New York City Built by Words
Representation of Urban Space in New York City Novels, 1900-1945

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Abstract

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New York City Built by Words explores the lesser-examined role of the built environment in representing urban spaces in modern New York City novels. This project reevaluates the often overlooked importance of the centrality of urban architecture in the genre by revisiting the "rag-to-riches" stories from the city's period of growth and by focusing on their use of skyscrapers as literary settings. This peculiar centrality is represented as a synthesis of the physical and non-material environment, and its development is traced from the turn of the century to the end of the World War II.

The first chapter looks at Theodore Dreiser's *Sister Carrie* (1900), a seminal text that establishes New York City as a new American metropolis in comparison to Chicago. It argues that Dreiser depicts New York's urban space as an urbanscape that exists between the ideal and materialistic environment, using tropes such as newspaper, theatre, and restaurants.

The second chapter examines F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Beautiful and Damned* (1922), "May Day" (1922), *The Great Gatsby* (1925), and "My Lost City" (1931). It shows how Fitzgerald establishes a peculiar urban space, dynamic and surreal, thereby

creating the image of a romantic city as a combination of physical and ideal environments throughout his New York novels.

The third chapter pairs The Fleischer Brothers' animated feature *Mr. Bug Goes to Town* (1941) with Ayn Rand's *The Fountainhead* (1943). While the former portrays individuals as dwarfed by the powerful physical and social forces of architecture associated closely with the capitalist culture, the latter depicts an architect's struggle to win over the changing urban space and finally implanting a static, permanent building, thereby defying the traditional representation of New York architecture that showed motion and change as its main features.

The final chapter follows the contemporary development of the genre after the 9/11 terrorist attack, namely, by Art Spiegelman's *In the Shadow of No Towers* (2004) and Colum McCann's *Let the Great World Spin* (2008). It discusses how the traumatic experience affected views about urban architecture, and attempts to recover from the trauma took place in relation to the representation of skyscrapers.

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Prologue: Tokyo that is not New York

"Art of Ground Zero" and Tokyo in the 1990s

In 1999, *A Picture of an Air Raid on New York City* (1996, figure 1), a painting by Japanese contemporary artist Makoto Aida, was one of the centerpieces of *Ground Zero Japan*, a milestone exhibition organized by art critic Noi Sawaragi to introduce a group of artists whose works explored the sense of space and history in postmodern Japanese society.[1] In the Japanese traditional style of scroll painting, Aida depicts the skyscrapers of Manhattan engulfed in flame and Japanese "Zero" bomber planes used in World War II, flying over the city in the shape of an infinity symbol.[2] The painting is a part of Aida's major series of works called "War Picture Returns," suggesting a revision of World War II-era pro-Imperialist Japanese propaganda pictures, a genre in which modern Japanese painting flourished, and one with a history long repressed. This work was primarily meant to be an elegy for the Japanese past, which links strongly to the artist's own trauma as a Japanese painter. The buildings in the picture are those of New York, caricatured and placed randomly in order to defuse the reality. However, the fire that engulfs the city in this picture is meant to represent reality, for "the sea of fire" is a typical image associated with the great bombing of Tokyo on March 9, 1944, evoking the strong image of a city in danger—not Hiroshima, which suffered the atomic bomb attack and is, in the Japanese imagination, associated with a blinding flash and black rain.

Fig.1. Makoto Aida, *Nyūyōku Kūbaku no Zu (Sensoga Ritāns) (A Picture of an Air Raid on New York City (War Picture Returns))*, 1996, six-panel sliding screens, hinges, Nihon Keizai Shimbun newspapers, black-and-white photocopy on hologram paper, charcoal pencil, watercolor, acrylic, magic marker, correction liquid, pencil etc., 66 9/16 x 148-13/16 (169 x 378cm), unfolded. Computer Graphics of Zero fighters created by Mutsuo Matsuhashi. Photography by Hideto Nagatsuka. © AIDA Makoto, Courtesy of Mizuma Art Gallery.

This work, conceived and realized in 1996, is considered by many critics to be one of the works that best reflects the atmosphere of Japanese society after 1995, the year in which major catastrophes struck two metropolises: the terrorist attack on subways in Tokyo and the massive earthquake in Kobe, each of which killed the largest number of people in Japan after World War II and cast fundamental doubt on its society's safety and stability.[3] Sawaragi, in criticism of contemporary Japanese art, calls the works of artists who responded to the atmosphere of this post-traumatic period "the art of ground zero," whose meaning is twofold. On the one hand, it means that the artists work within a depressed, traumatized society shell-shocked by two calamities after a long recession brought on by the collapse of "the bubble economy," an event perceived as a "second

defeat" after World War II. On the other hand, it means that they recognize their cultural origin back in the past, in the Japan in modernity, which became the strongest taboo of postwar Japan, the repressed memory of World War II (*The Art of Ground Zero*). In this sense, Aida's work is a major example, perhaps even a manifesto.

Two observations on society and culture that this work provides, which I explicate in the following section, point to the important issues concerning the interaction between the city's physical and nonmaterial aspects that I explore in this dissertation taking New York in modernity as an example.

The first idea concerns the close ties between the city, its social and material situation, and its cultural representations. Japan of the 1990s, which bred this painting, was a crucial turning point in post-war Japanese history. Since 1945, the end of WWII, the Japanese economy kept on growing and finally came to its prime in the 1980s with the asset price bubble that elevated Japan up to the 2nd richest country in the world. Then came "Black Monday" in 1992, whose ensuing economic downturn eventually led to the fall of one of Japan's biggest investment banks in 1997. In the aftermath, Japan was mired in the longest recession in its postwar history, and, with the major catastrophes in 1995, the 1990s has often been called "the lost decade."[4] This process had an impact on the physical look of the city, creating material change. Excessive investment and a construction boom altered the Japanese landscape, most prominently in metropolises; it replaced the old inner city with new postmodern buildings, and anything remaining from before World War II was replaced completely. Then, with the end of speculative trend, the

construction boom ended abruptly, and the dynamic physical changes to the city came to a halt, leaving empty spaces where building projects never even got off the ground. These changes in the physical urban structure were accompanied by other social changes as well. The times bred a culture of recession and reclusion epitomized by the "Otaku" culture, a phenomenon first visible in the subculture and later more apparent in the 2000s.[5] What the city experienced is an intrinsic interaction between the material and nonmaterial. The way the city changes materially affects the nonmaterial aspect of it, culture, society and community, and vice versa.

The second idea Aida's picture provides points to the larger question of the formation of the identity of Japanese modernity; Aida's planes flying above New York, instead of any other city, vividly highlight the centrality of the United States as "the other" in the postwar Japanese imagination. Questioned about the choice of the subject of his art, Aida states that he created it as "an 'impossible' fictitious historical painting," a homage to the genre of War Picture, and picked New York because it was "somewhere that such a thing wouldn't happen," alluding to the significance of New York City in Japanese imagination (*Monument for Nothing* 218); New York, as a symbolic capital of the US, existed as the symbol of modernity for Japan. It was perceived foremost as an idea, at once the city of a former nemesis and a dream city to gaze upon, as well as a physical place; New York is "not Tokyo" not only in that it is the symbol of the overwhelmingly powerful country that defeated Japan, but also in that the New York City's pureness – or naiveté – is born of its position as the world's biggest city, untouched by the memory of

foreign invasion or major destruction in modern times. When a Japanese company purchased Rockefeller Center at the height of the speculation boom in the late 1980s, it was treated as a symbolic victory, albeit a short-lived one.[6] New York in this discourse has a peculiar status as a synthesis of the ideas cast upon a physical place, and examining this image will be an important part of the formation of Tokyo's identity.

New York City in the modern period, especially from the late nineteenth century to the end of World War II, which grew rapidly around ideas imposed on to the physical landscape, and via the subsequent physical growth, gave rise to interpretations from various sources. This project is an attempt to survey the range of ideas projected onto New York in relation to the city's physical architectural character and also incorporate the perspective gained from observing Tokyo in the 1990s. This will help explicate New York's particular status as the capital of modernity, both self-acclaimed and so seen by others throughout modern history. By focusing on dynamism among the material and ideal layers of the city, much like the interaction I have seen in the formation of culture in the 1990s Tokyo, I want to explore how people have and continue to represent the urban space of New York City, characterized by dynamic change, speed, abundance, materiality, and ideals.

Introduction

New York City and its Cultural Representations

This project reasserts the active role of urban space in stimulating dialogue with literary representation. Space is not a simple, passive container in which modern life is played out or a static subject whose change is reflected in artistic representations. Rather, urban space actively and organically interacts in forming modern life itself. This concern is particularly relevant when we consider the culture of New York City from the mid-nineteenth century to the end of World War II, a period when the city experienced unprecedented growth, both structural and social. Its architectural environment is of particular importance, for it is the main feature of the city in this period. New York is physically unique for three main reasons: it is a highly artificial and rigidly planned city, structured to maximize its economic potential. Secondly, partly because it remained undamaged by the war, it became, in a sense, the capital of the modern world at the end of World War II. Thirdly, the city achieved a density unheard of at that time because it grew so rapidly, exploiting all available space in the limited land area of Manhattan.

This project is an attempt to explicate the relationship between this unique materiality and the nonmaterial dimensions of New York. In this sense, this project is part of one of the major challenges of cultural studies today: examining modernity, an intangible theme, as “a lived experience,” a concept discussed by Arjun Appadurai, in order to reconstruct how the social and technical changes brought by modernity are felt

and experienced by members of society.

The relationship between the physical shape of the city and the culture it breeds might be better understood in relation to the recent discussion on "architecture," a concept Laurence Lessig defined in *Code and Other Laws of Cyberspace* (1999) as a defining element of human behavior in society, together with law, morals, and economy. In Lessig's sense of the word, "architecture" is the material structure that includes the plan behind it, which works as the self-generating force that the environment creates. This new conception of the term opened up the possibility for considering the role that physical structure may play in defining people's behavior. Though it may seem farfetched, this theory provides a viewpoint from which we can reconsider the peculiarity of New York City in its characteristic form of urban space. In fact, one of the early observations of urban modernity provided by architect Rem Koolhaas in the 1970s directly addresses New York's "architecture" in the sense that Lessig later defined. In *Delirious New York* (1978), Koolhaas serves as the ghostwriter who decodes the city's dream, its "unconscious," thereby exploring the realm between the physical structure of the city and the plan that created it. Two of his observations regarding the city's architecture are particularly important: first, that the city has a "resolution of ambivalence as its basic movement," and second, that Manhattan is a material representation of the "culture of congestion," concepts which I think explain many characteristics of art from New York City, especially New York City novels; realistic novels that deal with city life in a changing society make up one of the many cultural representations that record the feeling

of the changing modern urban environment.

To investigate how the social and cultural change and the material shape of city interact with each other, I propose to look closely at New York novels, mainly realistic novels whose subject is life in New York, from the same period. Studies of "city novels" as a genre have a long history and wide range, with many focusing on New York City. Blanche Gelfant's *The American City Novel* (1954) and Eugene Arden's "The New York Novel: A Study in Urban Fiction" (1958) are the first major studies to define this genre. However, in these earlier discussions, city novels were usually treated as a subcategory of literary realism and naturalism. As the experience of American cities was established as one of the core subjects of American Studies in the 1960s, works concerning the city and its literature, such as Alan Trachtenberg's and David Weimer's studies, expanded the range of material for consideration and provided a valuable method of reading. In the late 1970s and the early 1980s, issues of class and economy were brought into discussion by the historical readings represented by works of Westbrook, Spindler, and others. Their studies recognized popular literature and other types of cultural artifacts as important components of the genre. New York City has also been an important subject in studies of ethnic literature. Especially prominent is the study of Jewish literature, conducted by critics such as Alfred Kazin, Ihab Hassan, and Irving Howe, and of African-American culture, without which it is impossible to narrate a story of twentieth-century New York. Among this scholarship, Burton Pike's *The City and Modern Literature* deserves special attention in relation to recent work on space, cultural representation, and modernity.

Pike's main argument is that there is the "Real city" and the "Word city"; the city represented in literature exists separately from the city in reality. While I find the argument compelling, I disagree with the overall tendency to connect New York only to the European tradition of the city. Recent revision of the relationship between American realist novels and their sense of space will provide the direct framework for my project. Starting with the seminal works of Amy Kaplan (1988) and Rachel Bowlby (1985), which examine the realist writer's sense of authorship in relation to their sense of writing space, these studies provide ways to more accurately capture the issues pertaining to the physical growth of the city and urban space and the development of literature dealing with the urban experience. More recently, Richard Lehan (1998) and Hana Wirth-Nesher (1996) have engaged the genre, focusing on major city writers' senses of space.

This project aims to add to the well-covered discussion on New York City novels by foregrounding the importance of urban architecture in New York City, which I believe has been conceived and represented as a fusion of the physical and ideal sides of the city. To further illuminate this often-overlooked interplay, I think it is fruitful to look at the less-discussed viewpoints of outsiders on the city: those from other cities who by definition conceive and define their experiences in New York from a comparative, distanced perspective, one that tends to bring in both the physical nature of New York City and the ideas that the city constantly generates and projects outward.[7] This viewpoint is most palpable in narratives about the city written by writers who actually come to the city and experience materiality and physical structure firsthand, especially in

novels that adopt the "rags-to-riches" format, and look at how individuals locate their larger significance within the material structure of the city.

The aim of this project is relatively restricted. I do not intend to provide a comprehensive catalogue of the various representations of the city in the given period, which, if attempted, would be extensive and virtually impossible. Further, I do not intend to argue that the writers discussed in this project represent the whole genre, which would be an absurd claim to make. For the sake of avoiding redundancy and maintaining focus, I will stay away from addressing topics that have already been sufficiently explored in the field. For instance, I will avoid a comparative approach that establishes a dichotomy between "city" and "country," or "European city" and "American city." As this project strives to examine the dynamics that characterize the whole of New York City as a literary space, I will consciously avoid an approach that concentrates on specific neighborhoods, such as Greenwich Village, the Lower East Side, and Harlem. I believe that this project will succeed if I am able to portray the dynamic and complex cultural space that fascinated and inspired the writers of the various times, as well as the manner in which the writers constructed and developed New York City as a literary space in their writings.

To highlight New York City's uniqueness in each period, which is deeply intertwined with the existing architectural settings of the city, I devote attention to New York's relationships with material change and the ideals linked to the city, which I think is most visible in the representation of the city's architecture in New York novels that

define themselves against a place other than New York.

In the first chapter, titled *New York that is Not Chicago: New York as the New Metropolis in Theodore Dreiser's Sister Carrie,* I focus primarily on Theodore Dreiser's *Sister Carrie* (1900), which depicts New York as a new city, dramatically different from a typical Midwestern metropolis like Chicago, by stressing the city's physical layout, depicting it as an embodiment of physical motion that promotes social mobility. In chronicling the protagonists' social rise and fall in the two cities, this novel discovers urban space such as avenues, restaurants, and hotels in skyscrapers as unique places loaded with special presence, describing New York City as a singular cultural milieu of the era. Moreover, this novel recognizes the city that is created not structurally, but in words, and locates the two completely different lives and urban experience in conjunction with this theme. By creating a portrait of New York in which an individual's fate within society is so deeply embedded within the material and nonmaterial structure of the city that it almost seems like the city is another prominent character in the novel, Dreiser adds an important dimension to the existing tradition of depicting New York City.

The second chapter is *New York that is not Paris: Contrasts of the Dream in F. Scott Fitzgerald's New York Novels,* which discusses New York from the Jazz Age, a period in which, according to many observers, the physical city came closest to its ideal state. One of the common threads among modernist writers of the 1920s is that they experienced Europe through service in World War I, which in turn helped define their American experience, and writers represent the modernity of New York's urban

environment in a way that is different from the European sense of the planned modern city, namely Paris. They portray New York as dynamic and transforming, but at the same time insulated and naïve. As a prominent example, I discuss F. Scott Fitzgerald's "New York stories," namely *The Beautiful and Damned* (1922), "May Day" (1922), *The Great Gatsby* (1925), and the essay "My Lost City" (1930) to argue that each work examines New York's dreamy composition in a way closely intertwined with its architecture, giving the city a special presence that differs from the treatment of Paris, the other dream city in the discourse. Fitzgerald's keen interest in pattern and composition locates the city's urbanity between its ideal and physical dimensions. As in Dreiser's work, Fitzgerald distinguishes hotels and restaurants in skyscrapers as romanticized settings that symbolize urban space, spaces that allow physical upward and downward movements, connected to protagonists' social position, to be rendered more dynamically.

The third chapter is called *New York that is not Leningrad: Ayn Rand's Impossible Tower in The Fountainhead* and looks at two examples from the 1940s, when New York, remaining one of the only metropolises to emerge from World War II unscathed, fashioned itself as the strongest city in the capitalist world. Its architecture, conceived as the materialization of ideas of speed and power that triumph in the world, also becomes an arena of strong individuality. A peculiar and defining example is Ayn Rand's novel *The Fountainhead* (1943), which conceives New York as an antithesis of contemporary totalitarian regimes. Rand's New York, although not exactly realistic, communicates the intense urban space of New York at its prime. It foregrounds the city's

architecture as the capitalistic ideal embodied by abundant material and the violent power behind it. The quests of two self-made men in New York are intrinsically tied to its architecture, as Rand uses architecture to frame the distinction between the character who triumphs and the one who fails. The victorious character replaces the existing, transforming landscape with perfection, therefore achieving a consummate, integral unity of the material and ideal. Another example of the violently powerful architecture that construes the urban space can be seen in the feature-length animated film *Mr. Bug Goes to Town* (1941), a work that further stresses the contrast between powerful architecture and the individual it dwarfs as insects experience the city's growth. Employing revolutionary animation techniques, the film creates ways to represent the kinetic, metamorphosing space of New York. Contrasted with such a work that addresses the same subject from a different perspective, Rand's peculiarity will be more apparent.

To put the discussion of the urban experience of modern New York in a contemporary perspective, the final chapter, *New York, Capital of Elsewhere: Spiegelman and McCann's New York,* considers artistic responses to the architecture of New York in light of the September 11th, 2001 terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center buildings. First, I look at Art Spiegelman's *In the Shadow of No Towers* (2004), for it depicts a collapse of the links between the physical and the ideal: in New York's material, architectural loss, the ideological realm of the towers is also attacked and destroyed. To examine possible aspects of the city and its trauma, the point of reference will be the polemics and issues surrounding Makoto Aida's painting discussed in the introduction;

looking at an artistic representation of another post-traumatic city in the 1990s will not only provide another perspective on the importance of architecture in New York, but also serve as a point of reference, revealing the fact that New York has no memory of destruction to go back to, and thus contextualizing New York's attempt to cope with trauma. The second half of the chapter examines Colum McCann's *Let the Great World Spin* (2009). McCann's novel proposes the possibility of creating a New York novel that steers away from defining the towers in a sweeping, one-dimensional ideal framework by using the towers as simple props, setting the stage for an unusual event on which hinge various human stories of loss and healing that speak to the character of the city in many ways.

I. New York that is Not Chicago

New York as the New Metropolis in Theodore Dreiser's *Sister Carrie*

This chapter discusses Theodore Dreiser's *Sister Carrie* (1900), one of the important New York novels that give the outsider's experience of discovering New York in a definite shape. This chapter argues that the central feature in *Sister Carrie* is the city and the architecture of its urban space. In contrasting it with Chicago, another metropolis in the story, Dreiser presents New York City as a singular presence, represented by the particular cultural milieu of the era conveyed by high-rise buildings.

Though the centrality of New York City in this novel has been discussed thoroughly in criticism, the work does not have a proper context in which to measure its particularity as an urban environment. The meaning of New York as the urban environment, especially, is featured widely in the studies of the realist literature in the 1980s, which explored the connection between social standing and representation of urban space. *Sister Carrie* gained renewed critical attention in a series of groundbreaking studies on American realism that came forward in the 1980s, in particular works by Walter Benn Michaels, Rachel Bowlby, and Amy Kaplan, which revisited naturalist novels with new sociological concerns such as the logic of capitalism in relation to individual subjects' identity formation. These works reconfigure the urban space as an active agent in the novel, socially structured in a way that is strongly tied to the logic of

consumer culture. However, these studies mostly concentrate on the social and cultural change of New York's urban space, not its relation to the physical side. It leads to overseeing the uniqueness of the city, assuming the similarity of modern experience in any modern metropolis. Thus, as the next logical advancement of the discussion, I would like to focus on the particularity of New York's urban space at the turn of the century, rather than its commonness, for the turn of the century was an era of tremendous physical change in New York as its skyline took shape and the city became a global icon. *Sister Carrie* captures New York City as the place in which these spatial aspects mingle and grow increasingly inseparable.

