

Mind the Gap: *Flânerie* in Baudelaire and Woolf

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D.Phil. SHORT ABSTRACT

Mind the Gap: *Flânerie* in Baudelaire and Woolf

This research stems from an interest in the role of the *flâneur* and his interaction with the city. The *flâneur* has been theorised as one of the most prominent figures in understanding modernity. This study draws upon two well-known modernist writers, Baudelaire and Woolf, using their literary *flânerie* to understand modernity from a twenty-first-century vantage point. The purpose of this thesis is to interrogate and reinterpret the notion of modernity: experience of modernity is that of spatiotemporal dislocation, a sense of in-betweenness that can be likened to the gap between a train and the platform. From the gap imagery, this thesis explores the paradoxical nature of modernity demonstrated in the writing of Baudelaire and Woolf. While existing studies have discussed the theme of *flânerie* extensively, the discourse is dominated by Benjaminian assumptions, which results in a visuo-centric bias. With recourse to Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology, this thesis provides a more holistic understanding of the intertwining relationship between the *flâneur*, the city, the writer, and the text. Comparing the *flâneur* to a writerly device, this study explains how the *flâneur* offers the writer a novel perspective on the city. The aim of the writer's manipulation of the *flâneur* is to approach what I call *line-scape*. This notion designates an ideal literary horizon which the writer constantly endeavours to reach, to no avail. Various implications of *line-scape* are investigated, most notably through landscape painting tradition, to highlight the way in which the writer deploys the *flâneur* figure as an implied observer of *line-scape*. Translation theories and phenomenology-inspired studies are also incorporated

into the research. Ultimately, *flânerie* as a clue to *line-scape* takes part in the current literary landscape, allowing for a reevaluation of modernist writing, engendering novel interpretations of the act of walking, and renewing interest in modernity and the city.

**Shao-Hua Wang, St. Hugh's College, Trinity Term, 2015
D.Phil. LONG ABSTRACT**

Mind the Gap: *Flânerie* in Baudelaire and Woolf

This research stems from an interest in the role of the *flâneur* and his interaction with the city. The *flâneur*, usually male, has been theorised as one of the most prominent figures in understanding modernity. Discussions of modernity and its relationship with modernism abound, but they render the term elusive: variations and nuances in its definition are further complicated by the observation that there is no agreement on whether modernity has come to an end, and if so, when it ended. This thesis argues that modernity should not be defined as an era in time, but that it should be defined as the experience of paradoxes and discrepancies.

To further illustrate the sense of modernity, this research draws upon two well-known modernist writers – Baudelaire and Woolf – to understand modernity from a twenty-first-century vantage point. The purpose is to explore the notion of modernity with an original and all-encompassing interpretation, which takes into consideration textual analysis, cultural studies, urban studies, and phenomenology. This thesis envisages the experience of modernity by likening it – as it were – to the gap of a railway platform. I propose here to relate modernity to an experience of spatiotemporal dislocation, a sense of in-betweenness that can be visualised as the gap between a train and the platform. This scenario of the gap encompasses discrepant senses of space and of time, rejecting the view that modernity merely designates a specific historical period. Whereas the train is often viewed as the landmark invention and representation of modernity, the comparison of the experience of modernity to the situation of

the platform gap can surpass the tendency to equate modernity to any particular invention, speaking to a more general sensual experience. This stance allows for the scrutiny of historical and social context that prompted modernity in Baudelaire's Paris and Woolf's London, but it does not limit the experience of modernity to these two examples. Instead, it uses the Paris-London comparison as a prototype to analyse the nature of modernity.

The *flâneur* serves as a suitable spokesperson for modernity, for he underscores a dynamic way to perceive the city, and he speaks to two underlying tendencies in the notion of modernity.

First, modernity emphasises everyday experience with a particular emphasis on life in the city: how urban development and the way one conducts one's life shape each other. The act of walking serves as a seemingly ordinary and yet complicated way to explore the city. Second, walking represents an attempt at aestheticisation of the city; walking and writing are intertwined. Literary *flânerie* helps elucidate modernism as a reaction to and a reflection on the experience of modernity.

This thesis uses Baudelaire and Woolf to exemplify the writer's position faced with the experience of modernity. The main literary works discussed include Baudelaire's *Les Fleurs du mal* and his prose poetry collection *Le Spleen de Paris*, as well as Woolf's London novels (mainly *Mrs Dalloway*, *The Years*, *Jacob's Room*, *The Waves*) and her essay 'Street Haunting', a well-known piece of writing concerning *flânerie* in London. Since elements of modernity permeate their works, and since they are both very eclectic writers, this thesis also takes into account Baudelaire's *Salon* essays in which he expresses his aesthetic

thoughts, and Woolf's essays in which she considers the challenges of being a writer.

In chapter one, this thesis reveals the paradoxical and ambiguous nature of modernity, based on Baudelaire's often-quoted definition of *la modernité* as both the eternal and the movable. The elaboration on the experience of modernity involves an understanding of the historical contexts of Baudelaire's Paris and Woolf's London. Even though Baudelaire and Woolf are often considered to be separately representative of Paris and London, this research is not arguing that modernity is a specific phenomenon in either city; instead, it extracts from their works the way in which paradoxes permeate their writings beyond the use of imagery, and can be discerned in their experimentation with language. They juxtapose the present with the past, modernity with antiquity, and sight with blindness; they confront classic notions of beauty with the mundane, and distil eternity from the transient. Exploring the paradoxical nature of their writing, I highlight how the experience of modernity, this particular sense of dislocation, underlines their work.

To best capture this experience, the thesis moves on to scrutinise the role the *flâneur* plays in city literature in chapter two. *Flânerie* has long been a trope in writing about the city. It indicates a very particular way of moving: strictly speaking, it means walking alone aimlessly; it is a leisure activity. However, I interpret the term in a more liberal way: it accentuates an awareness of external space as related to the subject's mobility; it emphasises a dynamic manner to perceive the city but this mobility is not limited to walking. Strolling about in the streets embodies a way to experience modernity in an individual manner, as well as in a more collective fashion. Such a seemingly solitary activity is influenced by

the other: walking is walking among the crowd, and it inevitably involves a consciousness of other people and external space. To further illustrate the *flâneur's* dependence on the other in experiencing modernity, this thesis draws on literary theories that are indebted to phenomenology. Phenomenology is important here because it understands human relationships as a holistic experience concerning not only the subject but also the intertwining relationship between the subject and the external other. It also views technology not merely as individual inventions, but as a process of adaptation to and familiarisation with novel spatial and temporal experiences created by certain inventions. The philosophical strand thus helps to read modernity outside of the constraint of demarcation of eras, because new technologies constantly challenge human perception. While phenomenology in itself covers a broad philosophical field, this research puts emphasis on Merleau-Ponty's work. His phenomenology, as demonstrated in *Phenomenology of Perception*, offers a holistic understanding of human existence. It portrays a kind of *chiasm* that is innate to perception. The body's chiasm signifies the subject's openness towards the outside world. One's existence is described as a being-in-the-world in that it does not exist in a void but relies on the presence of the other.

Compared to the visuo-centric tendency predominant in interpretations of modernist studies, phenomenology helps to re-evaluate the established Benjaminian discourse, the interpretation of which greatly shaped the twentieth-century understanding of the Baudelairean *flâneur*, and resulted in an overemphasis on sight in the experience of the city. Established reading of Benjamin and of the *flâneur* has the tendency to omit the fact that walking in the city encompasses a more integrated experience than a mere visual one. Contrary

to this somehow limited understanding of Benjamin's work, a phenomenological reading of the being-in-the-world points to the interdependence between one's existence and external space. Therefore, it fits in well with the aim of this thesis to go beyond a restrictive understanding of modernity as an era, thus helping to shape the experience of modernity as a situation prompted by the perceiving subject's interaction with urban space.

Defining *flânerie* in the light of Merleau-Ponty's theory also helps to put equal weight on Baudelaire and Woolf, allowing for a re-examination of the well-known *flâneuse* debate. Traditionally, female *flânerie* tends to indicate prostitution, among other gendered social implications. This study goes beyond a solely feminist view by regarding *flânerie* as a dynamic consciousness of the city that is available to every individual, regardless of gender. This stance permits the interpretation of *flânerie* as a way to experience the city and its various sensual stimuli, emphasising the way in which the *flâneur*'s intention must extend towards the external world, in a Merleau-Pontian sense.

In my final chapter, I elaborate on phenomenological consideration of the textual space to illustrate the role played by the *flâneur* on the page. The textual existence of the strolling figure allows the writer to create literary subjectivity. Merleau-Ponty has addressed the innovative status of language in works such as *Visible and Invisible* and *Le Prose du monde*. His views are taken up by a school of theorists, including Collot, Rabaté, and Jenny, who postulate a new kind of poetics that lead to a discussion of literary subjectivity as a unique speaking *I* and of literary horizon. In the light of such theories, this thesis asserts that *flânerie* embodies the innovative nature of words. I demonstrate that, for both Baudelaire and Woolf, the *flâneur* serves as a writerly device. The urban

stroller provides them with a being-in-the-world and a being-in-the-text. The *flâneur* is, therefore, a literary strategy. The purpose of such an instrument is to approach what I term *line-scape*. I coin this concept to describe the writer's ideal literary *landscape*. The term *line-scape* contains two implications. First, it borrows from the tradition of landscape painting the idea that each work indicates a perceiving subject, the observer of the landscape. The presence of the observer may not necessarily be depicted in the painting, but since landscape painting denotes one particular perspective, it implies a viewer. This implied observer reveals the painter's intention to use constructed subjectivity to interact with landscape. This element of interaction is reminiscent of the Merleau-Pontian chiasm innate to one's existence. Second, from landscape to *line-scape*, I accentuate the twofold existence of the *flâneur*. In the city, the writer may adopt the street stroller's steps to immerse himself in the experience of modernity. In the text, the writer uses the *flâneur*'s perspective to accommodate urban experience; in doing so, the *flâneur* becomes literary subjectivity. The writer *performs* this literary subject in an attempt to attain *line-scape* and to reflect experience of modernity. These two implications demonstrate that the *flâneur* can be regarded as the observer of the writer's *line-scape*.

Furthermore, *line-scape* underscores the writer's effort in using imagination to rework and transform memories, as attested by Baudelaire's art theory. Such a process is endless. *Line-scape* can never be reached: it is an ideal that prompts the writer to move forward, rather than to a fixed destination.

Exploring the implications of *line-scape*, this thesis dwells upon translation theories. Here, I resort to Ricœur's definition of translation to regard it as an endless chain of words, constantly approaching the ideal meaning

without ever being able to do so. Translation becomes a chain of *autrement-dit* that is continuously displaced. The process by which the writer approaches *line-scape* can be compared to that of translation in that both are an endless search for ideal words and meanings, and both engender new and unexpected meanings. *Line-scape* speaks to the writer's attempt to break from cliché and literary convention. Like the urban streets, textual space allows for unexpected encounters, triggering novel experiences and meanings. In pursuit of *line-scape*, the writer experiments with words but has no control over language. In this manner, the *flâneur* serves as a translating tool, offering a shifting perspective to extend into the external world – the urban world as well as the textual world. As this study demonstrates, the *flâneur* is available to the writer as a method to challenge the capacity of words to accommodate the experience of modernity. The *flâneur* as an approach to *line-scape* accentuates both existing and novel meanings in writing and reading.

Considering their literary *flânerie* as a break from the literary constraints of their time, this thesis reveals that Baudelaire's and Woolf's aesthetic considerations underscore a lived and stylised experience. Such experience is triggered by urbanity. In the attempt to capture it and negotiate with it, these two writers lend a voice to the body of the *flâneur*, using the *flâneur's* steps to become immersed in it. *Line-scape* expresses Baudelaire's and Woolf's passion for writing, their fascination with the city, and their contemplation of modernity.

This study contributes a new understanding of modernity to the field of modernist studies. Even though it only focuses on two authors, the notion of *line-scape* provides a prototypical and novel way to examine urban writing across cultures and languages. The thesis also re-evaluates Merleau-Ponty's heritage by

reasserting its importance to studies of city literature. Furthermore, since phenomenology can serve as a common ground for various disciplines, the use of it to investigate the practice of *flânerie* points to potential inter-disciplinary research in memories of the city, movement and navigation in the city, rhythms of the city, and most of all, it engenders a renewed interest in modernity. *Flânerie* is this aimless yet deliberate act in the urban streets, as well as on the page; it takes part in individual and personal stories, and it contributes to rewriting the city in a collective way. Ending with examples of other types of *flânerie*, this thesis hopes to open up other *paths* for the future.

Table of Contents

Introduction.....	1
Chapter One: Locating Modernity.....	13
Chapter Two: The <i>Flâneur</i>: A Phenomenological Explanation.....	74
Chapter Three: From Cityscape to <i>Line-scape</i>.....	113
Conclusion.....	223
Bibliography.....	232

List of Abbreviations

- OC* Baudelaire, Charles, *Œuvres Complètes*, Claude Pichois, ed., 2 vols (Paris: Gallimard, 1975-6)
- E* Woolf, Virginia, *The Essays by Virginia Woolf*, ed. by Andrew McNeillie and Stuart N. Clarke, 6 vols (London: Hogarth Press, 1986-2001)
- JR* Woolf, Virginia, *Jacob's Room*, ed. by Edward L. Bishop (Oxford: Blackwell for Shakespeare Head, 2004)
- MD* Woolf, Virginia, *Mrs Dalloway*, Fernald, Anne E., ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2015)
- O* Woolf, Virginia, *Orlando: A Biography*, ed. by J. H. Stape (Oxford: Blackwell for Shakespeare Head, 1998)
- AROO* Woolf, Virginia, *A Room of One's Own*, ed., by David Bradshaw and Stuart N. Clarke (Oxford: Blackwell for Shakespeare Head, 2015)
- TL* Woolf, Virginia, *To the Lighthouse*, ed. by Susan Dick (Oxford: Blackwell for Shakespeare Head, 1992)
- W* Woolf, Virginia, *The Waves*, ed. by Michael Hermert and Susan Sellers (Cambridge, Cambridge UP, 2011)
- Y* Woolf, Virginia, *The Years*, ed. by Anna Snaith (Cambridge, Cambridge UP, 2012)

Introduction

Modernism and modernity are two tightly related yet problematic terms. While any attempt at periodising modernism risks being arbitrary, there appears to be a general understanding that it designates an artistic and literary movement between the late nineteenth century and the early twentieth century, starting mainly in Europe. However, interest in so-called postmodernism has raised the question of when, and if, modernism ends. Similarly, modernity, sharing the same root as modernism, suffers from an over-theorisation to the degree that it has become an umbrella term encompassing everything and thus nothing: it is sometimes equated with technological changes, while sometimes used interchangeably with modernism – especially in French criticism. In their book on European modernism, Malcolm Bradbury and James McFarlane acknowledge that the term should be linked to 'a characteristic contemporary feeling': 'modernity is a new consciousness, a fresh condition of the human mind – a condition which modern art has explored, felt through, sometimes reacted against'.¹ Though their book is now canonical, their definition dilutes the term by bringing up notions like 'feeling' and 'consciousness', so that the definition touches upon certain traits of modernity without clearly explaining what kind of feeling is involved. Since their collection surveys various strands of modernism, it becomes more difficult to come to a conclusion about what modernity is. To complicate the matter further, if modernity is the sense of the new, then what is its relationship with modernism? In the same essay, the two authors write that

¹ 'The Name and Nature of Modernism', in *Modernism: A Guide to European Literature 1890-1930*, ed. by Bradbury and McFarlane, rev. end (London: Penguin, 1991), pp. 19-56 (p. 22).

even though it is almost impossible to formulate the artistic style that we call modernism, their concentration on 'the extraordinary talent' between 1890 and 1930 is an effort to study the work of a wide range of writers 'who manifest art for us in a major way'.² The scrutiny of a selection of modernist writers, however, proves that the task to sum up what modernism is remains difficult, if not impossible. After all, these writers express art rather differently, even within a European scope; it seems futile to insist on summing up a general artistic tendency in their case. Raymond Williams opines that a canonised modernism is restrictive in that such a 'Modernism' is 'confined to this highly selective field and denied to everything else in an act of pure ideology, whose first, unconscious irony is that, absurdly, it stops history dead'.³ He urges us to look back to the modernist tradition 'which may address itself not to this by now exploitable because quite inhuman rewriting of the past but, for all our sakes, to a modern *future* in which community may be imagined again'.⁴ Similarly, Gerald Froidevaux asserts that 'nous n'avons pas fini de nous débattre avec l'idée de modernité'.⁵

Drawing upon a more Marxist analysis, Eugene Lunn offers an overview of 'major directions of aesthetic form and social perspective in modernism as a whole': formal preoccupations, spatial montage, the cultivation of paradox, the demise of the individual subjects were the results of a 'broad crisis of eighteenth-

² Ibid., p. 52.

³ 'When was Modernism?', in Williams, *The Politics of Modernism: Against the New Conformists*, ed. by Tony Pinkney (London: Verso, 1989), pp. 31-39 (pp. 34-5).

⁴ Ibid., p. 35. Emphasis original.

⁵ 'Modernisme et modernité: Baudelaire face à son époque', *Littérature*, 63 (1986) 90-103 (p.90).

and nineteenth-century liberal thought'.⁶ Lunn's overview of modernism echoes Bradbury and McFarlane's statement that modernity seems to be a form of consciousness. Modernist art (Lunn's discussion takes into consideration music, visual art, as well as literature) seems to demonstrate certain traits that express this mindset. In his seminal work on modernity, Marshall Berman considers modernity a prevailing experience that unites mankind by disunity, for 'it pours us all into a maelstrom of perpetual disintegration and renewal, of struggle and contradiction, of ambiguity and anguish'.⁷ He also points out that most discussions of modernity feature its dualism between the material and the spiritual aspects. Indeed, modernity is often equated with material inventions and technological innovations. While this approach proves to be helpful in understanding historical and social contexts, it risks oversimplifying modernity to a set of technological developments or a situation bound by history, rather than accounting for an overwhelming sense of temporal and spatial discrepancies. It might be helpful for studies of specific modernist strands like the Futurist movement or English Modernism, but it may overlook a more general effect that urban development exerts upon societies and intellectual circles. This tendency ignores 'the intimate unity of the modern self and the modern environment'.⁸ According to Berman, earlier thinkers of modernity were

⁶ *Marxism and Modernism: an Historical Study of Lukács, Brecht, Benjamin and Adorno* (Berkeley: California UP, 1982), pp. 35, 39.

⁷ *All That is Solid Melts into Air: The Experience of Modernity* (London: Verso, 1983), p. 15.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 132.

able to discern in modernity a unity that must be rediscovered.⁹ In fact, the preoccupation with modernity derives partly from the desire to eliminate the dualism that Berman attacks. A better definition of modernity, therefore, should delineate a situation and a transition rather than a particular period of time.

After decades of discussion, the terms remain vague. The late-twentieth-century attempt to define modernism seems to come to terms with the impossibility of defining modernity and modernism, although it is possible to discern several common features with regards to a modernist mindset and aesthetic modernism. In his introduction to modernism published in 2007, Michael H. Whitworth takes up this topic:

Defining modernism need not mean laying finite limits to it, either in terms of a canon or a period. A more subtle definition defines not the material, but the processes that produced it: processes involving reactions to modernity that were sometimes aggressive, sometimes defensive, sometimes ambivalent.¹⁰

Whitworth's comment concisely and accurately summarises the long-standing confusion over the terms. Perhaps, instead of trying to define modernism, it is more worthwhile to interrogate its relationship with modernity directly. As Whitworth's statement indicates, various definitions of modernism continue to enrich the discussion; works devoted to one single author, to a specific time span, or to a particular place also abound. Faced with vast numbers of theories, this thesis investigates modernity in a broader sense: as I shall demonstrate, one cannot deny the historical, social, and economic roots of modernity, but the

⁹ Berman lists thinkers including 'Goethe, Hegel and Marx, Stendhal and Baudelaire, Carlyle and Dickens, Herzen and Dostoevsky'. It is also important to note that Berman's consideration has a Marxist orientation. See *ibid.*, p. 132.

¹⁰ *Modernism*, ed. by Michael H. Whitworth (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2007), p. 5.

context should not override and limit its occurrence within certain places and certain periods. I propose to understand modernity as an experience of spatiotemporal dislocation, a sense of in-betweenness that can be visualised as the gap between the train and the platform: experience of modernity is created through one's struggle faced with the swift moving side and the standstill side of the gap. This imagery of the gap echoes the long-standing linkage of modernity to the evolution in technology – the train being the symbol of progress. By focusing on the experience of the gap, however, I hope to go beyond a mere material definition and a simple equation of modernity to technological advances, putting emphasis on sensual experiences prompted by the discrepancy of the gap. This visualisation deserves a detailed discussion. It describes the modernist subject in a transitional position in the sense that the moving train indicates development, progress, and the future, while the platform suggests tradition and the past. The experience of modernity emphasises both yet belongs to neither; it is therefore paradoxical in its nature. In the very paradox, the experience of the gap underlines the present moment, which is born in the very predicament between the past and the future. Under the influence of the gap, modernist literary works portray the negotiation with the dislocating spatiotemporalities. Such a take on modernity helps to reveal the importance of modernism as an artistic reflection on, if not reaction to, modernity.

Within modernist discourse, the special focus of my thesis is on the *flâneur* – the aimless stroller of the urban streets. My interest in the strolling figure stems from his interaction with the city, where the experience of modernity is most evident. The *flâneur* has been theorised as one of the most prominent figures in understanding modernity. I propose to investigate

modernity along with the *flâneur*'s steps. The juxtaposition of these two key terms attempts to accurately represent and make explicit the writer's encounter with modernity. Of course, the *flâneur* has long been read within city literature: he has long been regarded as one of the representatives of the city. As Keith Tester writes, 'the *flâneur* is essentially about freedom, the meaning of existence (or the lack of a meaning of existence) and being-with-others in the modern urban spaces of the city'.¹¹ *Flânerie* started as a Parisian phenomenon; one of the most famous examples is the Baudelairean *flâneur*, who is often viewed as the prototype of the modern city dweller. Tester speaks of *flânerie* after Baudelaire as 'the activity of the sovereign spectator going about the city' to 'find the things which will occupy his gaze and thus complete his otherwise incomplete identity; satisfy his otherwise dissatisfied existence; replace the sense of bereavement with a sense of life'.¹² *Flânerie* is often paired with the spectacle of the city: Walter Benjamin's commentary on Baudelaire is one of the well-known foundation stones of this strand. However, this solely visual focus is reductive in that it fails to account for the complexity and politics the very act of walking entails. Recent discussions of the practice of walking have started to acknowledge its manifold implications, thereby renewing interest in the role of the *flâneur*.

This shift in discourse considers *flânerie* in a more integrated sense. It explores various sensual experiences embedded in the act of strolling about in streets. It re-examines the impact of the element of speed on urban experience.

¹¹ 'Introduction', in *The Flâneur*, ed. by Keith Tester (London: Routledge, 1994), pp. 1-21 (p. 8).

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 7.

In adopting an inter-disciplinary approach which draws upon phenomenology, I aim to contribute to the field of cultural studies and to explain the way in which the *flâneur* helps to illuminate modernity. My recourse to phenomenology is two-pronged. First, it elucidates the way in which being is not an isolated entity but a being-in-the-world: the body, in this sense, is an indispensable element for perception of the world. This approach helps to interpret *flânerie* in a more holistic manner: walking may be seen as a mobilised perception characterising one's bodily interaction with one's environment. Second, phenomenology's engagement with language sheds light on the process in which meanings are triggered in the text. As I will explain, Maurice Merleau-Ponty's work dwells upon the way in which words, parallel to one's being, are open to unexpected relationships with other words, and hence engender novel meanings which are not envisaged by the writer.¹³ This textual aspect is crucially important, because

¹³ It is important to acknowledge that Merleau-Ponty only represents a small part of the movement, in spite of the wide extent of his works. Proponents of phenomenology have given this movement a broad range of application: in modernist studies, Carole Bourne-Taylor and Ariane Mildenberg emphasise that phenomenology is intricately linked to modernism, due to shared 'preoccupations concerning subjectivity'. Beyond the humanities, phenomenology can be said to be at the roots of theories of the mind and present-day neuroscience. Recent interest in the combination of literary analysis along with theories in the cognitive sciences, for instance, brings these disciplines back together, offering a platform for co-operation between researchers in neuroscience, psychology, literary studies, and beyond. It is in this context that phenomenology proves to be a common language for both sciences and humanities. See *Phenomenology, Modernism and Beyond*, ed. by Bourne-Taylor and Mildenberg (Bern: Peter Lang, 2010), p. 5; for a concise introduction to the development of phenomenology, see *The Phenomenological Mind: An Introduction to Philosophy of Mind and Cognitive Science*, ed. by Shaun Gallagher and Dan Zahavi (London: Routledge, 2008), pp. 1-10. In his book combining neuroscience and literary analysis, Paul B. Armstrong's inter-disciplinary approach reminds us that phenomenology speaks to both realms, see *How Literature Plays with the Brain: The Neuroscience of Reading and Art* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 2003).

it enables me to further investigate the *flâneur's* textual existence: this figure is between the urban space and the textual space – an intermediating condition that reflects the very nature of modernity.

Vast as the scope of my research might seem to be, I shall use Merleau-Ponty's strand of phenomenology and the trope of *flânerie* to interrogate two modernist writers: Charles Baudelaire (1821-1867) and Virginia Woolf (1882-1941). While they are both immensely important modernist writers on their own and have been widely studied by numerous theorists and critics, this combination of authors will hopefully allow for a new constellation – a recurring term in Benjamin's *Arcades Project*. Analysis of the Woolfian *flâneuse* is often compared to her Baudelairean precursor from a feminist vantage point. But I will aim to examine the two, giving equal weight to each, to go beyond a solely feminist argument. Representing Paris and London respectively, they demonstrate how *flânerie* may be considered a writerly strategy to posit a literary subject.

Through a reading of the urban landscapes in Baudelaire and Woolf, I will further propose that the experience of modernity prompts the writer to create *line-scape*. I coin the term to describe the writer's unattainable literary ideal. *Line-scape* designates the relationship between a perceiving observer and an ever-receding horizon. The writer attempts to achieve *line-scape* by turning to imagination to configure an external subject. This literary subjectivity expresses and performs one's situation faced with the gap. In the modernist context, *line-scape* becomes the writer's resolution to cope with the experience of the gap. As modernity features dislocating sides of the gap and resists being pinned down, the writer configures literary subjectivity to represent the elusiveness of such

experience. I will explore the notion of *line-scape* along with landscape painting tradition and theories of poetic subjectivity, for both promote mobility and a dynamic relationship between an imaginary self and an otherness. The notion of an observer helps distance the writer from the speaker or narrator in a work, allowing for more sophisticated reading. *Line-scape* also acknowledges the failure of words to fully convey experience of modernity because its horizon is constantly receding. Yet in its failure, novel meanings are created through re-reading and re-writing, allowing for more space of interpretation. The notion of *line-scape* encompasses elements of phenomenology, semiology, human geography, and textual analysis. My aim is to consider the *flâneur* a writing instrument in that he serves as an observer of *line-scape*. The *flâneur* becomes one of the most suitable literary subjectivity because this figure speaks to both a bodily perception and textual presence. I shall demonstrate the way in which the writer adopts this figure to engage with modernism's deepest concern: the capability of language to express modern life.

With these goals in mind, I start with an attempt to locate modernity in the gap of the railway platform in the first chapter. My analysis of the work of Baudelaire and Woolf will elucidate modernity as sets of paradoxes. Despite the contextual differences between the two authors, my comparison aims to underscore that modernity is located not so much in their description of urban scenes, as in their sophisticated use of imagery, unconventional understanding of beauty, and skilful manipulation of language. Different as their writing styles may seem to be, I argue that they exemplify artistic reaction to, and reflection on,

modernity. Faced with modernity, I argue that the *flâneur* serves as a suitable writing instrument for the writer, because he provokes paradoxes.

In the second chapter, I will cast light on *flânerie* with an emphasis on its phenomenological aspect, which takes into account the indispensable inter-relationship between the self and the external other. This relationship is indicated by the fact that perception is always subjective; the existence of the subject's point of view therefore points to the existence of the other.

Furthermore, phenomenology emphasises the role the body plays in existence, a stress that facilitates understanding of the *flâneuse* debate: *flânerie* as a practice entails a study of historical and social contexts, and hence the discussion of the possibility of the *flâneuse*.¹⁴ Going beyond a feminist standpoint, I propose to look at *flânerie* not so much as a gendered practice, but as a *body* readily available to the writer. Phenomenology offers a suitable theoretical framework here, since it stems from an emphasis on the body's sensual experiences, and

¹⁴ While I use the masculine third person pronoun 'he' to refer to the *flâneur* throughout the chapters, I am highly aware of relevant discussions in terms of gender – as I shall address in chapter two, female stroller, the *flâneuse*, is often seen as a deviant from her predominant male counterpart, hence my consistent choice of maintaining the linguistic masculine term even when analysing the work of Woolf. My treatment of the term is not to dismiss the discussion of the *flâneuse* but to emphasise that the figure of the stroller indicates a heightened sense of the self in terms of literary creation for writers of both genders. While the experience of walking in the streets may indeed differ greatly according to one's gender, my consideration of *flânerie* puts more weight on its creative power. In the scope of this thesis, therefore, the pronoun 'he' does not refer so much to the gender of the stroller as to the linguistic nature of the French masculine noun suffix. By opting for using the term the *flâneur*, rather than alternating between the *flâneur* and the *flâneuse*, I argue that the motif of *flânerie* goes beyond physical walking in the street and can be read as a sort of textual meandering. As I shall illustrate in chapter three, the *flâneur* serves as the writer's prosthetic instrument of performing subjectivity. In this way, this figure almost becomes a gender-neutral term in the scope of literary *flânerie*. See also chapter two, pp. 95-9.

leads to a consideration of subjectivity through an extension to an alterity. It includes, but is not limited to, physical *flânerie*; it echoes the *flâneur*'s twofold existence in the city and in the text, for it deals with both the physical world and the textual world. Ultimately, phenomenology helps to illustrate how the writer, in the attempt to portray the self in modernity, reaches out to the *flâneur* as an instrument.

In my final chapter, I propose the term *line-scape*. Its reference to a space between the lines point to imagination and a poetic horizon, while its link to landscape painting implies a perceiving subject and a dynamic relationship with the world external to the subject. It also reflects the intertwining nature of the city and the text: the city is both readable and writable. Together, these aspects of *line-scape* show how the writer attempts to reach subjectivity by setting the *flâneur*'s foot in the urban landscape and capturing it into words. The intervention of the *flâneur* suggests that *line-scape* is not a naive textual representation of what is perceived, but an artistic consideration of the self faced with the experience of the gap. This writerly act appears to be a sort of *translation* in that it features a constant effort and never reaches a perfect solution. To further explain this point, I will draw attention to the notion of performance and the mechanism of metaphor. I take from both ideas the element of incessant mobility, which sheds light on the writer's translation of *line-scape*. While the notion of performance can explain the writer's manipulation of the *flâneur* and of the audience, the theory of metaphor helps to look at the intersecting meanings of texts as a sort of spatial organisation. The writer resorts to the *flâneur* figure to interrogate the experience of the gap in the city and in the

text. The attempt to accommodate experience of modernity in textual space also lies in the writer's concern with literary style.

My reading of Baudelaire's prose poetry and Woolf's poetic prose will also show their position in the gap between prose and poetry. Writing constantly grapples with literary conventions and existing meanings in order to prompt new ones. In this way, the writer aims to perform a textual *flânerie* in the conception of *line-scape*. Ultimately, investigating the ability of words to generate new meanings and the potential of literary genres to create new forms, I argue that *line-scape* illustrates the way in which the writing of Baudelaire and Woolf reveals the very essence of modernity.

By drawing upon phenomenology, I hope my research will add to the understanding of literary *flânerie*. This attempt, more crucially, should not be restricted to the two writers who are central to my research. The Paris-London comparison aims to provide a prototype for studies of city literature. It also seeks to regenerate interest in phenomenological approaches in literary studies. Finally, I hope that my perspective on *flânerie* as an approach to *line-scape* will become part of the current literary landscape, engendering and triggering more discussions and interpretations.

Chapter One: Locating Modernity

In studying the writer's relationship with modernity, I shall first discuss the nuances of this widely theorised term. Upon reviewing major and canonical discussions in the field, I argue that the experience of modernity is similar to that of the gap of a railway platform: it lies in between the swift moving train and the static platform, but it belongs to neither. Modernity is home to paradoxical experience. My first chapter starts with nuancing modernity and *la modernité*. Among modernist writers, I discern in the writing of Baudelaire and Woolf descriptions of the experience of modernity as a sense of paradox. Scrutinising Baudelaire's famous definition of *la modernité* as a contrast between the past and the present, I propose to interrogate the social and technological influences that result in it. Prevailing cultural theory of modernity in Paris is dominated by the interpretation of Benjamin's work on nineteenth-century Paris. As I shall demonstrate, this interpretation simplifies the experience of the city to mere a visual experience. Problematising such a trend, I engage with discussions of the relationship between technology and modernism to highlight that modernity is triggered by a tension between the discrepancies in spatiotemporalities. While historical contexts – the modernisation process in Paris and the urbanisation in London – should be examined, one should not attribute modernity solely to certain inventions or one particular place. Therefore, I resort to a more phenomenological interpretation of technology as a process of familiarisation to adapt to new spatiotemporal relationships. Ultimately, experience of modernity entails the dislocation of one's sense of space and time. I shall reveal that a similarly paradoxical nature underscores the writing of Baudelaire and Woolf.

Paradoxes engender tension and movement, and it is in this way that modernity proves to go beyond a time- and place- bound definition.

Discussions of modernity and its French counterpart, *la modernité*, provoke differences and similarities. Modernity often refers to the very phenomenon and developments that result in modernist movements in the English-speaking world, while *la modernité* carries in it a sense of the present. As Rita Felski observes, there seems to be a linguistic and cultural difference between the two cultural and linguistic circles, for *la modernité* tends to refer not so much to aesthetic movements as to 'the more general experience of the aestheticization of everyday life'.¹⁵ This quotidian concern can be 'exemplified in the ephemeral and transitory qualities of an urban culture shaped by the imperatives of fashion, consumerism, and constant innovation'.¹⁶ Antoine Compagnon also notes that speaking of 'la tradition moderne' is in itself a paradox, however, the phrase '*The Modern Tradition*' appears to be less so, as the English phrase is the opposite of '*The Classical Tradition*' and serves to 'désigner, du point de vue de son esthétique, la période historique qui commence vers le milieu du XIX^e siècle avec la mise en cause de l'académisme'.¹⁷ It seems that *la modernité* describes a general sensibility while modernity suggests certain developments in a certain period in history that result in what is known as modernism.

¹⁵ *The Gender of Modernity* (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1995), p. 13

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

¹⁷ *Les Cinq Paradoxes de la modernité* (Paris: Seuil, 1990), p. 8. Italics original. Cf. Baudelaire is dismissal of a similar 'académisme' in his *Exposition universelle* (1855), as he rejects 'l'aveuglante forteresse' of the system. See *OC II*, p. 577.

The different yet related strands have resulted in a call for reconciliation between them, and a more nuanced understanding of modernity as related to modernism. It has become a crucial task to integrate modernity into *la modernité*, for artistic sensibility and technological innovations are intertwined, both permeating everyday life as well as history; making modernity fit narrowly within a given and arbitrary time frame is reductive. There is also a need to elucidate how technological innovations and urban developments both enhance and are influenced by a sense of modernity, a point stressed by Felski, for whom modernity should not be reduced to a mere periodisation of history or 'sociohistorical phenomena', but should instead encompass 'particular (though often contradictory) experiences of temporality and historical consciousness'.¹⁸ Felski's relational approach can surpass a singular focus on the contextual differences and allows for a more comparative study. The definition of modernity needs to stress the 'sensibility of radical disruption and accelerating change wherever and whenever such a phenomenon appears'.¹⁹ As Susan Stanford Friedman elaborates, modernism 'requires tradition to "make it new"', a tradition 'comes into being only as it is rebelled against'.²⁰

Paradoxically, the notion of newness stems from a long tradition. Jürgen Habermas importantly identifies the consciousness of modernity as deriving first from aesthetic criticism, in which the '*querelle des anciens et des modernes*' in the

¹⁸ *The Gender*, p. 9.

¹⁹ Susan Stanford Friedman, 'Definitional Excursions', in *Disciplining Modernism*, ed. by Pamela Caughie (Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), pp. 11-32 (p. 24). Yet, Felski's relational understanding of modernity and modernism does not go unchallenged. As Friedman suggests, it risks overestimating the disruptive nature of modernity and resulting in a rejection of historical continuity. See *Ibid.*, pp. 22-4.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 30.

eighteenth century set off a movement of 'detachment from the models of ancient arts'.²¹ In spite of the eighteenth-century debate, Habermas reminds us that the word 'modern' has an ancient origin: its Latin form '*modernus*' appeared in the late fifth century: '[w]ith varying content, the term "modern" again and again expresses the consciousness of an epoch of a transition from the old to the new'.²² The notion of modernity thus builds on this ancient consciousness of newness. Studies on the relationship between modernity and modernism have acknowledged its discrepant nature, a suitable starting point to define modernity with a consideration of both the English and French strands. Bradbury and McFarlane's work on European modernism portrays it as a twentieth-century upheaval in art, a 'Great Divide'.²³ Their definition of modernity does touch upon a sense of speed, and it is a key term 'tied up with definitions of our situation which are subject to change' and yet, it seems impossible to historicise the 'modern' and to reach a conclusion about its style.²⁴ They seem to refer to the platform image which I use to describe modernity, yet it is not very clear where the artist and writer are situated. They recognise the gap but it appears that the artist and the writer must choose a side to fight against: if one chooses the fast-moving train, it is a declaration against that of the platform, hence a rejection of

²¹ *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity: Twelve Lectures*, trans. by Frederick Lawrence (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1987), p. 8.

²² 'Modernity versus Postmodernity', trans. by Seyls Ben-Habib, *New German Critique*, 22, pp. 3-14 (p. 3).

²³ 'The Name and Nature of Modernism', pp. 19-20.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 22. Therefore, they urge the reader to consider what the common base of modernism is: '[t]he movement towards sophistication and mannerism, towards introversion, technical display, internal self-scepticism'. However, their attempt to locate 'Modernism', to give it a place and a date, and to baptise it with a capital M, remains unfulfilled exactly because its potential is rooted in the nineteenth century if not even earlier, and it seems impossible to locate its beginning at any point. See *Ibid.*, p. 26.

tradition and history; it is an *either or* rather than a *neither nor*. Nevertheless, this is not to overlook the importance of their work, for Bradbury and McFarlane do discern that modernism is 'less a style than a search for a style in a highly individualistic sense'.²⁵ This view brings modernism closer to our understanding of modernity as the experience of the gap. Their volume is devoted to an overview of mainstream artistic movements in the twentieth century, and it has become an important stepping-stone in the field. Modernity is indeed, as most theorists acknowledge, a fluid term whose relationships with modernism deny definition and theorisation. However, the experience of the platform gap, as I visualise it, could bear this very fluidity while demonstrating its essence. In fact, one of the earliest definitions of *la modernité* has already preserved the above-mentioned paradoxical nature: in Baudelaire's often quoted essay 'Le Peintre de la vie moderne' (1863), *la modernité* is 'le transitoire, le fugitif, le contingent, la moitié de l'art, dont l'autre moitié est l'éternel et l'immuable'.²⁶ For Baudelaire, these characteristics of modernity, which tend to belong to aesthetic experiences, are closely related to life in the big city: modernity, to Baudelaire, is not devoid of context. With Felski's relational viewpoint in mind, I propose to read modernity as a sensibility to, and awareness of, the experience of the gap. Such an experience tends to be most prominent in the city, the very location where

²⁵ Ibid., p. 29.

²⁶ *OC II*, p. 695. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text. Rachel Bowlby's reading of this essay looks at this 'half-and-half theory of art' to validate how art can still be relevant to new contexts. Baudelaire's modernity 'is not itself presented as belonging to any particular time' – '[i]mplicitly, it is transhistorical or even quasi-eternal. See 'Half Art: Baudelaire's *Le Peintre de la vie moderne*', *Paragraph* 34.1 (2011), 1–11 <<http://ezproxyprd.bodleian.ox.ac.uk:2436/doi/pdfplus/10.3366/para.2011.0002>> [accessed 28 April 2015](pp. 4, 11).

'sociohistorical phenomena' took place.²⁷ While I disagree with looking at modernity solely as the result of any particular historical event or technological invention, I would like to emphasise, instead, the particular urban milieu that allows writers to turn their attention to the paradoxical experience dominating their life in the city, and a sense of dislocation that fascinates them, that which is reflected in their creative works as well as in their critical thoughts.

Whithin this modernist framework, my comparison of Baudelaire and Woolf helps to illuminate the way language deals with various sensual experiences in the city. Both writers incorporate their cities – Paris and London respectively – into their writings. In choosing these two authors, I do not intend to limit the understanding of modernity to any particular period or to specific authors but instead aiming to provide my research with a framework that can best illustrate my comparison of modernity to the experience of the gap. Despite the contextual differences between Baudelaire and Woolf, modernity in both cases is located not so much in their description of urban scenes as in their sophisticated use of images, unconventional understanding of beauty, and skilful

²⁷ I argue that the sense of dislocation still prevails today, as the virtual space has hugely distorted human beings' understanding of time and space. Before the age of the Internet, however, it is the city dweller that is greatly influenced by modernity's discrepancy. In her 1924 essay 'Characters in Fiction, Woolf famously claims that 'on or about December 1910, human character changed'. Bradbury's essay illustrates that towards the end of the nineteenth century, it was clear that 'the city was part of a total process of dissolution of old feudal and class relationships and obligations'. As a result, artists found themselves in a discrepancy between 'independence and social indeterminacy that we often today call alienation'. He further points out that '[m]odernist writing has a strong tendency to encapsulate experience within the city, and to make the city-novel or city-poem one of its main forms'. See Bradbury, 'The Cities of Modernism', in *Modernism*, ed. by Bradbury and McFarlane, pp. 96-104 (pp. 98, 100); Woolf, *E III*, p. 421.

manipulation of language. They are both eclectic writers whose works range from literary creation to art criticism.

Baudelaire's essays on art, for instance, are often regarded as manifestos for modernist aesthetics and for his own writing principles.²⁸ His poetry, most notably *Les Fleurs du mal* (second edition 1861), has been widely studied because Baudelaire reinvents the traditional alexandrines of French poetry with a touch of urbanity.²⁹ In *Le Spleen de Paris*, a collection of prose poems published posthumously in 1869, Baudelaire went a step further to accommodate modernity in prose poetry.³⁰ Claude Pichois, one of the most authoritative

²⁸ Besides a series of essays on the *Salons*, Baudelaire's essay 'Le Peintre de la vie moderne' and his miscellaneous writings on art, music, and literature are all part of his artistic output, to which his poetics is closely related.

²⁹ First published in 1857, *Les Fleurs du mal* was denounced by the *Ministère de l'Intérieur* for its immorality. The second edition, which is used by Claude Pichois in the *Œuvres Complètes*, was published in 1861. In the introduction to her recent study on Baudelaire's prose poetry creation, Corinne Bayle has summarised a review of many important twentieth- and twenty-first-century commentaries on Baudelaire's significance in modernist literature. Her review reveals how present-day critics in the French literary arena are still engaged with Baudelaire's legacy. See also Jonathan Culler's introduction in *Charles Baudelaire: The Flowers of Evil*, trans. by James MaGowan (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1998); Pichois' chronology and note on the collection in *OC I*; Bayle, *Nocturne de l'âme moderne: 'Le spleen de Paris' de Charles Baudelaire* (Mont-Saint-Aignan: Press Universitaires de Rouen et du Havre, 2014), pp. 13-6.

³⁰ Baudelaire's transformation from *Les Fleurs du mal* to *Le Spleen de Paris* shows the poet's negotiation with the question of representation, since traditional poetry could no longer speak for life. As Kathryn Oliver Mills puts it, Baudelaire 'perceived a conflict between a literary form that had defined poetry from its origin to the mid-nineteenth century, and the time in which he lived'. From his encounter with the painter Constantin Guys to his adoption of prose poetry, Mills delineates how Guys' influence goes beyond the famous 'Le Peintre de la vie moderne' and reaches Baudelaire's own poetics. As Mills contrasts Baudelaire's *Les Fleurs du mal* and the writing of *Le Spleen de Paris*, she notes a fundamental difference in the attitude towards art and life: while the former 'seems to posit art over life', the latter 'demonstrates an overwhelming everyday life'. Bayle holds a similar view in her comparison between the two works: despite some overlapping titles, few poems in *Le Spleen de Paris* could be said to be Baudelaire's adaptation from verse to prose. See Mills, *Formal Revolution in the*

editors and commentators of Baudelaire's works, has spoken of Baudelaire's prose poems as the 'poèmes urbains', because even the earliest poems in the collection were composed after the renovation of the city directed most notably by Haussmann.³¹

Across the Channel in London, Woolf's essays and novels also deal with life in a time fraught with paradoxes, contradictions and uncertainties. London has long been a centre of commerce and development, and Woolf was certainly aware of these urban developments and social changes; her highly experimental style stands testimony to her sensitivity to such changes. While she is often said to be famous for her stream-of-consciousness prose, such a label risks overlooking her progress in narrative skills. In fact, her novels vary greatly in terms of styles. She experiments with the novel genre to accommodate different voices and subjectivities. Ultimately, her novels question the very notion of genres. Their time frames span from one June day in *Mrs Dalloway* (1925), and decades in *The Years* (1937), to centuries in *Orlando* (1928), showing the ebb and flow of life – seemingly trivial and unimportant daily life is given a new perspective in her eccentric use of language. In *The Waves* (1931) and *Jacob's Room* (1922), traditional narrative is completely dispersed by internal monologues and soliloquies; the momentum of these two novels is not built on one single plot but, rather, thoughts around an imaginary centre, and the reader is led to find that the so-called centre is a mere illusion. Woolf does not fail to

Work of Baudelaire and Flaubert (Newark: Delaware UP, 2012), pp. 58, 64; Bayle, *Nocturne de l'âme moderne*, pp. 65-7.

³¹ 'Des poèmes en prose, Haussmann, le conseil judiciaire de Paris, fut peut-être la cause indirecte. De toute manière, aucun de ces poèmes n'est antérieur aux travaux, immenses pour l'époque, effectués dans la capitale'. See *OC I*, p. 1296.

reveal her writerly attempt to understand the self in a modern world.³² Her descriptions of London and its dwellers point to a search to interpret life, a search that leads to a questioning of existence. Her works do not just offer a glimpse of life in the city in the early twentieth century; rather, they posit a profound consideration of the ability of language to convey meanings and a reflection on the purpose of life.

Different as their writing styles may seem to be, I argue that both, Baudelaire and Woolf, exemplify artistic reaction to, and reflection on, modernity. Their works straddle poetry and prose, challenge the idea of genres in their respective eras, and reveal their attempts to grasp modernity. This very attempt thus allows us to read their works beyond their respective contexts and to consider modernity as a consciousness to the experience of the gap.

To illustrate the experience of modernity as a sense of the gap, an account of Baudelaire's Paris and Woolf's London is crucial to understand modernity. Such a degree of scrutiny is not aimed at complicating the term with different cities and historical periods, nor is it my goal to fall back to a narrow definition of modernity as a historical periodisation. The different contexts between Baudelaire and Woolf allow me to draw attention to modernity's more general and predominant themes: paradoxes and gaps. The common topic of life in the city enables us to view modernity beyond its historical origins. Taking our stance

³² In his recent study on the modern novel based on Woolf's works, Jacques Rancière has revealed that the practice of modern fiction features a tension 'entre le grand lyrisme de la Vie impersonnelle et les arrangements de l'intrigue, une tension qui n'échappe aux modulations du compromis qu'au prix d'un sacrifice violent'. Woolf's novels thus exemplify such a tension in their various voices and subjectivities. Rancière, 'La Mort de Prue Ramsay', in *Le Fil perdu: Essais sur la fiction moderne* (Paris: La fabrique, 2014), pp. 56-72 (p. 67).

from Baudelaire's famous definition of modernity quoted above, we can already discern modernity as more than an advancing force driven by technology. In fact, modernity features sets of paradoxes, discrepancies, and contradictions. It starts as an aesthetic consciousness, hailing the present as a new source of beauty. In praising the artist Constantin Guys, Baudelaire writes that 'toute notre originalité vient de l'estampille que le *temps* imprime à nos sensations' (*OC II* 696 emphasis original). Yet, Baudelaire does not reject the past and tradition. In the same essay, he claims that the artist in this pursuit of modernity will 'dégager de la mode ce qu'elle peut contenir de poétique dans l'historique, [...] tirer l'éternel du transitoire' (*OC II* 694). It is the same task for the writer to fully experience the dynamics between past and present, and to extract from the transitory a poetics that is also close to eternity.

The sense of contrast between the present and the past derives from the interaction with new social and historical changes – hence the focus on cultural history and the history of technology. In terms of cultural theories of technology, Walter Benjamin's role as one of the earliest forerunners in the field cannot be underestimated.³³ Benjamin's approach traces literary creation and, more importantly, changes in the literary market, along the lines of urban development in Paris. He notes how periodicals had been the literary centre of the eighteenth and the early nineteenth centuries, until the emergence of the *feuilleton* section in the daily newspaper, a section of 'short, abrupt news items'

³³ Sara Danius, 'Technology', in *A Companion to Modernist Literature and Culture*, ed. by David Bradshaw and Kevin J. H. Dettmar (Oxford: Blackwell, 2006), pp.66-78 (p. 70). 'The usefulness of his [Benjamin's] work lies partly in his sophisticated conception of the nature of representation, partly in his approach to mediation and historical causality'. See *ibid.*, p. 70.

that 'enabled a newspaper to have a different look everyday'.³⁴ While most sources of the *feuilleton* came from city gossips, it allowed the man of letters to have an excuse to spend hours on the boulevards to display his idleness as part of his 'working hours', a practice that had led to the development of the arcade and that indirectly shaped the urban spaces.³⁵

Among this type of literature, Benjamin is particularly interested in the genre of the 'physiologies'. They are 'modest-looking, paperbound, pocket-size volumes' investigating 'types that might be encountered by a person taking a look at the marketplace'.³⁶ He hails these figure sketches as 'the *haute école* of the *feuilleton*' thriving in the early 1840s, as they offered a detailed sketch of all walks of life in Paris.³⁷ Behind the circulation of the physiologies, however, Benjamin discerns a more fundamental cause of their popularity: the impact of the tightened rule on censorship in 1836, as a reaction to which, 'everything went through a review'.³⁸ The 'leisurely quality' of the physiologies might seem to fit the style of the *flâneur*, whom Benjamin describes as 'botanizing on the asphalt' and 'feeling at home among the façades of houses as a citizen is in his four walls', but the embedded control building on 'the grey cobblestones and

³⁴ 'The Paris of the Second Empire in Baudelaire', in *Charles Baudelaire: A Lyric Poet in the Era of High Capitalism*, trans. by Harry Zohn, 2nd edn (London: Verso, 1985), pp. 9-106 (pp. 27-8). In fact, Benjamin's writing on Baudelaire and on Paris demonstrates that Baudelaire's poetry can be understood as a record of life in nineteenth-century Paris: the crowd, the circulation of the *feuilleton*, and the urban transformation in the Second Empire all help shape Baudelaire's writing. Benjamin's analysis of Baudelaire is scattered across various works, and its English translation is collected in the volume quoted here.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 28-9, 35.

³⁶ 'The Paris of the Second Empire in Baudelaire', p. 35.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 35.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 36.

against the grey background of despotism' do not go unnoticed.³⁹

Benjamin's work is seminal in studies of modernity and the city. The status of his work has established the *flâneur* figure as representative of the city dweller in nineteenth century Paris. According to Catherine Nesci, Benjamin prompts a consideration of the *flâneur* as 'l'emblème de l'artiste moderne' while *flânerie* is 'le nouveau mode de perception adaptée au phénomène de la très grande ville et à la mosaïque des signes, rebuts et traces disséminés dans l'espace urbain'.⁴⁰ Indeed, Benjamin has established the importance of the *flâneur* to the understanding of the city, where, in Benjamin's own words, people 'had to adapt themselves to a new and rather strange situation, one that is peculiar to big cities'.⁴¹ This 'new and rather stange situation' that is 'particular to big cities' points to the city dweller's relationship with the experience of modernity. Sara Danius thus asserts the importatnce of Benjamin's study of Paris in the Second Empire, a project whose focal point is 'the complex relationship between art and technology'.⁴²

In the light of Benjamin's work, recent scholars have appraoched modernist literature by paying particular attention to the role played by technology in the creation of literary works. In one of her recent articles on technology and modernism, Danius has indicated that in many writers' works in the early twentieth century, technological changes are 'felt in the inner form of the literary work – on the level of style, rhetoric, imagery, figuration,

³⁹ Ibid., pp. 36-7.

⁴⁰ *Le Flâneur et les flâneuses: les femmes et la ville à l'époque romantique* (Grenoble: ELLUG, Université Stendhal, 2007), p. 53.

