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Revisiting the *Flâneur* in T. S. Eliot's ''Eeldrop and Appleplex – I''

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In the *Little Review* for May 1917, when *Prufrock and Other Observations* was first advertised, T. S. Eliot published ''Eeldrop and Appleplex – I,'' a prose piece that has been read as based on a conversation between himself and Ezra Pound. It is about the secret life of a bank clerk called Eeldrop (closely resembling Eliot himself) and his acquaintance Appleplex (possibly modeled after Ezra Pound), who indulge their taste for slumming in order to smell out evil with the ''implacable curiosity of a master detective.'' This article analyzes Eliot's ''Eeldrop and Appleplex – I'' and explores Eliot's writings on the experience of the city. I will examine Eliot's urban poetics of *flânerie*, which are made up of a hermeneutic of seeing, as well as his marginal figures – such as the lonely Londoner, the *flâneur*, and the stranger – that populate the contested terrain of the city, or the fetish commodity of the market. I will argue that Eliot's only piece of fiction, especially ''Eeldrop and Appleplex – I,'' presents his most prescient critique, his most intimate literary journalism of the problematic ''public privacy,'' especially of the so-called virtual gaze of urban spectatorship. Instead of merely offering an indictment that focuses exclusively on the oppressive privacy and compartmentalization of urban life, Eliot's piece attempts to read and write London as a text, with the *flâneur* as the key phenomenon to understanding the emergent metropolis of modernity, as well as providing a methodological apparatus to indulge in a kind of textual *flânerie*, a kind of double-codedness of perspectives to upset any traditional narrative resolution. ''Eeldrop and Appleplex – I'' should not be read as a unique part of Eliot's authorship, but should be viewed as a development and intensification of the speculative conception of urban experience that informs his philosophical, critical, and aesthetic writings.

Keywords: T. S. Eliot, ''Eeldrop and Appleplex – I'', the flâneur*, a hermeneutic of seeing, textual flânerie, the virtual gaze of urban spectatorship.*

I. Introduction

In the *Little Review* for May 1917, when *Prufrock and Other Observations* was first advertised, T. S. Eliot published "Eeldrop and Appleplex – I," a prose piece that has been read as based on a conversation between himself and Ezra Pound. It is about the secret life of a bank clerk called Eeldrop (closely resembling Eliot himself) and his acquaintance Appleplex (possibly modeled after Ezra Pound), who indulge their taste for slumming in order to smell out evil with the "implacable curiosity of a master detective" (Gordon 1977, 71, 165). That is, Eliot's piece seems to begin with the emergence of two male spectators who create a fictionalized playground to seek adventure in the city of "dreadful delight" and remain simultaneously insulated from the urban crowd.[1] However, as Eliot's piece proceeds, there is a further dimension of "Eeldrop and Appleplex – I" that invites the reader's attention. This article analyzes Eliot's "Eeldrop and Appleplex – I" and explores Eliot's writings on the experience of the city. I will examine Eliot's urban poetics of *flânerie*, which are made up of a hermeneutic of seeing, as well as his marginal figures – such as the lonely Londoner, the *flâneur*, and the stranger – that populate the contested terrain of the city, or the fetish commodity of the market. I will argue that Eliot's only piece of fiction, especially "Eeldrop and Appleplex – I," presents his most prescient critique, his most intimate literary journalism of the problematic "public privacy," especially of the so-called virtual gaze of urban spectatorship.[2] Instead of merely offering an indictment that focuses exclusively on the oppressive privacy and compartmentalization of urban life, Eliot's piece attempts to read and write London as a text, with the *flâneur* as the key phenomenon to understanding the emergent metropolis of modernity, as well as providing a methodological apparatus to indulge in a kind of textual *flânerie*, a kind of double-codedness of perspectives to upset any traditional narrative resolution. Finally, this article proposes that "Eeldrop and Appleplex – I" should not be read as a unique part of Eliot's authorship, but should be viewed as a development and intensification of the speculative conception of urban experience that informs his philosophical, critical, and aesthetic writings.

In Eliot's short story, Eeldrop and Appleplex rent two small rooms in "a disreputable part of town" because both want to separate themselves from "the fields of their daily employments and their ordinary social activities," as they wish to "apprehend the human soul in its concrete

individuality" (Eliot 1917a, 7, 8). They sometimes come there at nightfall, and depart in the morning for destinations unknown to each other (p. 7). The pair spend most of their time "[talking] or [looking] out of the window" of the room (p. 7). They observe the nearby police station and scrutinize the throng from behind the window of their rented rooms. When they become aware of disturbances they are lured outdoors and merge with the crowd, conversing and listening with passion and profession. When they retreat back to their rooms, the urban pageant that they have seen and heard becomes distilled, born, or recorded on the paper in their A–Z intellectual projects (pp. 7–8). I suggest that "Eeldrop and Appleplex – I" belongs to "the literature of flânerie,"[3] and the mode of *flânerie* that Eliot gives his two characters is a tailored and modified form which relies less on physical encounters with urban sites and more on "strolling" in the mind (such as intellectual wandering, movements of consciousness and memory, as well as conversation between Eeldrop and Appleplex).[4] Their *flânerie* is *conversational* or *dialogical*, which is unlike the behavior of most *flâneurs*, because these two characters seem to need each other. In my view, Eeldrop and Appleplex represent the prototypes of Eliot's *flâneur* in that they abandon themselves not only in the untiring curiosity of spectator and the freedom of the stroller, but also in the watchful detection of the amateur detective and the textual production of the city archivist. It may be argued that Gustave Flaubert's *Bouvard et Pécuchet*, first published in 1881, is a potential predecessor of Eliot's "Eeldrop and Appleplex." *Bouvard et Pécuchet* details the adventures of two Parisian copy-clerks, Bouvard and Pécuchet. When Bouvard inherits a sizable fortune, he and his friend decide to retire to the country, and set their minds on the composition of the *Dictionary of Received Ideas*. Yet, Bouvard's and Pécuchet's quest for intellectual stimulation leads them to flounder through branches of knowledge, and finally they decide to return to copying as before. In contrast to the Flaubertian model, Eeldrop and Appleplex, with their "raids on the inarticulate," receive less ironic and more self-conscious treatment from Eliot.[5] Arguably, Eliot's "Eeldrop and Appleplex – I" reveals not so much the individual encounter with urban experiences as the aesthetic gesturing toward the textual topography of the City, which as a literary subject has featured prominently as a complex textual network and has become the confluence of personal, cultural, and artistic concerns.

There appears in Eliot's life a repeated shift from one urban culture to another, from St. Louis to Boston, from Harvard to the Sorbonne, from Paris to London, from Marburg to Oxford. When the trajectory of Eliot's urban detour finally settles down in London, it is a signature effort to become attuned to the total phenomenon and sensibility of the age, a resolute advance to the city as the primary solution to the oscillation between social and intellectual conflict (Mizener 1962, 17). In a letter to Conrad Aiken, Eliot complains about the smugness, self-centered domesticity, and insularity of the academic world: "Oxford is very pretty, but I don't like to be dead" (Eliot 1988, 74). Although London appears like a scene from *Bleak House*, fraught with brown fog, trampled edges, and muddy skirts, it at least seems to offer "some promise of life behind the iron railings and curtained windows" (Gordon 1977, 65–66). What Eliot annexes as his poetic territory is not simply the city with its sophisticate, but also the fragmented scraps of urban life, the sordid, drab, urban landscape, presented in sharp contrast to both the civilized city of materialism and the Romantic countryside of spiritual regeneration (pp. 38–39; Crawford 1987, 10). Furthermore, by assimilating the city of daily life (pointedly identifiable through the specific place names) to the Unreal City (be it, for example, Dante's City of Dis, Baudelaire's Paris, Tiresias' Thebes, Stetson's Rome and Carthage, or Burbank's Venice), Eliot transforms the literal city into a visionary city (Mayer 1989, 259). Most critics have rightly observed that Eliot collects "a heap of broken images" – the scraps and traces of urban life – in a way that is similar to the montage, surrealist, or impressionistic principle of juxtaposition. Yet, what remains underestimated is the graphic nature, the virtual mobility – the spatially and temporally fluid subjectivity of this form of visuality (Featherstone 1998, 919) in Eliot's text, which points to a relationship between the panoramic view and the *flâneur*. Thus, there appears the *flâneur* figure, who moves through the industrial/consumer/information city and gathers fleeting sensations and impressions of modern life while remaining physically, if not completely emotionally, detached. The *flânerie* represents a cultural form from a specific time and place, as well as a reading method to interpret the traces of the city and a writing method to construct and represent urban life.