An effective way to do so is to compare it with the other big city in the novel, Chicago, to see what kind of qualities are stressed in Dreiser's depiction of New York. In *Hard Facts*, Philip Fisher discusses Dreiser's depiction of Chicago in *Sister Carrie* and *An American Tragedy* and sees it work as "a synecdoche" for America in the 1890s; by depicting the city and the novel's protagonists in similar ways, Dreiser explores the internal logic of the American city that operates dynamically between the current state and anticipatory self in which commodities are indices of fortune (169). This is an important argument that recognizes the city's centrality in this novel, and provides a starting point for contemplating the difference between two metropolises. More recently, Timothy Spears's *Chicago Dreaming*, a cultural study of the Chicago Renaissance that explicates the contemporary cultural milieu of literary works, including *Sister Carrie*, is important for two reasons. First, it locates *Sister Carrie* as an archetypical narrative of

hinterland migrants from small Midwestern towns to the new metropolis. Second, it not only portrays Chicago as a metropolis, but also points to the society's characteristic Midwestern ties, a quality that set it apart from the more cosmopolitan New York. It opens the possibility to explore how New York in this novel is conceived as "not Chicago": city layout, social mobility, the role of chance, and physical architecture all represent significant differences between the two places and help Dreiser define the urban spaces that serve as the primary settings for his story. This comparison will reveal the ways in which Dreiser identifies the essential part of New York to be its dynamic existence between the material side and the non-material side, while he characterizes Chicago as a relatively static, flat urban landscape.

Chicago and New York are two cities that hold special significance for Dreiser. Dreiser's own biography shows the depth of his love for these two cities, which was often the subject of his writing through his career. Jerome Loving's *The Last Titan* chronicles Dreiser's formative early years and describes his days in Chicago and New York as an aspiring novelist. Born in Terre Haute, Indiana, Dreiser moved to Chicago around 1887. Under the guidance of Eugene Fields, Dreiser worked as a newspaper columnist for two years. He also met Arthur Henry, his longtime friend and mentor, who at the time was in Chicago as a correspondent for the *Toledo Bee*. Dreiser came to New York in 1894 and remained there for most of his life. Before writing his first novel *Sister Carrie*, he worked as a magazine editor filling in for columns on various segments of the culture of the city. Throughout his career, in many forms of writing, Dreiser's main subject has been the city

of New York. *Sister Carrie*, which depicts Chicago and New York of the time, reflects Dreiser's own experience in and impression of the two cities.[8]

When the novel was first published in 1900, most of the reviews thought the book highlighted "local color," especially the Chicago part. Its description of the urban culture also drew a variety of responses. A Chicago paper was enthusiastic but thought it "dropped [the] Bohemian aspect of the city" (Salzman 10), a Minneapolis paper dismissed it as a novel about the city (12), and British papers thought it a great American novel (18–21). However varied, these responses all touch on the aspect of "the city" in the work, rather than the moral issues for which the novel is known. As "the city" is a central feature, it is worth examining the element of "the city" in Dreiser's other works. One example is *The Color of a Great City* (1923), which is a collection of sketches of New York City between approximately 1900 and 1915. In the introduction to this work, Dreiser reminiscences about the gilded age, turn-of-the-century New York, which Dreiser describes as "fast vanishing and no more," a place that had "greater social and financial contrast than it [has] now" (ix). The city was not "far-flung but for that reason more concentrated and almost as congested" (xi). The ideas that Dreiser presents in this work distill many of the images found in *Sister Carrie*.

Looking back on the 1890s, the days he first came to the city, Dreiser reminisces on vast movement and variety as characteristics of the city during this period. Here is one example of how Dreiser conceived New York:

> The thing that interested me then as now about New York—as indeed about any great city, but more definitely New York because it was and is so preponderantly large—was the sharp, and at the same time immense, contrast it showed between the dull and the shrewd, the strong and the weak, the rich and the poor, the wise and the ignorant. This, perhaps, was more reason of numbers and opportunity than anything else, for of course humanity is much the same everywhere. But the number from which to choose was so great here that the strong, or those who ultimately dominated, were so very strong, and the weak so very very weak—and so very, very many. (*The Color of a Great City* 2)

Thus Dreiser records his impression of New York as a place where "the veritable tides of people that were forever moving here—[were] so different to the Middle-West cities I had known" (xii). The divide between the poles is stressed in this passage with exaggerated details. Dreiser conceived the city as a changing, moving place, with extreme contrasts and sharp movement between poles, distinguishing it from the "Middle-West" he came from, whose center is Chicago. Dreiser later revisits the sentiment in *Book about Myself* (1922):

> There was something else here, a quality of life and zest and security and ease for some, cheek by jowl with poverty and longing and sacrifice, which gives to life everywhere its keenest most pathetic edge. Here was none of that eager clattering

> snap so characteristic of many of our Western cities, which, while it arrests at first, eventually palls. No city that I had ever seen had exactly what this had. As a boy, of course, I had invested Chicago with immense color and force, and it was there, ignorant, American, semi-conscious, seeking, inspiring. But New York was entirely different. It had the feeling of gross and blissful and parading self-indulgence. It was as if self-indulgence whispered to you that here was its true home; as if, for the most part, it was here secure. (408)

This sense of social divide resulting from the economic difference as a New York particularity is already incorporated in *Sister Carrie* as the city's fundamental feature. Dreiser establishes the contrast between the two cities at the beginning of his New York Chapter in a way that is directly connected to the society:

> Whatever a man like Hurstwood could be in Chicago, it is very evident that he would be but an inconspicuous drop in an ocean like New York. In Chicago, whose population still ranked about 500,000, millionaires were not numerous. The rich had not become so conspicuously rich as to drown all moderate incomes in obscurity. The attention of the inhabitants was not so distracted by local celebrities in the dramatic, artistic, social, and religious fields as to shut the well-positioned man from view. In Chicago the two roads to distinction were politics and trade. In New York the roads were any of a half-hundred, and

> each had been diligently pursued by hundreds, so that celebrities were numerous. The sea was already full of whales. A common fish must need disappear wholly from view—remain unseen. In other words, Hurstwood was nothing. (Pizer 214, subsequent quotes are made from this edition)

What is stressed in this passage as the difference between Chicago and New York is the city's variety. As is established in this first passage, in subsequent chapters of *Sister Carrie*, Dreiser follows Hurstwood's failure stressing the variety and extremity described in this quote as the characteristic element of New York and its society.

In fact, Dreiser altered the details in the novel to reinforce the divide. Around 1880, the time setting of *Sister Carrie*, Chicago had a population of more than half a million and was just becoming a great metropolis of the Midwest, and it was a fast-growing city, too: in 1890, the census records a population of more than a million. It was also a magnificent city of modern technology, boasting the tallest skyscraper in the world and the 1893 World Columbian Exposition. However, Dreiser does not feature these characteristics. Rather, Dreiser represents Chicago as smaller than it really was at that time, and less bohemian, as one of the contemporary reviews mentions (Salzman 12). The story of *Sister Carrie* is based on a real affair Dreiser's sister was involved in, and most of the details are accurate, yet Dreiser also has altered the settings to a more pretentious chain of saloons in Chicago to further stress Hurstwood's established position there. These changes are made in order to make the city look more static, and

Hurstwood's fall more dramatic, than they really were. On the other hand, ostensibly the same sorts of changes are applied to the New York part of the novel, but this time to emphasize the contrast with "stable" Chicago. A letter from a Doubleday editor calls Dreiser's attention to the fact that the "fashion parade," which Dreiser claims to be a common sight between the 14th and 34th Streets, is a "misnomer" (Pizer 461) suggesting that Dreiser is creating not a perfect representation of the city, but a picture of the city as it appeared to him. And in doing so, he stresses the motion and variety of the city. Dreiser is not only pointing out that these ideas are characteristic of the modern society in New York, but also presents motion and variety as deeply intertwined with the city's physical structure. By making the shape of the urban space inseparable from the tendencies of the society it houses, Dreiser constructs, in language, his version of New York.

Therefore, it is likely that Dreiser's image of Chicago, a big city with a more concrete image of society, serves to highlight that of New York, which mostly consists of movement and variety. *Sister Carrie* portrays New York City as a new metropolis with a focus on its architecture; as a unique urban space its ideal aspect is intertwined with the material side, showing how urban architecture plays a central role in expressing New York's urban reality. I will compare several elements present in the depiction of both Chicago and New York in this novel to show how much of the New York experience exists between the reality and the imagery of the city; Dreiser applies this description to the structure of the city, in particular places that fit his view of movement and variety, and to the newfound space between the city as material and the city as idea.

Stable Chicago and Haphazard New York: Where the Characters Come From and Where They are Going

Chicago in *Sister Carrie* is introduced as an industrious commercial city with a basically stable, class-oriented society. Minnie, Carrie's sister, and Hanson, Minnie's husband, serve as the counterpoint to what Carrie later becomes, living a life that reflects the Chicago system perfectly. Minnie and Hanson live in a one-floor resident apartment, "inhabited by families of laborers and clerks, men who had come, and were still coming, with the rush of population pouring in at the rate of 50,000 a year" (8). The city is sectioned according to social status, and people naturally gather in socially homogeneous areas. It is also apparent in the way the city is organized. On welcoming Carrie to Chicago, Hanson shows her "the lay of Chicago" to show Carrie the places where the "big manufacturing houses" are (10). The wealthier class lives across the river, in mansions which look like "fairy palaces and kingly quarters" to Carrie (86). In the end, Chicago is conceived as a "big place" where one "can get in somewhere in a few days," as Hanson assures Carrie (9). This sentiment is echoed when Hurstwood tells Carrie, who wants to leave the city in order to avoid Drouet, that "it would be as good as moving to another part of the country to move to the South Side" (110). Chicago is a metropolis, but is spread out, more stable and separated by class. If one belongs to a group, then one doesn't trespass in another group's territory.

Chicago in this novel is rather stable and fixed, and to establish oneself in its

society means investment in real estate. Working class and middle class alike, people settle down and invest in land and property. For instance, Minnie and Hanson invest in a piece of land, and Carrie, the sister moving in, is welcome as long as she is capable of contributing towards it. For people in Chicago, to become established and later advance in the world means stabilizing oneself in the city both socially and physically, so when they find a piece of land that corresponds to their standing, they begin making installments. The upper crust of the society represented by Hurstwood and his family shares the same belief. When Mrs. Hurstwood hears that one of the family's friends is going to own a building, her surprise is about how rapidly they established themselves by investment, when "only four years ago they had that basement in Madison Street" (65). There may be some degree of social mobility in Chicago, but it normally requires several generations and some previous standing. Essentially, status in Chicago is represented by real estate and investment in it.

This layout suits the city's more stable and fixed society, which makes Hurstwood, a saloon manager, a successful figure. Even Drouet, a traveling salesman, is portrayed as someone stable: he is in good standing with a large and prosperous house in Chicago, and has a place in the web of businessmen. Drouet and Hurstwood only want to have an affair with Carrie, but not so much as to leave their position and established life. In contrast, wandering Carrie is in a precarious position. As Philip Gerber points out, movement and chance are a common element in the fate of Hurstwood and Carrie, an element that later forces them out of their place in the city (11). As Carrie's flight from

her sister's household is unplanned and spontaneous, a haphazard accident forces Hurstwood to move and change his situation. It is represented as a crucial move; Hurstwood's spontaneous affair literally removes him from his place in the city, for he had his property in his wife's name and divorcing her would mean he would materially lose his stable standpoint in the city.

New York, the city to which Hurstwood and Carrie elope, is conceived as a place where what worked in Chicago fails, or works oppositely. New York is represented as a place with a looser social structure, less stability, and dominated mainly by chance, qualities that are closely tied to the city's physical shape. The first difference Carrie notices is that there are fewer carriages on the street, and then that the lay of the city looks unfamiliar:

> "Where is the residence part?" asked Carrie, who did not take the tall five-story walls on either hand to be the abodes of families. "Everywhere," said Hurstwood, who knew the city fairly well. "There are no lawns in New York. All these are houses." (213)

Though there is a basic divide between the rich and the poor, people are more mixed in New York. Hurstwood echoes the oft-repeated impression about the neighbors in New York: "you never can tell what sort of people you're living next to in this town, can you?" (223). This quote in turn shows his feeling that in Chicago one could easily tell who the

residents were, as neighborhoods were all arranged according to the class and society to which the people belonged. Hurstwood tries to reestablish himself to recreate their old middle class status. He rents a room, and Carrie feels the change of their social status in its smallness (216). He is not allowed to buy property, for people only rent in the city (217). They never settle down anywhere; as the economic situation of the household gets worse, they are forced to move to a smaller apartment in a dingier part of the city. The novel presents the city as stratified and marked by constant mobility. This sense of mobility continues throughout the novel, as Hurstwood ultimately finds himself in the cheapest boarding in Bowery and Carrie in a luxurious suite of the Waldorf-Astoria.

Thus Dreiser gives the New York experience a narrative shape. However, this stratified view of New York is not Dreiser's invention; for instance, Horatio Alger's rags-to-riches stories should be recognized as the precursor of Dreiser's representation of New York. As Alan Trachtenberg explicates in *The Incorporation of America*, as metropolises such as New York distinguished themselves from smaller cities in the post-bellum years, cultural responses to such new phenomena often attempted to understand the new urban environment by synthesizing the symbolic landscapes with actual cities (104). Alger's novels, especially *Ragged Dick* (1868) which chronicles the hero's advancement from a bootblack to an accountant, is a quintessential example of "converting […] a linear allegory through a symbolic landscape into a vertical rise within the city" (105). Other realistic novels that treat New York in the same era, such as Edith Wharton's *The House of Mirth* (1904), basically treat the same landscape.[9] Although the

two writers come from different backgrounds, both *The House of Mirth* and *Sister Carrie* try to incorporate the same growing New York City of the late nineteenth century characterized by incessant movement and crowded space. Dreiser's contribution to this landscape is that he captured the qualities of the changing city, such as motion and variety, and presented them as the essential thing that makes New York a solitary presence apart from any other modern city. Dreiser's zeal in describing the city's movement and fullness becomes evident when compared with Edith Wharton's description of New York City:

> The Spragg rooms were known as one of the Looey suites, and the drawing-room walls, above their wainscoting of highly varnished mahogany, were hung with salmon-pink damask and adorned with oval portraits of Marie Antoinette and the Princess de Lamballe. In the center of the florid carpet a gilt table with a top of Mexican onyx sustained a palm in a gilt basket tied with a pink bow. But for this ornament, and a copy of *The Hound of the Baskervilles* which lay beside it, the room showed no traces of human use, and Mrs. Spragg herself wore as complete an air of detachment as if she had been a wax figure in a show-window. (*The Custom of the Country*, 1)

Compare this with the Broadway scene in *Sister Carrie*:

> Carrie stepped along easily enough after they got out of the car at

> Thirty-fourth Street, but soon fixed her eyes upon the lovely company which swarmed by and with them as they proceeded. She noticed suddenly that Mrs. Vance's manner had rather stiffened under the gaze of handsome men and elegantly dressed ladies, whose glances were not modified by any rules of propriety. To stare seemed the proper and natural thing. Carrie found herself stared at and ogled. Men in flawless top-coats, high hats, and silver-headed walking sticks elbowed near and looked too often into conscious eyes. Ladies rustled by in dresses of stiff cloth, shedding affected smiles and perfume. […]. (*Sister Carrie* 227)

Wharton's details, more traditionally realist, are used to show how the space is statically structured, composed in a way that it manifests the personalities of those who reside in it. However, Dreiser is focused more on each individual's facial and bodily movement that defines, animates, and constructs the space, and less interested in equating the "realist" details with actual objects; for Dreiser, what is most essential is the inherent variety and unanticipated character of the city scene. Further, the most remarkable scenes of this novel depict movements in the city, the strike scene being a prime example. Dreiser sees the essence of New York in variety and motion. The great mob of various people is moving: intensity, speed, velocity, and dynamism are the main features of these scenes.[10]

By stressing haphazardness and chance, Dreiser illuminates randomness as one of the most significant features of New York society, discovering new space and using it

as a prop. It should be also noted that Dreiser further includes elements of chance in the plot using features of buildings. The scene in which Carrie makes friends with Mrs. Vance through the building dumbwaiter, or the situation involving the outside keys, sets up the element of chance as inseparable from the structure of the building (223–4). With this sort of attention to detail, Dreiser continuously discovers places that are particular to New York, and uses them to develop his vision of the city's inherent randomness. Restaurants are one such example. Dreiser establishes a contrast between a Chicago restaurant and a New York restaurant. The Chicago restaurant, together with the department store that appears later, is described with detail designed to portray the world that Carrie has never seen before, as a testimony to Drouet's wealth; it is such a rich, materially abundant and static world, from which you can pick things to construct your ideal self. This is also apparent in the scene where Drouet takes Carrie to the restaurant, "a large, comfortable place, with an excellent cuisine and substantial service," where he can enjoy "the changing panorama of the street—to see and be seen as he dined" (44). This gaze in Chicago is bidirectional; Drouet sees others from his social viewpoint, and confirms his own image in the gaze of the others. The same applies to Fitzgerald & Moy, the saloon Hurstwood directed, as it is a place to mingle and confirm that one belongs to a certain class. In Chicago, the person dictates the space.

When Carrie goes to Sherry's, a luxurious restaurant on Fifth Avenue in New York, the space of the restaurant, rather than the people, gains more significance. Dreiser, almost exaggeratedly, provides all the details that suggest the possibilities that this kind

of place might bring. It is a place of excessive abundance where there are "shining tables, at which were seated parties of two, three, four, five, or six" (234), and the interior of the restaurant and gestures of the people within the place are the focus. Gazes are not simple and reciprocal but more multidirectional, and to make this point Dreiser creates a restaurant full of mirrors—"tall, brilliant, bevel-edged mirrors—reflecting and re-reflecting forms, faces, and candelabra a score and hundred times" (235). In other words, there are infinite angles from which one can be seen, and thus one's personality is subject to unlimited interpretation. It is the place where Carrie's idea of luxury and gorgeousness becomes a reality (233). People pay so much for the show, thus for the waiter's grand gesture and overabundance of material. Not necessarily that those who are in the place form a community, but people are there to feel the wealth and extravagance not from the idea of society, but from details of the space—the air of assurance and dignity conveyed by incandescent lights, the reflection of their glow in polished glasses—which would also include the fellow diners. Which is to say that, in New York, the space dominates its inhabitants. Considered in this context, Dreiser's notorious redundancy, famously mocked by H. L. Mencken in his critique concerning the lengthy, unnecessary description in *The Genius*, might have been intentional.[11] Mencken's comments are usually taken as proof of Dreiser's weakness as a failed realist, but I think this observation highlights an important characteristic of Dreiser's writing as well: he is more indulgent in observing overwhelming abundant details and capturing the dynamic particulars about the city than depicting the object of the details themselves, which

enables him to portray the particularity of New York's new urban space.

Thus Dreiser picks spaces that symbolize New York, and focuses attention on the fact that places in the city have imaginary, conceptual aspects. Presence of such space is another important feature of Dreiser's New York. This interaction of material and conceptual plays an important, but different role in the two protagonists' fate.

Riot and Theater: Where Nonmaterial City and Material City Collide

Another important feature of this novel is that in depicting New York, it recognizes and locates the city's ideal/nonmaterial aspect as an essential part in the representation of its urban space, which figures in an important way in the two protagonists' opposite fates. The New York part of the plot revolves around the two main characters' opposite fates in New York. Hurstwood and Carrie's stories, corresponding to stories of a failed "self-made man" and an "American girl," as Kenneth Lynn points out, contrast sharply: Hurstwood, a well-to-do saloon manger in Chicago, finds himself unsuited to the larger environment of the city and helplessly sinks into poverty. On the other hand, Carrie, a lover with no resources, becomes a successful casino star in New York. As explained in the previous section, building on the tradition of novels of the genre that are set in New York, the contrast between the characters is strongly connected to the city's geography: starting in their first middle-class apartment in midtown Manhattan, they part ways, one going down Sixth Avenue to Bowery and the other up Broadway to the Waldorf-Astoria, which also highlights motion and movement as the

defining elements of the city. The exact qualities Hurstwood relied on in Chicago, such as social and economical stability, make him a failed capitalist in New York. Carrie's case is vice-versa; her malleable character is key to her success in New York.[12]

Furthermore, Carrie and Hurstwood's contrasting adventures reflect another important aspect of the city conveyed in this novel; material construction of the urban space is closely intertwined with its imagined aspect. In this regard, the role played by the image of the city represented in newspapers is especially important. As Philip Fisher discusses in "The Naturalist Novel and the City," in the New York part of the novel newspapers play a crucial role in the formation of the two protagonists' identities, serving as the mediator between anticipated self and present state. I further examine this point to show that the newspaper functions as a device to include the imaginative spaces in the narrative as important components of representation of the urban space. Thus, if we focus on the role "the city represented in newspapers" plays in this novel, the contrast will be more apparent. Hurstwood and Carrie both navigate through the material/nonmaterial city, going in and out of these two worlds. They venture into the city, and also into the city represented in newspapers. In their struggle, several significant places, especially high-rise hotels, come to the fore.

Hurstwood's fall can be measured both by his stance within the real city and his stance in the city represented in newspapers. Essentially, Hurstwood's experience in the city is torn between his actual status and the city depicted in the newspaper. Having lost his social standing in New York, Hurstwood ceases to act in it, and starts living in a world

created by the newspaper's depiction of urban life. For Hurstwood, the newspaper was at first a device that confirmed his social standing, as well as a way to use his previous experience of the city to navigate. Later, though, the newspaper functions as a device to escape his actual hardship.