⁴¹ 'The Paris of the Second Empire', p. 37.

⁴² 'Technology', in *A Companion to Modernist Literature and Culture* (p. 70).

representation, syntax, or phrasing'.⁴³ In Danius' account, there seems to be a lack of scrutiny in terms of how the novel and poetry implicate historical processes, due to a belief in 'aesthetic autonomy'.⁴⁴ In her book *The Senses of Modernism*, Danius argues that modernist literary works have in fact internalised technology: many landmark modernist works often describe a general 'transition from technological prosthesis to technological aisthesis, thus moving from externalization to internalization'.⁴⁵ For Danius, technology constitutes and is intrinsic to modernist aesthetics; both should be understood as 'internal to one another' – hence the term 'technological aisthesis'.⁴⁶

Despite her thorough reading of three major modernist writers, namely, Thomas Mann, Marcel Proust and James Joyce, Danius' argument has a tendency to equate modernity with technological innovation, falling back on a more reductive understanding of the term. Incorporating aesthetics with particular technologies and inventions appears to dissect the subject's senses into individual and independent perceptions. This tendency reflects the fragmentary nature embedded in modernist aesthetics, but it also shows that approaches to

⁴³ 'Technology', in *A Companion to Modernist Literature and Culture*, p. 67.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 71.

⁴⁵ *The Senses of Modernism: Technology, Perception, and Aesthetics* (London: Cornell UP, 2002), p. 3. In Danius' terms, the word *aisthesis* stresses 'things perceptible by the senses'; Rancière further suggests that it points to 'des modes de perception et des régimes d'émotion'. See Danius, *The Senses of Modernism*, p. 6; Rancière, *Aisthèsis: Scènes du régime esthétique de l'art* (Paris: Galilée, 2011), p. 10.

⁴⁶ *The Senses of Modernism*, pp. 11-3.

urban perception often end up favouring sight over other senses, a preference already problematised by certain theorists.⁴⁷

Novel directions of study shed new light on this discussion. Tim Armstrong's work, for instance, enriches the discussion by offering an embodied explanation of modernism. Focusing on how the body negotiates with technology, he points out that modernity has transformed the relationship between the two: 'the body is re-energized, re-formed, subject to new modes of production, representation and commodification'.⁴⁸ Jonathan Crary, on the other hand, chooses a reverse path to deal with sight: contrary to a technological determinism, his work puts emphasis on how the development of vision itself underwent a rupture in the early nineteenth century. As a result, the concept of vision revolutionised the technology of optical instruments and the physiological understanding of the eye. Ultimately, it has transformed the concept of the observer, who is problematised as 'both the historical product *and* the site of certain practices, techniques, institutions, and procedures of subjectification'.⁴⁹ However, Crary also admits that the focus on sight over other senses risks leading to a separation of the senses, gravitating towards the fragmentary subjectivity of modernity.⁵⁰

Under the influences of these attempts to interrogate the relationship between an individual and technology and to surpass a somehow simplified

⁴⁷ For instance, Juhani Pallasmaa denounces the 'ocularcentric and obsessively hygienic code of culture' rooted in Western civilisation. See *The Eyes of the Skin: Architecture and the Senses* (Chichester: John Wiley & Son, 2012), p. 19.

⁴⁸ *Modernism, Technology and the Body: A Cultural Study* (Cambridge, Cambridge UP, 1998), pp. 2-3.

⁴⁹ *Techniques of the Observer: On Vision and Modernity in the Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1990), p. 5. Author's emphasis.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 19.

causal relationship between technology and literature, my analysis of the work of Baudelaire and Woolf is not limited to particular innovations in their time. Relating to important cultural and historical studies, I hope to address how various inventions and developments all have a certain degree of novelty that adds to the experience of modernity – after all, novelty is a relative term. Modernity is a condition with which the writer, who is sensitive to newness, is faced. It contains conflicting spatialities and temporalities created by various innovations. The urgent task is to discern from literary works how this condition influences the writer both directly and indirectly. Based on a particular history of Paris and the situation in London, I will relate modernity to a more generalised 'new and rather strange situation' in 'big cities' described by Benjamin.⁵¹

Today, when we consider modern-day Paris, its transformation in the nineteenth century needs addressing. Paris underwent a large-scale urban renewal in Baudelaire's time; it was a project that shaped Paris with its famous boulevards and is chiefly attributed to Georges-Eugène Haussmann, the *préfet* of Paris under Napoléon III. In his biography of Haussmann, George Valence writes that as a result of the project, the city has become the centre of modernity: 'le développement des chemins de fer, de la grande industrie, des grands magasins, du gaz et de l'électricité, permet l'éclosion d'un nouvel urbanisme'.⁵² Valence reveals that the ultimate reason behind the project is to 'embellir la cité, la sécuriser politiquement, et nourrir la croissance économique'.⁵³ According to

⁵¹ See my quotation on p. 24.

⁵² *Haussmann le grand* (Paris: Flammarion, 2000), p 191.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 191. Benjamin also comments that '[t]he city of Paris entered this century in the form which Haussmann gave it'; his tone, however, is not without a touch of sarcasm, when he acknowledges that Haussmann 'had revolutionized

Benjamin, Haussmann's project began in 1859. Both David Harvey and Priscilla Parkhurst Ferguson, however, reveal that the plan to transform the city had started before Haussmann came to power.⁵⁴ Indeed, after the unrest in 1848, the dominant class in France sought to disable future rebellions and to accommodate the growing population to the thriving commerce.

Harvey's work on nineteenth-century Parisian cultural history offers an insightful analysis of the social and historical significance of Haussmannisation.⁵⁵ Among various concrete projects of construction and destruction, Harvey pays particular attention to the invisible flow thus generated – boulevards manipulated space and facilitated the circulation of goods and population, and most crucially, they mobilised surplus capital, without which construction on such a scale would have been impossible.⁵⁶ Speculation of future interest and flow of credit turned the city into a centre of capitalism to such a degree that even Haussmann was forced to surrender eventually: 'the circulation of capital became the real imperial power'.⁵⁷ Harvey's book title, *Paris, Capital of Modernity*, thus bears a double meaning, as it indicates both how Paris is the centre of modernity and how modernity features capital in its financial sense. The flow of

the physiognomy of the city with the most modest means imaginable: spades, pickaxes, crowbars, and the like'. See 'The Paris of the Second Empire', p. 85.

⁵⁴ David Harvey, *Paris, Capital of Modernity* (New York: Routledge, 2003), pp. 8-9; Ferguson, *Paris as Revolution: Writing the 19th-Century City* (Berkeley: California UP, 1994), p. 119.

⁵⁵ Ferguson offers an interesting overview of the term Haussmannisation, which 'has come to signify in shorthand any radical topographical modernization of any city'. The verb and substantive, which appeared in 1892 and 1926 respectively, bear witness to a generalisation attributed to a somewhat misleading tendency to attribute 'large-scale social phenomena' to one individual. See *Paris as Revolution*, p. 118.

⁵⁶ *Paris, Capital of Modernity*, p. 112.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 114.

capital might be invisible, but its force was not. Harvey's research shows that the use of land undertook 'increasing geographical segregation': imbalanced development resulted in difference between quarters (or *arrondissements*), creating a new *landscape* of the city.⁵⁸ In addition, the rising demand for labour power due to public works and the destruction of rural industries during the 1850s also helped to form a force – the circulation of labour power.⁵⁹ The flow of immigrants from the provinces formed part of the phenomenal urbanisation, but even within the city, traffic circulation became another force. Harvey attributes this urban traffic flow to geographical fragmentation as a result of 'dispersal of population, housing, and employment'.⁶⁰ This separation created the circulation of commuters, travelling from their cheap housing in the periphery to the commercial centre on a daily basis.⁶¹

More importantly, among the rural immigrants, a large population of women played an important role in the nineteenth-century Parisian flow because of their frequent, if not constant, association with prostitution. Single working women, or *femmes isolées*, engendered resentment among male workers because of the significantly lower wages and thus better employability for the

⁵⁸ Ibid., p. 138. Whereas the bourgeois tended to live in Western Paris, the Eastern part of the city was known for its working class population. The East-West division bears witness to disproportional demographical distribution, what we now call 'gentrification', that had aggravated the spatial segregation in Paris in the 1860s. See *ibid.*, pp.138-9.

⁵⁹ Ibid., p.180.

⁶⁰ Ibid., p.180.

⁶¹ Similarly, Woolf depicts the shop assistant commuting from the suburb of London. See my analysis on p. 34.

female.⁶² With such scarce pay, however, prostitution or liaison with a man became an easier way out; therefore, these women triggered fear in bourgeois circles due to the suggestion of moral corruption.⁶³ These negative feelings also found representation in Catholicism's denunciation of the credit system as being as demoralising as prostitution.⁶⁴ The search for money and for sexuality became part of an invisible flow of desire circulating in the city, while prostitution itself suggested a fluid form of exchange, another form of flow.

However, modernity is not unique to nineteenth-century Paris. As I have emphasised, modernity is not defined by specific historical contexts. The French capital may have prompted Baudelaire's poetic creation, but his modernity is not solely French. In this regard, Evan Horowitz remarks that Baudelaire's modernity derives also from his attention to English life.⁶⁵ While it is widely acknowledged that Baudelaire is greatly influenced by many English-speaking authors, most notably Edgar Allan Poe, Horowitz's interest in Baudelaire's engagement with English poetry and even his speaking about Baudelaire's Englishness (in both the ways in which he read and he *is read* by an audience across the Channel) reveal that Paris as 'the unofficial capital of the nineteenth century' is more of Benjamin's making.⁶⁶ Horowitz argues that since England was much more advanced than Paris in terms of industrialisation in the nineteenth century, the modern element in Baudelaire's verse has its roots in

⁶² Harvey, *Paris, Capital of Modernity*, pp. 182-3. As Harvey suggests, women were paid less than half wages compared with their male counterparts, hence the better employability. See *ibid.*, p. 182.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 182.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 118.

⁶⁵ 'London: Capital of the Nineteenth Century', *New Literary History*, 41.1 (Winter 2010), 111-28 (p. 112).

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 111.

Baudelaire's exposure to Englishness.⁶⁷

Horowitz's argument correctly overthrows a Benjaminian modernity that is often taken as the authority. 'London – both in itself and as the symbolic center of England – was closer to fulfilled modernity than Paris or any other nineteenth-century metropolis';⁶⁸ therefore, it is important for him to trace Baudelaire's literary works closely alongside those of Anglophone writers. In fact, even though London was one of the earliest modern cities after the Industrial Revolution, it never experienced revolutions and projects of reconstruction as intensely as Paris did.⁶⁹ In Philip Davies' photo collection of London in the period from 1870 to 1945, he observes that 'London was never controlled by a single political or religious body able to guide the layout of its streets to one grand design'; unlike Paris, the British capital 'was the largely-unplanned creation of a pluralist society driven by trade and commercial imperatives'.⁷⁰ As Anna Snaith and Whitworth point out, only in the early decade of the twentieth century were there proposals to transform the Holborn-Strand area in London. The London County Council managed to carry out this centralised plan.⁷¹ Davies adds that the

⁶⁷ Ibid., p. 111.

⁶⁸ Horowitz, 'London: Capital of the Nineteenth Century', p. 116.

⁶⁹ Furthermore, in the perspective of spatial arrangement, London is dominated by its squares, which help maintain residential quarters intact, while Paris, on the other hand, was dominated by the "'cannon-shot boulevard," seemingly without an end'. Sigfried Giedion comments that in Paris, the urban plan initiated 'the demands of an industrial age' by overthrowing a *promeneur's* point of view. Visually speaking, 'the first result of approaching the planning of a city as a large-scale transportation problem is the endless street, the street that stretches beyond the range of the eye'. See *Space, Time and Architecture: The Growth of a New Tradition*, 5th edn (Massachusetts: Harvard UP, 1967), p. 739.

⁷⁰ *Lost London: 1870-1945* (Amersham: Transatlantic Press, 2009), p. 10.

⁷¹ For a more detailed account of the Holborn–Strand scheme, which echoed the boulevards created in Paris by Haussmann, see Anna Snaith and Whitworth, 'Introduction: Approaches to Space and Place in Woolf', in *Locating Woolf: the*

Holborn-Strand scheme, the first large project carried out by the newly-founded London County Council, was 'the most extensive clearance project undertaken in London since the Great Fire'.⁷² The scheme, which made Kingsway '[a] grand new Imperial boulevard', was meant to eliminate traffic bottlenecks as well as 'sweep away one of London's worst slums'.⁷³ We cannot name one person or one project to epitomise London's transformation; nor was the scale of the Strand scheme comparable to the Haussmannisation half a century ago in terms of its magnitude. However, changes have been on-going in this city: not only did London see the first underground system in the world in 1863, but the railway and omnibus had both altered urban life in London; in Ana Parejo Vadillo's study, London, by the end of the nineteenth century, had already become 'a complex network of mass-transport structures', as trams and omnibuses transported 280 million and 300 million passengers respectively on an annual basis.⁷⁴ On top of that, the underground system carried 'a total of 131 million passengers'.⁷⁵ This London is also Woolf's London. Such a flow of passengers creates groups of commuters. In Snaith and Whitworth's configuration, Woolf certainly 'recognized the way that the railways, and particularly the Underground, reconstruct space'.⁷⁶ Reading the changes in the city alongside Woolf's literary

Politics of Space and Place, ed. by Snaith and Whitworth (London: Palgrave MacMillan, 2007), pp. 1-28 (pp. 10-1).

⁷² *Lost London: 1870-1945*, p. 101.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, p. 101.

⁷⁴ *Women Poets and Urban Aestheticism: Passengers of Modernity* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), p. 21.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 21.

⁷⁶ 'Introduction: Approaches to Space and Place in Woolf', in *Locating Woolf*, p. 17.

creation, they assert that in Woolf's eyes, the linearity promoted by the city deprived it of 'its emotional and narrative truth'.⁷⁷

The works of Snaith and Whitworth, and Vadillo not only provide contextual facts and statistics about the modernisation process in late nineteenth-century London, but also interpret such historical facts with literary creation. Historical studies and literary analysis add to each other, and such comparative studies shed new light on how we read literary works.⁷⁸ In a way, Woolf's works offer sketches of city life that are reminiscent of the physiologies in nineteenth-century Paris. The force of commerce and that of population circulation is portrayed in Woolf's prose. Her *London Scene* essay collection is particularly relevant;⁷⁹ as the title suggests, she registers the experience of urban life with keen observation. In 'Oxford Street Tide' (1932), the speaker describes how tortoises 'repose on litters of grass'; these 'slowest and most contemplative of creatures' are 'jealously guarded from passing feet'.⁸⁰ Slow-moving tortoises are exposed not only to the shoppers passing by, but as commodities they form part of the commercial circulation. While in Benjamin's depiction of the Parisian arcades, around 1840 'it was briefly fashionable to take turtles for a walk' in order to have the animals set the pace for the *flâneur*,⁸¹ the tortoises in Woolf's

⁷⁷ Ibid., p. 18.

⁷⁸ A similar but more specific study for Paris could be found in Masha Belenky's study of how omnibuses, which appeared in Paris in 1828, became part of the modernity that interests the writer. See 'From Transit to *Transitoire*: The Omnibus and Modernity', *Nineteenth-Century French Studies*, 35 (Winter 2007), 408-21.

⁷⁹ 'The London Scene' comprises six essays which Woolf initially called the series 'Six Articles on London Life'. See the explanatory note in *E V*, p. 280.

⁸⁰ *E V*, p. 284. Further references to Woolf's essays are given after quotations in the text.

⁸¹ 'Paris of the Second Empire', p. 54.

London have been rendered immobile, subjected to a more forceful commerce. The press forms another circulation, as '[n]ews changes quicker than in any other part of London' while traffic is incessant: '[b]uses, vans, cars, barrows stream past like the fragments of a picture puzzle' (*E V* 284). The shop assistants who live in 'the little villas out at Croydon and Surbiton' also take part in this circulation of traffic, as they must commute to the city centre to work (*E V* 286).⁸² In the short essay Woolf describes how people from all walks of life all submit to or become part of the Oxford Street tide. Taking Horowitz's view into consideration, we might come to the conclusion that London *is* the one and only city of modernity: it had influenced both Baudelaire and Woolf. Indeed, it is clear that both writers' aesthetics concerns are closely related to the development of the city, or more precisely, to the city of London; nonetheless, it would be misleading to link London, or any particular city, to modernity. Even in the cases of London and Paris, it is impossible to reach a conclusion about which one contributes most to modernity. It is said that some plans that Louis-Napoléon had in mind for Paris were partly inspired by London, where he went in exile and 'saw the completion of public works intended to render the center of London more accessible'.⁸³ Such an account does not suggest the influence of London on the development of Paris, given that Louis-Napoléon's role in the renovation is a

⁸² Cf. gentrification and population redistribution described by Harvey on n. 58, p. 29.

⁸³ David H. Pinkney, *Napoleon III and the Rebuilding of Paris* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1958), pp. 30-1. Pinkney also offers a well-documented overview of the project. In addition, Pierre Solda examines how the Haussmannisation is reflected in Zola's works; even though Zola is not the focus of my research, Solda's account of the urban construction can give us a detailed picture of the sociological condition of the period. See Solda, 'Emile Zola et l'haussmannisation de Paris', in *Paysages urbains de 1830 à nos jours*, ed. by Gérard Peylet and others, 68 (Talence: Eidôlon, 2004), pp. 95-108.

relatively minor one, compared to previous urban plans and Haussmann's strong character. However, it does shed light on the relationship between the two cities. Whereas Horowitz seems to attribute modernity to England, he does not ask what makes the city the cradle of modernity. Such a view could be problematic, because it aims to tie modernity to certain cities and might deny the possibility of modernity to others. It does not take into consideration that the city can be regarded as a phenomenon in the sense that it signifies a particular cluster of clashing spatio-temporalities: any city has the potential to engender modernity. In fact, both cities contribute to the notion of the modern city. Examining particular developments on both sides of the Channel is not to differentiate them but to extract from the comparison the essence that can be said to be representative of the modern city. In this vein, in his recent book, Jonathan Conlin judiciously underscores the importance of communication between the two cities in giving birth to modern cities in the nineteenth century. According to Conlin, Paris and London form a sharp contrast in terms of spatial organisation: the development of London around the turn of the century had been dominated by a more horizontal sprawl while that of Paris featured 'high-rise, high-density dwellings'.⁸⁴ Conlin's case study traces how Londoners started to accept the development of flats and gradually incorporated it into the city through housing projects during the mid-century.⁸⁵ The housing developments exemplify a broader phenomenon: the city dweller has to become accustomed to populated

⁸⁴ *Tales of Two Cities: Paris London and the Birth of the Modern City* (London: Atlantic Book, 2013), p. 29.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 29-30.

space. Specific as Conlin's examples may seem to be, they allow us to draw upon Paris and London more generally as two sources that created the modern city.

Indeed, the city may be seen as a particular space where visible and invisible changes take place, often in a dramatic manner. Writers of city literature may belong to specific contexts, but what comprises their experience of modernity is a sense of paradox and dislocation. Modernity cannot and should not be pinned down to any particular technology, place, or period of time, for the writer's experience cannot be attributed to one independent cause. While Horowitz speaks of Baudelaire's Englishness, Woolf's circle, the Bloomsbury group, is heavily influenced by French aesthetics and the French way of living.⁸⁶ To establish such a relation is not to argue simply that Woolf had read Baudelaire's works but to elucidate that both writers are situated in a similar cosmopolitan situation that engenders modernity. More precisely, it is a shared experience of the gap that renders modernity an interesting topic to examine across different ages and cities. It is also the same interest that makes the city a phenomenon worth examining.

To view the city as a phenomenon, Stephen Kern's *The Culture of Time and Space: 1880-1918* offers a useful starting point to investigate some changes in human history that challenge the perception of time and space. At first glance, the time frame of his work seems to be limited to merely four decades; his analysis, however, reveals an alteration in the perception of time and space due to technological changes. Through a seemingly narrow discussion, he reveals how a broader temporal and spatial dislocation occurs in the city.

⁸⁶ To this connection, see *Bloomsbury and France: Art and Friends*, ed. by Mary Ann Caws and Sarah Bird Wright (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2000).

Kern describes how the perception of the present is fragmented by 'a simultaneity of multiple distant events'.⁸⁷ The 'sequence versus simultaneity' polemics were explored by many artists due to the popularity of the wireless, the telephone, the high-speed rotary press, and the cinema.⁸⁸ McFarlane describes a similar situation in the last decade of the nineteenth century, when 'communications improved, distance shrank', and as a result, 'the more hectic rhythms of urban living imposed themselves over wider areas of society, so events moved faster and the whole tempo of life quickened'.⁸⁹ Kern's and McFarlane's emphasis on simultaneity and linearity echoes what Harvey terms the 'space-time compression' as a result of new transportation and communication technologies.⁹⁰ This compression, if not annihilation of space and time, is a prevalent idea in literary works.

Despite his specific focus on the bicycle and the automobile in the late nineteenth century, Kern discerns, beyond these modes of transport, the more prevailing impact of velocity. This broader view allows him to illustrate how the accelerating technology bore a twofold impact on the present as well as on the past: it 'speeded up the tempo of current existence' while 'transform[ing] the memory of years past, the stuff of everybody's identity, into something new': '[m]emories have the potential for becoming nostalgic only after changes have made comparisons possible and the past seems irretrievably lost'.⁹¹ Kern's work

⁸⁷ *The Culture of Time and Space: 1880-1918*, rev. edn (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 2003), p. 68.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 68.

⁸⁹ 'The Mind of Modernism', in *Modernism: A Guide to European Literature 1890-1930*, pp. 71-93 (p. 77).

⁹⁰ *Paris, Capital of Modernity*, p. 47.

⁹¹ *The Culture of Time and Space*, p. 129.

is important not so much in its factual explanation of inventions with regard to velocity, as in its interpretation of the effect of such inventions: Kern reveals the temporal propensity of speed. In fact, the crux of Kern's work lies in this double-sided effect on the present and the past. Velocity alters not only human perception but also memories. Kern's argument might easily fall into a technological determinism that ends up as a simple and reductive causal relation attributing all the changes to certain inventions. Therefore, it is crucial to point out that this phenomenon is not restricted to any time period, for throughout human history, invention has been defining and redefining the concept of distance and time. This mediated and dislocated sense of time is constantly being renewed. Specific as the progress of modernisation may seem to be, it is fundamentally a rethinking of time-space.⁹² Based on a similar concern, Jeremy Stein challenges Kern's and Harvey's argument and re-examines the traditional view of 'space-time compression' in the nineteenth century. He proposes an 'evolutionary' rather than 'revolutionary' explanation to the experience of time and space; he argues that such changes do not occur overnight; rather, '[t]echnological improvements and reductions in travel times between places were typically cumulative and gradual'.⁹³ Modernity not only features a gap between various senses of velocity in the here and now, but also characterises a gap between the present and the past. Modernist literature is relevant to the sense of time-space that Kern mentions and yet, this experience is not

⁹² I use the hyphenated time-space to indicate that these two elements are inseparable from each other, the consideration of one leads to that of the other, and both are essential to existence.

⁹³ Jeremy Stein, 'Reflections on Time, Time-space Compression and Technology in the Nineteenth Century', in *TimeSpace: Geographies of temporality*, ed. by Jon May and Nigel Thrift (London: Routledge, 2001), pp. 106-19 (p. 119).

completely novel in the nineteenth century: when people from one era declare their newness and claim their break from previous generations, what they experience is partially a renewed sense of time after an accumulation of 'space-time compression'. The term modernity may be a relatively new invention and the so-called modernisation may seem to refer to concrete developmental plans and inventions, but fundamentally, they all involve a rethinking of time-space, a rethinking that in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries appears evident in the aesthetics of the city.

Even though Kern's notion of time is useful, it is essential to explore technology beyond particular inventions and their limited impacts by discussing technology in its broader sense. In an approach different from, and yet related to Kern's, Jason Wasiak looks at technology through its influence on the city dweller and defines it by resorting to Heideggerian phenomenology.⁹⁴ For him, technology in the city is not technology *per se*, independent of any other element; rather, he stresses how technology is perceived through the city dweller. Wasiak regards adaptation to technology and equipment as a process to render them transparent; such a process can normalise them and thus familiarises one with the instrument and technology in question.⁹⁵ The experience of the city could thus be summed up as predominantly a negotiation among technological developments and 'a reshaping and dilation of our particular way of being-in-the-world'.⁹⁶ Aligning himself with phenomenological thinking, Wasiak

⁹⁴ 'Being-in-the-City: A Phenomenological Approach to Technological Experience', *Culture Unbound*, 1, (2009), 349-66.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 353.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 358.

illustrates that this process is made possible by the movement of the body.⁹⁷ The focus on the body cannot be underestimated because it echoes the idea that modernity talks not of any specific technological invention but refers to a constant dynamics propelled by various sensual experiences. The emphasis on the city-dweller's perception is crucial in order to go beyond the difference in historical and geographical specificities and to treat modernity as a particular experience of the gap. Varied as individual experiences may be, the awareness of a perceiver brings to the forefront the intricate relationship between technology and the city.

Adding to Wasiak's sociological research, which stresses the human subject, Andrew Thacker elaborates on a spatial extension from the urban to the textual, as '[l]iterary texts represent social spaces, but social space shapes literary forms'.⁹⁸ Similar to Wasiak, the body here stands between the perceiving subject and the perceived object; the city dweller's role becomes the key to understanding modernity, for the experience of the gap can be understood only through a human subject. Philosophically, existence involves more than mere perceptual experiences; it also entails the self's search for meaning in time and space. Existence in the city becomes an interesting subject of study because this search is influenced by modernity, which promotes distorted spatial-temporal experiences. The important role played by time in one's existence has been addressed by various philosophers: in his insightful introductory work on the philosophy of time, Mark S. Muldoon has pointed out that the quest for the meaning of life leads to an examination of time – how '*the philosophical play with*

⁹⁷ Ibid., p. 358.

⁹⁸ *Moving Through Modernity* (Manchester, Manchester UP, 2003), p. 4.

time, within a system of thought, encourages a formulation of meaning to arise'.⁹⁹ He further argues that this temporality-centric nature underscores the essence of French philosophy, which aims to grasp 'the self in the flux of time, as its perennial task'.¹⁰⁰ Whereas the focus on time as related to the self does not go unchallenged,¹⁰¹ this view nonetheless successfully directs our attention from lived experience in the city to written texts on the page. After all, such a philosophical quest deals with the relation of the self to others – an alterity which should be considered in the textual space as well.

For the city-dweller, modernity has both spatial and temporal characteristics, qualities that promote movement in both time and space. More importantly, modernity is revealed in the discrepancies of space and time. With regards to the latter, Paul Ricœur's acknowledgement of the aporias between temporalities should not be overlooked: instead of trying to reach a compromise, Ricœur's laborious study of time reveals the very unbridgeability between a

⁹⁹ *Tricks of Time: Bergson, Merleau-Ponty, and Ricœur in Search of Time, Self, and Meaning* (Pittsburgh: Duquesne UP, 2006), p. 12. Author's emphasis.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 16.

¹⁰¹ Wyndham Lewis, for instance, has trenchantly criticised what he categorises as the time-school philosophy: he denounces it as nationalist and regionalist because of its emphasis on a more local and psychological time frame. Lewis also accuses contemporary philosophy of dismissing the importance of space as a result of a self-displacement – as we have been accustomed to 'go backward and forward, at all speeds, in all places and times'. However, his quest for stability in concrete matter seems to ignore the intertwining nature of time and space, which is especially true for human experience. Similar to Lewis, Thacker aims to shift philosophical investigation from an exclusive focus on time to an awareness of space. In a different manner from Lewis, however, Thacker emphasises movement in space and place in a way that implicitly links space to time. Reading modernist literature in the light of Heidegger's, Bachelard's, and Lefebvre's spatial theories, Thacker's work sheds new light on the predominant time philosophy and acknowledges the indispensable role both time and space play in one's existence. See Lewis, *Time and Western Man*, ed. by Paul Edwards (Santa Rosa: Black Sparrow Press, 1993), p. 241; Thacker, *Moving Through Modernity*.

more human time as opposed to a cosmic one.¹⁰² In Ricœur's own words, 'the phenomenological time' cannot be included in 'the time of nature'; the former, the ordinary time, cannot be equalled with or designated to 'the universal time of astronomy, the physical sciences, biology, and, finally, the human sciences'.¹⁰³ The difference between the two can be discerned in *Mrs Dalloway*.¹⁰⁴ Rather than seeking to bridge the gap between the two temporalities, Ricœur believes that we should bring together history and fiction; phenomenology can shed light on 'a poetics of narrative', responding to 'the aporias of time'.¹⁰⁵ While this consideration appears to be largely temporal, the focus on city literature can further elucidate the intertwining characteristics of space and time; the role of the text reveals gaps between temporalities and between spatial experiences. The urban environment bears witness to sets of paradoxes which find their echoes in literary works. Modernist literature as a branch of art thus challenges

¹⁰² Muldoon, *Tricks of Time*, p. 59. Paul Ricœur's theory is indebted to Merleau-Ponty as he investigates how a literary work is able to open to a world that could be inhabited. He proposes a 'fictive experience of time', which is 'the temporal aspect of this virtual experience of being-in-the-world proposed by the text'. See Ricœur, *Time and Narrative*, trans. by Kathleen McLaughlin and David Pellauer, 3 vols (Chicago: Chicago UP, 1984-88), II (1985), pp. 100-12.

¹⁰³ *Time and Narrative*, III (1988), pp. 91-2.

¹⁰⁴ Ricœur's reading of *Mrs Dalloway* demonstrates how mortal time confronts monumental time; there is no single experience of time. While minor events mark the passing of the day in the novel, excursions into the past are grafted upon the narrative, endowing the brief narrated time with 'an implied immensity'. Various characters establish their own relationship to chronological time and prompt the reader to '*reconfigure time itself in our reading*'. Ricœur contends that the relationships between clock time and internal time are not simply oppositional: he urges us to look at various characters' relationships to monumental time as different solutions to surmount the 'fissure', 'between the monumental time of the world and the mortal time of the soul'. He concludes that no single experience of time is representative in *Mrs. Dalloway*: every experience of time is valid; it is the overall 'underground network' that counts as the true experience of time. See *Time and Narrative*, II, pp. 100-12.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 99.

the classical concept of absolute beauty, as it aims to reveal modernity in all its paradoxes and ruptures: it contrasts unity with fragmentation, juxtaposes eternity with everydayness, and it replaces absolute values with relationality. In the ebb and flow of city life, modernist literature dramatises the intertwining of individual moments in collective human entity.

Indeed, the modernity in Baudelaire's and Woolf's work contains paradoxes par excellence: from imagery and depiction to the most fundamental use of language, paradoxical elements permeate their works. Therefore, before I address how the *flâneur* serves as their strategy to exemplify modernity, and elaborate on Wasiak's view of technology by resorting to phenomenology, at this juncture, it is imperative to demonstrate how the paradoxical nature of modernity is illustrated.

Baudelaire's poetry is often oppositional and ambiguous. Besides his paradoxical juxtaposition of the transitory and the eternal in his definition of modernity, Baudelaire's poetry portrays the poet's situation in the contradictory gap. In the prose poem 'Le Mauvais Vitrier', for example, the speaker asks: 'qu'importe l'éternité de la damnation à qui a trouvé dans une seconde l'infini de la jouissance?' (*OC I* 287). The human condition is filled with contradiction: infinity is most approachable in the finitude of one second. Such an opposition seems to be temporal, but Baudelaire has given modernity a location in the city. 'Le Cygne', in the *Tableaux parisiens* section of *Les Fleurs du mal*, exemplifies one of the sharpest juxtapositions of paradox, as the speaker's *flânerie* in the modernised Paris is transformed into a lament for Andromache and past glories. Ironically, modernity coexists with antiquity. The speaker then observes a caged

swan's futile attempt to escape, which leads not to its 'lac natal' but only to a ditch, 'un ruisseau sans eau':

Un cygne qui s'était évadé de sa cage,
Et, de ses pieds palmés frottant le pavé sec,
Sur le sol raboteux traînait son blanc plumage.
Près d'un ruisseau sans eau la bête ouvrant le bec

Baignait nerveusement ses ailes dans la poudre,
Et disait, le cœur plein de son beau lac natal:
«Eau, quand donc pleuvras-tu? quand tonneras-tu, foudre?» (OC I 86)

This paradoxical modernity is fully-fledged in the image of the swan's wings in the dust; the verb 'baigner' further enhances the irony. The recurring 'p' alliteration in 'ses pieds palmés frottant le pavé sec' slows down and cripples the sentence, as if mimicking the clumsy movement of the swan. The 'ruisseau sans eau' creates an internal rhyme which sharpens the irony, an effect which is continued later in the swan's absent 'beau lac natal'. The rhyme created by the '-eau' renders the contrast between the dustiness and the lake even starker, and prompts a reconsideration of what is 'beau'.¹⁰⁶

In the modern city, traditional standards of beauty are challenged. Whereas the swan could be related to classical notion of beauty, the city itself also amounts to a modern myth. In the case of Paris, Haussmann's urban project is itself an attempt at myth-making. In Harvey's account, Haussmann's modern myth aimed to render the past irrelevant. Such a radical break has its political

¹⁰⁶ The swan's longing for the 'lac natal' forms 'un écart insurmontable', analogical to the gap between the concrete signifying and the abstract signified – a point that is further highlighted by the homophonic nature of 'cygne/signe'. See Jean Starobinski's analysis of the poem in *La Mélancolie au miroir: Trois lectures de Baudelaire* (Paris: Julliard, 1989), p. 73.

agenda: to secure the Empire and its authority.¹⁰⁷ Unlike Paris, London might not have been through infrastructural renovation of such a scale, but as Woolf's work can interestingly show, classical myth is first trapped then commodified, creating yet another myth of modernity.

In her essay collection *London Scenes*, Woolf further brings to the discussion a paradox in temporalities created by commodification. In 'Docks of London' (1931), she observes how objects are judged by their 'mercantile value': the tusks of mammoths 'that have lain frozen in Siberian ice for fifty thousand years' become 'suspect in the eyes of the ivory expert', as '[m]ammoth ivory tends to warp' and thus could only be used for 'umbrella handles and the backs of the cheaper kind of hand-glass' (*E V* 278). The narrator realises that 'if you buy an umbrella or a looking-glass not of the finest quality, it is likely that you are buying the tusk of a brute that roamed through Asian forests before England was an island' (*E V* 278). This passage reveals a gap between a seemingly unmovable past and a swift-changing present – it is not only an echo of Baudelaire's modernity but also an evocation of the caged swan: displaced and in exile. Similar to the caged swan bathing in dust, the mammoth has no forests in which to roam in Woolf's London; the expert's nonchalant tone adds to the irony, as the fifty-thousand-year-old tusk could be found in 'the cheaper kind of hand-glass'. Furthermore, it demonstrates how commodification alters people's

¹⁰⁷ *Paris, Capital of Modernity*, p. 10. Cf. Patrick Higonnet notes that from the 1830s on there was 'a wave of secularized Parisian mythology that crested in the 1860s with Baron Haussmann's astounding reconstruction of the city'. Nevertheless, Harvey's work questions Haussmann's claim of a total break from the past. See Higonnet, *Paris: Capital of the World*, trans. by Arthur Goldhammer (London: Harvard UP, 2002), p. 7; Harvey, *Capital of Modernity*, p. 13.

understanding of time and value. As a metropolis, London gathers oddities from all around the world, yet beauty is reduced to its pragmatic use. From streetlights to an umbrella, modernity might not be a radical break from the past, but it certainly aims to reveal its paradoxical nature. It contains busy urban London but also stages mammoths roaming in ancient Asian forests. As modernity is juxtaposed with antiquity, both Baudelaire and Woolf present urban experience as an experience of the gap. They demonstrate that the mundane and the ordinary also deserve attention. However, they are in favour of neither the mythical nor the ordinary. In their celebration of the gap, they acknowledge both. Hence, Baudelaire dramatises an encounter with a swan in the dirty gutter in the city, and Woolf evokes from an umbrella handle an exotic grandeur. Faced with such discrepancy, the writer grapples with the modern notion of beauty.

Modern city also plays with the notion of seeing and non-seeing, as a result of artificial light. Street lights seem to allow for vision in the night, but there is still an irreducible darkness that persists. The connotation of the street lights is worth pondering upon, for their installation was also part of Haussmann's grand design for Paris. They play an interesting role in the city, changing the urban horizon at night, playing with the idea of the seen and the unseen. Their visibility forms a contrast with the dark patches.¹⁰⁸ In 'Oxford Street Tide', the narrator who saunters 'towards the sunset' observes another

¹⁰⁸ Cf. In her essay 'Modern Fiction', Woolf famously uses the image of light to depict life as an ambiguity and a haziness that cannot be rationalised: '[l]ife is not a series of gig lamps symmetrically arranged; life is a luminous halo, a semi-transparent envelope surrounding us from the beginning of consciousness to the end'. See 'Modern Fiction', *E IV*, pp. 157-65 (p. 160).

'perpetual sunset' that 'seems to brood over the Marble Arch', created by 'artificial light and mounds of silk and gleaming omnibuses' (*E V* 283). The comparison of the urban light with a perpetual sunset is very intriguing. It is an oxymoron in that sunsets suggest an ending and a change, and yet the artificial sunset implies permanence and is deprived of its original link to nature. The natural sunset seems to be taken over by its artificial counterpart. Artificial light does not hail the arrival of the night and it could only 'brood over the Marble Arch', suggesting a hint of sullenness. The image of the Marble Arch sunset is also found in *The Years*, where Woolf portrays Eugénie's journey in the cab passing the Serpentine, which was 'red in the setting sun':

[...]. The lights – the sun-light and the artificial light – were strangely mixed.

[...]

The cab passed over the bridge. It entered the shadow of the trees. Now it left the Park and joined the long line of cabs, taking people in evening dress to plays, to dinner-parties, that was streaming towards the Marble Arch. The light grew more and more artificial; yellower and yellower. (*Y* 116-7)

In both quotations, Woolf notes how artificial light changes the outlook of Marble Arch in the evening. Depicting a similar scene from a stroller's perspective ('Oxford Street Tide') and from a passenger's point of view (*The Years*), Woolf seems to be fascinated by the effects of artificial light. Bright as the city might become due to artificial lighting, it does not mean that the urban space becomes easier to read: as street signs are lit up at night, the urban space is further complicated by these additional symbols and signs. This play on *what can be seen* and *what can be understood* is reminiscent of Baudelaire's 'Les Aveugles' in

Tableaux parisiens, in which the speaker addresses his own soul to contemplate the blind men:

Contemple-les, mon âme; ils sont vraiment affreux !
 Pareils aux mannequins, vaguement ridicules ;
 Terribles, singuliers comme les somnambules,
 Dardant on ne sait où leurs globes ténébreux.

Leurs yeux, d'où la divine étincelle est partie,
 Comme s'ils regardaient au loin, restent levés
 Au ciel; on ne les voit jamais vers les pavés
 Pencher rêveusement leur tête appesantie. (OC I 92)

As the speaker sees the blind 'travers[a]nt ainsi le noir illimité, / [c]e frère du silence éternel' (OC I 92),¹⁰⁹ the tension between seeing and not seeing is fully presented. The blind men are compared to mannequins: they have the posture of seeing (their eyes 'restent levés/[a]u ciel' as if they are looking afar) without being able to see anything at all. Whereas mannequins usually articulate gestures and poses of human beings, Baudelaire reverses the relationship in this metaphor, turning real men into something unanimated. Moreover, both border on a lack that relies on someone seeing them, to 'be grasped and understood by sight', for they themselves do not see.¹¹⁰ The blind men are situated in an eternal

¹⁰⁹ Jules Laforgue identified Baudelaire's 'silence éternel' as the poet's notion of beauty:

Tout notre tapage de passions, de discussions, d'orages, d'art, c'est pour, par le bruit, nous faire croire que le *Silence n'existe pas*. Mais quand nous retombons las, nous l'écoutons restagner de partout et nous sommes plus tristes, pas assez forts pour un tapage éternel ou pour nous faire au Silence éternel.

The lack of sight is related to the lack of voice. In Laforgue's interpretation, the noises and sounds form a stark contrast with an eternal silence. To a certain degree, Woolf's depiction of London scenes, as I shall explore in more details, also dwells on a similar urban cacophony. See Laforgue, 'Notes sur Baudelaire' in *Œuvres Complètes de Jules Laforgue: Mélanges posthumes*, 3rd edn (Paris: Société de Mercure de France, 1903), pp. 111-9, (pp. 116-7).

¹¹⁰ Ulrich Baer, *Remnants of Song: Trauma and the Experience of Modernity in Charles Baudelaire and Paul Celan* (Stanford: Stanford UP, 2000), p. 128. Baer

darkness that cannot be lit up by light, and still, they 'dard[e]nt' their 'globes ténébreux'. Baudelaire ridicules the futile attempt to see and in doing so, he dramatises the contrast between seeing and not seeing. After the speaker shifts his addressee from his soul ('mon âme') to the 'cité', the last couplet urges the city to *see* the speaker's own plight:

Vois, je me traîne aussi! mais, plus qu'eux hébété,
Je dis: Que cherchent-ils au Ciel, tous ces aveugles ? (OC I 92)

The irony is fully revealed by directly resorting to sight ('[v]ois'). The speaker identifies himself with the blind men: even though he can see, he is nonetheless as debased as the blind men; the word 'hébété' indicates some kind of shock leaving the speaker dazed.¹¹¹ The speaker can see but he sees nothing. Sight does not help him to see more clearly than the blind, for the speaker still wonders what the blind men search for. Therefore, William Chapman Sharpe relates this

appears to relate the mannequins in the poem to those appearing in shop windows, for both attract visual attention. However, given Baudelaire's role as an art critic, the mannequins could also suggest the artist's articulated dummies. Comparing the blind men to the artist's mannequins seems more suitable since it allows a juxtaposition of the poet and the artist; both discern 'le silence éternel' and ponder on the notion of beauty (see also Laforgue's comment in n. 109, p. 48). Interestingly, while the mannequins retain an eternal silence, many of them have nonetheless *articulated* joints. For an introduction to the artist's mannequin, see Jane Munro's insightful and informative account of its cultural history in *Silent Partners: Artist and Mannequin from Function to Fetish*, ed. by Munro (New Haven: Yale UP, 2014).

¹¹¹ The word 'hébété' describes a person 'dans un état d'hébétude passager ou durable'. While 'hébétude' suggests '[e]ngourdissement ou effondrement des facultés intellectuelles', it also designates to '[é]tat d'abrutissement intellectuel total à la suite d'un choc émotif ou en rapport avec une confusion mentale'. See *Le Trésor de la Langue Française informatisé (TLFi)* (Paris: CNRS éditions, 2004) <<http://atilf.atilf.fr/tlf.htm>> [accessed 15/08/2015]. Baer's analysis shows how the last couplet is metrically stumbling to the degree that the poet in fact 'momentarily renounces control over the poem's setting and thus assumes the position of blindness and exposure to an environment that threatens to overwhelm him'. See *Remnants of Song*, p. 129.

poem to the poet's own search for meaning, which is in itself a blind search.¹¹²

From seemingly lit-up urban streets to complete darkness for the blind, the range of seeing and knowing dramatises the elusiveness of modernity. The blind search in 'Les Aveugles' has multiple meanings: it is not only a search in the urban environment but also the poet's search to accommodate a similar situation in poetic language. Just as Woolf is fascinated by the Marble Arch transformed by light, Baudelaire is not blind to the changes of his time, and yet, he struggles to depict his era in a suitable language.

Besides the opposition between antiquity and modernity, and between sight and blindness, both authors also subtly display modernity's discrepancies between a liquidising force and a solidifying force. Margaret Cohen attributes the water image in 'Le Cygne' to a protestation against Haussmannisation, as the speaker evokes 'Andromaque, je pense à vous! Ce petit fleuve,/ Pauvre et triste miroir où jadis resplendit' (*OC* 185), a stark contrast between a water city and a walled city is created.¹¹³ The 'petit fleuve', which indirectly refers to the Seine, has become 'an outmoded presence' compared with the newly built boulevards and railway.¹¹⁴ In Cohen's words, Haussmann's modernisation has made Paris

¹¹² *Unreal Cities: Urban Figuration in Wordsworth, Baudelaire, Whitman, Eliot, and Williams* (Baltimore and London: John Hopkins UP, 1990), p. 54. The notion of blindness has its poetic connotation: Ainslie Armstrong McLees points out that blindness calls upon the tradition associating blindness with both 'prophecy and mystery'; the poem connotes 'both visionary and poet'. The reader is led to believe that blindness does offer access to another world, 'as signified through the wordplay on the multiple meanings of "vision"'. See *Baudelaire's 'Argot Plastique': Poetic Caricature and Modernism* (Athens: Georgia UP, 1989), pp. 93-4. I shall return to the meanings of the word 'vision' in chapter three, p. 140.

¹¹³ 'Modernity on the Waterfront: The Case of Haussmann's Paris', in *Urban Imageries: Locating the Modern City*, ed. by Alev Çinar and Thomas Bender (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007), pp. 55-75 (p. 71).

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 61.

into a 'landlocked city'.¹¹⁵ She argues that Haussmann's city of monuments is undone by the widowed Andromache's weeping exile; the city of waterfronts is thus regained in poetry.¹¹⁶ Nevertheless, Cohen seems to overlook the fact that the process of modernisation is not limited to the concrete construction of monuments. Fluidity and instability abound as a result of the circulation of financial capital, mobility of labour power, and more subtly, the flow of sexual desire, as I have mentioned above.¹¹⁷ Moreover, Cohen's argument implies a shifting from the city of water to that of stone, simplifying modernity as a one-way progress rather than a constant tension. Contrary to Cohen's argument, Burton Pike aptly portrays how the 'word-city' in literature changed from 'a fixed object in space' to 'an unstable refraction of an individual consciousness'.¹¹⁸ Jean Starobinski's insightful account of the poem points out that the poem contains a tension between a petrification effect and an evocative movement which is developed to undo it. From the dedication 'à Victor Hugo', to the first line, 'Andromache, je pense à vous', Starobinski argues that the poem moves to similar displaced figures: the preposition 'à' conducts a movement '*vers les êtres*' in their exile.¹¹⁹ Modernisation should not be reduced to a simple solidifying force. Paris is not a waterfront city challenged by cobblestone; it experiences

¹¹⁵ Ibid., p. 66.

¹¹⁶ Ibid., p. 71.

¹¹⁷ See pp. 28-30 of this chapter.

¹¹⁸ *The Image of the City in Modern Literature* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1981), p.71.

¹¹⁹ *La Mélancolie au miroir*, p. 76. Emphasis original. In fact, Baudelaire dedicated three poems in the *Tableaux parisiens* to Hugo. As Karlheinz Stierle suggests, the dedication is Baudelaire's 'feinte modestie', as it signifies not merely a homage to a predecessor but, more importantly, it implies that Baudelaire has gone beyond Hugo's achievements. See *La Capitale des signes: Paris et son discours*, trans. by Marianne Rocher-Jacquin (Paris: Maison des sciences de l'homme, 2001), pp. 491-2.

both forces. Such a dialectic is not absent from Woolf's depiction of London, either. In *Jacob's Room*, the light 'from the arc lamp drenched him [Jacob] from head to toe'.¹²⁰ This latter sentence is repeated, making the use of the word 'drenched' more peculiar. It points to a kind of liquidising effect, despite the fact that the arc lamp is a concrete installation in urban space. Concrete as certain urban constructions may seem to be, their real influence is an invisible force that outruns the flow of the river.¹²¹

The paradoxes of modernity are often vocalised in spatiotemporal terms. Instead of reaching reconciliation between the eternal and the fleeting, between the seen and the unseen, and between the concrete and the fluid, modernist writers highlight these discrepancies as traits of their predicament. Baudelaire, for instance, is highly aware of his transitional position in art history: as Pichois explains, Baudelaire 'serait ainsi pris, mais dialectiquement, entre la nostalgie du passé et l'énergie, le dynamisme qui lui permettent d'entrevoir et, déjà, d'organiser l'avenir' (*OC II* 1322). Such an awareness is already reflected in his earlier commentary of art. In *Salon de 1846*, he was preoccupied with living in a transitional age when 'la grande tradition s'est perdue', whereas 'la nouvelle n'est pas faite' (*OC II* 493). Tracing his aesthetic development from his earlier *Salon de 1846* to his later essay, 'Le Peintre de la vie moderne', we can discern the transitional role Baudelaire plays between romanticism and modernism. In

¹²⁰ *JR*, pp. 77-8. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

¹²¹ The liquidising effect in the modern city can be found in traffic circulation. Woolf's passage on the Marble Arch in *The Years* (quoted on p. 47) also contains a water metaphor: the cab 'streaming towards the Marble Arch' describes an urban circulation that is reminiscent of the river image in Baudelaire's 'petit fleuve' in 'Le Cygne' (*OC I* 85).

the pre-1848 era, Baudelaire speaks of romanticism as 'l'expression la plus récente, la plus actuelle du beau' (*OC II* 420). However, in ending the essay with a section entitled 'De l'héroïsme de la vie moderne', Baudelaire has already touched upon 'une beauté nouvelle et particulière'; he also asserts that '[l]a vie parisienne est féconde en sujets poétiques et merveilleux' (*OC II* 496). Later, his *Salon de 1859* presents a more confident art critic, not in the sense that he has grown out of the transitional phase, but in the sense that he fully admits the transitional nature of modern life. Opening with the section 'L'Artiste moderne', *Salon de 1859* highly praises the role of imagination (which I shall dwell upon in later chapters) and welcomes modern life in his celebration of the present. This tendency finally crystallises in the 1863 essay 'Le Peintre de la vie moderne', in which he embraces the paradoxes and contradictions that modernity has brought into art.¹²² Confronted with uncertainty, it is therefore the artist's obligation to challenge existing aesthetics and question its meaning. In 'Le Peintre de la vie moderne', Baudelaire speaks of beauty as 'une composition double'; it is 'fait d'un élément éternel, invariable, dont la quantité est excessivement difficile à déterminer, et d'un élément relatif, circonstanciel' (*OC II*

¹²² For Baudelaire's transformation, see also Jean-Pierre Bertrand and Pascal Durand's comment, 'Modernité et contemporanéité poétiques: l'héritage du XIXe siècle', *Lendemains*, 105/106 (2002), 69-88 (72). Stierle also comments on Baudelaire's gradual development of a poetics of the city. In fact, Baudelaire seems to start incorporating the theme of urban life rather belatedly in *Tableaux parisiens* in his second edition of *Les Fleurs du mal*, published in 1861. According to Stierle, these few poems epitomise Baudelaire's new language for the city and open up a new chapter for the Parisian discourse. Finally, it is in *Le Spleen de Paris*, which Baudelaire does not complete, that a new voice of the city is articulated. Examining Baudelaire's 'conscience urbaine', Stierle summarises that Baudelaire only comes to a realisation of aesthetics and poetics of the city 'pas à pas', a phrase that intriguingly indicates the element of *flânerie* in Baudelaire's artistic output. *La Capitale des signes*, pp. 411-2.

685). Baudelaire rejects absolute beauty and asserts it as both eternal and relational, without the latter, he further comments, the former element 'serait indigestible, inappréciable, non adapté et non approprié à la nature humaine' (*OC II 685*).

Woolf's novels also echo this sense of transition and relativity. In *Jacob's Room*, for instance, a personified beauty is located in the very paradoxes of modernity:

Then, at a top-floor window, leaning out, looking down, you see beauty itself; or in the corner of an omnibus; or squatted in a ditch – beauty glowing, suddenly expressive, withdrawn the moment after. (*JR 95*)

Modernist aesthetics seeks beauty in the sordid and ever-changing everydayness. '[B]eauty itself' may squat 'in a ditch', and that is also where Baudelaire's swan is.

The relational notion of beauty also underscores the aesthetics of the moment, as a beautiful woman means 'only something flying fast which for a second uses the eyes, lips, or cheeks of Fanny Elmer, for example, to glow through' (*JR 95*). Beauty is far from long-lasting:

[Y]es, beauty, flying through the room, shone there for a second. Fanny's eyes seemed to question, to commiserate, to be, for a second, love itself. But she exaggerated. Bramham noticed nothing. And when the kettle boiled, up she scrambled, more like a colt or puppy than a loving woman. (*JR 95*)

The glow of beauty does not endure, and in one second it falls back to animality, monstrosity, and banality, 'a colt or puppy', as daily life intrudes with the sound of the kettle. Beauty is described as intermittent and fluctuating, and yet Woolf is able to grasp the passing short moment. As a writer, she shows her concerns with the moment and hence with time and mortality: one should not look to the past for beauty, because it exists in the present moment. In 'A Room of One's Own', she speaks of her desire to focus on the present and her longing 'to pin

down the moment with date and season'.¹²³ This moment is not a total rejection of eternity, for Woolf realises how life (women's lives in this particular essay) is composed of numerous moments, and yet one cannot grasp one single moment with a date and season; it seems that nothing remains. She thus concludes that '[a]ll these infinitely obscure lives remain to be recorded'.¹²⁴ While the passage first speaks for most women who are forgotten by a male-dominated history, it also reveals Woolf's consideration of the treatment of time. The quotation from *Jacob's Room* becomes Woolf's attempt to record the moment, when beauty is 'withdrawn the moment after':¹²⁵ beauty, like everything else, exists moment after moment; eternal beauty may be out of humans' grasp, but at least one can catch a glimpse of it in one single moment. In addition, as beauty is characterised by 'the eyes, lips, or cheeks', the fragmentary nature of modernity is revealed in the use of the synecdoche.¹²⁶

While Woolf positions the so-called beauty with dailyness (the kettle) and even animality (the colt), Baudelaire also brings to poetry the mundane. For instance, in one of his 'Spleen' in *Les Fleurs du mal*, he speaks of the sky, which is 'bas et lourd pèse comme un couvercle' (*OC I* 74); the image of the lid is distant from that of a classical understanding of poetic beauty. Furthermore, Baudelaire announces eternal love in one fleeting moment. Baudelaire's most renowned celebration of fragmented beauty is most likely his poem 'A une passante', from

¹²³ Woolf, *AROO*, p. 65.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 65.