To talk of the *flâneur* raises a number of questions about the nature of public life. It raises questions about the interface between subjectivity

and anonymity, the individual and the crowd, the self and society, as well as the private and the public spheres. As it has been argued, the city should not be regarded solely as an object of investigation or a location for contemporary forms of sociability and experience. Nor should it just be considered as a metaphorical device bespeaking human conceptual development.[6] It is all of these things. The city should also be regarded as an organizing principle for the material, so that the text is the city, the city is the text, as Benjamin remarks: "That which is written is like a city, to which the words are a thousand gateways" (quoted in Frisby 1994, 100; Featherstone 1998, 910). Most criticism on T. S. Eliot tends to overlook the indeterminate nature of urban life experience and the problematic physicality of the city itself, and fails to appreciate the ambiguous social nature of the *flâneur* and the texual nature of the city. Instead, the criticism tends to emphasize the association of urbanism with spiritual loss and empty materialism. As it has been argued, urban culture is a statement of heterogeneity, of movement rather than fixity. This fluidity has become fundamental to modern identity, as an experience of non-place is an essential component of everyday existence. Urban decentralization, the "making of home away from home,"[7] provides an alternative thesis to the notion of "home" and the urban-centeredness as placed identity locus. When movement is commonly characterized as one of the quintessential experiences of the contemporary epoch, the meanings of home go far beyond a physical space and the objects therein. The meanings change from the birthplace – the intimate space where people inhabit and nurture the most significant personal relationships – to the social space where people who become "migrants of identity" have to cultivate, negotiate, nurture, or maintain an identity in movement. Such change marks a conceptual shift that reveals how people live their lives in movement and make sense of their lives as movement (Rapport & Dawson 1998, 27). The idea of mobility redresses the balance/imbalance between openness and closure, and redescribes the constructive, dynamic, and changing nature of the urban temporality, spaciality, and identity formation. Eeldrop and Appleplex are the early *flâneur* figures in Eliot's work, as they stroll across the unclassifiable spaces of the metropolis and render possible a range of disparate reading and heterogeneous writing in such urban topography. Their intensive *flânerie* of social geography ironically subverts any

conventional monologic attempts at totalizing knowledge and constructing stable demarcations of social otherness.

II. On some motifs in Eliot and the man of the crowd

In ''Eeldrop and Appleplex – I'' Eliot seems to continue a tradition of urban representation that is characterized by two modes of urban description. One, popular in the first three decades of the nineteenth century, tends to employ the literary conventions of previous ages and tries to retain an equanimity about urban life. This mode regards the metropolis as a stage on which to perform, to flaunt, and to manifest its own ''civility, grandeur, and ebullience'' (Epstein-Nord 2004, 151), while an awareness of the new harsh facts of poverty and social problems is forestalled. Pierce Egan's wildly popular works, first published in 1821, employed this distinctive character of urban representation. Egan's protagonists, Tom and Jerry, became the most notable representatives of Regency dandies of that era, and they delighted in the carnivalesque sights and viewed people of the street as passing shows. The two characters experienced the streets of London as a playground, a theatre of entertainment, and a performance of the upper classes (pp. 151–152; Walkowitz 1992, 18). The other mode of urban description has dominated urban consciousness since the mid-Victorian period and it is characterized by a growing conceptualized segregation of London as a divide between high and low, aboveground and underground. The Victorian literature of urban exploration represents the urban topography as a series of social juxtapositions of ''high'' and ''low'' life, or ''the rentier'' and ''the impoverished criminal.'' The literature typically portrays the cityscapes of London more ideologically than geographically, and depicts the city in an East/West, Aboveground/Underground reconfiguration (Williams 1990, 151–153; Wilson 1991, 26–46; Walkowitz 1992, 19–20; Pike 1999, 121–125). The most distinguished examples of this reconfiguration continue to be Friedrich Engels's social criticism of urbanization, Charles Dickens's wide-ranging literary realism of urban exploration, as well as James Greenwood's, Henry Mayhew's, and Charles Booth's journalistic exposés of London poverty. Engaged with a more earnest intent to explain and resolve social problems, these Victorian urban investigators not only distanced themselves from their objects of study, ''the low-Other,'' but also felt compelled

to possess a comprehensive knowledge of them via "cultural immersion, social masquerade, and intrapsychic incorporation" (Walkowitz 1992, 18–20). It is a literature of urban exploration of the fecklessness, squalor, and absence of identity of the city life.[8] It is a narrative tradition of shock, fear, and horror, which is interwoven with the voyeuristic, vicarious pleasure of the male experience in the literature of modernity.[9] Finally, it is a long history of the quest for urban legibility, as it represents the desire to read and make human sense out of an immense, intangible, and increasingly alienating urban field.[10]

Since the mid-Victorian period certain urban literature has been characterized by its presentation of a bifurcated and gendered urban landscape, and the transgression of binary urban zones – though justified in terms of social reform and philanthropy – has appeared motivated mostly by thrill.[11] Bourgeois men derive substitutable pleasure from visiting "bad" or "ugly" parts of the city, but they rationalize their conduct by claiming to speak on behalf of the poor.[12] Therefore, there has been witnessed the practice of urban male spectatorship, the proliferation of public places of pleasure and interest for men with the leisure to wander, to browse, as well as a tradition of sexual or sensational urban narrative which highlights the cultural fantasies, fears, or even anxieties about gender, class, and ethnic relations (Walkowitz 1992, 10–13; Wilson 2004, 63–66).[13] However, as Eliot's "Eeldrop and Appleplex – I" proceeds, it turns unexpectedly into more than a celebratory panoramic view that focuses on the pride and pleasure, the grandeur and monumentality of the city. It is more than just another example of such popular tales of London-slumming by men of leisure who indulge in the erotic or exotic pleasures of the underground and yet maintain their invisibility and invulnerability. Finally, it is more than a journalistic exposé of London scenes that feature the underworld of the city with its poverty and toil, vice and crime. "Eeldrop and Appleplex – I" is, instead, a sophisticated example of the urban literature of *flânerie*: a most subjective and visual work characteristic of rhapsodic textualism and a hermeneutic of seeing, which renders possible a new perspective on urban life in a paradoxical form of *flânerie* carried out by the *flâneur*, who remains not so much "the man in the crowd" as "the man of the crowd."[14] Eeldrop and Appleplex, in their watchfulness and anonymity, arrange their way through the city and remain unknown in the middle of the crowd. They are resting on the

boundary of exclusion and transgression, constraint and excess, and they are playing the roles of the *flâneur*/detective, the collector/archaeologist, the social investigator/literary producer.

As it has been noted, Eliot always lives in the city by choice and he looks for the rare and frightening beauty in the desert of Metropolis, using such visions as a focus for the immense range and variety of urban experience (Gordon 1977, 43–49; Mayer 1989, 70). Critics such as John T. Mayer claim that the Eliot who admires James Thomson, Charles Baudelaire, Jules Laforgue, and Arthur Rimbaud is the Eliot who redirects the English distrust of and indifference to the city, and who writes of a city of the dreadful night, and life in slummy streets bereft of dignity.[15] Most critics tend to agree that Eliot knows the city more at its worst than at its best, focusing on a determinist view of the relations between capitalist materialism and urban space. Indeed, to read Eliot in terms of sensational realism or quasi-factual journalism, there appears a series of dark imagery together with a dramatic excess of "abysses," "mean streets," "low-life deeps" – so as to give rise to a predictable pattern, a journalistic or fictional account of the urban wasteland that features the underworld of the city with its poverty and toil, vice and crime. However, such criticism seems to overlook the indeterminate nature of urban life experience, as characterized by "a volatile juxtapositioning of uniformity and difference," and "a fragile massing of mosaic pluralisms and temporarily grasped consensus" (Jenks 2004b, 1). Arguably, the essence of Eliot's urban representation lies in his way of linking the risks and opportunities, the closure and openness, the uniformity and heterogeneity that form part of general urban experience. Eliot's early works are preoccupied with themes of the ferocity and liveliness that characterize urban experience. He depicts the potential tension between the city as a site of freedom and agency and that of imprisonment and control, as well as the inherent nature of interlacing indeterminacy and multi-faced uncontainability. Benjamin writes: "no face is surrealistic in the same degree as the true face of the city" (Benjamin 1985, 230). Eliot's writings on the city engage with a number of recurrent themes, motifs, and methodological concerns which elucidate the intricate dimension of the cityscapes. Among them, the most significant recurring motif in Eliot's city writings is the shifting perspective of the *flâneur* figure. This figure is a configuration of the *flâneur* as journalist/observer, the *flâneur* as detective, and the *flâneur* as producer of text, which results from

being engaged in endless *flânerie* that is not exhausted in street strolling but instead involves reading, reporting, narrating, and producing metropolitan modernity/postmodernity in textual forms.