In Chicago, as a powerful social figure, Hurstwood has control over the newspaper. The social circle in Chicago coincided with his saloon. He also knows people who worked for newspapers in Chicago, and can use the influence to make Carrie's theatrical event a success (127). Hurstwood's strong tie to the newspaper is to be contrasted with his weak relationship with the medium in New York, where Hurstwood is cut out of the society and forced to observe it from outside. The newspaper, with its sectioned and flat layout, provides a bird's-eye view of the city. It becomes a map in which he can discover the various doings in the city. Because of that, although socially powerless, Hurstwood remains savvier about the city than Carrie. Even when his joblessness forces Carrie to audition for a theatrical job, Hurstwood is the one in control. Resource less Carrie had no idea but to physically go to Broadway, where theaters are, to find job information, to which Hurstwood coldly replies: "have you been all the way over to Broadway to find that out? I could have told you" (273). She is also incapable of navigating through the paper, and is just "hunting aimlessly through the crowded columns" and finally relies on Hurstwood again to pick three possible positions (274). Later, in poverty, he remains informed about the city and its architecture in an ironical way: he becomes familiar with the lay of the city in terms of the places where charity is offered

(359).

The newspaper thus gains a special significance as it continues to give Hurstwood the illusion that he is in control of the city; it tells what happens in the city and explicates their significance, providing an escape from the real hardship he experiences in the city:

> He buried himself in his papers and read. Oh, the rest of it—the relief from walking and thinking! What Lethean waters were these floods of telegraphed intelligence! He forgot his troubles, in part. Here was a young, handsome woman, if you might believe the newspaper drawing, suing a rich, fat, candy-making husband in Brooklyn for divorce. Here was another item detailing the wrecking of a vessel in ice and snow off Prince's Bay on Staten Island. A long, bright column told of the doings in the theatrical world—the plays produced, the actors appearing, the managers making announcements. Fannie Davenport was just opening at the Fifth Avenue. Daly was producing "King Lear." He read of the early departure for the season of a party composed of the Vanderbilts and their friends for Florida. An interesting shooting affray was on in the mountains of Kentucky. So he read, read, read, rocking in the warm room near the radiator and waiting for dinner to be served. (252–3)

Dreiser presents reading the newspaper as an addictive habit that makes Hurstwood

forget his troubles, and gives him a rest from "walking and thinking," or actually living in, the city.

The contrast between the real city and that in the newspaper is used effectively in the strike scene, which is presented as the symbolic event where various aspects of language and city, both material and nonmaterial, interact. To introduce this event, Dreiser uses the actual newspaper articles on the real Brooklyn strike in order to build up tension: notices of the strike, prediction of the economic state, reporting of the strike (296–8).[13] Hurstwood is actually drawn towards this event via an advertisement in the newspaper for motormen which assured protection from the government, but contrary to what the advertisement claimed, is a very dangerous job that puts him in contact with the tangible threat: "he had read of these things, but the reality seemed altogether new" (310). The strike scene puts Hurstwood in the most violent exchange of power and movement of people in the city. He is in "amid the babble of voices" as well as blows that come with curses (311). In this scene physical and verbal threats become mixed and inseparable, as striking workers hurl angry words as well as rubble and stones at Hurstwood. He abandons the scene injured and finds his refuge from reality in the newspaper :

> "Well," he said, after a time, his nature recovering itself, "That's a pretty tough game over there." Then he turned and saw the papers. With half a sigh he picked up the "World." "Strike Spreading in Brooklyn," he read. "Rioting Breaks Out in all the Parts of the City." He adjusted his paper very comfortably and continued.

> It was the one thing he read with absorbing interest. (313)

This scene vividly portrays Hurstwood's failure to participate in society and offers a striking contrast between the brutal reality of the riot, depicted with full attention to motion, and the newspaper, which is used as a refuge that provides Hurstwood with a withdrawn, omniscient viewpoint. He is falling out of reality, receiving the city only in the way he desires.

Unlike Hurstwood, Carrie comes to take control over the city represented in the newspaper, for Carrie's rise has a lot to do with imagery in the newspaper. Carrie got her first chance to act in Chicago, which provided the first opportunity to have her "name bandied about in the most frivolous and gay of places" (37). Since this debut, which was realized by her patrons Drouet and Hurstwood, her success as an actress is realized as, and measured in, the size of her image in the city. In New York, Carrie climbs the ladder of success to the point where she shines as a casino star on the billboard above Broadway. The novel explicates the connection between the actress's image and the city represented in the newspaper, in the non-material realm:

> It was about this time that the newspapers and magazines were beginning to pay that illustrative attention to the beauties on the stage which has since become fervid. The newspapers, and particularly the Sunday newspapers, indulged in large decorative theatrical pages, in which the faces and forms of well-known

> theatrical celebrities appeared, enclosed with artistic scrolls. […] Carrie watched these with growing interest. When would a scene from her opera appear? When would some paper think her photo worth while? (322)

Carrie's "worth" as an actress increases as her position in the public image grows. Her excitement of landing a minor role in a commercial play fades as she notices that she was "nothing" in comparison to "the leading lady and many members [who] were cited" in newspaper advertisements and the posters upon the billboards. But as she succeeds to get "excellent space" and decorative scrolls about her face, Carrie's advancement in the world of theater, and the city, becomes clear (325).

In the same manner that for Hurstwood the physical and imagined city collide in the strike scene, for Carrie, the material and non-material city merge in her being an actress, employed on Broadway and living in a hotel. The places she inhabits are all part of her material existence, but are also places that owe their significance to the non-material: Broadway and hotels are introduced as real places whose value relies heavily on image. As Drouet senses when seeing Carrie completely transformed into a famous actress, Carrie's value is highest in such settings: "What a prize! He thought. How beautiful, how elegant, how famous! In her theatrical and Waldorf setting, Carrie was to him the all-desirable" (351). Her success as an actress is strongly tied to two symbolic New York places in the novel, theater and hotel.

"Chicago isn't New York, by a big jump" is what Carrie is told when she

attempts to get a role at the theater (271), and actually the meaning of "theater" and the talent needed to be successful are altogether different in the two cities. The difference between two cities is also apparent in the kinds of roles she plays in the two places. In Chicago she had a role in a melodrama but in New York she does casino comedy, which requires her to perform more fragmental imagery than the character role she took in Chicago. Carrie prospers as she establishes her place in the realm between the real and the imagery as a famous actress. And, significantly, to achieve this status, Carrie does not rely on her acting talent, but rather is "discovered" haphazardly for her image: "Carrie did unconsciously move about with an air pleasing and somewhat distinctive. It was due wholly to her natural manner and total lack of self-consciousness"(287), that she instinctively "knows how to carry herself" (290). Chance is a major factor in New York success.

The differences between Chicago and New York can also be seen in the depiction of theaters. Theaters in Chicago function in the same way as they did in Edith Wharton's "the old New York," represented in *The Age of Innocence* (1920). That is, the theater structure functions as a microcosm of the society, a dramatic arena of gaze. Everyone knows everyone else, so the theater audience is a smaller version of the society where all retain their roles. It is the place where Hurstwood can exercise his influence to create "the full-dress event" for Carrie, with important people in the society occupying the box seats (129). Unlike *The Age of Innocence*'s Ellen Olenska, who was under the scrutiny of society, Carrie is onstage under the protective watch of Drouet and Hurstwood.

Yet, in both novels, the society against the outsider is represented by using the theater as the symbolic setting. On the other hand, theaters in New York are more of a commercial, larger-scale variety show. It does not require Carrie's talent in the sense that she demonstrated in Chicago. It is a place where charm matters more than the storyline or her ability to act. Carrie's biggest breakthrough comes when she is playing a minor role of a little Quakeress and is accidentally caught frowning at her own disconsolation; it becomes a big hit to be advertised in the paper with a headline, "if you wish to be merry, see Carrie frown" (327). Theaters in New York are more prone to chance, where imagery and catchphrases, the small images that surround the actress, are emphasized.

On the same note, New York hotels represent a role reversal, too. In Chicago, and more significantly in Montreal, hotels are a place to stay in secret, even with a false identity. Hurstwood and Drouet keep their rooms in the city, and stay at hotels when for some reason they cannot remain at home. Hotels are the opposite of the stable household. In contrast, New York hotels serve as representations of the status of the people who stay there. Thus the temporal nature and anonymity gain a positive meaning. It is a multipurpose setting: the lounge, for example, functions as a place for meeting. It is also a shelter for the likes of Hurstwood, who has nowhere to go, and, at one moment, when Hurstwood decides to restart everything as a hotel bellhop, is a veritable career option. Its malleability extends the value of the place, which changes according to the status of its occupants. For actresses, too, the hotel is a powerful ally. Carrie gets her first offer from the Wellington, the new hotel on Broadway, which explains to her that "every hotel

depends upon the repute of its patrons" and that to have a famous actress like Carrie as a guest "draws attention to the hotel, and—although you may not believe it—patrons" (329). Therefore the material space of the hotel confirms Carrie's social value, and by this act Carrie gains entry to "a place as she had often dreamed of occupying" (331). Hotels in New York are symbolic because they represent a temporal and malleable space which corresponds to the identity of actresses and strongly signifies New York society as it is represented in this novel.

In the two characters, Dreiser stresses two striking images of the interaction between the material space and the imagery about it: the strike for Hurstwood, and the theater and hotel for Carrie. At the end of the novel, to conclude the two protagonists' journeys in the city, Dreiser illustrates a dynamic contrast between the two important spaces. Hurstwood's tragic status in the city is symbolically represented in the scene in which the now homeless Hurstwood wanders in the winter night and finds Carrie's image on a billboard:

> At Broadway and thirty-ninth Street was blazing, in incandescent fire, Carrie's name. "Carrie Madenda," it read, "and the Casino Company." All the wet, snowy sidewalk was bright with this radiated fire. It was so bright that it attracted Hurstwood's gaze. He looked up, and then at a large, gilt-framed poster board, on which was a fine lithograph of Carrie, life-size.
>
> Hurstwood gazed at it a moment, snuffling and hunching one

> shoulder, as if something were scratching him. He was so run down, however, that his mind was not exactly clear.
>
> "That's you," he said at last, addressing her. "Wasn't good enough for you, was I? Huh!" (362)

As Hurstwood gazes at the image of Carrie as an actress, this scene captures his entrapment between the real city and that in the image. Carrie as his wife is now lost to him, but her larger-than-life image forcefully captures his eyes with radiant light. But in Hurstwood's confused mind, this completely artificial image is blurred and immersed with the memory of her real self, and he cannot tell them apart. His mind, completely lost in the city as imagery, makes a striking contrast with the physical hardship, harsh weather, and sickness that overwhelm him as reality.

Meanwhile Carrie, who has now secured a special position in the city as a famous actress, looks down on the city:

> In her comfortable chambers at the Waldorf, Carrie was reading at this time "Père Goriot" which Ames had recommended to her. […] Becoming wearied, however, she yawned and came to the window, looking out upon the old winding procession of carriage rolling up Fifth Avenue.
>
> […]
>
> "Look at the man over there," laughed Lora, who had caught sight of some one

falling down. “How sheepish men look when they fall, don’t they?”

“We’ll have to take a coach to-night,” answered Carrie, absently.

(363–4)

By using the hotel room commensurate with Carrie’s fame, this scene conveys the sense of insulated protection against reality that Carrie the famous actress has about her. In this scene, as was the case with Hurstwood’s looking up to Carrie on the billboard, social distance between people is conveyed effectively using the setting of a high-rise building. Although Carrie feels compassionate towards the hardship of the others, she ultimately fails to recognize the man, though he may be the now worn-out Hurstwood, falling down on the snowy pavement. All she could recognize is a mass movement of carriages along Fifth Avenue; the height of the building provides the distance, which enables her to literally have a bird’s-eye view of society, which she never could have previously, and is actually not interested in. It also suggests Carrie’s entrapment in the realm between reality and the world of imagery, as now for Carrie to leave the image of actress that surrounds her would mean to go physically out of this comfort and insulation and back to the street, for the image is what bestows her place in the city. Thus the two protagonists’ final scenes both depict characters caught between the real city and the image city, deeply entangled in the realm between the physical, real city and the imaginary, conceptual city. These scenes, connected by the imagery of snow, light and cold, make a striking contrast that embodies the divide between the characters’ fates. By using new technologies such

as billboards and high buildings, the sense of divide between them is represented as something meshed with the construction and shape of the city itself.

In summary, the New York Dreiser represents in *Sister Carrie* is stratified and moving. Dreiser constructs his version of New York in contrast to the static and sectioned portrait of Chicago, so that the uniqueness of New York is clear. By creating a portrait of New York in which an individual's fate within society is so deeply intertwined with the structure of the city that it almost seems like the city is another prominent character in the novel, Dreiser adds a new, important dimension to the existing tradition of the representation of New York City. Carrie arrives to New York as an ingénue to become a sought-after actress in the penthouse of a high-rise hotel and comes to represent existence between the imagery and the reality of the city. The high-rise buildings become significant places that incorporate the physical and ideological divide, which makes it impossible to get a perspective on the city. The same image of an actress in a hotel appeared in other works and became one of the quintessential images of the Jazz age. The next chapter looks at New York in the 1920s, when the characteristics seen in this chapter further accelerate, and the city becomes a place of movement and randomness, contextualized as a blurred, dreamy, and innocent place.

II. New York that is not Paris

Contrasts of the Dream in F. Scott Fitzgerald's New York Novels

The previous chapter discussed New York City represented in Theodore Dreiser's *Sister Carrie* (1900), which portrayed the turn-of-the-century New York as an idiosyncratic place set apart from the rest of the country, a kinetic, haphazard place where reality and fantasy merge, by connecting the city's social fluidity to its architecture. This chapter looks at the period after World War I in which New York City became the iconic city of the "Jazz Age," universally increasing its presence as the United States became a new dominant power of the world. There are numerous studies that single out this era as a particular form of American Modernity, as the era in which the city quickly assumed a new image. The economic boom brought tremendous changes in not only the cultural, ideological aspect, but physically with the construction boom that created many skyscrapers. This chapter examines how the transforming urban environment of New York in the Jazz Age is literarily conceived by looking at the New York novels of F. Scott Fitzgerald, arguably the novelist who worked with this idea most consciously; as studies of his identity formation show, Fitzgerald immersed himself in New York culture, both in his works on the city and his self-image in the celebrity couple of "Scott and Zelda," creating the quintessential image of New York in the Jazz Age.[14] In the words of Anthony Patch, the protagonist of *The Beautiful and Damned*, Fitzgerald sums up the

basic interaction in the city's identity formation:

> "I think the city's mountebank. Always struggling to approach the tremendous and impressive urbanity ascribed to it. Trying to be romantically metropolitan." (*The Beautiful and Damned* 544)

This chapter argues that Fitzgerald saw New York as the romantic metropolis that exists in dialogue between the physical city and the ideas imposed upon it, as shown in this quote. The sentiment expressed is in line with Malcolm Cowley's *Exile's Return* (1934), a work that explicated the geography in young American intellectuals' minds between the World Wars, especially the significance of cities. New York, especially the East Village, is a bohemian refuge from reality, whose next logical extension is the carefree, less restrictive society of Europe, especially Paris.

Fitzgerald experienced these two "dream cities" of the 1920s, but in a different context. A biography of Fitzgerald shows that for the author Paris was a rather distant place, detached from his reality because of both relative indifference and vague romantic longing. Until he and his wife Zelda started their residence in France as a celebrity couple among American expatriates in 1925, he only had a brief stay in the city in their first European trip in 1921, which he found disappointing. According to biographer Matthew Bruccoli, for the Fitzgeralds "places were associated with the people they knew, and they were bored with unrelieved sightseeing" (147). Before this experience, Paris existed as a

place in a family anecdote that Fitzgerald relished; Fitzgerald's parents honeymooned in Italy and France, but his mother Mollie, whose upbringing was more aristocratic and cosmopolitan than her husband's, refused to visit Paris for she had "already seen it" (12). Paris is an exotic, distant, romantic place that he fondly associates with his mother who loved and spoiled him. New York, however, which Fitzgerald frequented as a student at Princeton University and then struggled to succeed as a professional writer in order to marry Zelda, figured in Fitzgerald's life in a more substantial way both with its allure and reality.

Two of Fitzgerald's works, both published in 1931, highlight the difference in his perceptions of New York and Paris. "My Lost City," is an essay that follows the main character as he discovers, explores, understands, and later grows disillusioned with New York. "Babylon Revisited" is a short story published in the same year that depicts the main character's disillusionment with Paris. Both works dramatize the crucial moment of loss and disillusionment of the dream, using the settings of New York and Paris. Although New York in Fitzgerald's works is equally as romantic as Paris, the difference is the involvement of the physical structure of the city in creating "the dream." In "Babylon Revisited," the American expatriates' world is contrasted with the stable, bourgeois world of normal households, instead shown detached from the actual world of Paris. New York is where Fitzgerald consciously tries to match his imagery to the real landscape. *My Lost City* presents New York as a romanticized mythical island, in which Fitzgerald fuses romanticized images with the real, physical island:

> As the Ship glided up the river, the city burst thunderously upon us in the early dusk—the white glacier of lower New York swooping down like a strand of a bridge to rise into uptown New York, a miracle of foamy light suspended by the stars. A band started to play on the deck, but the majesty of the city made the march trivial and tinkling. From that moment I knew that New York, however often I might leave it, was home. ("My Lost City" 30)

First of all, Fitzgerald sees Manhattan as "the white glacier," thus as an island, a physical entity. It is also a social city, which has an uptown and a downtown. To add to this physical imagery, it also presents the city's romantic, idealistic, "majestic" presence that overwhelms the music played on the deck. This quote shows that Fitzgerald was conscious of different dimensions that constitute the city and the characters. Fitzgerald casts Paris in "Babylon Revisited" as a frivolous place unrelated to the actual city, only existing in hotels and restaurants, and filled with rootless people drifting around the city—this stands in contrast to the actual Paris connected to society and ordinary people's lives, a city to which he loses his daughter. On the other hand, Fitzgerald locates New York in the interaction of both physical and ideological dimensions to create a dreamy New York, where he participates more actively as "Dick Whittington," a rags-to-riches hero from the country looking up at Woolworth Building, or amazed by urban spectacles like an electric chariot race on billboards (30).

Thus, this chapter is called “New York that is not Paris” and focuses on this difference, for by examining Fitzgerald’s New York novels, it becomes apparent that Fitzgerald conceives these two “dream cities” of the Jazz Age differently, in a sense that New York had its physical layout as the important component of its imagery. I argue that Fitzgerald’s style of having conflicting elements match helps in capturing the urban space’s idiosyncrasy. It includes two patterns: the contrast of up and down, centered around skyscrapers, and secondly, outside and inside, using the island. In both cases, the city spotlights the hotel as the “dream” place situated in the center, where the dream coincides with reality. Buildings, especially hotels and restaurants, serving as the dream/physical places, are common motifs in Fitzgerald’s New York novels.

In this chapter, operating from the context of “My Lost City,” an essay that maps out Fitzgerald’s experience of the city, I will look at three of his New York novels to see how Fitzgerald locates New York’s urban peculiarity, its dreaminess, using aspects of the city’s physical shape. In each work he addresses the city’s peculiar urban space, especially hotels in high-rise buildings, showing how the city existed as a fusion of the material and the fantastic. The first work is *The Beautiful and Damned* (1922), which represents the protagonists’ innocently dreamy city. The next work is “May Day” (1922), which reconstructs New York City as a place characterized by fantastic motion and haphazardness. In *The Great Gatsby* (1925), the city is expressed as a mythical place, created by the combination of idea and material, and the loss of faith in the dream is rendered using the skyscraper, which provides him a new viewpoint.

The Beautiful and Damned : the Dream City of "the Metropolitan Spirit" and "the Girl"

The Beautiful and Damned is one of Fitzgerald's first New York novels, and it tells the story of the frivolous life of a young and beautiful couple, Anthony Patch, who is the grandson of a millionaire, and Gloria Gilbert, the sought-after belle of the society, whose carefree lifestyle epitomizes New York in the Jazz Age. The setting and episodes are based on Fitzgerald's own experience of the city in the early 1920s, and this novel records the atmosphere of New York of the era. To symbolize the dreaminess of the protagonists' life, Fitzgerald creates a fitting urban place: Anthony's bachelor pad, a reclusive homogeneous place for his friends, complete with a butler.[15] It also features a bathroom decorated with photographs of celebrated actresses, among which he hopes to hang a picture of his love (445). Romantically frivolous, this room materially embodies two essences of Fitzgerald's "dreamy city," which are later depicted in "My Lost City." This essay shows the two equally fictitious, quintessential images that signified urbanity for Fitzgerald: actresses—"the girl," an idealized female figure, and "the Metropolitan spirit" (106), which finds manifestation in Anthony's room, an environment that echoes the living space of Edmund Wilson, Fitzgerald's classic East Coast intellectual.