¹²⁵ See the quotation on p. 54 of this chapter.

¹²⁶ A similar synecdoche is very common in Baudelaire's poetry. For example, in 'Hymne à la beauté', the speaker addresses Beauty not as a whole but as 'ton œil, ton souris, ton pied'. *OC I*, p. 25.

the *Tableaux parisiens* in *Les Fleurs du mal*. The '[f]ugitive beauté', as shown in the last two stanzas, has the power to have the speaker reborn:

Un éclair... puis la nuit! – Fugitive beauté
Dont le regard m'a fait soudainement renaître,
Ne te verrai-je plus que dans l'éternité?

Ailleurs, bien loin d'ici! trop tard! *jamais* peut-être!
Car j'ignore où tu fuis, tu ne sais où je vais,
Ô toi que j'eusse aimée, ô toi qui le savais ! (OC I 93)

The last line deserves much attention: the speaker envisages a potential that could have been in the past and yet the imperfect tense (*subjonctif plus-que-parfait*, also *passé deuxième forme*) suggests that it never happened. It contains an openness in that the subject moves between 'je' and 'tu', suggesting some kind of interaction between the two people,¹²⁷ and yet, the verbs preclude the possibility of knowing and love is merely the speaker's one-sided thought. The final line appears to shift to the *passante's* perspective with the repetition of 'toi', but the speculation is not a sincere one.¹²⁸ The narrator contemplates the possibility of love. However, by stressing the adverb 'jamais' to admit that the two have lost track of each other, it is clear that they may never meet again. The speculation demonstrates the very essence of chance encounters in the city: all seems possible, and yet nothing is confirmed; uncertainty fills the stanza.¹²⁹ The

¹²⁷ As I will demonstrate in chapter two, this openness can be understood in phenomenological terms. The sonnet demonstrates the ultimate modern life: '[I]a temporalité réunie de la ville sous le signe de la modernité est soumise à la loi de la discontinuité des moments du temps, qui, chacun en soi, sont chargés à l'extrême d'actualité'. See Stierle, *La Capitale des signes*, p. 475.

¹²⁸ Stierle also notes that this last line forms a morphological and syntactic harmony: the two hemistiches correspond to each other, transforming 'éternité poétique de la forme' to 'une promesse' or 'un espoir placé dans ce que dément la sémantique de vers'. See *La Capitale des signes*, p. 482.

¹²⁹ 'A une passante' has become one of the most discussed poems concerning the urban crowd and chance encounter. Benjamin, for instance, has linked the poem

effect of the lightning, its elusiveness, is also expressed through the use of punctuation: ellipses and dashes bring a fleeting suspension from which the speaker discerns an eternity. Baer notes that the bright lightning brings out a 'blinding impact' to the speaker,¹³⁰ and the passing woman's eye in which the 'ciel livide où germe l'ouragan' (*OC I 92*) becomes reminiscent of 'Les Aveugles'. 'A une passante' is a poem about the 'regard rencontré', whereas 'Les Aveugles' is about the 'absence de regard'.¹³¹ This play on seeing is further accentuated by the order of the poems, since 'A une passante' follows immediately after 'Les Aveugles'.¹³²

Similar to Woolf's portrayal of beauty which 'shone there for a second', Baudelaire's depiction of the love 'at last sight' also reveals the poet's notion of modern beauty.¹³³ Beauty is fleeting and fragmented; love is only revealed for one flashing moment. Contrary to a more classical understanding of an eternal beauty, both Baudelaire and Woolf compare it to a flash, which connotes intermittent brightness and darkness; presence and absence; the known and the unknown. Here again, modernity exists in a paradoxically fleeting eternity.

The idea of the '[f]ugitive beauté' is not unique to encounters in the streets; the scene in fact speaks more of the poet's belief in a kind of beauty that exists in paradoxes. This point is supported by John MacKay, who discerns in the

to a particular city sensibility which likens the poet to a detective: as the speaker spots a woman in the urban streets, Baudelaire 'presents the crowd not as the refuge of a criminal but as that of love which eludes the poet'. 'The Paris of the Second Empire in Baudelaire', pp. 44-5.

¹³⁰ *Remnants of Songs*, p. 104.

¹³¹ Stierle, *La Capitale des signes*, p. 485.

¹³² For Stierle, the cycle implies 'un questionnement métaphysique qui surgit au cœur de la grande ville moderne'. See *Ibid.*, p. 487.

¹³³ 'The delight of the urban poet is love – not at first sight but at last sight'. See Benjamin, 'Some Motifs in Baudelaire', p. 125.

poem a temporal duality between antiquity and modernity inherent to the *passante*. The passer-by's beauty is rendered as both a 'ceremonial object' and as part of the urban crowd.¹³⁴ MacKay identifies modernity as 'the very phenomenal situatedness of an object', that is, on the one hand, irreplaceable; on the other hand, the irreplaceability is itself 'in continual flux'.¹³⁵ Baudelaire asserts the aesthetics of the moment in the section entitled 'De l'héroïsme de la vie moderne' in *Le Salon de 1846*: '[t]outes les beautés contiennent, comme tous les phénomènes possibles, quelque chose d'éternel et quelque chose de transitoire – d'absolu et de particulier' (*OC II* 493). He further elaborates:

La beauté absolue et éternelle n'existe pas, ou plutôt elle n'est qu'une abstraction écrémée à la surface générale des beautés diverses. L'élément particulier de chaque beauté vient des passions, et comme nous avons nos passions particulières, nous avons notre beauté. (*OC II* 493)

This crucial statement points out the tension rooted not just in the notion of beauty, but also more broadly in the nature of modernity. The adjective 'écrémée' enhances a sense of everydayness in the configuration of art; what we call eternal art is nothing but a surface skimmed from art of various kinds. Art should not be some general and seemingly grand ideal; passions can be found in the seemingly banal and ordinary daily life. Therefore, Habermas hails Baudelaire as the inaugurator of aesthetic modernity: following the heritage of the debate between the ancients and the moderns, Baudelaire 'shifts weight between "the absolutely beautiful and the relatively beautiful"'; the art critic 'assigns to the modern work of art a strange place at the intersection of the axes

¹³⁴ *Inscription and Modernity: From Wordsworth to Mandelstam* (Bloomington: Indiana UP, 2006), p. 131.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 132.

of the actual and the eternal'.¹³⁶ In Habermas' interpretation, Baudelaire's novel use of the word *modernité* successfully ties his work to 'the moment of its emergence' which can 'bring the steady flow of trivialities to a standstill', creating 'a moment in which the eternal comes into fleeting contact with the actual'.¹³⁷ The flash in 'A une passante' exemplifies this act, as the poem suspends a fleeting instant and endows it with a sense of eternity.

Baudelaire's definition of modernity is filled with dialectical energy and ambiguity; similarly, Woolf claims that London 'is not built to last; it is built to pass'; the walls and façades on Oxford Street can be easily knocked down, 'as if they were made of yellow cardboard and sugar icing' ('Oxford Street Tide', *E V* 285). These 'flimsy abodes' seem to exemplify Baudelaire's transient and yet eternal modernity (*E V* 285). In terms of modern aesthetics, Woolf's work contemplates the relational notion of beauty demonstrated in what Baudelaire calls the 'passions particulières'. Two characters from *Mrs Dalloway*, Septimus and his wife Rezia, represent a juxtaposition of the relativity of beauty:

'It is the hat that matters most,' she [Rezia] would say, when they walked out together. Every hat that passed, she would examine; and the cloak and the dress and the way the woman held herself. Ill-dressing, over-dressing she stigmatised, not savagely, rather with impatient movements of the hands, like those of a painter who puts from him some obvious well-meant glaring imposture; and then, generously, but always critically, she would welcome a shop-girl who had turned her little bit of stuff gallantly, or praise, wholly, with enthusiastic and professional understanding, a French lady descending from her carriage, in chinchilla, robes, pearls.

'Beautiful!' she would murmur, nudging Septimus, that he might see. But beauty was behind a pane of glass. Even taste (Rezia liked ices, chocolates, sweet things) had no relish to him. [...] But he could not taste, he could not feel. In the tea-shop among the tables and the chattering

¹³⁶ *The Philosophical Discourse*, pp. 8-9.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

waiters the appalling fear came over him – he could not feel. He could reason; he could read, Dante for example, quite easily ('Septimus, do put down your book,' said Rezia, gently shutting the *Inferno*), he could add up his bill; his brain was perfect; it must be the fault of the world then – that he could not feel.¹³⁸

Catching a glimpse of a woman, Rezia's notion of beauty relies largely on fashion: hats, cloaks and dresses.¹³⁹ The movements of her hands are like 'those of a painter', further emphasising an aesthetics that is found in daily life and in the streets, and yet also qualifies as beauty. By contrast, Septimus is deprived of any tastes and feelings. In his lost sense, Septimus stands for an out-dated aesthetics that demands an absolute and allows no relativity. His reading is largely classical literature,¹⁴⁰ and yet, in this passage for instance, what is deemed classical and absolute (Dante), traps him in the *Inferno*; only Rezia's call could make him shut it. One cannot deny that Septimus represents many diverse values, a notion of

¹³⁸ *MD*, pp. 78-9. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text

¹³⁹ Fashion, or *la mode*, is an important element in Baudelaire's modernity, since it speaks to a kind of instantaneous and changing beauty, from which the artist can extract an eternity – as quoted above, it is close to 'une abstraction écrémée à la surface générale des beautés diverses' (*OC II* 493). Robert Kopp regards fashion as the 'véritable mythe de la modernité', since it allows Baudelaire to affirm 'le double caractère de la création artistique'. Baudelaire's fondness of fashion is influential in that it becomes a theory of temporality: fashion in its doubled nature expresses the essence of modernity. Hence, in her analysis of fashion in Woolf's *Mrs Dalloway*, Randi Koppen draws upon Baudelaire's essay on the fashion illustrator Constantin Guys to elucidate that fashion is 'paradigmatic of modern art and writing' in so far as it synthesizes 'two temporalities and two aesthetic paradigms: *éternité* and *modernité*, fluidity and form'. For Koppen, cloth and fabric speak to a kind of 'fabrics of modern experience'. Rezia's attention to fashion (as quoted here), and Septimus' shabbiness, further indicate that he is at odds with modern life. See Kopp, 'Baudelaire: mode et modernité', *Cahiers de l'Association internationale des études françaises*, 38 (1986), 173-186 (186); Koppen, *Virginia Woolf: Fashion and Literary Modernity* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh UP), pp. 66, 75-6.

¹⁴⁰ Septimus is portrayed as Keats and he is fond of Shakespeare. His penchant for classical literature and his love for Miss Pole (who is 'lecturing in the Waterloo Road upon Shakespeare') reflect a more traditional standard of beauty (*MD* 76).

beauty being merely one of them, but from an aesthetic perspective, Septimus' death reveals that the traditional notion of beauty can no longer survive, having failed to engage with real life and to understand a modern world. Rezia represents a passion to live in the moment, and it is precisely this passion for everyday life that makes Woolf write about the mammoth tusk, for she infuses trivial everyday objects with her sensitivity and with observations of London in her time. Passion is also a key notion to Baudelaire's understanding of beauty. Besides the above quoted passage on passion in 'De l'héroïsme de la vie moderne', his 1852 essay 'L'École païenne' also trenchantly denounces a 'pastiche inutile et dégoûtant' of the paganism school, the members of which, according to Baudelaire, have lost their soul 'ainsi à travers le passé comme des corps vides pour en ramasser une de rencontre dans les détritibus anciens' (*OC II* 47). For Baudelaire, '[c]ongédier la passion et la raison, c'est tuer la littérature' (*OC II* 47).¹⁴¹ This claim highlights the modern self's quest for one's

¹⁴¹ 'L'École païenne', or the paganism school, is a neoclassicism that bears pre-Parnassian tendencies. In 1866, Baudelaire's *Nouvelles Fleurs du mal* was published in *Le Parnasse contemporain*, and indeed, some critics treat Baudelaire as part of the Parnassian school, a group of poets who embraced art for art's sake, including Théophile Gautier, Leconte de Lisle, and Théodore de Banville, to name just a few. While such a classification is not uncommon, Gretchen Schultz argues that Baudelaire's poetic agenda is more aligned with a commitment to the modern rather than to mere Parnassian sensibilities. As Schultz rightly puts it, Baudelaire 'grappled with both Romantic and Parnassian doctrine in order to overturn oppositions that had defined the poetic endeavor for the first half of the nineteenth century'. In fact, the paganism school can be counted as one of the phases that Baudelaire went through, but any attempts for a clear categorisation would be perhaps impossible. McLees holds a similar view in revealing how Baudelaire's poem 'La Beauté' serves as the poet's own caricature of his 'early infatuation with the idea of art for art's sake'. Nevertheless, this latter argument is completely overlooked by Stamos Metzidakis' article, in which he uses the same poem to exemplify an essentially Parnassian view of Baudelaire. See Gretchen Schultz, *The Gendered Lyric: Subjectivity and Difference in Nineteenth-century French* (West Lafayette, Ind.: Purdue UP, 2011), pp. 180-1; McLees,

proper passion; its particularity further implies multiplicity and relativity.

Absolute beauty is no longer the standard in a modern agenda.

In *Jacob's Room*, one particular passage seems to echo Baudelaire's criticism of a lack of passion in some of his contemporaries. Woolf targets the unlimited and one-sided exaltation of progress. The narrator first describes the war:

These actions, together with the incessant commerce of banks, laboratories, chancellories, and houses of business, are the strokes which oar the world forward, they say. And they are dealt by men as smoothly sculptured as the impassive policeman at Ludgate Circus. But you will observe that far from being padded to rotundity his face is stiff from force of will, and lean from the efforts of keeping it so. When his right arm rises, all the force in his veins flows straight from shoulder to finger-tips; not an ounce is diverted into sudden impulses, sentimental regrets, wire-drawn distinctions. The buses punctually stop.

It is thus that we live, they say, driven by an unseizable force. They say that the novelists never catch it; that it goes hurtling through their nets and leaves them torn to ribbons. This, they say, is what we live by – this unseizable force. (*JR* 129-30)

Criticising the Empire, Woolf appears not to be dealing with beauty and art here; her description of the 'unseizable force' is yet related to modernity. The passage seems to refer to a progressive view of the age; an age advancing with political and economical endeavours, while the repeated phrase, 'they say', indicates a clearly dubious tone. A collective, impersonal, but unclear 'they' seems to be blind to each individual's passion and emotion. The rowing image, the 'strokes which oar the world forward', is an indirect criticism of a blind British heroism, as the sport suggests a British spirit of conquest and is intensely masculine. The

Baudelaire's Argot Plastique, pp. 64-5. For Metzidakis' analysis of Baudelaire as a Parnassian poet, see 'Visual Signal in Poetry', in *Understanding French Poetry: Essays for a New Millennium*, ed. by Metzidakis, 2 edn (Birmingham, Ala.: Summa Publications, 2001), pp. 71-86 (p. 77).

rower lacks 'impulses, sentimental regrets, wire-down distinctions'; he is deprived of those 'passions particulières' that Baudelaire attributes to modern life.¹⁴² The critical tone may be implicit, but the last line of the paragraph, '[t]he buses punctually stop', peculiarly emphasises punctuality, forming a further contrast to the *irregular* nature of impulses. The narrator goes on to point out the novelist's failed effort to capture the 'unseizable force', but again such a claim is framed by a 'they say'; the collective prevailing 'they' appears to ignore the sporadic and rhapsodic element in modernity. 'They' refuse to acknowledge modernity as the experience of the gap by blindly turning to one of its two sides. While 'they' accuse the novelist of failing to capture such an essence, they themselves fail to recognise that this 'unseizable force' lies in a constant tension and in a sense of in-betweenness, rather than in a linear progress. Therefore, the very failure to capture such an elusive force is the very essence of modernity: modern life suffers from paradoxes and fragmentation. In 'Modern Fiction' (1925), Woolf famously expresses the challenge that the writer faces between true feelings and conventions: 'an ordinary mind on an ordinary day', as Woolf beautifully examines, 'receives a myriad impressions – trivial, fantastic, evanescent, or engraved with the sharpness of steel' (*E IV* 160). These impressions form an 'incessant shower of innumerable atoms' that fall and 'shape themselves into the life of Monday or Tuesday'; hence, the writer must strive to 'convey this varying, this unknown and uncircumscribed spirit, whatever aberration or complexity it may display' (*E IV* 160). Woolf is aware of the difficulty of capturing the sheer complexity of modern life, and yet in this

¹⁴² See the quotation on p. 58 of this chapter.

very contemplation, Woolf implicitly reveals the writer's double-sided situation in modernity: the shower of atoms may well fall into the mundane quotidian and the trivial, but it could also be that very 'éclair' that strikes the Baudelairean speaker, or the beautiful lady that inspires wonder in Rezia. Woolf's attitude again speaks to our unsettling modernity.

In addition, textual space allows for a cacophony inherent to modernity, adding to it another paradoxical feature. Woolf's narrative is often filled with shifting perspectives and various inner voices. This is perhaps best demonstrated in *Jacob's Room*, as the narrative itself circles around an empty eponymous empty centre – Jacob's room, with its dead owner. The very end of the novel deserves particular scrutiny:¹⁴³

Listless is the air in an empty room, just swelling the curtain; the flowers in the jar shift. One fibre in the wicker arm-chair creaks, though no one sits there.

Bonamy crossed to the window. Pickford's van swung down the street. The omnibuses were locked together at Mudie's corner. Engines throbbed, and carters, jamming the brakes down, pulled their horses sharp up. A harsh and unhappy voice cried something unintelligible. And then suddenly all the leaves seemed to raise themselves.

'Jacob! Jacob!' cried Bonamy, standing by the window. The leaves sank down again.

'Such confusion everywhere!' exclaimed Betty Flanders, bursting open the bedroom door.

Bonamy turned away from the window.

'What am I to do with these, Mr. Bonamy?' She held out a pair of Jacob's old shoes. (*JR* 147-8)

¹⁴³ Cf. George Poulet's analysis of Baudelaire's poetry also points to a similarly empty centre: '[l]e centre est le point mort'. See *Les Métamorphoses du cercle* (Paris: Librairie Plon, 1991), p. 420.

The room seems to be indifferent to the human presence; still, it is full of movements due to the changing narrative. The narrative focus appears to shift to Bonamy, but from his view, the city is filled with irregular movements: deprived of any human existence, the throbbing engines seem to metamorphose the city into a huge human body in pain – however, no real human being is in view. The verb 'swung' also points to an unidentifiable back and forth force. The mere depiction of the traffic turns into a cacophony of the urban soundscape: this is modernity in full swing. However, noisy as the city may seem to be, even the unhappy cry is 'unintelligible'. The end of the novel falls back to the same character as from the start of the story: Betty Flanders, Jacob's mother. The novel forms a closure to its own start, when the mother is looking for the young Jacob: 'Where *is* that tiresome boy?' (*JR* 3 emphasis original). However, this circle does not suggest cohesion and perfection, for what really links the work together is Jacob's absence rather than the presence of Betty Flanders. In both scenes, Jacob is mentioned only through his mother's mediation. It reminds us of the elusive and incongruous nature of alterity. The peculiar ending, with Betty Flanders holding 'a pair of Jacob's old shoes', could be seen as another emptying out: the shoes are themselves voids that can no longer be filled up. The empty room and the old shoes seem to wait to be filled in: 'standing in the middle of Jacob's room', Bonamy remarks that Jacob 'left everything just as it was' (*JR* 147). Only Betty Flanders' question resounds at the end of the novel, suspending every possible answer. The novel becomes the writer's play with presence and absence. The presence of Jacob's pair of shoes ironically reveals his absence. Here, Woolf puts an end to her work with a female voice circulating in the room of the dead male character. Considering the novel as a whole, Judy Little discerns in *Jacob's Room*

a muted male, a blank to which diverting female voices are added: 'these discourses feminize the male text that they are relating'.¹⁴⁴ On a narrative level, the deceased Jacob's shoes indicate a certain textual mobility (walking, and thus *flânerie*) that is somehow crippled and hampered by Jacob's death, but that is also fulfilled through Betty Flanders' question. Hence, Jacob could be viewed as the void of the male tradition (and thus a textual blank) from which the female narrator appears to gain more space. As Little puts it, Jacob is reduced to 'an empty narrative space, a man whose feet do not need the vacant shoes'.¹⁴⁵ By rendering Jacob's voice redundant, Woolf turns to other cacophonies in the textual space: the van, the engines, and the harsh and unhappy cry. However, while this discordance can be heard, it remains 'unintelligible'.

The audible and yet unintelligible sounds create another paradox prominent in modernity.¹⁴⁶ Woolf clearly demonstrates that cacophony and discordance are important aspects of modernity. Such urban cacophony is not alien to Baudelaire, who inaugurates the sound of a broken soul in 'La Cloche fêlée'. In the poem, published in Baudelaire's *Les Fleurs du mal*, the poet has brought to modernist literature a cracked bell. But what is truly cracked, as the speaker reveals, is not the chiming bell, which 'malgré sa vieillesse, alerte et bien portante, / [j]ette fidèlement son cri religieux', but the speaker's own soul: '[m]oi, mon âme est fêlée' (*OC I 72*). Whereas the bell remains faithful to its religious cry, the speaker's soul has only a weakened voice, which also implies emptiness, as it

¹⁴⁴ *The Experimental Self: Dialogic Subjectivity in Woolf, Pym, and Brook-Rose* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois UP, 1996), p. 38.

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 46-7.

¹⁴⁶ Cf. in the depiction of the 'unseizable force' in *Jacob's Room* quoted above, the verb 'hurtling' combines velocity with clattering sounds. See pp. 62-3 of this chapter.

fails to 'peupler l'air froid des nuits' (*OC I 73*). However weak this voice is, modernist writing chimes this cracked sound: its rhythm includes cacophony and discordance, while its rhyme voices out the silence.

It is in the silence and the failure to articulate that the voices of modernity prove to be most resounding. Woolf also delineates a failure to articulate in the beggar woman's singing in *Mrs Dalloway*:

ee um fah um so
foo swee too eem oo – (*MD 72*)

Near Regent's Park Tube station, among 'middle-class people' vanishing 'like leaves, to be trodden under, to be soaked and steeped and made mould of by that eternal spring', the beggar woman cries out the unrecognisable sound (*MD 74*), which the narrator depicts as 'a frail quivering sound, a voice bubbling up without direction, vigour, beginning or end, running weakly and shrilly and with an absence of all human meaning' (*MD 72*). Woolf endows a social misfit with the profound voice of civilisation, yet the sounds seem to be as cracked as Baudelaire's bell. In fact, David Bradshaw has noted that 'Woolf's London is a city that embraces the marginalized and accommodates the voiceless and yet everywhere confronts them with a built environment'.¹⁴⁷ Not only does Woolf fill London with the voice of the misfit, she also endows the textual space with less authoritative voices, as attested to in *Jacob's Room*.

Besides the incomprehensible voices, Woolf also voices out a kind of silence that further adds to the paradoxical nature of modernity. The use of punctuation (hyphen, ellipsis, parenthesis, and semi-colon) in her works forms

¹⁴⁷ 'Woolf's London, London's Woolf', in *Virginia Woolf in Context*, ed. by Bryony Randall and Jane Goldman (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2012), pp. 229-42 (p. 232).

an intermittent rhythm reflecting the modern city life with a multiplicity of voice or voicelessness. Therefore, Gerald Gould dubs the lyrical style of *Jacob's Room* 'dot-and-dash method'.¹⁴⁸ Indeed, it seems that *Jacob's Room* is dotted with dashes and ellipses; the visual effect on the page challenges the narrative line, creating more spaces. For the reader, it signals internal thoughts or uncertainty. For instance, Woolf uses repetition of words and punctuation in a less conventional way in order to portray a scene on a train carriage:

Nobody sees any one as he is, let alone an elderly lady sitting opposite a strange young man in a railway carriage. They see a whole – they see all sorts of things – they see themselves.... Mrs. Norman now read three pages of one of Mr. Norris's novels. Should she say to the young man (and after all he was just the same age as her own boy): 'If you want to smoke, don't mind me'? No: he seemed absolutely indifferent to her presence... she did not wish to interrupt. (*JR* 23-4)

The seemingly banal description in a train carriage delivers the idea of seeing: what one can see and what one can say in front of a stranger. The cadence of repetitive words ('they see') forms a rhythm that makes the prose almost poetic. The ellipses indicate an unfinished thought, and yet nothing can be concluded. Mrs Norman's question is never asked; information about her son, who is Jacob's age, is given in parenthesis. All is silent and yet words speak out loud: no one can see what a person really is, no one can hear what a person really thinks. The proximity is paradoxically dominated by a distance; the silence is filled with voices.

Similarly, paying particular attention to the silence in Woolf's work, Patricia Oudek Laurence identifies in Woolf three types of silence: 'the unsaid,

¹⁴⁸ 'Review in *Saturday Review*, November 1922', in *Virginia Woolf: the Critical Heritage*, ed. by Robin Majumdar and Allen McLaurin (London: Routledge, 1975), p. 106.

the unspoken, and the unsayable'.¹⁴⁹ According to her, it is 'a lexicon, punctuation, metaphor, space, or rhythm of silence' that situates Woolf as one of the most prominent modernist writers.¹⁵⁰ Silence is important because it 'captures in the rhythm of her [Woolf's] writing in time a "movement" – up, down/ inner, outer – of the mind' – a sort of openness essential to the writer.¹⁵¹ Crucially, silence should not be taken as an absence but be regarded as a form of resistance.¹⁵² As shown in the passage describing the scene in the train carriage quoted above, silence is filled with doubts and speculation; it might not be a form of resistance, but it is definitely not mute. Laurence's psychoanalytical and feminist perspective brings to the fore Woolf's concerns as a female writer in the early twentieth century; however, Woolf's reflection should not be interpreted solely from a feminist stance, for it concerns all human beings. Such a reflection is most resounding in silence, which Michel Collot equates with an openness 'sur l'horizon d'un non-dit qui reste à dire mais qui s'annonce dans le dit'.¹⁵³

In fact, the impossibility of concluding opens Baudelaire's prose poetry collection *Le Spleen de Paris*. 'L'Étranger' starts with a question to a stranger: '[q]ui aimes-tu le mieux, homme énigmatique, dis? ton père, ta mère, ta sœur ou ton frère?' (*OC I 277*). The speculation goes from family, friends, and country to gold, but all are denied by the stranger. The stranger finally reveals his penchant for clouds:

¹⁴⁹ *The Reading of Silence: Virginia Woolf in the English Tradition* (Stanford: Stanford UP, 1991), p. 2.

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 6.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 15.

¹⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 58.

¹⁵³ *La Poésie moderne et la structure d'horizon* (Paris: PUF, 1989), p. 168. I shall contend in later chapters that although Michel Collot's analysis mainly dwells upon poetry, his view should not be limited by any demarcations of genres.

– J'aime les nuages... les nuages qui passent... là-bas... là-bas... les merveilleux nuages! (*OC I 227*)

The ellipses engender spaces for imagination and speculation. Whereas the stranger's identity already connotes uncertainty, his love for clouds further adds to the fleetingness of the poem. The passing clouds also reflect the nature of the poem, in which the speaker proposes various answers that are all rejected by the stranger; the poem is passing from one possibility to another. Furthermore, the image of clouds is related to the Romanticist tradition. As Baer's insightful analysis demonstrates, 'L'Étranger' signifies not only the beginning of *Le Spleen de Paris* but also a new beginning after the Romantic period, where the clouds were typically 'taken as evidence of the immutability of change itself'; Baudelaire thus positions himself less as a continuation than as a change to Romanticism, regarding his clouds as 'an absence marked by dots'.¹⁵⁴ In Baer's words, the status of the clouds as the opening of the collection proves to be significant as Baudelaire is not only asking 'whether the clouds may be transient', but also questioning 'whether transience itself may be subject to change'.¹⁵⁵ The clouds speak to a kind of textual resistance to fixture: both the stranger and the clouds are fluid; the stranger's love for the clouds, combined with the ellipses, speaks to Baudelaire's awareness of the transient, which in his own definition, is half of his modernity.

¹⁵⁴ *Remnants of Song*, pp. 31-2.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 33. Baer goes on to argue that 'L'Étranger' exemplifies a kind of freedom that does not require specific groundings: whereas the speaker's other propositions (family members, one's country, beauty, money) all require particular experiences, the image of the clouds enacts a freedom that is not confined by any stances, and seems to question 'the initial gesture of positioning and imposing its own sense of position'. See *ibid.*, pp. 68-9.

Woolf also plays with the image of clouds in *Mrs Dalloway*, in which an aeroplane's skywriting creates textual clouds that provoke various interpretations:

Suddenly Mrs. Coates looked up into the sky. The sound of an aeroplane bored ominously into the ears of the crowd. There it was coming over the trees, letting out white smoke from behind, which curled and twisted, actually writing something! making letters in the sky! Every one looked up.

Dropping dead down the aeroplane soared straight up, curved in a loop, raced, sank, rose, and whatever it did, wherever it went, out fluttered behind it a thick ruffled bar of white smoke which curled and wreathed upon the sky in letters. But what letters? A C was it? an E, then an L? Only for a moment did they lie still; then they moved and melted and were rubbed out up in the sky, and the aeroplane shot further away and again, in a fresh space of sky, began writing a K, an E, a Y perhaps?

'Glaxo,' said Mrs. Coates in a strained, awe-stricken voice, gazing straight up, and her baby, lying stiff and white in her arms, gazed straight up.

'Kreemo,' murmured Mrs. Bletchley, like a sleep-walker. With his hat held out perfectly still in his hand, Mr. Bowley gazed straight up. All down the Mall people were standing and looking up into the sky. As they looked the whole world became perfectly silent, and a flight of gulls crossed the sky, first one gull leading, then another, and in this extraordinary silence and peace, in this pallor, in this purity, bells struck eleven times, the sound fading up there among the gulls.

The aeroplane turned and raced and swooped exactly where it liked, swiftly, freely, like a skater –

[...]

It had gone; it was behind the clouds. There was no sound. The clouds to which the letters E, G, or L had attached themselves moved freely, as if destined to cross from West to East on a mission of the greatest importance which would never be revealed, and yet certainly so it was – a mission of the greatest importance. Then suddenly, as a train comes out of a tunnel, the aeroplane rushed out of the clouds again, the sound boring into the ears of all people in the Mall, in the Green Park, in Piccadilly, in Regent Street, in Regent's Park, and the bar of smoke curved behind and it dropped down, and it soared up and wrote one letter after another – but what word was it writing? (*MD* 18-9)

The clouds have become a text open to all sorts of readings and potentialities.

Their freedom lies in their unreadability and thus a resistance to being pinned

down. The aeroplane moves 'swiftly' and 'freely', creating the letters which the crowd reads in 'silence and peace', but fails to reach a conclusion: the last question 'what word was it writing' is significant in that it denies any speculation and proposition; the clouds seem to become a silence ('[t]here is no sound') that opens up the text and allows for different voices. In the end, it does not seem to matter what the aeroplane is writing, for it promotes a movement circulating in the sky, in the crowd, and in the text. Using the skywriting as a sort of 'nuages qui passent', Woolf further highlights the fleetingness that characterises not only the clouds, but also the text.

Perhaps, both Baudelaire and Woolf aim to reveal a changeability innate to modernity. Their literary works are part of a continuation of literature and its tradition; yet, the two authors raise awareness of the instability in the text and challenge a tradition that has become oblivious to it. They acknowledge, if not embrace, a textual mobility that speaks to the paradoxical nature of modernity.

Modernity thus features fleeting eternity, banal beauty and resounding silence. It creates discrepancies and chasms which the writer endeavours to explore. It engenders movement and tension. While urban experience features paradoxes, these seeming contradictions are far from fixed sets of oppositions, for they are constantly in dialogue with one another: modernity displays movement and dialectics and is triggered by these tensions. The stress on movement directs the experience of the gap from a more temporal state to a spatial one.¹⁵⁶ Such a turn is necessary, as Baudelaire's *modernité* can refer to

¹⁵⁶ Collot notes a synthesis of space and time in the configuration of the literary horizon. Under the influence of Merleau-Ponty, Collot opines that it is the horizon of the object and the moment that allow Baudelaire to extract from the

both temporal and spatial aspects of being; the fleeting and the unmovable are relevant to both time and space.¹⁵⁷ These discrepant experiences of the city characterise the work of Baudelaire and Woolf. In their portraits of the city, their relationship with modernity is a search which, echoing the nature of modernity, suggests mobility and flexibility. Their writerly sensibilities allow them to probe the experience of the gap; in the meantime, as I shall demonstrate, they explore the potential of language. In order to do so, the writer must be open to the external world and to otherness. The writer's path is thus that of the *flâneur*: an aimless stroller endowed with keen senses. In their writing of the city, Baudelaire and Woolf question the relationship between life and art. For them, this is not abstract thinking and configuration because the experience of the gap is rooted in the very space and the very age they live in. They understand that there is no shortcut to the answer.

'profondeur de l'espace', an 'allégorie de la profondeur du temps'. *La Poésie*, p. 46. See also Baudelaire, 'Les Paradis artificiels', *OC I*, p. 431.

¹⁵⁷ As an art critic, Baudelaire himself opines in his *Salon de 1846*, '[l]a grande qualité du dessin des artistes suprêmes est la vérité du mouvement', as the artist's preoccupation is 'le mouvement, la couleur et l'atmosphère' (*OC II* 434-5). Baudelaire's aesthetics somehow encompasses his poetics; the painter's lines are transformed into poetic lines, and movement pervades his poetics.

Chapter Two: The *Flâneur*: A Phenomenological Explanation

Having portrayed modernity as the experience of the gap and illustrated its paradoxical nature in the writing of Baudelaire and Woolf, I argue that modernist literature could be regarded as a search for proper expressions to delineate one's subjectivity. Faced with the unsettling gap, a dynamics in the paradoxical urban experience, the best way to approach it for the writer is from a moving perspective. Walking becomes one of the most significant activities available to the urbanite to investigate the city; the writer thus adopts the figure of the *flâneur* to demonstrate this condition of modernity. Of course, mobility in the city does not solely rely on walking. Yet, walking has become an important motif for the writer of the city – hence the rising interest in the theme of *flânerie*, which, apart from its original meaning of aimless walking, also connotes a very particular awareness of the city. As a result, there is a vast amount of discussion on the city stroller. There is no denying that a vast amount of theorisation has left the *flâneur* straddling a physical existence in the city streets and a metaphorical existence in the textual space.¹⁵⁸ Yet, it is exactly this ambiguous position that makes him a suitable instrument with which the writer can elucidate subjectivity in the city – a point that I shall develop in the final chapter.

I call for a broader definition of the practice of *flânerie*. My focus on the Baudelairean and Woolfian *flâneur* is not restricted to their respective pedestrian experiences in the city. Although both authors have delineated the

¹⁵⁸ For example, Tester's collection of essays on the *flâneur* is one of the attempts to illuminate this walking figure in terms of social and literary spaces. In his introduction, Tester makes it clear that the *flâneur* may not be specifically Parisian: he could be 'used as a figure to illuminate issues of city life irrespective of time and space'. *The Flâneur*, p 16.

city from the point of view of a pedestrian, walking in fact can be understood in more philosophical and sociological terms. First, it connotes a coordination of the body and the senses with the external environment, with which we must familiarise ourselves. As the city features change, the city dweller must adapt his or her pace to the streets, the vehicles, as well as to all kinds of transport. This process is comparable to the familiarisation of technology that I have discussed.¹⁵⁹ The social aspect of walking has also been widely theorised; as Peter Frank Peters puts it, walking had indicated a privileged leisure and pleasure in the bourgeois class in the late eighteenth century, when it had become an indicator of material and transport development.¹⁶⁰ What is more, the city as a phenomenon implying certain sensual and psychological experiences has generated numerous studies; walking has added to the discussion as a way of appreciating the urban space. For Baudelaire and Woolf, the *flâneur* becomes a suitable avatar to approach the experience of modernity, because he provokes the very paradoxes which characterise it. Since the practice of *flânerie* is fundamentally a way of walking, it speaks to both an artist's consciousness as well as to a very ordinary form of behaviour. It contains both the aesthetic, and the quotidian side that reside in modernity and *la modernité*, respectively.

In addition, the physical aspect of *flânerie* calls for a phenomenological understanding, allowing us to refocus on various senses, and ultimately, on our very existence as related to the other. In this chapter, therefore, I will turn to phenomenology to illustrate how existence involves and relies on a realisation of

¹⁵⁹ See the reference to Wasiak in chapter one, pp. 39-40.

¹⁶⁰ *Time, Innovation and Mobilities: Travel in Technological Cultures* (London: Routledge, 2006), pp. 30-5.

the external other.¹⁶¹ However, the emphasis on the body also calls into question the apparently male suffix in the word *flâneur*. While a great deal of studies have approached the issue in revealing the possibility of the *flâneuse*, I intend to postulate the strolling figure as a literary device for the writer, an alterity to the writer's self. A seemingly looser definition of the *flâneur* implies the fluidity of this term, helping clarify that the key to the definition is a heightened sensitivity, the stress on mobility, and the openness towards the other – it is also these traits that draw the figure away from the dandy, another literary device which can be said to be the *flâneur*'s close cousin. My choice to focus on the *flâneur* will lead to another crucial aspect of phenomenology: its discussion of the *flâneur*'s being in textual space. Language rules and literary convention serve as the chartered streets; therefore, *flânerie* adds to writing an openness to new interpretation and a randomness of novel meanings.

In his book *Eloge de la marche*, David Le Breton investigates the significance of walking from an anthropological perspective, asserting that it is one of the most basic corporal activities that human beings have been doing for millions of years.¹⁶² Nevertheless, his laconic remarks on Baudelaire and his apparent opposition to walking in the city suggest that *flâner* and *marcher* deserve perhaps a finer distinction. There is no denying that *flânerie* as a writerly theme is not a new topic. Peters' study has examines discourse of

¹⁶¹ Cf. In her thesis on the nineteenth-century *flâneur*, Estelle Murail also looks at the *flâneur* in conjunction with Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology. Her stress on a moving body develops into an aesthetics of passing, a word rich in its implications of passing through time. See 'Beyond the *Flâneur*: Walking, Passage and Crossing in London and Paris in the Nineteenth Century' (unpublished doctoral thesis, Université Paris Diderot, King's College London, 2013), p. 172.

¹⁶² *Eloge de la marche* (Paris: Éditions Métailié, 2000), p. 12.

walking in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, when 'innovations in road construction and the advent of new and faster means of transport, especially the train' rendered walking an even slower way of travelling.¹⁶³ As a result, 'moving slowly on foot' had become a conscious choice.¹⁶⁴ In this way, walking was turned into a way of living: according to Peters, Rousseau in the eighteenth century 'recorded a series of ponderings he had made during his daily walks' in his book *Les Rêveries du promeneur solitaire* (which appeared after his death in 1782).¹⁶⁵ This recurring literary motif thrived in the first decade of the nineteenth century: in 1802, Karl Gottlob Schelle associated walking with an art of living, which 'attained its own codes and rules', in his work *The Walks or the Art of Walking*.¹⁶⁶ Schelle insisted on aimless wandering, a practice that had become popular among the romantics during the nineteenth century, as it suggests a relation 'with one's own inner experiences and with the landscape'¹⁶⁷ – the link of one's internal thoughts to the external landscape has already revealed a consideration of alterity as an intertwining element of the self. On the one hand, Baudelaire's *flânerie* derives from this tradition of walking as a space for writing; on the other hand, his *flânerie* stems from the stimuli of the city rather than an aimless walk in nature, a characteristic of Romanticism. Laura Katsaros thus opines that finding only solitude in the crowd, the modern poet

¹⁶³ *Time, Innovation and Mobilities*, p. 29.

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 29.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 34. For the discussion of Baudelaire's prose poetry not only as a successor but also as a critic of Rousseau's prose, see Christian Leroy, 'Les Petits Poèmes «Palimpsestes»', in *Baudelaire: Nouveaux Chantiers*, ed. by Jean Delabroy and Yves Charnet (Villeneuve d'Ascq: Presses universitaires du Septentrion, 1995), pp. 59-70.

¹⁶⁶ *Time, Innovation and Mobilities*, p. 34.

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 35.

'both longs for and repudiates the ecstasy of complete solitude enjoyed by the self-sufficient Romantic poet'; 'Paris, for Baudelaire, is the painful ecstasy of the private colliding with the public'.¹⁶⁸ Stierle's analysis of Baudelaire also adds weight to the discussion, revealing that the *flâneur* is a philosopher of the city.¹⁶⁹ It is Baudelaire who initiated the stroller as a man who advances into the unfamiliar and who is as fluid as the crowd that he emerges in.¹⁷⁰ For both Baudelaire and Woolf, *flânerie* stands less for an aimless journey to perceive the urban landscape, than for a consideration of the self as related to the other through movement in the city.

In fact, a phenomenological understanding of the *rôle* of the *flâneur* can successfully elucidate the relationship between the urban landscape and the perceiving stroller. This philosophical strand has stemmed from a rejection of the dichotomy of one's body and soul and has developed into an understanding of the self, which, rather than being a self-sufficient entity, relies on a consideration of alterity. It takes into account the subject's external space, which proves to be relevant to one's existence in the urban space. It has been adopted in various fields to elucidate one's involvement with external space.

David Seamon, for instance, points out that phenomenological geography could shed new light on everyday life, as he comes up with the idea of an 'integrating body-subject', which is able to perform 'body ballets'.¹⁷¹ Movements

¹⁶⁸ *New York – Paris: Whitman, Baudelaire, and the Hybrid City* (Ann Arbor: Michigan UP, 2012), p. 68.

¹⁶⁹ *La Capitale des signes*, p. 474.

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p.474.

¹⁷¹ 'Body-Subject, Time-Space Routines, and Place-Ballets', in *The Human Experience of Space and Place*, ed. by Annes Buttimer and David Seamon, pp. 148-65 (p. 158).

– 'time-space routines and body-ballets of the individual' can 'fuse into a larger whole', the sense of place is thus born from this 'space-environment dynamic' that he calls '*placed-ballets in terms of place*'.¹⁷² More important to the study of literature, Laura Doyle traces the development of phenomenology as the foundation of the present day discussion of postmodernity and poststructuralism.¹⁷³ She explains that phenomenology designates 'the tracing of logic of things *as* phenomena, as they appear in time and place for a perceiving subject rather than in their "essences" as might be understood by a Platonic idealism or a scientific positivism'.¹⁷⁴ Among various phenomenologists, Doyle highlights the importance of Merleau-Ponty: at once following and differentiating himself from other phenomenologists such as Husserl and Sartre, Merleau-Ponty postulates a shared horizon for individuals, in which each consciousness exists 'through the object it contemplates'.¹⁷⁵ This intertwining relationship with the external world contains, however, a slippage between the body and the world, manifesting itself 'within the subject-body' – in the example of self touching, Merleau-Ponty opines that 'the impossibility of the body's identity with itself' is not a loss or an absence but 'an ineffable yet lived fullness';¹⁷⁶ hence the body's *chiasm*. Such a phenomenology deals with 'the liminal, the incompleted, the aporia of the apprehended'.¹⁷⁷ Whereas much of phenomenology's focus seems to lie in the body, Doyle crucially points out that language shares the same sensorial

¹⁷² Ibid., p. 159. Emphasis original.

¹⁷³ 'Introduction: The Resistant Material', in *Bodies of Resistance: New Phenomenologies of Politics, Agency and Culture*, ed. by Laura Doyle (Illinois: Northwestern UP, 2001), pp. xi-xxxiv.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid., p. xviii. Emphasis original.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid., p. xxi.

¹⁷⁶ Ibid., pp. xxii-iii.

¹⁷⁷ Ibid., p. xvi.

zones as the bodies; this shared ground, although much overlooked, demonstrates that postmodernity and poststructuralism are in debt to phenomenology – as both 'share an interest in the local, the lived, the decentered, and the untotalizable'.¹⁷⁸ As Doyle contends, phenomenology 'helped to make the postmodern thinkable', and it is on this ground that she claims phenomenology's close link to postmodernism and poststructuralism.¹⁷⁹ It is from this point of departure that some critics have already attempted to read literary works in phenomenological terms or to delineate urban experience in a phenomenological manner.¹⁸⁰ However, few have understood *flânerie* and its loci – urban space as well as textual space – in phenomenological terms, which put emphasis on the intertwining relationship between one's body and the external world. Such a goal helps to elucidate the very existence of the *flâneur* in city literature – whose body becomes a blurred boundary of the city between its textual and spatial senses.

Indeed, Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology explains how the mechanism of perception is related to one's existence; it builds on Husserl's thought, rejecting the traditional Cartesian dualism of mind and body. Existence, in Merleau-Ponty's terms, is neither purely transcendental nor purely physical; instead, it

¹⁷⁸ Ibid., pp. xii-iii.

¹⁷⁹ Ibid., pp. xiii.

¹⁸⁰ For example, Doyle interprets Woolf's *A Room of One's Own* in the light of Merleau-Ponty's concept of the chiasm to configure 'a productive collision of thought and body'. Wasiak, as quoted on chapter one (pp. 39-40), also describes the experience of technology and the city using Merleau-Ponty's theory. See 'The Body Unbound: A Phenomenological Reading of the Political in *A Room of One's Own*', in *Virginia Woolf Out of Bounds: Selected Papers from the Tenth Annual Conference on Virginia Woolf*, ed. by Jessica Berman and Jane Goldman (New York: Pace UP, 2001), pp. 129-39 (p. 134).

features an intermediating 'being-in-the-world'.¹⁸¹ Consciousness, as he further argues, 'is being toward-the-thing through the intermediary of the body'.¹⁸² As consciousness is always conscious *of* something, Merleau-Ponty views it as the power to give a form to experience while it features 'a network of intentions'.¹⁸³ By taking the surrounding world and the object into his configuration of the subject, Merleau-Ponty proposes a dynamic and kinaesthetic existence rather than a static and absolute one; one's being always contains a bodily perspective and is always related to one's surroundings. Perception of an object is not to notice it from a void; the subject needs a general field of perception that serves as a possible anchorage.¹⁸⁴ Merleau-Ponty thus describes that consciousness 'takes roots in being and time by *taking up situations*'.¹⁸⁵ Elizabeth Grosz elaborates on Merleau-Ponty's theory, pointing out that in perception, the subject and object must be 'inherently open to each other'; 'things solicit the flesh just as the flesh beckons to and as an object to things'.¹⁸⁶ The emphasis on the reversibility between the subject and the object can also raise the awareness of the flesh of the body, which is often overlooked by a purely Cartesian discourse in its evaluation of the mind over the body. Muldoon also explains the idea of openness with Merleau-Ponty's work *Visible and Invisible* in mind: the flesh (*la chair*) signifies 'the chiasm or crossing over that permits the slippery inter-penetration (the reversibility) between subjective experience and objective

¹⁸¹ *Phenomenology of Perception*, trans. by Colin Smith (London: Routledge, 1989), p. xiii.

¹⁸² *Ibid.*, pp. 138-9.

¹⁸³ *Ibid.*, p. 121.

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 280.

¹⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 424. My emphasis.

¹⁸⁶ *Volatile Bodies: toward a Corporeal Feminism* (Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1994), p. 103.

existence'.¹⁸⁷ In Merleau-Ponty's own words, to perceive things is to 'live them', as the subject must open up and reach out towards the external others.¹⁸⁸ In other words, existence does not feature a closure of its own; the body's chiasm lies in this interposition, a 'being by porosity', which contains both the body and 'the distances participate in one same corporeity or visibility in general'.¹⁸⁹

We could thus consider the *flâneur's* being-in-the-world to be a *taking up* of, and an openness to, certain urban situations. Diverse as the urban landscape might be, the perceiving subject becomes 'sens-itive': a word play highlighted by Merleau-Ponty and Michel de Certeau, as *sens* refers to both direction and meaning in French.¹⁹⁰ The urban landscape contains multiple *sens*. De Certeau's work, *The Practice of the Everyday Life*, is particularly essential here as it investigates seemingly unimportant acts in daily life and discerns their underlying significance. He invites the reader to consider this everyday activity of walking 'a style of tactile apprehension and kinesthetic appropriation': it serves as a kind of spatial practice that helps to construct human relationships.¹⁹¹ The thoughts of de Certeau and Merleau-Ponty help to interpret *flânerie* as a way to establish one's relationship with the other and to situate the

¹⁸⁷ *Tricks of Time*, p. 174.

¹⁸⁸ *Phenomenology of Perception*, pp. 325-6.

¹⁸⁹ Merleau-Ponty, *The Visible and the Invisible: Followed by Working Notes*, ed. by Claude Lefort, trans. by Alphon Lingisso (Evanston: Northwestern UP, 1968), p. 149.

¹⁹⁰ For instance, Merleau-Ponty quotes the French poet Paul Claudel in the beginning of his chapter on temporality: 'La temps est le *sens* de la vie (*sens*: comme on dit le sens d'un cours d'eau, le sens d'une phrase, le sens d'une étoffe, le sens de l'odorat)'. See *Phenomenology of Perception*, p. 410. Emphasis original.

¹⁹¹ *The Practice of Everyday Life*, trans. by Steven Rendall (London: University of California Press, 1984), p. 97. For de Certeau, walking evades collective administration and suppression in 'an urbanistic system'. See *ibid.*, p. 96.

stroller in a network that depends on the reversibility between the subject and the object.

In the city, the *flâneur* is faced with various modes of mobility with their underlying or even imposing directions; urban space features circulation and flux, both of which demonstrate directions. From the traffic and crowd, to commercial capital and class mobility, the city promotes constant movements.¹⁹² Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari thus define urban space as a circuit and a network.¹⁹³ The emphasis on the circulative force of the city should not be underestimated as it helps further define the *flâneur*. Whereas the *flâneur* originally suggested an aimless stroller typically situated in nineteenth-century Paris, this figure bears a further significance within the scope of city literature and in modernist discourses. As mentioned in the first chapter, Benjamin has established the status of the *flâneur*. From his study of Paris, he raises awareness of the way in which Baudelaire adopts various personae from '[f]lâneur, apache, dandy' to 'ragpicker' as new forms and 'masks' behind which 'the poet in Baudelaire preserved his incognito'.¹⁹⁴ His particular focus on the figure of the *flâneur*, however, does not attempt to extend the *flâneur* beyond the heyday of the Second Empire, as he announces the death of the *flâneur* with the disappearance of the arcade.¹⁹⁵ Even though Benjamin's writing has since

¹⁹² As mentioned in chapter one, pp. 28-30.

¹⁹³ *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. by Brian Massumi (New York: Continuum: 2010), p. 477.

¹⁹⁴ 'The Paris of the Second Empire', pp. 97-8.

¹⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 50-1. Benjamin's analysis speaks to his Marxist stance in his focus on the commodification of the *flâneur*. In Priscilla Parkhurst Ferguson's interpretation, the *flâneur* is the product of the genre *physiologies* and character sketches under the July Monarchy; the figure 'suffers from a radical dislocation in mid-nineteenth century' to the degree that today, 'the *flâneur* of everyday life'

facilitated 'the resurgence of the *flâneur* as an icon of modernity in contemporary critical theory in the 1980s',¹⁹⁶ Aimée Boutin questions its tendency to devalue textual complexity as a result of an 'overvaluation of a twentieth-century notion of visibility'.¹⁹⁷ Boutin urges us to surpass the rooted Benjaminian framework and to reconfigure the *flâneur's* discourse within its more nineteenth-century context in the hope that such a method may help understand the *flâneur* 'in our contemporary globalized world', where the *flâneur* 'has become a tool for conceptualizing urban mobility and encounters, and a symbol of self-conscious awareness of urban experience'.¹⁹⁸ While Benjamin's work does have its limitations, we perhaps also trap ourselves within our understanding of his epoch and tend to overlook elements that allow for a broader discussion.

After all, the existence of the *flâneur* should not be limited to that of a walking subject, as the city imposes mobility through transport. Instead of regarding the *flâneur* as a dead and bygone figure – something Benjamin seems to propose in his configuration of Baudelaire – I intend to align myself with a more recent and inter-disciplinary configuration of the *flâneur*, which tends to view *flânerie* as both a quotidian urban practice and an artistic device.¹⁹⁹ Its stress shifts from physical walking to an awareness of urban situations.