John T. Mayer points out that Eliot once projected a series of city poems under the title of "An Agony in the Garret." Eliot predominantly composed this group of poems in Paris and completed them when he returned to America. As a group, these poems are characterized by "the internalized quest of a sensitive observer [who] walks the streets in search of meaning" (Mayer 1989, 69–70).[16] The poems are dense with the textures, decors, voices, glances of a pioneer explorer who is either concerned with his own ego-identity or with the plight of his subjects. They are also concerned with individual *flânerie* and the social process of inhabiting and appropriating urban space. Many of the themes of the *flâneur* are contained in Eliot's "Rhapsody on a Windy Night."[17] The poem represents the "psychogeography" of a nocturnal wanderer who, drifting from one hour to the next, abandons himself to the impressions and the urban spectatorship of the moment. This action in turn provides a kind of anonymity, as the *flâneur* experiences multiple oppositions: natural and unnatural; purposive and non-purposive; public and private; open and enclosing; solitary and crowded; familiar and fantastic.

Several years later, in 1917, Eliot continued and evolved his portrayal of the *flâneur* via his inquiry into the man in/of the crowd in "Eeldrop and Appleplex – I." Instead of strolling round the city and traveling vast physical spaces that used to be regarded as a classic statement of *flânerie*, Eeldrop and Appleplex stay mostly indoors and observe the crowd in the street from their windows. When they do venture outside, they seem to hang around their local police station, and then retreat back to their rooms and enter the results of their observations and inquiries into "large notebooks, filed according to the nature of the case, from A (adultery) to Y (yeggmen)" (Eliot 1917a, 7–8). I suggest that in "Eeldrop and Appleplex – I" Eliot shifts the focus on the *flâneur* from the negative conception of a passive "stroller and producer of harmless physiognomies" to the notion of a more directed "observer and investigator of the signifiers of the city" (Frisby 1994, 89). In my view, the fundamental essence of the *flâneur* in "Eeldrop and Appleplex – I" is that a mere stroller is elevated to the role of the detective, who deciphers urban visual texts and produces a literary text;

he can also be considered the archaeologist of the city archive. *Flânerie* as activity must, therefore, include acts of observation and dialogic conversation, as well as those of reading, writing, and producing texts of metropolitan life. As Appleplex claims, the crux of their *flânerie* is a ''pure observation'' of the many cases that ''have come under [their] attention at the door of the police station.'' Their observation is ''not alien to the principle of classification, but deeper'' – that is, they try to ''avoid classification,'' but ''do not deny [classification]'' (Eliot 1917a, 9–10). What Eliot's *flâneur* complains about, or is opposed to here, is the impure observation (which is not alien to the principle of classification, but shallower) endemic to newspaper stories,[18] the physiology of the city, and the criminology of the detective story.[19] The grounds for Eeldrop's and Appleplex's animus are the compost of newspaperly prejudice and stereotype, and fictionalized sentiments and sensations.

In this context, Eeldrop and Appleplex as the *flâneur* cannot be reduced to the voyeuristic spectator or to the mere idler. Instead, they are the prefigured detective: the *flâneur* author as producer, whose *flânerie* illuminates the nature of social investigation, and whose notes on detection outline the very nature of their methodological procedures and textual productions. Benjamin, in his discussion of Baudelaire's view that ''[the] observer is a prince enjoying his incognito wherever he goes'' (Baudelaire 1972, 400), defends the *flâneur*'s seemingly passive role as spectator, arguing that ''behind this indolence there is the watchfulness of an observer who does not take his eyes off a miscreant,'' and the methodological capacity of a detective and an artist of modernity who ''catches things in flight'' (Benjamin 1983, 41). As critics such as David Frisby have pointed out, Benjamin's conception of the observation and recording of metropolitan modernity is not confined to the activity of seeing or viewing the urban phenomena (Frisby 1994, 93). Rather, Benjamin insists upon the significance of a ''tactile'' ability, or a methodological capacity in the *flâneur* that brings this figure metaphorically close to that of the rag picker and the collector (Benjamin 1983, 17–20; Frisby 1994, 93). Accordingly, the *flâneur* appears as an urban observer who ''goes botanizing on the asphalt'' (Benjamin 1983, 36), or in terms of Elizabeth Wilson as ''a naturalist of [the] unnatural environment'' (Wilson 2004, 69), or, as Frisby argues, an urban botanist who collects urban images and records social interactions and social typifications (Frisby 1994, 92). The potential

affinity of the *flâneur* with the detective, the producer, the archivist, and the archaeologist is evident in the way that the *flâneur* is at home in the metropolis, and is capable of combining observation, watchfulness, and anonymity.

Eeldrop and Appleplex employ their intellectual *flânerie* as a form of detection and inferential practices, as their explorations are destined for their project of a "Survey of Contemporary Society" (Eliot 1917b, 17). Their sojourns in the interior – in their A–Z bibliography – can be justified by Adorno's portrayal of Kierkegaard: "the *flâneur* promenades in his room; the world only appears to him reflected by pure inwardness" (Adorno 1989, 42; quoted in Frisby 1994, 91). Eliot's *flâneur* is the man of the crowd rather than the man in the crowd, as he is immersed in the crowd and yet maintains "the gaze of [an] alienated man" who is not totally overwhelmed by the crowd and its phantasmagorias (Benjamin 1983, 170). Eeldrop and Appleplex are not only drawn to the spaces and structure of the metropolis, as they take on the role of social investigators, physiologic journalists, and textual producers in exploring the labyrinth of the populace, the human labyrinth which lies before them like a phantasmagoric veil (Benjamin 1974, 5.559; quoted in Frisby 1994, 94).

"Eeldrop and Appleplex – I" is a deep, uneasy, and fragmentary *flânerie* of the classifying of the metropolitan masses, of the exploration of "the newest and least researched labyrinth in the labyrinth of the city" (Benjamin 1974, 5.559; quoted in Frisby 1994, 94). The nub of such labyrinthine tours and detours is Eeldrop's and Appleplex's puzzled yearning for a pure observation (Ricks 1994, 117), in spite of the fact that "the particular has no language"[20] – "[the] majority not only have no language to express anything save generalized man; they are for the most part unaware of themselves as anything but generalized men" (Eliot 1917a, 10). In "Eeldrop and Appleplex – I" the range, scope, and nature of such contradictory thoughts is to be encompassed by psychogeographic *flânerie*, which is rendered possible by the dialogic, conversational exchanges between Eeldrop (a skeptic, with a taste for mysticism, who is learned in theology) and Appleplex (a materialist, with a learning toward skepticism, who studies the physical and biological sciences) (p. 8). This *flânerie* suggests a predilection for and a movement toward the public, drifting, and visual display.

