their uninvolved observers: 'Vaguely uncomfortable, the late-lunchers, the tea-drinkers, asked of one another why Somebody didn't do Something About

[129] Allan, *Hunger March*, 285–86.

It. It was terrible to see all these men going idle. Of course, the real sufferers didn't advertise their woes.'[130]

The Glasgow marchers seek to subvert a space which is not of their own making by employing 'tactics', as Certeau terms action taken by the subordinate class against the dominant class in the struggle for space.[131] The protesters portrayed by Allan, however, are not only peaceful, they are passive, and though their large numbers momentarily fill the streets they walk through, their presence in the space which they purport to claim is no more than fleeting. Once the crowd reaches the square and disperses, the space of the city smoothly passes back under the full control of the affluent citizens and no trace of resistance remains. The marchers achieve nothing and as the night falls, they seem to be entirely forgotten. In contrast with this failure, the novel describes a similar but more memorable act of resistance in Edinburgh of 1933, 'the last hunger march to secure headlines in the world's press'.[132] The protesters, while also peaceful, fully occupied the urban space and embraced and resolved the discrepancy between their shabby appearance and the historical facades of the city:

> At the end of a three day's march, unemployed men and women from all parts of Scotland camped and slept in a street famed for its beauty and historical associations. Dawn saw the red banners, tied to the railings of Princes Street Gardens, fluttering gently in the cool breeze above irregular rows of recumbent figures. Later, on the opposite pavement, Edinburgh shop girls and office workers, on their way to business, lingered to stare at the marchers rousing themselves from slumber and seeking out a nearby fountain in which to bathe their tired faces . . . About midday a crowd of some thirty thousand followed the red banners through ancient ways where the gilded cavalcade of Mary, Queen of Scots, once swayed, and where the Leith mob, after the failure of the Darien Expedition, swarmed,

[130] Allan, *Hunger March*, 287.

[131] See Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, 30.

[132] Allan, *Hunger March*, 201.

> crying out for the blood of the English captain whose vessel lay captive in the Forth.[133]

Where the Glasgow protesters march meekly through the city without stopping to connect with their surroundings, the Edinburgh protesters convert the city's most glamorous street into their living space, making a subversive use of whatever tools are available when using railings to tie their banners to and fountains to wash themselves in. In Cresswell's definition, the Edinburgh hunger march manages 'to give space a heightened symbolic significance', to 'make it a site of meaningful resistance'.[134]

3.3.2 A Sign That Meant Nothing: Alexander Trocchi's *Young Adam*

> We were chugging along the banks of the canal and it rolled away behind us like a very neat black tape dividing two masses of green-brown countryside. I could see a boom raised ahead in the distance. It looked very awkward perched there in mid-air like a sign that meant nothing but was black in the thin meagre afternoon light.
>
> —Alexander Trocchi[135]

Alexander Trocchi's writing draws on American Beatniks, French existentialists and the Situationists, who understood space as social product and cultivated 'the habit of wandering around the streets' with the aim of 'proactively inhabiting urban

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[133] Allan, *Hunger March*, 201–2.

[134] Cresswell, *In Place/Out of Place*, 163.

[135] Alexander Trocchi, *Young Adam* (1954; Richmond: Oneworld Classics, 2008), 42.

space'.[136] *Young Adam* (1954), Trocchi's first serious novel, characteristically lacks a definite sense of place and conveys the impression of incessant movement instead. The placeless and fluid resonance of the novel is achieved in part through its opaque, noncommittal descriptions of physical space and in part through the very setting, which is the route of a barge moving to and fro along the Forth and Clyde Canal connecting Edinburgh and Glasgow. Gerard Carruthers recognises the canal as 'a great symbol of Scotland's post-Enlightenment industrial success', however, the protagonist's impoverished existence on the overcrowded barge shows the symbol of success as entirely deprived of its former significance and meaning.[137] The protagonist himself, whose name, contradictory to the book's title, is not Adam and might not even be Joe, the name that he goes by, also leads an insignificant life evacuated of meaning: like the boom that he once spots from the deck of the barge, he is 'a sign that [means] nothing'.[138]

The rootless and aimless Joe is not so much in or out of place, rather, he is beyond place. Joe seems to be incapable of inhabiting space and making it into a place of his own, a deficiency that is mirrored in his inability to establish a meaningful relationship with another human being. He perceives Ella, the barge's owner, as an object of his sexual desire, her husband Leslie as his competitor and their young son as a blur of noise and motion. Joe drifts from one lover to another, from one place to another. An aspiring but failed writer, Joe intended to write his masterpiece while staying with his girlfriend Cathie in an isolated cottage in the countryside and evading other people. Then they moved to the town as Joe wished, but he did not finish his book. Following a breakup and later an apparent accident in which Cathie drowned, Joe had himself hired as a helper on the barge. The ending of the novel shows him lodging with a married couple in a town tenement and seducing his landlady. Underlying *Young Adam* is a fascination with mobility: Joe looks longingly at ships and imagines distant exotic places he would travel to; he visits a fair with its tents, stalls and caravans; he observes his surroundings from a moving barge, watching as places and people pass by.

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[136] Michael Gardiner, *From Trocchi to 'Trainspotting': Scottish Critical Theory since 1960* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2006), 74.

[137] Gerard Carruthers, *Scottish Literature* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009), 172.

[138] Trocchi, *Young Adam*, 42.

'The more I became involved in the small world of the barge, the more I felt myself robbed of my identity,' Joe complains and adds, 'Often I find myself anxious to become involved with other people, but I am no sooner involved than I wish to be free again.'[139] The mobile home on the barge does not feel liberating to Joe, not even after Ella's husband abandons her when he finds out about her affair with Joe. Quite the opposite, Joe often wakes up with the claustrophobic sensation of being closed in a coffin. While the world of the barge is defined by 'yellow' and 'scum-laden' water 'under the dirty lens of sky', the space of the cities where Joe walks around is simply nondescript.[140] In the vein of the Situationists, Joe wanders in Glasgow and visits the street where a man unjustly accused and later convicted of Cathie's death lives with his wife and children. Joe's curious tourist detour yields nothing: 'It was a short street of tenements in a poor quarter of the town, bleak and grey, and looked like any of the streets surrounding it. There was nothing to see.'[141] A similar absence of distinctive features is found in Edinburgh, where Joe visits Ella's windowed sister Gwendoline, who also at one point becomes Joe's mistress: 'Gwendoline lived in a tenement which was just like any other tenement in Leith, a blackish-grey building, scaled on the inside by a creeping grey stair with an iron banister, leading to brown doors with brass plates on them at every landing.'[142] Joe sees urban spaces as endless featureless replicas of themselves, and because he also rejected rural space and the transitional space of the canal, there remains nowhere for him to be but to stay suspended beyond place.

3.3.3 To Lose Oneself in the City: William McIlvanney's *Laidlaw*

> There are tourists and travellers. Tourists spend their lives doing a Cook's Tour of their own reality. Ignoring their slums. Travellers make the journey more slowly, in great detail. Mix with the natives. . . . Think of this as a wee ritual exercise for

[139] Trocchi, *Young Adam*, 110.

[140] Trocchi, *Young Adam*, 41.

[141] Trocchi, *Young Adam*, 99.

[142] Trocchi, *Young Adam*, 114.

> opting out of tourism. A car is psychologically sterile, a mobile oxygen-tent. A bus is septic. You've got to subject yourself to other people's prejudices, run the risk of a mad conductor beating you to death with his ticket-punch.
>
> —William McIlvanney[143]

The first of a successful triptych of crime novels featuring Detective Inspector Jack Laidlaw, William McIlvanney's *Laidlaw* (1977), puts as much emphasis on story and character development as on the Glaswegian setting. The novel springs from and thrives on Glasgow, which does not serve merely as an element of local colour but as an indispensable structure enabling the story to grow. The book builds on and interweaves spatial and social contrasts, such as inclusion versus exclusion, the detective versus the criminal, the central versus the peripheral. Regarding the interaction of space and society, Maria Balshaw and Liam Kennedy argue:

> Questions of (il)legibility and (in)visibility are implicated in representation as struggles for power and identity. This is perhaps most obviously marked in the categories of spatial duality—of inside and outside, of self and other—which often work to naturalise the symbolic order of the city, reproducing social divisions and power relations. The operations of power are everywhere evident in space, for space is hierarchical—zoned, segregated, gated—and encodes both freedoms and restrictions—of mobility, of access, of vision—in the city. Cities exhibit distinctive geographies of social differences and power relations, where space functions as modality through which urban identities are formed.[144]

Such spatial-cum-social hierarchy comes to a particular prominence in a detective novel like *Laidlaw*, where the murderer makes a tactical use of peripheral places in

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[143] William McIlvanney, *Laidlaw* (1977; Edinburgh: Canongate, 2013), 127.

[144] Maria Balshaw and Liam Kennedy, introduction to *Urban Space and Representation*, ed. Maria Balshaw and Liam Kennedy (London: Pluto Press, 2000), 11.

an attempt to become invisible to the eye of the law. The city itself is segregated into different areas to be used by different social groups: there are main streets in the centre safe for all but criminals, there are peripheral housing estates for working class tenants, there are city slums punctuated by vacant lots, tenements condemned to demolition and tentative redevelopment buildings.

Laidlaw opens dynamically with a scene that turns out to be featuring the novel's murderer, Tommy Bryson, fleeing through a hostile urban space and seeking refuge in an abandoned tenement. Tommy identifies the city with its citizens and feels disowned and ostracised by both. 'Outside, the city hated you. Perhaps it had always excluded you,' Tommy thinks.[145] Tommy's backstory reveals him to be an insecure youth tortured by a sense of guilt and rejection owing to his homosexual preferences, which he keeps secret and attempts to suppress by dating Jennifer Lawson, the victim. He apparently murders and violates the girl in emotion, striking blindly against the society at large, which he believes to be imposing on him normative heterosexuality. His misled act of resistance, however, qualifies simply as reactive resistance, described by David Couzens Hoy as 'the act of taking a purely negative position against something, without any substantive vision of what it is for'.[146] Hoy points out the availability of more positive and productive forms of resistance, including political resistance, which aims at the rearrangement of political power structures, and social resistance, which is an 'opposition to the ways that institutions shape individuals' and/or 'opposition to social policies that shape populations'.[147] Tommy's resistance is more out of place than Tommy himself ever could be: while trying to claim a legitimate place in the social order, he manages to exclude himself from the society entirely.

James Peacock notes another such inversion related to the murder, in which both the culprit and the victim fail to fit in their places: 'The girl's corpse is discovered in Kelvingrove Park, thus darkly inverting the notion of "The Dear Green Place", from Archie Hind's novel of 1966, by isolating the rural within the urban and re-inscribing it not as a place of "creativity and imaginative fertility"

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[145] McIlvanney, *Laidlaw*, 4.

[146] David Couzens Hoy, *Critical Resistance: From Poststructuralism to Post-critique* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2005), 5.

[147] Hoy, *Critical Resistance*, 7.

where "out of such a regenerated and fertile place things could grow well", but as a place of death.'[148] Hind's *The Dear Green Place* takes its title from Glasgow's supposedly original Gaelic name, Gles Chu, meaning 'the dear green place', and referring also to the protagonist's inspired attitude to his beloved home city, which he tries and fails to capture in his unfinished novel. Hind's aspiring writer ends up betrayed by Glasgow, the same bitter feeling experienced by a number of McIlvanney's characters. Besides Tommy Bryson, also Laidlaw's junior partner, Detective Constable Brian Harkness, suffers from a sense of despondency and rejection. Again, place and person are presented as interchangeable entities: 'Cities can turn their backs on you, just like people. Standing in the opening to Central Station near the Boots Dispensary, Harkness was feeling that. It was that middle of the evening time by which if you haven't gone where you're going or met whoever it is you're supposed to meet, the city locks you out.'[149]

Railway stations as places of transit recur in the urban novel either with the implication of the possibility of movement or, as in the case of the disused Leith Central Station in Welsh's *Trainspotting*, with the associations of a terminal, a dead end. Brian Harkness finds himself at Glasgow Central Station when he becomes overwhelmed by a sense of dislocation, however, the fact that the station busily operates suggests that the young constable will fight his dejection and move on. In contrast, the journey ends for the petty thug Minty, who is dying of cancer and recalls the earlier days of the city and of his own life, linked to the abandoned and vandalised St Enoch's Station: 'St Enoch's Station had been a part of the Glasgow he knew. Now the high, arched, glass roof that had fascinated him as a boy was patched with sky. What had seemed before unimaginably far away now only served to give perspective to the vastness of the distance beyond it. Those squares of starlit sky were a bottomlessness he was falling into. There were acres of macadam where the rails had been—nowhere for him to go from here.'[150] There is nowhere to go for Minty and nowhere to go from St Enoch's Station either—at its time the second

[148] James Peacock, 'Divided Loyalties, Changing Landscapes: William McIlvanney's Laidlaw Novels', *English* 62, no. 236 (2013): 74. Peacock quotes Douglas Gifford, *The Dear Green Place? The Novel in the West of Scotland* (Glasgow: Third Eye Centre, 1985), 6.

[149] McIlvanney, *Laidlaw*, 171.

[150] McIlvanney, *Laidlaw*, 250.

largest station in Glasgow, it was disused in the mid-1960s and demolished a decade later, at the time of the publication of *Laidlaw*.

In exploring the social geography of Glasgow, McIlvanney's novel juxtaposes two radically different versions of the suburbs. There are places like Drumchapel, sprawling peripheral estates which gradually replace the slums in the city centre, and there are small enclaves like Bearsden, a wealthy suburbia at the edge of Glasgow. Jennifer's family was relocated from the notorious Gorbals inner city slum to the Drumchapel estate, but Jennifer's father feels uprooted there, even though he owns a car and hence is decisively more mobile at the periphery than Joy in Janice Galloway's *The Trick Is to Keep Breathing*. The father, Bud Lawson, drives through a city violated by its traffic and industry: 'He resented the route by which he was having to go home: along the motorway to the Clyde Tunnel Junction, right into Anniesland, left out Great Western Road. The first part of it reminded him too strongly of what they had done to the city he used to know. Great loops of motorway displaced his part. It was like a man having his guts replaced with plastic tubing. . . . He had passed the Goodyear Tyre Factory and was among the three-storey grey-stone tenements of Drumchapel. They didn't feel like home.'[151] The reference is to the loops of the M8 motorway, Scotland's busiest motorway, whose inner city sections in Glasgow were built at the turn of the 1960s, hence the structure was still recent and unfamiliar at the time of the novel. Far from the noise of heavy traffic, the novel's minor character Matt Mason is more enviably displaced in Bearsden, and although he does not belong, he takes pride in his upward mobility: 'He wasn't one of them but he was here, in as big a house as any of them. And he was staying. . . . as surely as if he had laid each brick himself, from the half-baked dreams of a wee boy in the Gallowgate. Ragged, snottery nosed and hungry, . . . he had found his only available blueprint for a different kind of life in Hollywood films.'[152]

Detective Laidlaw stands out in the novel as the only character firmly rooted in his place to the extent of becoming one with it. He employs an unconventional method of investigation, which involves, among other peculiarities, preferring public transport to the police car so as to mingle with the locals more smoothly. He

[151] McIlvanney, *Laidlaw*, 15–16.

[152] McIlvanney, *Laidlaw*, 89–90.

tackles a criminal case through exposing himself to the city, he 'likes to lose himself in the city' and become 'a traveller', as he calls it, who soaks in beauty and filth indiscriminately, unlike a common tourist.[153] However curiously conducted, or possibly owing precisely to his creative techniques, Laidlaw's detective work is successful, so that at one point his mental processes are described in geographical terms as 'Laidlaw had Glasgowfied what was happening'.[154] This confusion of person and place in McIlvanney prefigures a later immensely successful detective novel series, the Rebus novels by Ian Rankin, starting with *Knots & Crosses* (1987). Like Laidlaw, detective Rebus has an intimate knowledge and appreciation of all aspects of his city, including the less savoury ones required for detective work. Unlike Laidlaw, though, Rebus is identified with Edinburgh, illustrating the potential for evil in a city associated with crime significantly less often than Glasgow.

3.3.4 Always from Glasgow: James Kelman's *How Late It Was, How Late*

I was born and bred in Glasgow
I have lived most of my life in Glasgow
It is the place I know best
My language is English
I write
In my writings the accent is in Glasgow
I am always from Glasgow and I speak English always
Always with this Glasgow accent

This is right enough

—James Kelman[155]

[153] McIlvanney, *Laidlaw*, 54.

[154] McIlvanney, *Laidlaw*, 189.

[155] Qtd. in Alex Hamilton, James Kelman, and Tom Leonard, *Three Glasgow Writers* (Glasgow: Molendinar, 1976), 51.

When James Kelman was called in the early 1990s to elaborate on the importance of Glasgow in his work, he retorted in his characteristically radical manner: 'Glasgow isn't important. . . . Glasgow just happens to be the city that I was born within . . . I could have been born anywhere in the world I suppose. And wherever that chanced to be would have been equally unimportant.'[156] Despite Kelman's evasiveness and refusal to commit to a definite label, he recognised the inextricable link between himself and his city early at the beginning of his literary career: 'I am always from Glasgow,' he admitted in the mid-1970s.[157] The reason why the question of Kelman and Glasgow should be raised in the first place is not only the Glasgow setting of most of his work, but above all his trademark use of the Glaswegian dialect with as much gusto as linguistic creativity. Kelman's writing is socially critical and anti-establishment, but not in a programmatic manner, rather, his work stands as a natural, unforced and non-didactic act in literature of what David Couzens Hoy terms social resistance.[158] Ultimately, in his critique of hegemonic power and the institutions that perpetuate it, Kelman notably draws on Kafka rather than on Marx.

Kelman strongly resists the imported (or imposed) anglicised culture and asserts the right of his culture to exist: 'There is a literary tradition to which I hope my own work belongs, I see it as part of a much wider process—or movement—towards decolonisation and self-determination: it is a tradition that assumes two things: 1) the validity of indigenous culture; and 2) the right to defend in the face of attack. It is a tradition premised on the rejection of the cultural values of imperial or colonial authority, offering a defence against cultural assimilation, in particular an imposed assimilation.'[159] This declaration, voiced by Kelman in his acceptance speech on being controversially awarded the Booker Prize for *How Late It Was,*

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[156] James Kelman, 'The Importance of Glasgow in My Work', in *Some Recent Attacks: Essays Cultural & Political* (Stirling: AK Press, 1992), 78.

[157] Qtd. in Hamilton et al., *Three Glasgow Writers*, 51.

[158] David Couzens Hoy, *Critical Resistance: From Poststructuralism to Post-critique* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2005), 7.

[159] James Kelman, Booker Prize acceptance speech (Oct. 11, 1994), qtd. in Carole Jones, *Disappearing Men: Gender Disorientation in Scottish Fiction, 1979–1999* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2009), 35.

How Late in 1994, harks back to Paulo Freire's definition of 'cultural invasion', in which 'the invaders penetrate the cultural context of another group, in disrespect of the latter's potentialities; they impose their own view of the world upon those they invade and inhibit the creativity of the invaded by curbing their expression'.[160] Kelman's struggle is at least twofold in that he writes from the position of a member of a minor nation as well as from the position of an oppressed class—he brings to the fore impoverished working-class protagonists, often such that are not only on the margin but even beyond it, out of place entirely.

Kelman utilises language to convey the immediacy of experience, he seeks to overcome the limitations of language and enable his characters to shine through uninhibited by the rules of the hegemonic discourse reflected in language. On the textual level, Kelman's *How Late It Was, How Late* (1994) resigns at dividing the text into chunks larger than paragraphs—aside from a rare empty line to indicate a new section, there are no chapter divisions. The novel is a linguistic outrage: there are long, winding sentences loosely punctuated by semi-colons, there are run-on sentences and sentence fragments, there are repetitions and, of course, there is the notorious abundance of four-letter words, often inventively used, as in the curious neologism 'enerfuckinggenetised'.[161] On the narrative level, Kelman deliberately (con)fuses narrative and dialogue by dispensing with quotation marks and moving seamlessly from the first, through the second, to the third person. Kelman realises that language is not a neutral medium but a political statement and that in fiction, 'getting rid of that standard third party narrative voice is getting rid of a whole value system'.[162] On the whole, as Simon Baker concludes, Kelman manages to 'transcend speech by absorbing it into a writing that can understand the fragmented ruins of contemporary urban life'.[163]

The disorienting language reinforces the Kafkaesque experience of the protagonist of *How Late It Was, How Late*, Sammy, who opens the novel waking

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[160] Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, trans. Myra Bergman Ramos (London: Penguin, 1996), 133.

[161] James Kelman, *How Late It Was, How Late* (1994; London: Vintage, 1998), 174.

[162] Kirsty McNeill, interview with James Kelman, *Chapman* 57 (1989): 4.