'conveys none of the urgency with which writers in early nineteenth century Paris encountered the city and the society increasingly defined by the city'. Ferguson seems to follow Benjamin's argument: even though she admits the possibility of *flânerie* in contemporary discourse, her interpretation appears to place the Benjaminian *flâneur* over other later transfigurations. See *Paris as Revolution*, p. 82.

¹⁹⁶ Aimée Boutin, 'Rethinking the *Flâneur: Flânerie* and the Senses', *Dix-Neuf*, 16.2, (2012), 124-32 (p. 128).

¹⁹⁷ 'Aural *Flânerie*', *Dix-Neuf*, 16.2, (2012), 149-61 (p. 149).

¹⁹⁸ 'Rethinking the *Flâneur*', p. 130.

¹⁹⁹ Tester, for example, argues that the *flâneur* is an attempted device to bridge the gap between modern daily life and artistic creation. Tester, *The Flâneur*, p. 7.

Additionally, the *flâneur* remains a moving subject, but his mobility is no longer restricted to walking, for transport, communication technologies, as well as one's active engagement with the urban scenes, all promote *transposition*. What distinguishes the *flâneur* is thus less leisure walking than the *sens*-itivity to urban space. Rather than a narrow limitation, walking-related mobility contains a certain range and allows for a broader definition.

Together, *flânerie* and *marche* circumscribe a spectrum which I would call a spectrum of leisure. The term *leisure* is elastic: it is a temporal notion encompassing both the idea of free time and the enjoyment of such time. This spectrum thus ranges from extreme random moving at one end to a purpose-driven journey at the other. While the former reminds us of the carefree dandy, the latter suggests submission to powers in the urbanistic system, a rational organisation depicted by de Certeau.²⁰⁰

It is also possible to discern another spectrum evaluating corporeal involvement, or differently put, the degree of technological intervention. Although physical walking is often impeded, or even replaced by, vehicle-riding in urban space, I argue that *flânerie* features a mobility that is not restricted to walking on foot. Movements in the city deserve a broader and thus more fruitful definition: what is crucial to *flânerie* is the emphasis on an active sensual and corporeal perception. The body may not be moving, but the subject's awareness of his or her body interacting with the external world asserts the more physical aspect of *flânerie*. Such an understanding can be read in the wake of de Certeau's description of walking as an individual style and 'an individual mode of

²⁰⁰ *The Practice of Everyday Life*, pp. 94-5.

reappropriation' that implicitly defy 'the collective mode of administration'.²⁰¹

Flânerie points to 'un anachronisme dans le monde où règne l'homme pressé'.²⁰²

This suggests that *flânerie* is a conscious choice – a way to spend time and to study modernity; the *flâneur's* keen observation becomes a means to appropriate what he perceives.

The walker thus has two axes available: the spectrum of leisure and that of techno-intervention. While a commuter's walk is highly mediated by technology and purpose-orientated, I intend to locate the Baudelairean and the Woolfian *flâneur* somewhere closer to the dandy-like random walking on one axis, and allow for more freedom on the mobility axis. Such a configuration can permit a greater scope in discussing *flânerie*: as urban space is constantly disrupted or facilitated by technology, it is impossible to insist on one single way of moving.²⁰³ In fact, a walker may adopt different personae at different stages of a journey and thus be found in different spots on the plane. It is this flexibility that renders the *flâneur* a more complex figure in literature.

As a moving subject, the *flâneur's* situation points to his relationship with the city, as he inhabits urbanity and experiences the unstable urban flux with his *sens*-itivity. For him, the word *sens* is suggestive less of the direction that he pursues than of the orientation of his intention when he perceives. One's intention, according to Merleau-Ponty, measures the 'lived distance' that binds

²⁰¹ *The Practice of Everyday Life*, p. 96.

²⁰² Le Breton, *Eloge de la marche*, p. 15.

²⁰³ Compare, for instance, Benjamin's discourse on the Baudelairean *flâneur*, whose survival depends on the arcade. A broader definition of the *flâneur* is more fruitful in that it aims to surpass a mere historical and material interpretation. See 'The Paris of the Second Empire in Baudelaire', p. 54.

one to meaningful things (and thus to *sens* in its other meaning).²⁰⁴ This downplay of directions of movement highlights that *flânerie* is an aimless meandering; its route does not presuppose any directions (and is thus *sens*-less). More importantly, the city does not allow for directions at will; public transport and planned streets impose certain directions. As a result, the *flâneur* turns to the other meaning of *sens*: *flânerie* is a search for meaning in taking up urban situations.²⁰⁵ Therefore, *flânerie* is paradoxically both with and without *sens*, a trait that makes the *flâneur* the perfect spokesperson for modernity.

Once the agenda is set, *flânerie* becomes a symbolic gesture, and the *flâneur* can be regarded as a heightened being-in-the-world, or more precisely, a being-in-the-city. While Merleau-Ponty asserts that the body involves the external world through 'the natural correlation between appearances and our kinaesthetic unfolding',²⁰⁶ the *flâneur's* movement and involvement with the cityscape prove to be essential for his role, which is an attempt to understand the city. Such a dynamic nature asserts the *flâneur's* own being through his 'full-co-existence with the phenomenon'.²⁰⁷ Here, Merleau-Ponty further endows the being-in-the-world with a temporal understanding as he opines that perception is in fact unfolded in time; the body creates time.²⁰⁸ Indeed, the living present opens up a lived past and a not-yet future,²⁰⁹ and as a result, being co-exists with

²⁰⁴ *Phenomenology of Perception*, p. 286.

²⁰⁵ Cf. Richard D. E. Burton notes how the *flâneur* is 'a "reader" of modern life' as the city offers a system of signs. I shall return to elaborate on this semiological interpretation later in chapter three. See *The Flâneur and His City: Patterns of Daily Life in Paris 1815-1850* (Manchester: Manchester UP, 2009), pp. 2-3.

²⁰⁶ *Phenomenology of Perception*, p. 310.

²⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 318.

²⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 239-40.

²⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 433.

'all the other landscapes which stretch out beyond it [one's surrounding], and all these perspectives together form a single temporal wave, one of the world's instants'.²¹⁰ It is this phenomenological take that enables us to further elucidate modernity. As I have suggested, modernity exists in the experience of discrepancies; the urbanite's being-in-the city is thus situated between his or her own body and the external world; being is constantly in constellation with the world, hence a being-in-the-changing. The modern city dweller is faced with dramatic discrepant temporalities that disrupt perception, and thus his or her taking-up of situations, to use Merleau-Ponty's vocabulary. Urban situations simulate the scenario of the gap: the city dweller belongs neither to the standstill platform nor the fast-moving train; he or she is in between, constantly attempting to take up various temporal situations. Even when one manages to reach 'one single temporal wave', it is only a temporary arrangement, for it is merely 'one of the world's instants'. It is also this temporal unfolding that allows the *flâneur* to experience the paradoxes that engender modernity: the contrast between nowness and the past as well as between fleetingness and the unmovable. This is not an evaluation of the past over the present but an emphasis of how both are continuously undergoing alteration according to the subject's negotiation with the experience of the gap.

In a similar vein, Henri Meschonnic understands *la modernité* as 'un combat' which is '[s]ans cesse recommençant': it is 'un état naissant,

²¹⁰ Ibid., p. 311.

indéfiniment naissant, du sujet, de son histoire, de son sens'.²¹¹ By proposing these three aspects, Meschonnic vividly describes the *flâneur's* situation in the gap as a constant struggle with the self. He also affirms that such a focus on the self is related to subjectivity in time, noting that the Latin word *modernitas* was translated as 'notre temps' in the twelve century.²¹² As a result, modernity presents multiple temporalities which the *flâneur* confronts and engages with in tracing his own subjectivity, in order to unfold his own perspectives in the present moment, however fleeting the present may prove to be. Indeed, if we consider Meschonnic's definition of modernity, which signifies '[l]a faculté de présent' and '[c]e qui fait des inventions du penser, du sentir, du voir, de l'entendre, l'invention de formes de vie',²¹³ it becomes clear that the *flâneur's* purpose of being is to perceive the experience of the gap, to take up these situations, to form a convergent perceiving subject, and to assert such a being-in-the-city. Merleau-Ponty has already postulated that the world contains 'fissures and gaps into which subjectivities slip and lodge themselves, or rather which are those subjectivities themselves'.²¹⁴ He also argues that each spectacle forms 'a certain kinaesthetic situation'.²¹⁵ Since these fissures and gaps are not stable but shifting; it requires the *flâneur's* sens-itivity to reach a compatible kinaesthetic perception. In addition, the kinaesthetic element implies that all is temporary; *flânerie* does not stop at any one instant, since the subject's perception

²¹¹ *Modernité modernité* (Paris: Gallimard, 1988), p. 9. Cf. In his preface to *Phenomenology of Perception*, Merleau-Ponty compares a philosopher to 'a perpetual beginner'. See *Phenomenology of Perception*, p. xv.

²¹² *Modernité modernité*, p. 37.

²¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

²¹⁴ *Phenomenology of Perception*, p. 333.

²¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 303.

continuously adapts to changing moments. The temporal unfolding, however, is not a linear and smooth one: the constant beginning described by Meschonnic, or the 'single temporal wave' that one has to manage to grasp, demonstrates that coping with modernity is a constant endeavour. Therefore, the *flâneur's* sensitivity is incessant; the realisation of one present moment can change that of the past and of the future; the *flâneur* grapples with the 'fissures and gaps' that Merleau-Ponty describes. The discrepant trend also underscores the experience of modernity.

The body of the *flâneur* embodies philosophical thinking. Phenomenology helps to elucidate the *flâneur's* relationship with the city. Many theories on modernity or modernism seem to follow a similar strand in their emphasis on the role played by the body and perception in understanding the city. Therefore, adding the *flâneur* to our consideration allows us to refocus on the notion that the subject is an integral and perceiving being. As Boutin calls into question the 'overevaluation of a twentieth-century notion of visibility', which prevails in the Benjaminian discourses, she advocates rethinking the *flâneur* in terms of other senses.²¹⁶ Starting from a somewhat visual-centric culture, the walking figure allows us to take a more integral look at urban experience. It is not, however, to deny the importance and existence of visibility embedded in modernist literature, but instead to reveal how the overemphasis on vision dominating many modernist studies results in a further fragmentation of the subject. There is therefore a need to reconsider perception not as a collection of isolated elements, but as an integrated experience. Tracing the progress of Western civilisation,

²¹⁶ 'Aural *Flânerie*', p. 149. See also my discussion in chapter one, p. 84.

Juhani Pallasmaa denounces the fact that from classical Greek to modern technological society, an 'ocularcentric and obsessively hygienic code of culture' has tended to marginalise other senses.²¹⁷ As a result, the modern technological city heightens 'detachment, isolation and exteriority'.²¹⁸ Such claims seems to be in line with the views of Armstrong, Danius and Crary, as they call for a reconsideration of the body's intricate relations to technology.²¹⁹ Based on this more body-oriented perspective, I propose to regard modernity as a more prevailing and fundamental phenomenon that rifts from perceptions of all kinds in the city. Additionally, while Pallasmaa asserts the importance of the architect in regulating the spatial experience in the city, he nonetheless falsely blames the modernist movement for marginalising other senses. He trenchantly criticises 'the Modernist idiom' whose one-sided intellectual and visual tendency fails to 'penetrate the surface of popular taste'; even 'the Modernist design' in general 'has housed the intellect and the eye' but renders 'the body and the other senses, as well as our memories, imagination and dreams, homeless'.²²⁰ Such a false accusation of modernist movement results from a confusion of terms. For Pallasmaa, it seems that modernist discourse speaks for modernity rather than for the critics of it. From optical invention and street light, to velocity that distorts vision, modernity signifies this sense of homelessness and estrangement. As a reaction to modernity, modernism (or what I view as the 'Modernist design') is in fact an attempt to represent and draw our attention to such a problem rather than a cause of it. While a complete understanding of the intact

²¹⁷ *The Eyes of the Skin*, p. 19.

²¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 22.

²¹⁹ See my analysis in chapter one, pp. 24-6.

²²⁰ *The Eyes of the Skin*, p. 22.

self is often impossible due to the fragmented nature of modernity, modernist literature can reflect the 'memories, imagination and dreams' denied by modernity. Modernism should be regarded as a counter discourse to modernity while being intertwined with it. After all, Pallasmaa himself acknowledges that poetry could work against the ocularcentric culture, as it brings us 'momentarily back to the oral and enveloping world'; echoing Merleau-Ponty's thoughts, Pallasmaa further asserts that artistic works enable a reconstruction of a world 'to which we inseparately belong'.²²¹ Despite the confusion of terminologies between modernity and modernism,²²² Pallasmaa does reveal how phenomenology could clarify our experiences of architecture and the city in general, as he utilises Merleau-Ponty's paradigm to delineate the experience of the city and to demonstrate the central role played by the body in the notion of the self.

Even within the realm of vision, Deleuze has discerned a haptic nature that surpasses the visual-centric tendency.²²³ In his appreciation of Francis

²²¹ Ibid., pp. 28-9. Despite Pallasmaa's negative view on the exclusion of the senses, with the exception of visuality, it is essential to point out that many major modernist works are highly visual. Baudelaire's poetry, for instance, is intensely visual, regardless of its notion of correspondence between various senses. In fact, such poetry does not set off to one-sidedly reject the ocularcentric culture, but instead reflects upon and highlights such a tendency. Katsaros takes Baudelaire's prose poetry as an example of 'the translation of everything into image' to reflect 'a generalized obsession with the mechanical creation of illusions'. See Katsaros, *New York – Paris*, p. 94.

²²² Such a confusion is not unusual in modernist studies. See Friedman's explanation of the opposition found in the terms, modernism, modernity, and modernisation. 'Definitional Excursions', in *Disciplining Modernism*, pp. 11-32

²²³ In her study of the haptic, Abbie Garrington points out that the touch, unlike other senses, seems to be unable to be attributed to a single organ – the skin seems to cover all over the body; it is thus linked to the understanding of the selfhood. *Haptic Modernism: Touch and the Tactile in Modernist Writing* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh UP, 2013), p. 19.

Bacon's painting, Deleuze proposes a haptic nature innate to vision: unlike a 'manual vision', haptic vision is not subordinated to the optical eye; rather, it seems to externalise and activate perception.²²⁴ As Deleuze puts it, the haptic vision 'discovers in itself a specific function of touch that is uniquely its own'.²²⁵ This haptic vision echoes Merleau-Ponty's intentionality, reaching out towards the external. More importantly, it also characterises the nature of *flânerie*. Confined in a vehicle, the *flâneur's* feet may no longer touch the ground, but his eyes retain the ability to extend out and pry.²²⁶ Technology, therefore, may enhance sensual perception rather than subordinating it, since the end of physical *flânerie* signifies the rise of other senses, haptic vision included.

Though highly criticised by Boutin for his visual-centric tendency, Benjamin's writing on the nineteenth century does consider the experience of the senses to be integral. He speaks of emotions experienced in big cities, linking them to certain innovations. In particular, the invention of the match around the middle of the nineteenth century 'brought forth a number of innovations which have one thing in common': they take only 'one abrupt movement of the hand' and can trigger 'a process of many steps'.²²⁷ From the match, the telephone, to the camera, which with a "'snapping'", '[a] touch of the finger now sufficed to fix an event for an unlimited period of time', Benjamin importantly postulates that urban experience is not purely visual: '[t]actile experiences of this kind were

²²⁴ *Francis Bacon: The Logic of Sensation*, trans. by Daniel W. Smith (London: Continuum, 2003), p. 155.

²²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 155.

²²⁶ According to Baudelaire's 'Le Peintre de la vie moderne', the *flâneur* is 'l'observateur passionné'; he is 'hors de chez soi' but at the same time he 'se senti[t] partout chez soi'. This seems to describe a continuum of sensations and experiences. See *OC II*, p. 691.

²²⁷ 'Some Motifs in Baudelaire', in *Charles Baudelaire*, p. 131.

joined by optic ones, such as are supplied by the advertising pages of a newspaper or the traffic of a big city'.²²⁸ Life in the big city involves coping with a range of sensual experiences. Benjamin reminds his reader that Baudelaire compares the *flâneur* plunging into the crowd to plunging 'into a reservoir of electric energy'.²²⁹ Benjamin's reading of Baudelaire's 'Le Peintre de la vie moderne' also underlines that the *flâneur* is 'un kaléidoscope doué de conscience, qui, à chacun de ses mouvements, représente la vie multiple et la grâce mouvante de tous les éléments de la vie' (*OC II* 692).²³⁰ Despite the fact that the kaleidoscope is an optical device, it also acknowledges a kind of kinaesthetic nature embedded in visuality.²³¹

In fact, a phenomenology-inspired reading of the *flâneur* precludes any conception of viewing him as a passive figure at the disposal of the city. The focus on the body, nevertheless, inevitably draws attention to gender, especially

²²⁸ Ibid., p. 131.

²²⁹ Ibid., p. 131.

²³⁰ Ibid., p. 131.

²³¹ Garrington's definition of the 'haptic' is useful here:

The word 'haptic' should be understood as an umbrella term denoting one or more of the following experiences: touch (the active or passive experience of the human skin, subcutaneous flesh, viscera and related nerve-endings); kinaesthesia (the body's sense of its own movement); proprioception (the body's sense of its orientation in space); and the vestibular sense (that of balance, reliant upon the inner ear).

In this way, Benjamin's evocation of Baudelaire's reservoir of electric energy and the kaleidoscope indicates haptic experiences, for electricity points to a sensation on the skin and can be related to touch, while the kaleidoscope is close to a sense of movement in which the subject must accustom to and hence proprioception. Greg Kerr echoes this view on the kaleidoscope as he points out that the optical instrument obeys 'a principle of fragmentation' and 'signals an imaginary of infinite variation and the dis-organization of any stable or comprehensive representation'. See Garrington, *Haptic Modernism*, p. 16; Kerr, 'Baudelaire's *Le Spleen de Paris: Rhapsodie* and "le vertige senti dans les grandes villes"', in *Dream Cities: Utopia and Prose by Poets in Nineteenth Century France* (London: Legenda, 2013), pp. 117-54 (p. 117).

since Woolf is often regarded as one of the most significant feminist writers. The word *flâneur* provokes debates on whether the urban stroller is solely male and whether its female counterpart, the *flâneuse*, could possibly exist.

In Peters' words, the act of walking indicates differences in both social classes and gender: 'one's stride and tempo' can distinguish men from women.²³² Socially speaking, Peters explains that women are not expected to walk alone, for fear that 'they might not be able to bear the loneliness of nature'.²³³ More crucially, people are suspicious of women walking alone in unfamiliar places for the link to prostitution: 'no man would allow his wife to go out for a walk without him'.²³⁴ Nesci also observes that there is a stark contrast between the male and the female stroller; a gender divide can be easily measured according to 'le plan de la flânerie et du mouvement dans l'espace urbain'.²³⁵ It is not difficult to imagine that the gender issue is involved not only in the discourse of *flânerie* but also in that of modernity. Among numerous discussions, Janet Wolff famously denounces the lack of discussion of women in the literature on modernity, as a sharper line between the private and the public spheres caused sexual division in the nineteenth century, rendering the existence of the *flâneuse* impossible. She thus calls for a feminist sociology of modernity that elucidates women's experiences in both spheres.²³⁶ Griselda Pollock maintains a similar view of private-public space division in arguing that female artists are

²³² *Time, Innovation and Mobilities*, p. 32.

²³³ *Ibid.*, p. 32.

²³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 32.

²³⁵ *Le Flâneur et les flâneuses*, p. 66.

²³⁶ 'The Invisible Flâneuse: Women and the Literature of Modernity', *Theory, Culture and Society*, 2 (1985), 37-48.

constructed differently.²³⁷ Deborah Epstein Nord adds to their argument by asserting that the Benjamin-Baudelaire discourse has provided 'a kind of paradigm for looking at urban spectatorship through the lens of gender', and as a result, women are rendered into the other.²³⁸ Surpassing this predominately male discourse, however, Nord's study of several female writers manages to take a more positive tone, as she ends her essay using Woolf's characters from *Mrs Dalloway*, Clarissa, and her daughter Elizabeth, to demonstrate a generation gap in women's engagement with the public space; the mother-daughter relationship seems to represent a shift in female mobility.²³⁹ This change is also noted by Rachel Bowlby, who compares the appropriating male gaze in Baudelaire's poem 'A une passante' with the *passante's* gaze back at Peter Walsh in Woolf's *Mrs Dalloway*. In the former, the speaker describes an anonymous woman in mourning, from whose eye the speaker discerns 'le plaisir qui tue' (*OC* 192).²⁴⁰ In the latter, an unnamed female figure appears during Peter's *flânerie* after his visit to Clarissa. Peter's stalking gaze is returned by the girl's 'look in his direction, but not at him, one look that bade farewell, summed up the whole situation and dismissed it triumphantly' (*MD* 49). Bowlby indicates that Woolf insightfully turns a classic street-stalking scenario into 'a parody of the genre whose conventions are clearly understood by both parties', as the scene is

²³⁷ 'Modernity and the Spaces of Femininity', in Pollock, *Vision and Difference: Femininity, Feminism and the Histories of Art* (London: Routledge, 1988), 50-90.

²³⁸ 'The Urban Peripatetic: Spectator, Streetwalker, Woman Writer', *Nineteenth-Century Literature*, 46 (December 1991), 351-75 (p. 353).

²³⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 374-5.

²⁴⁰ The erotic undertone is not missed by Stierle. See *La Capitale des signes*, pp. 466-7.

marked by the girl coming out of the power game 'triumphantly'.²⁴¹ Bowlby's comparative reading of the work of Baudelaire, Proust, and Woolf shows how Woolf is advocating the link between street-strolling and street-writing, which is bound to 'deviate from any expected routes'.²⁴² Bowlby's essay shifts previous focus on the street stroller (the *flâneur*), to that on the street writer: topology and tropology are intricately linked. Her work brings the Woolfian *flâneuse* into the arena of literary *flânerie*, which constantly challenges, if not un-writes, assumptions and codes.

Wendy Parkins and Elizabeth Wilson further challenge the clear spatial and gender demarcation that Wolff and Pollock seem to imply. Parkins offers a glimpse into a more female perspective on urban experience in terms of mobility.²⁴³ As for Wilson, she asserts that a traditionally gendered spatial division was a boundary 'the nineteenth-century bourgeoisie attempted to draw between public and private, as between the virtuous and the fallen woman'.²⁴⁴ She further elaborates that not only the *flâneuse*, but also the *flâneur*, is invisible: as the now classic Benjamin-Baudelaire reading could show, '[v]oyeurism and commodification lead to the attenuation and deferral of satisfaction'.²⁴⁵ Indeed, the *flâneur* may be regarded as a somehow effeminised role (and thus invisible) as a result of his detachment from the urban environment and commodification

²⁴¹ 'Walking, Women and Writing: Virginia Woolf as *Flâneuse*', in *New Feminist Discourses: Critical Essays on Theories and Texts*, ed. by Isobel Armstrong (London: Routledge, 1992), pp. 26-47 (p. 34). Bowlby goes as far as to suggest that even Clarissa's surname Dalloway implies a woman 'who likes to dally along the way' – the *flâneuse*. See *Ibid.*, p. 35.

²⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 37.

²⁴³ 'Moving Dangerously: Mobility and the Modern Woman', *Tulsa Studies in Women's Literature*, 20 (Spring 2001), 77-92.

²⁴⁴ 'The Invisible *Flâneur*', *New Left Review*, 190 (Jan-Feb 1992), 90-110 (p. 105).

²⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 108.

by it. Nevertheless, Wilson also argues that the *flâneur* is 'an embodiment of the special blend of excitement, tedium and horror aroused by many in the new metropolis, and the disintegrative effect of this on the masculine identity'.²⁴⁶ In a similar vein, Deborah L. Parsons criticises the views of Wolff and Pollock, because their stance seems to disregard the fact that 'the post-Benjaminian *flâneur* is more influentially a conceptual metaphor for urban observation and walking that extends even to the present day and the *flâneur* of de Certeau's postmodern city'; the figure has become 'a metaphor for the experiences and aesthetic styles of an increasingly urban society, characteristic of *flânerie* (adaptability, multiplicity, boundary-crossing, fluidity)'.²⁴⁷ This metaphorical reading of the *flâneur* is not to dismiss the importance of gender in urban experiences. By surpassing a somehow reductive differentiation of the male and the female stroller, Parsons' view can facilitate a more comprehensive understanding of modernity, one that takes into account most urban dwellers and regards the city as an all-encompassing phenomenon. What is more, as Felski observes, the discourse on modernity has long been linked to masculinity and resulted in various theoretical bases that actually impede the possible appearances of aspects that 'may have been or could potentially be beneficial for women'.²⁴⁸ While feminism 'has been highly critical of the concept of the modern', it 'has also been deeply influenced by it'.²⁴⁹

Addressing the issue of the *flâneuse* within the scope of Baudelaire and

²⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 109.

²⁴⁷ *Streetwalking the Metropolis: Women, the City and Modernity* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2000), pp. 40-1.

²⁴⁸ *The Gender of Modernity*, p. 17

²⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 16.

Woolf becomes crucial – I am not emphasising the importance of the *flâneuse* over her male counterpart, nor am I trying to argue for the possibility of the *flâneuse*. As a matter of fact, these two authors have been widely discussed separately in terms of *flânerie*. By focusing on both of them, and by taking into account phenomenology's concern with the body and the self, I hope to shed new light on the discussion. If we regard the *flâneur* as a consciousness of the city, it becomes clear that each individual, male or female, is able to register various sensual experiences when walking in the city. Of course, phenomenology is not the panacea to the *flâneur/se* debate. As Grosz notes, Merleau-Ponty himself has failed to explain what kind of body he is dealing with.²⁵⁰ Nonetheless, refocusing on the consciousness of being, and regarding the *flâneur* as a particularly heightened awareness of modernity serve as a proper starting point to go beyond a merely feminist discussion.

In short, despite an earlier portrait that may be traced back to Rousseau and his walking dreamer, today, the term *flâneur* is less about literal walking than about a form of literary walking. While I use the term *flâneur* throughout the chapters, I maintain a broader interpretation of the figure – the *flâneur* is a somehow gender-neutral trope that helps to embody modernity and the city. More precisely, he has become a strategy, or even an instrument, that the writer utilises to present the urban situation, and to accommodate and negotiate with modernity. A more flexible understanding of the definition of the *flâneur* allows this ambiguous figure to reflect the nature of modernity, which entails paradoxes and discrepancies.

²⁵⁰ *Volatile Bodies*, p. 110.

It is also crucial to point out that the *flâneur* is not the only device available to the writer, who is constantly adjusting to, and orchestrating his or her position within the gaps of modernity. As a result, the *flâneur* seems to form a tension with other figures, the dandy being one of them. The dandy embodies an attention to style, which sometimes overlaps with the role of the *flâneur*. Throughout his work, Baudelaire devotes considerable attention to the figure of the dandy, whose goal is to 'aspérer à être sublime sans interruption': 'il doit vivre et dormir devant un miroir' (*Mon cœur mis à nu*, OC I 678). Roger Kempf elaborates that '[l]e dandy se retranche, ignore l'échange, sinon avec les siens, n'offre à la galerie qu'un impénétrable miroir'.²⁵¹ After all, the dandy is in pursuit of '[l]a maîtrise de soi'.²⁵² Many have addressed the figure in terms of superficiality and the relationship with the artefact. In Baudelaire's essay 'Le Peintre de la vie moderne', the dandy represents a need to 'se faire une originalité, contenu dans les limites extérieures des convenances' (OC II 710). It is intriguing to investigate how the *flâneur* and the dandy have both become artistic devices and survival strategies for the true artist. Since both are closely related to modernity and the city, there is a need to scrutinise the nuances between them.

In Michel Foucault's reading of modernity, 'Qu'est-ce que les Lumières?', he seems to assimilate the man of modernity with the dandy rather than with the *flâneur*. Foucault's essay is pertinent to the discussion of modernity for he discerns in Baudelaire 'l'attitude de modernité' which is essentially the

²⁵¹ *Dandies: Baudelaire et Cie* (Paris: Seuil, 1977), p. 36.

²⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 36.

philosophy of the present.²⁵³ Foucault admires such an attitude, and he writes that in Baudelaire's writing, 'on reconnaît en général l'une des consciences les plus aiguës de la modernité au XIX^e siècle'.²⁵⁴ Faced with modernity, 'être moderne' does not consist in passively accepting the perpetual movement, but in 'ressaisir quelque chose d'éternel qui n'est pas au-delà de l'instant présent, ni derrière lui, mais en lui'.²⁵⁵ However, in the same essay, Foucault does not endow the *flâneur* with the status of representative of the attitude of modernity. In the light of Foucault's essay, Corey McCall's reading of 'Le Peintre de la vie moderne' reveals an essential difference in understanding the *flâneur* as 'a mere collector of experience' or as 'a true artist, the painter of modern life'.²⁵⁶ It is clear that Foucault is inclined to identify the *flâneur* with the collector rather than the true artist, 'l'homme de la modernité'.²⁵⁷

If we consider Baudelaire's definition of modernity as presented in 'Le Peintre de la vie moderne', it is evident that the transitory nature of modern aesthetics cannot be overlooked, for without it, 'vous tombez forcément dans le vide d'une beauté abstraite et indéfinissable' (*OC II* 695). Baudelaire speaks of his fondness for the moment, which make both the dandy and the *flâneur* useful avatars of the modern being to examine what is 'en lui'. Foucault explains that

²⁵³ 'Qu'est-ce que les Lumières?', in Foucault, *Dits et écrits*, 4 vols (Paris: Gallimard, 1994), IV, pp. 652-78 (p. 568).

²⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 568.

²⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 569.

²⁵⁶ 'The Art of Life: Foucault's Reading of Baudelaire's "The Painter of Modern Life"', *The Journal of Speculative Philosophy, New Series*, 24.2 (2010), 138-57 (p. 143).

²⁵⁷ 'Qu'est-ce que les Lumières?', p. 569.

modernity is a relationship with oneself; Baudelaire 'cherche à s'inventer lui-même' through his dandyism.²⁵⁸

However, Foucault's reading seems to be misleading. In fact, Baudelaire argues that the true artist should not be confused with the dandy, as the latter 'aspire à l'insensibilité', while the former is dominated by 'une passion insatiable, celle de voir et de sentir' (*OC II* 691). Richard Pope also notes Foucault's misinterpretation in situating the man of modernity in the figure of the dandy rather than in the *flâneur*: '[ê]tre moderne', for Foucault, is what Baudelaire calls 'dandysme'.²⁵⁹ Pope contends that Foucault's reading proves confusing: hastily relating the artist Guy to the dandy, Foucault seems to overlook the fact that the artist is not mentioned at all in Baudelaire's section devoted to the dandy.²⁶⁰ One cannot deny that for Baudelaire, the dandy signifies a care for the self, but as I shall demonstrate, it is the *flâneur* that can best represent the true artist faced with the experience of modernity.

Although Baudelaire may not present a systematic configuration of the dandy, his writing often addresses this figure. In his *Fusées*, dandyism is a 'culte de soi-même dans l'amour' (*OC I* 659). This emphasis on the self stands in stark contrast with the crowd-embracing *flâneur*. Whereas the *flâneur*'s passion and vocation is to 'épouser la foule' ('Le Peintre de la vie moderne', *OC II* 691 emphasis original), the dandy remains distant and detached. The contrast between the two also corresponds to that between a democratic ethos and an

²⁵⁸ Ibid., pp. 570-1.

²⁵⁹ 'The Jouissance of the Flâneur: Rewriting Baudelaire and Modernity', *Space and Culture*, 13.1 (2010), 4-16, (p. 11); Foucault, 'Qu'est-ce que les Lumières?', p. 570.

²⁶⁰ 'The Jouissance of the Flâneur', p. 12.

aristocratic one; the *flâneur* suggests a transition while the dandy remains an enigma to interpret.

The essence of dandyism lies in the focus on materiality as the dandy turns himself into an object of art: he postures as an artist but is not an artist. The *flâneur*, on the other hand, implies paradoxes, which gives him a certain depth. Such a distinction, however, is insufficient.²⁶¹ In fact, through their consciousness of the self, the dandy and the *flâneur* point to different ways of searching for identity. The dandy's seeming superficiality points to his existence in a symbolic order. As Philip G. Hadlock admits, the dandy, remaining in front of the mirror, serves to ensure that the male body is unseen, and is aligned with artifice; 'his realm is a highly charged symbolic domain'.²⁶² For Hadlock, the dandy is 'a signifier which seeks, through its melancholia, the return of the masculine self'.²⁶³ Hadlock's argument is focused on queer literature, but it

²⁶¹ To a certain degree, the dandy and the *flâneur* share common traits, hence the difficulty to attribute modernity to one of them. Wolf Lepenies identifies both the dandy and the *flâneur* as the successors of the court jester in dispelling boredom and melancholy. Drawing on Benjamin's theory, Lepenies recalls how the dandy regarded the boulevard as an interior and the world as a mirror. The dandy was a jester 'stripped of an audience – except that he himself wishes to become the audience'. Unlike the jester, these two figures 'adhered to a program that no longer served society, which enjoyed that program from a distance; it served only the person who produced it'. Likewise, Naomi Ritter sees the element of the spectacle and a superior conscious ego that links the dandy to the jester; the dandy remains 'a bourgeois substitute for the court jester'. See Lepenies, *Melancholy and Society*, trans. by Jeremy Gaines and Doris Jones (London: Harvard UP, 1992), pp. 69-70; Ritter, *Art as Spectacle: Images of the Entertainer since Romanticism* (Columbia: Missouri UP, 1989), p. 29.

²⁶² 'The Other Other: Baudelaire, Melancholia, and the Dandy', *Nineteenth-century French Studies*, 30 (2001), 58-67 (pp. 60-2).

²⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 59. Despite that the majority of theories dwell upon the superficiality and style indicated by dandyism, Elisa Glick contends that the dandy represents more than a mere 'embodiment of style over substance'. For her, the dandy's materiality epitomises a paradox between a celebration of 'the erotic and aesthetic of the commodity' and a reaction against 'the commodification of

elucidates that dandyism can be understood as a general concentration on the self. The *flâneur*, on the other hand, has an aimless purpose in the urban street; he enjoys both solitude and multitude, he wanders deliberately yet randomly. He may be similar to the dandy in his pursuit of style, but unlike the dandy, whose occupation is to 'courir à la piste du bonheur' ('Le Peintre de la vie moderne', *OC II* 709), the *flâneur* walks in an unresolved urban street. It is a more profound consciousness of the other that further distinguishes the *flâneur* from the dandy: while the dandy lives and sleeps in front of a mirror (and hence the image of the self), the *flâneur* plunges in the crowd (and hence a relation with the other). The emphasis on his mobility and sensual experience of the city demonstrates a sort of reversibility of the body and the exterior world. This reversibility also allows phenomenology to enrich the discussion of the *flâneur*.

In his unfinished work *Visible and Invisible*, Merleau-Ponty postulates this more refined consciousness of being seen, as he argues that the feeling of being looked at by things forms a co-existence in a shared world: 'the seer and the visible reciprocate one another and we no longer know which sees and which is seen'.²⁶⁴ Thoughts exist through the flesh, since 'they could not be given to us as ideas except in a carnal experience'.²⁶⁵ Perhaps, the existence of the dandy and the *flâneur* relies on being seen. For the artist and the writer, the two figures are two sides of the same coin; they coexist while retaining their specificity. The

modern life'. The dandy models himself 'on the structure of the commodity' and this 'results in a dangerous splitting of subjectivity'. Her reading demonstrates that recent discussion on dandyism depicts him 'as a transgression of gender boundaries' See 'The Dialectics of Dandyism', *Cultural Critique*, 48 (Spring 2001), 129-163, (pp. 130-1, 150, 157). I shall return to the element of transgression in my discussion of *Orlando* in chapter three, n. 496, p. 201.

²⁶⁴ *The Visible and the Invisible*, p. 139.

²⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 150. Author's emphasis.

flâneur exists in flesh and blood, providing what Merleau-Ponty terms 'the surface of an inexhaustible depth', because he represents a point of view, a starting point of perception.²⁶⁶ This depth, in Merleau-Ponty's terms, enables one 'to be open to visions other than our own' and thus allows artistic creation.²⁶⁷ On the contrary, the dandy's consciousness of being seen is characterised by materiality, fashion, and insensibility.

The tension between the dandy and the *flâneur* helps to illustrate the discussion of *sens* and one's relationship to the self. While the dandy focuses on the aesthetics of the surface, the *flâneur* conducts an underlying dynamic dialogue with his environment – a clear cut division between the two might not be possible as they both share a keen sense of the self, but the nuance lies perhaps in the *flâneur's* emphasis on corporeality. The *flâneur* exercises a crossing in the urban streets, as well as one between urban space and textual space. He is representative of the intentionality of the flesh, which, in Muldoon's reading of Merleau-Ponty, 'signals the reversibility that problematises the notion of intentionality' and lies 'at the root of the subject-object dichotomy'.²⁶⁸ The *flâneur's* subjectivity thus involves urbanity and textuality, stressing a search for *sens* in both realms. He thus asserts his *instrumental* position as a chameleonic figure. For Grosz, the body constructs the notion of space as a relation between points, offering 'a central or organizing perspective which regulates perceptions so that they occupy the same perceptual field'.²⁶⁹ As a result, the *flâneur* becomes a lived artistic device, an embodiment incorporating various senses, for they

²⁶⁶ Ibid., p. 143.

²⁶⁷ Ibid., p. 143.

²⁶⁸ *Tricks of Time*, pp. 174-5.

²⁶⁹ *Volatile Bodies*, p. 90.

cannot be totally isolated from one another; they are able to communicate with each other in a lived experience.²⁷⁰

The emphasis on lived experience leads to problematisation of identity and selfhood: *flânerie* can be understood as an approach to subjectivity. Both Baudelaire and Woolf incorporate hybrid subjectivity into their writing to underscore a fluid self-other relation. This consideration further reveals that the attempt to distinguish the dandy and the *flâneur* points to the impossibility of delineating a unified self. It can be argued that the writer uses different strategies to mask the self. Whether it is the dandy's indifferent posture or the *flâneur's* meandering in the city, it is the writer that is hidden behind their voices and explores the exterior world just as much as his or her own interior – this bidirectional search is more in line with *flânerie*, hence another reason to choose the *flâneur* as the writer's *way* of reflecting and reacting to modernity. Having briefly dwelt upon the dandy, I argue that the focus of my study makes the *flâneur* a better candidate to represent modernity. This choice, however, is not to downplay the significance of the dandy, but to accentuate the paradoxical nature of modernity. Of course, various figures can all serve as artistic strategies for the writer: the dandy, the rag-picker, the beggar, the blind, to name just a few, can all be found in city literature; it is impossible to exhaust the list. However, I shall deal mainly with the *flâneur* because his mobility can provide a dynamics to delineate the self-other relationship in both textual space and urban space. Just as with the *flâneuse* debate, this textual search of the self can be read in a feminist light, but should not be limited to it. This is why Little highlights that

²⁷⁰ Ibid., p. 99.

although the male writer predominately utilises opposition to distinguish the self from the other (which is often 'the culture and voices of women'), a more disruptive narrative structure should not be regarded as solely feminist.²⁷¹ After all, 'theories of opposition' fails to describe modern texts and societies since 'the social structures of gender, ethnicity, and economic status' tend to 'mingle and overlap in many forms and combinations'.²⁷² Instead of an oppositional narrative, Little discerns 'appositional discourses and selves' in the works of many female writers; in writing the failure to socialise, these writers celebrate relationality.²⁷³ In her reading of Woolf, for instance, Little decides not to examine 'the conflictual polarities', but to solicit an emphasis on the rich appositions in Woolf's 'appropriations and transformations of symbolic structures'.²⁷⁴ Woolf's writing is not so much about female voices deconstructing, or even triumphing, over male (and thus traditional) ones, but rather about demonstrating polyphony and relationality.

Woolf's novel *The Waves*, for instance, demonstrates the ebb and flow of the relationality of life. Not only does the very title of the novel suggest the coming and going of life and death, but the structure of the whole novel forms a movement among the characters. The centre of the novel is Percival, whose presence at the dinner is circled by the narrations of the other characters: [b]ut without Percival there is no solidity', as Neville said.²⁷⁵ In Little's words, Percival serves as a metasubjectivity; even though he offers no spoken words, he 'is the

²⁷¹ *The Experimental Self*, pp. 4-5.

²⁷² *Ibid.*, p. 6.

²⁷³ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

²⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 27.

²⁷⁵ *W*, pp. 95-6. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

discourse', representing his culture's assumptions.²⁷⁶ However, such a centre is far from a fixed one, as Woolf mobilises the narrative to unravel it. At the end of the gathering, Neville says:

'Now the cab comes; now Percival goes. What can we do to keep him? How bridge the distance between us? How fan the fire so that it blazes for ever? How signal to all time to come that we, who stand in the street, in the lamplight, loved Percival? Now Percival is gone.' (*W* 115)

Neville's thoughts point to the gap between the self and others, the gaps between people, and they also foreshadow Percival as the novel's empty centre. Percival's departure signifies both a sense of the present moment and an eternal human predicament: the statement '[n]ow Percival is gone' foretells death, as the next chapter starts immediately with Neville's announcement:

'He [Percival] is dead,' [...]. 'He fell. His horse tripped. He was thrown. The sails of the world have swung round and caught me on the head. All is over. [...].'
(*W* 119)

In the middle of the novel, what had seemed to be its centre has disappeared and the rest of the polyphonic narration continues. Little scrutinises Percival's role in the novel and argues that as 'the center of a relational or communal epiphany', his death allows the remaining characters to develop and 'to inscribe their vision dialogically, repeating and altering each other's phrases'; this 'chorus of reflection' features apposition rather than conflict and disruption.²⁷⁷ As a result, the subjectivity constructed throughout *The Waves* is often a collective one: although the six voices remain marked by cliché and convention, they form a rich source through the style and form that Woolf painstakingly orchestrates.²⁷⁸

²⁷⁶ *The Experimental Self*, p. 61. Author's emphasis.

²⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 62.

²⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 53-4, 63.

Bernard's internal monologue, for instance, demonstrates how life unfolds itself in movement during a journey on the train:

The world is beginning to move past me like the banks of a hedge when the train starts, like the waves of the sea when a steamer moves. I am moving too, am becoming involved in the general sequence when one thing follows another and it seems inevitable that the tree should come, then the telegraph-pole, then the break in the hedge. (*W* 150-1)

This vivid description indicates a realisation that life goes on, indifferent to human suffering. Inevitability dominates, and the writer, as represented by Bernard, can only move on. It is worth pointing out that the landscape bears the mark of technology, as the telegraph-pole is brought into view after the tree. The writer is also mobilised, willing or not. The writer's subjectivity henceforth takes part in an external world that is dominated by the here and now (here presented as 'the general sequence'). Jean Guiguet interprets Woolf's own personality along with her work, stating that for Woolf, to exist 'meant experiencing that dizziness on the ridge between two abysses of the unknown, the self and the non-self'.²⁷⁹ This dizziness incorporates the experience of the gap and the movement of the city and is reflected in both literary creation and the writer's attitude towards life. Modern life does not permit stability; vertigo and dizziness express a sense of dislocation in the city. Artistic creation reveals such dizziness by challenging existing standards of beauty.

Phenomenology's awareness of lived experience ties in well with the writerly concerns about the self that Baudelaire and Woolf present in their literary creations. It also takes into account the textual self: besides its emphasis on the body, phenomenology also deals with the world of words, investigating

²⁷⁹ *Virginia Woolf and Her Works*, trans. by Jean Stewart (London: Hogarth Press, 1965), p. 461.

how words are pregnant with meanings. In his unfinished work *La Prose du monde*, Merleau-Ponty sets forth the task of language:

[E]étant donné une expérience qui peut être banale mais se résume pour l'écrivain en une certaine saveur très précise de la vie, étant donné par ailleurs des mots, des formes, des tournures, une syntaxe, et même des genres littéraires, des manières de raconter qui sont, par l'usage, investis déjà d'une signification commune, à la disposition de chacun, choisir, assembler, manier, tourmenter ces instruments de telle manière qu'ils induisent le même sentiment de la vie qui habite l'écrivain à chaque instant, mais déployé désormais dans un monde imaginaire et dans le corps transparent du langage.²⁸⁰

By stressing the manipulation of language that the writer is able to carry out ('choisir, assembler, manier, tourmenter'), Merleau-Ponty explicitly underscores the writer's role in handling the words. The verbs suggest that writing is hard labour and the writer must fight against the seemingly banal experience and established literary convention. The potential for language to trigger novel meanings leads to Merleau-Ponty's idea of 'langage parlant' as opposed to 'langage parlé': while the former 'se fait dans le moment de l'expression', the latter serves as a mere 'porteur'.²⁸¹ Merleau-Ponty explains that 'langage parlé' suggests 'la masse de rapports de signes établis à significations disponibles' that allows for reading; however, it is 'langage parlant' that creates novel meanings:

Mais le langage parlant, c'est l'interpellation que le livre adresse au lecteur non prévenu, c'est cette opération par laquelle un certain arrangement des signes et des significations déjà disponibles en vient à

²⁸⁰ *La Prose du monde*, ed. by Claude Lefort (Paris: Gallimard, 2012), p. 67. It is intriguing that Merleau-Ponty also speaks of the similarities between painting and language, a comparison reminiscent of Baudelaire's penchant for both painting and literature. According to Merleau-Ponty, painting and language both entail 'la même opération expressive' to the degree that 'il est possible de considérer la peinture sur le fond du langage et le langage sur le fond de la peinture'. Ibid., p. 67.

²⁸¹ Ibid., p. 17.

altérer, puis à transfigurer chacun d'eux et finalement à sécréter une signification neuve, comme un instrument désormais disponible.²⁸²

Writing in 'langage parlant' is a perpetual reinvention of meaning. It is an arrangement of existing signs to create a transformation which yields a new meaning. This operation requires the writer's effort to break free from the limitation of language.²⁸³ Such a writerly concern is evident in Woolf's works, as Bernard's monologue in *The Waves* demonstrates:

Here am I shedding one of my life-skins, and all they will say is, 'Bernard is spending ten days in Rome'. Here am I marching up and down this terrace alone, unoriented. But observe how dots and dashes are beginning, as I walk, to turn themselves into continuous lines, how things are losing the bald, the separate identity that they had as I walked up those steps. [...] And as I move, surrounded, included and taking part, the usual phrases begin to bubble up, and I wish to free these bubbles from the trap-door in my head, and direct my steps therefore towards that man, the back of whose head is half familiar to me. (*W* 150-1)

Through Bernard's 'unoriented' walking, his apparent *flânerie*, textual space is engaged with his movement. Bernard's 'usual phrases' are reminiscent of Merleau-Ponty's consideration of language and show how *flânerie* mobilises words, and shatters their existing meanings. These 'usual phrases' point to a set language and can thus be identified as 'langage parlé', and the struggle to free the 'bubbles' evokes Merleau-Ponty's quest for 'langage parlant'. Through Bernard's voice, Woolf is asking how to use a set and constrained language to advance towards the unknown. With such a question in mind, every element in the text, 'dots and dashes' included, is mobilised, while 'usual phrases' also 'bubble up',

²⁸² Ibid., p. 20. In the preface to *La Prose du monde*, Lefort cites Merleau-Ponty's notion of the writer as a 'nouvel idiome' who 'se construit, s'invente des moyens d'expression et se diversifie selon son propre sens'. See *La Prose du monde*, p. IV.

²⁸³ The manipulation of language is related to style, which is 'ce qui rend possible toute signification'. See Ibid., p. 81. Style suggests the writer's performance, a notion which will be covered in chapter three.

waiting to be freed. In addition, 'langage parlant', this 'instrument désormais disponible', is exemplified not only by Woolf's arrangement or correlation of words, but also by the act of *flânerie*: there seems to be a correspondence between Bernard's movement and that of the words.

Phenomenology bridges the gap between the *flâneur*'s physical presence and textual existence; its strengths tie in well with the stroller's physical and textual presence. It also helps to illustrate the writer's manipulation of language and the *flâneur*. It encompasses the paradoxes of modernity with which the writer struggles. Following phenomenological discussions of the self and the world of words, I have highlighted the importance of a textual embodiment that allows the *flâneur* to serve as an instrument in approaching the urban experience. My next chapter will take a closer look at how Baudelaire and Woolf perform literary *flânerie* in that their words prompt novel interpretations which undermine the established meanings of words and rules of genre. While I borrow from semiology an understanding of the city as a container of signs to be read, phenomenology prevails in my analysis for its emphasis on a dynamic relationship between the self and the exterior world.

Chapter Three: From Cityscape to *Line-scape*

Based on my definition of modernity as a sense of paradox, I argue that modernity lies not in any particular time in history, but in a sense of dislocation in time and space. The *flâneur*, as I have illustrated, provides a sense of being-in-the-city to investigate modernity: he manifests– and suffers from – it. Indeed, a significant number of discussions have addressed this figure as the prototypical urban dweller and the spokesperson of modernity and the city. As discussed in previous chapters, urban experiences are not limited to visibility; therefore, a reconsideration of the *flâneur* figure should allow a more integrated look at it. More importantly, the *flâneur* is not only a prototypical urban dweller but also an artistic strategy for modernist writers, who painstakingly attempt to delineate their relationship with the gap of modernity. My interpretation of the *flâneur* draws upon Merleau-Pontian phenomenology, which, as I have elaborated in previous chapters, describes the *flâneur*'s being-in-the-world and his being-in-the-text. The current chapter will build upon such an understanding and elaborate on phenomenology's consideration of language and stylisation. Through an analysis of the works of Baudelaire and Woolf, my comparison aims to go beyond the different historical contexts in which they wrote in order to draw attention to the city as a trope for writing modernity. I will reveal that writing and walking are closely related, since the *flâneur* has become a kind of embodiment of unpredictability both in the city streets, and in between the lines.²⁸⁴ The role of the *flâneur* thus allows for a point of view with which the

²⁸⁴ Thierry Paquot situates Baudelaire as the inaugurator of a literature that delineates the body in the city: 'ce corps à corps entre le poète et la ville, sa ville, qui ne cessera de se réactiver de poème en poème'. Paquot, 'Le Paysage urbain,

writer is able to appreciate the city. This notion is crucial to the discussion, because it acknowledges that perception is subjective, and yet subjectivity cannot be realised without an alterity (in the case of the *flâneur*, the city is his alterity). Ultimately, I aim to illustrate that both Baudelaire and Woolf incorporate their cities – Paris and London respectively – into their writings by using *flânerie* as a literary strategy, and portray what I call *line-scape*. I define *line-scape* as the writer's constant attempt to address the external world through imagination; it is the writer's dynamic interaction with the text and with the other. I will first elucidate that this dynamic relationship derives from the notion of the *landscape* in painting. Secondly, I will situate my discussion along with other phenomenology-inspired theories, most notably those of Collot, Dominique Rabaté, Laurent Jenny, Jean-Pierre Richard, and George Poulet. As I have mentioned in chapter two, phenomenology can enrich the discussion because it deals with the world of the text, thereby straddling the city space and the creative space. It helps to bridge the gap between the *flâneur's* literary and physical existence, for it dwells upon both one's being-in-the-world and the potential of language. In the light of phenomenology, the *flâneur's* twofold existence allows for openness towards the external, and thus creates spaces for

l'écoumène de la modernité', in *Ville contre-nature: Philosophie et architecture*, ed. by Chris Younès (Paris: Édition La Découverte et Syros, 1999), pp. 154-74 (p. 157). It is worth noting that the word 'écoumène' in the title of Paquot's essay is a geographical notion referring to the relationship between humanity and its milieu. In the *TLFi*, the word 'écoumène' belongs to the entry for the word 'oekoumène', designating '[e]space habitable de la surface terrestre, tout ou partie'. Ontologically and phenomenologically speaking, it suggests a corporeality that goes beyond the human body: the flesh structures the milieu. 'Oekoumène, subst. masc.', in *TLFi*, <<http://atilf.atilf.fr/tlf.htm>> [accessed 15/07/2015].

new relationships. A phenomenological approach views urban experience as an adaptation to the city,²⁸⁵ investigates the creative power of language, and delineates the subject's openness towards the other. Such a configuration of the textual space is crucial, as it permits me to show the way in which *line-scape* points to the writer's extension of being-in-the-world. The emphasis on the writer's intervention on the page precludes a simple equation of *line-scape* with a mere textual representation of what is perceived. In the light of phenomenology, I will demonstrate how the *flâneur* serves as the writer's principal tool for adapting to urban experience.

It is crucial to point out that *line-scape* is always unfinished. Its fluidity and its dynamic nature make theories of narrative performance relevant to the discussion: since *line-scape* is not a static whole, the creation of new meanings and new spaces between words can be explained as a performance. Imagination, as attested by Baudelaire's wording comparing it to an operation, is a kind of staging. The notion of performance signifies the writer's effort to stage the *flâneur* in order to configure *line-scape*. On a linguistic level, this performative nature is embedded within the mechanism of the speaker *I* (who gains distance from the writer by establishing its own voice) and its relation to the audience/reader. The idea of performance also indicates that reading opens up spaces for exploration. To clarify the writer's performance behind the textual scene, I will borrow concepts from translation theory to explain that *line-scape*, like translation, involves various possibilities; it is impossible to find one perfect solution: a translation is always a work in progress and no fixed end product is

²⁸⁵ See Wasiak's essay mentioned in chapter one, pp. 39-40.

ever possible. I will unravel the process of translation to point out that *line-scape* can be viewed as the writer's *translation* of the self in relation to modernity, for both amount to a kind of endless spatial organisation that triggers subjectivity.