III. Urban poetics and a hermeneutic of seeing

''Eeldrop and Appleplex – I'' is set in the ''disreputable'' suburbs of South London, but the piece does not simply limit itself to anatomizing the flawed civilization surrounding its title characters. At first glance it seems to share certain features with *petit bourgeois* genres, such as the physiology of the city or the criminology of a detective story. Consisting of individual sketches of street characters, a series of observations of London scenes and figures (including even a murder anecdote), ''Eeldrop and Appleplex – I'' seems to reproduce ''the plastic foreground of those panoramas,'' to correspond to ''the extensive background'' of these entertainments with a ''store of information'' (Benjamin 1983, 159). Yet, Eliot's London sketches perceive a wider drama of urban life than many of their predecessors or contemporaries do, and they even suggest a full critique of society. According to Benjamin, there is a thirst in the bourgeois public for the artificiality provided by panoramas. In one sense, the panoramas serve as a substitute for the mobile gaze of the traveler, the bourgeois public's substitute for the Grand Tour (Friedberg 1994, 24; Featherstone 1998, 923). The city – the social setting – of the panoramas is an unchanging backdrop, and the presentations of human life are static, as the images are captured in a frozen state (Epstein-Nord 2004, 159). However, in a narrative that undercuts the seemingly self-centered perspective on the city around the character, Eliot's ''Eeldrop and Appleplex – I'' compactly presents three major and interwoven issues: the public/private dichotomy, its consequence, and virtual public life.

Eeldrop's and Appleplex's passion for the hidden truth beneath the masks and façades motivates them to travel incognito to a dingy neighborhood in ''a disreputable part of the town'' (Eliot 1917a, 7). They choose their rooms and neighborhood with care. Their chosen rooms have windows from which they can ''command'' the entrance of a police station across the way, and from which they spend most of their time observing the crowd in the street – ''[this] alone [possesses] an irresistible appeal in their *eyes*'' (p. 7, my emphasis). Consciously or unconsciously, Eliot in his own way initiates his Eeldrop and Applepex into the ''principles of the art of seeing,'' as the activity of the eye takes precedence over the activity of the ear. As Georg Simmel and Walter Benjamin have highlighted, this activity represents the marked characteristic of interpersonal relationships in the big city (Benjamin 1983, 38). According to Benjamin, visual

stimulation predominates in urban life, as people come to rely on visual experience to construct their perception and blueprint of cities (pp. 37–38). Yet, as distinct from other writers on the city who sustain a fixed, unified gaze in order to render possible a totalizing knowledge and stable demarcation of otherness, Eliot's London observations articulate a hermeneutic of seeing, emphasizing an epistemological crisis, fragmentation, and anti-representationalism of the self and the other.

Eeldrop and Appleplex choose and prefer the neighborhoods of silence to those of noise because they consider the former to be more evil than the latter:

> It was a shady street, its windows were heavily curtained; and over it hung the cloud of a respectability which has something to conceal… . From time to time the silence of the street was broken; whenever a malefactor was apprehended, the wave of excitement curled into the street and broke upon the doors of the police station. Then the inhabitants of the street would linger in dressing-gowns, upon their doorsteps; then alien visitors would linger in the street, in caps; long after the centre of misery had been [engulfed] in his cell. (Eliot 1917a, 7)

The protagonists are evidently attracted to a sense of "something going on" (of there being "something to conceal") in the dingy neighborhoods with furnished rooms, heavy curtains, transients, and a foreign population. They are attracted to urban spectatorship (which is subject to the preponderance of the activity of the eye over the activity of the ear), and the spectacle of a rush of human life in the streets (which could convert a clash of contest – of man against man or man against fate – into an amusing diversion on a stage, and which could even include murder as a dramatic incident). By means of deliberate impersonalism – as Eeldrop and Appleplex are the funny names of the protagonists who preserve their incognito even from each other – they take up rooms in poor households, go to live anonymously among the people, and establish a greater social intimacy than philanthropists or anthropologists.

Whenever the blank streets are converted into a drama of rows and survival, Eeldrop and Appleplex observe the crowds in the street and then mingle with the mob. They question the onlookers in order to record particular mannerisms and turns of phrase:

> Each pursued his own line of enquiry. Appleplex, who had the gift of an extraordinary address with the lower classes of both sexes, questioned the onlookers, and usually extracted full and inconsistent histories; Eeldrop

> preserved a more passive demeanor, listened to the conversation of the people among themselves, registered in his mind their oaths, their [redundancy] of phrase, their various manners of spitting, and the cries of the victim from the hall of justice within… . Appleplex entered the results of his inquiries into large note-books, filed according to the nature of the case, from A (adultery) to Y (yeggmen). (Eliot 1917a, 7–8)

Here, the craft of Eliot's *flâneur* entails a hermeneutic of seeing that compiles details, records, and catalogues fragments of a South London *flânerie* on an A–Z (or A–Y) basis. On first impression, their notebooks appear like the "complete cyclopedia" of Victorian urban fiction, or the systemic handbooks or guidebooks of tourist literature.[21] Guidebooks or tourist literature used to be regarded as offering unremarkable generalizations when discussing the representation of places and even people. They were often dismissed as containing only empty clichés and naïve or conservative oversimplification of complex reality. However, Eliot's "Eeldrop and Appleplex – I" attempts to achieve just the opposite of such hollow and derivative representations. I suggest that Eliot shares with Walter Benjamin a similar formula/principle/rationale in methodology, as Benjamin constructed his *Arcades Project* on an A–Z basis. Reflecting on his method, Benjamin says: "Formula: construction from facts. Construction through the complete elimination of theory" (quoted in Frisby 1994, 97; Featherstone 1998, 909). It highlights the graphic nature of the textual city. Eliot's and Benjamin's *flâneurs* are not just the strollers in the city, and nor is the city just an object of investigation. Instead, the city is the organizing principle for the writers' material, and their *flânerie* is a method for reading, writing, and constructing the textual city.

Eeldrop's and Appleplex's method of reading and constructing the textual city renders possible a form of virtual gaze, a form of mobile *flânerie*. As visual experience becomes materialized via composition, what results is the fluidity of a *flânerie* that mobilizes a virtual position, and which enables the subjectivity to upset, to escape from any kind of bounded differential in real life, be it physical, temporal, spatial, sexual, or racial. By converting their South London observations to an A–Z (or A–Y) composition, Eeldrop and Appleplex modify the act of viewing to take on the character of reading a book. What results is the increasing dissolution of the public time of observation and viewing into a privately controllable schedule of reading. With the greater capacity for selectivity and

reversibility, which is endorsed by writing and reading, Eeldrop and Appleplex can always record, retrieve, or reverse their "Survey of Contemporary Society," making possible the suspension, deconstruction, and reconstruction of the ordinary narrative flow. Therefore, in their discussion of Scheherazade/Edith, Appleplex first has to remove "the file marked *London* from between the files *Barcelona* and *Boston*" where it has been "misplaced," in order to relocate the "few evidences in [his] possession" left by Edith, as well as Appleplex's own "few observations on two sheets of foolscap" (Eliot 1917b, 16–17).

The text of this case study – Edith's biography, her "unusual career" in the city, her "passion for experience," as well as her self-proclaimed work of poetry – dissolves into an extensive textuality. Edith is Eliot's twentieth-century Scheherazade. She is thoroughly entwined in a series of memories or records, and these – along with her unusual career in the city – appear to be frozen under a shared male gaze and filed in a urban archive, which is accessible to timeless textual retrieval, re-representation, and dissemination. Arguably, "Eeldrop and Appleplex – II" proposes a representation of Eliot's twentieth-century Scheherazade that is fragmentary, complex, and different from any traditional or historical discourse which is composed of solid and neat referents. Eliot's two-part prose piece, especially "Eeldrop and Appleplex – I," is not so much a parody or pastiche, as a *flânerie* that seizes and coordinates different principles or orders – be they temporal, spatial, social – in one.

Taking up rooms in poor households and establishing some social intimacy enables the two protagonists to explore multiple self-identities as well as to challenge the conventional markings and boundaries of social and geographical difference, of public/private separation. Instead of a conventional and stark opposition between East and West London, Eeldrop and Appleplex construct a new mapping of the social geography which centers on South London. By means of anonymity, aloofness, role-playing, masquerading, and spectatorial stance, they enjoy a confident and confidential access to legitimate and illegitimate urban spaces, and they have the ability to move between them unscathed. Though they remain outsiders to the everyday life they observe and report, they are behind all the voices and facets of men and women and they seek to publicize, on an A–Z basis, the exclusively private and personal life in their *flânerie*. They are at home in the city, as they oscillate between two

distinct, but interdependent poles: private comfortable living quarters and public places that provide surveyable space for literary (re)production of the city.