[163] Simon Baker, '"Wee Stories with a Working-Class Theme": The Reimagining of Urban Realism in the Fiction of James Kelman', in *Studies in Scottish Fiction: 1945 to the Present*, ed. Susanne Hagemann (Frankfurt: Lang, 1996), 238.

up in the street after two days of heavy drinking, gets arrested and beaten up by police for no apparent reason and finds himself totally blind as a consequence. He spends the novel trying to navigate the suddenly unfamiliar streets, wondering where his girlfriend Helen disappeared and hiding from his pursuers, police or otherwise, who suspect him of an unspecified terrorist conspiracy. Everything about the novel is vague, uncertain and, most important, threatening. Ian Haywood points out that Kelman dramatises 'two central tropes of insecurity and dislocation: blindness and absence'.[164] Sammy's blindness heightens his paranoia, whether justified or not, as the urban space encloses him and turns into a trap: 'He brought his shoulder away from the wall but then he banged against it, lurched right into it and stumbled for christ sake, he righted himself and got his hands flat against it. This was really weird. Like sometimes how ye're smoking a bit of dope and ye keep coming in and out of thoughts, or else the same thought with fractured spaces and before ye get to a space there's a big noisy build-up like yer head's gony explode and ye hold yer eyes shut, tight shut.'[165] For Sammy, the city becomes a life-endangering maze of unseen cars and indistinct voices which may or may not be talking about him: 'A motor whooshed past, hell of a loud and near. He moved to the right to touch the kerb but couldnay find it. He reached the other way, the left, his hand out but he couldnay find it, the kerb, he reached further. Then stopped. More traffic. Help, he said. He was on the road. Surely no. Surely he wasnay on the fucking road man he couldnay be; Help, he said. Fuck sake man he couldnay be. Mutter mutter. . . . Help! Get me off the road! Help!'[166] By blinding his protagonist, Kelman achieves a perfect convergence of geographical space and the space of the mind.

Urban space in general and Glasgow in particular lays the foundations of Kelman's writing. Along these lines, Böhnke suggests that 'the (post)industrial city is central to the condition of alienation that haunts most characters in Kelman's stories and novels'.[167] Sammy does not seem to suffer from alienation in the

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[164] Ian Haywood, *Working-Class Fiction: From Chartism to 'Trainspotting'* (Plymouth: Northcote House, 1997), 154.

[165] Kelman, *How Late It Was, How Late*, 38.

[166] Kelman, *How Late It Was, How Late*, 41.

[167] Dietmar Böhnke, *Kelman Writes Back: Literary Politics in the Work of a Scottish Writer* (Berlin: Galda und Wilch, 1999), 81.

existentialist sense of the word, he feels out of place indeed, but he perceives this quality in physical rather than mental terms. Sammy does not distance himself from or elevate himself above the ordinary course of humanity, instead, he actively struggles to adapt to the changed conditions. Sammy finds himself a stranger in his home city, yet that does not necessarily make him estranged from it: he keeps on engaging with his environment, he moves around and communicates with people. He does not wander aimlessly, he never loses a sense of a goal. The protagonist enacts the city by endowing it with intentions and meanings of his own, he enunciates the city, as Certeau formulates it. Certeau proposes: 'The act of walking is to the urban system what the speech act is to language or to the statements uttered. At the most elementary level, it has a triple "enunciative" function: it is a process of *appropriation* of the topographical system on the part of the pedestrian (just as the speaker appropriates and takes on the language); it is a spatial acting-out of the place (just as the speech act is an acoustic acting-out of language); and it implies *relations* among differentiated positions, that is, among pragmatic "contracts" in the form of movements.'[168] Sammy begins to appropriate Glasgow by his very presence in its streets, he acts out the city by purposefully moving in it and finally, he deals with its various spatial relations, such as the opposition between the pavement, safe for pedestrians, and the road, dangerous to walk on.

Cairns Craig notices the peculiar absence of 'physical specification' of the city in *How Late It Was, How Late*.[169] Glasgow is unambiguously named as the novel's setting, but it is represented as a nondescript space punctuated by generic barriers of anonymous walls and roads. Unlike other Glaswegian writers, such as William McIlvanney, Kelman does not mention specific streets or landmarks. To Sammy, however, the space is not empty, it is pregnant with possibility:

> Outside the exit, once he went outside, if he went right and to the end of the building, then he would just have to cross a space, a space of about

[168] Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, trans. Steven F. Rendall (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), 97–98. Italics in the original.

[169] Cairns Craig, 'Kelman's Glasgow Sentence', in *The Edinburgh Companion to James Kelman*, ed. Scott Hames (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2010), 75.

> fuck knows
> there was a space; after that there was another building. Once he got to the end of that there was a pedestrian walkway. Then on it was plain sailing down to the main drag. That was where he was heading.[170]

Sammy is admittedly not sure about the particulars of his projected trip, but he is positive about his destination and sets out determined to reach it. The lack of physical description corresponds to the protagonist's blindness—the story is consistently seen from Sammy's point of view, and he does not describe what he cannot see. Regarding the representation of Glasgow in the novel, Scott Hames furthermore observes 'that Kelman's Glasgow is, in some respects anachronistic. His fiction rarely acknowledges the smart restaurants and festival of shopping which have usurped the central cityscape.'[171] Sammy's landscape is dotted by seedy pubs rather than smart shops, and the general impression is that of shabbiness. There is nothing glamorous about the spot where he comes to consciousness at the beginning of the novel, 'leaning against auld rusty palings, with pointed spikes, some missing or broke off'.[172] Neither is there much promise in the scene of Sammy's arrest, when the police drag him 'into the first available close, an auld building next to a furniture showroom', where they assault him.[173]

In the novel's darkly exhilarating conclusion, Sammy contrives to shake off his pursuers and escapes in a cab. The protagonist who loses sight ultimately vanishes 'out of sight', the last words of *How Late It Was, How Late*.[174] This ending is consistent with the emphasis throughout the novel on indeterminacy springing from constant motion. Sammy qualifies as the character type of an 'urban vagrant', a label applied by John Kirk to 'the figure of the vagrant, or the isolated unemployed man wandering the streets' of Kelman's fragmented urban space, a figure who

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[170] Kelman, *How Late It Was, How Late*, 76–77.

[171] Scott Hames, introduction to *The Edinburgh Companion to James Kelman*, ed. Scott Hames (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2010), 3.

[172] Kelman, *How Late It Was, How Late*, 1.

[173] Kelman, *How Late It Was, How Late*, 6.

[174] Kelman, *How Late It Was, How Late*, 374.

'maps these fragments and tenuously draws them together'.[175] By the end of the novel, Sammy has mapped Glasgow and found it wanting. He variously considers going to London or rural England, because 'English pubs werenay bad for tick', or Luckenbach, Texas, presumably because he enjoys country music, associated with the Luckenbach community.[176] Significantly, Kelman concludes with Sammy leaving a place rather than arriving at another one—aside from the unlikeness of Sammy's plans to drink on tick in London or travel to Texas to materialise, he is last seen in the midst of movement, getting in the cab. Cairns Craig comments that Kelman's characters typically 'shuffle back and forth, desperate for a rest, but unable not to go on refusing to become part of the polis, continually resisting arrest—and a rest'.[177] Craig's multifaceted comment reflects Sammy's restlessness on being blinded by the police and unjustly charged with resisting arrest, his inability to come to terms with polis as the city and 'polis' as colloquialism for police and eventually his tentative escape from the constrictions of both.

[175] John Kirk, *The British Working Class in the Twentieth Century: Film, Literature and Television* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2009), 118, 115.

[176] Kelman, *How Late It Was, How Late*, 257.

[177] Cairns Craig, 'Resisting Arrest: James Kelman', in *The Scottish Novel since the Seventies*, ed. Gavin Wallace and Randall Stevenson (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1993), 113.

4 Scottish Cities

4.1 The City and the Novel

> Space that has been seized upon by the imagination cannot remain indifferent space subject to the measures and estimates of the surveyor. It has been lived in, not it its positivity, but with all the partiality of the imagination.
>
> —Gaston Bachelard[178]

The processes underlying the interaction between space and society are very complex in that, as Maria Balshaw and Liam Kennedy explain, 'the production of urban space is simultaneously real, symbolic and imaginary; what is produced is a material environment, and a visual culture and a psychic space'.[179] The society physically moulds the space it inhabits according to the mental image of what a particular space should look like and how it should best serve its users. Not only whole societies but also individual human beings shape the space available to them and imprint on it their needs, possibilities and wishes. On the small scale of a single person, the indistinct abstract space is transformed into a concrete individualised place, and these places then, as Gaston Bachelard observes, become 'the sites of our intimate lives'.[180]

Bachelard emphasises the value of daydreaming nourished by the house and analyses in detail the values associated with different parts of the house on the vertical level, from the cellar up to the attic, as well as on the horizontal level,

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[178] Gaston Bachelard, *The Poetics of Space*, trans. Maria Jolas (Boston: Beacon Press, 1994), xxxvi.

[179] Maria Balshaw and Liam Kennedy, introduction to *Urban Space and Representation*, ed. Maria Balshaw and Liam Kennedy (London: Pluto Press, 2000), 4–5.

[180] Bachelard, *The Poetics of Space*, 8.

including various rooms, nooks, furnishings and the like.[181] The experience of living in a house, however, is alien to most characters in the Scottish urban novel, who typically occupy tenement flats rented from the council. Bachelard himself admits that his theory of the house does not apply to tenement living, which fails to provide its inhabitants with adequate privacy to cultivate daydreaming.[182] Even so, the most down-and-out characters still exist in some space which they can personalise at least by small gestures, such as putting a poster on the wall in a rented room. In the most extreme case, homeless people too have some choices, though very restricted, on where to stay and how best to arrange the space available to accommodate their needs.

Yi-Fu Tuan's interpretation of the space and place question takes into account the different emotions evoked by space and place respectively. 'Place is security, space is freedom: we are attached to the one and long for the other,' Tuan argues.[183] Space is essential for a person to dream, learn and grow; whereas place is needed for rest, nurture and recovery. 'Space is a common symbol of freedom in the Western world,' Tuan continues, while 'place is a calm center of established values. Human beings require both space and place.'[184] A limited access to space means that a person has limited options in creating an intimate place. In Scottish slum novels, this problem is amply manifested in families crowded in one or two rooms, where the struggle for space simply to move around is the major issue and the pursuit of one's inner life in peace remains a mere indulgence.

The argument of the social production of space notwithstanding, Tim Cresswell notices that 'compared with the dynamism of time, space and place appear inert'.[185] A change of time is indeed more readily perceived than a change in space, but this subjective perception does not yet make space fixed. Regarding the relationship of time and space, David Harvey points out that the increasing ease of movement from one place to another by modern means of transportation results

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[181] See Bachelard, *The Poetics of Space*, 6.

[182] See Bachelard, *The Poetics of Space*, 27.

[183] Yi-Fu Tuan, *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2011), 3.

[184] Tuan, *Space and Place*, 54.

[185] Tim Cresswell, *In Place/Out of Place: Geography, Ideology, and Transgression* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996), 159.

in what he calls 'time-space compression', or a 'sense of overwhelming change in space-time dimensionality'.[186] Space certainly seems more mobile and flexible to a contemporary person than a person living, say, in the nineteenth century. In the course of the twentieth century in particular, space has been rapidly evolving and triggering changing structures of feeling, which came to be reflected in the urban novel.

Capitalist societies operate on the principle of uneven distribution of capital, hence the space that such societies produce is unevenly developed. Christopher Harvie describes this process taking the example of Glasgow: 'Glasgow's expansion in the nineteenth century was protean: the Scottish Chicago. The epoch-making buildings of one decade were torn down in the next, the people were fitted into such land as was not required for industry, railways or upper-class housing. Much of the population lived effectively an underground existence, in small tenement flats which the sun reached, at best, for only one or two hours each day.'[187] Marx asserts that 'the history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles'; Harvey builds on this statement and complements the idea of class struggle with struggle for space, concluding that 'the history of capitalism is, then, punctuated by intense phases of spatial reorganization'.[188] As a rule, Scottish novelists present social and spatial struggles from the perspective of the underprivileged class, accounts of middle-class urban life are extremely rare.

The production, reproduction and reorganisation of space are continuous processes which ensure that space never retains its seeming stability and always exists in a state of flux. One spatial arrangement replaces another, but the latest version of space cannot entirely erase the earlier version, rather, all previously existing spaces permeate one another. The resulting product is what Harvey calls 'a *palimpsest*, a composite landscape made up of different built forms superimposed upon each other with the passing of time'.[189] Using different words, Edward W.

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[186] David Harvey, *Justice, Nature and the Geography of Difference* (Malden: Blackwell, 2004), 243.

[187] Christopher Harvie, 'Alasdair Gray and the Condition of Scotland Question', in *The Arts of Alasdair Gray*, ed. Robert Crawford and Thom Nairn (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1991), 81.

[188] Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *The Communist Manifesto: A Modern Edition* (London: Verso, 2012), 34; Harvey, *Justice, Nature and the Geography of Difference*, 296.

[189] Harvey, *Justice, Nature and the Geography of Difference*, 417. Italics in the original.

Soja similarly argues that 'the sequence of urban spatializations is cumulative, with each phase containing traces of earlier geographies, already formed urban spatial divisions of labour which do not disappear so much as become selectively rearranged'.[190] Rearrangements and reorganisations of space include demolishing buildings and raising new ones in the middle of older built-up areas, repurposing structures no longer required for their original use or simply abandoning spaces that outlived their usefulness. As apparent from these examples, changes in physical geography inherently involve changes in social geography.

4.1.1 The City in Time

> The twentieth century has been, then, *the* century of urbanization.
>
> —David Harvey[191]

Scotland stands out among comparable countries for its particularly rapid pace of urbanisation: according to T. M. Devine's data, in the 1830s, over 30 per cent of Scottish population lived in cities of 5,000 inhabitants and more, while by 1911, the number had risen to almost 60 per cent.[192] Scotland is furthermore characteristic by its uneven distribution of population, most of which is accumulated in the Central Belt, the area stretching between Edinburgh and Glasgow. The economy supported by Scottish cities had been relying on heavy industry since the start of industrialisation, and at the turn of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century, the country was enjoying growth and prosperity. Devine points out two major issues inherent in the Scottish economy at that time: first, industrial labourers

[190] Edward W. Soja, *Postmodern Geographies: The Reassertion of Space in Critical Social Theory* (London: Verso, 1989), 175.

[191] David Harvey, *Justice, Nature and the Geography of Difference* (Malden: Blackwell, 2004), 403. Italics in the original.

[192] See T. M. Devine, 'Industrialisation', in *The Transformation of Scotland: The Economy since 1700*, ed. T. M. Devine, C. H. Lee, and G. C. Peden (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2011), 39.

earned lower wages but had higher living costs than the English average, and second, the economy was not sufficiently diversified, so that the gradual decline of heavy industry had a devastating impact on Scotland.[193] Scotland's number one heavy industry was shipbuilding on the river Clyde, which by 1914 constituted 'not only one-third of British shipping tonnage but 18 per cent of total world output', as John A. Agnew notes.[194] Agnew adds that such volume 'could not be sustained in the face of competition from industrializing countries and the downturn in world demand', which was coupled with the Great Depression in the 1930s, and although World War II brought a temporary increase in production, the onset of deindustrialisation diminished the role of the shipbuilding industry, ultimately making its contribution to twenty-first-century Scotland's economy negligible.[195]

Besides the fast urbanisation and the rise and fall of heavy industry, another peculiar feature of Scottish urban life is the generous provision of subsidised council housing since the 1920s. Richard Rodger states that 'approximately 50 per cent of the aggregate Scottish housing stock in 1986 was municipally owned', which is twice as much as the British average.[196] Leading up to World War I, the population boost in Scotland's major cities was too large for the cities to accommodate the new citizens, so council housing projects were devised to solve the acute shortage of dwellings. From the start, the focus was on quantity rather than quality, which led to the creation of large-scale slums with a low level of living standards (including shared lavatories one per floor, limited access to water supply, cavity beds to replace bedrooms and generally unsanitary conditions) matched only by the high level of overcrowding. Devine observes that 'in 1911, nearly 50 per cent of the Scottish population lived in one or two roomed dwellings compared with just over 7 per cent in England', and in 1914, nearly 50 per cent Scots 'lived more than two persons to a room'.[197]

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[193] See Devine, 'Industrialisation', 64–66.

[194] John A. Agnew, *Place and Politics: The Geographical Mediation of State and Society* (London: Routledge, 2015), 117

[195] Agnew, *Place and Politics*, 117.

[196] Richard Rodger, introduction to *Scottish Housing in the Twentieth Century*, ed. Richard Rodger (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1989), 11.

[197] Devine, 'Industrialisation', 67.

The slum problem plagued Glasgow in particular, which in the 1950s led the city to implement a pioneering overspill policy with the target to clear inner city slums such as Gorbals and move their population to newly built peripheral estates, Drumchapel, Easterhouse, Pollok and Castlemilk, one at each corner of Glasgow. From the start, the project suffered from major drawbacks, especially the lack of amenities to serve the extensive housing schemes and the lack of job opportunities in the area. Lauren Paice also explains that 'many long-established communities across the city were torn apart in quick succession, with neighbours and extended family often being re-housed far apart from each other', which evoked in the relocated tenants 'a sense of isolation', mental as well as geographical.[198] Some aspects of slum clearances and inner city gentrification conspicuously resemble the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Highland Clearances, the enforced removal of crofters by the aristocratic landowners who opted for using the former farming land for sheep grazing and game hunting. In both cases, traditional communities were torn apart, and though the slum clearances were intended as social assistance to those in need, the execution of the plan was short-sighted, including the use of poor quality construction materials and design, which soon led to wide-spread problems with damp.[199]

Scottish over-reliance on corporation housing aggravated the country's long-standing unemployment problem. Rodger concludes that 'features inherent in the tenure . . . have acted as a limiting factor on labour mobility, and tenure has, therefore, partially reinforced structural economic problems by trapping families in areas of high unemployment'.[200] This is clearly manifested in Glasgow's peripheral estates, which failed to provide the projected employment opportunities as well as adequate public transport infrastructure to cater for the needs of its working-class inhabitants. In the late twentieth century, Scotland suffered from escalating unemployment following the election of the Conservative government led by Margaret Thatcher in 1979. C. H. Lee argues that 'given the severity of its social and economic problems, and the long experience of market failure, it is perhaps not

[198] Lauren Paice, 'Overspill Policy and the Glasgow Slum Clearance Project in the Twentieth Century: From One Nightmare to Another?', *Reinvention* 1, no. 1 (2008): http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/go/reinventionjournal/volume1issue1/paice.

[199] See Paice, 'Overspill Policy and the Glasgow Slum Clearance Project in the Twentieth Century'.

[200] Rodger, introduction to *Scottish Housing in the Twentieth Century*, 12.

surprising that Scotland should develop a strong dependence on government intervention'.[201] Conservative policies did not agree with Scotland's dependency culture and along with the culminating deindustrialisation, they hastened the closing down of the remaining heavy industries. By the end of the twentieth century, however, Scotland seemed to have successfully transformed to a service-oriented economy, of which tourism, as G. C. Peden remarks, 'was the largest single source of employment'.[202]

4.1.2 The Novel in Time[203]

> A recurring complaint in criticism of Scottish fiction of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries has been the lack of what we may call the industrial novel: the novel set in a modern city or large industrial town, having for theme, or at least background, the problems and conflicts of urban society.
>
> —Moira Burgess[204]

While the progress of urbanisation in Scotland was swift, the Scottish novel took a long time to tackle the changed structures of feeling connected to the changing

[201] C. H. Lee, 'Unbalanced Growth: Prosperity and Deprivation', in *The Transformation of Scotland: The Economy since 1700*, ed. T. M. Devine, C. H. Lee, and G. C. Peden (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2011), 228.

[202] G. C. Peden, 'Introduction: The Scottish Economy in Historical Context', in *The Transformation of Scotland: The Economy since 1700*, ed. T. M. Devine, C. H. Lee, and G. C. Peden (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2011), 6.

[203] This section incorporates selected material from my previously published article 'Country, City and in Between: Constructing Space in Twentieth-Century Scottish Fiction', in *From Theory to Practice, 2012: Proceedings of the Fourth International Conference on Anglophone Studies*, ed. Gregory Jason Bell, Katarína Nemčoková, and Bartosz Wójcik (Zlín: Univerzita Tomáše Bati ve Zlíně, 2013), 309–13.

[204] Moira Burgess, *The Glasgow Novel*, 3rd ed. (Hamilton / Glasgow: Scottish Library Association / Glasgow City Council Cultural and Leisure Services, 1999), 26.

environment. Manfred Malzahn contrasts the condition of Scottish and English literature in the course of the nineteenth century, concluding that whereas 'in England novelists like Dickens, Disraeli, Eliot and Gaskell confronted their readers with the new reality and its pungent problems, Scottish writers would turn to history or to provincial life for their material'.[205] Malzahn refers to the fact that towards the end of the nineteenth century, Scottish literary tradition relied almost exclusively on the achievement of two isolated individuals: Water Scott's historical regional fiction and Robert Burns's rustic dialect poetry. When at last in the 1890s there arose a group of writers who sought similar goals and used sufficiently similar methods to earn the label of a distinct school, they did not engage with urban realities but withdrew into Scotland's idealised rural past instead. The deeply-rooted regionalism of this group, even parochialism in some of its adherents, is reflected in the term by which they are referred to—kailyard school—the Scots word 'kailyard' designating literally a cabbage patch in the back garden.