While much has been discussed in terms of the link between subjectivity and the other, I draw attention to *flânerie*, which can benefit from the kinaesthetic trait elucidated by phenomenology, and which promotes the appreciation of *line-scape* as having a dynamic relationship with its observer. My emphasis on subjectivity and movement in the definition of *line-scape* helps to elucidate how walking and writing are tightly related for the writer: one is prompted by the other. In phenomenological terms, being-in-the-city consists of a series of adaptations to various spatiotemporal dislocations. Since my concern is with literature's configuration of urban experience, it is essential to point out that writing also entails an adaptation to, and experimentation with, language, with the help of a writing instrument. Here, the writing instrument is not limited to the pen, for the writer does not merely deal with the textual space, but also with the urban space. The writing instrument must enable the writer to experience both. Straddling the urban space and the textual space, the *flâneur* has become not only a paradigm for the urban dweller, but also an instrument in the practice of city literature. Most importantly, this approach illustrates how, in the realm of city literature, the writer often adopts the *flâneur* figure to provide a point of view on the city and on the text. Finally, in textual space, the *flâneur* underscores how the writer meanders between prose and poetry – this experience of the gap is rendered more evident by the study of genres. Literary *flânerie* embodies the stylistic preoccupations of the writer. Reading *line-scape* in Baudelaire and Woolf, I will demonstrate how the *flâneur* figure is the very pen

with which they configure urban experience in between the text and the city, as well as in between prose and poetry; this in-betweenness in and of itself reflects the nature of modernity.

Line-scape appears to be a bi-directional intention between the writer and the world, in which the writer posits a literary subjectivity, an imaginary observer of *line-scape*. Despite the implication of a textual essence in its prefix, *line-scape* is not simply a poetic or literary landscape, nor is it a textual representation of a landscape. Neither is *line-scape* a mere internal landscape in the writer's mind, because it is not an inward search for subjectivity but an attempt to understand the self through reaching out towards the other. There is a need to distinguish what I call *line-scape* from these related concepts, which tend to overlook the dynamic intertwining between textual and non-textual spaces, and between the self and the other. The notion of *line-scape* stems from a dynamic interpretation of landscape in terms of landscape painting. William J. T. Mitchell asserts that landscape '*circulates*' as 'a site of visual appropriation' and 'a focus for the formation of identity'.²⁸⁶ His definition reconsiders the tradition of landscape painting in the seventeenth century, and urges us to regard landscape 'not as an object to be seen or a text to be read, but as a process by which social and subjective identities are formed'.²⁸⁷ Indeed, a narrowly defined painterly landscape echoes the 'ocularcentric and obsessively hygienic code of culture' rooted in Western civilisation;²⁸⁸ within the modernist context, the emphasis on visuality makes *lens-scape* another possibility to ponder on.

²⁸⁶ *Landscape and Power* (Chicago: Chicago UP, 1994), p. 2. Author's emphasis.

²⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 1.

²⁸⁸ Pallasmaa, *The Eyes of the Skin*, p. 19.

Nevertheless, Mitchell's interpretation of a kinaesthetic landscape ties in well with the urban landscape, which features circulation and movement.²⁸⁹ Landscape is not purely visual; the appreciation of it involves the establishment of a relationship between the self and the other. This point is also supported by the etymology of the word itself. Gillian B. Pierce has pointed out an affinity between the word *landscape* and its French counterpart *paysage* in terms of their dynamic characteristic. She discerns a verb nature in the suffix -age in the French language; as for the English word *landscape*, it indicates 'a scene or backdrop on which to project our own subjectivity'.²⁹⁰ Ultimately, she writes, it 'refers in general to that which is not at the center, to the margins or marginalized, or to an act of decentering or marginalizing'.²⁹¹ These two origins correspond to Mitchell's interpretation: the appreciation of landscape reflects the perceiving subject's relational position to the perceived object. Based on an understanding of landscape as a process to reveal the self, I coin the term *line-scape* to describe the writer's consideration of the self as related to both the external world and the textual world, through the mediation of literary subjectivity.

In the vein of phenomenology, Collot initiates an investigation of the poetic landscape with a lexical excursion into the word *paysage*. Collot's view espouses Mitchell's interpretation: 'tout paysage est perçu à partir d'un *point de vue* unique, découvrant au regard une certaine *étendue*, qui ne correspond qu'à

²⁸⁹ See my reference to Deleuze and Guattari in chapter two, p. 83.

²⁹⁰ *Scapeland: Writing the Landscape from Diderot's Salons to the Postmodern Museum* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2012), pp. 34-5. For a more detailed explanation of the introduction of the word *landscape* into the English language, and its link to phenomenology, see Martin Leer, "'I Already Live in the Landscape': Phenomenology and Modernist Landscape", in *Phenomenology, Modernism and Beyond*, pp. 273-98.

²⁹¹ *Scapeland*, pp. 35.

une '*partie*' du pays où se trouve l'observateur, mais qui forme un *ensemble* immédiatement saisissable'.²⁹² First, this stress on the point of view implies a perceiving body; second, since the point of view is restricted in the sense that it is never omniscient, it inevitably and implicitly implies a 'point de non-vision' from which he proposes a dialectics between the visible and the invisible, as well as between the internal and external landscape.²⁹³ In Collot's account, it is exactly this coexistence of vision and non-vision that distinguishes the horizon from the panorama: 'le paysage est *horizon*' – his work thus focuses on the invisible horizon of literary works.²⁹⁴ In the wake of Collot, Laura Vanel-Coytte starts with an examination of various types of landscape, concluding that *paysage* should not be solely natural, as the term *paysage urbain* demonstrates;²⁹⁵ she problematises the notion of a 'paysage intérieur' which transcends the urban or natural landscape; it is this second understanding that

²⁹² *L'Horizon fabuleux*, 2 vols (Paris: José Corti, 1988), I, p. 11. Emphasis original. In his more recent work, Collot traces the appearance of the word *paysage* back to the sixth century in the domain of painting 'pour désigner un tableau paysager'. See *Paysage et poésie: du romantisme à nos jours* (Paris: José Corti, 2005), p. 11.

²⁹³ Collot, *L'Horizon fabuleux*, I, p. 15.

²⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 15. Author's emphasis. Cf. Paquot espouses a similar view, postulating that the urban landscape offers not 'une vue panoramique' but 'une vision tronquée et incomplète d'un morceau de ville'. See 'Le Paysage urbain', pp. 159-60. The concept of horizon is a fundamental element to the phenomenological understanding of consciousness. See Bourne-Taylor and Mildenberg, *Phenomenology, Modernism and Beyond*, pp. 8-12.

²⁹⁵ Paquot points out that although the expression 'paysage urbain' did not emerge until the end of the nineteenth century, its depiction had already been presented in the eighteenth century in works such as *Les Tableaux de Paris* and *Les Nuits de Paris, ou le spectateur nocturne*. 'Le paysage urbain', p. 155; See also Stierle, 'Baudelaire and the Tradition of *Tableaux de Paris*', *New Literary History*, 11.2 (1980), 345-61.

interests literary theorists.²⁹⁶ However, Vanel-Coytte's investigation into various types of landscape risks precluding certain aspects of the word and limiting it to a mere internal landscape. This tendency, as Collot explains in a more recent book, is to a great extent the fruit of Romanticism, according to whose value landscape had become not merely a genre in painting, but also an inspiration for the writer and the musician for its potential to 'exprimer à travers une image du monde ses sentiments les plus intimes et ses émotions face au cosmos'.²⁹⁷ While this Romanticist view of landscape was challenged in the mid-nineteenth century for its departure from reality, a pure realist understanding of landscape proves to be equally insufficient. Collot points out Baudelaire's legacy in reworking Romanticism and enriching it so that it prefigures modernity.²⁹⁸ This is why I propose the notion of *line-scape*: I extract from the complexity of the landscape tradition an emphasis on writerly concerns and on subjectivity. In so doing, I aim to scrutinise the role *flânerie* plays in the writing of the city.

In the understanding of *line-scape*, horizon is an important notion because it signifies the very 'line' that the writer seeks to approach. This literary horizon should be incorporated into this discussion, because it points to an external world to which the writer is open. In his work *La Poésie moderne et la structure d'horizon*, Collot further elaborates on the notion of horizon. His interpretation is particularly essential because of its phenomenological standpoint: he shows how

²⁹⁶ *Des Paysages de Baudelaire et Nerval* (Doctoral thesis, Université de Toulouse le Mirail, 2011), pp. 22-3.

²⁹⁷ *Paysage et poésie*, p. 65.

²⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 67.

phenomenology can link the subject's physical body to a literary point of view.²⁹⁹ Collot's theorisation of the landscape borrows from Merleau-Ponty's chiasm: 'le sens d'un paysage ne résulte pas d'une pure projection de l'intérieur vers l'extérieur, mais d'une interaction constante entre le dedans et le dehors'.³⁰⁰

Summing up phenomenological discussions on the openness of the perceiving subject to external objects, Collot turns to Richard to configure the intertwining relation between the reading of the page, and the appreciation of landscape: a 'beau chiasme richardien' in which 'les pages peuvent se contempler comme des paysages; et les paysages à leur tour, à travers leurs configurations sensorielles, leur logique, leur ordre secret, se comprendre, se lire comme autant de pages'.³⁰¹ The term *line-scape* can successfully express the chiasm between the urban and textual spaces. Situated in front of *line-scape*, the writer may be able to project a future and an elsewhere. In terms of external space and textual space, it appears that one can posit horizon as part of *line-scape* and move towards it. Yet, this horizon remains unreachable:

²⁹⁹ Collot aims to demonstrate 'une sorte de dialogue entre la parole des philosophes et celle des poètes'. *La Poésie*, p. 12. See also Collot's essay on the Baudelairean horizon as both 'une dette et une prise de distance vis-à-vis du Romantisme':

[S]i Baudelaire refuse de borner l'ambition de l'art à reproduire ce qu'on voit, ce n'est pas pour dépasser en direction d'un autre monde, invisible et transcendant, mais plutôt pour chercher, dans la structure même visible, le principe d'un approfondissement et d'un perpétuel renouvellement.

It is this 'renouvellement' that urges Collot to acknowledge Baudelaire's status as an inaugurator of modernity, which 'prend acte des limites de notre condition, mais qui ne renonce pas à l'ouvrir sur un infini, fût-il simplement esthétique'. Collot, 'Horizon et esthétique', in *Baudelaire: Nouveaux Chantiers*, pp. 265-78 (p. 277).

³⁰⁰ *Paysage et poésie*, p. 183.

³⁰¹ *Ibid.*, p. 186; Jean-Pierre Richard, *Pages paysages*, Microlectures, II (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1984), p. 7.

L'horizon, c'est ce qui rend la chose inépuisable, mais aussi insaisissable. Il y a en elle quelque chose qui échappe, et le poème, en la laissant échapper, est en quelque sorte fidèle à l'échappement qui la constitue. La chose est opaque, comme le mot du poème; elle ne s'offre jamais sans reste à la perception.³⁰²

The horizon is precisely that which reminds us of this unreachability, and poetic language ought to give a sense of it. The horizon is a constant reminder of the things beyond. Such a horizon can be accounted for in both spatial and temporal terms, and Collot thus asks:

[C]e qui fascine le poète ou l'écrivain, n'est-ce pas l'énigme même de ce passé, qui, aussi personnel soit-il, semble émerger d'un espace étranger, d'une distance intérieure si lointaine qu'elle semble un horizon extérieur au sujet?³⁰³

The past merges into a space almost external and even foreign to the subject. Not only is the writer interested in this paradoxical faraway interiority, but he is also intrigued by this horizon 'extérieur au sujet', which, I argue, forms the essence of *line-scape*. Just as the appreciation of landscape requires a subject, *line-scape* also implies an embedded observer, who is intertwined with the exterior space and thus enacts the chiasm of the flesh in phenomenological terms. Perhaps the

³⁰² Collot, *La Poésie*, p. 179. The unreachability of the horizon results from the opacity of language and of the body. Taking his stance from the now classical Saussurian semiology, Merleau-Ponty compares language to a riddle that can only be understood by 'l'interaction des signes dont chacun pris à part est équivoque ou banal, et dont la réunion seule fait sens'; he writes that 'tout langage est indirect ou allusif' in his 1952 essay 'Le Langage indirect et les voix du silence'. Even though Merleau-Ponty seems to dwell limitedly upon the opacity of language in his *Phenomenology of Perception*, this element is already present in his configuration of the bodily existence. He writes that the perceiving subject, by maintaining a point of view, must reach out towards the previously unknown other 'in the opacity of sensation'. The existence of the sign and the body creates an opacity of language. Therefore, the perception of both the sign and the body is indirect. See 'Le Langage indirect et les voix du silence', in *Signes* (Paris: Gallimard, 1960), pp. 49-104 (pp. 53-4); *Phenomenology of Perception*, p. 325.

³⁰³ *La Poésie*, p. 61.

question is: who is this observer that interacts with *line-scape*? How is this dynamic appreciation made possible by the writer?

In his collection of essays on 'le sujet lyrique', Rabaté discerns that among different approaches to the notion, there seems to be a shared emphasis on mobility.³⁰⁴ More precisely, the poetic subject resists being pinned down, thereby promoting tension and movement. Both Dominique Combe and Rabaté describe a tension rooted in the notion of the poetic *I*: it is personal yet universal; it describes the writer's most intimate relationship *and* humanity's shared experiences.³⁰⁵ Therefore, Combe views the 'sujet lyrique' as 'un point de vue dynamique' – 'un «jeu»'; the 'sujet lyrique apparaîtrait comme un sujet autobiographique «fictionnalisé», but at the same time, it is 'un sujet «fictif» réinscrit dans la réalité empirique'.³⁰⁶ Following this view, Jenny and Collot

³⁰⁴ *Figures du sujet lyrique*, ed. by Dominique Rabaté (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1996), pp. 7-8. In a more recent work, Rabaté takes up the same theme and stresses the element of performativity in proposing the notion of 'gestes lyriques'. He identifies several infinitive verbs as the goal of poetry. Poetic gestures are described in verb form because they imply 'des stratégies énonciatives plus ou moins contraintes, plus ou moins subies, des «postures», mais dans un sens dynamique, qui préserve la mobilité énonciative des poèmes. See Rabaté, *Gestes Lyriques* (Paris: Éditions Corti, 2013), pp. 24-5.

³⁰⁵ Dominique Combe, 'La référence dédoublée', in *Figures du sujet lyrique*, pp. 39-63; Rabaté, 'Énonciation poétique, énonciation lyrique' in *Figures du sujet lyrique*, pp. 65-79 (pp. 55-6).

³⁰⁶ 'La référence dédoublée', pp. 55-6. The use of the word 'jeu' suggests both 'activité divertissante' and also 'aisance dans le fonctionnement d'une chose ou de plusieurs choses entre elles'. It is the writer's playfulness to generate a literary subject, but between this very subjectivity and the writer there is a loose space, one that is not tightly tied to the other and thereby to fixed interpretations, along with which comes ambiguity. This configuration can be related to Roland Barthes, who contemplates the writer's consideration of the reader, which engenders '[u]n espace de la jouissance': Barthes stresses that the reader signifies not a person but a space in which one finds 'la possibilité d'une dialectique du désir, d'une *imprévision* de la jouissance: que les jeux ne soient pas faits, qu'il y ait un jeu'. A most apposite pun, if ever there was. In his essay on Baudelaire's lyrical *I*, Ross Chambers also notes that 'le mot "jeu" évoque tout un

postulate a sort of exteriority in the poetic subjectivity. In Jenny's words, the dynamics of poetic subjectivity lies in a vacillation 'entre prolongement du moi réel et détachement de moi fictif', which allows the poetic subject to perform 'une activité d'extériorisation et de rejet' – the 'sujet lyrique' could thus be considered 'une pure liberté indéterminée de figuration'.³⁰⁷ This dynamic verb-oriented tendency makes the poetic subject a suitable observer of *line-scape*. The writer projects a self into the poetic subject, and between the real self and the fictive one, a gap is created, a space that allows for an undetermined freedom. The new space also implies a new perspective on *line-scape*, which underscores indeterminacy. The poetic subject can be regarded as a product of 'langage parlant':³⁰⁸ the writer speaks this very language to create new relationships and hence new subjectivity, which denies any definite and fixed meanings. As mentioned in the second chapter, Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology links the being-in-the-world to language; a link which helps to explain how the poetic subject can establish its flesh in *line-scape*. In his article 'Le Sujet lyrique hors de soi', Collot borrows from Merleau-Ponty an emphasis on the flesh (*la chair*),

complexe de phénomènes que la langue française situe dans le champ sémantique du verbe "jouer" et qui pour Baudelaire ont une structure unitaire'. Last but not least, in her study of narrative as a performative space, Marie Maclean elaborates on the notion of play, asserting that to understand experimental narratives, it is vital to understand 'play' as a key word and to consider it thoroughly as 'an activity of freedom and yet a strictly rule-governed progression – the play of imagination and the play of the machine'. 'Jeu, subst. masc', in *TLFi*, <<http://atilf.atilf.fr/tlf.htm>> [accessed 09/05/2015]; Barthes, *Le Plaisir du texte* (Paris: Edition Seuil, 1973), p. 11; Chambers, "'Je" dans les Tableaux Parisiens de Baudelaire', *Nineteenth Century French Studies*, 9 (Fall - Winter 1980-81), 59-68 (p. 66); Maclean, *Narrative as Performance: The Baudelairean Experiment* (London: Routledge, 1988), p. 64.

³⁰⁷ 'Fictions du moi et figuration du moi', in *Figures du sujet lyrique*, pp. 99-111 (p. 110).

³⁰⁸ See chapter two, pp. 110-1.

which 'permet de penser ensemble ses appartenances au monde, à l'autre, au langage, non sur le monde de l'extériorité, mais comme un rapport d'inclusion réciproque'.³⁰⁹ Bringing the flesh into a consideration of the poetic subject, Collot further dramatises the vacillation of subjectivity: it involves a bodily existence but is not limited to the physical body. Subjectivity reaches to the textual, giving weight to language: '[l]e sujet ne peut s'exprimer qu'à travers cette chair subtile qu'est le langage, qui donne corps à sa pensée, mais qui demeure un corps étranger'.³¹⁰ Subjectivity derives from the poet but it is not solely the poet's own voice; it lends thoughts to a body but it is not in possession of this body. As a result, Collot places poetic subjectivity 'hors de soi'.³¹¹

Poetic subjectivity, that is, the observer of *line-scape*, relies on an openness towards the other and a constant tension between exteriority and interiority to survive. As a result, it cannot be located due to this very tension – its existence is bound up with the tension and exists only due to this tension. Such an uncertainty prompts Jean-Michel Maulpoix to go as far as to state that '[l]e sujet lyrique n'existe pas'.³¹² Observing the fragmentary nature of 'le sujet lyrique moderne', Maulpoix opines that the poet seems to lose the authoritative voice inspired by the Muse, but, in the meantime, the poetic subject takes shelter in 'cette sorte de toile ou de coquille qu'on appelle un "texte"' – it borrows the

³⁰⁹ 'Le sujet lyrique hors de soi', in *Figures du sujet lyrique*, pp. 113-25 (p. 115).

³¹⁰ Ibid., p. 115.

³¹¹ Ibid., p. 125.

³¹² 'La quatrième personne du singulier', in *Figures du sujet lyrique*, pp. 147-60 (p. 147).

poet's voice, transcends the flesh and bone of the writer, and continues to awaken the reader's emotions.³¹³

It is this unresolved tension between an autobiographical *I* and an impersonal, universal *I* (or between the 'moi réel' and the 'moi fictif' according to Jenny) that triggers subjectivity. While the discussion quoted here is limited to poetry, the fact that modernist writers tend to blur the boundary of the genres of poetry and prose reveals that the dynamic status of subjectivity can be applied to a wider range of literary works.³¹⁴ Similarly, although Collot's elaboration on literary horizon also dwells solely on poetry, I extend this view to a broader realm encompassing modernist writings. It seems more suitable to regard such subjectivity not as a *poetic* subject, but as *literary* subjectivity, an observer of *line-scape*: just as *line-scape* features a tension between the visible and the invisible, subjectivity in literary works also exists 'hors de soi'. More precisely, it exists by reaching out of the self – in the realm of textual space, such an existence is composed of Merleau-Ponty's 'langage parlant', and is therefore beyond the surface meaning of words. It goes beyond the writer's self in positing an *I* that exists in between. As quoted above, Maulpoix's literary subjectivity takes shelter in a 'coquille' – the text (thereby language and 'langage parlant' in particular) reverberates beyond the writer's flesh while never entirely abolishing the

³¹³ Ibid., p. 151. Indeed, the loss of the Muse, the traditional poetics, is expressed in Baudelaire's poems 'La Cloche fêlée' and 'La Muse malade' in *Les Fleurs du mal*. In the former poem, as I have pointed out in chapter one, the poet announces a cracked soul and brings dissonance into modernist literature (*OC I* 72-3). In the latter, the speaker asks the Muse 'qu'as tu donc ce matin?'. Despite the speaker's wish that the Muse remain healthy, '[c]omme les sons nombreux des syllabes antiques', the Muse has fallen ill – an illness suggesting that traditional poetics ('les sons nombreux des syllabes antiques') has become stale (*OC I* 14-5). See also chapter one, pp. 66-7.

³¹⁴ I shall return to the topic of genres later in this chapter.

latter.³¹⁵ I argue that among various literary subjects that the writer can turn to, the *flâneur* is one of the most prominent in city literature. He *performs* a kind of literary *flânerie* that corresponds to the tension of *line-scape* and the paradox of modernity. The *flâneur* offers the flesh in between the lines; he is as fluid as *line-scape* and thus serves as the most appropriate point of view to experience the city. The strolling figure is a form of protection for the writer. Most importantly, I use the term *flânerie* here to refer not only to direct depiction of random and solitary walking in the city, but also to narrative meandering: in modernist writing, narrative often indicates various perspectives and thereby resists one single voice. The multiplicity and mobility tie in well with the nature of *flânerie*.

In *The Waves*, the voice of Bernard could be identified as a literary *flâneur* and thereby Woolf's 'hors de soi'. Tony E. Jackson holds a similar view, regarding

³¹⁵ Interestingly, in one of Woolf's most experimental novels, *The Waves*, the recurring image of the snail seems to serve as the kind of shell ('coquille') that Maulpoix depicts. In one of the interludes, Woolf describes how '[The birds] spied a snail and tapped the shell against a stone' (W 86). In the main body of the novel, Louis notes that '[t]o be loved by Susan would be to be impaled by a bird's sharp beak, to be nailed to a barnyard door' (W 94). In addition to the image of the bird's attack, there is also an element of paronomasia in the words 'nail' and 'snail' that implicitly corresponds to the interlude. Bernard also recalls how he and his friends 'have sung like eager birds each his own song and tapped with the remorseless and savage egotism of the young our own snail-shell till it cracked (I am engaged)' (W 97). Even several chapters later, Bernard mentions again how birds 'broke their snails on stones, dipped their beaks in sticky, viscous matter; hard, avid, remorseless' (W 198). The snail seems to imply a certain protection which ultimately fails under the attack of the birds' beak. Woolf's peculiar use of the snail image has attracted the attention of Whitworth, who comments that Bernard in *The Waves* 'has lost the "thin hard shell" around the soul, the snail's shell which symbolizes the public self throughout the novel'. See Whitworth, *Einstein's Wake: Relativity, Metaphor, and Modernist Literature* (Oxford, Oxford UP), p. 160.

Bernard as 'Woolf's great image of the modernist writer'.³¹⁶ Indeed, Bernard voices the writer's perplexity when faced with the insufficiency of language:

'But how describe the world seen without a self? There are no words. Blue, red – even they distract, even they hide with thickness instead of letting the light through. How describe or say anything in articulate words again? – save that it fades, save that it undergoes a gradual transformation, becomes, even in the course of one short walk, habitual – this scene also. [...]' (W 230)

Paradoxically, as Tony E. Jackson puts it, this lack of words is not a rejection of story telling, but a positive response to truth in its 'reorientation of both narrative and self-representation'; after all, Bernard's very argument is carried out in words: 'Bernard has made a narrative out of the impossibility of narrative'.³¹⁷ Contradictory as it might seem to be, Bernard's doubts express the modernist conundrum par excellence: they concern not merely writing but also the notion of the self. There is an opacity – the so-called 'thickness' – that denies direct access to the self,³¹⁸ but this obstacle is not all negative. The passage turns to itself, as the very scene also 'undergoes a gradual transformation' and becomes 'habitual'. Bernard thus epitomises the modernist writer's quest for

³¹⁶ *The Subject of Modernism: Narrative Alterations in the Fiction of Eliot, Conrad, Woolf, and Joyce* (Michigan: Michigan UP, 1994), p. 147.

³¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 158.

³¹⁸ Cf. in *Jacob's Room*, Woolf seems to use the young man's room to represent his mind: '[w]hether we know what was in his mind is another question' [...]; '[a]s for following him back to his room, no – that we won't do' (JR 78). However, the following sentence immediately breaks the promise: '[y]et that, of course, is precisely what one does' (JR 78). Nevertheless, the narrative drifts away from Jacob's room to other characters. Despite the attempt to enter Jacob's room, the narrative remains vague about this 'centre' and 'magnet': 'a young man alone in his room' (JR 78). While the room can be identified with the protagonist's interiority, the narrative demonstrates the difficulty of reading it. Such opacity has been developed by Merleau-Ponty to delineate the indirect perception of language and the body. See this chapter, n. 302, p.122.

invisible horizon and subjectivity, as well as an acknowledgement of the limitations of language.

Line-scape is on the one hand a dynamic composition of language and a configuration of the self through language; on the other hand, it calls for a transformation of the real through imagination. Its observer, literary subjectivity, is born from the writer's manipulation of language and imagination. Imagination plays a crucial role in Baudelaire's writing. Foucault, for instance, has discerned a transfiguration of the real in Baudelaire's analysis of Constantin Guys: '[l]a modernité baudelairienne est un exercice où l'extrême attention au réel est confrontée à la pratique d'une liberté qui tout à la fois respecte ce réel et le viole'.³¹⁹ The Baudelairean notion of the real requires imagination: as we find in *Salon de 1846*, beauty is not a naïve mimicry of nature; rather, the artist must struggle with nature, and 'interpréter dans une langue plus simple et plus lumineuse' (*OC II* 457). Baudelaire ponders the potential of imagination in greater depth in *Salon de 1859*, affirming that '[o]ui, l'imagination fait le paysage' (*OC II* 665).³²⁰ In the same essay, he condemns his contemporaries for their inability to portray what they dream of, for they merely capture what they see (*OC II* 618-9). He goes on hailing imagination as 'la reine des facultés':

Elle [l'imagination] décompose toute la création, et, avec les matériaux amassés et disposés suivant des règles dont on ne peut trouver l'origine que dans le plus profond de l'âme, elle crée un monde nouveau, elle produit la sensation du neuf. (*OC II* 621)

It is clear that Baudelaire's imagination leads to *line-scape* – this 'monde nouveau' created from 'le plus profond de l'âme'. The materials are 'amassés'

³¹⁹ Foucault, 'Qu'est-ce que les Lumières?', p. 570.

³²⁰ The verb 'fait' is operative. It underscores the writer's act in creation.

and yet they engender a 'sensation du neuf'. Imagination is a process of decomposition followed by a new composition; it 'touche à toutes les autres; elle les excite, elle les envoie au combat' (*OC II* 620). This newness requires a new recipient and hence new subjectivity. In Baudelaire's description, the true artist and poet must 'éviter comme la mort d'emprunter les yeux et les sentiments d'un autre homme, si grand qu'il soit; car alors les productions qu'il nous donnerait seraient, relativement à lui, des mensonges, et non des *réalités*' (*OC II* 620 emphasis original). As both an art critic and a poet, Baudelaire's critical review can often be understood as a manifesto for his writerly agenda, as he moves freely between both realms: one compensates for the other and together they outline his notion of artistic creation. In his commentary on Delacroix in *Salon de 1846*, Baudelaire notes that nature is 'un vaste dictionnaire' for the painter (*OC II* 433). Later on in *Salon de 1859*, Baudelaire further develops this metaphor to portray how, without imagination, the painter is merely copying a dictionary, a practice that leads to 'un très grand vice, le vice de la banalité' (*OC II* 624-5). Indeed, reading Baudelaire mainly as an art critic, Pierce remarks that Baudelaire's commentary on landscape painting in *Salon de 1859* demonstrates that the word *paysage* already implies a 'critical distance from nature in its raw or "undressed" state'.³²¹ This distance is also crucial in the delineation of *line-scape*, for it allows for literary subjectivity, a 'hors de soi' to appreciate *line-scape* without directly taking part in it. In the section dedicated to landscape in his *Salon de 1859*, Baudelaire declares that a true landscape painter (*paysagiste*) must know how to 'traduire un sentiment par un assemblage de matière végétale

³²¹ *Scapeland*, p. 24.

ou minérale'; he emphasises particularly the importance of 'l'homme pensant et sentant' in conceiving landscape (*OC II* 660). This 'homme pensant et sentant' can be seen as an observer of landscape – subjectivity that is implied but not directly portrayed. This implied subject is also an observer of *line-scape*. As Baudelaire criticises the majority of landscape painters who copy the natural landscape as if copying a dictionary while 'croyant copier un poème', he asserts that 'un poème ne se copie jamais: il veut être composé' (*OC II* 661). He effortlessly combines his view on landscape painting with that on poetry. In art as well as in literature, such a composition can be explained in a phenomenological manner: the artist or the writer does not merely observe and portray the landscape but also lives through it; creation thereby implies a lived experience.

More importantly, imagination is not only asserted by the writer's will, but is also prompted by a new spatial relationship with the city. Again, in *Salon de 1859*, what Baudelaire calls 'le paysage des grandes villes' is 'la collection des grandeurs et des beautés qui résultent d'une puissante agglomération d'hommes et de monuments, le charme profond et compliqué d'une capitale âgée et vieillie' (*OC II* 666). The urban landscape is a combination of human presence and artificial settings, a combination that creates a profundity, pointing to the past. The 'capitale âgée et vieillie' endows 'le paysage des grande villes' with a past, while the wording also dwells upon a traditional metaphorisation of the city as a female body. Baudelaire is intrigued by 'les grandes villes': in *Fusées*, he mentions the '[i]vresse religieuse des grandes villes' where '[m]oi, c'est tous; Tous, c'est moi' (*OC I* 651) – a statement to be read in the light of the Merleau-Pontian chiasm; the city prompts the subject's openness. In his *Notes Diverses* to

L'Art philosophique, Baudelaire also writes of the '[s]ensations d'un homme sensible en visitant une grande ville inconnue' (*OC II* 607).³²² For him, the city has multiple meanings. As an actual city, Paris was where he witnessed various urban developments; yet at the same time, the city is a creative space, offering a starting point for the configuration of *line-scape*, through various poetic subjects, among which the *flâneur*. His *Salon* essays, therefore, can be understood as a declaration of his own creative works.

After all, for Baudelaire, the city serves as 'a mechanism for living time in a certain way'; poetry can thus capture how 'the modern city transformed the experience of time'.³²³ Katsaros reads Baudelaire's poetry against the backdrop of the Haussmannisation in Paris, arguing that 'the accelerated pace of urban transformation, expansion, and metamorphosis' has disrupted the original pace of the city.³²⁴ She adds that this disturbed pace is brought forth by Baudelaire, whose prose poems in particular become stagnant in the present.³²⁵ In proclaiming that 'the time is never right' in Baudelaire's *Le Spleen de Paris*, her study further claims that there seems to be nothing left in the prose poems except for time: '[t]he only "real" thing in the prose poem is the time of writing – the time it takes to read a gesture or an attitude; the time it takes for the act of

³²² Pichois asserts that this fragment has been taken into Baudelaire's preface to *Le Spleen de Paris*. See Pichois' note in *OC II*, p. 1382.

³²³ Katsaros, *New York-Paris*, p. 99.

³²⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 55-6.

³²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 100. Rob Halpern mentions that the present in Baudelaire's prose poem 'Perte d'auréole' embodies an isolated present that is 'cut-off from its history, negating the continuities of past and future traditionally ensured by a present tense pregnant with both'. See 'Baudelaire's "Dark Zone": The *Poème en Prose* As Social Hieroglyph; or The Beginning and the End of Commodity Aesthetics', *Modernist Cultures*, 4 (2009), 1-23 (p.2).

writing to present itself as a spectacle'.³²⁶ Nevertheless, she seems to overlook the fact that it is exactly this predicament that motivates the writer to construct *line-scape*, which is an attempt to envisage a horizon and to surpass the limitation of the present by exploring it. As mentioned above, Haussmann's project had disturbed the relationship between the city dweller and monument that Baudelaire speaks of; as a result, 'des grandeurs et des beautés' of the city are redefined. Baudelaire does not abolish the past; instead, he addresses 'le charme profond et compliqué' of an old capital. Cheryl L. Krueger also contends that the prose poem serves for Baudelaire as an escape from 'time and time-boundedness'.³²⁷ Perhaps, Baudelaire's prose poetry may not succeed in prolonging timelessness, nor can it reach a definite eternity, but it has revealed a glimpse of a temporality that confronts eternity with transience and resides in the *line-scape*.

In fact, imagination can break the limits of the present moment by drawing upon an imaginary present (and thus others' stories) or a renewed past (and thus memories). An imaginary present helps to construct Baudelaire's *line-scape*. In one of his prose poems, 'Les Fenêtres', this trait is particularly evident, as the speaker observes an old lady through her window, fashioning her story, and asking:

Peut-être me direz-vous: 'Es-tu sûr que cette légende soit la vraie?'
 Qu'importe ce que peut être la réalité placée hors de moi, si elle m'a aidé à
 vivre, à sentir que je suis et ce que je suis? (*OC I* 339)

Objectivity, the reality 'hors de moi', is embedded in the speaker's subjectivity; the two are intertwined with each other. *Line-scape* does not ask what is real;

³²⁶ *New York-Paris*, pp. 100, 102.

³²⁷ *The Art of Procrastination* (Newark: Delaware UP, 2007), p. 90.

Katsaros' emphasis on truthfulness in the prose poems seems to be misleading. One cannot deny that many characters in the work are deprived of a past and a future: the woman behind her window in 'Les Fenêtres', for example, is bereft of both: 'there's nothing left for them on either side of time; ultimately, Baudelaire is fundamentally writing about writing'.³²⁸ However, she appears to overlook that what is real does not matter: as long as the story (and thereby the writing) helps the speaker to live, and to feel. The window image reveals Baudelaire's role as both a poet and an art critic. In *Salon de 1859*, Baudelaire contends that many landscape painters in his time fail to compose, since they merely 'ouvrent une fenêtre', and 'tout l'espace compris dans le carré de la fenêtre, arbre, ciel et maison, prend pour eux la valeur d'un poème tout fait' (*OC II* 661). His prose poem 'Les Fenêtres', however, is not such a 'carré de la fenêtre': Baudelaire fills in his own window not with objects but with imagination; he achieves a profundity in remaking 'l'histoire de cette femme, ou plutôt sa légende' (*OC I* 339).³²⁹ Baudelaire's window frame allows a profundity, as the poem starts:

³²⁸ Katsaros, *New York-Paris*, p. 100. Furthermore, Baudelaire's rewriting of a legend can be viewed as the poet's own 'self-effacement as the author of his own words', a cancellation mirrored by the poet's physical disappearance from the poem. See *ibid.*, p. 68. Such a configuration assumes the speaker as the poet Baudelaire. Katsaros' effort in identifying the presence of the actual poet in his work risks reducing the potential of *line-scape*, which allows the writer to construct various perceiving personae. In her study of Baudelaire's *Spleen de Paris*, Maria C. Scott proposes a more profound reading of the Baudelairean imagination. As she illustrates, Baudelaire believes that artistic imagination should not be a mere mimicry of nature; as an art critic, there is a 'mnemonic inscription' that 'serves as a kind of intermediary' between nature and the artwork. See *Baudelaire's 'Le Spleen de Paris': Shifting Perspectives* (Hampshire: Ashgate, 2005), p. 166.

³²⁹ As Katsaros contends, the word legend is often associated with a heroic connotation in that it demands being read. Its Latin origin *legendus* suggests 'that

Celui qui regarde au dehors à travers une fenêtre ouverte, ne voit jamais autant de choses que celui qui regarde une fenêtre fermée. Il n'est pas d'objet plus profond, plus mystérieux, plus fécond, plus ténébreux, plus éblouissant qu'une fenêtre éclairée d'une chandelle. (*OC I* 339)

Rabaté writes that the imagery of the window underscores 'les rapports entre extérieur et intérieur, clôture et ouverture du moi à autrui, du texte au monde, de la finitude à l'infini, du sensible à l'intelligible'.³³⁰ The opening of the poem reveals such a paradox and plays with the idea of seeing, as Rabaté explains that it 'déplace une série de termes parallèles: regarder contre voir, fenêtre par où l'on voit et fenêtre *que* l'on voit'.³³¹ The verb 'voit' is worth dwelling upon for its link with the ability to decipher and to imagine; it is not merely 'regarde' and it

which must be read, that which should be read'. According to the *OED*, the Medieval Latin word *legenda* means 'what is read'. In this sense, referring to the widow's story as a legend becomes 'cruel and derisive'; deprived of all the heroic elements, the widow's story is a legend only in an ironic sense. However, by drawing attention to itself (a legend that 'should be read'), the poem has become a legend demonstrating the potential of imagination. See Katsaros, *New York-Paris*, p. 74; 'Legend, n.', in *OED Online*, < <http://www.oed.com> > [Accessed 15 Jun 2015].

³³⁰ *Gestes Lyriques*, p. 28. The window serves as an important motif inaugurating modernist literature around the 1860s, because it marks the loss of the romanticist concept of nature and hails the advent of the city: Rabaté's work investigates poetic gestures by focusing on four poems all entitled 'Les Fenêtres' by Baudelaire, Mallarmé, Apollinaire, and Ponge. These poems, in Rabaté's analysis, perform the poetic gesture 'ouvrir' and represent an evolution of poetry spanning almost a century. He explains that the window is linked to the city in its indication of 'un rapport ouvert entre des sujets séparés et anonymes': '[c]'est au sens que lui donne Baudelaire, un motif éminemment «moderne». See *ibid.*, p. 30. As Maulpoix notes, the window image often recurs in poetry in the second half of the nineteenth century. It offers on the one hand a 'vertical écran transparent', 'lieu de voyance et d'aspiration'; on the other hand, it is also 'écran de séparation que l'on ne saurait franchir'. Maulpoix writes that '[l]'accès transparent est fermé': '[a]u lieu de permettre au sujet de s'échapper vers le céleste ou vers le monde, la fenêtre poétique – qui est aussi bien la page blanche peu à peu noircie – lui renvoie indéfiniment sa propre image'. In *Du Lyrisme*, Maulpoix elaborates on how the image of the window mirrors the self through the other, serving as a transition between the two. See 'J'aime les nuages', in *Baudelaire: Nouveaux Chantiers*, pp. 187-90 (p. 188); *Du Lyrisme* (Paris: José Corti, 2001), p. 91.

³³¹ *Gestes Lyriques*, pp. 31-2. Emphasis original.

conjures up the concept of poetic *voyance* as well. The present tense of the opening is also intriguing, since it indicates a general or universal truth, therefore the speaker gains distance from the reader, a distance reinforced by the third person statement ('celui qui'). Baudelaire puts forward a theory of seeing: while one can see what is in an open window, a closed window allows one to *see* the window not just as it is, but also as an object that is most 'profond', 'mystérieux', 'fécond', 'ténébreux', and 'éblouissant' – characteristics that are in themselves paradoxical. Baudelaire's window is not a flat canvas filled with objects but a relationship: it permits a profundity, actively and painstakingly composed by the writer. This point is also stressed towards the end of the section on landscape in *Salon de 1859*, where Baudelaire boldly announces that the false is in fact truer in artistic representation: he denounces landscape painters as liars, precisely because they fail to lie (*OC II* 668). Echoing the poem 'Les Fenêtres', Baudelaire does not ask for realistic artistic representation; rather, he opts for artistic imagination, which is more intrinsic to his artistic principles. His notion of landscape can help to shape our understanding of *line-scape*.³³² Similar to an active painterly landscape that Baudelaire advocates, *line-scape* aims for the writer's voluntary engagement with the lines through intermediating subjectivity to envisage life; whether the description be real or not, the purpose is to survive in 'le paysage des grandes villes' quoted above. This point is further supported by the fact that the old woman's legend remains a

³³² In fact, Baudelaire's tendency to apply similar principles to poetry and painting marks his modernist position. This point is supported by Rabaté, who notes 'les croisements si riches pour la Modernité entre peinture et poésie'; '[l]e poète retrouverait par là quelque chose sur le blanc du support (la toile comme la page) la création dans son surgissement souverain'. *Ibid.*, p. 29.

mystery, an ellipsis that, in Rabaté's reading, renders the closed window a mirror which reflects 'le solipsisme d'un sujet coupé des autres'.³³³ As a result, the window is both open and closed, a duality central to the ethical question 'si l'on peut vivre à la place d'autrui'.³³⁴ Indeed, as the speaker addresses the reader at the end of the poem – '[p]eut-être me direz-vous: "Es-tu sûr que cette légende soit la vraie?"' – this question actually invites the reader to take part in the narrative.³³⁵

Imagination does not come out of nowhere; it works on memory and the past. Baudelaire explains in 'Le Peintre de la vie moderne' that the true painter follows 'l'image écrite dans leur cerveau, et non d'après la nature' (*OC II* 698). In a strikingly similar spirit, Woolf's writing demonstrates this search and re-working. Towards the end of her essay 'Street Haunting: A London Adventure', Woolf's narrator recounts all kinds of encounters during the journey:

Walking home through the desolation one could tell oneself the story of the dwarf, of the blind men, of the party in the Mayfair mansion, of the quarrel in the stationer's shop. Into each of these lives one could penetrate a little way, far enough to give oneself the illusion that one is not tethered to a single mind, but can put on briefly for a few minutes the bodies and minds of others. (*E IV* 490)

Walking home, the narrator evokes an immediate past. Like the speaker in Baudelaire's 'Les Fenêtres', she penetrates other people's lives to enter into an illusion; it does not matter if the story is true, as long as one can 'put on' a story to experience the self through another person's life. Similar to the Baudelairean speaker in 'Les Fenêtres', the Woolfian narrator acknowledges that such a penetration is a mere 'illusion' that does not last long. In addition, the whole

³³³ Ibid., p. 32.

³³⁴ Ibid., p. 32.

³³⁵ Ibid., pp. 32-3.

narration happens during walking, the 'desolation' is replaced by various other lives. None of the lives are fully penetrated, but through walking and writing, the narrator is able to shift from one life to another, from the present to the past; while nothing is fixed, *line-scape* is born from this very fluctuation.

Furthermore, in *Mrs Dalloway*, the protagonist Clarissa is reminiscent of the Baudelairean speaker in 'Les Fenêtres': retreating to her room after hearing of the death of Septimus, whom she had never met, Clarissa is fascinated to see an old lady by the window:

It was fascinating to watch her, moving about, that old lady, crossing the room, coming to the window. Could she see her? It was fascinating, with people still laughing and shouting in the drawing-room, to watch that old woman, quite quietly, going to bed. She pulled the blind now. The clock began striking. The young man had killed himself; but she did not pity him; with the clock striking the hour, one, two, three, she did not pity him, with all this going on. There! the old lady had put out her light! [...] She must go back to them. But what an extraordinary night! She felt somehow very like him – the young man who had killed himself. She felt glad that he had done it; thrown it away. The clock was striking. The leaden circles dissolved in the air. (*MD* 166)

As Clarissa observes the old lady's movement, her thoughts go back to herself – '[c]ould she see her?'. Perhaps what really matters is not the old lady's story, as long as the protagonist can survive. Clarissa survives, ignorant of the old lady's identity. Commenting on Baudelaire's window, Starobinski judiciously states that 'the window and its inhabitant turn out to have been merely a pretext for an inward movement' or an 'intensification of self-consciousness'.³³⁶ It is a similar movement in *Mrs Dalloway*. Clarissa's thoughts move from the old lady to herself before turning to Septimus; she 'felt somehow very like him'. Again, consideration of the external leads to an inward reflection. Whereas Clarissa's

³³⁶ 'Windows: From Rousseau to Baudelaire', trans. by Richard Pevear, *The Hudson Review*, 40.4 (1988), 551-560 (pp. 558-9).

affinity to Septimus allows us to view him as her double, we can also argue that Clarissa remains alive thanks to Septimus' death. The window becomes significant due to its multiple meanings in the novel. On the one hand, it leads to Septimus' death, since the young man threw himself out of the window.³³⁷ On the other hand, the window amounts to a kind of creative force; after all, window imagery is present – through the image of the French window, which is not strictly speaking a window – from the beginning of the novel, when Clarissa sets out on her *flânerie* in London to buy flowers:

What a lark! What a plunge! For so it had always seemed to her, when, with a little squeak of the hinges, which she could hear now, she had burst open the French windows and plunged at Bourton into the open air. (*MD* 3)

Woolf opens her novel with a seemingly ordinary day, when Mrs Dalloway decides to buy the flowers herself. Daily life, even the squeak of the hinges, is tinted with excitement and adventurousness. The polyptoton ('plunge'/'plunged') creates echoes indicating the writer's hypersensitivity to both life and words. The repetition forms a movement down through the page, which could be regarded as a vertical movement interlacing with the horizontal movement formed by reading the lines. Bourton in *Mrs Dalloway* implies much more than a mere country retreat from London: it represents Clarissa's past; it is the bygone and faraway and thus an unattainable horizon. However distant this horizon may be, the present-day London manages to bear the traces of Bourton in the past through the 'plunge'; both space and time are intertwined in *line-scape*. Analysing the parallaxic nature of Woolf's narrative, Jane Goldman aptly links the plunge to its previous paragraph, the very start of the novel, the famous

³³⁷ I shall return to Septimus' death through the window later. See p. 218.

line when Clarissa announces that 'she would buy the flowers herself' (*MD* 3). As the narrative continues, Woolf describes that '[t]he doors would be taken off their hinges' as preparation of the party (*MD* 3). The focus then shifts to Clarissa, who thinks: 'what a morning – fresh as if issued to children on a beach' (*MD* 3). The unhinging of the doors serves as 'an image that simultaneously heralds the unhinging of the novel's own narrative portals' – the plunge might refer to Clarissa's shopping or the children's play on the beach, but the 'squeak' in the past allows Clarissa to plunge from the present into a past; both coexist and create the reader's plunge into the prose.³³⁸

Indeed, the window provides an open and yet framed access to the past. Baudelaire's 'Les Fenêtres' and Woolf's window image both serve as strategies for survival; the window frame offers a space in between life and death, between exterior and interior, working as a threshold into the past as well as a chance to reinvent the present. In a similar manner, Rabaté stresses the vision offered by the window: the word 'vision' is ambiguous in French, as it means both 'l'acte simple de perception' and 'le songe ou la rêverie'.³³⁹ Both Baudelaire and Woolf endow their windows with this double entendre: '[l]a vision est précisément ce

³³⁸ Jane Goldman, '1925, London, New York, Paris: Metropolitan Modernisms – Parallax and Palimpsest', in *The Edinburgh Companion to Twentieth-Century Literatures in English*, ed. by Brian McHale and Randall Stevenson (Edinburgh: Edinburgh UP, 2006), pp. 61-72 (p. 69).

³³⁹ *Gestes Lyriques*, p. 32. Of course, the word 'vision' has its root in the verb 'voir', both can refer to imagination. Cf. Baudelaire's 'Le Mauvais Vitrier' in which the speaker complains that the glazier has no 'verres de couleur', 'des verres roses, rouges, bleus, des vitres magiques, des vitres de paradis' – 'vitres qui fassent voir la vie en beau' (*OC* I 287 emphasis mine). The notion of seeing is indicated by the 'v' alliteration. The glass panel of the window inspires imagination as it is framed and yet it allows seeing (or non-seeing).

qui rend le lointain proche'.³⁴⁰ Baudelaire's speaker configures another's story, while Clarissa seems to live her past through the window frame.³⁴¹ Interestingly, Ricœur also turns to the same metaphor when he speaks of the fictive experience of time: for him, the literary text is at once 'closed upon itself with respect to its structure and open onto a world, like a "window" that cuts out a fleeting perspective of a landscape beyond'.³⁴² Ricœur's temporal experience is portrayed in spatial terms; the 'window' contains both time ('fleeting perspective') and space ('landscape and beyond'). The view of the window also signifies two sides of the imagery, linked by a new relationship. Through the use of the window imagery, Baudelaire and Woolf exercise imagination to allow for a glimpse of *line-scape*.

Line-scape incorporates a spatiotemporal movement innate to urban experience; it is not static in its interlacing of space and time. This movement is constantly approaching the present. As Collot puts it, the present features a 'point de passage entre les horizons protentionnels et rétentionnels, il ne fait jamais que passer'; this focus on the moving present corresponds to perceptive processes.³⁴³ The present forms a double meaning, because it is both a convergence of temporal perspectives and an outside of time. We can elaborate on Collot's 'point de passage' by dwelling upon the notion of passage. In Stierle's

³⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 32.

³⁴¹ Henri Lefebvre has also dwelt upon the potential offered by the window. Overlooking twentieth century Paris from the window, the city is also filled with rhythms, which must be experienced, he argues, by 'abandon[ing] oneself to its duration'. 'Seen from the Window', in *Writing on Cities*, ed. and trans. by Eleonore Kofman and Elizabeth Lebas (Oxford: Backwell, 1996), pp. 219-227 (p. 219).

³⁴² *Time and Narrative*, II, p. 100.

³⁴³ Collot, *La Poésie*, p. 52.

understanding, the word has its root in the French word *pas*: it not only forms the semantic negative form *ne pas* but also deploys a semantic network – '«passer», «passé», «passant», «passager»' – 'sous le signe de l'éphémère qui a son point de fuite dans le passage et sa signification plurielle puisque le mot désigne le chemin privé reliant deux voies publiques, le passage d'un texte et la transition'.³⁴⁴ This interpretation implicitly embeds *flânerie* within the network: a *passage*, in both textual and spatial senses, connotes steps (*pas* in French). From *pas* to *passage*, the network shifts from urban space to textual space. Writing demonstrates such a double-faceted present. It is in the description of temporal and spatial movement that the swift passing present is most evident.

In fact, like Baudelaire, Woolf has a knack for capturing the sense of a passing instant. In *The Years*, for instance, she depicts Kitty travelling on the train:

Now where are we? she said to herself. Where is the train at this moment? *Now*, she murmured, shutting her eyes, we are passing the white house on the hill; *now* we are going through the tunnel; *now* we are crossing the bridge over the river.... A blank intervened; her thoughts became spaced; they became muddled. Past and present became jumbled together. (Y 245 emphasis original)

This short passage epitomises modernity's connection to experience of passing. It portrays being situated in the gap since the subject is simultaneously at a standstill and in movement; as a result of an anaphoric structure, the temporal adverb 'now' conveys a heightened sense of the instant. Still, the *present* location

³⁴⁴ *La Capitale des signes*, p. 14. Evidently, Baudelaire's 'A une passante' shares the same indication. See my analysis in chapter one, pp. 55-6. According to Elissa Marder's reading of 'A une passante', 'the activity of passing is repeated to the point of immobility and history is presented as "cliché"'. See *Dead Time: Temporal Disorders in the Wake of Modernity (Baudelaire and Flaubert)* (Stanford, Stanford UP, 2001), p. 68.

remains difficult to capture, due to the velocity of the train.³⁴⁵ Despite the fact that the sense of the moment is conveyed by the word 'now' – as the train moves from here to elsewhere, from the tunnel to the bridge, from now to an uncertain point in the future – the train never arrives at the future, as every future is a now-to-be; each *now* is marked by a *here*. Thus, the past and the present as well as space and time become intertwined, and, yet, all are fleeting.

The sense of time and its passing is one of the major themes in modernist literature. Katsaros remarks that '[t]he city is never there in the present' because the present 'is already the abyss of the future'; being in the present is 'a vision of a gap inside of time in which the past has been cut off and the future is always about to arrive'.³⁴⁶ From this impossibility, Collot argues that modern poetics does not aim to reveal what is behind the horizon and beyond death; rather, it values more 'l'éclair aveuglant du "passage" lui-même'.³⁴⁷ In light of Collot's inchoative understanding of horizon, an ideal eternal horizon is unreachable and the theme of death is the ultimate destination: death is the only way that human beings can approach a near eternity. The impossibility of eternity motivates the writer to question the idea of eternal beauty. It is despair but also hope. It is in this spirit that the speaker in 'Hymne à la beauté' confronts beauty:

Que tu viennes du ciel ou de l'enfer, qu'importe,
 Ô Beauté ! monstre énorme, effrayant, ingénu!
 Si ton oeil, ton souris, ton pied, m'ouvrent la porte
 D'un Infini que j'aime et n'ai jamais connu? (*OC I 25*)

³⁴⁵ See also *The Railway Journey and Modernity: Time, Space, and the Machine Ensemble*, ed. by Matthew Beaumont and Michael Freeman (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2007).