Indeed, they inhabit a range of public/private liminal spaces, as they command a view of ''the entrance of a police station'' from the windows of their rooms and have individual encounters with street figures: two dominant modes of urban representation are embodied. One is a panoramic mode of urban observation that provides a ''bird's-eye'' view of urban life and enables the spectators a description of the whole scene; the other is an episodic mode of urban experience that renders possible a ''mole's-eye'' view to scrutinize the details, and to encourage a kind of scientific cataloguing and sorting.[22] The occurrence of criminal acts and trials causes private life to become involuntarily public: ''whenever a malefactor was apprehended, a wave of excitement curled into the street and broke upon the doors of the police station'' (Eliot 1917a, 7); and also causes the two modes of seeing to converge, as Eeldrop and Appleplex ''rush out to mingle with the mob'' (p. 7). The city displays a virtual public life when it is viewed from either atop or at close range in isolated encounters, as it is converted into an urban spectacle. As critics have pointed out, social life is ''degraded rather than honoured'' by its transformation into the realm of the spectacle, because it is ''the realist reduction at the core of materialist epistemologies'' (Jenks 2004, 39). Issues concerning the decline of the public/private dichotomy and virtual public life begin to emerge from the careful study of these street scenes.[23] Eeldrop and Appleplex recreate themselves as the spectators and *flâneurs* in the contemporary city, and they view the city as being increasingly transformed into quasi-public/private spaces. The characters hold onto, rather than obliterate, the semantic positions that distinguish and distance them from the Otherness, and this renders possible the swings between immersion and detachment, between the episodic encounter of the street-level *flâneur* and the panoramic/panoptical vision of the detached city planner–observer. Virtual public life has been stimulated.[24]

IV. The lonely Londoner, the flâneur*, and the stranger*

The representative figure who negotiated public space and walked the city streets in Paris, in London, and other modernizing cities in the nineteenth

century was the *flâneur*. The essence of the *flâneur*, as identified by most scholars, is in his stance as the surveyor of the urban scene, the spectator of urban life who takes all into his leisurely gaze, while he himself remains invisible or indistinguishable from the crowd.[25] In the oft-quoted example of the *flâneur* we find Benjamin characterizing him as follows. On the one hand, the *flâneur* is the idler or waster – the man who takes a turtle for a walk (Benjamin 1983, 129); on the other hand, he is the observer or detective, the suspicious person who is always looking, noting, and classifying – the man who goes botanizing on the asphalt (p. 36). As a creature of the past, how far does the *flâneur* retain contemporary significance? In terms of the neo-Marxist version of the post-Baudelairean *flâneur*, he is reduced to someone not serious, socially superfluous, in retreat from great historical conflicts, or an addict who seeks an immersion in the sensations of the city, to "bathe in the crowd," to become lost in feelings, to succumb to the pull of random desires and the pleasures of scopophilia (Jay 1993; Weinstein & Weinstein 1993). Mike Featherstone, on whose theories my argument relies, in a more sympathetic way, addresses the *flâneur* as the cultural specialist, the artist of life; or else labels him the social scientist or detective due to his characteristic reflexivity and his ability to aestheticize everyday life (Featherstone 1992, 1998).[26] Thus, the *flâneur* in the contemporary city experiences swings between the emotional immersion and sensational excitement of the street-level stroller, as well as the decontrol of the social detective/cultural specialist, who carefully records and analyzes the "random harvest" of impressions from the streets (Featherstone 1998, 913). The labyrinths of the urban world become visible in the vast panorama of the *flâneur*; not only in the great range of incidents, individuals, and issues faithfully covered, but also in their almost surrealistic juxtaposition and apparent randomness. If nature provides the Romantic with a vast dictionary and a source of symbolic materials, the urban environment presents itself to modern/postmodern urbanists/*flâneurs* as an overwhelmingly complex repository of signs. In the *flâneur*'s attempt to come to terms with the city, issues of identification, interpretation, and representation are thus highlighted (Sharpe & Wallock 1987b, 16–17). The City – evolving from the Enlightenment City of New Jerusalem, through the Victorian City of Babylon, to the Modern City of Babel or Nonplace – is thus tantalizingly readable but never fully read.[27]

Like the aesthete–decadents of the fin de siècle, Eeldrop and Appleplex accept the disconnection between appearance and reality, but they do not fashion or flaunt an aristocratic, dandified aesthetic of surface impressions and cosmopolitan observations. Eeldrop and Appleplex are more like mid-Victorian reformers, as they are concerned with urban degeneracy and the "terra incognita" of the social geography, but they do not set out to produce objective, totalizing knowledge of the bifurcated cityscape of the rich and the poor. Unlike their predecessors or contemporaries, Eeldrop and Appleplex are not personally caught up in the adventure of exploration. They do not constitute themselves as conquerors of the great unknown with zest and effort toward a totalizing knowledge. They are not brave explorers of the extreme deprivation of the city, who identify tropes of degeneration, contagion, and gender disorder, so as to mark off the rough from the respectable. Nor are they secret seekers after voyeuristic pleasure who experience the streets of London as a playground.[28] The two characters represent the combined perspectives of both the non-purposive stroller and the purposive detective moving through the labyrinths of sign-value and information overload. Their concern is characterized by a sense of reflexivity, not only about the stereotyping of people (the lonely Londoner) and the plastic identity of the stranger, but also about the genre itself and the issue of representationalism.

Eeldrop and Appleplex hold identical views of the human social condition, deeming it "too well pigeon-holed, too taken for granted, too highly systematized" (Eliot 1917a, 8). Their common motive, which leads them sometimes to separate themselves from the fields of their daily employments and ordinary social activities, is to "apprehend the human soul in its concrete individuality" (p. 8). When talking about the need to look upon people as individuals rather than as objects for gossip or statistical classification, they pride themselves on moments of observation and insight that transcend the usual pigeonholes:

> "Why," said Eeldrop, "was that fat Spaniard, who sat at the table with us this evening, and listened to our conversation with occasional curiosity, why was he himself for a moment an object of interest to us? He wore his napkin tucked into his chin, he made unpleasant noises while eating, and while not eating, his way of crumbling bread between fat fingers made me extremely nervous; he wore a waistcoat café au lait, and black boots with brown tops. He was oppressively gross and vulgar; he belonged to a type, he could easily be classified in any town of provincial Spain. Yet under the circumstances – when we had been discussing

> marriage, and he suddenly leaned forward and exclaimed: "I was married once myself" – we were able to detach him from his classification and regard him for a moment as an unique being, a soul, however insignificant, with a history of its own, once for all. It is these moments which we prize, and which alone are revealing. (p. 8)

They struggle against finalization and its verbal inadequacies. Indeed, part of the challenge that the contemporary city poses for the individual is its flattening of subjectivity. The city as a composite of the multifarious paradoxically generates a one-dimensional urban subject: "[when] a man is classified something is lost," "[the] majority not only have no language to express anything save generalized man; they are for the most part unaware of themselves as anything but generalized man" (p. 10). Echoing within the dialogue between Eeldrop and Appleplex is a lament about people who are trapped into fixed, flat postures, people who come to the city and lose their solidity, people who become dissociated not only from others and from the city in which they live, but also from themselves.

The sudden remark from the Spaniard – "I was married once myself" – forces Eeldrop, Appleplex, and the reader to regard him individually, no matter how "insignificant," "gross," and "vulgar" he might be, to detach him from his classification and treat him as a valid individual. Consciously or unconsciously, the Spaniard has his narrative highlight the issues of privacy, inclusion, exclusivity, and intimacy of the London life, the alienating and brutalizing massiveness of urban life, the losing battle of an individual's attempt at masterful comprehension of the city as well as his doomed failure in seeking to fashion subjectivity out of his experience of it. Also, his narrative disrupts the interface between self and surroundings, subject and object, or even diasporic periphery and imperial centeredness. "That fat Spaniard" is not, in fact, so much a person as a signature. The character is the mark of someone whom people – or Eeldrop and Appleplex – briefly note or remember and then walk off, or sign off: "[he] was oppressively gross and vulgar; he belonged to a type, he could easily be classified in any town of provincial Spain," "[what] we learned about that Spaniard is incapable of being applied to any other Spaniard, or even recalled in words" (Eliot 1917a, 8, 9). What is heard here is the bitter echo of the stranger who typifies an inorganic membership of the group (Simmel 1950, 402–408). He is a foreigner who becomes like a native and yet is denied the sentiment of intimate and collective connection to any

neighbourhoods, friendship group, or social networks. Such an echo bitterly informs a general trajectory for the formation of the peripheral immigrant/stranger in the imperial metropolis: a problematic adaptation, relocation, and identity of the diasporic stranger in an alien association that is based upon a reciprocal and rational agreement of interest rather than instinctive, organic sentiment of the collectivity (Jenks 2004b, 4–5).