Moira Burgess contemplates the possible reasons for the curiously long time that Scottish novelists took to catch up with issues attendant on urbanisation and industrialisation, suggesting that the 'brutal impact of the Industrial Revolution' had a 'stupefying effect on contemporary writers', who, under the influence of Walter Scott, felt the need to look back to record the disappearing peasant way of life rather than to face the problems of the present.[206] Parallel to the kailyard school, there evolved a group of fiction writers who transferred the genre conventions to urban settings, retaining the characteristic 'sentimentality and a certain smallness of vision, which flourish just as happily in a tenement close as in a cabbage patch', as Burgess remarks.[207] Burgess describes this writing retrospectively as 'urban kailyard', which, except for the shift in setting, 'shares the attributes of the kailyard proper', including the moralising tendency in upholding 'a code of unshakeable assumptions regarding conventional conduct and belief'.[208] Where the rural kailyard focuses on the modest concerns of small farmers and weavers, the urban kailyard deals with poor but complacent tenement dwellers. As a rule, neither rural

[205] Manfred Malzahn, 'The Industrial Novel', in *The History of Scottish Literature*, ed. Cairns Craig, vol. 4, *Twentieth Century* (Aberdeen: Aberdeen University Press, 1987), 229.

[206] Burgess, *The Glasgow Novel*, 31.

[207] Burgess, *The Glasgow Novel*, 34.

[208] Moira Burgess, *Imagine a City: Glasgow in Fiction* (Glendaruel: Argyll, 1998), 68–69.

nor urban kailyard writings achieve any significant literary value, though in the latter category J. J. Bell's *Wee Macgreegor* (1902), a series of endearing sketches from a little boy's uneventful life, remains enduringly popular.

The kailyard mode of literary expression largely exhausted its potential during the first decade of the twentieth century and was succeeded in the interwar period by what came to be known as the Scottish Literary Renaissance, an unprecedented upsurge of creative writing seeking to define peculiarly Scottish identity and experience. Although the movement, starting with Hugh MacDiarmid's poetry and continuing with a range of fiction writers, did produce novels set in cities, the city in works such as those by the Glaswegian novelist Catherine Carswell appears merely as a background, while the focus remains on the inner life and aspirations of the characters. On this note, Dietmar Böhnke comments: 'By the end of the First World War living in urban conglomerations far from traditional roots had become a common experience for most Scots. Although the Renaissance writers' quest for a Scottish national identity somehow mirrored this loss of roots, the bleak reality of that experience only began to be reflected in Scottish literature by the mid-1930s through a tradition that has since come to be known as the Industrial or Glasgow Novel.'[209] Böhnke's interchangeable use of the Industrial and the Glasgow Novel, however precarious it might seem, actually corresponds with the literary scene of the 1930s, which saw a rapid rise of the urban novel that for the first time directly addressed the industrial experience represented in its most condensed form by Glasgow.

The Glasgow Novel begins as an ambitious if aesthetically limited effort of typically left-leaning authors to realistically portray and resolve the tensions springing from the clash of classes, the crippling effect of the Great Depression and the constant threat of unemployment. Even the mostly highly regarded novels of the 1930s, such as George Blake's *The Shipbuilders* (1935) and James Barke's *Major Operation* (1936), tend to exaggerate the possibility of an understanding between the middle-class employers and the proletariat and occasionally lapse into artless didacticism. Christopher Whyte notes that 'the classic mode of Glasgow fiction is realism. Glasgow life is felt as a raw, untapped material, an unleavened

[209] Dietmar Böhnke, *Kelman Writes Back: Literary Politics in the Work of a Scottish Writer* (Berlin: Galda und Wilch, 1999), 44.

mass, and the urge is first and foremost to transcribe, to denounce. . . . Realism as a mode hinders transcendence.'[210] The Glasgow Novel inclines to naturalism in its minutely detailed descriptions often accompanied by a preoccupation with the unsavoury aspects of urban experience, as epitomised by the deliberately sensational story from the Gorbals slums, Alexander McArthur and H. Kingsley Long's *No Mean City* (1935), where even a hint of transcendence is precluded from the start.

The urban novel grew more reflective and inward-looking after World War II, whose carnage set many writers in search of residual humanity in bleak cityscapes. Robin Jenkin's novel *The Changeling* (1958), for example, examines the possibility of improvement for a sensitive Glasgow slum boy and concludes that there is no escape from the life of poverty, as the protagonist's petty criminal past catches up with him and he takes his life. In a similar vein, George Friel's Glasgow trilogy, consisting of *The Boy Who Wanted Peace* (1964), *Grace and Miss Partridge* (1969) and *Mr Alfred, MA* (1972), deals with the characters' losing internal struggles and pushes the importance of the city setting aside. Some post-World War II novels ambitiously interweave the character and the city, especially Archie Hind's seminal *The Dear Green Place* (1966), whose protagonist, an aspiring chronicler of Glasgow, prefigures the deeply troubled Glasgow School of Art student who is the protagonist of Alasdair Gray's *Lanark: A Life in Four Books* (1981).

Gray's highly influential *Lanark* stood at the birth of the Second Scottish Literary Renaissance, from which there sprang a number of widely varied writers who introduced hitherto unexplored perspectives of the city. In Glasgow, Agnes Owens, Janice Galloway and A. L. Kennedy supply the so far nearly absent women protagonists and women's ways of using the city, while James Kelman gives expression to the until then largely inarticulate voices from the very margins of society. In Edinburgh, Ian Rankin reimagines the historical capital as the capital of crime, while Irvine Welsh reveals the touristy metropolis's murky peripheries and seedy subcultures. Altogether, these authors contribute with their portrayals of post-industrial cities to the postmodern plurality of visions, in which, as Marie

[210] Christopher Whyte, 'Imagining the City: The Glasgow Novel', in *Studies in Scottish Fiction: Twentieth Century*, ed. Joachim Schwend and Horst W. Drescher (Frankfurt: Lang, 1990), 319.

Odile Pittin-Hédon comments, 'the city becomes *a* city, or rather myriads of cities whose representations bear upon one another'.[211]

4.2 Glasgow[212]

> Glasgow is a special city. Hardly anybody who has lived there or written about the place would disagree. The key to its literary tradition lies in the particular, and in many ways terrible, nature of the urban experience Glasgow stands for.
>
> —Christopher Whyte[213]

The fortunes of Glasgow are closely connected to a specific feature in its physical geography: the river Clyde, which made the city only later to unmake it. In the British colonial period, the convenient location of Glasgow on the western coast at the mouth of Clyde enabled the city to enter the market with commodities produced in the British West Indies, especially sugar and tobacco. Glasgow derived significant profit from the transatlantic trade and continued its growth during the Industrial Revolution, when the Clydeside shipbuilding industry earned the city the sobriquets Workshop of the World and the Second City of the Empire. As a result of the steep decline of heavy industry following the 1930s Great Depression,

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[211] Marie Odile Pittin-Hédon, "Re-imagining the City: End of the Century Cultural Signs in the Novels of McIlvanney, Banks, Gray, Welsh, Kelman, Owens and Rankin', in *The Edinburgh History of Scottish Literature*, ed. Ian Brown, vol. 3, *Modern Transformations: New Identities (from 1918)* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2007), 254. Italics in original.

[212] This section incorporates selected material from my previously published article selected material from my forthcoming article 'A Tale of Two Cities: The Antithesis between Edinburgh and Glasgow as Reflected in Scottish Literature', in *Anglophone Culture across Centuries and Borders: Proceedings from an International Conference*, ed. Pavlína Flajšarová and Jiří Flajšar (Olomouc: Univerzita Palackého v Olomouci, 2015).

[213] Christopher Whyte, 'Imagining the City: The Glasgow Novel', in *Studies in Scottish Fiction: Twentieth Century*, ed. Joachim Schwend and Horst W. Drescher (Frankfurt: Lang, 1990), 317.

Glasgow embarked on a tumultuous phase of political radicalism known as the Red Clydeside, when working-class leaders staged hunger marches and called, among other social causes, for the improvement of labourers' working and housing conditions.

Glasgow's most overcrowded and unsanitary inner city slums that housed the working-class up to the post-war period were subsequently cleared under an ill-advised overspill policy which led to the creation of the peripheral housing estates. David Newlands summarises the outcome of the solution provided by the housing schemes, observing that 'lacking social amenities and local employment opportunities, they soon became as bad as the inner-city areas they were supposed to replace'.[214] Along with the slum clearances, there started the construction of the M8, a multi-lane motorway which encloses Glasgow's centre in a tight square-shaped loop. Moira Burgess points out that the ambitious but insensitive project 'effectively devastated inner-city areas like Cowcaddens, Anderston, Townhead and Govan'.[215]

Glasgow's difficulties further deepened in the 1980s, a decade of swiftly rising unemployment, which was countered in the field of cultural life in 1990 by the surprising award to the city of the title of the European Capital of Culture. As Crawford comments, 'at the start of a decade when unemployment hit 30 percent in some of the city's surrounding housing estates and almost 40 percent in the central district, and when nearly 30 percent of Glasgow's social housing (the largest such concentration in western Europe) suffered problems with damp, the 1990 designation "European City of Culture" seemed to some a bad joke'.[216] The revival of the Scottish literary scene in the 1980s most likely contributed to Glasgow's recognition as a cultural centre, though ironically, some of the prominent writers of the time, including Alasdair Gray and James Kelman, criticised the nomination as a commercial charade bound to alienate Glasgow from its native culture rather than to promote it. Although Glasgow has been on the mend since the end of the twentieth century, it still 'has a labor force containing one of the highest proportions

[214] David Newlands, 'The Regional Economies of Scotland', in *The Transformation of Scotland: The Economy since 1700*, ed. T. M. Devine, C. H. Lee, and G. C. Peden (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2011), 172.

[215] Moira Burgess, *Imagine a City: Glasgow in Fiction* (Glendaruel: Argyll, 1998), 213.

[216] Robert Crawford, *On Glasgow and Edinburgh* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 2013), 36.

among British cities of workers with low levels of skills, together with one of the lowest proportions of professional and managerial people', John A. Agnew writes in 2015, and 'also includes a population that has become increasingly dependent on municipal and national government programs that compensate for the lack of employment and other opportunities'.[217]

For all its troubled history, Glasgow takes pride in having inspired a peculiar niche in literature known today as the Glasgow Novel. This category can be broadly applied to all fiction set in Glasgow, provided that the city does not function merely as a setting but proves to be an essential element that enables and reinforces some of the themes and motifs of the works. Moulded in the depressed 1930s, the genre sprung out as a response to the pressing social problems of the time, which materialised in proletarian industrial fiction often of limited artistic merit. The primary impulse was to publicise the working-class hardships and urge for change, with the writers assuming a 'journalistic approach to novel-writing (several, like George Blake, were in fact journalists)', as Burgess remarks.[218] Apart from documentary novels, Burgess goes on, simultaneously there appeared fiction dramatising 'the idea that Glasgow is not merely dirty, crowded, unhealthy—conditions explicable, and curable, in practical terms—but independently evil, a malevolent force'.[219]

In contrast to the earlier representations of Glasgow as a sordid, suffocating city, the post-World War II period saw a shift to the tentative perception of Glasgow as a site which might foster imaginary life and artistic creativity. The Glasgow Novel moved from monothematic works with formulaic plots and one-dimensional characters to a new variety, including the recurring themes of the plight of the artist, the coming of age and the clash between the country and the city. The genre culminated in the 1980s and 1990s, set in motion by the publication of Alasdair Gray's *Lanark: A Life in Four Books* (1981), whose influence cannot possibly be overstated. Burgess summarises that 'the appearance of *Lanark* seemed to empower and encourage Glasgow novelists; to demonstrate that a Glasgow novel could be

[217] John A. Agnew, *Place and Politics: The Geographical Mediation of State and Society* (London: Routledge, 2015), 147.

[218] Burgess, *Imagine a City*, 115.

[219] Burgess, *Imagine a City*, 173.

offbeat and experimental, that the well-worn categories were things of the past. Within a few years Glasgow fiction had attracted the attention of the wider world.'[220]

4.2.1 Mobs like Flooded Rivers: A. McArthur and H. Kingsley Long's *No Mean City*

> Night brings no kindly silence to the tenement dwellers of the Empire's second city. . . . The tenements themselves are never silent. There are sick children who wail and healthy ones who get restless; half-drunken men who snore and mutter; half-sober ones who quarrel with their wives. . . . And ever and anon front doors will open to allow some hurrying figure to reach the single landing closet which serves three households.
>
> —A. McArthur and H. Kingsley Long[221]

The first literary representation of Glasgow to draw significant attention was *No Mean City* (1935), a collaborative attempt by A. McArthur, a working-class Glaswegian who supplied the content of the book, and H. Kingsley Long, a journalist who shaped the text into a publishable form. Their scandalous account of slum life in the Gorbals met with mixed responses: among curious readers, the novel became a bestseller; among serious critics, it was dismissed as sensation-seeking, poorly written and lacking in aesthetic merit. Stretching over a period of nine years starting in 1921, the novel documents the rise and inevitable fall of several characters who come from different backgrounds and choose different paths in attempt to free themselves from the slum conditions. The protagonist, Johnnie Stark, relies on his brute strength and blind courage, which earns him the title Razor

[220] Moira Burgess, *The Glasgow Novel: A Complete Guide*, 3rd ed. (Hamilton / Glasgow: Scottish Library Association / Glasgow City Council Cultural and Leisure Services, 1999), 60.

[221] A. McArthur and H. Kingsley Long, *No Mean City* (1935; London: Corgi, 1957), 22.

King and the post of the leader of a major street gang. He becomes increasingly marked by wounds sustained in violent street battles, serves several terms in jail for assault and ends up beaten to death and replaced by a younger rival. The fortunes of his wife, Lizzie, follow the same trajectory, as her reputation derives from that of her husband, whom she married for his status as a hard man. Razor King's brother Peter and his wife Isobel seek upward mobility by working hard in respectable occupations, but Peter's almost inadvertent involvement in politics costs him his job and sets the couple on a rapid decline. Given the universal popularity of dance halls at the time, another couple, Lily and Bobbie, first succeed as much-sought-after and well-paid professional performers, but then their careers fall apart following personal disputes.

The relentlessly bleak novel is presented from a conspicuously middle-class perspective by an omniscient narrator who emphasises the unnaturalness, outlandishness, even exoticism of the setting and intrudes into the narrative with informative and judgemental comments. These intrusions disrupt the purported authenticity of the story because, as Wayne C. Booth points out, 'not only do they have no immediate relationship to other elements in the story, but they frequently call the reader's attention explicitly to the fact that he is reading just a story'.[222] The following passage from *No Mean City* illustrates the narrator's bemused detachment from the characters, the obtrusive didacticism and also the exclusion of the Scottish dialect word 'hoose' relegated into quotation marks. 'Hoose', though it corresponds to Standard English 'house', refers here and in other Scottish urban novels to a tenement flat rather than to a house as a self-standing building:

> Battles and sex are the only free diversions in slum life. Couple them with drink, which costs money, and you have the three principal outlets for that escape complex which is for ever working in the tenement dweller's subconscious mind. Johnnie Stark would not have realized that the "hoose" he lived in drove him to the streets or that poverty and sheer monotony drove him in their turn into the pubs and the dance halls or into affairs like the one he was having with

[222] Wayne C. Booth, *The Rhetoric of Fiction*, 2nd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983), 205.

> Mary Hay. But then, the slums as a whole do not realize that they are living an abnormal life in abnormal conditions.[223]

The novel enacts the concept of determinism in that it consistently reaffirms the impossibility of transcendence by any means whatsoever, be it Razor King and Lizzie's hardness, Isobel and Peter's austerity or Lily and Bobbie's talent.

No Mean City corresponds with the premise of conditioning as formulated in Marx's historical materialist theory: 'The mode of production of material life conditions the social, political and intellectual life process in general,' Marx argues, 'It is not the consciousness of men that determines their being, but, on the contrary, their social being that determines their consciousness.'[224] Edward W. Soja refines and injects human element into Marx's somewhat mechanical hypothesis and reveals that the process of conditioning goes both ways: 'The created spatiality of social life [has] to be seen as simultaneously contingent and conditioning, as both an outcome and a medium for the making of history—in other words, as part of a historical and geographical materialism rather than just a historical and geographical materialism applied to geographical questions.[225] Societies and individuals are indeed shaped by their social existence, as Marx claims, but they also exert an active influence on their environment in a continuous process of mutual interaction. Economic determinism acts as the decisive force in *No Mean City* and all the characters ultimately fail in their struggle against it, but the very fact that some of them briefly manage to extricate themselves from the limits of their socioeconomic position undermines the supposed absolute inevitability inherent in the idea of determinism. A deterministic worldview prevalent in the early phase of the Glasgow Novel however gradually subsides and gives way, by the 1980s at the latest, to an almost endless variety in representing the complex relationships between the citizens of Glasgow and their city.

Despite his lack of insight, Razor King realises the unlikeliness of overcoming his social and spatial conditioning and resorts to unmotivated acts of

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[223] McArthur and Long, *No Mean City*, 44.

[224] Karl Marx, *Selected Writings*, ed. David McLellan, rev. ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 425.

[225] Edward W. Soja, *Postmodern Geographies: The Reassertion of Space in Critical Social Theory* (London: Verso, 1989), 58.

violence, first as a thoughtless outlet of his frustrations, then as a conscious choice of lifestyle. Razor King subliminally resists whatever force put him in his lot, but his resistance lacks a specific target and remains simply destructive rather than constructing anything new from the ruins. A similar unconstructive blind aggression, labelled as 'reactive resistance' by David Couzens Hoy, reappears in a number of Glasgow Novels, including William McIlvanney's *Laidlaw* (1977), whose Tommy Bryson strikes against the homophobic society by murdering a female victim.[226] At the same time, *Laidlaw* illustrates the shift in the Glasgow Novel to its more ambitious and intricate incarnation in terms of both form and content in that the aggressor is neither the protagonist of *Laidlaw*, nor is he presented as less human, as an unnatural deviation. There are 'no fairies, no monsters. Just people,' Detective Laidlaw believes and hence allows more humanity to a murderer than what is granted to any of the dehumanised characters in *No Mean City*.[227]

Paulo Freire describes the mechanism of unmotivated violence, explaining that 'the oppressed, instead of striving for liberation, tend themselves to become oppressors, or "sub-oppressors"', which comes to expression as 'horizontal violence', that is, violence against one's own people.[228] In the Gorbals portrayed in *No Mean City*, violence is promoted to a manifestation of culture in which men and women alike take part, fighting members of rival gangs, inhabitants of rival streets or whomever offends them. Christopher Whyte notices the 'cyclic, ritual quality' of the street battles detailed in the novel and suggests that Razor King's only viable possibility of fulfilment lies 'in the brief, orgiastic flashing of his twin razors'.[229] Dick Hebdige identifies the attitude of refusal crystallised in 'the elevation of crime into art' as a characteristic feature of 'subculture', that is, the alternate culture of the subordinate group which defines its 'expressive forms and rituals' in opposition

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[226] David Couzens Hoy, *Critical Resistance: From Poststructuralism to Post-critique* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2005), 5.

[227] William McIlvanney, *Laidlaw* (1977; Edinburgh: Canongate, 2013), 85.

[228] Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, trans. Myra Bergman Ramos (London: Penguin, 1996), 27, 44.

[229] Christopher Whyte, 'Imagining the City: The Glasgow Novel', in *Studies in Scottish Fiction: Twentieth Century*, ed. Joachim Schwend and Horst W. Drescher (Frankfurt: Lang, 1990), 323, 325.

to the dominant group.[230] Violence in the Gorbals qualifies as a coherent subculture because it occurs as a repeated ritual, a piece of (sub)culture which is produced and consumed in that the gang fights involve active participants as the producers and enthusiastic spectators as the consumers. The gang clashes even follow an elaborate set of rules that address the whole process, starting from a formal challenge of the opponent and leading up to the declaration of the winning party and the celebrations of the victory.

However the dwellers in the Gorbals rebel against the hegemonic group, their own social arrangement replicates the class order that disadvantages them. 'The Gorbals is a microcosm,' Silvia Bryce-Wunder observes, 'Its pecking order mentality reflects the hierarchical structure of modern British society; the scramble for and veneration of power in the tenements reproduces and reinforces, at the lowest level, the internal mechanisms of an entrenched caste system.'[231] The narrator of *No Mean City* confirms: 'Society in the tenements is graded far more narrowly than in the outside world. One street may be definitely "better class" than another and not such good class as a third. Families that have two rooms look down upon those that live in a "single end". Immense importance attaches to clothes.'[232] Social status in McArthur and Long's novel is tightly interlocked with space. The overcrowded tenement dwellers measure social rank by the space available to them, and their common greatest ambition is to acquire a two-bedroom flat. Street battles offer rare moments of exhilaration when the dispossessed inhabitants of the Gorbals come to fully occupy and rule the urban space, stopping traffic and spreading ruin around:

> Albion Street is normally a quiet enough turning off Trongate, but on that evening the opposing mobs surged down it from opposite ends in a tumult of shouting and yelling and cursing and defiance. Stones and bottles were thrown from one crowd to the other before the front ranks met. All traffic was held up, and scores of people who

[230] Dick Hebdige, *Subculture: The Meaning of Style* (London: Routledge, 2003), 2.

[231] Sylvia Bryce-Wunder, 'Of Hard Men and Hairies: *No Mean City* and Modern Scottish Urban Fiction', *Scottish Studies Review* 4, no. 1 (2003): 119.

[232] McArthur and Long, *No Mean City*, 104.