³⁴⁶ *New York-Paris*, pp. 108-9.

³⁴⁷ *La Poésie*, p. 75. Collot's phrase is reminiscent of the dazzling appearance of Baudelaire's 'A une passante', analysed in chapter one, pp. 55-6.

Desperate as the speaker is, it no longer matters where beauty comes from, as long as it leads the speaker to an unknown eternity. Nevertheless, the poem implicitly suggests that such monstrous beauty has only a limited power – to render '[l]'univers *moins* hideux et les instants *moins* lourds' (*OC I* 25 emphasis mine); its standard is relative rather than absolute. Beauty at its best can merely lessen the burden of existence; it is by finding hope in despair that Baudelaire is able to discern beauty. It is in this despairing hope that Poulet has discerned two temporalities in Baudelaire's *opus*: 'la durée paradisiaque' as opposed to 'le temps infernal'.³⁴⁸ As Poulet opines, Baudelairean temporality is neither 'le temps éternel des états paradisiaques' nor 'le temps malheureux des états infernaux'; rather, it is 'un temps double', which 'dans le malheur, contiendrait la promesse du bonheur, qui de la laideur ferait surgir de la beauté'.³⁴⁹ Such a temporality is both '*déficience à l'éternité et tendance à l'éternité*'.³⁵⁰ The modernist notion of beauty does not crystallise into an absolute eternity but into a sort of relativity. In keeping with Baudelaire's system of ambivalence, this seemingly contradictory understanding of eternity outlines the modernist writer's *line-scape*, which features a constant negotiation. This explains why Collot postulates that the literary horizon 'reste insaisissable'; it fascinates the writer because it is the very frontier of 'un autre monde destiné à demeurer *inconnu*'.³⁵¹ Similar to Baudelaire's 'temps infernal', Woolf describes a descent into a hellish condition in Jinny's voice in *The Waves*:

³⁴⁸ *Etudes sur le temps humain* (Edinburgh: University Press, 1949), p. 342.

³⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 350.

³⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 350. Author's emphasis.

³⁵¹ Collot, *La Poésie*, p. 104. Author's emphasis.

'Here I stand,' said Jinny, 'in the Tube station [...]. Millions descend those stairs in a terrible descent. Great wheels churn inexorably urging them downwards. Millions have died. [...].'

'[...]. I admit, for one moment the soundless flight of upright bodies down the moving stairs like the pinioned and terrible descent of some army of the dead downwards and the churning of the great engines remorselessly forwarding us, all of us, onwards, made me cower and run for shelter.' (*W* 154-5)

On the one hand, Woolf uses the escalator to convey her critique of the Great War; the 'terrible descent' leads to the underworld. The churning engine sends an 'army of the dead' downward in an inexorable manner. The verb 'churn' suggests a mechanical process: it points to an act of stirring and agitating any liquid or mixture of liquid and solid matter.³⁵² It enhances the impression of a descending urban flow that does not allow for any individuality. On the other hand, the great wheels force people to move forward and thus represent the inevitable passing of time, which no one can escape from. Jinny realises that she is also part of the forward-moving mass even though she seems to remain immune to, and less afflicted by, the descending army of the dead: she distinguishes herself from the other '[m]illions' by announcing '[h]ere I stand', but the internal speech soon shifts the subject from 'they' to 'all of us', with Jinny wanting to 'run for shelter'. Her reaction appears to be the impact of the churning wheels, to which she has no resistance. Jinny's here and now is tinged with a pessimistic view of passing time – an avatar of Baudelaire's 'temps infernal'. Woolf's reflection on the war, death, and time conjures up a human condition that is further unhinged by technological advances.

³⁵² 'Churn, v.', in *OED Online*, < <http://www.oed.com> > [Accessed 16 Jul 2015].

Line-scape engages the passing present but cannot attain eternity or ideal horizon. After all, no one can claim to own any language. Even the writer is not exempt from its elusiveness: once written, words join what Collot describes as a *carrefour*, opening up 'des directions de sens imprévues, qui ne sont pas forcément compatibles avec celles qu'avaient esquissées les mots précédents':

Tout mot-carrefour peut-être l'occasion d'aller plus loin vers l'horizon désigné par l'élan initial du poème, mais aussi de se détourner et d'entrer dans l'espace de l'égarément. L'horizon qui guide le poète, au lieu de s'approcher et de se confirmer, le plus souvent, recule et se déplace.³⁵³

Language immediately moves away from the intended meaning, allowing for various turns, extensions, and crossings. What drives poetic creation is thus a gap between what is written and what is not; between what the writer intends and what is generated through reading. Collot elaborates that such a discrepancy 'à chaque instant sépare le poète du mot qu'il voudrait dire'; as a result, the poem becomes 'un constant dépassement de lui-même et des possibilités déjà explorées de la langue'.³⁵⁴ *Line-scape* signifies this endless potentiality of language and its open-endedness, rather than asserting the writer's power over it. It also implies a more profound negotiation on the writer's part with human existence. As Collot acknowledges, poetic experiences can never fully be achieved but are bound to remain aporetic:

Etant admis que le dernier mot ne sera jamais dit, et l'horizon jamais atteint, le poète s'arrêtera chaque fois que les mots écrits auront défini un espace de sens dont les lignes composent un paysage stable et cohérent, tout en convergeant vers ce point de fuite qui seul peut leur conférer une secrète mobilité. Si bien que le point final peut devenir point de départ pour toute lecture capable de rendre le poème inachevable.³⁵⁵

³⁵³ *La Poésie*, pp. 160, 166.

³⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 168.

³⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 169.

The urban landscape is never a coherent or stable one. Therefore, the notion of its corresponding *line-scape* points to an unattainable horizon: each final point is also a new starting point; various *points de vue* create a 'point de fuite'; together, the lines are the rudiments of movements and intentions. *Line-scape* is an attempt to understand the discontinuous urban horizon: it contains paradoxes and contradictions. It is not a naïve representation; it requires the writer's effort to create new meanings and yet in the meantime, it evades the writer's will and generates new meanings through reading.³⁵⁶

The elusiveness of language explains the reason why, for the writer, reinvesting language with new potential is a painful process: it is filled with clashes and confrontations. The erratic path between the lines does not guarantee a finitude or a destination; rather, it brings endless re-workings of language. Therefore, Maulpoix describes the condition of the modern poet as perplexed and even '*en conflit avec sa langue et son savoir pour renouveler la figure des choses*'.³⁵⁷ More significantly, he turns to the walking metaphor to portray the poet, who straddles the city and the text. The poet's *flânerie* is just as confusing as the *flâneur's* wandering in the gap of modernity:

³⁵⁶ Even though Woolf's *To the Lighthouse* does not belong to her London novels in a strict sense, it is still crucial to point out how the end of the novel is particularly relevant to Woolf's *line-scape*. Lily's artistic vision is embodied in the very line which she draws:

[S]he [Lily] looked at her canvas; it was blurred. With a sudden intensity, as if she saw it clear for a second, she drew a line there, in the centre. It was done; it was finished. Yes, she thought, laying down her brush in extreme fatigue, I have had my vision.

Lily's line appears to sum up Woolf's own vision about creation, as it corresponds to the line written by the writer: both start from a creative vigour, 'a sudden intensity'. See *TL*, p. 176.

³⁵⁷ *Le Poète perplexe* (Paris: José Corti, 2002), p. 49. Author's emphasis.

Promeneur, flâneur, rôdeur, piéton ou paysan de Paris, le poète est un homme qui marche. En chemin dans la vie comme dans la langue, il interroge une provenance et une destination.³⁵⁸

Inhabiting the gap between life and language, the poet is in between, and this is why the *flâneur* becomes the best spokesperson for literary creation, and a suitable observer for *line-scape*. Maulpoix describes the poet's pace as one 'de funambule'; his existence 'tient à un fil: celui des lignes que sa main trace et qui dévident, page après page, l'écheveau de sa propre vie'.³⁵⁹ The poet's self does not merely rely on poetic lines; as a performer, this poet, 'le danseur de corde' in Maulpoix's terms, can only survive due to the space *between* the lines.³⁶⁰ Lines, like streets in the city, signify a set of rules available to the writer-*flâneur*. Instead of obediently following the rules, the writer seeks to challenge and reinvent them, through the act of walking and writing. However, the writer does not triumph over language; the interrogation is also challenged by the fluidity of language. It is this dialectic relationship between the writer and language that forms *line-scape*.

Ultimately, *line-scape* can surpass the limitation of a mere 'land'-scape or cityscape in that it highlights the ability of language to generate meaning. *Line-*

³⁵⁸ Ibid., p. 19.

³⁵⁹ Ibid., p. 23.

³⁶⁰ Ibid., p. 19. Maulpoix's comparison of the poet with 'le danseur de corde' evokes Baudelaire's prose poem 'Le Vieux Saltimbanque', as the speaker describes how the aged street performer 'promenait sur la foule et les lumières, dont le flot mouvant s'arrêtait à quelques pas de sa répulsive misère!' (*OC I* 296). It is evident that the old clown represents the poet faced with a readership that fails to understand. As Rancière writes, the old man is also 'le poète fixé à son identité, jouant le rôle du poète': '[l]a vie multiple et les multiples vies dans lesquelles le poète nouveau doit se perdre le libèrent de ce rôle désuet'. See 'Le Goût infini de la République', in *Le fil perdu*, pp. 94-112 (p. 110). Starobinski also investigates a more general link between the clown and the poet, a link from which a new concept emerged in the nineteenth century. See *Portrait de l'artiste en saltimbanque*, rev. end (Paris: Gallimard, 2004), p. 10.

scape outlines new relationships, since, in delineating the other, writing in fact approaches literary subjectivity. *Line-scape* acknowledges the being-in-the-city and being-in-the-present in a textual form. Just as it connotes the invisible while revealing the visible, it also contains absence while demonstrating presence, evokes the past while dramatising the present, and above all depicts the self while imagining the other. *Line-scape* is achieved through imagination, which seems to become an organic mechanism. In Baudelaire's words, 'l'univers visible' is 'une espèce de pâture que l'imagination doit digérer et transformer' (*OC II* 627). The metaphor neatly merges a bodily mechanism with a textual process, addressing phenomenology's fundamental concern with the perceiving subject. This is also where the notion of *flânerie* reaches its metaphorical sense. Aimless yet deliberate, *flânerie* allows one to leave behind one's established identity to immerse oneself in democratic anonymity: the 'pâture' to feed upon. This is also true in a textual and imaginary *flânerie*. The writer seems to construct the other's story, relying on imagination and memory; the meandering in the world of words engenders new relations in the writer's negotiation with alterity.

In *Jacob's Room*, Woolf seems to evoke the process of imagination, from the writer's perspective:

[...]. Ah, but where are you going if instead of brushing past the old man with the white beard [...], you let him go on with his story, which ends in an invitation to step somewhere, to his room, presumably, off Queen's Square [...] – fill in the sketch as you like.

As frequent as street corners in Holborn are these chasms in the continuity of our ways. Yet we keep straight on. (*JR* 79)

The freedom to fill in the sketch appears to echo the freedom to walk: the former liberates itself from 'langage parlé' while the latter reinvents urban establishments with unexpected turns. Just as Baudelaire weaves an imaginary

story in 'Les Fenêtres', the gaps and 'chasms' between the self and the other seem to become less insurmountable with the help of imagination. The writer must keep 'straight on' as propelled by time and an impulse to write. It is these turns and chasms that the writer attempts to fill in with 'his story', while in doing so, 'we' move forward, leaving *history* behind. 'We' continue the present while the other's story becomes history. Subjectivity disguises itself from objectivity but also relies on it. However, such subjectivity is uncertain. As the Woolfian narrator opines in 'Street Haunting', '[c]ircumstances compel unity; for convenience's sake a man must be a whole' (*E IV* 486). Imagination has to stage an imaginary unity for the sake of the subject's survival. As the narrator hints, unity should not be taken for granted.

From landscape to *line-scape*, the discussion amounts to the intertwining of phenomenology and semiology. In semiological terms, the operation of *line-scape* aligns itself with what Roland Barthes calls 'les textes scriptibles' in *S/Z*.³⁶¹ As opposed to 'les textes lisibles', 'les textes scriptibles' espouse multiple networks in which we find 'une galaxie de signifiants' instead of 'une structure de signifiés'; 'les réseaux sont multiples et jouent entre eux, sans qu'aucun puisse coiffer les autres'.³⁶² Barthes further fleshes out that 'les textes scriptibles' have no starting point; they form a network and 'on y accède par plusieurs entrées dont aucune ne peut être à coup sûr déclarée principale'.³⁶³ He adds in parenthesis that 'le sens n'y est jamais soumis à un principe de décision, sinon

³⁶¹ Barthes, *S/Z* (Paris: Éditions de Seuil, 1976), p. 11

³⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 11.

³⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 11.

par coup de dés'.³⁶⁴ Contrary to a totality in the interpretation of texts, Barthes finds in 'les textes scriptibles' an affirmation of plurality and mobility. His semiological analysis enriches the idea of *line-scape*, since the mobilised *sens* indicates movements and intentions on the part of both the writer and the reader. More precisely, the concept of 'textes scriptibles' invites the reader to re-write the text, emancipating the texts from their codes and conventions, and therefore rendering the texts open-ended. Writable texts allow for a constant search for meaning and direction (*sens* means both in French).

In this regard, textual interpretation appears to be closely related to *flânerie*: it is a contemporaneous random act that promotes *sens* – meaning as well as direction – in urban space. The *flâneur* could be regarded as the pivotal being-in-the-city that recognises the body's intermediate role; he meanders through the multiplicity of the city streets as well as in the Barthesian intertextual network of *sens*. The fact that urban space can be read as a text is not new. Barthes' semiology of the city touches upon it, when he announces that his double love for the city and signs is 'probably, as a matter of fact, only one': the city is a discourse and therefore a language.³⁶⁵ In his work on city literature, Stierle has pointed out some earlier writings on experience of ancient cities such as Athens and Rome.³⁶⁶ However, it was not until the seventeenth century, with

³⁶⁴ Ibid., p. 11. Note that the 'coup de dés' is a reference to Mallarmé.

³⁶⁵ 'Semiology and Urbanism', in *The Semiotic Challenge*, trans. by Richard Howard (Berkeley: California UP: 1994), pp. 191-201 (pp. 191, 195). Delivered in 1967, Barthes seems to regret in this essay that there was no sufficient theorisation on the semiotics of the city. Stierle comments on Barthes' lament, suggesting that Benjamin – whose *The Arcades Project* Barthes had not come across – had already elaborated on the readability of the city. Stierle, *La Capitale des signes*, p. 19.

³⁶⁶ Stierle, *La Capitale des signes*, pp. 39-42.

the French writer La Bruyère, that 'la lisibilité' of the city was discovered. Stierle recognises in his work a new form for a city, 'un insatiable besoin de différenciation matérielle'.³⁶⁷ The obsession with differentiation turned Paris into 'la ville de la différence et de la lutte pour le pouvoir de jouer de la différence'; La Bruyère's ability to understand the city in its semiological and coded terms was unprecedented.³⁶⁸ From then on, experience of the city would bear both semantic and empirical aspects. For instance, Jonathan Culler plays with the idea that Baudelaire's poem 'Le Cygne', from *Tableaux parisiens* section of *Les Fleurs du mal*, serves as 'a powerful apostrophic *signe*, as readers adopt the emotion which the futility of the swan's apostrophe seems to be exposing'.³⁶⁹ 'Le Cygne', 'ce malheureux, mythe étrange et fatal' (*OC* 186), becomes a homophonous *signe* in the poem. Similarly, Scott Carpenter has eloquently explained the way in which Benjamin's urban theory makes 'le chemin' and 'la poésie' converge: 'l'expérience de la rue' and 'l'expérience du texte' become rightly linked.³⁷⁰ Ultimately, Benjamin establishes 'une correspondance entre l'expérience du poète dans la ville et celle du lecteur dans le texte'.³⁷¹ According to Michael Sheringham, this convergence is evident in Paris, where the text and the city are intertwined in street names, as the street plaque 'plants the textual in the midst of the monumental, the relative immateriality of language in the midst

³⁶⁷ Ibid., p. 47.

³⁶⁸ Ibid., pp. 47-8.

³⁶⁹ *The Pursuit of Signs: Semiotics, Literature, Deconstruction* (London: Routledge: 2001), p. 160. See also Starobinski's remark on the poem in chapter one, n. 106, p. 44.

³⁷⁰ 'Entre rue et boulevard: les chemins de l'allégorie chez Baudelaire', *Romantisme*, 36 (2006), 55-65 (p. 59).

³⁷¹ Ibid., p. 59.

of the concrete materiality of stone, brick, and macadam'.³⁷² Sheringham's remark reminds us that the distinction between the materiality and the immateriality is not clear-cut, that they overlap. The monumental implies various invisible forces along with urban development, a topic that I have dealt with in chapter one.³⁷³ Language, on the contrary, is not purely immaterial either: writing in particular relies on material existence, in the form of an instrument. The city space is intertwined with the textual one. This situation forces the writer to cope with the in-betweenness: from the streets to the paper, the writer *walks* in between the two spaces. The trope of the textuality of the city implies a reader, and a need for subjectivity which brings the *flâneur* into discussion. This figure represents the being-in-the-world which phenomenological discussions of body and language address. With regard to semiology, the *flâneur* also speaks to the act of reading in the city through various encounters. In this vein, Barthes remarks that the city 'essentially and semantically, is the site of our encounter with the other'.³⁷⁴ The *flâneur* complies

³⁷² 'Paris – City of Names: Toponymic Trajectories and Mutable Identities', in *The Cultural Identities of European Cities*, ed. by Katia Pizzi and Godela Weiss-Sussex, *Cultural Identity Studies*, 16 (Oxford: ebrary, 2011), pp. 165-84 (p. 173). Cf. De Certeau's thoughts on proper names in *The Practice of Everyday Life*, p. 104.

³⁷³ See chapter one, pp. 28-9.

³⁷⁴ 'Semiology', p. 199. This semiotic interest is elaborated by Julia Kristeva, who initiates in literary criticism the concept of intertextuality, a 'transposition of one (or several) sign system(s) into another'. Kristeva studies the intersection of language with space; the status of the word, she contends, comprises a horizontal subject-addressee axis and a vertical text-context axis. Such a spatialised understanding of words delineates how language functions within the configuration of subject, addressee and context: the quest for literary semiotics is thus to discover 'different modalities of word-joining (sequences) within the dialogical space of texts'. Kristeva's configuration seems to suggest a kind of literary *flânerie* in which subjectivity is prompted by the encounter and interaction of words. Indeed, the writer is far from in control of what is written. However, as the writer *performs* subjectivity, the horizontal and vertical axes are

with this mediating role in the urban space. Nesci's informative work *Le Flâneur et les flâneuses* thus traces the literary origin of the *flâneur* from the 1840s Parisian bourgeois literary circle: he is the '[o]bservateur invisible des mœurs et des types publics urbains' and a 'lecteur chargé de la lisibilité de la ville'.³⁷⁵ For the *flâneur*, the city is filled with sediments of signs as well as memories. It is also in this tradition that the city has been regarded as a book. For instance, in *Jacob's Room*, urban scenes are 'rude illustrations, pictures in a book whose pages we turn over and over as if we should at last find what we look for'; the narrator asks '[w]hat do we seek through millions of pages? Still hopefully turning the pages – oh, here is Jacob's room' (*JR* 80). Similarly, in 'Street Haunting', the narrator speaks of a 'page of the volume of life' (*E IV* 488). More significantly, the 'short passage from work to home' in which people indulge 'in some narcotic dream' appears to converge moving in time and space with a passage from a book (*E IV* 488). The passage is also the passage of text that the reader reads.³⁷⁶ The city and the text become inseparable from each other.

More precisely, using Barthes' terminology, the city is not merely a 'texte lisible'; the turning pages that Woolf describes and the 'passage' indicate a certain momentum, embedded in the notion of the palimpsest. Parsons remarks

further complicated: not only can the addressee be distinguished into an intended reader and a general readership, but the text-context dimension is also not straight forward, for the text engenders a new space around itself and can accumulate new context. Subject, addressee, and context are all in a dynamic interaction. Therefore, instead of turning to a greater detailed study of Kristeva's theory, the following discussion will use the concept of performance to illustrate how Baudelaire and Woolf *perform* a literary subject. See Kristeva, *Revolution in Poetic Language*, trans. by Margaret Waller (New York: Columbia UP, 1984), pp. 59-60; *Desire in Language: A Semiotic Approach to Literature and Art*, trans. by Thomas Gora and others (Oxford: Blackwell, 1993), p. 66.

³⁷⁵ *Flâneur et les flâneuses*, p. 96.

³⁷⁶ See the semantic discussion of the word *passage* in this chapter, pp. 141-2.

that urban landscape bears 'a palimpsest of layered time'.³⁷⁷ Such mobility also means that the 'palimpsest' concerns not only the ways to read a city's history properly, but also modes of writing (and walking): besides 'la lisibilité de la ville' to which Nesci refers, the urban text may well contain a 'scriptibilité' corresponding to 'les textes scriptibles'.³⁷⁸ Both the text and the city have a shared code upon which new layers are written. As Margery A. Evans adds: Baudelaire's Paris is dominated by the image of 'a cluster of intersecting trajectories, a fantastic, palimpsest arabesque of criss-crossing paths'.³⁷⁹ Even in his adaptation of de Quincey's 1845 essay, 'The Palimpsest of the Human Brain', Baudelaire describes the human brain as a palimpsest 'immense et naturel':

« [...] Mon cerveau est un palimpseste et le vôtre aussi, lecteur. Des couches innombrables d'idées, d'images, de sentiments sont tombées successivement sur votre cerveau, aussi doucement que la lumière. Il a semblé que chacune ensevelissait la précédente. Mais aucune en réalité n'a péri.» (*OC I* 505)

Human perception is layered. Baudelaire's understanding of memories and the brain relies on a rewriting of de Quincey. In fact, this passage is almost a word for word translation of de Quincey's – it is in itself a palimpsest. Baudelaire adds that '[t]ous les échos de la mémoire, si on pouvait les réveiller simultanément,

³⁷⁷ *Streetwalking the Metropolis*, p. 36.

³⁷⁸ This urban 'palimpsest' has its semiotic undertones. In his work entitled *Palimpsests*, Gérard Genette summarises five transtextual relationships among literary works. It is no coincidence that Genette chose 'palimpsests' as a title, for the idea of palimpsest is to write upon the trace of other writings, hence it points to the transtextual relationships and interactions that Genette interrogates. No writing is completely isolated from other writings, hence Genette writes, 'the subject of poetics is *transtextuality*'. *Palimpsests: Literature in the Second Degree*, trans. by Channa Newman and Claude Doubinsky (London: Nebraska UP, 1997), p. 1. Among the five relationships, it is worth pointing out that Kristeva's intertextuality is one of them. On the connection to Kristeva, see n. 374, pp. 153-4.

³⁷⁹ *Baudelaire and Intertextuality: Poetry at the Crossroad* (Cambridge, Cambridge UP, 1993), p. 12.

formeraient un concert, agréable ou douloureux, mais logique et sans dissonances' (*OC I* 506). Perhaps Baudelaire has demonstrated the very intertextuality that invariably underscores writing. This palimpsestic nature is indeed prominent in city literature, in which layers of texts take part in layers of the city, the two spheres falling upon each other, just as Baudelaire's depiction of the human brain does. As Patrick Labarthe rightly puts it, Baudelaire's palimpsestic Paris becomes a 'profondeur de mémoire', and his writing succeeds not so much in 'ranim[ant] magiquement une sorte de classicisme perdu' as in 'inscri[vant] dans la langue le sceau même d'une historicité qui affecte la ville'.³⁸⁰ The palimpsest works in a way in which a new layer does not abolish the old one, but is put into dialogue with both the past and the future. In Evans' analysis of *Le Spleen de Paris*, intertextuality works on two levels: first, the loose, kaleidoscope-like structure within the collection allows for freedom of interpretation.³⁸¹ In addition, Baudelaire's reworking of established literary *topoi* amounts to a 'convergence not only of a number of internal cross-reflections but also of a cultural heritage'; the 'descent' into prose of the collection is thus one into 'the *carrefour* and the *lieu commun*'.³⁸² In the same fashion, the city is 'un lieu où se croisent les chemins du souvenir'; Stierle further affirms that the *flâneur*'s role 'ouvre toujours dans la présence du perceptible le royaume onirique de souvenirs qui se superposent'.³⁸³ Therefore, the *flâneur* is 'la figure par excellence du philosophe de la ville, qui déchiffre simultanément, en qualité de

³⁸⁰ 'Baudelaire, Paris et le «palimpseste de la mémoire»', in *Figurations de la ville-palimpseste*, ed. by Ursula Bähler and others, Edition l'endemain, 26 (Tübingen: Narr, 2012), pp. 21-34 (pp. 22, 33).

³⁸¹ *Baudelaire and Intertextuality*, p. 9.

³⁸² *Ibid.*, p. 10.

³⁸³ *La Capitale des signes*, p. 26.

sémioticien de la ville, ce qu'aucune théorie de la lisibilité n'exprime'.³⁸⁴ Not only is the city filled with chartered streets, it is also 'le royaume onirique de souvenirs': walking becomes a personal act – a will to remember. This is perhaps why Barthes maintains that the city contains an endless chain of signification; as the signified passes, the signifiers remain – '[t]he hunt for the signified can therefore constitute only a provisional undertaking'.³⁸⁵ Considering this 'hunt' at a street level, it becomes each urban user's singular attempt to relate the signified to the signifiers. The process seems infinite, as the signified always 'become the signifiers of *something else*'.³⁸⁶ But it is exactly this endlessness and elusiveness that render the city space writable – it is a hunt among words for an imaginary centre, an unattainable horizon and thus *line-scape*.³⁸⁷ In the very process of walking, the *flâneur* is mapping out his own line within the existing streets. He is at the same time reading and writing. *Flânerie* promotes creativity since the route is erratic. Each chance encounter and each turn become a reorganisation of sensual experiences and signs. According to Vanel-Coytte, the *Tableaux parisiens* section of *Les Fleurs du mal* exemplifies a new poetics as the result of 'la confrontation entre le Paris réel et le Paris imaginaire (qui n'a jamais existé ou n'existe plus)'.³⁸⁸ The poet has clearly set out his goal in portraying *landscape* in the very first poem of the section, 'Paysage'. In her analysis of the

³⁸⁴ Ibid., p. 25.

³⁸⁵ 'Semiology', p. 197.

³⁸⁶ Ibid., p. 197. Author's emphasis.

³⁸⁷ Cf. *Jacob's Room* and *The Waves*. *Jacob's Room* is the novel of centrelessness par excellence since the room is empty, with its owner dead, and the narrative shifts around without one central narrator. See also chapter one, p. 64. The soliloquies in *The Waves* also circulates around Percival, who dies in the middle of the novel. See chapter two, p. 108.

³⁸⁸ *Des Paysages*, p. 280.

poem, Vanel-Coytte discerns a 'tension entre le projet poétique de Baudelaire et la réalité contemporaine':³⁸⁹

Je veux, pour composer chastement mes églogues,
Coucher auprès du ciel, comme les astrologues,
Et, voisin des clochers écouter en rêvant
Leurs hymnes solennels emportés par le vent.
Les deux mains au menton, du haut de ma mansarde,
Je verrai l'atelier qui chante et qui bavarde;
Les tuyaux, les clochers, ces mâts de la cité,
Et les grands ciels qui font rêver d'éternité. (*OC I 82*)

The speaker reveals his will ('je veux') to achieve a traditional poetic goal by recalling Virgil's eclogues. The adverb 'chastement' indicates a sort of constraint. It appears to be in stark contrast with the verb 'coucher' that follows: the former indicates both purity and abstinence from sex, while the latter seems to shatter this promise by lying down. The word 'composer' is key here in that it stresses the speaker's agency in creation. The city is perceived 'en rêvant' while 'les grands ciels' 'font rêver d'éternité'. Vanel-Coytte reveals that the project is nonetheless confronted by reality, when the speaker claims in the following stanza that '[j]e verrai les printemps, les étés, les automnes' (*OC I 82*).³⁹⁰ Finally, the poem ends with a landscape created by imagination and dreams. As the speaker evokes 'je rêverai des horizons bleuâtres' (*OC I 82*), he chooses to create his own Spring:

Car je serai plongé dans cette volupté
D'évoquer le Printemps avec ma volonté,
De tirer un soleil de mon cœur, et de faire
De mes pensers brûlants une tiède atmosphère. (*OC I 82*)

The dream thus summoned up seems not to be some 'églogues' chastely composed in the very first line: the '[j]e veux' does not 'chastement' follow what

³⁸⁹ Ibid., p. 361.

³⁹⁰ Ibid., p. 290.

is seen ('je verrai'), instead, it evolves into what is dreamt ('je rêverai'); Baudelaire demonstrates the confrontation between what is seen and what the poet seeks.³⁹¹ Once again, he underscores the importance of imagination and poetic will. Finally, the poem becomes a question to the very *paysage*, an eponym turns to the poem itself: what kind of landscape is created, if not an eclogue? Beneath the disguise of an idyllic landscape, the speaker proposes an urban scene. Bearing in mind that this is the beginning of the section *Tableaux parisiens*, perhaps we could formulate the question: how could one's creation be chaste, when lying down under the sky of a modern city?

The predicament is also to be found in the penultimate poem of the section, 'Rêve parisien'. The poem starts with a dream about an ideal urban landscape, which is halted in the second part of the poem, that is, the last two stanzas of the poem:

En rouvrant mes yeux pleins de flamme
 J'ai vu l'horreur de mon taudis,
 Et senti, rentrant dans mon âme,
 La pointe des soucis maudits;

La pendule aux accents funèbres
 Sonnait brutalement midi,
 Et le ciel versait des ténèbres
 Sur le triste monde engourdi. (*OC I 103*)

The poem moves from the thrill of the dream – '[l]e sommeil est plein de miracles!' (*OC I 101*) – to a miserable and stagnant reality. An emphasis on sight can be discerned, especially if we consider the lines that immediately precede the second part:

Et sur ces mouvantes merveilles
 Planait (terrible nouveauté!

³⁹¹ Ibid., pp. 289-90.

Tout pour l'œil, rien pour les oreilles!)³⁹²
 Un silence d'éternité. (*OC I* 103)

This eternity is a fake, for it lasts only until the speaker reopens his eyes; the self is brought back to the here and now.³⁹³ The dreamy state contains mere sights but reality is not limited to the visual. Despite the fact that Baudelaire's poetry is highly visual, I argue that by constructing a useless and elusive shelter in sight, Baudelaire reveals the insufficiency of visuality. The speaker feels the 'soucis maudits' and hears the 'accents funèbres', which sight cannot cancel. Contrary to the speaker, the world appears to be all numb – 'le triste monde engourdi'. By incorporating various sensual experiences, Baudelaire lays bare the modern soul, and lets the reality outside the dream take advantage of the body's openness to the external. He is not celebrating a static, eternal beauty or the all-encompassing power of imagination, but he pushes the soul to confront reality. He highlights the intermittent characteristic of the modern city, and underscores the limitation as well as the potential of imagination.

The city allows the writer to exert his imagination outside of the self; *flânerie* can thus best describe the writer's textual situation, because the practice itself embraces and reflects the tensions and gaps inherent to modernity, allowing the writer's struggle with the imaginative power of language to become fully fledged. The writer's imagination does not offer an eternal shelter from reality; each line contains potential turns and changes, just as the city streets contain unpredictable encounters. Baudelaire's poems often perform a flight

³⁹² It is worth noting that this line is self-referential in that it points to the visual rhyme (*rime pour l'œil*) in Baudelaire's poems – for instance, *hiver/s'élever* in the first stanza in 'La Cloche fêlée' (*OC I* 71).

³⁹³ See also Stierle's analysis of the tense of the poem in *La Capitale des signes*, p. 460.

from the self, as is the case in the evocation of the dream state in 'Rêve parisien'.³⁹⁴ However, what appears to be a refuge is often undermined by the intrusion of reality. In a similar way, the urban streets allow for the exploration of the unknown, but they also bring shocks and surprises. Writing and walking are intimately related in that both promote a tension between the self and the other. The tension is also accompanied by instability and mobility – key notions in *flânerie*.

Bowlby and Alexis L'Allier have already proposed the link between walking and writing embedded within Woolf's essay 'Street Haunting'; the connection lies in the narrator's visit to the shoe shop and the pretext of walking is to purchase a pencil: "[r]eally I must buy a pencil," as if under cover of this excuse we could indulge safely in the greatest pleasure of city life in winter – rambling the streets of London' (*E IV* 480).³⁹⁵ The pencil is obviously a metaphor for writing; the journey becomes 'une écriture se jouant dans l'anticipation et dans la mémoire du marcheur'.³⁹⁶ Adopted by the writer as the prototypical city dweller, the *flâneur* translates the semiotic process in the city into proper signifiers – language thus demonstrates a dialectical movement between urban space and textual space. The idea of translation crucially links the movement of

³⁹⁴ I shall address the importance of the notion of performance in the following pages.

³⁹⁵ Bowlby, 'Walking, Women and Writing', pp. 44-5; L'Allier, 'Virginia Woolf et le moi ballotté dans la ville en mémoire', in *Les écrivains déambulateurs: Poètes et déambulateurs de l'espace urbain*, ed. by André Carpentier and L'Allier, coll. *Figura 10* (Montréal: Université du Québec à Montréal, 2004), pp. 137-52 (pp. 138-9). Note that 'ballotté' in the title of L'Allier's article is an interesting metaphor to ponder on. It suggests commotion and agitation in both emotional and physical senses: '[q]ui est secoué, agité en divers sens'. 'Le moi ballotté' thus implies unstable subjectivity. See 'Ballotté, ée, part. passé, adj. et subst. masc', in *TLFi*, <<http://atilf.atilf.fr/tlf.htm>> [accessed 19/06/2015].

³⁹⁶ L'Allier, 'Virginia Woolf et le moi ballotté', p. 139.

the *flâneur* in both spaces. In *Poétique du traduire*, Meschonnic describes translation as a communication between cultures and information, the translator, therefore, being 'un passeur':

Passeur est une métaphore complaisante. Ce qui importe n'est pas de faire passer. Mais dans quel état arrive ce qu'on a transporté de l'autre côté. Dans l'autre langue. Charon aussi est un passeur. Mais il passe des morts. Qui ont perdu la mémoire. C'est ce qui arrive à bien des traducteurs.³⁹⁷

The word *passeur* is worth dwelling upon. Its root in the verb *passer* make it part of the walking vocabulary mentioned above.³⁹⁸ The word *passeur* is in itself a *passeur*: it takes the translator to the side of the *flâneur*. According to the *Trésor de la Langue Française informatisé*, the word designates the person that transports other people or things to another place (and thereby the case of Charon), and sometimes this means crossing a border clandestinely.³⁹⁹ Whereas Meschonnic tends to stress the process of transportation, the second meaning, transgressing a boundary, is as relevant as the first one. Walking, transporting, and transgressing are all tightly related to *flânerie*: the act of *faire passer* is a kind of intervention which inevitably alters the original thing (here a text) and the agent (here the translator). The *flâneur*'s in-betweenness might not be a transgression *per se*, dwelling between words and between urban streets, but the aimlessness acts against the built environment. Moreover, the transgressing element lies more in a textual sense, as existing meanings of words – and

³⁹⁷ *Poétique du traduire* (Largrassse: Editions Verdier, 1999), p. 17. Emphasis original.

³⁹⁸ See pp. 141-2 of this chapter.

³⁹⁹ *Passeur*, *subst. masc.* 1. 'Personne qui transporte des passagers d'une rive à l'autre d'un cours d'eau'. 2. 'Personne qui fait passer clandestinement une frontière, une zone interdite, les lignes ennemies à quelqu'un (ou à quelque chose)'. See 'Passeur', in *TLFi* <<http://atilf.atilf.fr/tlf.htm>> [accessed 29/04/2015].

established forms – are challenged and new meanings are constantly created (and then soon join the existing meanings) through meandering in textual networks. The writer as a translator is not merely a carrier as Charon. Faced with a web of text and language, the writer brings another layer of meaning upon words, and opens up new links towards other words and texts. I argue that the *flâneur* speaks for translation more aptly than does the *passeur*, because the latter may suggest that when one travels to and fro, one carries one set of signifiers to another. This image risks reducing translation to 'un pur moyen d'information', a reduction which Meschonnic urges the critic to avoid.⁴⁰⁰ He advocates speaking of a 'poétique' rather than 'traductologie' when one speaks of translation.⁴⁰¹ The *flâneur* never arrives at a final destination because he has none. His embodiment in the city and the textual spaces facilitates a transgression between different realms. These features tie in well with elements of translation which is about relating one set of signifiers to another, and transporting subjectivity into the perspective of the other. In the meantime, the medium involved does not remain unchanged (as Charon does, to extend Meschonnic's metaphor). The *flâneur* not only passes on the message but also metamorphoses with it, an alteration that may lead to a change in his course (since he does not have any set route). The writer adopts the *flâneur* figure to *translate* the city into *line-scape*, because he can borrow from this figure mobility (both in the urban streets and in the textual web) and subjectivity (both an urban alter-ego and a body in flesh).

⁴⁰⁰ *Poétique du traduire*, p. 17.

⁴⁰¹ *Ibid.*, p. 61.

With the idea of *line-scape* in mind, I will first compare translation to the writer's performance on the page in the sense that it involves a consideration of audience, and that the *flâneur* is one of the performing puppets. The idea of translation deserves more elaboration. Its process involves the mechanism of metaphor, because it replaces one word with another. As I will demonstrate, translation can be seen as a sort of spatial arrangement. Ultimately, the act of translation implies an instrumental intervention: the *flâneur* helps approach the ultimate horizon, but without ever being able to reach it. His position involves a stylistic translation of urban experience. Total objectivity being a mere illusion, *flânerie* can serve as 'un instrument de connaissance du réel'.⁴⁰² This view echoes Baudelaire's objection to art as a mere copy of nature; its emphasis on the instrument corroborates the notion that writing is a mediated process.⁴⁰³ Engaging language and words, the writer is in fact translating what is perceived into *line-scape* rather than directly copying the external world. Baudelaire himself postulates the writer's role as a translator: in his reflections on Victor Hugo, he asks 'qu'est-ce qu'un poète (je prends le mot dans son acception la plus large) si ce n'est un *traducteur*, un déchiffreur' (*OC II* 133 emphasis mine). The writer translates. In his configuration of art, Baudelaire also espouses a similar view. In *Salon de 1859*, for instance, he argues that '[s]i une exécution très nette

⁴⁰² Collot, *La Poésie*, p. 175.

⁴⁰³ In Merleau-Ponty's words, as I have illustrated, the indirectness of language means its opacity. See n. 302, p. 122. Cf. In his study of Proust, Genette discerns in *Temps retrouvé* 'l'infinie médiation du langage'. Genette ends the essay by noting that '[c]'est le conflit du langage et de la vérité qui *produit*, comme on l'a pu voir, le langage indirect; et le langage indirect, par excellence, c'est l'écriture – c'est l'œuvre'. Baudelaire's rejection of art as a mere copy of nature relies on a similar belief in the creative power of language to prompt a productive force. See 'Proust et le langage indirect', in *Figures II* (Paris: Éditions de Seuil, 1989), pp. 223-94 (p. 294). Author's emphasis.

est nécessaire, c'est pour que le langage du rêve soit très nettement *traduit*' (*OC II* 625 emphasis mine). Additionally, as Baudelaire further opines, this 'exécution très nette' is needed so that 'l'attention de l'artiste se porte même sur la propreté matérielle des outils' (*OC II* 625). While Baudelaire's topic here is painting, I argue that the notion of translation becomes a clue for understanding the *flâneur's* role in Baudelaire's and Woolf's *line-scape*. The *flâneur* serves as a translating instrument for the writer, who, with the help of imagination, aims to *perform* subjectivity; the writing process can be regarded as a translation of subjective experience into lines.

Before I explain the process of translation, I would like to stress the notion of performance at this point. I describe the process of translation as the writer's performance, mainly because Baudelaire's choice of words relates imagination and artistic composition to creative *operation*.⁴⁰⁴ Operative keywords should be taken seriously, for they represent not merely Baudelaire's eclectic writing style, but also imply the performance by which the writer is able to stage *line-scape*. I have demonstrated that the literary subject is the observer that interacts with *line-scape*, as a result of the writer's manipulation of language. The *flâneur*, I argue, is one of the strategies that provides a perspective on *line-scape* and hence a sort of literary subject. However, in order to clarify the writer's role as different from, and yet similar to, literary subjectivity, I propose to resort to the notion of performance. Textual space, in this sense, can be taken as a stage for performance, whose instability and fluidity can allow for flexible

⁴⁰⁴ For instance, as I have quoted throughout the chapter, he writes that the imagination 'décompose toute la création' (*OC II* 621), while a poem 'veut être composé' (*OC II* 661), and the speaker in 'Paysage' talks about his will to 'composer chastement mes églogues' (*OC I* 82).

perception and interpretation. In Erika Fischer-Lichte's words, '[t]he imagination of the spectators is set in motion by the movements of the actors/performers'.⁴⁰⁵ Moreover, the notion of performance derives mainly from theatrical and oral tradition, a link to poetry's power of enunciation and its link to orality. In his commentary on *Les Fleurs du mal*, John E. Jackson notes that 'Baudelaire parle, il fait son poème le théâtre d'une parole qui, le plus souvent, est orientée vers un destinataire clairement identifié'.⁴⁰⁶ But this operative and theatrical interpretation can be expanded to describe the writer's *performance* on the page. The page can be said to be a stage; as Genette has already contended, literature contains spatiality:

L'expression n'est pas toujours univoque, elle ne cesse au contraire de se dédoubler, c'est-à-dire qu'un mot, par exemple, peut comporter à la fois deux significations, dont la rhétorique disait une littérale et l'autre figurée, l'espace sémantique qui se creuse entre le signifié apparent et le signifié réel abolissant du même coup la linéarité du discours. C'est précisément cet espace, et rien d'autre, que l'on appelle, d'un mot dont l'ambiguïté même est heureuse, une *figure*: la figure, c'est à la fois la forme que prend l'espace et celle que se donne le langage, et c'est le symbole même de la spatialité du langage littéraire dans son rapport au sens.⁴⁰⁷

Genette stresses the role the figure plays in bringing into language a spatial orientation. This 'rapport au sens' is taken up by Jenny, whose notion of 'le figural' is 'doublement «représentatif»' in the sense that it 'représente (imitativement) quelque chose du monde en re-présentant (en présentant à

⁴⁰⁵ 'Performative Spaces and Imagined Spaces: How Bodily Movement Sets the Imagination in Motion', in *Dynamics and Performativity of Imagination: The Image between the Visible and the Invisible*, ed. by Bernd Huppau and Christoph Wulf (London: Routledge, 2009), pp. 178-87 (p. 180).

⁴⁰⁶ 'Le Jeu des voix: de l'interpellation et de quelques autres formes énonciatives dans *Les Fleurs du mal*', in *De la Belle Dorothee aux Bons Chiens*, ed. by John E. Jackson and others, *Année Baudelaire*, 6 (Paris: Champion, 2002), pp. 69- 87 (p. 69).

⁴⁰⁷ Genette, 'La Littérature et l'espace', in *Figures II*, pp. 43-8 (p. 46). Emphasis original.

neuf) la forme de la langue'.⁴⁰⁸ For Jenny, 'la langue n'est pas seulement un espace de mémorisation et de stockage des traces, qui autorise la reprise, c'est aussi, et du même coup, un espace de délimitation et d'écartement, où se fonde toute ouverture, et qui peut toujours être rouvert et redisposé'.⁴⁰⁹ Jenny's approach inherits the phenomenological openness towards the external world. It is reminiscent of 'langage parlant'. This view of language as a creative space aligns well with the very direction that Marie Maclean's work takes.⁴¹⁰ She specifies that narrative cannot be 'satisfactorily explored except as a site of an interaction, just as a body or a mind can only be fully appreciated when seen in interplay with those of another'.⁴¹¹ This comparison of the narrative to the body attracts my attention for its phenomenological undertones. Both the body and the page are sites of encounter, suggest an alterity, without which they can no longer exist. This idea is comparable to the chiasm and the reversibility of the body and of language. Here again, subjectivity (either that of a text or of a body) relies on interaction with the other. Maclean's study is based on speech-act theory, performance models and narrative theory; such a scope not only deals with the narrator and the narratee, but also distinguishes the writer from the narrator, and the reader from the narratee.⁴¹² The textual performance promotes

⁴⁰⁸ *La Parole singulière* (Paris: Belin, 2009), p. 30.

⁴⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 31.

⁴¹⁰ In fact, Maclean's work sheds new light on the statements on the figure by Genette and Jenny: she writes that 'a highly condensed narrative text, like those of Baudelaire, may not need to use figurative language, because each concretization is in itself a figure'. In this way, she helps to open up the insights of Genette and Jenny to a wider realm. See *Narrative as Performance*, p. 67.

⁴¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. xi.

⁴¹² Using Baudelaire's *Le Spleen de Paris* as an example, Maclean argues that Baudelaire was highly aware of 'the gulf which divided the implied narrative

the idea that '[e]ach enactment, like each reading, is itself an interpretation of that theory':

Our reader response, our enactment, our interpretation will modify the text and produce a new response among its readers in its turn.
Performance, like revolution, is an act which must always be renewed.⁴¹³

Performance is a space for renewal; a space that is constantly unsettled.

However, the reader is as much of a performer as the writer. The reader, the audience of the performance, as Maclean describes, is continuously renewing the response to the performance. The writer's words are staged on the page; the *flâneur* is one of the puppets, one of the observers of *line-scape*. Performative space creates an encounter between the writer, the actor, and the audience, allowing them to build up different relationships. The writer's goal is to portray *line-scape* to the reader (both the ideal reader and the actual reader) using the actor (*flâneur* as an instrument). On the stage, the *flâneur* is one of the writer's best disguises. The stroller seems to represent the writer's perception of modernity, being able to discern a faraway horizon embedded within *line-scape*. However, the fact that this figure is as fluid and paradoxical as modernity, suggests that this horizon is not a fixed line, but an unattainable and receding part of *line-scape*.⁴¹⁴

audience, the average readers of his class and generation, from the ideal or potential reader who could grasp the *énoncé*'. Ibid., p. 49.

⁴¹³ Ibid., p. 42.

⁴¹⁴ Cf. Maclean's remark on the twofold meaning of walking (a hint to *flânerie*):
Walking then is a double activity: on the one hand it is conning the signs amidst which one moves, as the eye cons the signifiers of the text, caught in the patterns of the streets as in those of typography, pausing before a shop window as one pauses before a felicitous piece of rhetoric; on the other hand it is movement, rhythmic activity, the rise and fall of the breath, but punctuated by stops and starts [...].

See Ibid., p. 56.

To perform subjectivity, the writer's operation can be regarded as an act of translation. Both the notions of performance and translation underscore a lack of a definite end-product. In addition, my use of the term translation emphasises instrumental intervention and incessant replacement: one translation engenders layers upon another, in order to approach *line-scape*. This constant approximation is the source of writerly subjectivity, contemporaneous to the translation process. Translation delineates this endless constellation between subjectivity and *line-scape*; one depends on the other, while neither is fixed.

Susan Bernstein describes translation as a sort of substitution in order to approach an ultimate ideal, thereby drawing attention to metaphor.⁴¹⁵ While the theorisation of metaphor is in itself a vast field, I would like to focus on its mechanism as part of translation.⁴¹⁶ Theories on metaphor do not necessarily

⁴¹⁵ Susan Bernstein, *Virtuosity of the Nineteen Century: Performing Music and Language in Heine, Liszt, and Baudelaire* (Stanford: Stanford UP, 1998), p. 147.

⁴¹⁶ Although Bernstein's study reveals how Baudelaire's juxtaposition of various artistic media engenders a tension 'between technique and effect, the letter and its figurative animation', her statement risks confusing metaphor with translation, due to a lack of clarification of related fields of study. Her view on metaphor builds on Roman Jakobson's famous description of language, in which he discerns in discourse two semantic lines: similarity and contiguity – the former is accomplished through metaphor and the latter through metonymy, and verbal behaviour is the operation of both poles. However, in the realm of translation studies, this dichotomy appears to be inadequate to explain the mechanism and the nature of translation. Douglas Robinson, for instance, proposes a broader array of tropes involved in translation, including metaphor, metonymy, synecdoche, irony, hyperbole, and metalepsis. He argues that translation is not a strict and clear-cut choice between metaphor and metonymy; but rather the six 'master tropes' for a 'hermeneutical path' representing the translator's 'dialogue' with the source language. More significantly, as Tony E. Jackson adopts the Lacanian and Freudian understanding of the self to read the modernist narrative, his analysis demonstrates that, as distinct from realism, modernist novels build on the intertwining of 'metaphoric totality and metonymic continuousness'. Even though I only address the metaphorical nature of translation in my analysis for the sake of relevance, it is crucial to acknowledge that translation deals with a spectrum of tropes. I am indebted to

take into account its relationship with translation; moreover, theories of translation encompass an enormous field that does not fit within the scope of this study. I use translation in a more creative sense, rather than following its more traditional definition. I am not limiting my use of the term to translation from one language to another, and my study is less concerned with the authenticity or truthfulness of a translation than with the interaction created by translation. I borrow from this term aspects that are linked to *line-scape*. Therefore, I dwell upon the role metaphor plays in translation process, because it points to a spatial organisation relevant to literary *flânerie*. Its stress on movement may also enrich my discussion of *line-scape*'s invisible and unreachable horizon. In a similar vein, translation can be said to be inclusive of various systems of signs; therefore, the city-scape may be *translated* into *line-scape*. In this way, the *flâneur* may be seen as a translating tool for the writer. His situation in the gap is further asserted, as translation resists fixture and features a continuous performance that triggers new meanings. Last but not least, translation requires an openness towards the other: it implies an awareness of the self, which may add to the discussion of subjectivity. Therefore, by resorting to translation and metaphor, I hope to use these two related notions to further elucidate the concept of *line-scape* as a writerly vision, and the instrumental function of the *flâneur* to the writer.

Katarzyna Szymańska for the elaboration on translation studies. See also, Jakobson, 'Two Aspects of Language and Two Types of Aphasic Disturbances', in *Fundamentals of Language*, ed. by Jakobson and Morris Halle (The Hague: Mouton, 1956), pp. 55-82 (p. 76); Robinson Douglas, *The Translator's Turn* (Baltimore: John Hopkins UP, 1991), pp. 140-1; Tony E. Jackson, *The Subject of Modernism*, p. 147; Szymańska, 'How Translations Function: Illusion and Disillusion', in *Re-reading Schleiermacher: Translation, Cognition & Culture*, ed. by Teresa Seruya and José Miranda Justo (Berlin: Springer, forthcoming).

Under the influence of Ricœur, Muldoon asserts that metaphor engenders new meanings 'by creating a new reference which describes and redescribes the world, or part of the world'.⁴¹⁷ In Ricœur's own words, this redescription entails an 'auto-destruction du sens' due to the failure of interpretation; however, this very failure is productive in that it also creates 'la « torsion » du sens littéral des mots', resulting in 'une innovation de sens au niveau de l'énoncé entier'; what actually contributes to 'la métaphore vive' is this latter development.⁴¹⁸ According to the *OED*, the word metaphor originates from ancient Greek, suggesting the verb 'to transfer'.⁴¹⁹ The implied movement aligns well with the *flâneur's* textual existence. Just as language is subjected to an endless process of metaphorisation, and hence new meanings, the *flâneur's* identity is also malleable: the walking figure provides a bodily perceptive point, and thus forms literary subjectivity. Yet, rather than having full control over this figure, the writer must accept the fact that the intended meanings will be distorted in order to engender new meanings.⁴²⁰

Collot attributes a similar innovative role to metaphor with a particular emphasis on the new space created: metaphor, the poetic figure par excellence, transports a word to another, the language describing it is already spatialised.⁴²¹ A figure, which includes metaphor, creates a territory to explore, between 'un

⁴¹⁷ *Tricks of Time*, p. 234.

⁴¹⁸ Ricœur, *La Métaphore vive* (Paris: Seuil, 1975), p. 289.

⁴¹⁹ 'Metaphor, n.', in *OED Online*, < <http://www.oed.com> > [Accessed 31 Oct 2014].

⁴²⁰ From the reader's perspective, Merleau-Ponty also discerns 'une torsion secrète' in the experience of reading: 'plus de flèches se dessinent vers ce lieu de pensée où je ne suis jamais allé auparavant'. Reading can be viewed as probing a space that has never been investigated before. *La Prose du monde*, p. 19. Merleau-Ponty uses Stendhal as his example here.