As a contemporary review called this novel "Horatio Alger upside down," representation of the urban space in this novel is also in dialogue with the novels from the previous generation that made use of New York's physical layout (70).[16] With this room as the center, Fitzgerald adds a twist to the rags-to-riches landscape we saw in the

previous chapter, turning the urban space that signified social movement along Fifth Avenue used in *Sister Carrie* into a playful setting; Anthony's "reproachless apartment" on 52nd Street, the "treacherous rung" of a "gigantic ladder" created by Fifth and Sixth Avenues, gives Anthony the sensation of going uptown as if "hoisting himself by hand." (444).

There is also a direct critique of this myth, rendered in the typical rags-to-riches plot in which Anthony attempts to take a salesman job. Mr. Kahler prepares Anthony for salesmanship by telling him the ways to "get up" on the list as a successful businessman. Characteristic of the typical rags-to-riches discourse, he teaches Anthony the difference between "the Street" and "the fancy things [he] learned in college" (620), thus the practical knowledge connected with the city. Anthony finds this idea a product of "self-assurance and opportunism" that is based on pure luck, where a "bartender" or a "darn messenger boy" goes out into the world, turning himself into a magical symbol by success in investment; the opportunism of the idea makes Anthony uneasy for he finds "faith that their affairs were the very core of life. All other things being equal, self-assurance and opportunism won out over technical knowledge" (621). Anthony also captures the essence of how the vague idea of success finds manifestation in the physical entities, especially of mansions along Fifth Avenue, which he understands as "a fruitless circumambient striving toward an incomprehensible goal, tangibly evidenced only by the rival mansions of Mr. Frick and Mr. Carnegie on Fifth Avenue" (620). Anthony's ideal is placed as an antithesis to this rags-to-riches landscape, whose "turmoil and bustle" and

"riches" seem distant and unrelated to his world.

Romanticized urban space, exemplified as Anthony's bachelor pad, is seamlessly connected and expanded to the big hotels that take on dreamlike qualities, such as The Ritz, where Anthony and his idyllic friends gather and party, or the Plaza, where Gloria, the ideal girl's image materialized in reality, resides with her parents and meets Anthony for the first time, and later serves as a stage for numerous dance parties. Instead, Anthony's city coincides with Anthony and Gloria's childishness, characters portrayed as ethereal and isolated. As Gloria says, their happiness is as frivolous as bubbles, although big and beautiful, and made possible only by "the soap and water" (the money that Anthony's grandfather provides him) (553). In this sense, New York in this novel is a place materialized out of such a dreamy, unrealistic imagery. Anthony understands the couple's future in vague terms: also his career and aging dreams to be "in a sort of glorified diplomatic service and be envied by princes and prime ministers for his beautiful wife" (572) or "a white-haired (beautifully, silkily, white-haired)" who "loll about in serene glory, worshipped by the bourgeoisie of the land" (659). In these images, external elements such as their future or aging are associated with their being in an imagined, dreamy foreign country. The labor movement and class conflict is depicted as nothing more than spectacle for the flappers who enjoy slumming as much as car rides through the city, adding to the protagonists' detachment from social reality.

To further contextualize this dreaminess of New York's urban space, the novel sets up the contrast between the city seen from outside and inside; insulated and afloat,

Anthony and Gloria's personal environment in New York suggests a realm above the change and trouble going on in the city and in the rest of the world, while the reality exists outside the city: Anthony's lifeline is in Tarrytown, where Anthony's grandfather has a reclusive estate; the couple experiences life-changing incidents in Marietta; and Gloria's parents age and pass away in Kansas City. The biggest reality of all is the war: Anthony spends some time as a sergeant stationed at a camp in the South, where he experiences real military life and is involved in an affair with a local girl, two things that stand in stark contrast with the dreamy "Metropolitan spirit" and "the girl" that characterize Fitzgerald's idea of New York. Being in this place, Anthony finds himself in limbo between New York and "the interminable massacre beyond" (717), which enables him to see the frivolity of the city in a different light. After Anthony comes back to the city for the armistice, he feels left out of the big armistice ball at the Astor, an incredible panorama of women in which Gloria takes a celebrated part (721). Anthony feels estranged, but at the same rediscovers the mystical quality of the city:

> New York, he supposed, was home—the city of luxury and mystery, of preposterous hopes and exotic dreams. Here on the outskirts absurd stucco palaces reared themselves in the cool sunset, poised for an instant in cool unreality, glided off far away, succeeded by the mazed confusion of the Harlem River. (663)

Anthony's experience outside the city gives him a perspective that in a way changes his

relation to Gloria (737). Moreover, Fitzgerald shifts the city narrative in the following chapter to Gloria, which further reinforces the contrast. Unlike Anthony she does not experience rupture in her urban being, the fact stressed in a scene at the Grand Central Station where the contrast is made between Anthony transformed into a soldier and the still theatrical Gloria seeing him off. The novel further stresses the naiveté of New York City during the war. New York is represented as a big hotel ballroom, a big dream for Gloria, while Anthony isn't part of it anymore. He attends the ball as a broken invalid, as someone forever cut out of the world.

In response to the urban landscape in rags-to-riches New York novels, *The Beautiful and Damned* shows two basic patterns that support Fitzgerald's dreamy view toward the city. The novel places itself in dialogue with the rags-to-riches story built on the up and down in the city. Then, to contextualize the world of the characters in *The Beautiful and Damned*, Fitzgerald introduces the contrast between inside and outside the city, which highlights New York City's blissful isolation. Contrasting the worlds inside to those outside, contextualizes, questions, and even glorifies the dreaminess of Manhattan. The contrasts between inside and outside and up and down, presented in this novel to recreate and stress the peculiarities of New York's urban space, are further explored and become defining motifs of the next two New York novels.

"May Day": Going through the Roof, Jumping out of the Window

"May Day" is a novella first published in *Smart Set* in 1920 and was included

in *Tales of the Jazz Age* in 1922. It chronicles events in New York on May Day, 1919, as the city enters an economic boom. This story focuses on the speed and motion of a dreamy city "bloated, glutted, stupid with cake and circuses," by adding motion to the existing landscape (113). In Fitzgerald's words, he captures the atmosphere of "the general hysteria of that spring which inaugurated the Age of Jazz" by combining the sketches to present "a pattern which would give the effect of those months in New York as they appeared to at least one member of what was then the younger generation" (*Tales of the Jazz Age* 800). It should be noted that the idea of pattern is mentioned here as a part of Fitzgerald's original intent. As Colin Cass discusses in detail, the differences in the two versions of this story highlight Fitzgerald's decision to make this pattern clear. As Anthony Mazzella says, the pattern present in this novel consists of the contrast between two plots with two main characters, which represents two different worlds. The first plot features Gordon Sterrett, who was once a star student at Yale but is now an alcoholic, broke and forced into a marriage. He desperately comes to visit his college friend Philip Dean, who is dismayed at and indifferent to Gordon's hardships. Philip refuses to lend Gordon money, and they promise to meet at a party at Delmonico's on Fifth Avenue. The other plot features two poor soldiers, Carroll Key and Gus Rose, who come back from the war looking for jobs in the jubilant postwar city. They confront the city's change; they see the excitement of the May Day parade as well as a raid on an anarchist, finally heading to Delmonico's where Key's brother works as a waiter, to secure some liquor.

These two plots are connected to the city's geography, especially in avenues the

plots are associated with. In Dean's story, flappers, frivolous youth, luxurious restaurants, and hotels are on Fifth Avenue; soldiers, socialists, and labor papers are all located on Sixth Avenue. In this setting, characters are represented in pairs. Gordon and Dean are contrasted with Rose and Key; workers on Sixth Avenue are contrasted with flappers on Fifth Avenue. Jewel, who drags Gordon into trouble, is contrasted with the idealized Edith; intellectual socialists are confronted by the angry mob. As an inherited trait from the previous generation's New York novels, these paired characters' sense of upward progress and downfall is represented geometrically, intertwined with the New York City landscape. What is innovative about the novel is the presence of Sixth Avenue, which gives depth to the rags-to-riches idea associated with the Fifth Avenue. Key's brother goes "up" from a café on Sixth Avenue to Delmonico's, while Gordon is forced to move to an obscure hotel on Sixth Avenue in which he commits suicide; hotels and restaurants represent the locations where such divided worldviews converge and interact. The two worlds are symbolized by two hotels: the Biltmore, where Gordon's successful friends stay, and the dingy hotel on Sixth Avenue where Gordon commits suicide.

In the same way, social downfall is represented geographically. This means that Gordon cannot belong to the place he used to belong to. It is also the case with Edith, who perceives going to her brother's office as a trespassing from her world. Edith's brother works at a labor paper on Sixth Avenue, which is just a few blocks down from Delmonico's, but this path itself is adventure to her:

> "No—" she paused, "but somehow I began thinking how absolutely different the party I'm on is from—from all your purposes. It seems sort of—of incongruous, doesn't it? —me being at a party like that, and you over here working for a thing that'll make that sort of party impossible ever anymore, if your ideas work." (886)

As shown in this quote, the difference between parties is connected to two avenues that represent two worlds in the same city—for Edith, this path would not only be a physical turn down the road, but a path into an unknown world. At the same time, it points to the lack of materiality in the "ideas" of Henry and Bartholomew, who are bourgeois students. When they have to confront the real workers and soldiers, who are antagonistic to the ideologue and the socialist movement, the sense of divide becomes apparent in the sense of physical height, expanding two-dimensional contrast to three dimensions:

> "People," said Bartholomew, and then after an instant: "Whole jam of them. They're coming from Sixth Avenue."
>
> […]
>
> "They're coming up!" cried Bartholomew. (888)

"Coming up," which signifies crossing the boundary with force, is at stake here. Creating such a situation, Fitzgerald uses the actual height of the building as an effective setting to show the people's divide; people come from down under to challenge those in higher

places, all rendered physically. Originally, the workers' assault on an agitator, which causes the raid in the first place, is conveyed as tearing down someone preaching from the high place to the lower people. The tragedy caused by conflict between different social classes is framed in physical distance; in this raid, Edith's brother is injured and Key accidentally falls down from the window and dies. This contrast between the worlds of Fifth Avenue and Sixth Avenue is not only framed in the geography of the city, but in relation to vertical movement, which lends itself to a sense of movement and kinetic sensibility. The story then escalates to further expand the kinetic landscape, in which social movement that is represented as up and down the street centrally featured in the previous chapter is now conveyed in terms of vertical height. In the scene after the raid, in the lobby of the Biltmore, Edith finds Gus, the soldier who participated in the raid and hurt her brother, and reports him to the police. He is physically thrown down on the floor, while Peter and Dean, two drunken socialites, take the elevator going up to the roof:

> But to Mr. In and Mr. Out this event was merely a parti-colored iridescent segment of a whirring, spinning world. They heard loud voices; they saw the stout man spring; the picture suddenly blurred.
>
> Then they were in an elevator bound skyward.
>
> "What floor, please?" said the elevator man.
>
> "Any floor," said Mr. In.
>
> "Top floor," said Mr. Out.

> "This is the top floor," said the elevator man.
>
> "Have another floor put on," said Mr. Out.
>
> "Higher," said Mr. In.
>
> "Heaven," said Mr. Out. (901)

In this scene, the change in social status, which was connectedly expressed in two-dimensional movement up and down along Fifth Avenue in turn-of-the-century novels, is represented three-dimensionally using skyscrapers. The socially successful go higher in the hotel to obtain a better viewpoint than others.[17] In contrast, those who fall socially, as Key does, are rendered as falling from the building or forced to the ground. These settings are made possible by the setting prop of the tall building. Fitzgerald uses the new space provided by the new architecture as an environment for movement.

Together with the elevator, another urban space that Fitzgerald discovers and adds as a new prop is the automobile; as if to fortify the previous quote, which depicts the elevator scene which conveys the sense of going up the building, there is a scene where two students go through the city in a car:

> Fifty-third Street was a bus with a dark, bobbed-hair beauty atop; Fifty-second was a street cleaner who dodged, escaped, and sent up a yell of, "Look where you're aimin'!" in a pained and grieved voice. At Fiftieth Street a group of men on a very white sidewalk in front of a very white building turned to stare after them, and

> shouted: “Some party, boys!”
>
> At Forty-ninth Street Peter turned to Dean. “Beautiful morning,” he said gravely, squinting up his owlish eyes. (896)

The car going smoothly down the avenue conveys a sense of movement similar to the sense of the elevator going up smoothly. In criticism of Fitzgerald’s novels, the machines are often considered to be a symbol of inhuman power, but it should be noted that underneath this characterization of destructive power, Fitzgerald used them wisely as props to convey the basic elements of fast speed in urban space. By also providing street numbers, the author conveys the sense of smooth movement just as the flying elevator does vertically.

Fitzgerald adds more speed and randomness to the description of the city in this story, conveying a sense of haphazardness as the most important quality of the era. In this sense, another particularly urban milieu used in this novel, other than hotels, is restaurants. They are placed in this story symbolically as linking points where the two separated worlds of Fifth and Sixth Avenues interact: Delmonico’s and Childs’. In each place the moments in which the two worlds meet haphazardly, without reason or consequence, are featured. In Delmonico’s, where the Yale party is held, drunken students end up drinking with soldiers who sneaked in. The other one is Childs’ on Columbus Circle, an anonymous, universally designed place rendered temporally special by its unlikely crowd:

> You will see there a crowd of poor people with sleep in the corners of their eyes, trying to look straight before them at their food so as not to see the other poor people. But Childs', Fifty-ninth, four hours earlier is quite unlike any Childs' restaurant from Portland, Oregon, to Portland, Maine. Within its pale but sanitary walls one finds a noisy medley of chorus girls, college boys, debutants, rakes, *filles de joie*—a not unrepresentative mixture of the gayest of Broadway, and even of Fifth Avenue. (890)

In the scene quoted above Fitzgerald captures a symbolic moment of urban community, of detachment and indifference. Moreover, the author turns this general space, filled with random people at different tables indifferent to other people's status or identity into a sublime picture by further adding the beautiful blue dawn that embraces them all, symbolizing the temporal unity among people with no other specific ties:

> The great plate-glass front had turned to a deep creamy blue, the color of a Maxfield Parrish moonlight—a blue that seemed to press close upon the pane as if to crowd its way into the restaurant. Dawn had come up in Columbus Circle, magical, breathless dawn, silhouetting the great statue of the immortal Christopher, and mingling in a curious and uncanny manner with the fading yellow electric light inside. (894)

It is an effective choice of place considering that Childs' is a New York-born nationwide chain restaurant; Childs' is a place made to be generic and universal, but on this particular morning, it becomes a unique place in the city. The place creates an anonymous space where people, regardless of class or social standing, can simply be together. Yet, the city is at once divided and united, a place where people meet haphazardly and things happen in ways connected, yet disconnected. United—a group of different people in a single place—and divided—individuals are nonetheless isolated from each other. Beautiful symbolism is created using a contrast between the neoclassical color of "Maxwell Parrish moonlight" mingling with the "fading yellow electric light" of the store; by juxtaposing the romantic and realistic, or the natural and artificial, it captures the aesthetic of the place where the idealistic aspect matches the physical. "May Day" thus dramatizes New York as a kinetic, haphazard place, where the sense of social falling and uprising are connected effectively to the physical architecture of the city.[18]

The Great Gatsby/My Lost City: Seeing through the Congestion

In "May Day," carrying on from *The Beautiful and Damned*, New York City is represented as a collection of dynamic vertical and horizontal movement. It uses tall buildings to add the height and create ways to convey the sense of movement. *The Great Gatsby* addresses the dreaminess of the city from a different angle. It talks about the mythical atmosphere of the city, its essence located in the myth and romance about it, in a

novel way that features the contrast between outside and inside, rather than that between up and down.

In this novel, Fitzgerald's attitude towards New York City is that of "longing from far away." Most of the novel takes place in Long Island on East Egg and West Egg, and New York City basically is somewhere far away to be looked at just as Gatsby does, with the green light of Daisy's residence. This stance creates an outside and inside of the city. In this novel, too, the interest in pattern is preserved; as Fitzgerald says in a letter to Maxwell Perkins, his novel is conceived as "something *new*—something extraordinary and beautiful and simple + intricately patterned" (Bruccoli, "Preface" vii). Matthew Bruccoli explains that in *Trimarchio*, the precursor to Gatsby, the author makes revisions to smoothly carry characters in and out of Manhattan, and to establish the pattern from Long Island, via Queens, to Manhattan.

There are only a few instances in which the protagonists go to the city, and they are meaningfully placed to make a contrast between inside and outside the city. There are few scenes in which Nick visits New York, and in each instance the city is represented as the inside space, such as Myrtle's apartment, his workplace, and the midtown restaurant where he is introduced to Gatsby and Wolfsheim. Especially important is the Plaza Hotel, where Jordan Baker reveals Gatsby's secret to Nick, and where Tom confronts Gatsby. In each moment, mostly in restaurants and hotels, New York is represented as inside a room. Hotel suites, the penthouse mansion Myrtle lives in, or the taxi that is painted mauve—all are very artificial and unnatural environments. There are no spaces between interiors and

exteriors within the city; that is, Nick's life in New York City only has to do with his job in Lower Manhattan, dinner at the Yale Club, and his commute from Penn Station. All the other places in the city feel like outside, far from his life. These spaces inside the city are full of commodities. Myrtle's room is full of furniture much too big, and as if to add to that, she starts shopping from the moment she gets to the city. Snacks, paper, and gossip papers—she has the list of things that she would have in the city (41). In the last Plaza Hotel scene, where a confrontation between Gatsby and Tom occurs, the specific, detailed, and yet out of place conversation about ordering a mint julep effectively represents the uncomfortable tension that dominates the room.[19] New York City is represented as a series of artificial and temporary rooms, as well as the myriad commodities that the city contains.

Then, to contrast New York City as an artificial space full of small things, New York City seen from the other side of the bridge is perceived not as a physical entity, but a concept. The city is represented as the contrast between the dreamy city seen from the outside and the inside city full of artificial things:

> The city seen from the Queensboro Bridge is always the city seen for the first time, in its first wild promise of all the mystery and the beauty in the world.
>
> […]
>
> As we crossed Blackwell's Island a limousine passed us, driven by a white chauffeur, in which sat three modish Negroes, two bucks and a girl. I laughed aloud

> as the yolks of their eyeballs rolled toward us in haughty rivalry.
>
> "Anything can happen now that we've slid over this bridge," I thought; "anything at all…" (73)

Stressing the separation of the city and outside by the use of the bridge, this scene reinforces the sense of dreaminess and surreality of Manhattan by presenting interior New York as quiet pastoral rooms contrasted with the outside, the island where actual things happen. The city can be seen either from inside, or outside, but never as a whole. There is no united view to connect these two standpoints; it is always one or the other.

This lack of a composite view of the city is better contextualized when paired with an observation in Henry James's *American Scene* (1908), the author's travelogue that records his impression of the growing New York City from the perspective of a returning native. In the same way as Fitzgerald remembers the city seen from the ferry as the quintessential image, James rediscovers New York from the ship on the river on his return to the city:

> The "tall buildings," which have so promptly usurped a glory that affects you as rather surprised, as yet, at itself, the multitudinous sky-scrapers standing up to the view, from the water, like extravagant pins in a cushion already overplanted, and stuck in as in the dark, anywhere and anyhow, have at least the felicity of carrying out the fairness of tone, of taking the sun and the shade in the manner of towers of

marble. (419)

Although James is essentially observing the same sight as Fitzgerald, there is no trace of romanticism in the way James portrays New York full of skyscrapers. What is striking is the materiality of depiction, the lack of romantic beauty. New York's Old World is oppressed by these new buildings, therefore deprived of the overall view, which he calls the "smothered visibility" of the city (421), a characteristic which James conceives primarily as a material one because of the "topographic curse of development" (439).[20] In turn, James reminiscences about his romantic lost city, the "Old New York" symbolized by smaller buildings. The city's situation is connected to his own loss of "visibility," the loss of viewpoint that once allowed him to see the city as a whole. Now the city consists of nothing but tall buildings, overshadowing "a visible Church, a visible State, a visible Society, a visible Past; those of the many visibilities, in short, that warmly cumber the ground in older countries" (467). James further talks about rented spaces such as hotel rooms and tenement rooms, overcrowded, mongrel places that signify the city's tarnished future and now characterize this new city. James's observation makes clear what Fitzgerald addresses, the same urban phenomenon as Fitzgerald; although in a way opposite to Fitzgerald's mythical romantic sketch of the city, James keenly perceives the lack of viewpoint created from which he can visualize the city as a whole, a condition created by new architecture.