> had intended to be no more than spectators found themselves swept into the riot by the pressure of an ever-increasing crowd. Windows on either side of the street were magnificently smashed in the shock of the first meeting. . . . The whole mob reeled and sprawled and swirled and eddied like a flooded river between narrow banks.[233]

This depiction of a clash between rival gangs captures the sheer exaltation of those involved and endows mindless violence with a poetic quality, approvingly dubbing the smashing of windows 'magnificent' and likening the mob to a reeling, sprawling and swirling river. The novel spells out a contradictory message as it overtly condemns the slum subculture, yet in the same breath celebrates it in the lengthy descriptions of bloody battles, lingering on details of fight tactics and injuries sustained by the casualties.

4.2.2 The Tree That Never Grew: Archie Hind's *The Dear Green Place*

This is the tree that never grew,
This is the bird that never flew,
This is the fish that never swam,
This is the bell that never rang.

—Archie Hind[234]

Archie Hind's novel *The Dear Green Place* (1966), called so for the alleged Gaelic meaning of Glasgow's name, brings to attention the motif of the green place, which has been recurring in Scottish writing since the time of Robert Burns. Douglas Gifford traces the history of literary representations of the dear green place and records the evolving associations connected with the concept, starting from the

[233] McArthur and Long, *No Mean City*, 179–80.

[234] Archie Hind, *The Dear Green Place* (1966; Edinburgh: Birlinn, 2001), 248. Italics in the original.

approach of the kailyard school.[235] In Andrew Nash's definition, kailyard entails 'a provincial outlook, a predilection of romance over realism, an excessive focus on rural as opposed to urban settings, and a tendency to evade social and industrial issues'.[236] Hence, to kailyard writers, the dear green place represents a refuge in terms of space as well as society, as kailyard characters are firmly rooted in traditional rural communities which seem to be immune to moral corruption. Gifford describes a later interpretation of the dear green place as 'a visionary landscape of the mind' growing from 'the notion of an older Scotland', a site of harmonic communion, represented in Lewis Grassic Gibbon's *Sunset Song* (1932) by 'the Picts and Elder People of the Mearns before community debasement set in'.[237] Finally, Hind's novel inaugurates the perception of the dear green place as 'a non-spatial, non-landscape idea, of creativity and imaginative fertility', Gifford suggests, and concludes that 'out of such a regenerated and fertile place things could grow well'.[238] As Hind illustrates, however, the image of the dear green place as a site of creativity is yet another myth that fails to materialise and is no more realistic than the earlier kailyard representations.

The Dear Green Place follows the plight of a young working-class artist, Mat Craig, who aspires to write a novel capturing the multifaceted richness of Glasgow, 'driven by this warm lust to make, to shape, to invent, to describe, this loop of the Clyde with its dusty streets and backyards, its crumbling walls and stretches of waste, its factories and chimneys and noise and nooks and people'.[239] Mat copes with practical as much as artistic problems; his writing ambitions result in his failure to support his wife and newborn baby, while his subject eludes him and refuses to be constrained by words. Mat envisions a masterpiece that would reveal Glasgow's past and present, its green places and its industrial areas, an epic novel that would give justice to the powerful emotions evoked in him by his city. His descriptions of Glasgow are both an ode and a threnody, and while his response to the city does not lack in emotional intensity, he is unable to reconcile Glasgow's

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[235] See Douglas Gifford, *The Dear Green Place? The Novel in the West of Scotland* (Glasgow: Third Eye Centre, 1985), 5.

[236] Andrew Nash, *Kailyard and Scottish Literature* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2007), 14.

[237] Gifford, *The Dear Green Place?*, 5.

[238] Gifford, *The Dear Green Place?*, 6.

[239] Hind, *The Dear Green Place*, 210.

conflicts and transform them in a clear mental vision that could be expressed in writing:

> He was standing on the bridge looking over the parapet into the dirty water, at the very spot where Boswell had stood and looked at the widest streets in the whole of Europe. Gles Chu! Glasgow! The dear green place! Now a vehicular sclerosis, a congestion of activity! . . . Mat had to admit that all this moved him in a way that art could only be secondary to; the foundries, steelworks, warehouses, railways, factories, ships, the great industrial and inventive exploits seemed to give it all a kind of charms, a feeling of energy and promise. . . . A dirty filthy city. But with a kind of ample vitality which has created fame for her slums and her industry and given her moral and spiritual existence a tight ingrown wealth, like a human character, limited, but with a direct brutish strength, almost warm. Glasgow! Gles Chu![240]

Overwhelmed by his contradictory perceptions, Mat wanders the streets in search of his theme and the appropriate language to treat it, but he finds nothing. Cairns Craig summarises the resonance of *The Dear Green Place* as that of 'a novel about the impossibility of a working-class writer in a Calvinist city writing a novel about the city he lives in: novel and environment are antithetic to one another and the only novel that can be written about it is the novel about the failure to write a novel'.[241]

According to Henri Lefebvre, 'the user's space is *lived*—not represented (or conceived)', in contrast to 'the abstract space of the experts (architects, urbanists, planners)'—and its origins lie in 'childhood, with its hardships, its achievements, and its lacks'.[242] Mat's difficulty lies in overcoming the gap between lived space and represented space, in other words, he knows his experience of the space but he cannot mediate it in writing. He seeks in vain to retrieve the brief moment of

[240] Hind, *The Dear Green Place*, 60–62.

[241] Cairns Craig, *The Modern Scottish Novel: Narrative and the National Imagination* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1999), 213.

[242] Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith (Malden: Blackwell, 1991), 362. Italics in the original.

transcendence that occurred once at the beginning of the novel, encompassing both the urban and the natural, the adulthood and the childhood: 'As he walked up the road from the tram stop he could see the sky far away to the west, bright pink and blue like the illustrations in a child's book . . . Mat had felt moved and happy. He walked under some trees overhanging the pavement and a cobweb touched his face which had made him remember walking through a wood as a child.'[243] The reference to a children's book and to a childhood memory in this passage, along with numerous other scenes from Mat's boyhood recalled throughout the novel, comply with Lefebvre's identification of the roots of a lived space in the landscape of one's early years. Mat fails to relate imaginatively to this lost landscape of the dear green place and ends the novel mentally and physically broken, bitterly recalling a piece of children's verse whose lyrics list the symbols on Glasgow's coat of arms: '*This is the tree that never grew, / This is the bird that never flew, / This is the fish that never swam, / This is the bell that never rang.*'[244] Since these are the closing words of *The Dear Green Place*, Mat in a sense does reconnect with his childhood through the simple rhymes, but the connection is too weak to find its expression in a work of art, as Mat had originally wished.

Aside from artistic issues, Mat faces pragmatic problems, including a lack of space to pursue his writing. While staying in his parental home, he devotes nights to writing, but is frowned upon by his parents, who rightly point out that this practice does not sit well with his day job. After Mat moves with his wife and their child into a tiny flat of their own, the place is too crowded for the family to function without constantly getting in each other's way, which causes disputes and smothers Mat's creative spirit. Regarding crowding and creativity, Yi-Fu Tuan remarks that 'human beings are so adaptable that under certain favorable conditions they can wring an advantage even from residential crowding—namely, a kind of indiscriminate, gregarious human warmth', however, 'the cost of this successful adaptation to crowding . . . appears to be a chance to develop deep inwardness in the human personality'.[245] To Mat, his dwelling provides neither the feeling of

[243] Hind, *The Dear Green Place*, 5.

[244] Hind, *The Dear Green Place*, 248. Italics in the original.

[245] Yi-Fu Tuan, *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2011), 64–65.

family closeness, nor the chance to cultivate insight and imagination, and if anything, the unavailability of adequate space to live, work and create deepens Mat's despair and severely impairs the bonds within his family. There is nothing like a dear green place for Mat, 'since the final view of Glasgow', as Douglas Gifford sums up, 'is of a cultural wasteland, whose fitting central symbol is the superbly evoked slaughterhouse' where Mat finds temporary employment.[246]

In the ending of *The Dear Green Place*, besides having a flickering moment of connection with his projected novel's theme lying in his childhood and Glasgow's coats of arms rhymes, Mat also unwittingly taps into the appropriate language in which to write his Glasgow opus. Alone on a ferry, Mat hovers on the verge of a breakdown: 'A voice, a shrugging Glesca keelie voice, said to him: "Ye're nut on, laddie. Ye're on tae nothin'." Mat looked around the empty ferry, but still the voice spoke. "Ye're not quoted. A gutless wonder like you, that hasn't got the gumption of a louse. . . . " A harsh, ugly, contemptuous, slangy voice. This time he didn't look round, for it was his own voice, he had spoken aloud.'[247] The words speak of failure, but the turn of phrase and the sound speak of Glasgow, precisely as Mat had imagined, even though at this point he remains unaware of it. Ian Brown and Colin Nicholson both recognise the influence of Hind's novel 'as representing a new approach to writing about Glasgow, breaking with its sometimes-mawkish gang-literature tradition. The novel is properly a landmark, opening an urban landscape in ways productively developed by Alasdair Gray, James Kelman and William McIlvanney.'[248] *The Dear Green Place* indeed represents a major step away from the tradition of McArthur and Long's *No Mean City*, as referred to by Brown and Nicholson, and as a metanovel, Hind's work explores a hitherto neglected territory to be later conquered by McIlvanney's *Laidlaw* (1977), Gray's *Lanark: A Life in Four Books* (1981), Kelman's *How Late It Was, How Late* (1994) and other novels that succeed in expressing a strong sense of Glasgow's urban space in a language evoking Glasgow.

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[246] Douglas Gifford, Sarah Dunnigan, and Alan MacGillivray, eds., *Scottish Literature in English and Scots* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2002), 863.

[247] Hind, *The Dear Green Place*, 247.

[248] Ian Brown and Colin Nicholson, 'Arcades—The 1960s and 1970s', in *The Edinburgh Companion to Twentieth-Century Scottish Literature*, ed. Ian Brown and Alan Riach (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009), 142.

4.2.3 A Magnificent City: Alasdair Gray's *Lanark*

> But if a city hasn't been used by an artist not even the inhabitants live there imaginatively. What is Glasgow to most of us? A house, the place we work, a football park or golf course, some pubs and connecting streets. . . . Imaginatively Glasgow exists as a music-hall song and a few bad novels. That's all we've given to the world outside. It's all we've given to ourselves.
>
> —Alasdair Gray[249]

A voluminous novel of epic resonance, Alasdair Gray's *Lanark: A Life in Four Books* (1981) comprises four books arranged out of their chronological sequence because, as the author suggests in his cameo appearance in the novel, he wants the entire work 'to be read in one order but eventually thought of in another'.[250] The novel develops two main story lines, at the first impression seemingly unrelated, yet on closer observation ingeniously interlocked. One of them involves a deeply troubled teenager, Duncan Thaw, who obsessively pursues a fulfilment of his artistic vision in a realistic setting of post-World War II Glasgow. Frustrated in his efforts, Thaw takes his own life only to be reincarnated as Lanark, the protagonist of the alternate story line, which is set in the dystopian city of Unthank and follows Lanark's symbolically endowed search for sunlight. Just as Lanark is an older impersonation of Duncan, so Unthank is a later embodiment of Glasgow, no more a city on the Clyde, but 'a city on the banks of a shrunk river', though still recognisable as 'a city with nineteenth-century square full of ugly statues'.[251]

Lanark opens the novel with no memories of his former existence, and since he does not know his name, he assumes the earliest name that he can recall, the one

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[249] Alasdair Gray, *Lanark: A Life in Four Books* (1981; Edinburgh: Canongate, 2007), 243.

[250] Gray, *Lanark*, 483.

[251] Gray, *Lanark*, 78.

of a town pictured in a poster in the railway carriage which brought him to Unthank. Douglas Gifford considers *Lanark* to be a descendant in the tradition of Glasgow represented as a green place nurturing creativity, an image envisioned so powerfully in Archie Hind's foundational *The Dear Green Place* (1966). Gifford associates the very name Lanark with a picturesque rural place and notes that 'this memory of open green spaces and light will haunt Lanark/Duncan Thaw throughout the novel'.[252] To Gifford, the scene when Lanark walks with his son to the top of a hill, mirroring his own hike as a child, 'brings the theme of dimly remembered green place to an almost affirmative moment of epiphany'.[253] Young Duncan, though at ease with his urban surroundings, shows special fondness for Glasgow's green places. He always walks to school through Alexandra Park instead of taking the straighter route down a busy street, keenly observing the way in which the presence of the city impacts on the appearance of nature in the park: 'The sky was usually pallid neutral and beyond the pitches a grey pragmatic light illuminated ridges of tenements and factories without obscuring or enriching them. Past the hill a boating pond lay among hawthorns and chestnuts. Often a film of soot had settled overnight on the level water and a duck, newly launched from an island, left a track like the track a finger makes on dusty glass.'[254] Despite passages like this that record industrial pollution affecting natural beauty, the novel does not overtly criticise the despoilment of nature by urbanisation and instead highlights the protagonist's loyalty to the city.

Duncan's coming of age is marked by spatial change: during World War II, his family relocates to the country, but when they return home, neither their flat—let to another family during the war—nor the city looks the same. On arriving in Glasgow, Duncan observes the scenery uncomfortable and bemused: 'Thaw looked out at a succession of desolate streets lit by lights that seemed both dim and harsh. Once Glasgow had been a tenement block, a school and a stretch of canal; now it was gloomy huge labyrinth he would take years to find a way through.'[255] Duncan's emotional and geographical dislocation in realistic post-war Glasgow is matched

[252] Douglas Gifford, *The Dear Green Place? The Novel in the West of Scotland* (Glasgow: Third Eye Centre, 1985), 11.

[253] Gifford, *The Dear Green Place?*, 13.

[254] Gray, *Lanark*, 156.

[255] Gray, *Lanark*, 146.

by Lanark's experience on arriving at the Institute, a self-sufficient dystopian society occupying a sealed-off building with labyrinthine corridors and chambers where human beings are left to die in order to be converted into food and fuel. Lanark spends his life searching for sunlight 'to love, and meet friends, and work in it', more precisely, a sunlit city like the one that he sees from the Institute's windows but learns that the image is located in the past and cannot be retrieved.[256] The same image described in the same words reappears in the novel in Duncan's story when Duncan and his school friend Coulter climb on the hills above Glasgow and contemplate the city. At this moment, the dear green place in all senses seems to be within reach of Duncan, who is about to start studying at Art School on a scholarship, but his dream will turn into a nightmare as the requirements of the school fail to accommodate Duncan's artistic vision.

Rather than the mythical dear green place, the shifting settings of *Lanark* resemble hell, which Moira Burgess finds to be another prominent motif in the Glasgow Novel. Gray's novel particularly excels in 'making hell not merely from a physical environment, not merely from a psychological state, but from both and the interaction between them', as Burgess notices.[257] Lanark, whose story opens the whole book, directly declares Unthank to be hell early on in the novel.[258] On his quest for a sunny urban space, Lanark unwillingly ends up in Unthank at a later time only to find the city in an even worse shape than during his first visit:

> He remembered a stone-built city of dark tenements and ornate public buildings, a city with a square street plan and electric tramcars. Rumours from the council corridors had made him expect much the same place, only darker and more derelict, but below a starless sky this city was coldly blazing. Slim poles as tall as the spire cast white light upon the lanes and looping bridges of another vast motorway. On each side shone glass and concrete towers over twenty floors high with lights on top to warn off aeroplanes. Yet this was Unthank, though the old streets between towers and motorlanes

[256] Gray, *Lanark*, 98.

[257] Moira Burgess, *Imagine a City: Glasgow in Fiction* (Glendaruel: Argyll, 1998), 180.

[258] See Gray, *Lanark*, 45.

> had a half-erased look, and blank gables stood behind spaces cleared for carparks.[259]

Through Lanark, Gray does not bemoan the loss of rural landscape to cityscape, but the loss of an earlier stage in Glasgow's development, whose original tenements and poverty were at least human, whilst the clinically cool modern architecture provokes only forbidding feelings. In the modern Unthank depicted above, the formerly shrinking river has now been transformed into a motorway, and Lanark once again exasperatedly calls the city 'Hell', with a capital initial.[260] Unthank's 'looping bridges' of a 'vast motorway' dotted by 'concrete towers' gradually replacing the old streets lined by tenements allude to the transformation of Glasgow in the post-Word War II decades, when clearings of inner city slums started and the M8 motorway encircling Glasgow's centre was laid down.

The motif of hell in *Lanark* is fittingly complemented by the recurring image of the Necropolis, the city of the dead, Glasgow's majestic cemetery sprawling on a hill overlooking the city. An incarnation of the Necropolis first appears when Lanark desperately cries for a way out of the diseased city of Unthank and the earth opens on the pinnacle of the graveyard, taking on the shape of a mouth and directing Lanark to jump in. Lanark does so and finds the Institute on the other side. The instructions for coming down the earth-mouth, naked and head first, imply birth, or rebirth in Lanark's case, the implication however gathers ironic resonance as Lanark discovers that the Institute literally feeds its population on dead human beings. The Necropolis foreshadows death also for Duncan's mother, who is admitted to Glasgow Royal Infirmary—somewhat unfortunately located next to the cemetery—with what turns out to be a terminal condition, and who then spends her last days looking out of her window with a view of the Necropolis. The Necropolis assumes more ambiguous connotations when Duncan and his friend from the Art School, Kenneth McAlpin—who shares the name with Scotland's first king and lives in the wealthy suburb of Bearsden—climb a hill and survey Glasgow lying spread below them, with 'travelling patches of sunlight . . . silhouetting the cupolas

[259] Gray, *Lanark*, 398.

[260] Gray, *Lanark*, 430.

of the Royal infirmary against the tomb-glittering spine of the Necropolis'.[261] The impression of the Necropolis still lingering, Duncan proceeds to announce that 'Glasgow is a magnificent city' and elaborates that 'because nobody imagines living here', unlike in London or Paris, Glasgow lacks artistic life and only 'exists as a music-hall song and a few bad novels'.[262] The 'few bad novels' refer to the ambivalent heritage of A. McArthur and H. Kingsley Long's *No Mean City* (1935), a book which perpetuated a one-sided representation of Glasgow as a site of irredeemable physical and spiritual deprivation.

Ian A. Bell brings up a broader interpretation of Duncan's complaint about Glasgow's lack of imaginative life: 'The case asserted in *Lanark* is that Glasgow especially remains under-represented, but using the same terms it could equally well be argued instead that Scotland as a whole has for many years been powerfully and constrainingly mis-represented, that it has only existed as an imaginative construction, and perhaps as a not very convincing one at that.'[263] Gray completed the ambition introduced by Hind in *The Dear Green Place*—symbolically, Hind's only published novel, for he never overcame his later writer's block—and produced in *Lanark* a touching tribute to the multifaceted and often ambivalent character of Glasgow and its citizens in particular and Scotland in general. Gray avoids the risk of misrepresenting Glasgow precisely because he does not presume to offer a single realistic view of the city as earlier novelists attempted, rather, he presents widely varied facets of urban spaces that fit into the mosaic of Glasgow without necessarily completing it. A fellow Glaswegian author, the poet Edwin Morgan, appreciates Gray's unassuming representation of the city, explaining that 'the feeling we get is not of some breast-beating commitment or some vacuous local pride but of an at-home-ness with a place where he can work and where a remarkable array of human material offers itself continuously for transformation into art'.[264]

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[261] Gray, *Lanark*, 243.

[262] Gray, *Lanark*, 243.

[263] Ian A. Bell, 'Imagine Living There: Form and Ideology in Contemporary Scottish Fiction', in *Studies in Scottish Fiction: 1945 to the Present*, ed. Susanne Hagemann (Frankfurt: Lang, 1996), 221.

[264] Edwin Morgan, 'Gray and Glasgow', in *The Arts of Alasdair Gray*, ed. Robert Crawford and Thom Nairn (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1991), 64.

Throughout the novel, Duncan and Lanark passionately engage in acts of rebellion against imposed dogmas in all aspects of life, getting involved in political, social and ethical modes of resistance, based on David Couzens Hoy's classification.[265] Duncan's social resistance is manifested in his struggle against the institutional restraints of the art college that he despises for wasting his admitted talent on unambitious examination tasks focused on commercial design. After being dismissed from the college without degree, Duncan comes into conflict with institutionalised religion, whose representatives do not welcome his boldly original interpretation of the Creation painted by him in a church mural. George Donaldson and Alison Lee note that Duncan's story resists the traditional pattern of the coming-of-age novel, where 'the subject is tamed into conformity with constituted authority through education and bruising experience . . . When the subject rails or rebels or fails to comprehend the social order, that act . . . fixes both the central character's still imperfect understanding of order and fixes the seemingly objective nature of that order yet more firmly.'[266] Duncan's more mature alter ego, Lanark, undertakes a major act of political resistance when he attends as a delegate a summit of fictional world powers and attempts to thwart them from closing a destructive pact. Both Duncan and Lanark fail, but it does not mean that they achieve nothing. Their actions qualify as ethical resistance, as defined by Hoy: 'The paradigm for ethical resistance is such that ethical resistance will inevitably fail. The ultimate resistance is in the face of death. . . . This resistance is better described as ethical than as moral, for it shows up in the person's *ethos*, which in this case is the person's perseverance, despite infirmity, in meaningful activities.'[267] Duncan remains committed to delivering his best work on the church mural even when his art is denounced and the church consequently condemned to demolition. Lanark's ultimate ethical resistance lies in his response to the news of his impending demise in the conclusion of the novel. As soon as the messenger who announces that Lanark will die the next day disappears, Lanark forgets him and continues contemplating

[265] See David Couzens Hoy, *Critical Resistance: From Poststructuralism to Post-critique* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2005), 6–8.