⁴²¹ *La Poésie*, pp. 229-30.

signifiant' and its 'signifié habituel'; it 'introduit du *jeu* dans le langage, crée un espace, ordinairement inaperçu, où le sens, au lieu d'être toujours-déjà, trouvé, est en quête de lui-même'.⁴²² For him, the figure opens both an external space to other things as well as an internal and thus invisible horizon.⁴²³ It takes into consideration not merely the other but also the self. Richard Klein adds weight to the discussion by contending that metaphor is a spiralling movement 'to rejoin itself, to signify its signifying, and thereby to halt the movement, to silence the text that it has become – or, rather, that it has always been'.⁴²⁴ Such a spinning movement is centrifugal; the self is 'lost in the movement from one figure to another'.⁴²⁵ Indeed, metaphor as a spatial organisation is a quest for genuine meanings in various directions. Here, the word play of *sens* occurs again, signifying in itself both meaning and direction; its polysemy hence opens up an ambiguity. This double meaning further extends the phenomenological interpretation of language to a more specifically poetic level. Metaphor becomes part of translation in its 'vertical substitution incarnating the spiritual in the materiality of a signifier'.⁴²⁶

In the light of the openness and the potential of language to engender novel meanings via the act of translation, it is evident that Baudelaire's *line-scape* is a manifesto or battle cry for his new kind of poetic and aesthetic approach: to bring cityscapes and city life into the scope of lyric poetry. Baudelaire draws his

⁴²² Ibid., p. 30. For the connotations of *jeu*, see n. 306, pp. 123-4.

⁴²³ Ibid., p. 231.

⁴²⁴ Richard Klein, 'Straight Lines and Arabesques: Metaphors of Metaphor', *Yale French Studies*, 45 (1970), 64-86 (p. 64).

⁴²⁵ Ibid., p. 64.

⁴²⁶ Bernstein, *Virtuosity*, p. 147.

horizon after 'les grands ciels qui font rêver d'éternité' (*OC I 82*) in 'Paysage'.⁴²⁷ The writer strives to compose *line-scape*;⁴²⁸ in the meantime, however, the cruel reality remains: eternity is a mere dream. Despite its unreachability, the writer acknowledges the constant failure as a tension that is in itself close to the literary horizon and *line-scape*.

Here, the Ricœurian theory of translation can offer a fruitful illustration of the openness of language. Ricœur highlights the translator's role as a mediator and translation as the site of 'hospitalité langagière'; translation appears to be an act of welcoming foreignness into one's own language.⁴²⁹ In a synthesis of Ricœur's work, Richard Kearney dwells upon this openness to the other, concluding that '[a]ll translation involves some aspect of dialogue between self and stranger'.⁴³⁰ The self-other interaction first engages different cultures and nations, but it also works within the same cultural system. Ricœur underscores the fact that 'il est toujours possible de *dire la même chose autrement*'.⁴³¹ It is this *autrement-dit* that is most relevant to the self-other relationship. Substitution, replacement, and whatever terms that we can use to unravel metaphor, are all devices of *autrement-dit*, and are therefore somehow related to the process of translation. I position the notion of *autrement-dit* as the main way to view

⁴²⁷ Quoted above, p. 158.

⁴²⁸ E.g. 'D'évoquer le Printemps avec ma volonté' in 'Paysage' (*OC I 82*). In 'Street Haunting', the narrator summons 'all the chambers of an imaginary house and 'furnish them at one's will with sofa, table, carpet' (*E4 485*). It is worth mentioning that the second example demonstrates that creativity and originality lie in the writer's incorporating the everyday and everyday objects into *line-scape*.

⁴²⁹ *Sur la traduction* (Paris: Bayard, 2004), p. 20.

⁴³⁰ 'Paul Ricœur and the Hermeneutics of Translation', *Research in Phenomenology*, 37 (2007), 147-59 (pp. 151-2). See also Ricœur, *Sur la traduction*, p. 17.

⁴³¹ *Sur la traduction*, p. 45. Author's emphasis.

translation, in order to stress the writing process and its intimate relationship with *flânerie*: *autrement-dit* indicates a bodily existence (as it indicates a way of speaking) while metaphor, despite its spatial implication that is a crucial part in configuring the translation process, remains mainly within the textual space.

Ricœur's understanding of translation may be read with the discussion of literary subjectivity. The *flâneur* is one *autrement-dit* that is available to the writer. He is not the writer's self but he lends the writer a body and thus a perspective. By translating the writer's perception, the *flâneur* forms a movement around imaginary subjectivity.⁴³² The whole depicts the writer's *line-scape*. Nevertheless, the central self is elusive and fleeting: subjectivity changes along with *line-scape*.

It is this impossibility of fully representing an object or the self that proves to be the very truth poetry aims to reveal.⁴³³ *Line-scape* points to the

⁴³² Signs in the city epitomise this movement in its pursuit of differentiation; this is also the reason why fashion is tightly linked to the notion of modernity. After all, fashion is a way one distinguishes oneself from the other with artefacts; it engenders signs to be deciphered. In this way, the dandy's obsession with fashion derives also from this desire to assert the self through the other. See also chapter one, n. 139, p. 60.

⁴³³ Collot, *La Poésie*, p. 183. Therefore, Collot introduces Michel Deguy's notion of 'référance', in which the letter 'a' indicates 'cette incapacité du poème à coïncider avec la chose, vers cette différence toujours maintenue entre le lieu et la formule':
La référence poétique est donc toujours un rapport à *distance* entre le mot et la chose, épreuve douloureuse de leur séparation dans la mesure même où elle essaie de les faire se rejoindre. Elle est une tension perpétuelle, puisqu'elle ne saurait abolir tout à fait cette distance, ni s'y résigner.

See *Ibid.*, p. 183. Of course, 'référance' is inseparable from the notion of 'différance', one of Jacques Derrida's central theories on the instability of language, which made a tremendous contribution to the post phenomenological sphere. Ruth Robbins and Julian Wolfreys put emphasis on Derrida's legacy in delineating the problem of 'differing orders of signification' in literature and in painting. This aspect ties in well with the writing of Baudelaire, whose 'Le Peintre de la vie moderne' in particular deals with artistic and literary theories.

same configuration, since the writer boldly and brutally reveals that total representation is a mere illusion. Woolf expresses this inability of the writer in *Jacob's Room*, where the narrator postulates that each individual 'had his past shut in him like the leaves of a book known to him by heart; and his friends could only read the title' (*JR* 52). However, in its search for a novel expression, the act of translation generates new potentialities. It is this hope that motivates the writer to continue the quest among words.

Baudelaire's prose poem 'Le Thyrses' from *Le Spleen de Paris* performs this kind of translation in that it combines the writer's will and imagination in a seemingly simple description of an object or a tool. Both Bernstein and Klein identify this poem as a symbolic thyrsus itself: the prose poem starts with a question '[q]u'est ce qu'un thyrses?' and the speaker offers a series of explanations and alternatives to the term, according to 'le sens moral et poétique', followed by an elaboration on its physical features (*OCI* 335). The series of *autrement-dit* asserts that the thyrsus seems to be many things, but none manages to portray it in a definite term. As Klein postulates, the chain turns into a 'frenzy of language', that is 'correlative to the dance which the emblem has become'.⁴³⁴ The thyrsus seems to be everything and hence nothing, but such a deployment of language forms a dance, a movement that expresses fluidity. The text creates a balanced force in what Maclean terms 'an interplay of energy and

See 'In the Wake of...Baudelaire, Valéry, Derrida', in *The French Connections of Jacques Derrida*, ed. by Wolfreys and others (New York: State University of New York Press, 1999), pp. 23-52 (p. 24).

⁴³⁴ 'Straight Lines', p. 81.

action'.⁴³⁵ Furthermore, the poem is intriguing in its dedication to the composer Franz Liszt, who is addressed directly, though only towards the end of the poem:

Cher Liszt, à travers les brumes, par-delà les fleuves, par-dessus les villes où les pianos chantent votre gloire, où l'imprimerie traduit votre sagesse, en quelque lieu que vous soyez, dans les splendeurs de la ville éternelle ou dans les brumes des pays rêveurs que console Cambrinus, improvisant des chants de délectation ou d'ineffable douleur, ou confiant au papier vos méditations abstruses, chanter de la Volupté et de l'Angoisse éternelles, philosophe, poète et artiste, je vous salue en l'immortalité! (*OC I* 336)

The way Baudelaire addresses Liszt can be linked to another aspect of translation: the involvement of tools. Firstly, it seems that Liszt's music and words are mediated: it is the 'pianos' that 'chantent' and 'l'imprimerie' that 'traduit'; there appears to be an emphasis on the instrument rather than on Liszt's genius. Secondly, even Liszt falls victim to Baudelaire's pen. Bernstein believes that Baudelaire exerts a certain displacement in dedicating this poem to Liszt, who 'is not master but a string on Baudelaire's lyre allowing his own voice to resound'.⁴³⁶ Ultimately, she concludes that Liszt functions as 'an oscillating motion between figure and referent'.⁴³⁷ The musician is subjected to the poet's manipulation, performing a music that is no longer his own creation. Klein supports this view, claiming that Liszt embodies a paradox in the poem: the pianist is 'simultaneously a fictional and a real man, present but absent, a

⁴³⁵ *Narrative as Performance*, p. 64.

⁴³⁶ *Virtuosity*, p. 186.

⁴³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 188. The notion of virtuosity, which is shared by both musicians and poets, implies the idea of performance. In fact, the speakers in Baudelaire's prose poetry are all avatars of the poet, whose virtuosity points to a duality of self-reflexiveness and creative skill. For both Liszt and Baudelaire, virtuosity represents the compelling alliance of freedom and a high degree of consciousness.

musician and a philosopher, intoxicated but sober, romantic and classical – philosopher, poet, and their paradoxical unity, *artiste*.⁴³⁸

The pianist becomes the mouthpiece of the poet; the poet, that of language. We should not, however, take 'l'imprimerie traduit votre sagesse' as simply a translation from music to letter. While the reference appears to pay homage to Liszt as a writer, it also reminds the reader of Baudelaire's role as a translator. Barbara Bohac further comments on the rhapsodic elements implied by gypsy music, upon which Liszt had written.⁴³⁹ Interpreting 'Les Vocations', the prose poem which immediately precedes 'Le Thyrsus' in *Le Spleen de Paris*, Bohac brings in Liszt's influence on Baudelaire in terms of genius, concluding that 'Le Thyrsus' is dedicated not so much to Liszt the musician as to Liszt the writer.⁴⁴⁰ In a broader sense, Baudelaire's writing juxtaposes different kinds of art and reveals the tension 'between technique and effect, the letter and its figurative animation, printed matter and the metaphor of reading replacing it'.⁴⁴¹ Liszt is thus doubly subjugated; he performs the very music dedicated to himself as a writer, through Baudelaire's pen. Furthermore, even the thyrsus is not Baudelaire's original invention. Bernstein points out that Baudelaire borrows the figure of the thyrsus from de Quincey, whose work Baudelaire had introduced to France. Similar to the way in which Baudelaire rewrites de Quincey's

⁴³⁸ Klein, 'Straight Lines', p. 85. Author's emphasis.

⁴³⁹ 'Baudelaire et Liszt: Le Génie de la rhapsodie', *Romantisme*, 151 (2011), 87-99.

⁴⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 89. Cf. In a letter to Saint-Beuve written in January 1866, Baudelaire mentions that the goal in working on *Le Spleen de Paris* is to 'accroch[er] sa pensée rapsodie à chaque accident de sa flânerie'. See Baudelaire, *Correspondance*, ed. by Claude Pichois and Jean Ziegler, 2 vols (Paris: Gallimard, 1973), II, p. 583. For the relationship between Baudelaire and Liszt's rhapsody, see also Kerr, 'Baudelaire's *Le Spleen de Paris*', p. 129.

⁴⁴¹ Bernstein, *Virtuosity*, p. 175.

palimpsestic brain, when he transports de Quincey's thyrsus into his own poem, he also adopts the posture of a translator.⁴⁴² As a result, it seems that 'Le Thyrses' is a translator's (Baudelaire's) tribute to a writer (Liszt) with a borrowed thyrsus (de Quincey's).⁴⁴³ Similarly, the writer borrows the *flâneur* figure to 'perform' *line-scape*.⁴⁴⁴

After all, the poem is not a simple tribute to Liszt. Baudelaire is also preoccupied with the writer's control over language and imagination. There is a duality in the depiction of the thyrsus:

– Le bâton, c'est votre volonté, droite, ferme et inébranlable; les fleurs, la promenade de votre fantaisie autour de votre volonté. (*OC I* 336)⁴⁴⁵

The physical depiction of the thyrsus embodies the duality that characterises creative vigour: will and fantasy. As Marcel Raymond notes, Baudelaire's art is both 'délire' and 'une méthode'; it is not a mere instinct but also 'un système

⁴⁴² Ibid., p. 189.

⁴⁴³ Notably, Baudelaire is also the translator of Poe's work. It seems that Poe serves as a model similar to de Quincey for Baudelaire, who incorporates both of them into his subjectivity. As Caroline F. Levander comments, 'it is not only that Poe became better known through Baudelaire, but that Baudelaire became more himself through Poe'. Baudelaire seems to inhabit Poe, just as the writer adapts the *flâneur* figure: 'through translating Poe, Baudelaire not only promoted a favorite author but practiced speaking in his voice, living in his literary head, and writing with his hand'. Levander's interpretation is phenomenological in its emphasis on the act of living through another writer's life. See Levander, *What is American Literature* (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2013), p. 64.

⁴⁴⁴ However, this does not suggest that Baudelaire subsumes music under literature. Rather, it reflects Baudelaire's wide exploration of art. His writing ranges from literature, to painting, to music. In *Mon cœur mis à nu*, he asserts that music contains a spatial aspect – '[l]a musique donne l'idée de l'espace' (*OC I* 702).

⁴⁴⁵ Evans observes that the motif of the *bâton* recurs in *Le Spleen de Paris*, the image thus creates an internal relationship. See *Baudelaire and Intertextuality*, pp. 64-71.

infiniment complexe et cohérent de relations réciproques'.⁴⁴⁶ The thyrsus symbolises a consideration of convention and constraint on the one hand, but it also suggests playfulness, exploration, and experimentation on the other hand. The duality is spatialised as the thyrsus' combination of straight and sinuous lines, which, in Baudelaire's elaboration, is 'un pur bâton', 'pur et droit', around which 'se jouent et folâtrant des tiges et des fleurs, celles-ci sinueuses et fuyardes' (*OCI* 335-6). In his reading of the poem, Tzvetan Todorov discerns an ambiguity in the thyrsus, which, in Baudelaire's poetic, religious, as well as physical depiction, appears to be both spiritual and material. The ambiguity becomes 'the symbol of content and form in art'.⁴⁴⁷

The sinuous line is an important notion in Baudelaire's poetics. It implies a kind of freedom and creativity, indispensable to imagination. Richard opines

⁴⁴⁶ *De Baudelaire au surréalisme* (Paris: José Corti, 1947), pp. 26-7. Cf. The tendency for duality is also rooted in Baudelaire's comparison of the artist to a convalescent. Baudelaire writes that 'la convalescence est comme un retour vers l'enfance', '[l]e convalescent jouit au plus haut degré, comme l'enfant, de la faculté de s'intéresser vivement aux choses, même les plus triviales en apparence':

Mais le génie n'est que l'*enfance retrouvée* à volonté, l'enfance douée maintenant, pour s'exprimer, d'organes virils et de l'esprit analytique qui lui permet d'ordonner la somme de matériaux involontairement amassée. ('Le Peintre de la vie moderne', *OC II* 690 author's emphasis)

The passage emphasises the proactive aspect of artistic creation: the sensibility of a child does not suggest a naïve perception but also the skills and resources to process 'la somme de matériaux involontairement amassée'. According to Babara Spackman on the same passage, convalescence is 'a space in-between' and 'a commingling of opposites' in Baudelaire. Her view adds to the interpretation that modernity is the experience of paradoxes. In this way, comparing the artistic genius to the convalescent and the child, Baudelaire emphasises that the artistic creation requires both sensitivity and skill. See *Decadent Genealogies: The Rhetoric of Sickness from Baudelaire to D'Annunzio* (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1989), p. 58.

⁴⁴⁷ Tzvetan Todorov, *Genres in Discourse*, trans. by Catherine Porter (Cambridge, Cambridge UP, 1990), pp. 65-6. Todorov expands this notion of duality to the discussion of genres: he proposes that the thyrsus belongs to 'both prose and poetry'. See *ibid.*, p. 65.

that the Baudelairean sinuosity 'traduit' 'l'effusion d'un contour, le débordement d'une limite'.⁴⁴⁸ It embodies duality in its combination of 'un bercement' and 'une avance'; it conjures both 'une paresse' and 'un élan'.⁴⁴⁹ For Baudelaire, it is 'la montée d'un désir ou le mouvement d'une joie sensuelle'.⁴⁵⁰ Richard finds in the notion of 'la sinuosité' the poet's poetic depth: the sinuous 'attire l'ondulation vers un point central et original', 'elle peut aussi déployer sans rupture une infinie richesse d'espace ou de temps'.⁴⁵¹ In a more phenomenological sense, Richard asserts that sinuosity helps to achieve an openness 'dans toutes les dimensions du temps et de l'espace, à le relier en profondeur au monde des objets, à autrui, à lui-même'.⁴⁵² Following Richard's argument, Poulet connects the thyrsus with the unattainable literary horizon: since it is 'le symbole du centre et du cercle mouvant', the duality thus suggests 'la beauté imparfaite et humaine' which contains both 'un effort volontaire' and 'des formes toujours inachevées'.⁴⁵³ Both Richard and Poulet discern in Baudelaire's poetic lines a reconciliation with the imperfect human condition: death is the ultimate and only way out; life in the city is 'un présent-limite, cette durée fragile chaque jour condamnée à mourir et renaître'.⁴⁵⁴ However, inasmuch as the poet performs a sort of sinuous line, it may be possible to come to terms with death via a poetic profundity. Baudelaire's voluntary sinuous movement towards the centre is aporetic. It is also in such a sinuosity that the modern notion of beauty is

⁴⁴⁸ *Poésie et profondeur* (Paris: Éditions de Seuil, 1955), p. 145.

⁴⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 145.

⁴⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 145.

⁴⁵¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 150-1.

⁴⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 148.

⁴⁵³ *Les Métamorphoses*, p. 427.

⁴⁵⁴ Richard, *Poésie et profondeur*, p. 154.

asserted. Despite the fact that there is no perfection, beauty still resides in the fragility and fluidity of the moment.

Furthermore, the poem 'Le Thyrsus' implicitly links to the *flâneur*, who provides the poem with a speaking subject and a constructed centre. This trait is most evident in the conspicuous *I* appearing at the end of the poem. The speaker's rhythmic movement – 'à travers les brumes, par-delà les fleuves, par-dessus les villes' – shows the way in which the actual poet manipulates the writing instrument and points to literary *flânerie* across literature, painting, and music. The poet-*flâneur* can thus be regarded as a thyrsus itself, as the poet strives to negotiate with poetic form, while the *flâneur* symbolises capriciousness and aimless movements in a constructed environment. The duality of ideal beauty and artistic imagination is achieved through the thyrsus and then through the speaker who salutes Liszt at the end of the poem.

My study of the *flâneur* has led to a translation of experience of modernity into *line-scape*. It is intriguing to see how the poet adopts the *flâneur* figure as a strategy to cope with modernity and to translate it into texts. Such a view finally turns the *flâneur* into an instrument and questions the speaking *I*. Apart from offering a configuration of the *flâneur* in his essays, Baudelaire's poetry often conveys the voice of a poet-*flâneur*. While historically this can be related to a reaction to the urban renovation of Paris in the nineteenth century, the lament and the nostalgia of the bardic voice requires more understanding:⁴⁵⁵ it is Baudelaire's attempt to reach an artistic unity rather than merely a protestation

⁴⁵⁵ Haussmann's modernisation project had changed Paris to the degree that the speaker laments '[l]e vieux Paris n'est plus' in 'Le Cygne' (OC I 85). See Vanel-Coytte, *Des Paysages*, pp. 251-72. See also my background introduction in chapter one, pp. 27-9.

against urban development. Focusing on the poetic *I* in Baudelaire's prose poetry, Ross Chambers interprets the 'je' as neither the narrator nor Baudelaire the poet, but as an 'embrayeur'.⁴⁵⁶ The narrator is in fact 'un *moi lyrique*': "'je" dont l'identité se confond avec la seule fonction du dire poétique'; and the linguistic *I* is reduced to the function of poetic performance.⁴⁵⁷ The *je* in 'Le Thyrses' fulfils what Klein calls the need for 'a fiction of subject' in these textual movements: a poetic *I* that 'announces itself in the very last line of the text' in this poem.⁴⁵⁸ In Merleau-Ponty's words, the speaking *I* functions as an instrument; it is 'installé dans son corps et dans son langage' and transported 'magiquement dans la perspective d'autrui'.⁴⁵⁹ Such a linguistic transposition into the other is of course not magical: it is the writer's literary strategy. The *flâneur* thus performs a linguistic operation that contains a movement, reflecting the nature of *flânerie*. Brett Bowles maintains that Baudelaire's poetry belongs to 'an autonomous realm beyond simple autobiography' in his installation of the speaking *I* in a

⁴⁵⁶ "'Je" dans les Tableaux parisiens de Baudelaire', p. 60. The word *embrayeur* is worth dwelling upon: the verb form 'embrayer' designates to 'transmettre le mouvement de rotation d'un axe aux organes qu'il doit entraîner'; the noun therefore connotes a mechanic connector and could thus be understood as an instrumental poetic mediation adopted by the writer. In linguistic terms, its English counterpart is 'deictic expression' or 'shifter'. In contrast to a proper name, it signifies 'linguistic expressions that refer to the personal temporal, or spatial aspect' of an utterance; its designation therefore is 'dependent on the context of the speech situation'. See 'Embrayer, verbe trans.', in *TLFi*, <<http://atilf.atilf.fr/tlf.htm>> [accessed 75/07/2015]; Hadumod Bussmann, *Routledge Dictionary of Language and Linguistics*, trans. and ed. by Gregory Trauth and Kerstin Kazzazi (London: Routledge: 1996), p. 116.

⁴⁵⁷ Chambers, "'Je" dans les Tableaux parisiens de Baudelaire', pp. 59-60.

⁴⁵⁸ 'Straight Lines', p. 84. In his study, Chambers reveals two layers of the 'je' in Baudelaire's prose poetry collection: 'un "je" sujet du discours' and 'un "je" personnage, sujet fantasmatique'; this double organisation adds further complexities to the discussion of duality. See Chambers, "'Je" dans les Tableaux parisiens de Baudelaire', p. 68.

⁴⁵⁹ *La Prose du monde*, p. 29.

flâneur's disguise.⁴⁶⁰ It is also an emancipation from 'langage parlé' to create 'langage parlant'. Combining Baudelaire's understanding of imagination and Merleau-Ponty's notion of 'langage parlant', it is therefore evident that the *flâneur* is the very speaking and translating *I* available to the writer.

In fact, the very term poet-*flâneur* signifies a failure to reach one single definition and asserts the writer's imagination as well as the *flâneur's* instrumentality; the hyphen is an attempt to bridge the gap between the writer and his instrument. No matter how stable the connected two parts are, the combination resists fixture; it is the very 'embrayeur' to which Chambers refers. The poet Baudelaire must use the *flâneur* figure to translate urban rhythms, which are created through his struggles with *sens*. Therefore, it is important to reach beyond a limited reading of the *flâneur* and to acknowledge how translation traverses two kinds of spaces in the pursuit of *sens*.

Flânerie is not limited to poetry; its close relationship with the city means that the writers of the city can all take advantage of such a figure. Baudelaire's thyrsus speaks of the writer's struggle, and the duality can be read in various ways: from a writerly point of view, it is a negotiation between convention and invention; in terms of modernity, the thyrsus also speaks to the paradoxes which underlie the experience of the gap. More significantly, the thyrsus draws

⁴⁶⁰ "'Les Sept Vieillards": Baudelaire's Purloined Letter', *French Forum*, 23.1 (1998), 47-61 (p. 47). Understanding the complicated deployment of speaker in Baudelaire's poetry helps to elucidate his intricate poetic craft. Even though it is important to distinguish the Baudelairean speaker from the poet himself, one should not dismiss the biographical dimension. Burton, for instance, closely traces Baudelaire's life in one particular year along with his work. His biographical study of Baudelaire's creative output in 1859 due to the influence of his sojourn in Honfleur helps understand the influence of the city on Baudelaire. See Burton, *Baudelaire in 1859: A Study in the Source of Poetic Creativity* (Cambridge, Cambridge UP, 1988).

attention to the *flâneur*'s instrumental role in the city and in the text. In fact, Baudelaire is not unique in combining the trope of walking and writing. Woolf's essay 'Street Haunting' also provides a neat example of the *flâneur* as a translating instrument.⁴⁶¹ The rhythms of the city are taken up by the narrator. Sabine Hake illustrates that the tempo and rhythm of walking can first 'establish the conditions under which the familiar sites are translated into textual effects'.⁴⁶² Moreover, 'the shifting perspectives afforded by walking turn the surrounding objects and events into dreamlike images waiting to be deciphered'.⁴⁶³ In this perspective, Woolf's essay 'Street Haunting' serves as a paradigm for literary *flânerie*. As already mentioned, the pretext for the walk is to purchase a pencil. This writing instrument indicates, in particular, writing the city, because the essay about 'a street adventure' also ends with the same instrument. The ending asserts the value of writing, as the narrator echoes the start of the journey, inviting the reader to examine the lead pencil:

⁴⁶¹ Bowlby has noted that Woolf has played with the idea of sauntering and its link to haunting in her diary dated 20 April, 1925, a few years before the writing of the essay 'Street Haunting': 'I like this London life in early summer – the street sauntering & the square haunting'. Bowlby argues that 'haunting' is 'almost a homonym of one of the possible English words for translating *flâner*: sauntering'. It is worth noting Woolf's close relationship with the London squares. The square is quintessential to the cityscape of London, allowing a retreat in the heart of the city. Woolf's 'square haunting' also implies how much she is attached to it. Such passion, as Cécile Wajsbrot observes, is reflected in Woolf's London addresses, many of which consist of squares around Bloomsbury. See Bowlby, 'Walking, Women and Writing', p. 40; *The Diary of Virginia Woolf*, ed. by Anne Olivier Bell, 5 vols (London: Hogarth Press, 1977-1984), III (1980), p. 11; Wajsbrot, 'Londres, une passion ambiguë', *Magazine Littéraire: Dossier sur Virginia Woolf*, March 1990, pp. 29-31 (p. 29).

⁴⁶² *Topographies of Class: Modern Architecture and Mass Society in Weimar Berlin* (Michigan: Michigan UP, 2008), p. 153.

⁴⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 153.

And here – let us examine it tenderly, let us touch it with reverence – is the only spoil we have retrieved from the treasures of the city, a lead pencil. (*E IV* 491)

The writer's journey into the city contains an array of encounters, but ultimately all experiences are condensed into the lead pencil, 'the only spoil', which implies writing. The word 'spoil' also indicates a particular perspective: among all the 'treasures of the city', the pencil is the narrator's particular 'spoil'. The proactive act of rescuing the pencil from the journey may be read as an act of extracting from memories the 'spoil' to translate into words. The writer must select from the memory of the journey elements to *translate* into words. The pencil reference also suggests that writing will not be possible without getting out of the house (for the pencil) and of the writer's self (for the experiences).

Enclosing the whole journey and the essay, the motif of *flânerie* is also indicated by the dwarf woman buying shoes; despite her minute size, her feet are 'perfectly proportioned' (*E IV* 483).⁴⁶⁴ Such marginal figures (the blind and the dwarf) correspond to Baudelaire's gallery of underdogs in both *Tableaux parisiens* and *Le Spleen de Paris*; they create in art 'a novel utterance': as McLees observes, 'the choice and treatment of models' is '[c]entral to the concept of modernity'.⁴⁶⁵ By turning to marginal figures, Baudelaire and Woolf endow them

⁴⁶⁴ Cf. *Jacob's Room*: the whole novel ends with the deceased Jacob's shoes. Whereas the novel centres around a dead – and thus empty – figure, the image of the shoes seems to indicate a certain mobility within the narrative – not only because Jacob walks through the novel, but also because it signals to us and invites us to retrace Jacob's steps, or our own steps. Besides, the shoes are among the mundane, even trivial and grotesque elements that can be found in Baudelaire's imagery. See also my discussion of the end of the novel in chapter one, p. 64.

⁴⁶⁵ *Baudelaire's 'Argot Plastique'*, pp. 82-4. The outsider as a theme in literature is not a pure coincidence; instead, the phenomenon appeared in graphic art and images and through a collaborative effort, 'the same material assumed both

with an allegorical poetic act (and hence a performance): these marginal figures seem to create distance from the observer, who often assumes the pose of the *flâneur*. Still, the description of the misfit – either the lack of vision, the disproportioned feet, or simply the lost youth – implicitly questions if not presents, various perspectives on *line-scape*. Thus, in McLees' study, caricature serves as the poet's 'silent partner', readily accommodating 'the low life with which he infuses poetry'.⁴⁶⁶

I would like to turn briefly to these so-called silent partners: the term itself indicates that these marginal figures are at the disposal of the writer. In 'Street Haunting', the dwarf woman's feet become an allegory of walking and writing: the narrator can only depict such an encounter thanks to her *flânerie*, and the focus on the feet implicitly links to the narrator's own passion for walking. Moreover, Woolf registers in the description not a realistic approach, but one imbued with the narrator's imagination, as in the episode of the dwarf woman trying on the shoes:

Look at that! Look at that! she [the dwarf woman] seemed to demand of us all, as she thrust her foot out, for behold it was the shapely, perfectly proportioned foot of a well-grown woman. [...] She was thinking that, after all, feet are the most important part of the whole person; women, she said to herself, have been loved for their feet alone. Seeing nothing but her feet, she imagined perhaps that the rest of her body was of a piece with those beautiful feet. (*E IV* 483)

graphic and written form, reinforcing the intertwining of the genres'. See *ibid.*, p. 81.

⁴⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 82. Michele Hannoosh considers the modern city to be 'the space of the comic, a kind of caricature'; it presents the *flâneur* 'with an image of his own dualism, self-ignorance, and otherness, his status as subject and object, implicated in the same urban experience he seems to control'. Reading 'Le Peintre de la vie moderne' in this light, Hannoosh speaks of a kind of productive doubling that the artist is capable of; artistic creation is 'the fertile contest between the self and non-self'. *Baudelaire and Caricature: From the Comic to an Art of Modernity* (Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State UP), pp. 4, 298.

The condescending manner and the thoughts of the dwarf woman are in fact the narrator's speculation, for the dwarf woman does not speak, she only 'seems to' demand the narrator's attention. Most of all, the narrator conjures the dwarf woman's internal thoughts and imagination – how she 'imagined perhaps that the rest of her body was of a piece with those beautiful feet'. This passage is highly charged with the narrator's willingness to imagine; in fact, she is aware of the particular effect that the shoe store cast upon the dwarf woman, or more precisely, upon the narrator herself:

At length, the pair was chosen and, as she [the dwarf woman] walked out between her guardians, with the parcel swinging from her finger, the ecstasy faded, knowledge returned, the old peevishness, the old apology came back, and by the time she had reached the street again she had become a dwarf only. (*E IV* 484)

The narrator remains a mere observer of the scene; however, she appears to abolish the distance in between herself and the dwarf woman. In a way, the narrator is able to travel freely into the latter's mind. This chiasm demonstrates the freedom that *flânerie* allows, and it also reminds us of the Baudelairean speaker in 'Les Fenêtres', who cares not for the faithfulness of the story but for his own survival. Indeed, even though the narrator here expresses a certain degree of empathy towards the dwarf, it goes only as far as the narrator's will. As soon as the dwarf goes back into the street, the spell ends and the narrator remarks dismissively that 'she had become a dwarf only'. Yet, in the following paragraph, as the narrator's *flânerie* continues, she also asserts that the dwarf woman 'had changed the mood':

[S]he [the dwarf woman] had called into being an atmosphere which, as we followed her out into the street, seemed actually to create the humped, the twisted, the deformed. [...] Indeed, the dwarf had started a hobbling grotesque dance to which everybody in the street now conformed: the stout lady tightly swathed in shiny sealskin; the feeble-

minded boy sucking the silver knob of his stick; the old man squatted on a doorstep as if, suddenly overcome by the absurdity of the human spectacle, he had sat down to look at it – all joined in the hobble and tap of the dwarf's dance.

In what crevices and crannies, one might ask, did they lodge, this maimed company of the halt and the blind? (*E IV* 484)

The dwarf woman seems to be very powerful in that she is able to change the atmosphere, offering a different perspective on the city: everyone appears to conform to 'a hobbling grotesque dance'. The word 'hobbling' describes a way of moving, another reference to *flânerie*. The dance succumbs to limping; the walking-related wording opens up a spectrum of movement in which *flânerie* takes part. The dwarf triggers a novel perspective to appreciate the city, creating 'the humped, the twisted, the deformed'. In a reading that parallels walking to writing, the new atmosphere brought about by the dwarf woman can be compared to the new meanings engendered by words on the page. The narrator's asking '[i]n what crevices and crannies' do these marginal figures lodge may be seen as a realisation of 'langage parlant'. Previously unnoticed meanings of words can be engendered by the act of reading. They are hidden in the 'crevices and crannies' between the lines. It seems that the dwarf is exactly the narrator's *silent partner* in that she is given a voice only through the narrator, and if the whole essay represents a manifesto of *flânerie* and writing, the dwarf woman is doubly reduced: reduced to her feet to epitomise the theme of walking, and then to a sign that, through various combinations with other signs, performs a 'hobbling grotesque dance'. She becomes the writer's puppet. Johanna X. K. Garvey affirms that Woolf is highly aware of the power of the silent partner, whose '[d]eviance or marginality appears as a subtext' in Woolf's 'Street Haunting':

Woolf recognizes the paradoxical liberation and empowerment available to those on the margins of the city's economic, political, and social system – the freedom offered by the ability to 'haunt' such sites of power and yet not to be trapped or implicated in them.⁴⁶⁷

In a textual sense, the focus on marginal figures highlights a new way of writing and of reading. By shifting attention to the previously unknown or unmentioned, Woolf draws the reader's attention to alternative readings and unexpected interpretation. While these figures remain silent, they are at the mercy of the writer and of the openness of textual interaction, which allows Woolf to create a kind of textual liberation for the reader.

Marginal figures also abound in Baudelaire's poems. Similar to Woolf's use of them, these silent partners can be viewed as an allegory of writing. More significantly, Baudelaire uses different registers to create a clashing effect that brings to the reader's awareness a changing social value. In their marginality, these figures represent the unexpected and unpredictable, challenging one's expectations and assumptions. These marginal others seem to have minor roles, but the way the writer uses them as the other enables narrative to create the literary subject.⁴⁶⁸ 'Le Vieux Saltimbanque', for instance, shows how the poet sees himself in the forgotten old acrobat. It depicts how the speaker sees an old acrobat at a fun fair, the old man forming a stark contrast to the joy around him:

Partout la joie, le gain, la débauche; partout la certitude du pain pour les lendemains; partout l'explosion frénétique de la vitalité. Ici la misère absolue, la misère affublée, pour comble d'horreur, de haillons comiques, où la nécessité, bien plus que l'art, avait introduit le contraste. Il ne riait pas, le misérable! Il ne pleurait pas, il ne dansait pas, il ne gesticulait pas, il ne criait pas ; il ne chantait aucune chanson, ni gaie ni lamentable, il

⁴⁶⁷ 'Difference and Continuity: The Voices of *Mrs. Dalloway*', *College English*, 53.1 (1991), 59-76 (pp. 60-1).

⁴⁶⁸ Another example is 'Les Aveugles', which I have analysed in chapter one, pp. 48-50.

n'implorait pas. Il était muet et immobile. Il avait renoncé, il avait abdiqué. Sa destinée était faite. (*OC I 296*)

The '[p]artout' and 'ici' create in the fair an insurmountable gap – the acrobat's artistic performance is entirely cancelled: his attitude is not due to considerations of art but to necessity. The speaker then depicts a series of things that the acrobat does *not* do and only affirms that he is 'muet et immobile'. The succession of negatives ends up in one positive sentence: nevertheless, 'muet' and 'immobile' only further diminishes him, a confirmation of his total renunciation – emphasised by the 'm' alliteration.

The speaker sympathises with the old man, but his identification with the acrobat is not fully revealed until in the last paragraph:

Et, m'en retournant, obsédé par cette vision, je cherchai à analyser ma soudaine douleur, et je me dis: Je viens de voir l'image du vieil homme de lettres qui a survécu à la génération dont il fut le brillant amuseur; du vieux poète sans amis, sans famille, sans enfants, dégradé par sa misère et par l'ingratitude publique, et dans la baraque de qui le monde oublieux ne veut plus entrer! (*OC I 297*)

Here, Baudelaire installs yet another silent partner. The speaker identifies with the abandoned acrobat on the basis that the latter bears the image of the 'vieil homme de lettres'. Again, as in Woolf's dwarf woman, the acrobat is not given a chance to talk:

Que faire? A quoi bon demander à l'infortuné quelle curiosité, quelle merveille il avait à montrer dans ces ténèbres puantes, derrière son rideau déchiqueté? En vérité, je n'osais; et, dût la raison de ma timidité vous faire rire, j'avouerais que je craignais de l'humilier. (*OC I 296*)

The speaker turns the acrobat into a man of letters at his own will, but refrains from speaking to the old man. The motif of the acrobat has its own significance: as Starobinski's study on the figure demonstrates, the nineteenth century saw a tendency to transport the clown into literature for its 'dynamique et plastique'

nature: '[l]e poète s'identifie à ce pouvoir de lévitation; il y reconnaît l'empire qu'il entend lui-même exercer sur le corps verbal du langage'.⁴⁶⁹ In addition, McLees recognises a liberating force in the acrobat figure 'by turning for a model to a low class of society alternately viewed as visionary and demented, Baudelaire frees himself from bourgeois society's restrictions and transcends his situation'.⁴⁷⁰ The poet uses this figure to represent an outcast whose skills are not appreciated by the public, hence the link to the poet's own role and predicament.

Most crucially, marginality makes the reader aware of the position of the observer: is the observer more central, as the Woolfian narrator seems to be, or does the observer share the stance of the Baudelairean speaker, who is on the same side as the acrobat? Turning to these silent partners, the writer exploits marginality: in 'Street Haunting', for example, the element of walking is enhanced while in 'Le Vieux Saltimbanque', the public's ignorance is suggested.

As a paradigm of *flânerie* and writing, 'Street Haunting' is filled with references to walking and writing. The two seem to merge in the visit to the second-hand bookshops, where the signs of the city meet their textual counterparts through walking:

But here, none too soon, are the second-hand book-shops. Here we find anchorage in these thwarting currents of being; here we balance ourselves after the splendours and miseries of the streets [...] Besides, in this random miscellaneous company we may rub against some complete stranger who will, with luck, turn into the best friend we have in the world. (*E IV* 486-7)

⁴⁶⁹ *Portrait de l'artiste en saltimbanque*, p. 28. Starobinski also comments that the old acrobat's failure lies in his silence, which somehow 'préfigure l'aphasie de Baudelaire'. See *ibid.*, pp. 74-9.

⁴⁷⁰ *Baudelaire's 'Argot Plastique'*, p. 85.

Woolf equates encounters in a second-hand bookshop with those in the streets; they balance and complete one another, for both imply a meeting of signs. The sudden start 'here, none too soon' suggests unexpectedness, which is the nature of *flânerie*. The tension is released in the 'anchorage' in written words. Books are aligned with people, and *flânerie* takes a textual turn. The street adventure allows the narrator to leave 'the straight lines of personality' and deviate 'into those footpaths that lead beneath brambles and thick tree trunks into the heart of the forest' (*E IV* 491), comparable to Baudelaire's 'forêts de symboles' in 'Correspondances' (*OC I* 11). The turn from the straight line into the digressive footpath is also the combination of the straight line and the sinuous one found in Baudelaire's thyrus: the double-edged duality of will and constraint versus fantasy and imagination. The whole essay delineates how walking performs an openness towards the other – be it people or books. It is an ability to take up another role – and in this case, the role of the *flâneur*.

Laure Gardelle takes a similar stance in her linguistic analysis of Woolf's *Mrs Dalloway*. She argues that the careful use of walking-related vocabulary in the novel expresses an 'osmose entres mondes extrérieur et intérieur'.⁴⁷¹ Registering all the occurrences of verbs of mobility, Gardelle argues that Woolf's linguistic expressions and semantic choices reflect '[l]'équilibre ou des déséquilibres de l'être' to such a degree, that Woolf endows the last sentence of the novel, '[f]or there she was' (*MD* 174), with an all-encompassing force: 'le

⁴⁷¹ 'L'Expression linguistique de la marche dans *Mrs Dalloway* de Virginia Woolf: équilibre et déséquilibres de l'être', *Études britanniques contemporaines*, 44 (2013), <<http://ebc.revues.org/534>> [Accessed 29 September 2014] (para. 5 of 21)

verbe *be* transcende le statique; c'est être que de marcher'.⁴⁷² Walking seems to be equated with a life force and a way of living. In both *Mrs Dalloway* and 'Street Haunting', Woolf demonstrates the embodiment of writing in the practice of walking. Walking provides the narrator with an excursion to the past and to other perspectives, engendering literary subjectivity from these external elements. Ultimately, seeing through the eyes of another can be regarded as saying the same thing in different ways – the whole becomes a translation, an *autrement-dit*.

The *flâneur* is indeed this instrument, allowing the writer to express the same thing differently. The writer-*flâneur* performs a translation to make impression and expression coincide. The writer inhabits the *flâneur*, endowing him with a subject to translate and to lend a voice to writing. Through the writer's translation, the *flâneur's* body becomes a constructed instrument; it is no longer a biological body but a philosophical or social avatar unfolding in the here and now. However, the disguise remains a temporary installation. The unstable hyphen in the term writer-*flâneur* implicitly reflects the ever-changing *line-scape* that arises from the writer's postulation and exploitation of the *flâneur* figure. *Flânerie* amounts to an adventure into the unknown. The excitement it triggers can generate new meanings and novel situations endlessly.

In Lefebvre's accounts, rhythms of the city can only be revealed through 'attentive eyes and ears, a head, a memory, a heart'.⁴⁷³ This claim summarises many essential aspects of the essay 'Street Haunting': immersed completely in the streets, the narrator of 'Street Haunting' experiences the rhythms of the city

⁴⁷² Ibid., para. 21 of 21.

⁴⁷³ 'Seen from the Window', p. 227.

from different perspectives. While Lefebvre's account underscores sensual experiences of the city, *flânerie* offers a stylistic way to approach them. Edward K. Kaplan thus regards the writer as an 'exemplar and theoretician of the modern self'.⁴⁷⁴ It is in this spirit that the speaker in Baudelaire's 'Les Fenêtres' claims to be 'fier d'avoir vécu et souffert dans d'autres que moi-même' (*OC I* 339), and the Woolfian narrator urges the reader to scrutinise a lead pencil. *Flânerie* has become an aesthetic style which art cannot do without. When Foucault argues that Baudelaire's 'ascétique de soi' lies only 'dans un lieu autre que Baudelaire appelle l'art',⁴⁷⁵ the city, more precisely, the city from the *flâneur's* perspective, can be considered to be such a place that seems to be outside of art and yet embodies art.

Baudelaire and Woolf combine life and art into their writing in a way that their writing style speaks to the notion of *flânerie*. Their literary *flânerie* demonstrates the way in which they harness and prompt language to accommodate urban experience. Such urban aesthetics can be further elaborated in the light of Merleau-Ponty's notion of *style*. Merleau-Ponty speaks of the way in which 'la perception déjà stylise': 'l'homme et la signification se dessineront sur le fond du monde justement par l'opération du style'.⁴⁷⁶ As Christopher Watkin puts it, perception in a Merleau-Pontian sense is 'always already

⁴⁷⁴ Baudelaire's *Prose Poems: The Esthetics, the Ethical, and the Religious in the Parisian Prowler* (Athens: Georgia UP, 1990), p. 12.

⁴⁷⁵ 'Qu'est-ce que les Lumières?', p. 571.

⁴⁷⁶ *La Prose du monde*, p. 83. Merleau-Ponty goes on to describe how the painter perceives a passing woman as 'une chair tout entière présente, avec sa vigueur et sa faiblesse, dans la démarche ou même dans le choc du talon sur le sol'. This depiction speaks to Baudelaire's portrait of the *passante*. See *ibid.*, pp. 83-4; chapter one, p. 55.

expressive, poetic and creative'.⁴⁷⁷ Style 'accounts for the meaning of the world'.⁴⁷⁸ The writing of Baudelaire and Woolf expresses the stylisation of urban life, in the sense that they both experiment with language, which is stylised to represent the experience of modernity. The process continues as long as one lives, and thus Merleau-Ponty states that '[i]l y a style (et de là signification) dès qu'il y a des figures et fonds, une norme et une déviation, un haut et un bas [...]'.⁴⁷⁹ This configuration of style brings together *flânerie* and writing: while perceiving the city through *flânerie* is a type of stylisation, to express it through words require a literary style that is as free and as paradoxical as the aimless walk. Art shares with perception the same need for stylisation. Under the influence of phenomenology, Jenny echoes this refocus on the potential of art to embody life by stressing '*l'art dans la vie*'.⁴⁸⁰ In the realm of literature, he contends that the poetic moment is 'une invention de l'instant dans un déploiement imaginatif'; Baudelaire manages to comprise both 'stases' and 'flux' in his poetisation of the city.⁴⁸¹ In fact, Jenny's study is not limited to literature but encompasses various art forms: artistic essence is 'une esthétisation toujours plus poussée de la vie quotidienne, nul n'échappe à cette modélisation de

⁴⁷⁷ *Phenomenology or Deconstruction?: The Question of Ontology in Maurice Merleau-Ponty, Paul Ricoeur and Jean-Luc Nancy* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh UP, 2009), p. 22.

⁴⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 30.

⁴⁷⁹ *La Prose du monde*, p. 85.

⁴⁸⁰ *La Vie esthétique: Stases et flux* (Lagrasse: Éditions Verdier, 2013), p. 15. Author's emphasis.

⁴⁸¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 20, 26. In 'Le Cygne', as Jenny further demonstrates, the rich images that the speaker evokes towards the end of the poem as well as the reference to Andromache become a mental flux. *Ibid.*, pp. 28, 30. See also my analysis of the poem in regard to the urban flux in chapter one, pp. 50-1.

l'existence par des schèmes venus de l'art'.⁴⁸² Proposing that art and life are far from opposite, Jenny asserts that the two interrelate as 'termes d'échanges, d'interpénétration et de circulation'.⁴⁸³ As a result, *flânerie* embodies the writer's endeavours and engagement with life and art – walking and writing are a bi-directional translation between a lived experience and a lived poetics. The discussion of a poetisation of the city leads to its stylisation. There is no denying that the dandy is closely related to this care for style – Jenny stresses this role as 'une force agissante et un prescripteur de conduites' in *Le Style en acte*.⁴⁸⁴ However, the *flâneur's* perambulation seems to be more suitable to frame the stylisation of the city. His complex relationship to the urban scene turns the focus on style into a contemplation of the self as related to the other; the city prompts the writer to confront the dialectics between the two. Both Marielle Macé and Jérôme David show how Baudelaire's loss of subjectivity resulted in a 'crise du style' during his sojourn in Brussels, where the lack of urbanity deprived the poet of the practice of *flânerie* and thus prevented him from inhabiting the form of life.⁴⁸⁵ Macé sees rhythm as a contour and a frame (*cadre*)

⁴⁸² *La Vie esthétique*, p. 15.

⁴⁸³ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

⁴⁸⁴ *Le Style en acte: Vers une pragmatique du style*, ed. by Jenny (Genève: Métis, 2011), p. 13.

⁴⁸⁵ In her lecture on Baudelaire's 'crise de style', Marielle Macé views this crisis in art not as a failure but as an exercise, a 'pratique du monde', which should be read with the notion of the dandy in mind. See 'Baudelaire, une stylistique de l'existence', Collège de France, 20 March 2012, <http://www.college-de-france.fr/site/antoine-compagnon/seminar-2012-03-20-17h30.htm>; Jérôme David, 'Baudelaire à Bruxelles: Style de la flânerie et individuation esthétique', in *Le Style en acte*, pp. 87-98.

that allow an existential aesthetics in Baudelaire.⁴⁸⁶ David adds that it is '[l]a flânerie en actes' that establishes this act of individuation as 'une dialectique de stylisation de l'autre et d'autostylisation'.⁴⁸⁷ Whereas the dandy's attention to style is a stable pose and a heightened consciousness of the self, the *flâneur* is engaged in a constant stylisation which is part of a constellation with the exterior. *Flânerie* becomes a mobile and dynamic state of intertwining reciprocity as well as an embodiment of both form and life.

In Baudelaire's *Exposition universelle* (1855), he claims that '[l]'artiste ne relève que de lui-même' and '[i]l ne promet aux siècles à venir que ses propres œuvres' (*OC II* 581). The artistic work embodies the self of the creator. Nevertheless, the notion of the self is complex. In his literary works, references to the self are often presented in references to the reader, to the speaker of the work, or to the poet. In fact, Baudelaire's *Spleen de Paris* is known for its satirical features at various levels. Scott observes that many poems in the collection can attest to Baudelaire's penchant for hoaxes: there is 'an ironic dimension that was intended to go unperceived by most readers of the time' in order to amuse 'an author who felt misunderstood by his contemporaries' and 'imagined or anticipated readers who would detect his irony'.⁴⁸⁸ In prose poems like 'Le Chien et le flacon' and 'Les Bons Chiens', for instance, Scott argues that Baudelaire renders the reader his satirical target.⁴⁸⁹ Besides a complicated intertextuality,

⁴⁸⁶ She also relates the *cadre* to Baudelaire's 'Les Fenêtres': Baudelaire's frame offers a form and yet, it demonstrates his singularity. See 'Baudelaire, une stylistique de l'existence'.

⁴⁸⁷ 'Baudelaire à Bruxelles', p. 89. Author's emphasis.

⁴⁸⁸ *Baudelaire's 'Le Spleen de Paris'*, p. 23.

⁴⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 127.

she considers 'Le Chien et le flacon' to be an allegory of literary reception.⁴⁹⁰ The dog is horrified by the fine perfume that the narrator presents:

«- Ah! misérable chien, si je vous avais offert un paquet d'excréments, vous l'auriez flairé avec délices et peut être dévoré. Ainsi, vous-même, indigne compagnon de ma triste vie, vous ressemblez au public, à qui il ne faut jamais présenter des parfums délicats qui l'exaspèrent, mais des ordures soigneusement choisies.» (OC I 284)

This overt insult to the reader, as Scott interprets it, may not merely be an accusation of other poets' failure to appreciate *Les Fleurs du mal*, but also an invitation to the reader 'to embark on a search for covert meanings in the prose poems', which, though they may appear to be excrements, are 'soigneusement choisies' by the poet.⁴⁹¹ In 'Les Bons Chiens', the concluding poem of the whole collection, a satirical tone is also highly present: as Scott mentions, the poem 'might be understood to mock readers who do sympathize with the poet as much as those who do not', as good dogs are nonetheless poor, pitiful and flea ridden.⁴⁹² Even the '*œuvre sans nom*' in 'la chambre du saltimbanque absent' could be read as self-referential: the collection of prose poems is the very *œuvre* with an absent author (OC I 362).⁴⁹³ Scott's unconventional reading of *Le Spleen de Paris* aims to distinguish the narrator of the poems from the poet. Comparing Baudelaire's prose poems to the configuration of writing in his various essays, she argues that the real self the poet wants to convey is often the contrary to that of the narrator.

⁴⁹⁰ Ibid., p. 127.

⁴⁹¹ Ibid., p. 124.

⁴⁹² Ibid., p. 127.

⁴⁹³ Ibid., p. 128. Note that the 'saltimbanque absent' is an internal reference to 'Le Vieux Saltimbanque' in the collection.

Self-satire, self-parody and self-irony are essential to the interrogation of the notion of the self in modernist works. While most of this discussion is prompted by the dandy figure in Baudelaire, I would like to demonstrate that Woolf's *Orlando: A Biography* (1928) serves as a stylistic reflection that falls back to the self – the eponymous protagonist and the work. The novel is a reflection on the making of biography. Its conspicuous subtitle, *A Biography*, suggests that the work concerns Orlando's legendary life, which strangely spans hundreds of years and straddles two genders. Despite the pretence, this self-proclaimed biography proves to be an anti-biography, as Woolf purposely satirises the genre of biography writing through the narrator's comments. The narrator reveals the discrepancy between clock time and inner time, criticising the insufficiency of traditional biography writing:

But the biographer, whose interests are, as we have said, highly restricted, must confine himself to one simple statement: when a man has reached the age of thirty, as Orlando now had, time when he is thinking becomes inordinately long; time when he is doing becomes inordinarily short.⁴⁹⁴

Without breaking the frame of convention, the traditional writer (here, apparently, the biographer) is confined to 'one simple statement'. However, in making such a claim, the novel refers to itself (a biography), revealing the difficulty in recording life: Orlando's life. An even bolder self-reference appears, when the narrator criticises chronicle biography recording life month by month:

This method of writing biography, though it has its merits, is a little bare, perhaps, and the reader, if we go on with it, may complain that he could recite the calendar for himself and so save his pocket whatever sum the Hogarth Press may think proper to charge for this book. (*O* 152)

⁴⁹⁴ *O*, p. 58. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

It seems that Woolf is highly aware of the biographer's insufficient configuration, which reduces the human mind to one single temporality. In the making of a fake biography, Woolf is in fact questioning the gap between temporalities and the possibility of representing modern life. By mentioning her own publishing house, the Hogarth Press, Woolf also shows her awareness of her role as a writer, and more importantly, of her reader, whose taste can influence the market.