Eeldrop and Appleplex observe and complain about a London that hosts a bizarre motley assortment of types (identified in terms of criminology, sociology, personality quirks, or physical stigmata of race/class/gender otherness). London offers a collection of sudden events, bizarre coincidences, people and the strangers, as events appear and recede, upsetting absolute narrative and causal continuity:

> We had been talking of young Bistwick, who three months ago married his mother's housemaid and now is aware of the fact. Who appreciates the truth of the matter? Not the relatives, for they are only moved by affection, by regard for Bistwick's interests, and chiefly by their collective feeling of family disgrace. Not the generous minded and thoughtful outsider, who regards it merely as evidence for the necessity of divorce law reform. Bistwick is classed among the unhappily married. … In Gopsum Street a man murders his mistress. The important fact is that for the man the act is eternal, and that for the brief space he has to live, he is already dead. … He has crossed the frontier. … For the man's neighbors the important fact is what the man killed her with? And at precisely what time? And who found the body? For the "enlightened public" the case is merely evidence for the Drink question, or Unemployment, or some other category of things to be reformed. (Eliot 1917a, 9)

Obviously, their *flânerie* A–Z (or A–Y) is composed of scrawled fragments, which attempts to make a textual access to the illegible city, while at the same time acknowledging that all the events and people are traced or resurrected in a sense of ineffable and estranged otherness. Eeldrop and Appleplex have tried to produce catalogues and systems of classification, yet only have found themselves defeated by the sheer scope, range, and nature of the problem. Their *flânerie* A–Z (or A–Y), as well as their "Survey of Contemporary Society," addresses the theme of cultural completeness, urban legibility, epistemological fulfillment as well as its inevitable ruins and failure. Their fragmentary *flânerie* works as mementoes of a missing text and as indexes to an unreliable biography of the city and its people. For example, despite the tables and classifications, Eeldrop's and Appleplex's findings on Bistwick may be transformed into

a melodramatic tragedy of misalliance and the unhappily married. Or the findings can be translated under the memorial plaques of case studies of ''divorce law reform.'' In their investigation of ''the man in Gopsum Street [who] murders his mistress,'' Eeldrop and Appleplex insist that their study is based upon ''pure observation'' and is consequently disinterested. They thus have to resist either the seductive sensationalism of realist fiction, which is pregnant with vivid characters, domestic violence, sensational narrative, and moral significance. Or they have to resist the official memorialization after the event, such as classifying it under the ''Drink question, or Unemployment, or some other category of things to be reformed.'' In archival fashion, Eeldrop's and Appleplex's *flânerie* and their social geography of ''Survey of Contemporary Society'' aims to offer alternative histories of alternate Londons. They are concerned with peripheral details, as they focus on the particulars and the singulars rather than the big generalizations.[29] However, intrinsically, their *flânerie* A–Z (or A–Y) has become a theatre of ghosts which is characterized by resurrected otherness and estrangedness. This is due to the following: ''[the] important fact is that for the man the act is eternal, and that for the brief space he has to live, he is already dead,'' because ''[he] has crossed the frontier,'' passing beyond reconstruction and authenticity.

To some extent, their efforts toward urban legibility and stable demarcations of otherness have led Eeldrop and Appleplex to live anonymously in lodgings among the people, to the point of social masquerade, cultural immersion, and intrapsychic incorporation (Walkowitz 1992, 20). Yet, the imaginary map presented in the London *flânerie* of Eeldrop (''a [skeptic,] with a taste for mysticism,'' Eliot 1917a, 8) and Appleplex (''a materialist with a learning toward [skepticism],'' p. 8), challenges the grand tradition of English empiricism which assumes that facts speak for themselves, that facts are perceived by the senses and gathered by an impartial mind. Eeldrop and Appleplex speak of themselves as European intellectuals whose distaste for conventionality, and whose thirst for truth and reality, make them the shrewd observers and dissenting interpreters of the panoramic spectacle created by their *flânerie*. Eeldrop insists that ''[their] philosophy should spring from [their] point of view and not return upon itself to explain [their] point of view,'' and since they ''cannot escape the label,'' they should at least ''let it be one which carries no distinction, and arouses no self-consciousness''

(pp. 10–11). Between the two extremes, however, dissonance may occur. Eeldrop and Appleplex seem to be left disturbed by the outcome of the excursions of their *flânerie*: they remain unquiet in such a cultural context of appearance that is seductive with simulation, illusion, fabrication, and hyperreality.

V. Conclusion

The City is the greatest human invention and ambition, through which and by which, ideally, human life will be cultivated. Indeed, the City is a magical misalliance of reality and phantasmagoria, and its magic remains overwhelmingly transgressive. The call that the *flâneur* is a key figure in the critical literature of modernity and unbanization found Eliot as a ready listener. Ultimately, Eliot's artistic development of his urban poetics is inseparable from his physical wanderings and his psychogeographic *flânerie*. His artistic development involved a conscious movement among multiple and diverse social spaces, and an authoritative dealing with cities, both indoors and outdoors, both real and unreal. The image of the City formed by his *flânerie* becomes the basis of his reflexivity, as it hermeneutically reveals the pride and prejudice, projections and repressions, expectations and anxieties of the man and his time. The richness and frightening complexity of London (and other contemporary cities) provide Eliot and his fellow writers with experiences, images, and the drive for urban exploration. Yet, the City also threatens to subvert any sense of ontological order, to annihilate any attempted quest for epistemological realization and fulfillment, or to reduce humans and their associations into a conglomeration of private cells. Deeply influenced in a variety of ways by nineteenth-century traditions of urban description, Eliot and his *flâneur* mark a period of transition that looks backward in form to their British or European predecessors, yet looks forward in terms of the concern to their postmodern successors. The City always ceases to be a knowable entity. If the nineteenth-century *flâneur* is just beginning to experience the issues of illegibility, then the contemporary *flâneur* encounters these problems more intensely, since the boundaries of time and space are becoming more flexible and mutable, and since the City is becoming a vast labyrinth of information overload and data simulation (Featherstone 1998, 923). "Eeldrop and Appleplex – I" remains the high-water mark of Eliot's

insistent participation in the problematic dialogue of urban representation. The prose piece is also a kind of terminus, since the individual talent has to continue to develop culturally and intellectually in the living context of a tradition in order to meet the city's burgeoning commercial and professional, ethical and aesthetical demands.

NOTES

1. The term is borrowed from Walkowitz 1992.
2. Eliot had his "Eeldrop and Appleplex – II" published in the *Little Review* in September 1917. While critics have accepted Eliot's self-fashioned image as the urban rambler in "Eeldrop and Appleplex – I," most have overlooked the significance of his modest, invisible, yet equally legitimate *flâneuse* in "Eeldrop and Appleplex – II." Another paper of mine, entitled "Sexual/textual politics of identity: The invisible *flâneuse* in T. S. Eliot's 'Eeldrop and Appleplex – II,"' was delivered at the 61st Annual Convention of the Rocky Mountain Modern Language Association, October 4–6, 2007, Calgary, Canada. In my paper I argue that the *flâneuse* is the central figure in Eliot's "Eeldrop and Appleplex – II," in her element in the crowd – she is at the center of the world and at the same time hidden from the world.
3. The term is borrowed from David Frisby, who identifies the literature of *flânerie* in the work of Franz Hessel, Walter Benjamin, Georg Simmel, Robert E. Park, and others. This literature is characterized by an ensemble of observing, reading, deciphering, recording, and reconstituting street scenes and images from the city (Frisby 1994, 95–101). In the course of my argument on the hidden roles of Eeldrop and Appleplex as the *flâneur* – such as that of purposive detective, visual textual decipherer, literary textual producer, and archaeologist of the city archive – I am indebted greatly to David Frisby's comprehensive study: "The *flâneur* in social theory" in Tester 1994, 81–110.
4. For example, it is on a grey and yellow Sunday evening, which is filled with the tepid air and the smoky smell of lilac, when Eeldrop and Appleplex talk about Edith, alias Scheherazade, in their suburban lodgings in South London. "Eeldrop and Appleplex – II," focusing on the case of Scheherazade/Edith, begins with phrases of memory, which are seemingly unattached and floating: "On such a night as this … I often think of Scheherazade, and wonder what has become of her" (Eliot 1917b, 16). It seems that Eeldrop and Appleplex provide a kind of paradigm for looking at urban spectatorship through the lens of gender, so much so that in the city of the male spectator Scheherazade/Edith appears as "other," always objectified and instrumental in making the social statements that Eeldrop and Appleplex are seeking for their A–Z intellectual projects. However, I would like to argue that it is by means of Eeldrop's and Appleplex's essentially dialogic *flânerie* that Edith, Eliot's twentieth-century Scheherazade who pursues her "unusual career" in the city (p. 17) by placing herself in the center of various textual dissemination and production, appears as the *flâneuse* and female writer with attempts to chronicle her own female spectatorship.