[266] George Donaldson and Alison Lee, 'Is Eating People Really Wrong? Dining with Alasdair Gray', *Review of Contemporary Fiction* 15, no. 2 (1995): 159.

[267] Hoy, *Critical Resistance*, 8. Italics in the original.

the view of the city from the Necropolis, 'a slightly worried, ordinary old man but glad to see the light in the sky'.[268]

Whether deliberately or otherwise, the ending of *Lanark* echoes the ending of Lewis Grassic Gibbon's *A Scots Quair* trilogy (1932–34), where the ageing protagonist, Chris, is last seen sitting in the grass and watching dusk fall over her beloved landscape. Both Gray's and Grassic Gibbon's respective works similarly follow their protagonists' journey from youth to old age and interlink the protagonists' changing structures of feeling with the transformations in the space that they inhabit. Grassic Gibbon realistically records the fast progress of urbanisation and industrialisation, while Gray imaginatively captures the equally violent processes of globalisation and deindustrialisation. Grassic Gibbon sees the rise of the city, while Gray envisions its fall. The conclusion of Duncan's story depicts a curiously inverted fall of the city, the disappearance of Glasgow into the sky: 'The city beyond them was growing into the sky. First the towers of the municipal building ascended, and beyond them the hump of Rotten Row with all the tenement windows lit, and then the squat cathedral spire with tower and nave and a nearby cluster of Royal infirmary domes and beyond those, like the last section of a telescope, the tomb-rotten pile of the Necropolis slid up with the John Knox column overtopping the rest.'[269] Following this hallucination, Duncan incurs a mental breakdown which eventually leads to his suicide. The ending of Lanark's story and at the same time the ending of the whole book strikes a more hopeful cord in that though Unthank is ruined in an apocalyptic earthquake and fire, the river returns to the city and so does the sunlight.

The coda to the novel encapsulates the book's overall resonance: 'I STARTED MAKING MAPS WHEN I WAS SMALL SHOWING PLACE, RESOURCES, WHERE THE ENEMY AND WHERE LOVE LAY. I DID NOT KNOW TIME ADDS TO LAND. EVENTS DRIFT CONTINUALLY DOWN, EFFACING LANDMARKS, RAISING THE LEVEL, LIKE SNOW. I HAVE GROWN UP. MY MAPS ARE OUT OF DATE. THE LAND LIES OVER ME NOW. I CANNOT MOVE. IT IS TIME TO GO.'[270] These words speak of the

[268] Gray, *Lanark*, 560.

[269] Gray, *Lanark*, 348.

[270] Gray, *Lanark*, 560. Emphasis in the original.

inscription of time on the physical landscape and the landscape of the mind and culminate on an affirmative note, expressing positive action and resilience against adversity. The conclusion of the novel reinforces the sentiments conveyed by Duncan's and Lanark's stories of unrelenting resistance against hegemony on all levels. Hoy points out the significance of resistance in that it 'is both an activity and an attitude. It is the activity of refusal. It is also an attitude that refuses to give in to resignation.'[271] The refusal to resign, as Hoy emphasises, encourages an active stance and 'an openness to the indefinite possibility that things could be different, even if one does not know exactly how'.[272] Ultimately, Gray's *Lanark* epitomises its author's often-repeated maxim promoting resistance against oppression and fostering hope, which has been engraved among other notable quotations in the new building of the Scottish Parliament opened in 2004: 'Work as if you live in the early days of a better nation.'

4.2.4 Cultcha City: Alasdair Gray's *Something Leather*[273]

> Many intelligent people still think Glasgow is a bolshie slum full of drunks who slash each otha with ray-zas because nobody wants the ships they used to build.
>
> —Alasdair Gray[274]

More than a coherent novel, Alasdair Gray's *Something Leather* (1990) is a series of loosely related character and situation sketches, which eventually turn out to contain a limited set of the same characters presented at different periods of their

[271] Hoy, *Critical Resistance*, 9.

[272] Hoy, *Critical Resistance*, 10.

[273] This section incorporates selected material from my previously published article 'Towards a Heteroglot Discourse: Representing Nonstandard Dialects in the Scottish Novel', in *Facets of Scottish Identity*, ed. Izabela Szymańska and Aniela Korzeniowska (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo Naukowe Semper, 2013), 211–19.

[274] Alasdair Gray, *Something Leather* (London: Cape, 1990), 149.

lives and in shifting constellations. The often self-contained chapters comprising *Something Leather* deal with a variety of topics, most of which characteristically interweave the personal and the political. Notably, a chapter entitled 'Culture Capitalism' satirises the biased perceptions on the part of the English regarding the transition of Glasgow from A. McArthur and H. Kingsley Long's infamous no mean city in 1935—'a bolshie slum full of drunks who slash each otha with ray-zas because nobody wants the ships they used to build'—to the European City of Culture in 1990.[275] This chapter of *Something Leather* revolves around the planned exhibition of the London artist Harriet Shetland, or Harry, in Glasgow as part of the City of Culture events. Harry is represented by an informed but still patronising agent, Linda, whose conversation with an unnamed English dealer reveals their (mis)conceptions considering Scotland's history, people and culture.

The clash between Scottish and English worldviews is reflected not only at the level of the story but also in the use of the language. Gray cleverly subverts the traditional hierarchy of Standard English and nonstandard dialects by transcribing the speech of characters who flaunt their upper-class accent phonetically, much as a more conventional writer would transcribe dialect speech. Besides achieving an exuberantly humorous effect, the technique of inverting central and marginal modes of expression illustrates the absurdity of prioritising one culture over another:

> "First tell me about the European Cultcha Capital thing," says the dealer. "Why Glasgow? How has a notoriously filthy hole become a shining light? Is it an advatising stunt?"
> "Certainly, but we have something to advertise!" says Linda. "It all began when John Betjeman discovad Glasgow in the sixties and found what nobody had eva suspected. The city centa is a mastapiece of Victorian and Edwardian architectcha. But in those days it was unda such a thick coating of soot and grime that only the eye of a masta could penetrate it. Even moa off-putting wa the people. In those days most Scottish impoats and expoats passed through Glasgow, and the good middle bit was squashed up tight against docks and warehouses and the tenements of those who worked in

[275] Gray, *Something Leather*, 149.

> them. What would visitas think of London if Trafalga Squaya was on the Isle of Dogs? If every day hordes of horny-handed men in filthy overalls percolated up and down Regent Street and half filled the Fleet Street pubs?"[276]

In this vein, Linda's defence of Glasgow continues, mingling historical facts, radical politics and ridicule of the character type of a smug and wealthy Englishman who exploits Scotland's resources in a manner reminiscent of colonisation and who condescends to Scottish natives only to express amusement at their apparent cultural backwardness. Occasionally growing darker and bitter, Linda rejoices at the collapse of Glasgow's heavy industries and the post-World War II inner city slum clearances, which had the working-class 'decanted into big housing schemes on the verge of things. So the middle of Glasgow is clean now and will neva be filthy again! The old warehouses and markets and tenements and churches are being turned into luxury flats and shopping malls and a surprising variety of very decent foreign restaurants. Which is wha we come in—I mean the English.'[277] Linda describes the break-up of whole communities and their eviction from the city to the periphery effectively as an act of cleansing which civilised a formerly wild area and opened it up for the enjoyment of more prosperous classes than the native inhabitants.

For all her appreciation of Glasgow as an investment opportunity, Linda struggles to resolve the question of why Glasgow would become a 'cultcha city'—apart from being the lowest bidder in that it did not require funding from the central government:

> "But shooali the natives have some local cultcha of tha own?" says the dealer. . . . "Has Glasgow nothing else apart from Billy Connolly?"
> "Some novels by Glasgow writas have had rave reviews in the *Times Lit. Sup.*, but I'm afraid they leave me cold. Half seem to be written in phonetic Scotch about people with names like *Auld Shug*. Every

[276] Gray, *Something Leather*, 171.

[277] Gray, *Something Leather*, 172.

> second word seems to be fuck, though hardly any fucking happens. The otha half have complicated plots like SM obstacle races in which I entie-aly lose my way and give up."[278]

Besides the Glaswegian comedian Billy Connolly, Linda refers almost prophetically to the work of James Kelman, who actually writes 'in phonetic Scotch' punctuated with swear words, and whose novel *How Late It Was, How Late* (1994) was to receive, apart from 'rave reviews in the *Times*', the Booker Prize for the year 1994. The other allusion is to Alasdair Gray himself, though the 'SM obstacle race' description does not do his novel *1982, Janine* (1984) justice entirely. Before any more native culture can be discovered, however, Linda and the dealer's conversation moves to Harry, a critically acclaimed and commercially successful sculptor. Harry undertakes to enlighten Glasgow with a lavish exhibition of her masterpiece—a vast installation consisting solely of bare human buttocks modelled from various materials and of different shapes and sizes—indeed a curious artistic choice to contribute with to the cosmopolitan Capital of Culture.

4.3 Edinburgh[279]

> Central Edinburgh . . . can seem something of a splendid stage set, even a museum exhibit. In a city of grand, often riverless bridges, some historic streets are windswept in their elevation, others oddly and fascinatingly sunken; among the latter, the sixteenth-century Mary King's Close (whose remains now lie

[278] Gray, *Something Leather*, 174. Italics in the original.

[279] This section incorporates selected material from my forthcoming article 'A Tale of Two Cities: The Antithesis between Edinburgh and Glasgow as Reflected in Scottish Literature', in *Anglophone Culture across Centuries and Borders: Proceedings from an International Conference*, ed. Pavlína Flajšarová and Jiří Flajšar (Olomouc: Univerzita Palackého v Olomouci, 2015).

> beneath the Royal Mile's City Chambers) has a haunted, museum-like stillness.
>
> —Robert Crawford[280]

The modern history of Edinburgh revolves around the changing nature of its status as the capital city. Prior to 1707, Edinburgh served as the capital of an independent country, but the 1707 Act of Union merged the formerly sovereign kingdoms of England and Scotland to form Great Britain, which demoted Edinburgh to the capital of a nation-state. The Act of Union, the result of what Michael Gardiner describes as 'a series of bribes and blunders', still remains a controversial issue, as Scottish nationalist voices denounce this political step as an act of colonisation rather than an act of union.[281] In the twentieth century, in the spirit of the post-World War II decolonisation, Scotland held a devolution referendum in 1979 to decide whether the majority of Scots supported the establishment of a national parliament. The proposal was rejected, but the referendum was repeated in 1997 and this time the Scottish electorate voted in favour of a devolved parliament. Consequently, in 1999 Edinburgh proudly resumed its role as the seat of the new Scottish Parliament.

During the second half of the eighteenth century, the city flourished as a centre of learning: Edinburgh Enlightenment fostered personalities influential in the entire body of Western thought, such as the philosopher David Hume and the economist Adam Smith. In 1786, the first volume of *Encyclopaedia Britannica,* the standard reference work, was printed by William Smellie in Anchor's Close in Edinburgh. The same William Smellie recorded one English immigrant's appraisal of the city as a hub of intellect: 'Here I stand at what is called the *Cross of Edinburgh*,' the Englishman allegedly said, 'and can, in a few minutes, take fifty men of genius and learning by hand.'[282] Early-nineteenth-century Edinburgh saw a significant rise in publishing: besides books, notable magazines were founded, including the reputable *Edinburgh Review* (since 1802), *Blackwood's Edinburgh*

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[280] Robert Crawford, *On Glasgow and Edinburgh* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 2013), 37.

[281] Michael Gardiner, *The Cultural Roots of British Devolution* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2004), 2.

[282] Qtd. in Crawford, *On Glasgow and Edinburgh*, 12. Italics in the original.

Magazine (1817–1980) and *Chamber's Edinburgh Journal* (1832–1952). It was for the proliferation of ideas and knowledge in the period of Enlightenment that Edinburgh acquired its epithet the Athens of the North.

The comparison of Edinburgh to Athens is founded not only on the city's intellectual life but also on its visual appeal. With the imposing Castle overlooking the city centre, the Calton Hill monuments and the extinct volcano Arthur's Seat dominating the skyline, Edinburgh evokes an impression of refined majesty. Calton Hill however also hosts a structure that came to be known as 'Edinburgh's disgrace', the lonely pillars of what should have been a grand Parthenon, had the city not run out of funds soon after the construction started in the 1820s.[283] The cultural reputation of contemporary Edinburgh rests on its Festival, an annual three-week show of performances, both established and experimental. What started in 1947 as a modest effort to boost the post-war morale and fuel cultural exchange eventually turned into the world's largest celebration of the creative and performing arts. Although it boasts no such thing as the Edinburgh novel, Edinburgh was popularised as a literary city owing to a number of writers who typically explore the dark side which lies below the superficial glitter of the capital. Edinburgh figures as a subculture capital in Irvine Welsh's stories of the underprivileged and dispossessed, while Ian Rankin's detective novels present the city equally unflatteringly as the capital of crime.

4.3.1 Other People's Edinburghs: Muriel Spark's *The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie*

> And many times throughout her life Sandy knew with a shock, when speaking to people whose childhood had been in Edinburgh, that there were other people's Edinburghs quite different from hers, and with which she held only the names of

[283] Crawford, *On Glasgow and Edinburgh*, 134.

> districts and streets and monuments in common. Similarly, there were other people's nineteen-thirties.
>
> —Muriel Spark[284]

Born and bred in Edinburgh, Muriel Spark regards the city as a major formative influence on her writing, even though she spent most of her adult life outside Scotland and only one of her over twenty novels, *The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie* (1961), is set in her native country.[285] Spark's condition of geographical and internal exile is amply reflected in her writing, including *The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie*, which takes place in Edinburgh in the 1930s and elaborates, among others, on the concept of characters out of place. The description of dislocation fits the titular character, an unconventional teacher at a respectable school, considered 'a trifle out of place' in her conservative environment, though she would not be so 'amongst her own kind, the vigorous daughters of dead or enfeebled merchants, of ministers of religion, University professors, doctors . . . who had endowed these daughters with shrewd wits, . . . logical educations, hearty spirits and private means'.[286] Miss Brodie's favourite student, Sandy Stranger, carries the attribute of strangeness, or out-of-placeness in her very name and further enacts this quality in her role in the story, when she betrays her unsuspecting teacher—causing Miss Brodie to lose her job—and when she becomes a nun, though she is repeatedly shown to find churches repelling. Sandy remains out of place even in her convent, where she writes a bestselling philosophical book and receives the visits of interviewers while uncomfortably clutching the bars the grille, as though she wished to leave but was forcing herself to stay.

Analysing Scottish features in Spark's writing, Ian Rankin suggests that 'Edinburgh to her means rationalism. Believing in a strong difference between right

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[284] Muriel Spark, *The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie* (1961; London: Penguin, 2013), 33.

[285] See Alan Bold, *Muriel Spark* (London: Methuen, 1986), 26.

[286] Spark, *The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie*, 42.

and wrong.'[287] Bernard Sellin concurs with this claim and concludes that despite Spark leaving Edinburgh at the age of nineteen, 'she could not avoid the moral influence of her native city'.[288] *The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie* puts great emphasis on the notions of propriety and morality, but at the same time the novel makes it clear through its central conflict that there exist multiple interpretations of moral as well as other values. Miss Brodie does not adhere to the school's curriculum, but she does not consider her approach to teaching inappropriate, on the contrary, she apparently believes that she is furthering the interests of her pupils. Unpopular among the staff for her nonconformity, Miss Brodie is eventually dismissed from the school on the grounds of teaching fascism after Sandy compromises her with the school's headmistress.

While Miss Brodie admires certain aspects of fascism, rather than teaching it, she acts as a fascist dictator herself in that she enforces her idiosyncratic values and aesthetic tastes on her class, presenting her views as unquestionable dogma. Paulo Freire stresses the significance of education in the mechanism of hegemony, pointing out that 'education as the exercise of domination stimulates the credulity of students, with the ideological intent . . . of indoctrinating them to adapt to the world of oppression'.[289] Miss Brodie's teaching philosophy, 'Give me a girl at an impressionable age, and she is mine for life', delineates the relationship between the teacher and the pupil as that of an uncompromising dictator and her submissive subject.[290] Delivering as promised, Miss Brodie's teaching turns out to have a lasting effect on all of her pupils, but particularly on Sandy. Following the success of her book, Sandy, now Sister Helena, is asked about the influences of her

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[287] Ian Rankin, 'The Deliberate Cunning of Muriel Spark', in *The Scottish Literature since the Seventies*, ed. Gavin Wallace and Randall Stevenson (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1993), 51.

[288] Bernard Sellin, 'Post-war Scottish Fiction—MacColla, Linklater, Jenkins, Spark and Kennaway', in *The Edinburgh Companion to Twentieth-Century Scottish Literature*, ed. Ian Brown and Alan Riach (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009), 128.

[289] Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, trans. Myra Bergman Ramos (London: Penguin, 1996), 59.

[290] Spark, *The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie*, 9.

schooldays, on which she admits, 'There was a Miss Jean Brodie in her prime', the closing sentence of the novel.[291]

Sandy never overcomes the decisive impact of Miss Brodie on her, but in conversations with her visitors in the convent, she realises that there are different sets of values and perceptions than hers—she discovered 'that there were other people's Edinburghs quite different from her', as much as 'there were other people's nineteen-thirties'.[292] For the first fifteen years of her life, Sandy knew little of the world beyond her home and her school, and her sheltered existence only started to crack when Miss Brodie took her class for a walk in the Old Town: 'They approached the Old Town which none of the girls had properly seen before, because none of their parents was so historically minded as to be moved to conduct their young into the reeking network of slums which the Old Town constituted in those years. The Canongate, The Grassmarket, The Lawnmarket, were names which betokened a misty region of crime and desperation.'[293] For the first time, Sandy encounters destitution, filth and vulgarity, she meets women in shawls, men in shabby suits and children in rags, and to her, it is an 'experience of a foreign country'.[294]

The trip to the Old Town temporarily removes all of Miss Brodie's pupils from their comfortable middle-class position and puts them out of place. Slum children shout obscenities in incomprehensible language at the girls, who stand out among the locals in their violet school uniforms and are perceived as intruders, even explicitly likened to the fascists: 'The Brodie set was Miss Brodie's fascisti, not to the naked eye, marching along, but all knit together for her need and in another way, marching along.'[295] As the group marches out of the Old Town, which they have the privileged choice to leave and retire for tea in Miss Brodie's flat, they walk past unemployed men queueing in the street. Sandy observes the coarse working-class men with fear, and although it is her who is out of place in their home territory, in her thoughts it is the men who have no right to be there: 'She saw the slow jerkily moving file tremble with life, she saw it all of a piece like one dragon's body which

[291] Spark, *The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie*, 128.

[292] Spark, *The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie*, 33.

[293] Spark, *The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie*, 32.

[294] Spark, *The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie*, 32.

[295] Spark, *The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie*, 31.

had no right to be in the city and yet would not go away and was unslayable.'[296] From the perspective of the underprivileged Old Town dwellers, it is the Brodie set that must appear as a threatening dragon, 'as a body with Miss Brodie for the head', as an army 'in unified compliance to the destiny of Miss Brodie, as if God had willed them to birth for that purpose'.[297]

Miss Brodie is a protean personality who inspires comparison to various entities throughout the novel, reaching from a fascist leader to 'the God of Calvin', as Sandy thinks of her teacher with increasing disapproval of Miss Brodie's manipulative behaviour and self-generated code of conduct.[298] The Calvinist god arbitrarily chooses a few believers predestined for salvation regardless of their merit, and in the same manner, Miss Brodie picks a set of the elect to become her special pupils and impacts on them in ways that inescapably determine the fates of the girls. Sandy's relationship to Miss Brodie is as ambivalent as Miss Brodie herself: Sandy reacts against her teacher the Calvinist god by betraying her and by converting to Roman Catholicism, which, unlike Calvinism, conditions salvation by virtue as well as faith, offering the believers to choose their fates themselves. Yet, Sandy contemplates with dark fascination St Giles Cathedral, where the Calvinist founder John Knox was appointed minister, and perceives Calvinism as 'some quality of life peculiar to Edinburgh and nowhere else [that] had been going on unbeknown to her all the time, and however undesirable it might be, she felt deprived of it'.[299] In the last analysis, Gerard Carruthers argues that due to Miss Brodie's conflicting nature, 'she can be read as a representation of an ambivalent Scotland itself, as she identifies with [Catholic] Mary, Queen of Scots and abhors [Calvinist] John Knox'.[300] The same reading applies to Sandy, who, despite her outward betrayal, remains inwardly faithful to the legacy of Miss Brodie's teaching.

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[296] Spark, *The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie*, 40.

[297] Spark, *The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie*, 30.

[298] Spark, *The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie*, 120.

[299] Spark, *The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie*, 108.

[300] Gerard Carruthers, 'The Remarkable Fictions of Muriel Spark', in *A History of Scottish Women's Writing*, ed. Douglas Gifford (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1997), 518.