In addition, self-reference is not limited to the narrator. The eponymous protagonist Orlando is also a writer. The novel ends up disentangling the very process of writing through Orlando's poem 'The Oak Tree', whose composition spans several hundred years. The narrator comments on the power of poetry, strongly asserting the influence of words:

No time, no devotion, can be too great, therefore, which makes the vehicle of our message less distorting. We must shape our words till they are the thinnest integument for our thoughts. Thoughts are divine, etc. (O 101)

The shaping of words into a thin layer corresponds to the idea that meanings are malleable and it requires the writer's great strength to confront literary convention in order to engender this 'thinnest integument'.

Apart from presenting Orlando as a writer, Woolf also expresses her observation, if not mockery, of the literary market through Nick Greene's reaction to Orlando's manuscript. Originally dismissing contemporary poetry, Nick Greene's attitude changes completely, when he meets Orlando in London several centuries later:

'A manuscript!' said Sir Nicholas, [...] 'How interesting, how excessively interesting! Permit me to look at it.' And once more, after an interval of some three hundred years, Nicholas Greene took Orlando's poem and, laying it down among the coffee cups and the liqueur glasses, began to read it. But now his verdict was very different from what it had been then. (O 160)

Woolf's satirical tone continues as Nick Greene asks about royalties for the manuscript, but Orlando, unfamiliar as she is with a commercialised literary market, thinks about 'Buckingham Palace and some dusky potentates who happened to be staying there' (*O* 160). Orlando as a writer is subjected to a capitalist market – even words fall into the world of commodities.

I argue that Woolf uses the uncertainty of Orlando's gender and the self – 'she was man; she was woman; she knew the secrets, shared the weakness of each' (*O* 92) – to reflect the self's shifting mobility. Orlando's androgyny can be viewed as a challenge to assumptions of one's identity and gender. As Perry Meisel explains, Woolf's language does not only record but also 'performs' 'an exchange or crossing between the social and psychological that fashions world and subjects alike from the ground up'.⁴⁹⁵ This kind of 'active writing' allows coexistence of 'rival or contradictory assumptions'.⁴⁹⁶ Besides Orlando's androgynous nature, Woolf also questions the notion of the self embedded in one's name. For instance, Orlando's self is put into vacillation, as she ponders, calling out 'Orlando?':

It is the most usual thing in the world for a person to say, directly they are alone, Orlando? (if that is one's name) meaning by that, Come, come! I'm sick to death of this particular self. I want another. [...] But it is not altogether plain sailing, either, for though one may say, as Orlando said (being out in the country and needing another self presumably) Orlando?

⁴⁹⁵ *The Cowboy and the Dandy: Crossing over from Romanticism to Rock and Roll* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2000), p. 106.

⁴⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 106. Therefore, Meisel coins the term 'crosswriting' to describe 'the transgression or crossing over of one's own assumptions even as they are put into place'. *Ibid.*, 108. As Susan Fillin-Yeh aptly argues, Orlando, Woolf's 'dandified, cross-dressed hero/heroine' is linked to Baudelaire's dandy, who hails ambiguities and who 'seem constantly and irrepressibly to reinvent the mode of behavior'. See Fillin-Yeh, 'Introduction: New Strategies for a Theory of Dandies', in *Dandies: Fashion and Finesse in Art and Culture*, ed. by Fillin-Yeh (New York: NYUP, 2001), pp. 1-34 (pp. 2, 6).

still the Orlando she needs may not come; these selves of which we are built up, one on top of another, as plates are piled on a waiter's hand, have attachment elsewhere, sympathies, little constitutions and tights of their own, [...]; for everybody can multiply from his own experience the different terms which his different selves have made with him – and some are too wildly ridiculous to be mentioned in print at all. (*O* 175)

What does Orlando mean? Woolf posits different avatars for the character Orlando, but there is always one that is missing, an imperfection reflecting the constant quest for *line-scape*. *Orlando* is permeated with Woolf's concerns with the notion of the self. They are not only presented in the form of self-reference to the novel and to writing, but also in a more intricate manner: by creating Orlando, Woolf brings to the fore a very fluid subject, linked to Woolf's *line-scape*. The so-called self is constantly negotiating with other selves. It is not a fixed enclosed entity; rather, as phenomenology would describe it, being is incessantly relating to the exterior. The boundaries of the self are thus blurred; subjectivity is fluid.

It is in this perspective that Baudelaire's theory of correspondences can be regarded as a conception of blurred subjectivity. Baudelaire's fondness for synaesthesia demonstrates how language, the subject, and the world are all intertwined. In his well-known poem 'Correspondances', a man situated in nature's temple traverses the 'forêts de symboles', the speaker asserts that '[l]es parfums, les couleurs et les sons se répondent' (*OC I* 11). The perfumes expand their olfactive effect to other senses – 'frais comme des chairs d'enfants,/ Doux comme les hautbois, verts comme les prairies' (*OC I* 11). The poem concludes that the perfumes 'chantent les transports de l'esprit et des sens' (*OC I* 11). These singing perfumes direct sensory experiences to the tactile, the visual, and the auditory; one corresponds to another and yet all achieve 'une ténébreuse et

profonde unité' (*OCI* 11). The man on the scene also participates in the 'correspondances'. Indeed, the subject and object in the world are open to each other; this openness allows for translation, the endless chain of *autrement-dit*. In a broader sense, the reversibility of the flesh that phenomenology promotes could also be related to a reversibility between senses.⁴⁹⁷ In the wake of Merleau-Ponty, Grosz asserts that 'translation' of various senses into one another is possible, thanks to the unity provided by the body image.⁴⁹⁸ Such a negotiation configures a kind of literary *flânerie*, lending to writing the walking figure's steps. The act of walking aimlessly points to literary creation and the writer's venturing into otherness in the attempt to capture the self.

Finally, the writer's configuration of style and the *flâneur's* situation in the gap may be extended to elucidate their situation in the gap between prose and poetry. I will elaborate on the concept of frame to render the discussion more fruitful: it first designates the image of a frame – the window – which, as mentioned above, appears in the work of both Baudelaire and Woolf as a sort of limitation of the present from which the poetic *I* or the protagonist strives to break away. The window frame denotes a border, and yet, it is a border to be transgressed through imagination; consequently, writing performs an attempted break from the frame. Moreover, language itself sets a frame: in order to communicate efficiently, language users must obey, to different degrees, linguistic rules and convention. However, the writer challenges such a set frame, which, in a modernist context, is no longer sufficient to deal with the experience

⁴⁹⁷ I have addressed the body's reversibility in chapter two, pp. 81-2. See also Grosz, *Volatile Bodies*, p. 108.

⁴⁹⁸ *Volatile Bodies*, p. 100.

of modernity. In so doing, the writer writes in Merleau-Ponty's 'langage parlant'. In a similar vein, Todorov's analysis entails a more global view on language, literature, and genres. He interprets the notion of genres along with the concept of transgression: '[a] new genre is always the transformation of an earlier one, or of several: by inversion, by displacement, by combination'.⁴⁹⁹ He adds that 'genres exist as an institution: they function as "horizon of expectation" for readers and as "models of writing" for authors'; as a result, genres serve as an indirect form of communication with the whole society.⁵⁰⁰ Todorov's stance emphasises genres as a social codification. These linguistic and social aspects of genres can be regarded as another frame. The linguistic frame is coupled with the built urban streets. The writer-*flâneur* must deal with both limitations, aiming to transform them through an individual stylisation. In this way, the frame of the self-other border becomes unsettled; language is constantly being reinvented, witnessing the creation of Merleau-Ponty's 'langage parlant'. Interestingly, in his discussion of genres, Todorov's essays on the poetic novel and prose poetry point to my authors in question. Both Baudelaire and Woolf confront the outdated genres in their respective epochs. Their experiments with poetry and prose lead to very different developments. I shall therefore pay particular attention to Baudelaire's prose poetry and Woolf's poetic prose, scrutinising their inversion, displacement and combination of genres, to borrow Todorov's words, in order to further delineate the two authors' *line-scape*.

Todorov examines the practice of prose poetry by asserting Baudelaire's status in popularising the genre, despite the widely recognised fact that he is not

⁴⁹⁹ *Genres*, p. 15.

⁵⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 18-9.

its inventor: Baudelaire introduced it 'on to the horizon of his contemporaries and his followers, who made it a model of writing'.⁵⁰¹ Indeed, Baudelaire may be credited with legitimating the genre, bestowing upon it its *lettres de noblesse*.⁵⁰² His status as a precursor of the genre is based on the fact that he establishes a standardisation or codification for prose poetry. Reading Baudelaire's *Petits poèmes en prose*, Todorov observes that opposition and duality underscore the collection: for Baudelaire, 'the poetic is envisaged here only in its contradictory union with prose'.⁵⁰³ Yet, Todorov admits that it seems impossible to conclude what makes a text poetic. His attempt to extract the essence of 'poeticity' might not reach a conclusion, but the antithesis embedded in prose and poetry appears to be fundamental in Baudelaire's work, if not in all practitioners of the genre.

Robert Greer Cohn further elaborates on this antithesis, for he discerns a crossing of the vertical and horizontal lines in the prose poem in general. According to Cohn, the prose poem 'seems fated to a *croisée* (casement window) effect' due to its shape on the page, which 'reflects the poetic brevity and density (vertically) combined with the horizontal lines of the narrative'.⁵⁰⁴ It is through such a horizontal and vertical intersection that Baudelaire manages to 'interpenetrate powerfully (though delicately)' the huge gap created by the tension between prose and poetry; therefore, Cohn concludes that the horizontal

⁵⁰¹ *Genres*, p. 62. As Bayle explains, Baudelaire inherits a long tradition of prose poetry; the expression 'poème en prose' has Romanticist connotations and has triggered numerous discussions of style. See *Nocturne de l'âme moderne*, pp. 35-41.

⁵⁰² See also Pichois's 'Notice' on *Spleen de Paris* in *OC I*, p. 1295.

⁵⁰³ *Genres*, p. 66.

⁵⁰⁴ 'A Poetry-Prose Cross', in *The Prose Poem in France: Theory and Practice*, ed. by Mary Ann Caws and Hermine Riffaterre (New York: Columbia UP, 1983), pp. 135-62 (p. 139).

and the vertical 'tremble on the brink of changing places, as always occurs in lively mating, crossing, or multiplication'.⁵⁰⁵ In other words, the choice of prose poetry is not so much a rejection of lyricism as a rejection of a fixed window frame. The word *croisée* is not a random choice because it means both a crossing and a casement window. It symbolises a frame of limitation, but also allows the intersection of the vertical and the horizontal lines. In portraying the gap of modernity, prose poetry stresses the attempt to reach from the poetic end towards the prose end, ending up as a crossing in between the two. Cohn's idea asserts the ability of prose poetry to achieve *line-scape* and to reflect the gap of modernity. His use of the verb *interpenetrate* also refers to the movement that Richard and Poulet take great pains to elucidate. After all, the '*croisement*' implies intersecting relationships between the self and the other, and between the future and the past; all form a *carrefour* 'alive with such cross-purposes'.⁵⁰⁶ The essence of Baudelaire's prose poetry lies exactly in its constant crossing: not only in its structure and linguistic properties but also in the themes it treats. We see a constant crossing of time and space in poems such as 'La Chambre Double', and 'L'Horloge', in which imaginary space or atemporality are presented. These '*croisées*', however, are not mere juxtapositions of oppositional themes. Crossing implies an action in progress, while opposition tends to feature two fixed notions; the idea of crossing goes beyond opposition and its implication of a fixed contrast. More importantly, the notion of crossing fits in well with the emphasis on the city's movement, with phenomenology's stress on openness, and above of all, with the *flâneur*'s search for the self. Ultimately, the crossing of prose poetry

⁵⁰⁵ Ibid., p. 144. Author's emphasis.

⁵⁰⁶ Ibid., p. 147.

can be seen as a crossing between the self and the other; a boundary blurred and a frame called into question. This crossing features not so much opposition as relationality, or even reversibility. In the prose poem 'Les Foules', for instance, Baudelaire presents the art of 'jouir de la foule' (OC I 291). The self is interchangeable with the multitude; multitude and solitude are 'termes égaux et convertibles pour le poète actif et fécond' (OC I 291). Otherness permeates the self. The speaker's call to 'peupler' the solitude reflects the prosification of poetry: '[i]l [le poète] peut à sa guise être lui-même et autrui' (OC I 291); a theme revisited later in the collection in 'Les Fenêtres'. When the speaker weaves the old lady's legend into the prose poem, the self-other distinction is erased, the prose-poetry boundary is also challenged. Crossing does not place one over the other, but reflects the very gap in between.

Commenting on the properties of prose poetry, the poet Michel Deguy – who happens to be a disciple of Baudelaire – brings up the instrumental mediation in writing: he notes that with 'la main au stylo', there is a 'possibilité indécise' between prose and poetry.⁵⁰⁷ As such, the *flâneur* also serves as a writing device. Michel Beaujour asserts that Baudelaire's prose poetry is consubstantial with the idea of *flânerie*: some of the titles which Baudelaire had in mind for the collection were *le rôdeur* and *le promeneur*.⁵⁰⁸ Beaujour argues

⁵⁰⁷ Michel Deguy, 'Poème en prose, prose en poème', in *The Prose Poem*, pp. 215-230 (p. 216).

⁵⁰⁸ 'Short Epiphanies: Two Contextual Approaches to the French Prose Poem', in *The Prose Poem*, pp. 39-59 (p. 46). In her study of Baudelaire's consideration of potential titles to his prose poetry collection, Sonya Stephens notes that the related titles appear not only in publication but also in Baudelaire's private correspondence: all together, possible titles invite speculation and analysis not because of what the correct title should be, but because it reveals a more

that such titles imply first 'tableaux observed in passing by a typical nineteenth-century Parisian flâneur' and 'an explicit or implicit moral provided by the stroller's points of view'.⁵⁰⁹ It is worth noting that while the word 'rôdeur' is loaded with negative connotations in that it implies lurking, 'le promeneur' is too vague and weak to describe the urban walk. The *flâneur*, however, proves to be elastic enough to accommodate the poet's demand for an observer of *line-scape* and is hence embedded in Baudelaire's writing. While such contextual elements seem to be insufficient to explain Baudelaire's literary *flânerie*, it does reveal how the strolling figure helps to portray *line-scape*. In his famous preface to *Petits poèmes en prose*, Baudelaire himself also writes that 'une prose poétique' is generated 'de la fréquentation des villes énormes' and 'du croisement de leurs innombrables rapports' (*OC I 276*). This prose is 'assez souple et assez heurtée pour s'adapter aux mouvements lyriques de l'âme, aux ondulations de la rêverie, aux soubresauts de la conscience' (*OC I 276*).⁵¹⁰ It is important to point out that the word 'soubresauts' suggests not only an abrupt movement, but also a shock; the tension is ongoing and the self is shaken.⁵¹¹ The *croisée* effect proposed by Cohn does not offer a static frame of observation and opposition; instead, it features a tension and movement.⁵¹²

fundamental question of how to designate a work. See *Baudelaire's Prose Poems: The Practice and Politics of Irony* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1999), pp. 3-5.

⁵⁰⁹ Beaujour, 'Short Epiphanies', p. 46.

⁵¹⁰ Scott offers an alternative reading of the preface as a caricature. See *Baudelaire's Le Spleen de Paris*, pp. 23-4.

⁵¹¹ 'Soubresaut, subst. masc.': 'Mouvement brusque, convulsif et involontaire du corps ou d'une partie du corps'. *TLFi*, <<http://atilf.atilf.fr/tlf.htm>> [accessed 14/07/2015].

⁵¹² The intersecting effect is also to be found in the complicated rhyme scheme in Baudelaire's *Les Fleurs du mal*. Hence, Graham Chesters explains the importance of Baudelaire's use of 'reinforced rhymes', rhymes at the end of the line that may

Just as the window image in both Baudelaire and Woolf suggests the self's potential relationship with others, the *croisée* of the prose-poetry boundary also suggests an intention and a movement, a sort of *flânerie*, promoting chiasm. Such an intersection of genres is not absent from Woolf's writing, either. Woolf lamented the inability of conventional genres to accommodate modern life. In her essay 'Poetry, Fiction and the Future' (1927), she envisages a kind of writing that is able to adapt to modern emotions:

It will be written in prose, but in prose which has many of the characteristics of poetry. It will have something of the exaltation of poetry, but much of the ordinariness of prose. [...]. By what name we are to call it is not a matter of very great importance. What is important is that this book which we see on the horizon may serve to express some of those feelings which seem at the moment to be balked by poetry pure and simple and to find the drama equally inhospitable to them. Let us try, then, to come to closer terms with it and to imagine what may be its scope and its nature. (*E IV* 435)

This passage reflects her struggle to create a new kind of writing whose label is not important but whose nature is flexible enough to tailor to the 'monstrous, hybrid, unmanageable emotions; of human beings' (*E IV* 429). As Woolf configures, the new type of writing must 'dramatise some of those influences which play so large part in life, yet have so far escaped the novelist' (*E IV* 439). From 'the power of music, the stimulus of sight, the effect on us of the shape of trees or the play of colour, the emotions bred in us by crowds' to 'the delight of movement', Woolf concludes that '[e]very moment is the centre of a meeting place, of an extraordinary number of perceptions which have not yet been

seem to be weak at first sight, but are 'reinforced by equivalences which lurk further back in the line'. The reinforced rhyme is different from alliteration because the latter tends to enhance 'a horizontal musicality (*i.e.* along and within the line); the former, however, seeks to 'enrich the vertical musicality and the visual effect of rhyme'. See *Baudelaire and the Poetics of Craft* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1988), pp. 16-7.

expressed' (*E IV* 439). Modern life in Woolf's depiction is filled with various sensual experiences, merging to form a moment; yet, it has not been fully explored by the writer. Her novels are experimental in her attempt to describe the shifting-changing moments in the inner consciousness of the characters and in her use of interweaving fragmented voices to construct the same scene. Such multifaceted realisation forms a literary *flânerie* approaching the novels' *line-scape*. The car accident scene in *Mrs Dalloway*, for example, shows the traffic at a standstill, while thoughts and words continue to spread:

Yet rumours were at once in circulation from the middle of Bond Street to Oxford Street on one side, to Atkinson's scent shop on the other, passing invisibly, inaudibly, like a cloud, swift, veil-like upon hills [...]. But now mystery had brushed them with her wing; they had heard the voice of authority; the spirit of religion was abroad with her eyes bandaged tight and her lips gaping wide. But nobody knew whose face had been seen. Was it the Prince of Wales's, the Queen's, the Prime Minister's? Whose face was it? Nobody knew. (*MD* 13)

Whereas the face behind the car window forms an opaque centre, this symbol of power engenders rumours rather than authority. The unknown figure seems to suggest a determined attempt to control ('they had heard the voice of authority'), but the mobility and fluidity of the rumours deny this possibility. Rumours emerge as new meanings to define the so-called centre. Speculating about the figure inside the car, the surrounding characters demonstrate their desire to see and know; narration flows from one voice to another with no confirmation ever, creating the effect of a chain of endlessly reverberating *autrement-dit*. This uncertainty does not undermine the narrative power, but engenders a positive denial of authority, enriching the scene with the fruits of 'langage parlant'. In this way, Woolf's construction of the novel as a whole becomes a literary *flânerie*; like

many of Woolf's novels, the centre remains unknowable or empty, through which the dynamics of language become more evident.

Furthermore, Woolf's attempt to break narrative limits also renders her prose writing poetic. Woolf creates poetic prose that reveals her own situation in the prose-poetry gap. David Lodge has investigated Woolf's writing, drawing upon Roman Jakobson's linguistic theory, which aligns prose with metonymy due to its contiguity, and poetry with metaphor for its similarity.⁵¹³ While the traditional novel is essentially metonymic, Lodge argues that modernist fiction tends to utilise metonymy to achieve a metaphorical mode of writing.⁵¹⁴ According to this prose-poetry distinction, Woolf's poetic prose is moving towards the metaphorical pole, while Baudelaire's prose poetry moves towards the metonymic one. This linguistic configuration, however, remains in the realm of the textual space and appears to be slightly reductive, because it tends to overlook the urban space as a source for the writer to *translate*. The writer is faced with a twofold gap: the gap of modernity in the city, and the discrepancy between prose and poetry in textual space. Stressing the *flâneur* figure as a translation tool in between, I argue that the writer's situation is more complicated than a movement from prose towards poetry, or the other way round. Writing, as Baudelaire and Woolf have demonstrated, is not only a linguistic configuration; more fundamentally, it is an attempt to bridge the gap between dislocating spaces and temporalities. Subjectivity thus reaches out towards the external world to *translate* experience of modernity into textual

⁵¹³ See also n. 416, pp. 169-70.

⁵¹⁴ David Lodge, 'The Language of Modernist Fiction: Metaphor and Metonymy', in *Modernism: A Guide to European Literature 1890-1930*, pp. 481-96 (pp. 482-4).

space; conversely, experience of the city also relies on reading urban space as a text. It is the writer's sensitivity to both movements that renders literary works creative. In the vein of phenomenology, the writer's crossing into the textual space entails translating the being-in-the-world into a being-in-the-text. The self is only revealed through a lived relation with the other in both spaces; it is contemporaneous with the portrayal of otherness. Todorov reminds us, in his analysis of the genre, that 'the literary genres turn out to be the textual projection of the diversity of human attitudes to life'.⁵¹⁵ In other words, genres present not one univocal voice but the potential of subjectivity as related to other possibilities. They offer a frame to interrogate *line-scape*, but they are not fixed demarcations of literary works.

In terms of prose poetry, the question of the self is linked to its tendency of being brief. While most theorists recognise brevity as a feature of prose poetry,⁵¹⁶ Rabaté adds that in modern poetry, brevity serves as 'un système esthétique' that renders evident a condition featuring fragmentation and discontinuity; more precisely, he establishes a close link between 'les rapports de la brièveté et de la question du Moi'.⁵¹⁷

⁵¹⁵ *Genres*, p. 59. Todorov questions the criteria of poeticity and sums up four properties that make a novel poetic: 'the nature of the actions; the narrative embeddings, or the second-degree narratives; the parallelisms; the use of allegory'. He further explains that it is the combination of all four features that renders a work poetic. Instead of reading Woolf's novels along with certain properties that he proposes, however, I believe it is more essential to understand how the frame of genres is challenged through the writer's spatial operation than to dwell too much upon specific linguistic traits. See *Genres*, p. 53.

⁵¹⁶ See *The Prose Poem in France*, p. vii, xi; Beaujour, 'Short Epiphanies', in *ibid.*, p. 40.

⁵¹⁷ *Poétiques de la voix* (Paris: José Corti, 1999), p. 42.

Woolf's poetic novel may not share the trait of brevity with prose poetry, but the element of exploration of human relationships is as evident. *The Waves* is probably one of the most prominent novels that demonstrate myriad attitudes towards life and interlacing human relationships. This results from not only the six voices woven together, but also from the structure of the novel itself, which seems to reflect the intertwined nature of the self and the other. Melvin J. Friedman suggests that Woolf utilises 'interchapters' to 'locate the position of the sun in the sky and the movement of the waves' in order to 'establish her poetic presence in the novel'.⁵¹⁸ Indeed, these inter-chapters themselves are seemingly omniscient narratives with seemingly random subjects, the majority of which are about animals and natural scenes, all depicted poetically. Nevertheless, such a postulation tends to separate the inter-chapters from the rest of the soliloquies and undermine the distinct *line-scape* that Woolf draws throughout the entire work. In fact, the interludes are intricately linked to the main narrative. Woolf's poetic presence can be seen as subjectivity that permeates textual space. Cohn's argument about prose poetry can be elaborated here: as prose tends to be horizontal due to its narrative nature; poetry exerts its vertical direction thanks to the juxtaposition of images and rhymes. The intersection of the two creates a crossing. In *The Waves*, the inter-chapters are interlaced with the main body of the novel. The imagery of snails and birds, for instance, permeates the novel, breaking down the distinction of the interludes and the soliloquies. Woolf depicts the birds singing in the garden in one of the interludes: '[t]hey [the birds] spied a snail and tapped the shell against a stone'; '[t]hey tapped furiously,

⁵¹⁸ 'The Symbolist Novel: Huysmans to Malraux', in *Modernism: A Guide to European Literature 1890-1930*, pp. 453-66 (pp. 459-60).

methodically, until the shell broke and something slimy oozed from the crack' (*W* 86). The action of birds smashing snails seems to suggest something rooted in human nature, some sort of violence. Later on, Bernard distinguishes a person's inside and outside: using similar images, he compares the self to '[a] shell [which] forms upon the soft soul, nacreous, shiny, upon which sensations tap their beaks in vain' (*W* 204). Whitworth notes Woolf's fondness for the metaphors of snail, which speak to 'vulnerable souls secreting protective shells'.⁵¹⁹ From the characters' point of view, Woolf's interludes appear to be allegorical,⁵²⁰ indicating man-woman relationships in which the women, whose beaks are somehow sensual, become aggressive and intrusive, while the men remain closed and defensive. Together, the seemingly nonchalant nature that Woolf describes becomes engaged with human relationships. In this light, Whitworth contends that *The Waves* is essentially concerned with the relation between individuals and groups: the snail shell can be said to be a barrier, 'a shell of individuality formed over the soul'.⁵²¹ The theme of individuality and collectivity underscores the work as a whole, since Whitworth reads the waves as 'individuals torn from a larger fluid mass'.⁵²² While Whitworth's analysis of imagery helps to lay the fundamental theme of the novel, the violent deed remains unsolved and resists one single interpretation. This sort of recurring imagery does not merely indicate a novelist's poetic existence; more importantly,

⁵¹⁹ *Virginia Woolf* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2005), p. 1. See also my analysis of the imagery of snail in *The Waves* in this chapter, n. 315, p. 127.

⁵²⁰ Even though my reading is not complying with Todorov's criteria for a poetic novel, it is still worth noting that the use of allegory is one of his criteria in defining the poeticity of the novel. See this chapter, n. 515, p. 212.

⁵²¹ *Virginia Woolf*, p. 188.

⁵²² *Ibid.*, p. 188.

it forms subjectivity to challenge the genre frame. The writer is formulating a sort of *flânerie* to inhabit *and* cross the gap between various voices of the novel, and Woolf does not offer any certain answer to it: it is a movement that approaches *line-scape*.

Ultimately, the crossing is also a crossing in time: not clock time but a time that divides life and death. The gap of modernity becomes a universal gap that concerns all human beings. The writer's being is again situated in between. The *flâneur* may help approach literary horizon in that *flânerie* celebrates a lived experience, and yet it also points to what lies beyond the horizon: what cannot be taken up and lived through – death. Writing indicates not only what has been written but also what seems invisible. Beneath this universal human condition, the city prompts sensations that dramatise the experience of the gap. The most extreme experience of the gap is what Baudelaire calls a profundity. Collot argues that Baudelaire prompts an awareness of 'l'ouverture d'une telle dimension de *profondeur*'.⁵²³ Indeed, in Baudelaire's own words, he describes in his *Fusées* that '[i]l y a des moments de l'existence où le temps et l'étendue sont plus profonds'; '[d]ans certains états de l'âme presque surnaturels, où *la profondeur de la vie* se révèle tout entière dans le spectacle, si ordinaire qu'il soit, qu'on a sous les yeux' (*OC I* 658-9 emphasis original). What Collot emphasises is in fact the possibility of a literary work revealing the ultimate human condition of death, Baudelaire's '*profondeur de la vie*'.⁵²⁴ This profundity, however, leads to

⁵²³ *La Poésie*, p. 25. Author's emphasis.

⁵²⁴ The term *profondeur* is of course a leitmotif in Baudelaire, not the least in his *Journaux intimes*. It is related to the concept of poetic depth. Hence, Yves Bonnefoy claims that 'Baudelaire invente la mort' in the sense that the poet discerns in it 'un aspect profond de la naissance des êtres, en un sens leur seule

a rooted human dilemma: human existence in time and space is confined to the here and now.⁵²⁵ Collot identifies the modern poet's struggle with this condition: what Baudelaire calls the '*profondeur de la vie*' is in fact the 'crue simultanée de l'espace extérieur et de l'espace du dedans'.⁵²⁶ It is not the visible, but the intertwining between the visible and the invisible; it is not a fixture but a constant movement towards an unattainable horizon.⁵²⁷ What is really important is that the invisible sphere opens up 'l'espace à perte de vue', which signifies a loss of the self, leading to a 'plongée dans des profondeurs intérieures qui échappent à l'inspection de la conscience'.⁵²⁸ In textual space, death can be portrayed as a vertical descending that disrupts the horizontal progress on the page. Baudelaire is obsessed with the image of death. As part of his *profondeur*, he has transformed the Romanticist image of *gouffre* into the sunken holes of death in 'Danse macabre'. This poem from *Tableaux parisiens* section describes the dance of the skeletons, whom the speaker addresses:

Le gouffre de tes yeux, plein d'horribles pensées,
Exhale le vertige, et les danseurs prudents
Ne contempleront pas sans d'amères nausées
Le sourire éternel de tes trente-deux dents. (OC I 97)

Death replaces vision; the skeletons' eyes become the very 'gouffre' that represents death. Vanel-Coytte regards this 'gouffre' as a '[p]esanteur spatiale et

réalité'. Bonnefoy, *L'Improbable et autres essais: suivi d'Un rêve fait à Mantoue* (Paris: Gallimard, 1992), p.116.

⁵²⁵ This condition also underlines Richard's and Poulet's reading of sinuosity. See pp. 179-80 of this chapter.

⁵²⁶ *La Poésie*, p. 26.

⁵²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 26.

⁵²⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 27-8.

allongement temporel du spleen'.⁵²⁹ Furthermore, the 'sourire éternel' of the 'trente-deux dents' ironically reveals how eternity is a mere illusion (*OC I 97*); death is juxtaposed with eternity. The vivid and detailed description of the skeletons' appearance, especially the reference to the teeth, bears an allusion to the phobia of the passage of time, represented in the schema of manducation: in his account of 'les visages du temps', Gilbert Durand reads the schema of the monster as part of 'un symbolisme «mordicant»'.⁵³⁰ This emphasis on biting implies a 'sadisme dentaire', and the image of 'la gueule armée de dents acérées' forms the literary visage of Kronos, the ogre of Time – hence Durand brings forth the expression '«la morsure du temps»'.⁵³¹ Therefore, Baudelaire's depiction has incorporated not merely the symbol of death itself but also the fear rooted in himself as well as in all humans: that of the passage of Time.⁵³² The skeletons are the victims of Kronos, the monster Time: their flesh has been devoured by Time while what remains are the biting teeth and the sunken eyeholes; they symbolise the very anxiety and anguish of mortals.

More dramatically perhaps, the theme of death concludes *The Waves*, when Bernard exclaims at the end of the novel:

⁵²⁹ *Des Paysages*, p. 140. Collot also dwells upon a similar image, resorting to the Lacanian notion of desire as an empty centre 'qui se creuse toujours davantage'; '[d]ans le paysage des écrivains modernes, l'horizon figure souvent, par son vide ou par son recul, cet insaisissable objet du désir', see *La Poésie*, p. 126. As I have argued in chapter one, the notion of the centre as an illusion applies to Woolf, too. See my discussion of *Jacob's Room* in chapter one, p. 64; the discussion of *The Waves* in chapter two, p. 108.

⁵³⁰ *Les Structures anthropologiques de l'imaginaire : introduction à l'archétypologie générale*, 9th edn (Paris: Bordas, 1969), p. 89.

⁵³¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 89-90.

⁵³² The theme of passage is indicated also in *flânerie*. See pp. 141-2 of this chapter.

'Death is the enemy, It is death against whom I ride with my spear couched and my hair flying back like a young man's, like Percival's, when he galloped in India. I strike spurs into my horse. Against you I will fling myself, unvanquished and unyielding, O Death!' (*W* 238)

The novel ends with the very words 'O Death'. Tony E. Jackson interprets this death as a modernist beginning.⁵³³ Indeed, the deaths of Septimus, Jacob, and Percival drive the progress of Woolf's *Mrs Dalloway*, *Jacob's Room*, and *The Waves* respectively. It is in the fear of death that the writer sees a rebirth. Ultimately, the writer is in dialogue not with life, but death. Although this negotiation never brings us closer to eternity, it somehow allows for *line-scape* that gives us hope for a future and a horizon.

Death and hope are both framed by the image of the window in *Mrs Dalloway*; both Clarissa's 'plunge' into the past and Septimus' suicide jump point to verticality intersecting with the horizontal line of the narrative.⁵³⁴ Both stop the horizontal narrative and call for a more profound understanding of time. As I have already addressed Clarissa's plunge into the past upon opening the French window, I believe that Septimus exerts a similar descending movement, though it signifies not a revisiting of the past, but death – as if he jumps into the very *gouffre* that haunts Baudelaire's imagination. Septimus sees no way out except for the window, '[t]here remained only the window [...], the large Bloomsbury lodging-house window; the tiresome, the troublesome, and rather melodramatic business of opening the window and throwing himself out' (*MD* 133). He thus 'flung himself vigorously, violently down on to Mrs Filmer's area railings' (*MD*

⁵³³ *The Subject of Modernism*, p. 160.

⁵³⁴ Thus, for Goldman, that Clarissa and Septimus 'both tread the streets of London, and have visible points of urban geography and experience in common' can be regarded as 'the parallax crux of the novel (and the crux of its satire)'. '1925, London, New York, Paris', p. 68.

134); his wife, Rezia, 'saw the large outline of his [Dr. Holmes'] body dark against the window' before being put into sleep after Septimus' suicide. As a social misfit, Septimus' plunge into death becomes a protest against Dr. Holmes, who represents the authority and dominant value of the time and sees Septimus as a 'coward' (*MD* 134). Woolf's use of window imagery is rather delicate. She describes Dr. Holmes' figure from Rezia's point of view, and thus creates a figure 'against the window', in stark contrast with Septimus' body thrown out of the window. Septimus performs a sort of vertical disruption to the so-called authorities, and as the news of his death ripples, it reaches Clarissa: '[o]h! thought Clarissa, in the middle of my party, here's death, she thought' (*MD* 164). Similar to the skeletons' sunken eyes in Baudelaire, the vertical movement brutally halts the horizontal progress, confronting the understanding of life and time. However, such a vertical drop does not cancel the horizontal line; it suggests less despair than life's various *sens* (hence my repeated use of the French word to stress the double meaning). *Line-scape* encompasses both vertical and horizontal lines not through their confrontation but through their intersection and crossing.

Straddling prose and poetry, Baudelaire and Woolf question the set frame of writing. By disrupting the notion of genres, they show how human relationships are interlaced, how the self is dependent on the other, and how death is not all despair. Just as the *flâneur* roams the city and the texts, creating new routes at each turn, the writer seeks new ways of expressing himself or herself in language to translate the experience of modernity.

Apart from this theoretical configuration, we should not, however, overlook the fact that this effort to translate derives from a zest for life in the

acceptance of death as the final resolution. The openness towards the other is not only crucial to imagination but also central to an ethical impulse. Commenting on Baudelaire's more mature works, Kaplan argues that they express a fundamental tension between ethics and aesthetics.⁵³⁵ Baudelaire's shifting perspective illustrates this concern of the self. The *flâneur* becomes a central figure, because the role itself is underpinned by mobility and instability. The way various personae are adapted has turned Baudelaire's work into *flânerie* between different minds. In a similar vein, L'Allier contends that '[l]e passage de l'intériorité à extériorité' provides 'une vision du monde plus ouverte à l'autre et à ses histoires sans fin, à la pluralité narrative du monde moderne'.⁵³⁶ After all, ethics and aesthetics are interwoven. Ethics entails a consideration of the subject as related to the other: what Judith Butler calls 'a deliberating subject'.⁵³⁷ Summarising the Foucaultian understanding of ethics, Butler further regards the consideration of the self as 'an aesthetics of the self that maintains a critical relation to existing norms'.⁵³⁸ Nevertheless, the understanding of the self often reaches an opacity, these very '[m]oments of unknowingness about oneself' become 'the venue for one's ethical responsibility'.⁵³⁹ This is why Rachel Hollander argues that 'a pervasive sense of unknowability saturates and shapes Woolf's experimental fiction'.⁵⁴⁰ According to her, 'it is exactly the encounter

⁵³⁵ *Baudelaire's Prose Poems*, p. 4.

⁵³⁶ 'Virginia Woolf et le moi ballotté', p. 140.

⁵³⁷ *Giving an Account of Oneself* (New York: Fordham UP, 2005), p. 8.

⁵³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 17.

⁵³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 20.

⁵⁴⁰ 'Novel Ethics: Alterity and Form in *Jacob's Room*', *Twentieth Century Literature*, 53.1 (2007), 40-66 (p. 41).

with otherness that defines the ethics of modernism'.⁵⁴¹ Woolf's unconventional narrative reveals an uncertainty; individuality is reconfigured through the loss of narrative control and in so doing, absolute subjectivity is denied.

By a translation of the other and a consideration of literary subjectivity, Baudelaire and Woolf reveal their profound concern with humanity: their writing has become an important asset to modernist literature because they implicitly question how to understand oneself in relation to history, society, and others. While the opacity persists, translation offers a constant attempt to make the unknown known, or more knowable; it is constantly approaching but never achieving it.

What matters, in the end, is not the rhyme and rhythm of lyrical poetry; rather, it is a more profound rhythm of life that chimes with the writer's concerns. It is the writer's predicament, love, hatred, confusion, and comprehension of modern life that incessantly mobilise words, create spaces, and engender new meanings. Guiguet also comments on Woolf's passion for and sensibility to life, affirming that her commitment makes her novels 'vibrate with the pulse of that human experience from which they spring'; '[a]ll the artist's

⁵⁴¹ Ibid., p. 41. From a more historical and political perspective, Jessica Berman investigates how the so-called high modernist writings are directly engaged with the transformation of community. Theories of community and political engagement are not my immediate topic, but they somehow echo the writer's ethical concerns: borrowing Jean-Luc Nancy's elaboration on 'being-together', a notion derived from the Heideggerian being-in-the-world, Jessica Berman argues that the care of self expands the being-in-the-world into being-together within a community – a 'compearance' in Nancy's words. She stresses such an engagement as 'the movement and translation of foreign experience (whether of the past or of a geographically distant place) into common experience'. This movement and translation, more importantly, are 'concomitant and never-ending'. See Jessica Berman, *Modernist Fiction, Cosmopolitanism, and the Politics of Community* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2001), pp. 14, 19.

virtuosity, all her efforts are bent towards the faithful expression of that experience'.⁵⁴² This assertion of the combination of life and art underscores the ambition of the modernist writer. The writer's journey is itself *flânerie* with an unknown and unapproachable destination – the ultimate horizon. *Line-scape* addresses this search and its impossibility. Starting from the urban streets, the *flâneur* has travelled far. I have located this figure in the gap of modernity and revealed how he is manipulated by the writer. By proposing the idea of *line-scape*, my *flânerie* does not aim to fully address the *flâneur's* path; rather, this work adds to a pervasive discussion of city literature, and perhaps renders more open and more porous the gap between urban and textual spaces.

⁵⁴² Virginia Woolf and *Her Works*, p. 461.

Conclusion

This thesis reviews and explores the idea of modernity, providing a new definition of it to elucidate its relationship with modernism. Experience of modernity is thus compared to the condition of being in the gap of a railway platform. Close analysis of the work of Baudelaire and Woolf has provided much evidence that the nature of modernity contains an unresolvable and paradoxical characteristic, a tendency that points to the dislocating spatiotemporal experience prominent in the city. Baudelaire's and Woolf's configuration of modernity does not aim to resolve such paradoxical nature; instead, they underscore this very condition of in-betweenness, a trait that attests to Baudelaire's famous definition of modernity as 'le transitoire, le fugitif, le contingent, la moitié de l'art, dont l'autre moitié est l'éternel et l'immuable' (*OC II* 695).

The notion of modernity has long been debated. Reviewing prominent discussions in the field, this study has demonstrated that defining modernity as a period of time can be reductive and problematic because this term has different connotations in English and French literary arenas. However, comparing it to the experience of the gap allows us to go beyond a time- and place-bound definition, and to highlight one's negotiation with a discrepant sense of time and space.

I discern that the figure of the *flâneur* and elements of *flânerie* help Baudelaire and Woolf to demonstrate the fluidity and the momentum embedded in the experience of modernity. The *flâneur* is not new to city literature, since the figure has been widely theorised, most notably by Benjamin. The interpretation of Benjamin's works, however, has contributed to disregarding the fact that life in the city involves multi-sensual experiences, and resulted in an overemphasis

on visuality. The overemphasis on sight prevailing in the Benjaminian discourse has also caused a fragmentation of urban experience. Moreover, the fact that the *flâneur* is a gendered term has also triggered debates on the possibility of the *flâneuse*, given the implication of prostitution linked to female street-walking.

This thesis speaks to these existing discussions and reminds us, nevertheless, that the *flâneur's* meandering in the city should not overlook the fact that experience of the city encompasses various sensual stimuli. This research understands *flânerie* as a particular consciousness developed by the writer to appreciate urban space. However gendered the experience may be, it is also a consequence of the fact that walking is an individual act through which one interacts with the other. *Flânerie* highlights a mobility that is available to all. Various senses are intertwined in the practice of *flânerie*, and should not be treated independently of each other because they contribute to a more holistic understanding of one's existence. Such an understanding of *flânerie* is implemented by referring to the Merleau-Pontian phenomenology. Whereas phenomenology accounts for an integrated understanding of being-in-the-world, Merleau-Ponty's notion of chiasm further emphasises the way in which one's consciousness depends on a consideration of the other. Similarly, *flânerie* may then be used to appreciate the urban space, which, in turn, asserts the existence of the self.

Since Merleau-Ponty hails 'langage parlant' as the innovative nature of language, his work also helps to interrogate the way in which the *flâneur* is deployed as a literary strategy. As I have pointed out, the stroller has a twofold existence and embodiment: one in urban space and one in textual space. Such an understanding reflects the intertwining relationship between walking and

writing, a notion that is crucial to studies of city literature. By aligning myself to a phenomenological stance and by interpreting the *flâneur's* role as an instrument for the writer, I have emphasised the writer's embodiment of, and openness to the external world by adopting the walking figure to reach out to the external other.

The writer's recourse to the *flâneur* to posit modernity leads to the creation of what I term *line-scape*. I coin this notion to designate the fruits of the writer's attempt to encapsulate modernity with the help of literary imagination. Its reference to a space between the lines points to imagination, with which the writer approaches the literary horizon. The term inherits from the tradition of landscape painting the implication of an observer with whom the external space interacts. The writer thus envisages literary subjectivity through the creation of *line-scape*. Furthermore, *line-scape* reflects the intertwining nature of the city and the text: both are readable and writable, as I have demonstrated using Barthes' vocabulary. The writer uses the *flâneur* to create a novel perspective on the city. Such writing on the city invites various interpretations and re-writings. *Line-scape* underscores the writer's creativity and the reader's effort in bringing into the text new spaces and new meanings.

To further elucidate the way in which *line-scape* allows for open interpretation and encourages reading between the lines, I have compared the pages of a work to a stage: writing can therefore be viewed as a performance, in which the *flâneur* and other marginal figures serve as puppets that are given perspectives on the experience of modernity. They draw attention to the previously unknown or unnoticed aspects of modern urban life. Among various

avatars of the writer, I have underscored the *flâneur's* particular importance because his mobility corresponds to the ever-changing experience of modernity.

In terms of *line-scape* as the writer's textual operation in the attempt to capture the experience of modernity, I have also used Ricœur's translation theory to clarify the never-ending process, for translation indicates an endless effort to create meanings. The idea of a perfect and final translation is a mere illusion because translation triggers a chain of *autrement-dit*, in Ricœurian vocabulary. Such a failure to reach one final translation, however, is not all negative, because it leads to an active interaction between the writer, the reader, and the text. This dynamics brings us back to the nature of modernity – the experience of the gap and the *flâneur's* negotiation with continuous discrepancies.

Finally, my comparison of the writings of Baudelaire and Woolf on urbanity also analyses their use of the window imagery in the prose poem 'Les Fenêtres' and in *Mrs Dalloway* respectively. I have gone beyond a mere textual analysis by arguing that the window indicates a frame from which both authors break away. The frame points to a codification of genre and literary convention, both of which had become stale during the time of Baudelaire and Woolf. In consequence, they endow originality to language. The window in both Baudelaire and Woolf suggests a *crossing* between different genres.

Given that my thesis examines nuances of two major European cities and two modernist authors, one cannot deny that this seemingly narrow scope can hardly be considered representative of city literature in general, especially when we consider how the notion of the metropolis has evolved and changed since the

nineteenth century. However, by initiating the notion of *line-scape*, I have provided a common ground for understanding city literature.

This thesis can be regarded as a reassessment of Benjaminian discourse, a re-reading that reminds us of the complexity of the experience of modernity. This research also re-evaluates the legacy of Baudelaire and Woolf in terms of their contribution to a new kind of poetics that can correspond to 'this discord, this incongruity, this sneer, this contrast, this curiosity, the quick, queer emotions', as Woolf opines in 'Poetry, Fiction and the Future' (E 4 434). After all, their endeavours are concerned not so much with the creation of new genres as with the capacity of language to stimulate new *sens*.

Scrutinising Baudelaire's and Woolf's exploration of the potential of language, my thesis enables phenomenology-inspired theories to flourish in the context of city literature. Phenomenology, despite its importance in sociology, anthropology, philosophy, and French literary criticism, tends to be underestimated in literary theories in the English-speaking world. This research incorporates the fruits of phenomenology into comparative literary study, demonstrating the way in which phenomenology can facilitate a deeper understanding of literary subjectivity than that of mere textual analysis. Most crucially, based on the emphasis on the relationship between life and art, I coin the term *line-scape* to delineate how city literature speaks to a sense of in-betweenness innate to the experience of modernity: life prompts art, while art reflects life. *Line-scape* describes an ideal goal, to which the writer approaches by a constant act of stylisation. Maulpoix hails Baudelaire's modernity which 'inscrit

la critique de l'art dans l'art lui-même'.⁵⁴³ The role of what Maulpoix calls 'un critique exemplaire' is not missed by Woolf, either.⁵⁴⁴ Both of them endow their work with a lived experience. They *translate* confrontation with, confusion about, and reflection on modern life into lines containing unpredictability. Such unexpectedness reminds us of the figure of the *flâneur*. Under the influence of the phenomenological explanation that one's perception is always stylised, this thesis has demonstrated that the experience of modernity, and the *flâneur's* deportment, have become a way to stylise life as well as art.

The combination of city literature, the *flâneur*, and phenomenology is a response to the increasing trends towards comparative study in the humanities and beyond. While comparative literature in itself suggests an attempt to bridge the gap between different languages and cultures, city literature may be seen as a place of crossing that can lead it into world literature. The idea of the city is highly pertinent to the current era because our world is witnessing further spatiotemporal dislocation, as a result of the advent of the Internet and globalisation. To a certain degree, we all have similar laments to those of the Baudelairean speaker, '[l]e vieux Paris n'est plus' (OC I 85). Thus, the comparison of modernity to the experience of being-in-the-railway-gap still prevails today. The city as a phenomenon still engenders the writer's confusion and passion for delineating *line-scape*. It is not an easy task and should be further investigated in future researches. Since the notion of space has been greatly changed, this research presents a need to reconsider the urban space, through the perspective

⁵⁴³ *Du Lyrisme*, p. 99.

⁵⁴⁴ *Ibid*, p. 99.

of the *flâneur*. It also invites comparisons of the notion of the city between different historical, geographical, and linguistic contexts.

In a twenty-first-century context, instead of seeing *flânerie* as a dead and bygone practice, interest in this seemingly simple act persists. The zest for *flânerie* has not dwindled. Because walking is such a mundane activity in day-to-day life by the vast majority of human beings across the globe, the *flâneur* has taken on various forms. His incarnations abound. The strolling figure and the act of walking (or the lack of it in our sedentary era) have become a phenomenon that has been addressed by film studies, performing art, photography, and, of course, city literature, to name just a few fields.⁵⁴⁵ We see the Baudelairean *flâneur* in many major cities in the world. Even in Paris and in London, other strollers have blurred the Baudelairean speaker's traces and Clarissa's memories of Bourton, adding to city streets their own footprints and memories. Traveller, backpacker, tourist, commuter: the term may vary, but the features of *flânerie*, its randomness and its freedom, can still be discerned in the walking person's openness towards external space, and reflection on being-in-the-world. While I approach the notion of *flânerie* as a writing strategy, its other dimensions remain inexhaustible, and further research can certainly add to the palimpsest of the city. *Flânerie* is an individual act, but it also adds to memories of the city.

Scholar of English literature, Susan Alice Fischer, for instance, traces her experience of London as 'a landscape of the mind', even though she is not a

⁵⁴⁵ Organized by Klaus Benesch (LMU-Munich) and François Specq (ENS de Lyon), the 2013 conference 'The Art of Walking : Pedestrian Mobility in Literature, Philosophy, and the Arts from the Eighteenth to the Twenty-First Century' at ENS Lyon serves as an example of an interrogation of the act of walking from a wide range of disciplines.

Londoner.⁵⁴⁶ She speaks of the imaginative power which London represents: in the case of *Rodinsky's Room*, in which Rachel Lichtenstein and Ian Sinclair write about David Rodinsky's mysterious disappearance in East London; Fischer examines how this book is 'also a performance in the very way it is conceived'.⁵⁴⁷ Using Rodinsky's room as a creative space, Fischer links the man's story to her own past. She concludes what London means to her:

Each time I dip back into the reservoir that is London, writing becomes, if not easier, at least less stuck. [...] I realise I have lived to dream once more of rooms with open views and of finding my way as I ramble the streets of London.⁵⁴⁸

I would like to think that my own research has also been a sort of *flânerie* – meandering between the writings of Baudelaire and Woolf and writing about them, I have been adjusting my rhythm and pace. I started my journey with an interest in modernity and its relationship with the city. My study on the *flâneur* led me to Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology, whose understanding of the being-in-the-world has helped shape my own *flânerie*. Keeping literature at the heart of my research, I have also detoured and digressed into art history, phenomenology, translation theory, and music.

The spirit of the *flâneur* has created a new generation of art and a new way to approach life. The Jazz musician, for instance, becomes an example of the modern-day *flâneur* that I discover during my research. Jazz music often contains elements of improvisation, implying freedom and virtuosity. Such a trait echoes

⁵⁴⁶ 'A Room of One's Own: Rodinsky, Street Haunting and the Creative Mind', *Changing English: Studies in Culture and Education*, 8.2 (2001), 119-28 (p. 119).

⁵⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 121.

⁵⁴⁸ Ibid., pp. 127-8. To the connection of Baudelaire's comparison of crowds to 'un immense réservoir d'électricité', see my reference in chapter one, n. 231, p. 94.

the nature of *flânerie*. In fact, the urban stroller's silhouette can be found on the piano keyboard of 'Dodo' Marmarosa. As Jacques Réda, a poet and Jazz critic prominent in twentieth-century French literature, puts it, the Jazz pianist has transported the *flâneur*'s footsteps onto the piano keys: '[d]e son pas qui sonne clair, il arpente déjà un paysage qu'on ne distinguera jamais que par échappées et qui doit tout à la fantaisie du promeneur'.⁵⁴⁹

In the light of Baudelaire, Duguay, one of the most prominent French poets to-date, also has his version of the *Spleen de Paris*.⁵⁵⁰ In many individual pursuits and personal writings,⁵⁵¹ the *flâneur* has survived, and the writer's pursuit of *line-scape* continues.

⁵⁴⁹ 'Un Oiseau rare: Dodo Marmarosa', in *Jouer le jeu: Essai* (Paris: Gallimard, 1985), pp. 103-134 (p. 113). In his 2007 article 'The Jazz Critic as Flâneur', Peter Schulman writes about the importance of the concept of *flânerie* in the work of Réda: 'the beauty of Réda's jazz writings seem indeed spiritually intertwined with his notions of the *flâneries* as dreamy, improvised wanderings through cities'. See 'The Jazz Critic as Flâneur', *Lingua Romana: A journal of French, Italian and Romanian culture*, 6.1 (2007) <<http://linguaromana.byu.edu/schulman6.html>> [accessed 22 July 2015].

⁵⁵⁰ *Spleen de Paris* (Paris: Galilée, 2001).

⁵⁵¹ For instance, Réda's *Recommandation aux promeneurs* and Pierre Sansot's *Poétique de la ville* both take part in a personal quest which is tightly linked to city literature and the notion of *flânerie*. See *Recommandation aux promeneurs* (Paris: Gallimard, 1988); Sansot, *Poétique de la ville* (Paris: Éditions Payot & Rivages, 2004).

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