5. The phrase "raids on the inarticulate" is taken from Harmon 1976, 450–459. Among other likely analogues from French, Latin, or English satires in which characters representing philosophical or ideological positions do a lot of talking, *Bouvard et Pécuchet* is, in my view, the most inspiring precursor. Yet, there is a sense of difference between the rather bitter irony that Flaubert directs toward his pair (as well as their A–Z intellectual projects) and the more sympathetic but still ironic treatment Eliot gives to Eeldrop and Appleplex. The relentless failure of Bouvard's and Pécuchet's adventures highlights themes such as epistemological crisis as well as the alienation of human thought from human experience. Ezra Pound once referred to *Bouvard et Pécuchet* and wrote that "Flaubert having recorded provincial customs in [*Bovary*] and city habits in [*L'education*], set out to complete his record of nineteenth-century life by presenting all sorts of things that the average man of the period would have had in his head," and that it also highlights the nature of "the record of 'received ideas' in [*Bouvard and Pécuchet*]" (Pound 1968, 403, 405). Flaubert published his *sottisier* (anthology of stupid quotations) in the form of a dictionary of received ideas (encyclopedia of commonplace notions) appended to his novel *Bouvard et Pécuchet*, and arguably this demonstrates an abortive encyclopedic effort and an unsuccessful epistemological quest for a totalizing archaeological or archival investigation of the nineteenth-century life.
6. In terms of Mike Featherstone, two powerful images of the city have been developed in the Western tradition. One, claimed by Hannah Arendt in 1958, is the image of the city as the *polis*, the home of citizenship, democratic participation, and self-governing political community. The other is the image of the city as the *cosmopolis*, as Babylon the world city, a settlement of enormous scope, characteristic of heterogeneity, fragmentation, and lack of citizenry. See Featherstone 1998, 911–912.
7. For example, see Barth 1969; Clifford 1997; Rapport & Dawson 1998. The traditional conceptions of individuals as members of separate localized communities and insulated cultures have been challenged in the process of urbanization and globalization, so much so that urban metaphors such as "community," "ethnicity," or even "home" have invited further debates and re-definitions. In the urban centrist view, "a community," "a district," or "a home" is an urban location that serves as the key source of rootedness, the manifestations of stasis, fixity, or immutability which ensures stable cultural reproduction and self-identity. The thesis of urban de-centrism, on the other hand, treats urban existence as transitory, agitated, and effervescent, and voices concerns about contemporary identity within the context of the fluidity of "home" (Jenks 2004b, 11–13).
8. For example, on reading the city, see Dyos & Wolff 1973; Sharpe & Wallock 1987; Sadler 1998; Gilbert 2002.
9. On gendered space and the invisibility of women in the literature of modernity, see Pollock 1988; Wolff 2004, 2.3–16. Both Griselda Pollock and Janet Wolff argue that modernity has been realized itself as the province of masculinity, not only ideologically and socially, but also aesthetically and literarily. Women are not at home in the city: they cannot walk or stroll freely in the city. The very presence and visibility of some women – women workers, women shoppers, and so on – on the streets is excused by their functional purpose. In reality as well as in literature,

Wolff and Pollock claim, women are marginalized; they are denied full subjectivity and are the object of male optical gratification, the prey to the harassment of male gaze. Excluded from the public/masculine sphere, women are disempowered and silenced, made virtually invisible and inaudible.

10. According to William Sharpe and Leonard Wallock, the history of the quest for urban legibility can be traced back to Juvenal's and Horace's depicting of "the pandemonium of ancient Rome," and highlighted by Dickens's, Mayhew's, and Engels's referring to London, to the building of the new "Great Towns," as an "unintelligible mess," with such quest continuing with complaints about the "decentered city, nonplace urban realm, doughnut" by Lewis Mumford and other contemporary writers and critics (Sharpe & Wallock 1987b, 1–50). In her studies of mid- and late Victorian urban spectatorship, Walkowitz also maintains that Engels, Dickens, and Mayhew are the "most distinguished among a throng of missionaries and explorers," who try to read the illegible city, and transform what appears to be chaotic into a social text that is "integrated, knowable, and ordered" (Walkowitz 1992, 18).
11. Chris Jenks suggests that in the British tradition reform and philanthropy are established as a proper and articulate element of any social science or social commentary, while in the United States they could hardly have themselves presented explicitly as "liberal patronizing motives" in the face of the American high personal achievement ethic (Jenks 2004a, 1.9).
12. In her thorough study, Walkowitz observes that the "fact and fantasy" of urban exploration has long been a telling feature of nineteenth-century bourgeois male subjectivity, and a powerful streak of voyeurism has marked a range of disparate activities, be they new commercial activities, new journalist practices, or work on social reform and policy when the "dreadfully delightful city" became a contested terrain of the patriarchal ideology (Walkowitz 1992, 15–39).
13. Walter's *My Secret Life* and Petronius' *London Unexpurgated* are such examples. *My Secret Life* appears to be the ostensibly true-life chronicle of Walter, an anonymous Victorian gentleman who has an obsessive desire or passion for sexual experiences. In a similar way, the anonymous author of *London Unexpurgated* – known as "Petronius" – presents himself as a guide to London, an amateur historian of the London underworld, who is interested in "only giving the facts."
14. In terms of Baudelaire, the *flâneur* is a passionate observer whose domain is the crowd, and who enjoys his incognito wherever he goes, feeling away from home and yet simultaneously at home anyway (Baudelaire 1972, 399–400). For Benjamin, the hallmark of modern metropolitan experience is the encounter with the crowd, the urban populace composed of the great assemblage of strangers: "the crowd – no subject was more entitled to the attention of nineteenth-century writers" (Benjamin 1983, 120). In their discussions of Edgar Allen Poe's "The Man of the Crowd," both Baudelaire and Benjamin express a sense of fear, curiosity, or intoxication, as they perceive that the modern labyrinth of the crowd appears as the newest space in which one may come to lose oneself (p. 122; Baudelaire 1972, 397). According to Keith Tester, the man in the crowd stands as opposed to the man of the crowd because the latter may appear to join in the anonymous and empty rituals of meetings with strangers, yet remains consciously resistant to become so mundane or banal (Tester 1994, 9).