4.3.2 Enlightenment Ghosts: Ian Rankin's *Knots & Crosses*[301]

> There were ghosts in the cobbled alleys and on the twisting stairways of the Old Town tenements, but they were Enlightenment ghosts, articulate and deferential. They were not about to leap from the darkness with a length of twine ready in their hands.
>
> —Ian Rankin[302]

'Oh my God, I seem to have written a crime novel by mistake while trying to write the great Scottish urban updating of *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*.'[303] This how the author Ian Rankin recalls his initial reaction after the publication of what was to become the first in a series comprising so far nineteen novels centred at the character of Edinburgh-based detective John Rebus. The book in question, *Knots & Crosses* (1987), inaugurated the rise of a specifically Scottish brand of crime fiction known under the label tartan noir. Drawing on the hard-boiled American noir crime writing rather than the genteel English murder mystery subgenre, tartan noir typically achieves greater psychological depth and complexity of characterisation, thus sharing many affinities with modern Scandinavian detective fiction.[304] Aaron Kelly explains the implications of the term tartan noir: 'The moniker Tartan Noir can be slyly evocative. A noir tartan, if such a thing were possible, encourages us to consider that patterns exist beneath an absolute, inscrutable darkness. This premise goes right to the heart of crime fiction. The genre has always sought to uncover the

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[301] This section incorporates selected material from my paper '"But *here*, in Edinburgh! It's unthinkable." Bringing the Evil to the Doorstep in Ian Rankin's *Knots & Crosses*', accepted for publication in the post-conference volume of the Crime and Detection in the Age of Electronic Reproduction conference, Liberec, November 22–24, 2013.

[302] Ian Rankin, *Knots & Crosses*, in *Rebus: The Early Years* (1987; London: Orion, 2004), 35.

[303] Len Wanner, 'Ian Rankin: Rough Justice in Tartan Noir', in *Dead Sharp: Scottish Crime Writers on Country and Craft* (Isle Uig: Two Ravens Press, 2011), 19.

[304] See Wanner, 'Ian Rankin', 4–6.

hidden connections, meanings or designs of the everyday.'[305] Rankin perfects the premise of revealing what lies beneath the surface by setting *Knots & Crosses* firmly in an Edinburgh presented as a tourist capital which leads a double life as a crime capital.

The inspiration for Rankin, Robert Louis Stevenson's seminal novella *Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* (1886), revolves around the motif of duality in that it examines the classic opposition of the good and the evil but deals also with the contrasts between the public and the private identity, between appearance and authenticity, between the surface and under-the-surface and other dichotomies. Edinburgh-born Stevenson chose to set *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* in London, but in a London modelled on his native city, which he describes in these terms: 'Half a capital and half a country town, the whole city leads a double existence; it has long trances of the one and flashes of the other, . . . it is half alive and half a monumental marble.'[306] In the late nineteenth century, Stevenson perceived the schizophrenic condition of the Scottish capital behind whose impeccable facade people perform acts of virtue as much as acts of corruption and crime. A hundred years later, Ian Rankin sees Edinburgh as still inherently split between warring contradictions and outright incompatible opposites. Rankin, who studied at the Edinburgh University, recalls his impression of the 'Jekyll and Hyde nature to the city, or the kind of structural way it's broken up into New Town and Old Town, where the New Town was designed to be rational and geometric because the Old Town's chaotic. That's kind of two sides to the human nature, seems to me the organized and the sort of feral.'[307]

The dual nature of Edinburgh is mirrored in the protagonist of *Knots & Crosses*, Detective Sergeant John Rebus, whose ambivalent characterisation extends to the point where he becomes a suspect in the case that he investigates. Rankin's premise for the novel was simple to start with—in his own words, 'cop as good guy (Jekyll), villain as bad guy (Hyde)'—yet he managed to create far greater

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[305] Aaron Kelly, introduction to *Dead Sharp: Scottish Crime Writers on Country and Craft*, by Len Wanner (Isle Uig: Two Ravens Press, 2011), xiii.

[306] Robert Louis Stevenson, 'Edinburgh: Picturesque Notes', in *Edinburgh: Picturesque Notes, The Silverado Squatters, and Will o' the Mill* (1890; Rockville: Wildside, 2009), 10.

[307] Stefani Sloma, 'The City as Character: Edinburgh in the Works of Ian Rankin', *Researcher: An Interdisciplinary Journal* 25, no. 2 (2012): 71.

intricacy and ambiguity than what is typically owed to genre fiction as a literary kind threatened by remaining formulaic.[308] The crime of the novel consists of a string of kidnappings and murders by strangling of four pre-teenage girls with no apparent motive, sex crime having been excluded early in the process of investigation. Running parallel are two subplot lines: one of them focuses on anonymous cryptic messages that Rebus starts receiving at the same time as the so-called Edinburgh Strangler appears; the other follows Rebus's brother Michael's involvement in organised drug crime. Only when the last girl, Detective Rebus's daughter Sammy, is kidnapped, does Rebus realise that from the beginning it was himself who was targeted, and this by his former fellow Special Air Service trainee, Gordon Reeve, seeking a personal vendetta. The outcome of the Strangler case, together with Michael confessing his illegal activities to the unsuspecting Rebus, startles the protagonist with the revelation that evil in all forms comes closer than even a criminal detective could anticipate.

A clash of contesting concepts has been described as an intrinsic feature of the Scottish psyche by G. Gregory Smith, who coined the phrase Caledonian antisyzygy in reference to 'the very combination of opposites', 'the contrasts which the Scot shows at every turn' and which are hence projected in the nation's literature.[309] Smith's post-World-War I diagnosis of the double Scottish character might seem reductionist and dated in the increasingly globalised and diversified present. Indeed, Rankin feels urged to defend his unfashionable stance:

> I'm still obsessed by the idea—and I know that a lot of critics think it is a simplistic one—of the Edinburgh character and the Scottish character being a Jekyll-and-Hyde thing. I *do* think that we all have this darker side, I *do* think there is always more than one side to use, and I know damn fine that the side I present to the world is not the same Ian Rankin who sits down to write the books.[310]

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[308] Ian Rankin, 'Introduction: Exile on Princes Street', in *Rebus: The Early Years* (London: Orion, 2004), vii.

[309] G. Gregory Smith, *Scottish Literature: Character and Influence* (London: Macmillan, 1919), 4.

[310] Gill Plain, 'Rankin Revisited: An Interview with Ian Rankin', *Scottish Studies Review* 4, no. 1 (2003): 133. Italics in the original.

Rankin's *Knots & Crosses* illustrates that even though he uses the elementary motif of duality as a starting point, he refuses to draw a clear line dividing the opposite poles. Furthermore, instead of insisting on the sheer blackness of the villain's world and the untainted whiteness of the detective's territory, he negotiates in the grey in-between zone where the criminal and the policeman contend. The result is a surprisingly plastic narrative and well-rounded main characters that convey the effect of life-like plurality rather than flat, straightforward duality.

The novel features a remarkable minor character, the investigative journalist Jim Stevens, who may not exactly act as the detective's sidekick in the conventional Sherlock-and-Watson sense, who nevertheless receives a significant space in the book as he discovers Michael Rebus's illegitimate activities and tracks both Rebus brothers to confirm—or, as is eventually the case, rule out—their criminal conspiracy. The disgruntled Stevens shares a number of affinities with Rebus, including his preference for field work, his habit of working alone and also his deeply-rooted bond to Edinburgh: 'It was said that he had turned down jobs with London papers, just because he liked to live in Edinburgh. And what he liked best about his job was the opportunity it gave him to uncover the city's murkier depths, the crime, the corruption, the gangs and the drugs.'[311] Stevens as much as Rebus inhabits a self-imposed emotional void in order to prevent personal alliances from affecting his judgement. The reporter's approach arguably contributes to his efficiency, and he compulsively pursues his story, even if 'the ground he walked upon was always likely to fall away beneath his feet, letting him slip into Leith docks of a dark and silent morning, finding him trussed and gagged in some motorway ditch outside Perth. He didn't mind all that. It was no more than a passing thought.'[312] Similarly, Rebus fails to establish any emotional connection with his environment, such as when he contemplates the sentimentally charged statue of Greyfriars Bobby, a favourite sight in Edinburgh which commemorates the faithful terrier who allegedly guarded the grave of his deceased master for fourteen years until its own death: 'He had stared long and hard at the statue of the small dog, and had felt nothing. He had read of Covenanters, of Deacon Brodie, of public

[311] Rankin, *Knots & Crosses*, 22.

[312] Rankin, *Knots & Crosses*, 29.

executions on the High Street, wondering what kind of city this was, and what kind of country.'[313]

Rebus rightly alludes to the less than glamorous history of Edinburgh, among whose most enduringly popular criminals are the eighteenth-century Deacon Brodie, a cabinetmaker by day and burglar by night, and Burke and Hare, early nineteenth-century body snatchers turned murderers who traded in cadavers for anatomy lectures. Perversely, the tourist metropolis commodifies and profits even from the grimmest aspects of its history, albeit sold in a suitably sanitised form. For instance, the Old Town's main thoroughfare, Royal Mile, prides a traditional restaurant called Deacon Brodie's Tavern, and sitting appropriately on the border between the Old and the New Town, there is the Edinburgh Dungeon, a sensational attraction whose performers routinely re-enact the city's criminal past. The concept of criminality as commodity offered for consumption next to plaid, haggis and pipers has little in common with actual crime carried out either in the past or the present. Rankin's novel summarises the impression of the city thus: 'There were ghosts in the cobbled alleys and on the twisting stairways of the Old Town tenements, but they were Enlightenment ghosts, articulate and deferential. They were not about to leap from the darkness with a length of twine ready in their hands.'[314] This statement shows less concern for the history of crude crimes committed by individuals and more for the heritage of large-scale violence represented by the reference to the Covenanters, a persecuted religious sect who signed their pledge in Greyfriars Kirk—the same area where Greyfriars Bobby is located—in the first half of the seventeenth century, hence becoming one of the Edinburgh Enlightenment ghosts.

A recurrent motif of *Knots & Crosses* is the sheer wonder of Edinburgh locals at the obscenity of the crimes happening at their very thresholds: '"But *here*, in Edinburgh! It's unthinkable." Mass murderers belonged to the smoky back streets of the South and the Midlands, not to Scotland's picture-postcard city.'[315] The figure of an old-school detective, who operates in shabby pubs rather than white-collar offices and gathers information by means of informants rather than up-

[313] Rankin, *Knots & Crosses*, 101.

[314] Rankin, *Knots & Crosses*, 35.

[315] Rankin, Knots & Crosses, 84–85.

to-date technology, serves as an excellent device for delving into the seedy and murky depths of the city. Rankin utilises both actual and invented landmarks and geographical names, and as his protagonist moves around Edinburgh while investigating the case, he puts on the same footing the historical Old Town monuments and the disreputable Leith housing schemes. The contradictory double-sided character of the city is pondered on for example when Rebus observes Lothian Road, a busy Edinburgh thoroughfare, from the window of a moving taxi:

> He was watching from his window as the city's late-night drunks rolled their way up and down the obstacle-strewn hazard of Lothian Road, seeking alcohol, women, happiness. It was a never-ending search for some of them, staggering in and out of clubs and pubs and take-aways, gnawing on the packaged bones of existence. Lothian Road was Edinburgh's dustbin. It was also home to the Sheraton Hotel and the Usher Hall. Rebus had visited the Usher Hall once, sitting with Rhona and the other smug souls listening to Mozart's Requiem Mass. It was typical of Edinburgh to have a crumb of culture sited amidst the fast-food shops. A requiem mass and a bag of chips.[316]

Despite the acknowledged existence of not-so-glamorous locations in the city incongruent with Edinburgh's public shiny appearance, not even Rebus is ready to associate Edinburgh with crime easily. For him and fellow officers at the police station, criminality could be reasonably expected in places like post-industrial Glasgow with its infamous history of street gangs, but certainly not in the country's heavily marketed showcase city.

The competitive difference between Edinburgh and Glasgow crops up repeatedly in the novel, often with a mild hint of grotesqueness. 'That would make for a gang-war, Glasgow-style,' Stevens considers possible case development scenarios and bemoans the annoying elusiveness of Edinburgh's criminals, in contrast to Glasgow's unashamedly straightforward ones: 'He liked the Glasgow gangsters of the 1950s and '60s, who lived in the Gorbals and operated from the

[316] Rankin, *Knots & Crosses*, 57.

Gorbals and loaned illicit money to neighbours, and who would slash those same neighbours eventually, when the need arose. It was like a family affair.'[317] In this respect, the distinction between Edinburgh and Glasgow lies perhaps not as much in the imagined low criminality rate in the former and the profusion of crime in the latter as rather in the fact that, as Rankin puts it, 'Edinburgh's very good at hiding its secrets'.[318] While Glasgow certainly fares poorly regarding the level of crime and consistently ranks as Britain's most violent city, in Edinburgh, to use Rankin's words, 'all the sins are there, but . . . quite well hidden'.[319]

The Edinburgh portrayed in *Knots & Crosses* comes alive on multiple levels, assuming a distinct character—even personality—when surveyed by Rebus and Stevens, for example, and when seen from the perspective of visitors to the city. The tourists' versus the detective's experience create the starkest opposition: 'John Rebus was moving through the jungle of the city, that jungle the tourists never saw, being too busy snapping away at the ancient golden temples, temples long since gone but still evident as shadows. This jungle closed in on the tourists relentlessly but unseen, a natural force, the force of dissipation and destruction.'[320] What Rebus perceives as a hazardous jungle, the tourists view as an amusement maze. Even one and the same spot may present a duplicitous character, depending on the usage it is put to at given moment. Edinburgh's Calton Hill, a pleasant green area conveniently located immediately off Princes Street, the New Town's main thoroughfare, offers easy walks, panoramic views of the city and an array of architectural monuments. After dark, however, its countenance changes radically, as Stevens notes while spying on Michael Rebus: 'Thing hotted up at night: car chases, girls and boys hoping for a ride, parties at Queensferry beach. Edinburgh's gay community would mix with those merely curious or lonely, and a couple, hand-in-hand, would now and again enter the graveyard at the bottom of the hill. When darkness fell, the east end of Princes Street became a territory all of its own, to be passed around, to be shared.'[321] This mid-1980s account of an area situated in the very heart of

[317] Rankin, *Knots & Crosses*, 146, 29.

[318] Sloma, 'The City as Character', 74.

[319] See *Review of Scotland's Cities: The Analysis*, government report (Edinburgh, 2002), 118–24; Sloma, 'The City as Character', 73.

[320] Rankin, *Knots & Crosses*, 157.

[321] Rankin, *Knots & Crosses*, 51.

Edinburgh might be dated in some of its specifics, but writing in 2013, Crawford still notes that 'by night, Calton Hill can be dangerous'.[322]

Rankin's novel conforms to the concept of interaction and interdependence between space and society, concisely formulated in Tim Cresswell's statement that 'society produces space and space reproduces society'.[323] Accordingly, the characters in *Knots & Crosses* impact on the setting as much as the setting impacts on them: 'Edinburgh rain was like a judgement. It soaked into the bones, into the structures of the buildings, into the memories of the tourists. It lingered for days, splashing up from puddles by the roadside, breaking up marriages, chilling, killing, omnipresent.'[324] Besides the superficial communication that Edinburgh indeed has a rainy climate, this gloomy passage subtly alludes to the biblical flood as judgement: the rain functions at once as apocalyptic and purging. Rankin exploits religious concepts at several points in *Knots & Crosses*. Appropriately to the crime fiction genre, Rebus discovers himself in what he describes as 'an Old Testament land', 'a land of barbarity and retribution', and appropriately to tartan noir, he concludes his thoughts with blackly comic profanity: 'Rebus reminded himself to stop praying. Perhaps if he stopped praying, god would take the hint and stop being such a bastard to one of his few believers on this near-godforsaken planet.'[325] In a similar vein, the estranged Rebus reflects on the tall monument dedicated to Walter Scott on Princes Street, finding a looming threat rather than the consolation of religion in its ominous 'Gothic missile': 'The Scott Monument pointed religious believers in the right direction, but few of the tourists who snapped it with their expensive Japanese cameras seemed at all interested in the structure's symbolic connotations, never mind its reality, just so long as they had some snaps to show off to their friends back home.'[326]

'I wanted to show tourists and outsiders that there was more to these places than shortbread and tartan, golf and whisky and castles,' Rankin asserts when discussing the motives behind his work about his native country and continues,

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[322] Robert Crawford, *On Glasgow and Edinburgh* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 2013), 135.

[323] Tim Cresswell, *In Place/Out of Place: Geography, Ideology, and Transgression* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996), 12.

[324] Rankin, *Knots & Crosses*, 111.

[325] Rankin, *Knots & Crosses*, 25.

[326] Rankin, *Knots & Crosses*, 69.

'Scotland faces the same challenges as any other nation. We worry about crime, the environment, education and health, employment and migration.'[327] Provided that Rebus acts as Rankin's 'mouthpiece', according to the author's claim in his introduction to *Knots & Crosses*, then Rankin appears to bear a particular grudge against the tourist industry.[328] Sandrock helpfully clarifies Rebus's/Rankin's seemingly inexplicable hostility against tourism, pointing out that the precise target of the critique are not the tourists as such but 'the touristic commodification of Edinburgh', which 'is challenged for its prioritisation of outward beauty and splendour while neglecting the harsher realities of the city'.[329] In Sandrock's reading, Rankin presents the 'duality of the Scottish soul not as an intrinsic character trait' in agreement with G. Gregory Smith's original view, 'but rather as a socio-economically determined condition'.[330] Some of the more blatantly critical passages in the novel confirm this impression, such as Rebus's bitter complaint: 'The tourist side of his capital city. They were never interested in the housing-estates around this central husk. They never ventured into Pilton or Niddrie or Oxgangs to make an arrest in a piss-drenched tenement; they were not moved by Leith's pushers and junkies, the deft-handed corruption of the city gents, the petty thefts of a society pushed so far into materialism that stealing was the only answer to what they thought of as their needs.'[331] Rankin certainly qualifies as a socially critical writer, yet despite the occasionally harsh statements uttered by his characters, he avoids the pitfalls of creating a self-righteous protagonist who professes to have all the answers.

Rankin's novel culminates in a symbolically endowed confrontation of Rebus with the murderer which takes places literally under the surface, in a maze of ancient corridors and cells buried under the Edinburgh Central Library. Edinburgh's Old Town is known to have been built at haphazard heights due to space restrictions, with entire new streets erected on top of old ones, some of which have been preserved underground until today. In the novel, the building of the

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[327] Ian Rankin, *Rebus's Scotland: A Personal Journey* (London: Orion, 2005), 120.

[328] Rankin, 'Introduction', viii.

[329] Kirsten Sandrock, 'The Quest for Authenticity: History and Class in Ian Rankin's Rebus Novels', *Scottish Literary Review* 3, no. 1 (2011): 165.

[330] Sandrock, 'The Quest for Authenticity', 155.

[331] Rankin, *Knots & Crosses*, 69.

library can be seen as representing the heritage of the Edinburgh Enlightenment and is also associated with the present and with superficial appearances. The vaults under the library, formerly used by the Sheriff Court, conjure up the ghosts of the city's dark past and stand for Edinburgh's unsavoury underbelly. Here, Rebus is forced to exorcise the ghosts of his own past as he challenges his opponent, who turns out to be employed as a children's librarian, convenient to his criminal intent. Following on from the two men's climactic one-on-one struggle, Sandrock interprets Rebus 'as a figure of resistance against the Enlightenment ideas of intellectualism and progress' which 'is particularly eager to resist those cultural and material forces that associate these Enlightenment ideas with Edinburgh'.[332] Rebus undermines the superficial perception of Edinburgh as a historical artefact marketed to the tourists and instead expresses in his attitude his need to know and reveal to others the city in its multilayered entirety, picturesque or otherwise. This view corresponds with the conclusion of the novel, where 'Edinburgh had shown itself . . . as never before, cowering beneath the shadow of the Castle Rock in hiding from something. All the tourists saw were shadows from history, while the city itself was something else entirely.'[333]

4.4 Glasgow and Edinburgh[334]

> Glasgow, the Glaswegians' narrative might claim, adjusted to modernity and even fell too much in love with modernist ideas of redevelopment, boldly punctuation its skyline with high-rise buildings; Edinburgh dreamed through its Festival and slept.
>
> —Robert Crawford[335]

[332] Sandrock, 'The Quest for Authenticity', 153.

[333] Rankin, *Knots & Crosses*, 181.

[334] This section incorporates selected material from my forthcoming article 'A Tale of Two Cities: The Antithesis between Edinburgh and Glasgow as Reflected in Scottish Literature', in *Anglophone Culture across Centuries and Borders: Proceedings from an International Conference*, ed. Pavlína Flajšarová and Jiří Flajšar (Olomouc: Univerzita Palackého v Olomouci, 2015).

[335] Robert Crawford, *On Glasgow and Edinburgh* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 2013), 38.