The Great Gatsby reconstructs the sense of New York's "smothered" urban

space featuring a pattern between the vague, idealistic outside and trivial, materialistic inside, to symbolically represent the lack of viewpoint suggested in James's observation. Different from the vertical New York depicted in "May Day," a setting full of speed and change, hotels in this novel are presented as artificial space full of commodity, or the sites of confrontation.[21] The famous imagery of the city that concludes "My Lost City" should also be considered in this context. To symbolically represent the end of an era, Fitzgerald chooses the city seen from the top of the Empire State Building, which is the dream building built at a prodigious speed:

> From the ruins, lonely and inexplicable as the sphinx, rose the Empire State Building and, just as it had been a tradition of mine to climb to the Plaza Roof to take leave of the beautiful city, extending as far as eyes could reach, so now I went to the roof of the last and most magnificent of towers. Then I understood—everything was explained: I had discovered the crowning error of the city, its Pandora's box. Full of vaunting pride the New Yorker had climbed here and seen with dismay what he had never suspected, that the city was not the endless succession of canyons that he had supposed but that *it had limits*—from the tallest structure he saw for the first time that it faded out into the country on all sides, into an expanse of green and blue that alone was limitless. And with that awful realization that New York was a city after all and not a universe, the whole shining edifice that he had reared in his imagination came crashing to the ground. (32)

This epiphany provides a resolution of various divides presented in Fitzgerald's novels to recreate the dreaminess of its urban space. The view provided from the top of the skyscraper shows the hero the geographical limits of New York's world; this realization is important, because the new architecture provides a new height from which the viewer can see the horizontal whole of the city itself; in other words, the growth of the city—in architecture—lends the world a clear dimension of depth. The physical height of a skyscraper offers a viewpoint primarily nonexistent from within the city, overcoming the "smothered visibility" that characterized the city and gave it its mythical atmosphere. The discovery is not only a material one but also one rooted in the ideal about the city; in this scene, the hero realizes the limits of his world and consequently loses the perception of the limitlessness associated with the city. The last scene of "May Day," which makes a limitless rise seem possible, and Gatsby's inner/outer New York City reflect each other; all the contrasts about New York City culminate in this scene, providing the new "visibility" that affords a view of the city as a whole.

In sum, Fitzgerald's New York novels—*The Beautiful and Damned*, "May Day," and *The Great Gatsby*—and his "My Lost City" essay each discusses New York City in the 1920s using the idiosyncratic urban space found in the previous generation of New York novels. Finally Fitzgerald reaches an observation that overcomes the dreaminess, which is only obtainable from the superhuman viewpoint made possible by the Empire State Building. The skyscraper overcomes the high-rise hotel, and is suggested as

something out of human control, larger than the city, providing an all-seeing viewpoint on an urban space that continues to grow and evolve. In the next chapter, the skyscraper becomes the center of representation of the city. Ayn Rand's superhuman building, a product of superhuman power likened to the capitalistic and individualist ethic, is an important example. It becomes the center of power around which things gather, or the static embodiment of ideas that equally overwhelm individuals. As the building gets taller it provides new visibility, one that attempts to transcend all of the human movement, growth, and dynamism that has colored previous depictions of the city.

III. New York that is not Leningrad

Ayn Rand's Impossible Tower in *The Fountainhead*

As the last chapter closed with the image of the Empire State Building that provided the viewpoint that a high-rise hotel could not, the presence of skyscrapers in the city became more prominent. This chapter focuses on the physical power that created the world's highest building at a prodigious speed. The feeling of power and change that filled the air during its booming growth attracted many writers who marveled at and left impressions on the changing city. One example is Helen Keller, a deaf and blind author and educator, who in her journals and essays repeatedly mentions her stays in the city, and how the materiality of urban atmosphere, like "reverberations of exploding energy" on the subway gives her confirmation that "the mankind is real flesh and I myself am not a dream" (Lopate 508). Her remarks vividly convey the presence of the moving city by capturing the subway system and bustling traffic, but especially important is the construction of skyscrapers. For example, in her 1929 essay she describes a building site as such:

> Standing there 'twixt earth and sky, I saw a romantic edifice wrought by human brains and hands that is to the burning eye of the sun a rival luminary. I saw it stand erect and serene in the midst of storm and tumult of elemental commotion. I heard the hammer of Thor ring when the shaft begins to rise upward. I saw the

> unconquerable steel, the flash of testing flames, the sword-like rivets. I heard the steel drills in pandemonium. I saw countless skilled workers welding together that mighty symmetry. I looked upon the marvel of frail yet indomitable hands that lifted the tower to its dominating height. (Cohen 48)

This quote, a rare impression by an individual who, despite the lack of ordinary perception, sensually records a rare moment of New York in its making, capturing the sense of movement and power felt in the air, rather than audiovisual imagery shows both Keller's ability to keenly feel the change that was going on in the city as a crucial part of its atmosphere, and shared images about construction that were circulating at that time, showing that the rush of towering skyscrapers was romanticized and epitomized New York in this era; she vividly captures the way in which such power and sheer physicality are associated with skyscrapers, a trope that is central to *Mr. Bug Goes to Town*, a 1941 animated film, as well as to Ayn Rand's famous novel *The Fountainhead* (1943), which I discuss later in this chapter. *Mr. Bug Goes to Town* in its theme and treatment of architecture has a lot in common with the motion-filled city that we have seen in the last chapter, visualizing it in animation. Compared to it, the peculiarity of the city represented in *The Fountainhead* becomes apparent. This novel can be considered as Rand's attempt to replace with the kinetic, ever-changing city with the static and monumental architecture.

Mr. Bug Goes to Town: Urban Space as Power and Change

The powerful physical imagery of the growing building that captured Keller's attention is featured centrally in *Mr. Bug Goes To Town*. One of the first feature length animated films by The Fleischer Brothers, it tells a story of bugs and humans in a big city, which could be presumed as New York City from the way it is presented as a crowded island full of skyscrapers.[22] Hoppity, a young grasshopper who came back from his journey, finds his native "lowland" in danger of destruction because of the city's development that is rapidly turning the small patch of green adjacent to a struggling composer's small house into a new skyscraper. Led by Hoppity, bugs seek their refuge from the tidal changes that engulfed their home at the top of the skyscraper. Hoppity finds out that the couple is due to receive a big payment for a new song, "We're the Couple in the Castle," which Hoppity helps them to deliver, so that they can have a new home. Its climax features a long sequence in which bugs climb up the skyscraper in building to reach their dream garden; by using imagery that suggests that the successful go higher up in the building—the couple's success brings them from a small house to the penthouse in a skyscraper, accompanied by the bugs' fate and Hoppity's cheer that "We should go up! Up to the top!" —the film constructs a clever rags-to-riches story around the central image of the growing skyscraper.

This work is essential to consider the culture of New York City in the modern period for it makes full use of the medium's potential to represent the urban space full of change and movement. Hayao Miyazaki, a pioneer of modern-day Japanese animation,

recognizes this film's importance as a landmark of kinetic imagination.[23] In his interview on the film, he praises the representation of motion accomplished by Fleischer Studio's technical excellence and various innovations, including its use of rotoscope, full animation, and watercolors that create complex layers of movement and depth that enrich the story. Miyazaki says that through these excellent renovations and countless efforts that the creators devoted to the film, it succeeds to communicate "the élan and joy of capturing the world as a kinetic space," which he thinks is the fundamental driving principle of the art of animation (Miyazaki 3–9).[24]

The skyscraper sequence at the climax of the film is the paramount example of Miyazaki's observation; the rising shaft, flame and drilling, bricklaying, steel frame creation, rivet catching, and other movements just as powerful and kinetic as those mentioned in Keller's remarks, capturing the world full of motion. The idea of architecture overwhelming the individual, the major theme of the story, is rendered further by using visual imagery. As bugs go up the structure aiming for the top, they are threatened by the brutal power of labor. The forceful rendition of "rivet catching," a depiction of the incandescent rivet thrown into the air, caught with a bucket, and struck by the rivet gun, epitomizes the force that drove such majestic architecture. Its power is effectively conveyed by the movement of bugs standing around it, shaken helplessly with its sheer power. The swift tempo of repetitious action connects the skyscraper to the film's overall theme of capitalistic success; other movements that signify success—records of the song pressed and sold out, coins falling and piling up, upward

scales on the piano—further fortify the sense of smooth flow of the upward mobility, represented as a physical act.[25] In this sequence, the skyscraper is presented as an embodiment of both the power and the movement that creates it.

In addition to visual effects, the film's story depicts how the buildings become central to urban imagination. The story pairs the lives of bugs, powerless and almost totally dependent on their surroundings, with a young composer couple's rags-to-riches success story, stressing the sense of powerlessness or haphazardness in the protagonists' destiny. Bugs and humans alike are thrown around in the tidal architectural change; bugs, without knowing where they were going, but carried on by the rhythm of towering steels of skyscraper, in a way the same as humans who are sent here and there by change in infrastructure. Also, this film presents bugs' life as a deeply intertwined part of the urban architecture by using attractive details such as Bugville and homes made of unused human objects. Especially brilliant is the underground dance scene, which not only shows the bugs using an abandoned crevice of the road as an elaborate dance hall, but by having Hoppity touch a live wire and interfere with streetlights, confusing the traffic, also wonderfully visualizes the way in which those who live in the city affect the larger urban architecture. "The castle in the air" that the couple sings about and finally arrives at, and the dreamlike garden that the insects finally attain, are presented not as romantic, but as material, attainable only by wealth, and as the product of pure chance. Stronger than them is the architecture, which is featured as the crucial component of the worldview, as something closely entwined with the life of those who live in the city, almost as powerful

as that overwhelms and conditions them materially.

The Fountainhead: Urban Space as Material to be Controlled

Mr. Bug Goes to Town is a good contrast to Ayn Rand's *The Fountainhead*, another popular New York story from the same era that depicts a genius architect's struggle to realize his ideal skyscraper. As in Fleischer's film, this novel depicts skyscrapers as an embodiment of capitalistic power, but Fleisher and Rand assume almost opposite stances in depicting the relationship between skyscrapers and individuals. Rand's work is worth considering in this context, for Rand's static, solid and absolute buildings are products of the same powerful urban atmosphere and make a sharp contrast with Hoppity's building, kinetic and motion-filled, as the city was in the tradition we have seen in this dissertation so far. An architect whose former jobs include rivet catching and knowing "how to use the torch," Howard Roark, the hero of the novel, is the figure that epitomizes the powerfulness of creation in New York urban space of the 1930s and 1940s, and provides the counterpoint to the vision presented in *Mr. Bug Goes to Town*, shifting focus from building to the creative force behind it. Thus, *The Fountainhead* echoes *Mr. Bug Goes to Town* in that Roark's rise can be considered another example of the rags-to-riches story in New York that features powerful architecture.

It might seem an odd pick to consider in this context, for Rand's novel has yet to be really treated as a New York novel. As past criticisms have almost always read the book as an interpretation of her epic and polemical philosophy, Objectivism—the

anti-communist, capitalistic fundamentalist individualism promoted in her novels—in this essay I limit my argument to the novel's significance within the context of New York City novels, and thus aesthetic/rhetoric questions regarding the representation of New York City in relation to the fate of the individual, especially its use of skyscrapers. Looking at *The Fountainhead* from this perspective will shed light on a new interpretation of the book and place it in the litany of New York novels, opening up a new understanding of the novel.

The choice of the hero—the architect in New York—is an interesting one, for there is no obvious reason in Rand's biographical background for such a choice. Being a Russian-Jewish immigrant from St. Petersburg and moving to California as a scriptwriter in Hollywood, Rand had no connection to the city. Frank Lloyd Wright, the architect whose life loosely inspired the life of protagonist Howard Roark, worked mainly in Chicago, and Tokyo has more of his buildings than New York. According to Susan Burns's biography, Rand moved to New York for the express purpose of writing *The Fountainhead*, where she did her research on architecture and history and apprenticed at an architectural firm to prepare for the novel from scratch (40–51). Rand's understanding of the city in general comes from its artistic representation, a great amount of which comes from the films she watched during her childhood in St. Petersburg, a city that is undergoing a lot of transformation (17). She approaches the city mostly from her own idealized understanding and hope, which are strongly tied to anti-totalitarian regimes rising in Europe, the USSR, in particular, which she tied to her dislike of the Roosevelt

administration, which was expanding government reach in private sectors (48).

In "Engineering Power: Hoover, Rand, Pound and the Heroic Architect," Sharon Stockton makes a compelling argument that Rand's choice might have been a conceptual, romantic one.[26] Referencing Cecelia Tichi's historical study, Stockton shows that Rand's characterization of Roark, the "heroic architect" —a perplexing character choice considering Rand's personal background—in fact originates in the image of the hero-engineer, representing the industrial United States conceived as an antithesis of the fascist Europe. She also makes an important point that Roark's architecture is the product of an abstract structure of pure productivity (815). Thus Rand's choice of the hero—the architect struggling to establish his own buildings in New York—turns out to be a perfect match for her anti-communist pursuits, intrinsically connected both to the city itself and the capitalistic ethos it represents.[27] The idea of perceiving New York as the embodiment of a democratic ethos closely associated with the American presence in the world can also be seen in Lewis Mumford's *The Culture of Cities* (1938). Mumford is one of the first scholars to discuss cities and focus on their idealistic implications. He not only examined and criticized the existing cities, but also worked on urban planning projects to materialize the idealistic aspects of the city. During World War II, Mumford's idea of the metropolis as the anti-totalitarian idealistic form of society was read in Nazi-occupied European countries as the ideal vision for the postwar city.

In this respect, Rand's New York is better understood and contextualized in the discussion if focused on its aspect of being conceived as "not Leningrad," opposed to her

native city of St. Petersburg, the city which, together with Moscow, represented the cultural center of imperial Russia. It was the place where the Russian revolution broke out in 1905, which ceased to be the capital of the country in 1918, and had its name changed to Leningrad after the revolutionary leader in 1924. These political and social changes were accompanied by physical changes to the city, as it moved from the symbolic Russian imperialist style to a more constructivist, functionalist mode (Kawabata). Rand had a way to see the city as a material representation of ideology, in a similar way to her native city, but with the completely opposite meaning attributed to it. Put in such a context, the depiction of New York in *The Fountainhead* can be considered an example of dialogue, or more like a collision, with previous and contemporary versions of narratives about the city. In particular, Rand challenges the traditional New York story of rags-to-riches, finally suggesting that the hero architect, Howard Roark, triumphs with physical power over Gail Wynand, the media tycoon who is more of a conventional rags-to-riches hero, thus offering a drastic rereading of the genre. Rand portrays New York as an arena of power where partisan interests collide, and where architecture plays a vital, active role rather than just serving as a receptacle; Rand's protagonists' fates are manifested in a way that is embedded in the city's architecture, finally suggesting Rand's version of New York City as a place where the physical power of creation prevails.

To that end, Rand creates a story around the contrast between Wynand and Roark's characters. In the 1962 introduction to *The Fountainhead*, Rand reveals that she

started conceiving the novel by creating characters, rather than the story: "Would I want to meet these characters and observe these events in real life? In this story an experience worth living through for its own sake? Is the pleasure of contemplating these characters an end in itself?" (ix) Leonard Peikoff introduces relevant pieces from Rand's unpublished journals, in which she contemplated the characters, to allow a glimpse of Rand's process. She first defined her character's mindset. For example:

> Howard Roark—The noble soul par excellence. The man as man should be. The self-sufficient, self-confident, the end of ends, the reason unto himself, the joy of living personified. Above all—the man who lives for himself, as living for oneself should be understood. And who triumphs completely. A man who *is* what he should be. (729–30)

Then, with a hero with indefinite yet assertive characteristics in the center, other characters are placed in relation to the main character. Peter Keating, the successful yet secretly mediocre architect, is "the exact opposite of Howard Roark, and everything a man should not be." Dominique Francon, the goddess-muse, is "the woman for a man like Howard Roark" and the villain Ellsworth Toohey, an intellectual known as the champion of the downtrodden, is "a man who never could be—and knows it." The archenemy of Roark and later his soul mate, *New York Banner* owner Gail Wynand, is a media tycoon whose life is loosely based on that of William Randolph Hearst—for Rand,

"a man who could have been" (730). In this geometrical layout of characters, Roark and Wynand are given special place, as "is" and "could be"; Wynand is the hero with a definite lack, and the source of the differences between him and Roark are vital to the story. To best examine Roark, one should first look at Wynand and his rags-to-riches tale to examine how the "existence" of the two characters in the city is defined in different terms.

Building as Social Standing: The Rise and Fall of "The Man Who Could Have Been"

Wynand's story is a rags-to-riches tale typical of New York in the sense that his rise is represented in his spatial movement within the city. His ability to free himself from a given social stratum is connected to his physical ability to relocate within the city. He starts as a street tramp in Hell's Kitchen, and then grows up to be the young head of Hell's Kitchen gangsters (412). After having commanded enough influence in his own neighborhood, with his strong will and street smarts, he makes his way out of his territory, working as a bootblack on the seaport and longing to seize Manhattan (417). Unlike his neighbors who "never ventured beyond [the neighborhood's] boundaries, and others who seldom stepped out of the tenement in which they were born," Wynand does not hesitate to move "through the best streets of the city" (419). Wynand starts his upward journey in the city with his street smarts and happenstance help from strangers. Starting as an errand boy at *The Gazette*, Wynand continues to make his way up in journalism, finally making himself the owner of *The New York Banner* and becoming a media tycoon. He is quick to

seize “the chances offered by a growing city,” and against all advice he invests in real estate which no one expects to become valuable. His success leads to his next conquest of a bigger building and loftier place (426), finally leading him to the *Banner* building. In the end, Wynand is a real estate tycoon living in a residential hotel in the middle of Manhattan, enjoying the privilege of flaunting his influence over 6 million people (406). His success can be measured by the scale and prestige of the places he owns within the city; in Wynand’s world, “higher” is better.

Moreover, what should be noted in Wynand’s rise is its literalness that stems from Rand’s peculiar brand of realism, which might be one reason why it is not considered “real” in the sense of other realistic New York City novels; however, it is an important feature in this context for it complements New York’s peculiarity that exists where the ideal and the material are wed, making its characteristics more evident. It is apparent that Rand’s concern was not the “reality” of New York, for she clearly defines the real not as “things as they are” but as “things as they ought to be” (*The Fountainhead* viii). Neither is she interested in the way the city is socially constructed; As Susan Burns points out, in this novel tenement houses in Hell’s Kitchen and drawing rooms of business magnates could be filled with the same sort of people (88). Detailed observation of New York is essentially limited, as seen in the remarks that in New York “the people […] were extremely well dressed” and men are “smart as hell” (*The Fountainhead* 27). Although one would expect these socially informed details to be important to a person like Peter Keating, a character who lives off other’s reputations, the lack of detail is

consistent with Rand's lack of interest in the naturalistic view of reality.

Instead, the key element of Rand's depiction of New York's urban space is to follow the principle of a person's "integrity," the most fundamental value in her idea of individualism that is defined to be as organic as "the ability to stand by an idea" that "presupposes the ability to think" (321). This idea is developed extensively in this novel, and forms its basic framework. In praise of her beauty, the heroine is described as "match[ing] inside and out," which is synonymous with "integrity," or the impossible "clean, consistent, reasonable, self-faithful, the all-of-one style, like a work of art" of which she is an embodiment (516). This rhetoric of "outside" matching "inside," connecting material things with their non-material dimension is present in the novel on many levels, and plays out interestingly in the representation of city and urban space, for it suggests an intimate connection between idea and materiality. Characters' qualities are manifested by their physical looks, pointing to the possibility of the hero as well as the skyscraper that "matches inside out": material equal to its ideal attributes.

This characteristic adds an interesting dimension to Wynand's rise and fall, for it connects the character and the space he occupies in a quite literal manner, pushing forward the idea of a rags-to-riches sense of space. As Wynand's life is closely linked to the architecture of New York, the layout of the city and buildings, in a rather literal manner, his eventual "fall" is also strictly literal. His first epic defeat came when he was fifteen, lost a fight and found himself powerless in the gutter. He was badly hurt and had to crawl with his arms, leaving "the long smear of blood on the pavement" (420), and had

to knock against the bottom of the door of a saloon. This image surfaces repeatedly in the novel as the lowest point of his life, and it should be noticed that this nadir is defined not by the social boundaries of Hell's Kitchen, but the raw image of Wynand, literally on the ground.

To show how physically integral these buildings are to Wynand and how crucial they are to his social status, Rand represents the buildings as if they were part of, or extensions of, Wynand's body, adding details to liken Wynand's spatial surroundings more closely to his body. He lives in a luxurious penthouse atop The *Banner* building, which is publicized in a way befitting his theatrical, gimmicky public persona, but he keeps a private secret art gallery under it, a locked room with "a few objects not to be pawed," which literally serves as "a substitute" to his soul (428–9). The building provides not only a secure, prized space for him, but also something directly relevant to his physicality. Buttons on Wynand's table are described as the nerve center from which he commands the whole building: "each wire controlling some men, each man controlling some men" (540). In this image Rand cleverly constructs a twofold meaning. On the one hand it suggests Wynand's power, which is strong and concrete like the building-structure of the system that controls people. But on the other hand, it shows that because the building is too like himself, Wynand almost perceives the building as his body, something bound to him. This serves to foreshadow his final fall of betraying Roark when Wynand is unable to abandon his newspaper and his building. Losing his buildings and the newspaper that led to his rise, which he considered so vital, would be tantamount to

losing his existence.