15. For example, as John T. Mayer points out, although Victorian novelists found rich material in London squalor, and Baudelaire saw hell in contemporary Paris, English poets until Eliot mainly turned away from the city. It was not until 1922 when *The Waste Land* was published that Georgian poetry, and its benign, pretty countryside, was finally displaced (Mayer 1989, 302). After a thorough study of the history of nineteenth-century English poetry, G. Robert Stange concludes "The frightened poets" by suggesting that the poets take little joy in the city, and that this resulted from a mix of Romantic gestures, aristocratic pastoralism, and middle-class prudery. See Dyos & Wolff 1973, 2.493. When Eliot looked back with a sense of special gratitude to poets whose works had deeply impressed him during his formative years, he paid handsome tribute to Baudelaire and Thomson. Critics concur that it is the French poets who let Eliot make the necessary leap to writing urban poetry. Critics such as Mayer, however, might question the Victorian poet James Thomson's possible contribution, arguing that Thomson's Dreadful City seems "too melodramatic to be influential" (Mayer 1989, 302). Other critics, such as Robert Crawford, maintain that Thomson's city represents how London functions as a wider symbol of humanity in its horrific aspect (Crawford 1985, 23–41; 1987, 36–52).
16. See Mayer, "The city as Via Dolorosa" in Mayer 1989, 67–96. In terms of Mayer, the city poem series includes: "First Caprice in North Cambridge" (1909), "Second Caprice in North Cambridge" (1909), "Fourth Caprice in Montparnasse" (1910), [The smoke that gathers blue and sinks] (1911), "Interlude: In a Bar" (1911), [Inside the gloom] (1911), [He said: This universe is very clear] (1911), "Rhapsody on a Windy Night" (1911), "Interlude in London" (1911), "First Prelude in Roxbury" (1910), "Second Prelude in Roxbury" (1910), "Third Prelude in Roxbury: Morgendämmerung" (1911), "[Fourth Prelude]: Abenddämmerung" (likely 1911), "The Little Passion" (likely 1911). Mayer regards this series of fourteen poems as a travesty of the traditional meditations on the fourteen stages in Christ's Passion, stages that coincide with the fourteen stopping places along the Via Dolorosa (the route in Jerusalem that Christ is believed to have followed, from the judgement hall of Pilate, where he received the sentence of death, to Mount Calvary, the site of the Crucifixion). All of these early unpublished poems are available in Ricks 1996. When Eliot settled in Paris in the autumn of 1910, he was attracted and repelled by a bifurcated city of a wealthy elite and alienated masses; a cityscape of grand palaces juxtaposed with shabby hovels, glittering leisure with obscure density and poverty. In Paris during the early 1910s Eliot maintained a kind of spectatorial distance as the *flâneur* as he tried to understand the urban scene: "I had only the genuine stimulus of the place, and not the artificial stimulus of the people, as I knew no-one whatever, in the literary and artistic world, as a companion – knew them rather as spectacles, listened to, at rare occasions, but never spoken to" (see Conversation, May 2, 1921, recorded by Robert McAlmon, in Boyle 1968, 8–9; quoted by Gordon 1977, 37).
17. Psychogeography as a concept and spatial attitude was first highlighted in the works of the Situationist International during the 1950s and 1960s. As its name implies, psychogeography attempts to combine subjective and objective modes of urban representation (see Knabb 1981, 50, 307–308; Sadler 1998, 76–81). In my

paper entitled "Rhapsody on a city of dreadful night: The *flâneur* and urban spectacle," to be published in the *Yeats Eliot Review*, I argue that Eliot's "Rhapsody on a Windy Night" can be read as the realization of a "psychogeography" of the *flâneur* – a visual mapping of an unrouted travelogue of the city, characteristic of "the dérive," "detournement," and "the spectacle." Arguably, the nature of fragmentary *flânerie* inherent in "Eeldrop and Appleplex – I" further illuminates Eliot's anticipating situationist "psychogeographic *flânerie*."

18. Christopher Ricks in *T. S. Eliot and Prejudice* discusses such deep-rooted newspaperly prejudices, pointing out that "[the] impure observation endemic to newspapers (which like to call themselves things like the *Observer*) is not alien to the principle of classification but shallower" (Ricks 1994, 273). His phrases "impure observation" and "shallower classification" are borrowed here to exemplify the twofold (or multifold) nature of Eliot's terms as well as their inherently subversive nature in respect to the commonplace stereotype in Eeldrop's and Appleplex's *flânerie*.
19. When praising Baudelaire's work for being ahead of its age, Benjamin enumerates two kinds of "petty-bourgeois genre": one is the *physiologue* or the physiology of the city, the other the criminology of the detective story. While the former offers for sale "soothing little remedies" that brush aside any disquieting notions about the city so as to constitute "the blinkers of 'narrow-minded city animal'" (Benjamin 1983, 40, 38), the latter claims its share in the marketplace by concerning itself with the thrilling and threatening aspects, the terror and excitement of urban life (pp. 35–40).
20. In *The Family Reunion*, Harry expresses such a dilemma:

> The partial anaesthesia of suffering with feeling
> And partial observation of one's own automatism
> While the slow stain sinks deeper through the skin
> Tainting the flesh and discolouring the bone –
> That is what matters, but it is unspeakable,
> Untranslatable: I talk in general terms
> Because the particular has no Language.
> (Eliot 1978, 294)

See also Harmon 1976, 455, for detailed discussion on "the inarticulate."

21. In her discussion of Pierce Egan's *Life in London*, Deborah Epstein-Nord quotes that the metropolis is a "complete CYCLOPEDIA," and "each street a volume of intelligence." Epstein-Nord also mentions Carol L. Bernstein, who analyzes *Life in London* in the context of the fashionable novel and dandyism (Epstein-Nord 2004, 2.159, 173 n. 34). And I would like to suggest that Eliot's "Burbank with a Baedeker: Bleistein with a Cigar" seems to confirm my argument on the "tourist imagination" in his "Eeldrop and Appleplex – I."
22. Here I am combining elements of both Deborah Epstein-Nord's study of the literary representation of London in the early nineteenth century and of Mike Featherstone's discussion on the physicality of the city. According to Epstein-Nord, there are two dominant perceptual and literary modes of urban description of the early nineteenth-century city: the "panoramic" view and a sudden "episodic"

encounter with solitary street figures (Epstein-Nord 2004, 152–153). For Featherstone, the city of the plan or map provides a ''bird's-eye'' view of urban life in which the city is planned and readable, while the ''mole's-eye'' view of the city favours the multitude of experiential pathways through the city. Featherstone uses De Certeau's well-known article ''Walking in the city'' as an example of the mole's-eye view of the city of walkers from below who move through the alleys and passageways of the labyrinthine city, and who write the city without being able to read it (Featherstone 1998, 912).

23. There has been a debate about the extent to which the Victorian notion of the compartmentalization and separation of private world and public world is practiced in life. For example, in contrast to the argument that modern literature as well as the nineteenth-century public space is exclusively masculine (Wolff 1989, 2004), other feminists and theorists have argued that women are visible in public and inhabit a range of public/private liminal spaces, such as department stores, tea rooms, restaurants, hotels, museums, exhibitions, and so on (Friedberg 1994; Wilson 1995, 2004; Nava 1997). The issue becomes more complicated in the modern/postmodern context, as the city is seen as increasingly bereft of public space. Public space has fallen into a quasi-public/private space where there is a high level of surveillance, normalization, and homogenization (Featherstone & Lash 1998; Fiske 1998).
24. Featherstone suggests that for Benjamin there shall be a direct relationship between the panoramic viewer and the *flâneur* (Featherstone 1998, 919, 923).
25. On the *flâneur*, see Benjamin 1983; Berman 1989; Wilson 1991, 1995, 2004; Walkowitz 1992; Tester 1994; Epstein-Nord 1995, 2004; Featherstone 1998.
26. Featherstone suggests that the *flâneur* provides continuity between modernity and postmodernity in terms of the aestheticization of everyday life, which takes three forms. First, it can be seen in the movement of art toward life, as in the work of the avant-gardes of the 1920s; second, in the movement of life toward art, as in the case of Baudelaire; third, in the development of a consumer culture and simulation culture in which the *flâneur* becomes adaptive and receptive to the sign. In terms of Featherstone, similar to the nineteenth-century *flâneur* who combines the perspectives of ''the stroller'' seeking the aesthetic sensations and strangeness of the city places and crowds, and ''the detective'' searching for clues in a city that has become a vast labyrinth of information traces, the *flâneur* in the simulated data cities is able to adopt both modes (Featherstone 1998, 923).
27. Sharpe and Wallock, following Carl Schorske's theories, identify three major areas of urban self-perception since the eighteenth century: the Enlightenment City of Virtue, the Victorian City of Vice, and the Modern City beyond Good and Evil, which correspond metaphorically to a New Jerusalem, a Babylon, and a Babel (Sharpe & Wallock 1997b, 7).
28. For a reading of the tradition of urban spectatorship examined respectively from the perspectives of historical, cultural, and literary studies, see Walkowitz 1992, 15–40.
29. For detailed discussion on archive reason and archiving culture, see Featherstone 2000, 161–184.

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