Cases of fierce rivalry between two major cities within the same country that compete for a position of prominence have been documented since antiquity. The opposition between the cultured Athens and the militant Sparta provides a classic example. The antagonism of Edinburgh and Glasgow counts among many similarly tense relationships between pairs of cities worldwide. These include Toronto versus Vancouver, Melbourne versus Sydney and, on the smaller scale of Europe, Berlin versus Bonn. Edinburgh, Scotland's second largest city with a population nearing half a million, serves as the country's capital. On the other hand, Glasgow with its almost six hundred thousand residents comes first as Scotland's most populous city. Robert Crawford asserts that 'in the English-speaking world the rivalry between Glasgow and Edinburgh is foundational in that it precedes and to some extent prefigures all other fully developed, long-standing urban rivalries'.[336] According to Crawford, the uniqueness of this particular opposition lies in the fact that unlike elsewhere, in Scotland the 'sense of sparring and sometimes outright competition between the country's two largest cities has been a defining aspect of the nation'.[337]

Among the pragmatic reasons for two cities of about the same potential to compete for dominance are the social prestige and economic advantages enjoyed by a nation's capital city. This was the case when the Commonwealth of Australia was created in 1901 and its two largest cities, Melbourne and Sydney, failed to agree as to which of them would become the country's capital. Eventually in 1908 a new capital city, Canberra, was established, chosen strategically for its geographic location approximately midway between the two original candidates. A jousting between cities can develop even when neither of the competitors is a capital city, such as in the instance of the long-standing rivalry between Oxford and Cambridge, where the battlefield is restricted primarily to the respective cities' universities. A less well-defined, nonetheless lively competition takes place between Toronto and Vancouver, neither of which is a national capital, though Toronto is the capital of the Ontario province and briefly served as the nation's capital in the mid-nineteenth century. At present, Toronto and Vancouver compete against each other in politics, economy and, most obviously, in sports. Toronto functions as a centre of

[336] Crawford, *On Glasgow and Edinburgh*, 4.

[337] Crawford, *On Glasgow and Edinburgh*, 4.

commerce, hence its atmosphere tends to be work-focused and fast-paced, whereas its West Coast neighbour takes pride in its international character, abundance of natural beauty and eco-friendly lifestyle.

Similarly to Toronto and Vancouver, the rivalry between Edinburgh and Glasgow occurs at multiple levels simultaneously and is impossible to trace back to any single easily identifiable cause. The two Scottish cities started developing in different directions in the eighteenth century at the latest, and since then their paths grew increasingly divergent. On a local scale, the 1707 Act of Union harmed Edinburgh in depriving it of the status of a national capital, but the same act benefited Glasgow in that the admission to the British Empire opened up new trading opportunities, gradually allowing Glasgow to rise and flourish as a major port and merchant town. The removal of the parliament from Edinburgh after 1707 left the city bereft of purpose and impaired its sense of identity: as Crawford summarises, 'Scotland's capital city was robbed of much of what had made it a capital in the first place'.[338] While Edinburgh was struggling to define its new role under the new circumstances, Glasgow seized its chance and structured its development around trade and, following the onset of industrialisation, heavy industry, making an advantageous use of the river Clyde. Where Edinburgh Enlightenment drew scholars, lawyers and politicians, Glasgow relied on the transactions of merchants and the labour of skilled and unskilled workers. The twentieth century cemented the stark distinction between the two cities, as Edinburgh successfully transitioned to a service-oriented economy, whereas Glasgow, built up on industry as it was, faced severe problems associated with deindustrialisation.

Raymond Williams points out the existence of inherent spatial and social differences between ancient cities with a long history of gradual development and modern industrial cities that came to being in a relatively short time in order to cover momentary demands on production. Williams's example contrasts London as a traditional historical city and Manchester, Birmingham and Liverpool as 'cities built as places of work', which is reflected in their urban planning and the character of their population.[339] Edinburgh is such a historical city, with the medieval Old

[338] Crawford, *On Glasgow and Edinburgh*, 5.

[339] Raymond Williams, *The Country and the City* (Nottingham: Spokesman, 2011), 220.

Town and the Castle at its core, as opposed to Glasgow, which 'might seem Edinburgh's antithesis', as Crawford points out, because 'areas of central Glasgow—near the north end of the Kingston Bridge, for instance, or down by the Science Centre—are almost completely and exuberantly of the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries'.[340] Edinburgh has its history inscribed in Old Town's tall houses, narrow closes and multilevel streets; while Glasgow retains relics of its former industrial fame, as the disused Finnieston Crane on the Clyde, but it also adds modern, bold structures to its skyline, such as the Clyde Auditorium—affectionately nicknamed the Armadillo for its shape.

In representing urban Scotland, Edinburgh tends to be utilised as a trope for the country's polite facade displayed to the world, in contrast to Glasgow, which is typically depicted as Scotland's unsavoury underbelly. This simplified dichotomy fails to appreciate that Edinburgh also copes with problems of its own and that Glasgow too has its peculiar appeal and charm. Julian Earwaker and Kathleen Becker provide a particularly poignant characteristics of the latter:

> Like Edinburgh, it is a city of contrasts, but Glasgow does not hide its problems down narrow closes and behind heritage façades. In its wide, American-style grid of central avenues, shining new office blocks and refurbished hotels sit cheek-by-jowl with decaying red sandstone shopfronts and the gap-toothed defiance of open wasteland. Architectural gems do battle with huge high-rise housing schemes, while the proudly shabby East End is swiftly bypassed by tourists hurrying towards the vibrant West End. Alongside the River Clyde, massive crane towers stand as stark reminders of an industrial heritage almost entirely lost, and trains on the 'Clockwork Orange' underground system scurry along like rats in a run around a city whose heart is cruelly cleaved in two by the M8 motorway.[341]

[340] Crawford, *On Glasgow and Edinburgh*, 37.

[341] Julian Earwaker and Kathleen Becker, *Scene of the Crime: A Guide to the Landscapes of British Detective Fiction* (London: Aurum Press, 2002), 27.

Contemporary Glasgow defiantly embraces all of itself, putting on equal footing sleek modern architecture and crude remnants of its industrial past. Glasgow stands firm on the ground as 'a working industrial city', whereas Edinburgh clings to its public image as 'a wonderful museum of itself', as Crawford puts it.[342] Glasgow is associated with vigorousness, adaptability, spontaneity and warmth—qualities advertised by the immensely successful 1983 promotional campaign under the motto 'Glasgow's miles better'—whilst Edinburgh comes across as a proud and conservative city, perhaps too conscious of its representative role. The two cities are divided by their differences but united in their awareness of them, so that instead of hostile antagonism, Glasgow and Edinburgh engage in a friendly sparring that ultimately sustains both parties and and supports their distinct identities.

4.4.1 Love, Hate and Home: Alasdair Gray's *1982, Janine*[343]

> I do not love Glasgow much, I sometimes actively hate it, but I am at home there.
>
> —Alasdair Gray[344]

In a way similar to his *Lanark* (1981), Alasdair Gray's *1982, Janine* (1984) combines two interrelated stories: one recounts the painful personal history of a middle-aged divorcee who copes with depression, insomnia and alcoholism, whereas the other consists of convoluted pornographic scenarios, often of violent nature, which Jock, the protagonist, conjures up in his mind to cope with his sleeplessness as much as a haunting sense of guilt for his life choices. The intricate

[342] Crawford, *On Glasgow and Edinburgh*, 27.

[343] This section incorporates selected material from my forthcoming article 'A Tale of Two Cities: The Antithesis between Edinburgh and Glasgow as Reflected in Scottish Literature', in *Anglophone Culture across Centuries and Borders: Proceedings from an International Conference*, ed. Pavlína Flajšarová and Jiří Flajšar (Olomouc: Univerzita Palackého v Olomouci, 2015).

[344] Qtd. in Edwin Morgan, 'Gray and Glasgow', in *The Arts of Alasdair Gray*, ed. Robert Crawford and Thom Nairn (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1991), 66.

way in which these two plot lines are intertwined reinforces the novel's underlying motif of power struggle, since Jock's agonised memories of his past wrongdoings keep on intruding into his sexual fantasies and vice versa. The title of *1982, Janine* derives from the name of the dazzling female figure occupying centre stage in Jock's imagination, a voluptuous woman of dishevelled black hair and playfully sullen lips, Gray's favourite representation of the femme fatale character type recurrent in his writing and illustrations alike. Jock puts Janine and other imaginary female subjects through routine abuse and humiliation, which reflects and perpetuates the mechanism of oppression by the hegemonic power of which Jock is both a victim and collaborator. Jock is comfortably situated by selling himself out to a foreign-owned company and even though he despises his corporate job, he remains in the position and only indulges in fruitless daydreams of working for the benefit of his country. The novel deliberately confuses the language and imagery of sexual submission and political subjugation, so that ultimately, as George Donaldson and Alison Lee observe, 'violent sexuality is used as a metaphor for a whole host of political abuses that the strong foist upon the weak'.[345]

Jock's contemplation of his current deeply disappointing existence leads him to reflect on his earlier, more hopeful days, which results in the juxtaposition of the post-war welfare Scotland of his youth and the early 1980s Glasgow, characterised by William M. Harrison 'as an abandoned, late-capitalist, postindustrial locus: a city in decay and on the dole'.[346] Jock recalls his studies at Glasgow's Technical College in the 1950s as the only fulfilling period of his life, a time when he, in his youthful idealism, used to believe that modern science has all the answers for the world's problems. He describes his time spent in Glasgow as inspiring, creative and confident, qualities that he no longer experiences in his unadventurous job as a supervisor of security installations. Besides his cherished college years, Jock associates Glasgow with his much admired friend and mentor Alan, who served as a model of resourcefulness and practicality for Jock. Alan's tragic death while still at college left Jock devastated and marked for him the end

[345] George Donaldson and Alison Lee, 'Is Eating People Really Wrong? Dining with Alasdair Gray', *Review of Contemporary Fiction* 15, no. 2 (1995): 155.

[346] William M. Harrison, 'The Power of Work in the Novels of Alasdair Gray', *Review of Contemporary Fiction* 15, no. 2 (1995): 163.

of the era of visionary optimism, after which Jock went on to abandon the woman he loved, marry a woman he did not and embark on the career of a travelling supervisor, which further deepened his sense of uprooting. Jock perceives himself as a person out of place and without a fixed identity, which is the impression established in the very opening of the novel, where Jock struggles to determine even which continent he is on: 'It could be in Belgium, the U.S.A., Russia perhaps, Australia certainly . . . But there is no bible. All American hotel bedrooms have bibles so I am definitely not in the States.'[347]

Jock is simultaneously drawn to, yet shrinks from remembering his Glasgow studies, not only because his memories are tainted by Alan's death but also because Glasgow in particular seems to provoke in him feelings of powerlessness. Jock gropes to reconnect with the mental image of Glasgow as his dear green place, but instead his mind is taken over by violent pictures of a physical destruction of the city, the ultimate loss of the place, which he accepts with detached stoicism and underlying emotional numbness: 'But the Clydeside has outlived its usefulness. . . . Glasgow now means nothing to the rest of Britain but unemployment, drunkenness and out-of-date radical militancy. Her nuclear destruction will logically conclude a steady peacetime process.'[348] In his Orwellian vision of war as peace, Jock mixes a hint of nostalgia for the bygone Glasgow at the height of its industrial success and an air of resigned bitterness about the Faslane naval base—the site of Britain's nuclear submarines, located forty kilometres north-west of Glasgow, which sparkled fresh controversy at the time of the novel as the government announced its decision to enhance its nuclear defence system with the new Trident missiles. Elaborating on his apocalyptic scenario, Jock continues to consider the fate of Edinburgh in a characteristically tongue-in-cheek tone: 'It's a pity about Edinburgh. It has almost nothing to do with Glasgow but stands too near to go unscathed. Let us hope that only the people die and the buildings and monuments are undamaged, then in a few years the Festival can resume as merrily as ever. It's mostly the work of foreigners, anyway.'[349] Jock views Edinburgh as a relic which encapsulates the

[347] Gray, *1982, Janine*, 1.

[348] Gray, *1982, Janine*, 126.

[349] Gray, *1982, Janine*, 126.

nation's past in its architecture but serves no practical purpose in the present, apart from showing off its historical buildings for the pleasure of tourists.

1982, Janine pointedly contrasts Glasgow and Edinburgh in a chapter devoted to Jock's stint as an electrician with an amateur theatrical company which performs with surprising success at the Edinburgh Festival. Not only the Festival events but the whole city strikes as an inauthentic place of ostentatious but ultimately empty theatricality, epitomised by the way in which the company director uses the space of Calton Hill, where the company takes a stroll: 'The director climbed upon the pedestal of the national monument and strode senatorially between the big pillars declaiming verses from *Julius Caesar*. . . . The director said to me, "One day, my boys, all this shall be yours," and swung an arm round the whole horizon . . . The director shook his fist at the urban part of this scenery and told it loudly, "At last we come to grips, you and I."'[350] The director regards Edinburgh as a stage set and uses the space accordingly. The company's writer shares the director's perception of the city but not his satisfaction with this state of affairs. With disapproval bordering on contempt, the writer declares Edinburgh 'a setting for an opera nobody performs nowadays, . . . an opera called *Scottish History*'.[351] The writer addresses the director, explaining how Edinburgh appeals to lovers of drama but not to people doing ordinary jobs: 'You love it because your approach to life is just amateur theatrical. I hate it because the only parts of the scenery that really work here are the factories and shops, which might as well be in Glasgow.'[352] Edinburgh remains, in the words of the writer, 'an empty, pretentious sham', a space associated with leisure, even idleness, whereas Glasgow comes across as a living and breathing city, associated with work and utility.[353]

The contrasts between Edinburgh and Glasgow are so deeply ingrained that they show even in details of their amenities and public services. For instance, the writer points out the wordy label on Edinburgh's litter bins, 'THE AMENITY OF THIS CITY IS RECOMMENDED TO YOUR CARE', and the short message to the same effect on Glasgow's bins, 'KEEP GLASGOW TIDY'.[354] Where

[350] Gray, *1982, Janine*, 222.

[351] Gray, *1982, Janine*, 223. Italics in the original.

[352] Gray, *1982, Janine*, 223.

[353] Gray, *1982, Janine*, 222.

[354] Gray, *1982, Janine*, 223. Emphasis in the original.

Edinburgh intimidates with its pompous eloquence, Glasgow prefers simple efficiency. Jock furthermore notices the forbidding graveness of Edinburgh trams, which 'were all a funereal chocolate colour', unlike Glasgow trams, where 'each tramcar had a 2 1/2-feet-wide band of colour going round it between the upper and lower decks, blue or yellow or red or white or green according to the route it ran, and the rest was painted orange and green with cream and gold borders, and the city coat-of-arms on the sides in green, white, gold and silver'.[355] Edinburgh's painstaking uniformity is countered by Glasgow's sheer colourfulness and subscription to practicality: trams in Glasgow indicate their route by a bright stripe, hence making it easier for the travellers to identify their line. Public transport in Glasgow also hosts advertisements, thus promoting business, unlike in Edinburgh, where it seems that 'city fathers believe that adverts would spoil the appearance of a public carriage'.[356] Distinctions like these reinforce the character of Glasgow as an environment which nourishes the requirements of everyday life and work, while Edinburgh retains its artificial quality carefully staged for the purpose of recreation and consumption.

[355] Gray, *1982, Janine*, 221.

[356] Gray, *1982, Janine*, 221.

5 Conclusion

The twentieth century has been a fruitful and affirmative period for Scottish literature. Before that, Scottish writing tended to cling to themes located in the nation's past and in the vanishing traditional way of living and working in the countryside. While in Victorian England, major novelists engaged with contemporary issues attendant on urbanisation and industrialisation, Scottish writers largely ignored the rapid transformations of their world. Reaching up to the Great Depression, Scottish literature, though it did not lack its great masterpieces, was generally wanting in dynamism, flexibility and immediacy. It was only in the mid-1930s that Scottish fiction responded to the changing structures of feeling and acknowledged the existence of urban space as a valid literary topic.

The most enduring testimony of this belated recognition of Scotland's experience of urbanisation is provided in Lewis Grassic Gibbon's triptych *A Scots Quair* (1932–34). Grassic Gibbon interlocks the fortunes of his protagonist with the fate of Scotland as he follows the unwilling but inevitable progress of the main character from her beloved countryside to the indifferent city. Other novelists deal with the clash of the country and the city: Gordon M. Williams's bleak novel *From Scenes like These* (1968) more than three decades after Grassic Gibbon portrays the city as encroaching on the country to the point of completely eliminating it. Unlike Grassic Gibbon, however, Williams does not view farming communities as a source of support, strength and virtue. After scrutinising both the life on the farm and the life in a town tenement, Williams concludes that corruption and decay plague both equally and an alternative solution is nowhere to be found.

Spatial thinking involves a number of binary oppositions as well as meeting points: there is the country and the city, the centre and the periphery, one can be in place, out of place or beyond place entirely. The question of the central and the peripheral implies and often combines spatial and social dimension. This is strongly manifested in the case of the post-World War II inner city slum clearances in Glasgow, which removed underprivileged tenants from the centre of the city to its very periphery, where new extended housing estates were set up. As illustrated for instance in Janice Galloway's *The Trick Is to Keep Breathing* (1989), these

peripheral geographies served to peripheral members of the society and further aggravated their marginalisation by housing them in schemes which did not offer adequate amenities and means of transport. Set in Edinburgh, Irvine Welsh's *Trainspotting* (1993) takes a different perspective on the subject of physical and social periphery. Welsh's novel focuses on the unsavoury subculture of drug abuse and primitive violence, pitting against each other the settings and dwellers of the derelict Leith at Edinburgh's periphery and the touristy Old Town in the city centre.

Even the marginalised and dispossessed, while they do not have a place of their own, can make an impact by a subversive use of existing places. This is the principle of demonstrations, such as the one described in Dot Allan's *Hunger March* (1934), where a mass of impoverished unemployed workers marches through Glasgow, inspiring feelings of discomfort and vague fear in the merchants and clerks whose ordinary use of the place is adversely affected. In contrast to the collective character and broader social concerns of the 1930s novels like *Hunger March*, Alexander Trocchi's *Young Adam* (1954) depicts a highly individualist version of placelessness. The alienated protagonist of Trocchi's novel feels out of place and moves beyond place, literally drifting to and fro on a barge along the Clyde Canal or aimlessly wandering around indistinct cityscapes. Starkly opposing Trocchi's rootless protagonist, the main character of William McIlvanney's *Laidlaw* (1977), identifies himself with his place so much that he becomes a natural part of it. Detective Laidlaw loses himself in Glasgow, embraces the city and makes it his own. Losing oneself in Glasgow is also the theme of James Kelman's *How Late It Was, How Late* (1994), but where McIlvanney's protagonist experiences a sense of familiarity and belonging, Kelman's down-and-out protagonist, following his loss of sight, struggles with disorientation that is physical as much as mental.

Urban space is a site of constant transition and motion, which nourishes a great diversity of approaches assumed by different writers. This sheer variety is particularly apparent in the evolution of the Glasgow Novel, a genre where the city of Glasgow often rises to the position of an individual character in the novel rather than remaining a mere backdrop to the actions of human characters. The earliest stage of the Glasgow Novel is epitomised by A. McArthur and H. Kingsley Long's *No Mean City* (1935), a deliberately brutal account of the material and spiritual impoverishment reigning in the Gorbals, at that time arguably Glasgow's worst slum. This book and its imitators do not aspire to reach beyond the face-value of

shock and curiosity, unlike the new inward-looking and transcendence-seeking reincarnation of the Glasgow Novel after World War II. Archie Hind's *The Dear Green Place* (1966) taps into metafiction in presenting the painful plight of a novelist striving to write the great Glasgow Novel, thus introducing the concept of Glasgow as a site where life, work and even creativity might flourish. Further reassuring representations of Glasgow come in the 1980s and on, most remarkably in the fiction of Alasdair Gray, who embraces his native city with its treasures and its failures alike.

Glasgow, Scotland's largest city with a turbulent modern history, inspires a significantly wider range of representations and a larger scope of responses than Edinburgh, the country's comparatively sedate capital. Where Glasgow struggled with its collapsing heavy industry, overcrowding and unemployment, Edinburgh kept on displaying its historical architecture and established itself, with the assistance of its annual cultural Festival, as a chief tourist attraction. Many literary treatments of Edinburgh aim precisely at this touristy facade and delve under the surface in order to reveal what remains hidden to the city's casual visitors. Muriel Spark's *The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie* (1961) comprises unique descriptive scenes of Edinburgh's pre-World War II Old Town, showing its low life from the naive perspective of a comfortably middle-class schoolgirl. Ian Rankin in *Knots & Crosses* (1987), the first of a series of popularly and critically successful detective novels, radicalises the critical approach to Edinburgh's superficial beauty in routinely turning the city into a scene of violent crimes. An exemplary contrast between Edinburgh's deceptive charm and Glasgow's unashamed vigour is drawn in Alasdair Gray's *1982, Janine* (1984), which exposes the former as a place of artifice and celebrates the latter as a place of creativity.

The contribution of the present work rests on its comprehensive coverage of the subject of the Scottish urban novel and its combination of a chronological and thematic approach employed in order to achieve a greater insight into all aspects of the subject. It is a pioneering effort both with respect to the scope and the amount of detail allowed to the analyses of representative novels: while full-length treatments of selected topics in the Scottish urban novel indeed exist, they are limited either to the well-researched Glasgow Novel or to the interpretation of the body of work of an individual author. The emphasis throughout has been on illustrating the major qualitative development of urban writing and highlighting the

richness and variation that Scottish novelists discover in urban settings. Whereas at the beginnings of the urban novel in the 1930s, the genre seemed flat and uninspiring, by the end of the twentieth century, it has become a multifaceted tool capable of expressing creatively the finest nuances of Scottish urban experience.