The lowest point Wynand hits after this fall is also represented literally. Defeated by the board of trustees and thus having committed the ultimate sin of compromising his integrity—the crucial ingredient of Rand's ideal—Wynand feels forced down to the pavement of New York from the tops of its skyscrapers:

> It's only a bottle cap, thought Wynand looking down at a speck or glitter under his feet; a bottle cap ground into the pavement. The pavements of New York are full of things like that—bottle caps, safety pins, campaign buttons, sink chains; sometimes—lost jewels; it's all alike now, flattened, ground in; it makes the pavements sparkle at night. The fertilizer of a city. Someone drank the bottle empty and threw the cap away. How many cars have passed over it? Could one retrieve it now? Could one kneel and dig with bare hands and tear it out again? I had no right to hope for escape. I had no right to kneel and seek redemption. Millions of years ago, when the earth was being born, there were living things like me: flies caught in resin that became amber, animals caught in ooze that became rock. I am a man of the twentieth century and I became a bit of tin in the pavements, for the trucks of New York to roll over. (689)

This quote, too, highlights the literal nature of Wynand's rags-to-riches formula. To emphasize his even lower state, Wynand senses himself as not only being on the

pavement, but further "flattened, ground" into it, suggesting force, pressure, and no hope of escape. His final realization is "I never got out of here" (693); Wynand, as well as Toohey, who calls Wynand the "Petronius of Hell's Kitchen" in an attack on the newspaper for advocating capitalistic exploitation, are not free from the places and buildings they come from and what the places represent in the context of the city (102). Thus Rand contributes to the evolution of the New York rags-to-riches story, as simply representing status and movement, stressing the materiality of the city that constitutes its atmosphere.

Thus Wynand's rise is represented as a series of possessions, communicated with literalness that conveys the inseparable relationship between the protagonist and his building, located in and defined its value in relation to the city. At the height of Wynand's success, after he marries Dominique, the only thing missing from his ascent is his own building, a product of his own creation, which would manifest his power in the architecture he is part of. He longs to create the world's tallest skyscraper on the site of the place he comes from; in a way materially recreating his life, by destroying and remodeling his past by replacing it with his ideal vision materialized:

> "That's the Banner Building. See, over there? —that blue light. I've done so many things, but I've missed one, the most important. There is no Wynand Building in New York. Some day I'll build a new home for the *Banner*. It will be the greatest structure of the city and it will bear my name. I started in a

> miserable dump, […] But I thought, then, of the Wynand Building that would rise some day." (519)

The Wynand building, which would be "the final symbol" of his power over the city, would sit on a big block covering almost the entire area of Hell's Kitchen, Wynand's inability to physically construct is crucial in this context, for it in turn showcases Roark's heroic ability.

Wynand's rags-to-riches story is thus told as a series of struggles to free himself from the urban architecture that defines his life, and ultimately an attempt to alter it physically. In the end, his failure to escape from what the architecture represents is due to the fact that he can own, but not create. His struggle is conveyed quite literally using the city's structure: not satisfied with what he sees in the city, he aims to rewrite it by possessing his own skyscraper. From his rise to power to his ultimate fall, his struggle is substantiated by material details. As the complement to Wynand, the creativity of the hero, Howard Roark, is conveyed as the sense of physical power. To differentiate the man who "could have been" and the man who "is," Roark is represented as the ultimate hero—an embodiment of the ideal as well as of the sheer physical power capable of destroying and rebuilding it.

Building as Embodiment of Power: The Triumph of "The Man Who Is"

Roark is conceived as someone who compensates for Wynand's shortcomings.

He is introduced to the novel as the new hero who can realize this dream, whose presence manifests a completely different conceptualization of the city and its buildings. Cast as the antithesis to Wynand as the ultimate "egotist" Rand idealizes, Roark is the character who remains adamantly unaltered throughout the novel; he is not interested in his social position, impermeable to others' reputation.[28] What is completely different is that Roark's rise is one in which his qualities are gradually manifested, accepted, and naturalized. In the same way that Wynand's rise and fall is conveyed literally, in Roark's story, his will and character, adamant and absolute, are conveyed organically, finally turning him and his skyscraper into the ultimate icon of capitalism and sheer power.

As is the case with Wynand's equivalence to the buildings he owns, Roark is equal to his creative power. Roark's profession and his projects justify power to a violent degree. From the beginning, when Roark is expelled from a prestigious university, he is configured as someone pitted against the popular notion of an architect. Roark's occupation as an architect is connected to power, and consequently the ability to create and thus physically alter the urban architecture. Asked why he became an architect, he answers: "because I love this earth. That's all I love. I don't like the shape of things on this earth. I want to change them" (39). In the words of his teacher, Henry Cameron, architecture is "not a business, not a career, but a crusade and consecration to a joy that justifies the existence of the earth" (72). By associating such natural, romantic imagery with the occupation, the architect is defined as someone who wields the power to materially create and destroy, as opposed to the "false" architects in the novel, such as

Keating, Francon, and Toohey, who are contained within social and historical confines, creating work that signifies external values such as their own fame or a sense of fidelity to the larger architectural history. The prime example of such architecture is The Cortlandt Houses, a public project conceived from economic, socialistic necessity and cast as a product of negotiation and nepotism.

Roark's architecture is presented as an antithesis. It is organic in the sense that it matches the power that created it. In his designs, "each structure was inevitably what it had to be […] it was as if the buildings had sprung from the earth and from some living force, complete, unalterably right" (7). For Roark, then, instead of an arena bound by social or historical limits, the city is depicted as an object on which Roark exercises his power. Skyscrapers and the city as material, suggested in Wynand and Dominique's more romantic vision of the city, stand opposite to this socially confined view. The way they see it has religious undertones, as something that gives them a "particular sense of sacred rapture" (463). Wynand continues as such:

> "I would give the greatest sunset in the world for one sight of New York's skyline. Particularly when one can't see the details. Just the shapes. The shapes and the thought that made them. The sky over New York and the will of man made visible. What other religion do we need?" (463)

Wynand's love for the skyline, skyscrapers not as details but as shapes, expressed in the

quote above is further articulated in Dominique's view of the city from the Staten Island ferry at night:

> In the vast emptiness of sky and ocean, the city was only a small, jagged solid. It seemed condensed, pressed tight together, not a place of streets and separate buildings, but a single sculptured form. A form of irregular steps that rose and dropped without ordered continuity, long ascensions and sudden drops, like the graph of a stubborn struggle. But it went on mounting—toward a few points, toward the triumphant masts of skyscrapers raised out of the struggle. (317)

In their view, the city is not made up of details or individual parts. Instead, the city is seen as a vast material at the disposal of those who "struggled" for skyscrapers—the ideas visualized and materialized out of the "solid," whose shape is naturally connected to the will and the intent of the man. Dominique conceives this ideal city as the place where streets full of "faces made alike by fear," a vision that contradicts her strong individuality, are replaced by the strong individual (247). It should be noted that in this image her struggle to free herself from the banality of the mob is likened to a rejection of the "mirror-room," the space foregrounded in *Sister Carrie* as a typical New York space that colors other New York novels (442). In a way that naturalizes the solid city envisioned both by Wynand and Dominique, Rand constructs the image of the city as material for Roark to reshape:

> From the train, he looked back once at the skyline of the city as it flashed into sight and was held for some moments beyond the windows. The twilight had washed off the details of the buildings. They rose in thin shafts of a soft, porcelain blue, a color not of real things, but of evening and distance. They rose in bare outlines, like empty molds waiting to be filled. (199)

Note that in this quote Roark is disinterested in the existing city itself, but only sees the possibilities of shaping it. The skyline of the city is not even the embodiment of the idea, as it was for Wynand and Dominique, but seen only as the material; it is the mold to be filled, or the outline to be completed. Unlike Wynand, who exercises his power by possessing space on Manhattan, Roark's ideal is to be realized only in buildings he conceives and builds on his own. Skyscrapers will be the pure embodiments of his ideas, his "possessions" in the literal sense as he exerts creative control and command over their creation according to his conception.

Thus skyscrapers in this novel are imagined as the ultimate icon that is materially synonymous with New York City; their actual or social function does not interest the author, rather becoming a symbol in which the material merges with what the structure is intended to represent. Using such imagery as a crucial component, Rand poses a new ending to the rags-to-riches story, one in which the individual could reach a higher realm of success by materially creating his ideal, even at the expense of the

destruction of the old. The final and crucial difference between Wynand's and Roark's power is the difference between possession and creation expressed on different levels finally resulting in this interesting dimension of iconography, uniting physical and ideal attribution in one. Roark's body gradually increases its presence as an embodiment of power, placed against the city as a powerful individual trying to seize the material of the city, and it is represented in a way that is drastically different, and decisively more powerful than the other characters in the novel.[29] Thus the novel builds up the tension of naturalization as if there were no divide between Roark, his building, and the power he uses to create/destroy. Whereas in *Mr. Bug Goes to Town* we see the city's materiality in the foreground, Rand adopts an even wider perspective to give a view of Roark, an architect, as the driving and creative force behind that visual materiality. As Roark's power is manifested visually and organically, it extends to the things he creates. The sight of gray limestone inspires him to a series of designs pertaining to that image:

> "He thought of a broad sheet of paper, and he saw, rising on the paper, bare walls of gray limestone with long bands of glass, admitting the glow of the sky into the classrooms. In the corner of the sheet stood a sharp, angular signature—Howard Roark." (15)

Roark's ideas, manifested as designs on paper, directly connect material to the building made of it, as if the material already incorporates his intent. This description shows that

the immutable organic quality of his project is already present in his sketches, granting Roark the natural right to take the material and to create. Unlike Wynand's signature, which is forced upon others to claim his ownership, Roark's social ascent is shown as his name is naturally, visually materialized as he prevails in the world: "Howard Roark, Architect," first mentioned on this design, manifests itself as it later appears on his paycheck (123), then on the door of his office, and finally at the billboard of the world's tallest skyscraper (726). It's solitary, static, and unmalleable.

This difference is more visible compared to signs that Wynand creates, in the sense that his written signs represent the possessive power he exercises in this novel. His golden "GW" signatures are everywhere, both in his private and public spheres, as if to claim ownership over the space. This applies not only to material space, but also to nonmaterial ones. His name together with his photograph is on his paper every day, making the "Wynand Papers" synonymous for yellow journalism in general. Moreover, his signatures on the sail of his yacht attest to the fact that Wynand's possession is extended to the nonmaterial realm:

> Dominique looked out at the gold letters—*I do*—on the delicate white bow.
>
> "What does that name mean?" She asked.
>
> "It's an answer," said Wynand, "to people long since dead. […] you see, the sentence I heard most often in my childhood was 'You don't run things around here.'" (460)

In this scene, the imagery of a white sail with his declaration blowing in the wind fortifies the sense that Wynand's will to possess extends to nonmaterial things, just as his goal is to set records by flying in an airplane, to make his mark in places never reached. It also shows that his signs are essentially placed in dialogue with other people. The blue slashes of Wynand's editing pen could stand in for his initials, for such lines that seemed "to rip the authors of the copy out of existence" could only be made by him (408). When he fights for Roark singlehandedly as his employees walk out on him, his signed articles—his discourses represented in words are represented as his weapon. Wynand's will to possess is associated with words and dialogue.

On the other hand, the source of Roark's influence is conveyed through the visual. Roark's talent for creating imagery that conveys things without explanation gradually overwhelms ideas explained in words to the extent that, in the Stoddard Temple trial scene, Roark simply submits his drawing as testimony. In this scene, all these other explanations about his flaws and the beauty of this building—the plaintiff's accusation, Dominique's defense and the attack from *The Banner*—are given the same value as the "ten photographs of the Stoddard Temple" Roark submits as testimony (367). In the construction of this balance Rand implies her belief that Roark's image-based physical creativity is a powerful force in the collision with his opponents.

As regards Roark, the line between an idea realized as a sketch on paper and its physical realization further grows thin, finally to the extent of justifying violence.

Regarding Enright House, one of his buildings, Roark says that he wishes "that in some future air raid bomb would blast this house out of existence. It would be a worthy ending. So much better than to see it growing old and soot-stained, degraded by family photographs, the dirty socks, the cocktail shakers and the grape-fruit rinds" (294). In this observation it is suggested that the logic of integrity extends also to his designs, as if any failed integrity should be corrected; the novel finally suggests that the architect's right to envisioning a project should also mean the power to create it, to the extent that it includes that of destroying it physically.

The built-up tension between destruction and creation culminates in the idea of two skyscrapers with opposite fates, which the novel uses to naturalize the dramatic course of events: the Cortlandt Homes and the Wynand Tower. Cortlandt Homes is the public housing complex that Roark designed under Peter Keating's name, but it was not built as Roark intended, as Keating failed to execute Roark's plan faithfully. When Roark sees the building realized and sees "white crosses on the fresh panes of glass in the windows" which look "appropriate, like an error x'ed out of existence," it is as if Roark is looking at his botched projects (637). This "botched" image echoes back to Henry Cameron's unrealized projects that Roark finds among Cameron's relics; the ideal, integral designs defeated by social pressure, and crossed out on the paper to signify that it was never realized. As finally Roark decides to physically blow up the Cortlandt to realize a building true to his ideal vision, these two moments of "crossing out" signify the moment in which sheer powers of creation and destruction become inseparable. Rand

finally naturalizes this act of blowing up as within his rights by acquitting Roark in his trial, literally legalizing it.

The Ultimate, Impossible Tower of Creation and Destruction

Roark's presence also yields the presence of the perfect, ultimate skyscraper; the Wynand building that has been realized in the last scene of this novel is the culmination of skyscraper ideals—"the last skyscraper built in New York, so much the better, the greatest and the last" (620). Intended to be "the final symbol" of Wynand's life, as the embodiment of an idea he envisioned but could not realize, it is the ultimate culmination of Roark's creative power; "a monument to that spirit which is yours…and could have been mine" as Wynand says, establishing the two characters' fundamental differences (519). Indefinite and assertive as Roark himself, the building is also the ultimate embodiment of Roark's triumph over the city. Thus Rand adds a new ending to her rags-to-riches story by replacing the existing architecture with Roark's towers that signify both destruction and creation. This ideal skyscraper is absolute, and by definition static; the building ceases to be just a space that measures one's place in society, but towers over the city as an unchangeable, ultimate icon of power, associated with so much energy and struggle and movement in its making. Yet, however overwhelmingly energetic, it is hollow and impossible, as it denies the continuation of time and movement, things that have characterized New York skyscrapers.[30]

Although Rand closes the novel with this hollow, impossible, and all-ending

creation, motion and change remain active elements of the architecture. Rather than the building itself, the ecstatic sense of movement the two buildings provoke in Dominique reflects the kinetic atmosphere associated with skyscrapers in the making. At the end of the novel, as the Wynand building is created, she feels as if her car were "speeding vertically" (642) when she acts as an accomplice in the destruction of the Cortlandt Homes, a sensation that later resurfaces as she goes up in the hoist to the top of Roark's building:

> She saw roof gardens float down like handkerchiefs spread on the wind. Skyscrapers reached her and were left behind. The planks under her feet shot past the antennae of radio stations. […] There was nothing behind her now but steel ligaments and space. She felt the height pressing against her eardrums. The sun filled her eyes. The air beat against her raised chin. […] The line of the ocean cut the sky. The ocean mounted as the city descended. She passed the pinnacles of bank buildings. She passed the crowns of courthouses. She rose above the spires of churches. Then there was only the ocean and the sky and the figure of Howard Roark. (727)

Although the purpose of her rise is to point to the genius architect looking down at every other structure in the city, the last sequence of the novel that follows Dominique's rise by the side of the building conveys the joy of movement associated with New York

architecture and echoes the sense of swift power, movement, and change conveyed by the building that Hoppity and friends climbed up in *Mr. Bug Goes to Town*. Equally inspired by modern New York as the embodiment of capitalistic power, Roark's and Hoppity's buildings are both of the caricatured, idealistic form of the city, yet capture the power of the growing architecture that epitomized the period. However, what these two works see in the skyscraper is opposite. In the end Roark's skyscraper is an object in itself: the skyscraper itself embodies the unchanging, ultimate building. In Hoppity's story, however, the skyscraper is a setting that demonstrates power and movement. When the bugs look down on the street, buildings are invisible. In the former, static trumps the kinetic, while in the latter, kinetic remains vital.

The protagonists of Ayn Rand's *The Fountainhead*, Gail Wynand and Howard Roark, are two self-made men whose quests in New York are intrinsically tied to its architecture, but Rand makes a clear distinction between the character who triumphs and the one who fails by using the city's architecture. Wynand is more of a traditional rags-to-riches hero who makes his way in the city by owning space, a man whose path is represented in the movement between sections of New York, literally into the upper social strata. Howard Roark, on the other hand, is the new hero who embodies Rand's idea of creative destruction, who has the power to actually alter the city's architectural landscape, rather than living and rising within its confines. In the end, Wynand fails, as he is unable to free himself from the city's architecture, and Roark, who exercises his creative power, triumphs. Yet the final building suggested as his triumph is impossible,

for it negates the movement and change associated with buildings in New York City.

In sum, architecture and built environment is a crucial element in the consideration of the cultural representation of urban space in New York City in its modernity. As the city grows with its characteristic skyscraper structure, the narrative of social advancement incorporates the urban architecture, stressing the city's uniqueness. The three previous chapters examined the change and development of the city's architecture and corresponding shifts in the representation of urban space in New York from 1900 to 1940. This development can be considered one continuous sequence in which a distinct image of New York was built with words in the narratives of individuals discovering the city, stories that, in a way, interacted with the actual changing landscape, creating a unique modern urban space characterized by a distinct interplay between material character and idealistic realm. Dreiser saw the rise of a unique city different from other American metropolises, in the turn-of-the-century New York, depicting it as an embodiment of physical motion that promotes social mobility. To symbolize this kind of a city, the novel discovers urban spaces such as restaurants and hotels in skyscrapers as singular cultural settings that are deeply intertwined with their respective non-material realm. F. Scott Fitzgerald, in his three New York novels, then portrayed the 1920s New York's urban environment as dynamic and transforming, but at the same time insured and naïve—almost on a cloud of detached security. To convey this sense of dreaminess, Fitzgerald applies the same landscape as Dreiser and, with a keen interest in pattern and

composition, locates the city's urbanity between its ideal and physical dimensions. Hotels and restaurants in skyscrapers are used as romanticized settings that symbolize urban space, spaces that allow physical upward and downward movements connected to protagonists' social positions, to be rendered more dynamically. Then, as I attempted in this chapter, Ayn Rand's *The Fountainhead* should be considered as a peculiar yet defining example of this tradition. Rand's New York communicates the intense urban space of New York at its prime. Together with the contemporary animated feature *Mr. Bug Goes to Town*, Rand's novel foregrounds the city's architecture as the capitalistic ideal embodied by abundant material and the violent power behind it. The quests of two self-made men in New York are intrinsically tied to its architecture, as Rand uses architecture to frame the distinction between the character who triumphs and the one who fails. The victorious character replaces the existing, transforming landscape with perfection, therefore achieving a consummate, integral unity of the material and ideal in the form of a super-skyscraper.

This outcome somewhat coincided with reality as the United States found itself as the world's only superpower, with New York at the "center." In a sense, Roark's vision of the "ultimate" skyscraper was actually realized in the World Trade Center buildings, which were both milestones in the history of American architecture, the tallest buildings in New York for decades, and mainstays of symbolic financial might. The next chapter leaps forward to the 2000s and examines the representation of architecture of modern-day New York around and after the 9/11 attacks. I will examine literary responses to the event

to see how the first physical attack on the city cast new doubts on classic representation. The events forced observers to think about how the positive and progressive fusion of ideal and material, envisioned and examined by writers such as Dreiser, Fitzgerald, Rand, and others, violently breaks down and how to reconstruct the urban landscape by attaching different stories and meanings to the city.

IV. New York, the Capital of Elsewhere

Architecture and Trauma in New York Novels by Art Spiegelman and Colum McCann

> I'm interested in what [Michael] Ondaatje calls the "International mongrels of the world" or what [Salman] Rushdie calls the "international bastards," all those people with no place and yet every place inside them. […] [John Berger] waited a long time and then he said that he was "a citizen—no, no, not a citizen—a patriot of elsewhere." (McCann 368–9)

This chapter leaps forward to the twenty-first century to consider cultural representations of the city within the experience of the multiple terrorist attacks on September 11th, 2001, the first major foreign attacks on the American mainland, an unprecedented catastrophe of vast significance; in *Trauma Culture*, Ann Kaplan suggests that it marked a "ground zero" that created a "tabula rasa," a new starting point that fundamentally altered the understanding of the world (311). This is especially true for New York City, where the World Trade Center Buildings were targeted and destroyed. This is a defining event for my argument, in the sense that actual objects in the environment were targeted for their ideological meanings in a city whose ideological representations of peculiarity, power, and development have been inseparable from its unique architecture and material character. By taking two works that deal with the experience and trauma, this chapter looks at representation of the experience and its traumatic aftereffects, especially related to the representation of the city's architecture and the two towers, both to explore how the

traumatic experience is conceived as a collapse of the ideal and material, and to take a closer look at the subsequent appropriation of the ideal leaving the material. The first section of this chapter looks at Art Spiegelman's *In the Shadow of No Towers* (2004) to examine the American art of Ground Zero, the moment in which material and nonmaterial aspects that once intertwined to create the New York landscape fall apart. In the second half of the chapter, I will examine Colum McCann's *Let the Great World Spin* (2009) to see the act of healing and recovery as an attempt to reconnect the architecture with a formerly obscure historical event. In the former, the towers suffer the consequences of the rupture between materiality and meaning. In the latter, the towers are rediscovered as the locus of connection between seemingly separate places, signifying the post-9/11 urban space.

New York that is not Tokyo Revisited: the Lack of Traumatic Past

In March 2003, Makoto Aida's *A Picture of An Air Raid on New York City* (figure 1), the Japanese art of "ground zero," was one of the most talked-about pieces in *The American Effect*, an exhibition at the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York City.[31] The polemical image of skyscrapers of Manhattan engulfed in flame and foreign bomber planes flying over the city, although produced and chosen for the exhibit before the World Trade Center attack, stirred strong and emotional responses among its viewers to the extent that it had to be removed from the exhibit.[32] Based on the responses to the work, it seems that many viewers imagined links between the present event and the past:

the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor and the recent terrorist attacks. A reviewer said that the work "provokes feelings ranging from horror to disgust to anger and fear, as Aida links the past and present," while "powerfully evoking images of Al Qaeda and Hiroshima" (Desmond 1052). Trauma evokes memories and provokes feelings, strongly connecting different periods of time in emotional ties; this image of the destruction of New York City, otherwise a fairly common image in American popular culture, triggered so much emotion because it served as a catalyst providing a link between New York's recent physical destruction and the United States' only memory of its own physical damage during World War II.[33]

This exchange provides a fertile starting point in considering the concepts of a city and its trauma. As argued in the prologue, the aggressiveness in Aida's picture should not be considered a shallow representation of malice or revenge, but rather a transference of trauma—newly inflicted on Japanese cities in the 1990s, it echoes other traumatic memories of the city in peril, the air raids that destroyed Tokyo fifty years earlier, which seemed rather detached from reality until 1995, when Sawaragi's idea of "the art of ground zero" took conceptual shape. Aida's work vividly visualizes the sense of fear or peril that could grip the city at any minute, as it did during World War II and recently in the 1990s; the sign of infinity, made by the holographic planes, is the symbol of the never-ending cycle of traumatic memory that prevents the subject from moving freely beyond that moment. These elements of architecture and city trauma seen in Aida's work in turn highlight the peculiarity of New York's traumatic experience as it is treated in

Spiegelman's work. One is the way in which New York City's architecture, especially its buildings, its characteristic formation of the interplay between ideal and material aspects, becomes an essential part of this experience. The other is that if trauma forces the subject to enter looping time and link present wounds to those in the past, New York, a city with no memory of destruction to connect to, is left to cope with it in different ways.

Architecture of Trauma: Spiegelman's Twin Towers

On September 11th, 2001, Art Spiegelman, a renowned American cartoonist best known for his Pulitzer-Prize winning *Maus*, experienced the attacks on the World Trade Center closely from his Lower Manhattan studio. He was also one of the first to make a representation of the calamity that destroyed a part of Manhattan for the first time in history; as a staff cartoonist for *The New Yorker* at the time of the attack, he created the famous post-incident image of New York after Ad Reinhardt, the twin towers in shadows (figure 7). This initial representation of the incident became the cover illustration of his graphic novel, *In the Shadow of No Towers*, which chronicles the aftermath of the attack and traces his struggle to cope with trauma. In this collection, "comix," as Spiegelman calls his comic strips printed in full broadsheet size, record this process. The first ten pages chronicle Spiegelman's artistic response to the events of the time period between 2001 and 2003. Then, following an essay on the history of newspaper comics, the next seven panels are replicas of newspaper comics from the turn of the twentieth century in New York. The work has been serialized in the US and Europe, and published in 2004 on

the third anniversary of the attack.

The book's density reflects the author's attempt to grasp New York's traumatic experience and its aftermath. The structure of the book confuses the traditional panel-based format of comics, for it has neither a clear storyline to follow nor a definite order to look at the images, conveying a confused sense of perception. Using the full dimensions of a large comix format, Spiegelman employs a cubistic approach and constructs the layout in a way that the stories on the page loosely communicate the connections among them. It foregrounds the presence of a person and his traumatized psyche that is supposedly synthesizing these events. And as the glowing limbs of the North Tower are present in all the pages, his ongoing struggles are tied to the traumatic experience of the tower's destruction, the actual ground zero inflicted on his city for the first time in its history.

Not only is its content about the architecture, but the format of this work itself is closely tied to architecture in many ways. The overall structure of the book is likened to the towers; the first part is called "the First Tower," and the second part is called "the Second Tower" (Ewert 89). Often panels are arranged into the figure of towers, for instance:

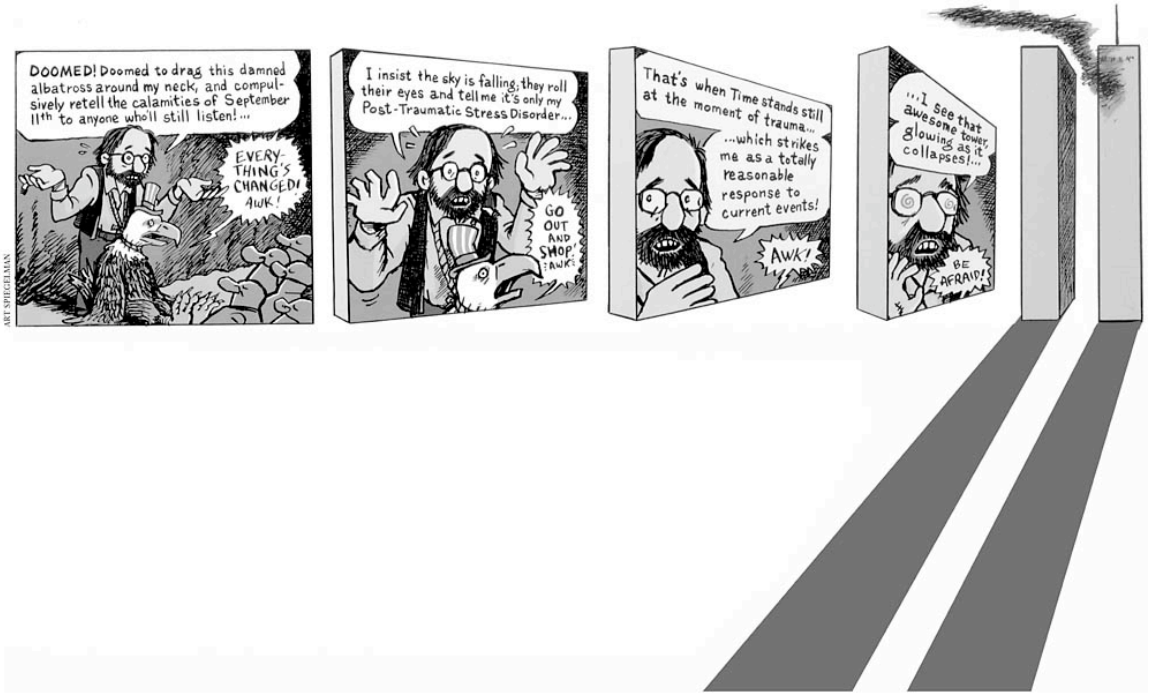

Fig. 2. Excerpt from *In the Shadow of No Towers*, Page 2. Copyright © 2004 by Art Spiegelman, Courtesy of Pantheon Books, a division of Random House Inc.

This sequence vividly portrays the traumatic moment in which the materiality of the towers and their destruction overwhelms the attempt to depict the experience in narrative form. Besides the obvious fact that the work features an incident that concerns towers, architecture is central to this work, for it is a part of Spiegelman's fundamental stance toward comics, as seen in his essay about turn-of-the-century newspaper comics:

> Comic pages are architectural structures—the narrative rows of panels are like stories of building—and while an eccentric artist like [Gustave] Verbeck could turn that structure on its head, Winsor McCay, the towering genius of the first decade of comics, drew monumental structures designed to last. […] Changes in

> scale (panels as well as everything else), figures flying and falling and the real-world fantasy architecture of McCay's beloved New York City dominated the stunning weekly pages. (*In the Shadow of No Towers*, 12)

Note that not only comics as an art form are likened to architecture; Spiegelman is looking at these buildings as one of the representative images of New York City at the turn of the century. Then his attempts to renew that image in this book can be considered a new visual representation of the post-traumatic city now forever separated from the turn-of-the-century "real-world fantasy architecture" that McCay celebrated, and, as we have seen in the previous chapters, Theodore Dreiser wrote about.

By creating a series of comix on the shift in his perception of the city, itself coping with its first ever-traumatic destruction, Spiegelman comes to face the unquestioned and irrevocable divide between the ideal and material reality of the city, two elements which seemed inseparable in the New York of modernity. In his representation of the towers and built environment of post-traumatic New York City, Spiegelman reflects on three issues that have altered his sense of time and space in the city, which are both similar to and different from what Aida's painting revealed about the trauma of Tokyo in the 1990s. First, he uses the book to express the time of traumatic experience as being thrown into a confused circular pattern that inevitably comes back to the source of the traumatic experience, which echoes Aida's idea of infinity and trauma. Second, due to New York's lack of physically-destructive traumatic experience in the past,

Spiegelman cannot put the event into a national, historical frame of reference like the one that Aida had to use; the past Spiegelman looks back to is his family's history and past representations of New York City architecture, which he tries to use to contextualize the materiality of the experience. Finally, unlike Aida, he tries to find a way to demonstrate New York's material experience of physical disaster against the event's widespread contemporary interpretations.

Time is the main issue in this work, which records an individual's attempts to capture and represent the post-traumatic sense of time.[34] As I have suggested in the previous chapters of this dissertation, the kinetic sense of progressive time and space had always been associated with urban space of modern New York. Spiegelman instead represents traumatized time, the time that stopped progressing at the moment of calamity, caused a change in past conventions, and keeps reverting to the moment. This work starts with a strong sense of rupture; as the first panel declares, "Ground Zero had marked Year Zero": the collapse of the tower marked the end of an era, which for New York was a sense of uninterrupted progression from its beginning, and also the end of a certain perception of urban architecture (1). This sense of rupture and discontinuation appears in many forms throughout the work. First of all, the collapsing tower, which appears on every page as an incandescent skeleton of the North Tower, the awesome, sublime fall of a glowing tower, which are the icons of the more innocent age. Then, in the first panels, called "the New Normal," a family is sitting on a couch, staring into a TV (figure 3); in the second panel they are terrified by the images of the collapsing tower. In the last panel

the family is still there, unmoved. But the shock of 9/11 can be seen in their hair, which remains almost electrified, and as the calendar on the wall is replaced with an American flag, days are no longer counted—time essentially stops there.

The date of the calamity is also a moment of rupture in which the meanings of things are forever altered. For instance, the "Crazy Lady" story suggests another sort of fundamental change; she was around on a SoHo street all the time, even before 9/11, yelling gibberish at Spiegelman in a language that he barely understands, but after the attack, she suddenly speaks English, making clear sense, and confronts Spiegelman with an accusation based on paranoiac yet causal logic (6). The moment changes the mode of communication, even though now the language creates conflict rather than a block to communication.

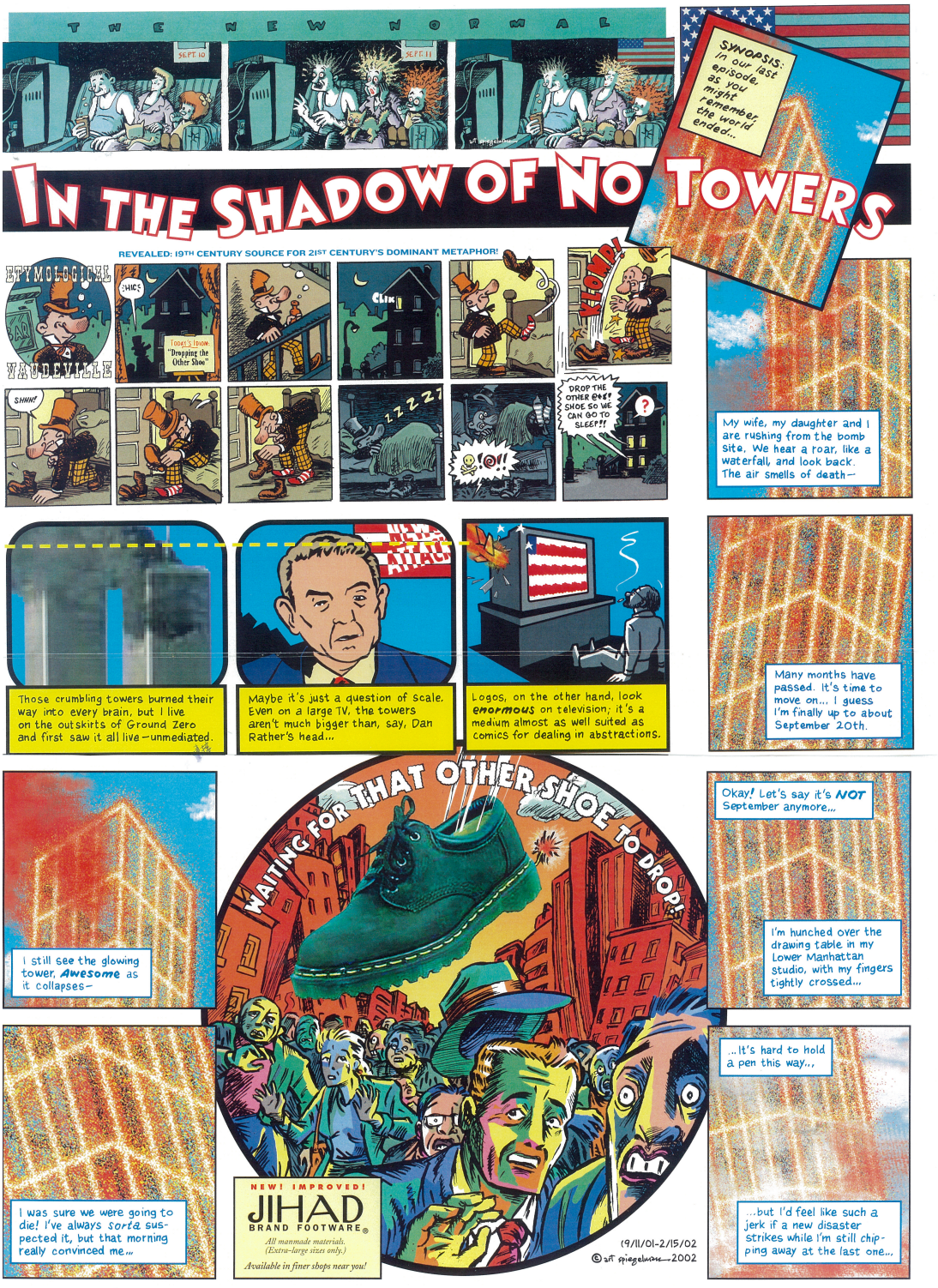

Fig. 3. *In the Shadow of No Towers* Page 1. *From IN THE SHADOW OF NO TOWERS* by Art Spiegelman, copyright © 2004 by Art Spiegelman, Courtesy of Pantheon Books, a division of Random House Inc.

As linear time stopped with the rupture of a catastrophic event, the story shows reality thrown into a dislodged, imagined temporal format. As the work starts with "in the last episode, the world ended" (1), in this unconventional serial work, the sense of punctuality and regularity that is associated with the newspaper format, which suggests continuation and progression, is put in question, casting fundamental doubt on this sense of time. In an essay on the use of a serial format in this work, Hillary Chute points out that the convention of newspaper comics is confused in this work by the irregular pace of publishing, which took random intervals by length, and by the fact that one day's story takes about a year to tell (228).

The collision of these dislodged senses of time is eloquently expressed on the last page (figure 4). Many things are expressed on this page that makes it an important summation of Spiegelman's musings on traumatized time. Confused timelines simultaneously exist in this panel. One is a time that is stopped, and the other is a dislodged one that circles and continues, the collision of which creates a sense of time that impossible to escape. Symbolically, Spiegelman uses panels in the shapes of buildings to express it. This page is composed of two towers that embody various observations made in the work. The South tower on the right is constructed with panels that convey Spiegelman's critique of the exploitation of the September 11th attacks, a process in which a defining moment of "memento mori" and "the end of civilization as we knew it" comes to be reduced to mere "kitsch" and "jingoistic strutting." In the panel on the left, formed as the North Tower, Spiegelman and his family are represented as

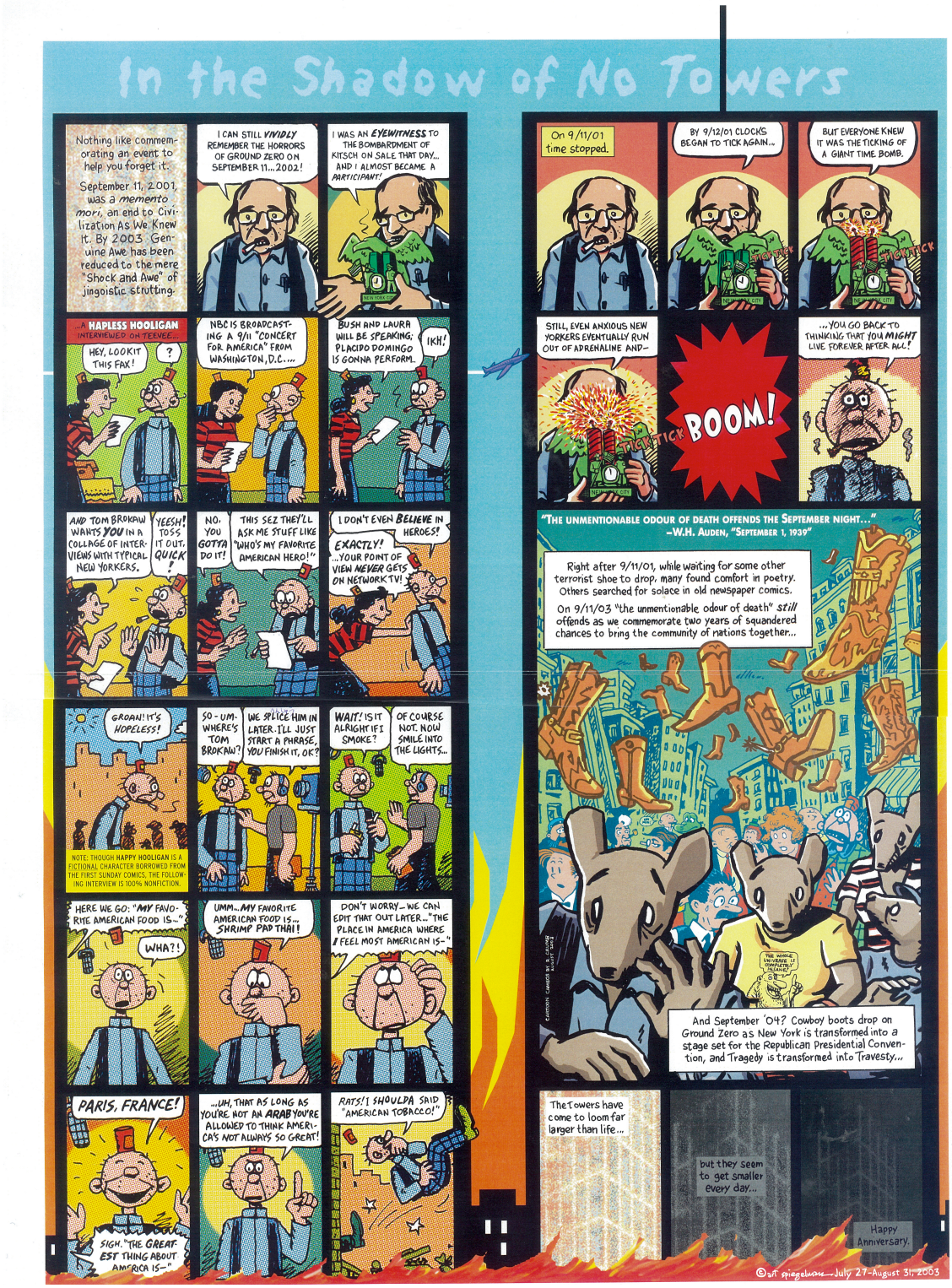

Fig. 4. *In the Shadow of No Towers* Page 10. *From IN THE SHADOW OF NO TOWERS* by Art Spiegelman, copyright © 2004 by Art Spiegelman, Courtesy of Pantheon Books, a division of Random House Inc.

cartoon characters from Hapless Hooligan and Maus, his alter ego cast on a historical canvas as I explicate in the next section; they are still bound by the traumatic moment of the tower's collapse and the looming, ever-present fear of another attack. The towers are thus entrapped in infinite time between one calamity and another. While within the panels that make up the two towers time is stopped at the moment of the attack, the time represented outside the towers is complex; we see a jet plane approaching the North Tower, on the brink of crashing into it, yet the city seen below is already engulfed in fire. The implication of infinity in Aida's picture is also present here. It shows that trauma forces individuals to live in a time between one destruction and the other, from which one cannot escape, and the entire concept of time no longer behaves as it once did.