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Annotation

The present work provides a comprehensive treatment of the subject of the Scottish urban novel, combining a chronological and thematic perspective to achieve a greater insight into all aspects of the subject. The subject is approached through theories of space and place, represented by radical human geographers such as Henri Lefebvre, David Harvey or Edward Soja, and through a moderate Western Marxist approach pertinent to the left-leaning tendencies of the theoreticians of space and of the urban novels referred to.

The work is divided into two major parts. Part one (that is, chapter 3), 'Dialogic Imaginings', identifies key topics in the discourse of space and analyses how selected literary works respond to these topics. Part two (that is, chapter 4), 'Scottish Cities', accounts for the history of the Scottish city and the urban novel and proceeds to analyse works set in Glasgow and in Edinburgh respectively, concluding with a comparative chapter on these two cities.

At the early stage of its development, the Scottish urban novel focuses on the acute realities of urbanisation and industrialisation. The conditions of the collapsing heavy industry, rising unemployment and overcrowded housing underlie the birth of the Glasgow Novel in the 1930s. The plight of the characters qualifies as a class struggle, more precisely, as a class struggle enacted in space, often represented as a struggle *for* space.

In its next stage after World War II, the urban novel branches into a new variety of representations. Glasgow comes to be acknowledged as more than a hotbed of deep-seated economic and social problems, for the first time, the city is depicted as an environment which may nourish living, working and creative undertaking.

Edinburgh receives fewer literary treatments, and most of them are preoccupied with penetrating the touristy facade of the city and revealing the contradictions that lie beneath. Whether set in Edinburgh, Glasgow or elsewhere, by the end of the twentieth century, the Scottish urban novel cements its position as a powerful genre capable of expressing all the intricacies of contemporary experience.

Anotace

Předložená práce poskytuje ucelený přehled problematiky skotského románu z prostředí města za použití kombinace chronologického a tematického přístupu k dosažení všestranného náhledu do různých stránek dané problematiky. Přístup k tématu vychází z teorií prostoru a místa zastoupených sociálními geografy jako je Henri Lefebvre, David Harvey či Edward Soja, a dále z postupů umírněného západního marxismu, v souladu s levicovým zaměřením zmiňovaných teoretiků prostoru a místa a současně i analyzovaných literárních děl.

Práce je rozdělena do dvou hlavních částí. První část (kapitola 3), „Dialogická představivost“, se věnuje klíčovým tématům v diskurzu prostoru a místa a popisuje, jakými způsoby vybraná díla tato témata reflektují. Druhá část (kapitola 4), „Skotská města“, zachycuje dějiny skotského města a románu z městského prostředí, dále rozebírá díla odehrávající se v Glasgowě a Edinburghu a končí komparativní kapitolou srovnávající obě metropole.

V raném stádiu vývoje se skotský román z prostředí města zabýval palčivými problémy způsobenými urbanizací a industrializací. Ve třicátých létech dvacátého století se z podmínek upadajícího těžkého průmyslu, rostoucí nezaměstnanosti a přelidněnosti Glasgowa vyvinul takzvaný glasgowský román. Tento žánr popisuje boj postav jako třídní boj, přesněji řečeno jako třídní boj odehrávající se v prostoru, často také jako boj o životní prostor.

Ve své další vývojové fázi po druhé světové válce román z prostředí města nabyl na různorodosti. Glasgow se objevuje už nejen jako ohnisko hluboce zakořeněných ekonomických a společenských problémů, ale poprvé také jako prostředí, kde je možné žít, pracovat a věnovat se tvůrčí činnosti.

Edinburghu se dostává menšího počtu literárních zpracování, přičemž většina z nich se snaží proniknout pod zdánlivě bezchybný povrch turistické metropole a odhalit problémy, které návštěvníkům města zůstávají skryty. Ať už se skotský městský román odehrává v Glasgowě, Edinburghu či jinde, koncem dvacátého století tento žánr upevňuje svou pozici jako literární nástroj, který umožňuje autorům zachytit současný život Skotska v celé jeho složitosti.

Appendix

This appendix aims to enhance the preceding text by illustrating in a visual form some of the urban development issues discussed. Every effort has been made to identify and credit copyright holders of images reproduced in this work. All the images included are labelled as available for non-commercial reuse under the Creative Commons licence.

Glasgow

Image 1 Modern Glasgow (John Lindie, Wikimedia Commons)

Like Edinburgh, it is a city of contrasts, but Glasgow does not hide its problems down narrow closes and behind heritage façades. In its wide, American-style grid of central avenues, shining new office blocks and refurbished hotels sit cheek-by-jowl with decaying red sandstone shopfronts and the gap-toothed defiance of open wasteland. Architectural gems do battle with huge high-rise housing schemes, while the proudly shabby East End is swiftly bypassed by tourists hurrying towards the vibrant West End. Alongside the River Clyde, massive crane towers stand as stark reminders of an industrial heritage almost entirely lost, and trains on the 'Clockwork Orange' underground system scurry along like rats in a run around a city whose heart is cruelly cleaved in two by the M8 motorway. (Julian Earwaker and Kathleen Becker, *Scene of the Crime*)

Image 2a Glasgow Clydeside, mid-1930s (www.glasgowhistory.com)

Image 2b Glasgow Clydeside, 1957 (www.educationscotland.gov.uk)

> But the Clydeside has outlived its usefulness. . . . Glasgow now means nothing to the rest of Britain but unemployment, drunkenness and out-of-date radical militancy. (Alasdair Gray, *1982, Janine*)

Image 3a Inner city slum clearances, 1969 (www.skyscrapercity.com)

Image 3b The Gorbals clearances, 1950s–1960s (Graham, www.theapricity.com)

> Battles and sex are the only free diversions in slum life. Couple them with drink, which costs money, and you have the three principal outlets for that escape complex which is for ever working in the tenement dweller's subconscious mind. . . . The slums as a whole do not realize that they are living an abnormal life in abnormal conditions. (A. McArthur and H. Kingsley Long, *No Mean City*)

Image 4a The Drumchapel scheme, 1950s (Robert Sweeney, www.hiddenglasgow.com)

Image 4b The Drumchapel scheme, 1953 (Robert Sweeney, www.hiddenglasgow.com)

> Glasgow, grappling with unsatisfactory planning procedures and inadequate resources, sought to deal with housing problems in the city by creating a number of peripheral working-class estates such as Drumchapel, Easterhouse and Castlemilk. However, lacking social amenities and local employment opportunities, they soon became as bad as the inner-city areas they were supposed to replace. (David Newlands, 'The Regional Economies of Scotland')

Image 5a Drumchapel tyre factory, 1979 (Robert Sweeney, www.hiddenglasgow.com)

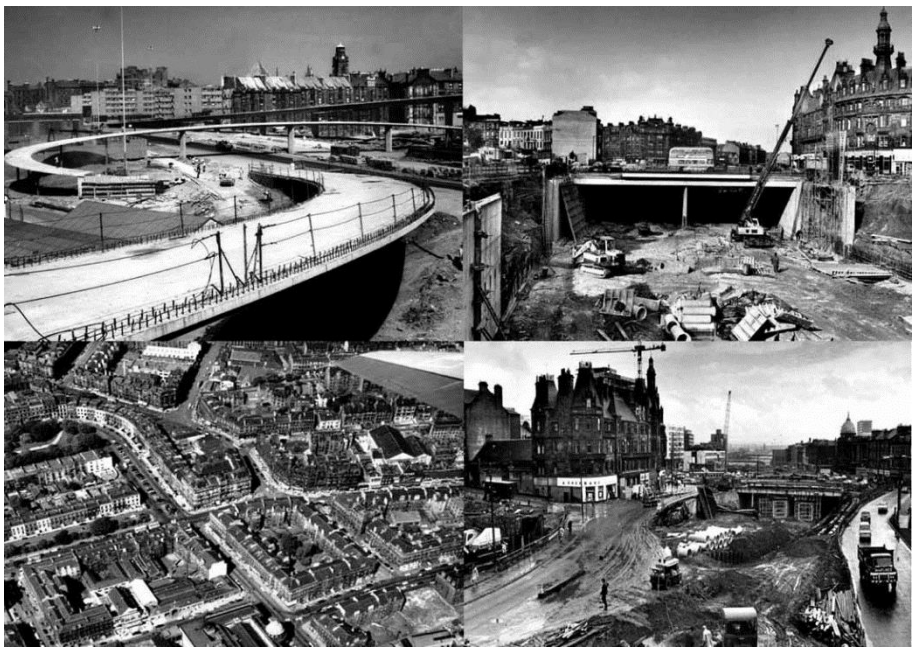

Image 5b The M8 motorway construction, 1960s (M. Riaz, www.skyscrapercity.com)

> He resented the route by which he was having to go home: along the motorway to the Clyde Tunnel Junction, right into Anniesland, left out Great Western Road. The first part of it reminded him too strongly of what they had done to the city he used to know. . . . He had passed the Goodyear Tyre Factory and was among the three-storey grey-stone tenements of Drumchapel. They didn't feel like home. (William McIlvanney, *Laidlaw*)

Image 6a St Enoch Hotel, before World War II (Chris Jones, www.glasgowhistory.com)

Image 6b St Enoch Station, demolished in 1977 (James H., www.urbanglasgow.co.uk)

> St Enoch's Station had been a part of the Glasgow he knew. Now the high, arched, glass roof that had fascinated him as a boy was patched with sky. What had seemed before unimaginably far away now only served to give perspective to the vastness of the distance beyond it. Those squares of starlit sky were a bottomlessness he was falling into. There were acres of macadam where the rails had been—nowhere for him to go from here. (William McIlvanney, *Laidlaw*)

Image 7a Glasgow Necropolis, present time (Wikimedia Commons)

Image 7b Glasgow Royal Infirmary, present time (Anne, Flickr)

> Travelling patches of sunlight went from ridge to ridge, making a hump of tenements gleam against the dark towers of the city chambers, silhouetting the cupolas of the Royal infirmary against the tomb-glittering spine of the Necropolis. "Glasgow is a magnificent city," said McAlpin. "Why do we hardly ever notice that?" "Because nobody imagines lives here," said Thaw. (Alasdair Gray, *Lanark*)

Edinburgh

Image 8 Modern Edinburgh (Andrew Bowden, Wikimedia Commons)

> Central Edinburgh . . . can seem something of a splendid stage set, even a museum exhibit. In a city of grand, often riverless bridges, some historic streets are windswept in their elevation, others oddly and fascinatingly sunken; among the latter, the sixteenth-century Mary King's Close (whose remains now lie beneath the Royal Mile's City Chambers) has a haunted, museum-like stillness.
> (Robert Crawford, *On Glasgow and Edinburgh*)

Image 9a Princes Street, present time (Tom Page, Wikimedia Commons)

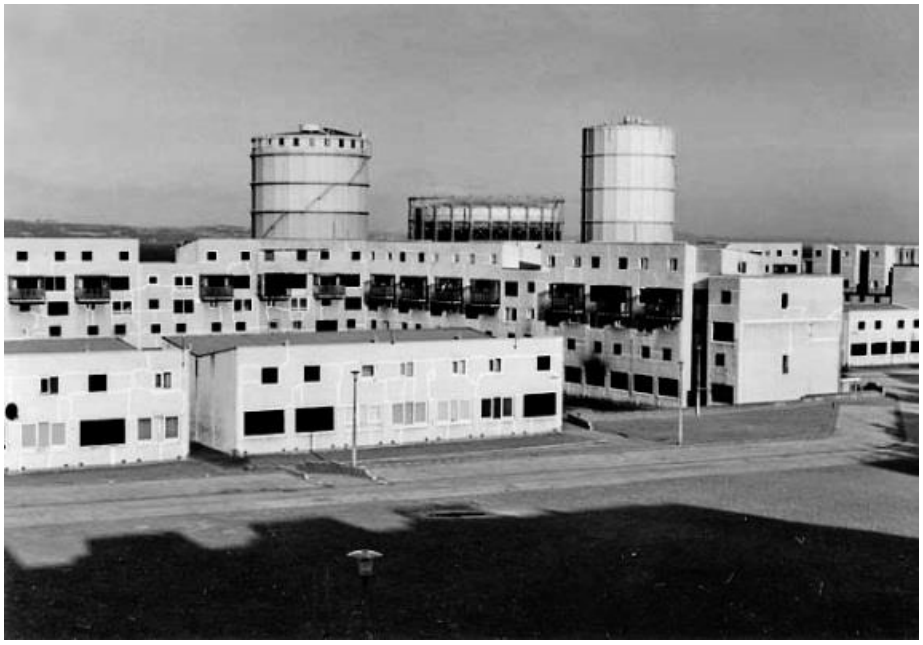

Image 9b West Granton, mid-1990s (Andrew Shortel, www.edinphoto.org.uk)

> Like whin Monny's auntie came ower fae that wee village oan that Island oaf the west coast ay Ireland, wi aw her bairns. . . . The woman sais, ah want a hoose in Princes Street lookin oantay the castle. . . . The cunts in the council jist laugh n stick the cunt n one ay they hoatline joabs in West Granton, this nea cunt else wants. Instead ay a view ay the castle, she's goat a view ay the gasworks. (Irvine Welsh, *Trainspotting*)

Image 10a Edinburgh Castle, present time (Rhys A., Wikimedia Commons)

Image 10b Arthur's Seat, present time (David Dixon, www.geograph.co.uk)

> Edinburgh had shown itself . . . as never before, cowering beneath the shadow of the Castle Rock in hiding from something. All the tourists saw were shadows from history, while the city itself was something else entirely. (Ian Rankin, *Knots & Crosses*)

Image 11a Calton Hill, present time (Jeremy Nelson, Wikimedia Commons)

Image 11b National Monument, present time (Colin, Wikimedia Commons)

> Thing hotted up at night: car chases, girls and boys hoping for a ride, parties at Queensferry beach. Edinburgh's gay community would mix with those merely curious or lonely, and a couple, hand-in-hand, would now and again enter the graveyard at the bottom of the hill. When darkness fell, the east end of Princes Street became a territory all of its own, to be passed around, to be shared. (Ian Rankin, *Knots & Crosses*)

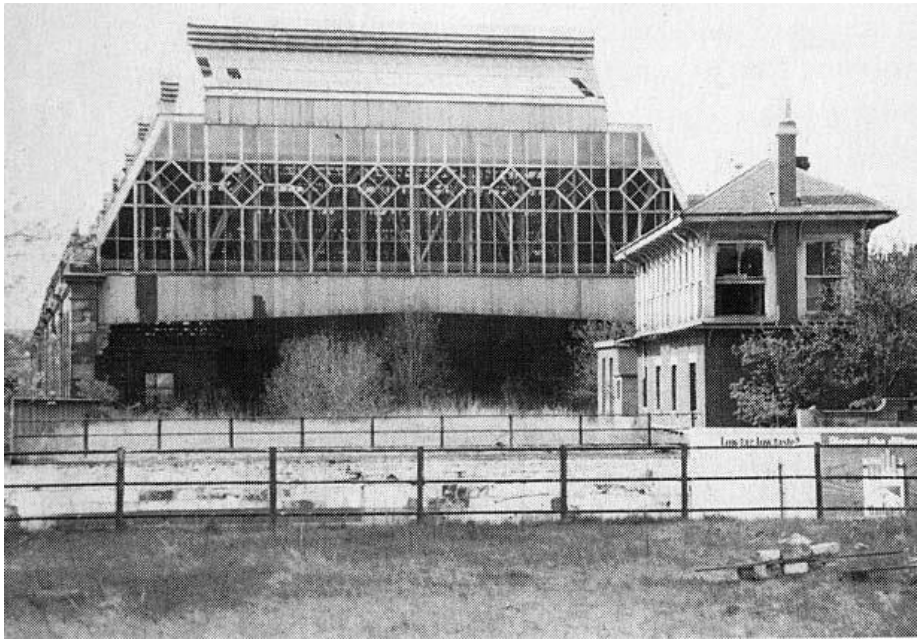

Image 12a Leith Central Station, 1987 (A. J. Mullay, www.edinphoto.org.uk)

Image 12b Leith Central Station, 1980s–90s (David Naismith, www.traintesting.com)

> We go fir a pish in the auld Central Station at the Fit ay the Wal, now a barren, desolate hanger, which is soon tae be demolished and replaced by a supermarket and swimming centre. Somehow, that makes us sad, even though ah wis eywis too young tae mind ay trans ever being there. —Some size ay a station this wis. Git a train tae anywhair fae here, at one time, or so they sais, ah sais, watchin ma steaming pish splash oantae the cauld stane. (Irvine Welsh, *Trainspotting*)

Image 13a Lothian Road, present time (Kim Traynor, www.geograph.org.uk)

Image 13b Usher Hall, present time (Kim Traynor, Wikimedia Commons)

> Lothian Road was Edinburgh's dustbin. It was also home to the Sheraton Hotel and the Usher Hall. Rebus had visited the Usher Hall once, sitting with Rhona and the other smug souls listening to Mozart's Requiem Mass. It was typical of Edinburgh to have a crumb of culture sited amidst the fast-food shops. A requiem mass and a bag of chips. (Ian Rankin, *Knots & Crosses*)

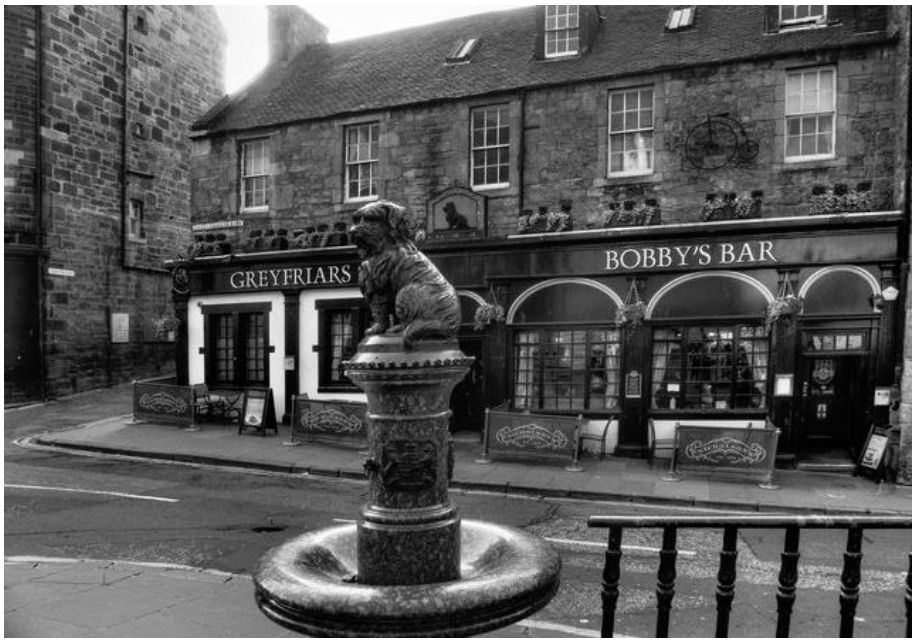

Image 14a Greyfriars Bobby, present time (David Dixon, www.geograph.co.uk)

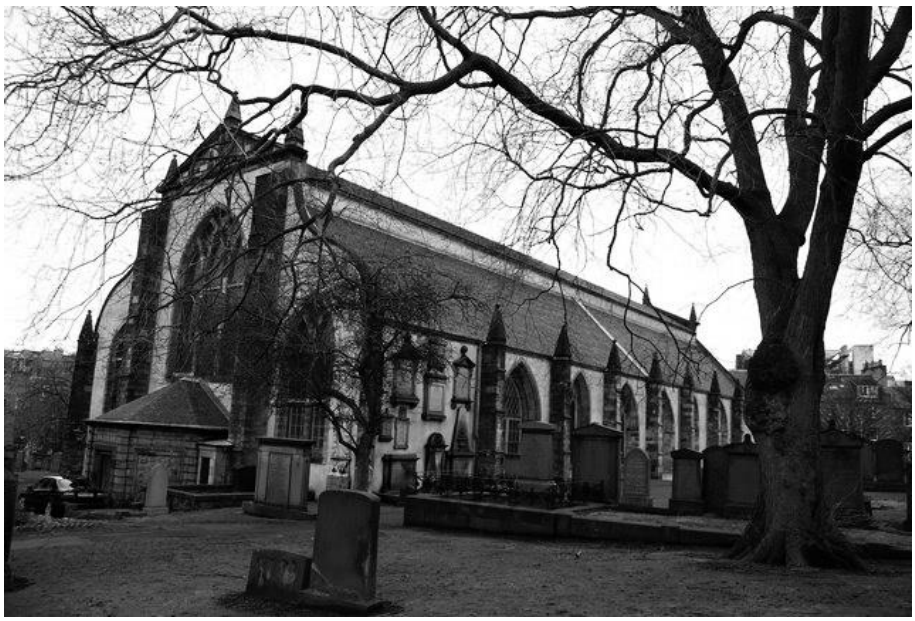

Image 14b Greyfriars Kirk, present time (N. Chadwick, www.geograph.co.uk)

> He had stared long and hard at the statue of the small dog, and had felt nothing. He had read of Covenanters, of Deacon Brodie, of public executions on the High Street, wondering what kind of city this was, and what kind of country.
>
> (Ian Rankin, *Knots & Crosses*)