The Nonmaterial Elsewhere where Trauma Seeks its Roots

Where, then, does this traumatic time, entrapped between one calamity and the other, connect back to? As we have seen in the difference between the traumatic times conceived by Aida and Spiegelman, it is what the present trauma conjures up; while in Aida's work it directly connects back to the past and the common Japanese memory of destruction in World War II, almost as an inevitable consequence of location, the catastrophic experience prompts Spiegelman to return to two places that are not directly connected to the experience of the material city.

One source Spiegelman goes back to contextualize his experience is his own, which connects terror in his present to his father's past world—as a Jewish prisoner in a

Nazi concentration camp. While the imagery of smell and smoke in this work serve as a link, which many critics have observed and I later come back to for more discussion, I think one link that should not be overlooked is that this work connects the incident to personal trauma by evoking the image of twinness, which strongly connects the "twin towers'" destruction to the sense that "the other shoe" should drop, without which "one cannot go to sleep," which Spiegelman says to be the "dominant metaphor" for the twenty-first century ("Etymological Vaudeville," 1). The image of twinness, now connected to the image of destruction, permeates this work; on the inside cover, which reprints a newspaper page from September 11th of 1901, there are two hemispheres that decorate the title of *The World*. The newspaper points to the image of two competing media tycoons, William Hearst and Joseph Pulitzer, and two competing papers, both equally known for the Sunday cartoon, which at one point both had the same *Yellow Kid* character. The first old-cartoon characters to appear in this work are the Katzenjammer kids, two boys who turned into "Towertwins" with a burning tower on each head (2). "An Upside down world" on page 7 contrasts Baghdad and the US as parallel universes, and the world's trauma of which the Bush administration is unaware is the "Twin towers of Hiroshima and Auschwitz." These images of twinness, put in the context of "dropping the other shoe," fortify the sense that calamities arrive in pairs. This repeating image of twinness not only points to the towers destroyed, but is also tied to Spiegelman's own trauma on a more personal level. It points to Spiegelman's personal trauma about his older brother, Richeu, who died as a small child during World War II, poisoned in his

aunt's desperate suicide to avoid Nazi prosecution. *Maus I*, dedicated to Richeu, chronicles his parents' anguish that follows the family and finally leads his mother to also take her life. *Maus II* depicts the familial trauma transferring to Spiegelman, who never met the deceased brother, as his father, now senile, constantly mistakes him for Richeu; Spiegelman himself constantly suffers a sense of guilt that he should not have outlived the brother for whom he is now mistaken, almost like a twin.

Another source Spiegelman appropriates to contextualize his experience is within his own genre: old newspaper cartoons from the turn of the last century. Apart from the obvious fact that he works in the medium, Spiegelman looks at cartoons because he sees a formal affinity between architecture and comic strips. In this section he collects the ones that feature material destruction of architecture, especially buildings and skyscrapers, to stress the innocence related to the urban architectural environment of the era. These incidents served as a setting for kinetic gags, a series of which carries these cartoons forward. For instance, in the *Happy Hooligan* strip, a simple, no-frills format of 12 frames lined up in a 3 x 4 pattern are carried forward only by Hooligan's motion (*In The Shadow of No Towers*, plate V). Also, these incidents are represented without outside references; the explosion in *The Glorious Fourth of July* only suggests the cleverness of Foxy Grandpa (Plate IV), and Father in *Bringing Up Father* sees and understands the Leaning Tower in Pisa only as its materiality as instable architecture which needs extra supporting (Plate VII). By revisiting the imagery of the city and its collapse, Spiegelman attempts to recover the now bygone innocence of New York's kinetic urban space from

the turn of the century, closely tied to the rhythmical punctuality of newspaper serial qualities. However, at the same time, as in the interpretation he gives in "The Comic Supplement," he is conscious that the luxury is forever lost—after all, Hooligan is dressed as "an Arab" who throws himself into the human tower knocking it down, Katzenjammer's attempt to outfox Grandpa results in an explosion in a public gathering, and Father fixing tower in Italy gives an image of American foreign intervention—the current trauma irrevocably tarnishes the way he looks at the world (10).

In this regard, his choice of a scene from Winsor McCay's *Little Nemo in Slumberland* (1907) is significant; the plate shows the city where Nemo and friends, looking for a way out of the city to go back to the palace of King Morpheus, cause the innocent destruction of the city (figure 5). As in the other plates, the innocence associated with children, play and dream, now evokes the image of calamity, as Spiegelman comments on the plate in "The Comic Supplement," it is impossible to look at the downtown spot Flip is treading on without thinking about the destruction.

However, put in a wider context, this plate reveals more meanings: the selected plate is the second work from four consecutive plates (figure 6). The previous plate shows Nemo and his friend suddenly finding themselves as giants, lost in the city. To find the way back to the palace of King Morpheus, they start climbing up the buildings. Their motive is innocent, and the people are not hostile to them; buildings are effectively used as stairs or ladders to convey height and movement. However, the third plate shows the consequences of their acts (figure 6). Because Flip carelessly knocks over a building, the

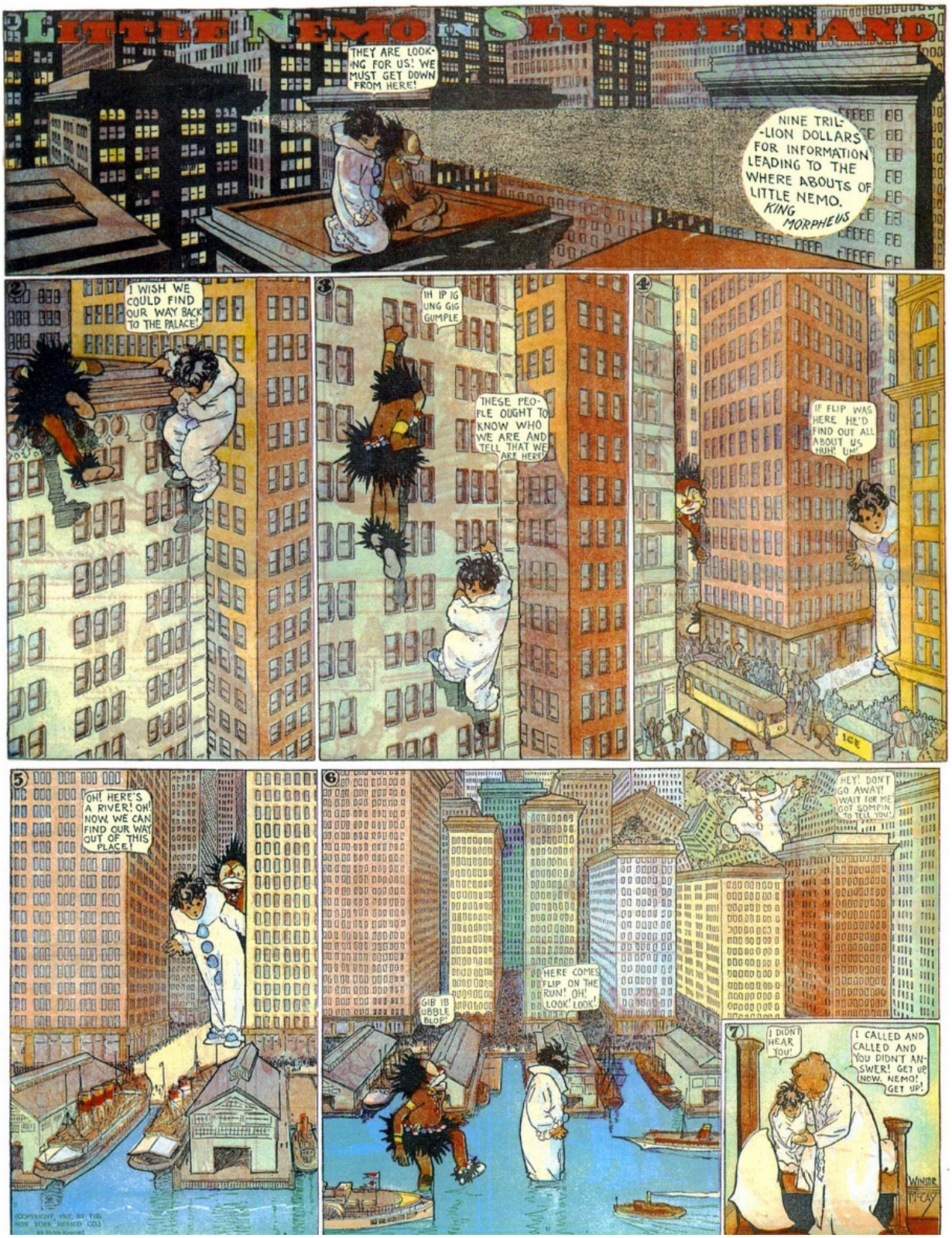

Fig. 5. *Little Nemo in Slumberland*, rpt. in *In the Shadow of No Towers* Plate VI.

Fig. 6. *Little Nemo in Slumberland*, the four consecutive plates of the same sequence. rpt. in Marschall 36–9.

city is engulfed in fire. Even though Flip "didn't mean to," the fire is fierce and cannot be extinguished, leaving only burnt steel structures. The navy is attacking them as intruders, sending the children fleeing, climbing up the cliff in the final plate. It becomes apparent that Spiegelman picked the image of the city on the verge of destruction; neither the one in which Nemo and the others are playing among the skyscrapers, which would seem distant, nor the one in which the city is burnt down, which would have caused emotional reactions too strong and misdirected, as Aida's air raid painting had.

Towers Taken Away to Elsewhere: The Irrevocable Gap between the Material and Ideal Towers

The materiality of the experience is at stake; finally, Spiegelman locates his own trauma in the wide gap between how it is represented and how he actually experienced it. Spiegelman mentions throughout the novel that the calamity was not clearly visible to him as he went through it, let alone in a way it was represented visually on television. Quite ironically, the popular visual image captured by the mass media belongs only to those who were at a distance from the calamity. This gap traumatizes him and makes him felt isolated from the rest of the country, even from the New Yorkers on the northern part of the island, who could "see" it. In a sense Lower Manhattan is the place where the attack was the most invisible.

Spiegelman shares the feeling that was common among New Yorkers at the time, that the towers were used in attempts to isolate their ideological meaning, as well as

visual images and words surrounding them and further exploited after their destruction. To recover the experience of the attack from its popular visual imagery and the interpretations around it is to recover and communicate the real tower in its materiality. For instance, Spiegelman deems the moment of the Republican National Convention in 2004 a conquest of the city by the party which sees it only in terms of its ideal qualities: "Why did those provincial American flags have to sprout out of the embers of Ground Zero?" (7) Spiegelman ends up refusing the popularized ideal aspect of the city by suggesting that the flag belongs to a certain other province, but not his own. Thus, Spiegelman's concern is to redeem the local and material aspects of the incident by consciously avoiding inflated interpretation. He recognizes himself as a "rooted cosmopolitan": not really rooted to the American idea, but the physical place of Lower Manhattan. And his sense of place is closely tied to the idea of the city and buildings around him. He further rejects the romanticization of the World Trade Center buildings by likening the buildings to his nose: "I never loved those arrogant boxes, but now I miss the rascals, icons of a more innocent age. […] I mean, it's not like I love the way my nose looks…I just don't want somebody ramming a damn plane into it!" Spiegelman defines the building in the truly local sense; these are the "boxes" that were an important part of the city's bygone era, and things that are close to him, part of his actual body (2).

To this end, Spiegelman foregrounds and concentrates on the material, physical aspect of the tower. Seen from this viewpoint of proximity and his refusal to idealize the event, it becomes clear that the "smoke and smell" imagery in this work is given different

meanings. This imagery of "smoke and smell" is often interpreted as a catalyst that connects his present with his father's past in the concentration camp in Auschwitz. While I agree with this interpretation, I think there is also a clear sense of disconnection, a difference in degree that Spiegelman uses as a way of separating from the source. There are three different smells mentioned in this work. First, there is the sense of smell that appears in W. H. Auden's poem "September 1, 1939" quoted in the last panel: "The unmentionable odour of death offends the September Night…" (10), which is a metaphorical use of smell as a sense of fear and uneasiness, for although the calamity was happening in Europe during World War II, the poet was in the United States.[35] And there is smoke imagery in his recollection of his father, who could only describe the smoke in Auschwitz as "indescribable." Quite different from Auden's "smell," this time it directly represents killing gas, with strong connotations of death and human malice behind it, rather than collective fear. These two "smells," although each connected to the traumatic experience, are geographically, temporally distant and quite different from the third, Spiegelman's "smoke," or the smell of architectural debris that filled Lower Manhattan, for their lack of materiality. Spiegelman stresses the materiality of this third smell; it was visible in images such as men covered in white ash, or the air that children should not breathe. The building is destroyed, but not simply as an ideal—rather, it also affects the city directly as actual debris. It covers and leaves traces on other buildings and parts of the city. It is a tangible element that directly and materially, rather than metaphorically or metonymically, signifies the collapse of the towers.[36] The smoke and smell and the

pieces of the collapsed towers do not create a metaphorical fear that can be felt by people watching on television or in other countries, nor can they be equated to the direct malice of homicidal gas. The debris and other remnants of the buildings are more material—simply the buildings pulverized. This is the way that people are entrapped by the buildings, and this serves as proof of Spiegelman's and others' literal proximity to the events.[37]

The "Tribute in Light" project, made by a group of artists to commemorate the six-month anniversary of the attack, was a perfect testament in this context, for as Kirshenblatt-Gimblett praises, light reflects on "pulverized towers—incandescent dust," making them finally visible from a distance (39). Originally proposed as "Phantom Towers," these two beams of light in turn highlight the phantomness of abstract interpretation and further political appropriation of the incident, showing how the seemingly real imagery, circulated by the media, is removed from the material experience. It also echoes back to what Spiegelman attempted in his first image of the terrorist attack. It is as if the shadow of the towers, printed in jet black on a black background made with four colors to differentiate the pureness of the black, signified a material heaviness of the loss, and the light illuminated the substance of it.

In sum, *In Shadow of No Towers* is Spiegelman's attempt to cope with the trauma inflicted on New York by the terrorist attack of September 11th, 2001. In this work, employing the image of buildings, the author shows facets of the urban environment in post-traumatic society. First, in the synthesis of imagery on each page, he shows a

fundamental change in the perception of time, triggered by the catastrophic event. In particular he touches upon the entrapped sense of time, which is similar to what is seen in Aida's work. Then he shows that trauma requires contextualization. It is a struggle to connect it to elsewhere; in Aida's case, there was a historical link that could be made between World War II and the calamities of the 1990s. However, Spiegelman does not have a historical background associated with the city to work with, so he reflects on his personal history and representations of the city at the turn of the last century, both of which serve as frame of reference for him to understand the current event. Spiegelman also struggles to retrieve the towers from the experience interpreted elsewhere to his experience felt at home. Finally, as a way to reclaim the experience of the incident, Spiegelman values the materiality of experience over its abstract interpretation. To that end, he looks at debris that covered Lower Manhattan as something unique and unrelated to the widespread metaphorical concerns and the actual agents of death. For Spiegelman, the materiality of his experience is something that is powerful in its own way, something that he thinks runs against the ideological interpretations of the media and government, and something that physically envelops the people that experienced it. Using the comix, Spiegelman attempts to recreate the experience materially, to counter the ideological attempt to claim the towers as sign of exploitation, both by the terrorists and later by the American government.

Fig. 7. *The New Yorker*, September 24, 2001. By Art Spiegelman.

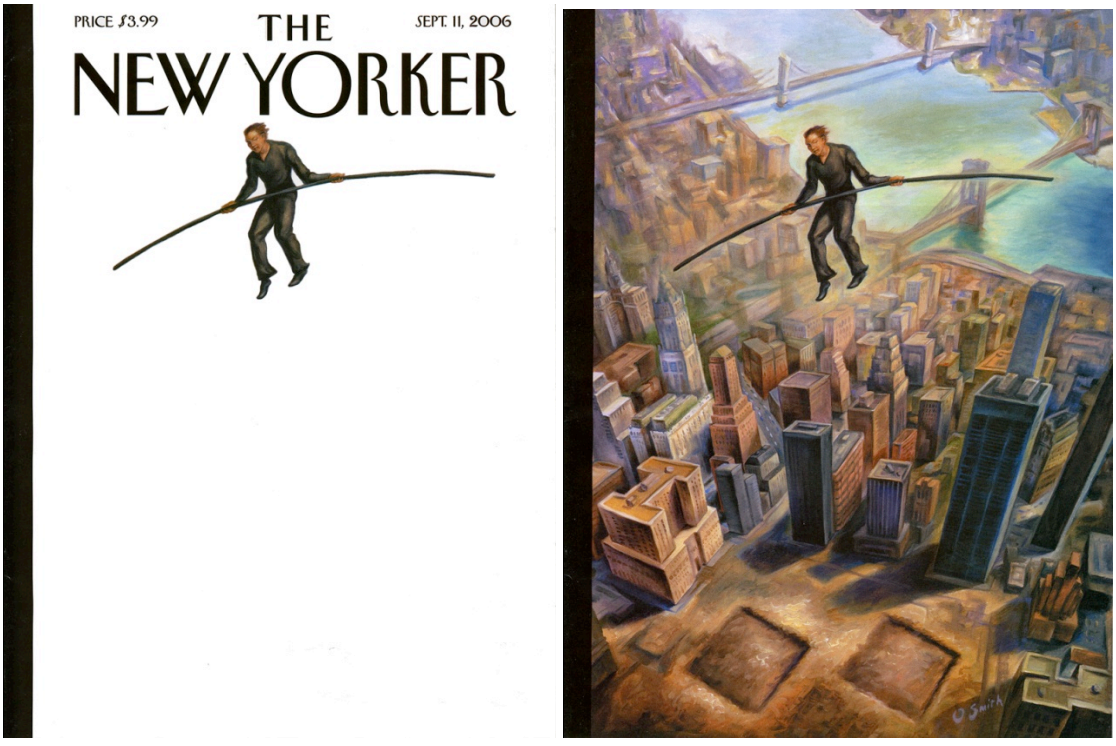

Fig. 8. *The New Yorker,* September 11, 2006. By John Mavroudis and Owen Smith.

Let the Great World Spin: Rediscovering the Towers as a Bridge between Elsewheres

In the Shadow of No Towers perceives and contextualizes the attack on the World Trade Center towers and its aftermath as a traumatic experience in which the towers' material and nonmaterial aspects are torn apart. In Spiegelman's musings about the incident over time, two things emerge: first, that New York lacks a traumatic experience in the past that the collective memory can connect to; second, that the attack signified the dismantling of the connections between the ideological and material aspects of the towers, which had grown increasingly intertwined throughout the modern period. New York's struggle in the aftermath of the event can be viewed as an effort to cope with the loss of the material towers and a fundamental exploration of the significance of the towers idealized.

As people attempted to retrieve the vanished/exploited towers from collective memory, a tightrope walk came to attract special attention as the symbolic opposite of the recent tragedy. On August 7, 1974, Philippe Petit, a French high-wire artist, walked a tightrope between the World Trade Center buildings that been completed the same year. The event is regarded as an "artistic crime"—a personal, harmless, and creative deed, yet at the same time a guerrilla act meticulously planned and executed to violate regulations. In terms of its presentation, the stunt also stands "opposite" the 2001 attacks in the sense that it involved just one person and minimum equipment, carefully placed so as not to hurt the towers.[38] The event was executed with no noise or flash, making the scene hardly recognizable from a distance. Featured on the cover of *The New Yorker* on the fifth

anniversary issue of the attack, the event has come to the surface as a symbolic moment to which the collective memory could refer (figure 8).

The second section of this chapter treats Colum McCann's *Let the Great World Spin* (2009), a New York novel that uses Petit's tightrope walk as the basic inspiration for the representation of its urban space. The novel tells stories of ordinary people from different social standing in New York City in the summer of 1974, all connected to Petit's stunt in some way. Weaving together various subplots involving characters in the city, the work centers on two main stories: one is the story of people that surround John Corrigan, an Irish missionary from Dublin doing reform work among the people in the South Bronx. Told mostly from the viewpoint of his older brother Ciaran, Corrigan's story reveals how his stoically idealistic personality creates conflicts with but also connects him to local people, especially to Tillie and Jazzlyn, mother and daughter prostitutes to whom he becomes a guardian. The other is the story of a group of mothers who lost their sons in the Vietnam War and the unlikely friendship between Claire, the affluent wife of a judge on Park Avenue, and Gloria, an African-American single mother who lives in a housing project in the Bronx. In its last section, the novel connects this historical moment to the contemporary post-9/11 city by telling the story of Jaslyn, the daughter of Jazzlyn, who is eventually adopted by Gloria and visits from hurricane-ravaged Louisiana to see Claire, her adoptive aunt, on her deathbed. Serving as the silent witness to all these events, the towers are presented as material props to the tightrope walk; the novel refocuses on a moment in which the towers had almost entirely material meaning, providing a physical

locus for the stories that converged around them.

This novel offers a suggestive version of New York's urban architecture that reflects the post-9/11 sensibility, offering a rereading of the particular New York urban space that this dissertation has discussed so far. In their settings and characters, the novel's small stories, each in a way tied to the city's architecture, intertwining and affecting each other, work to recreate the atmosphere of New York City in the 1970s. In its themes, the novel offers a new portrait of the city to redefine the urban space associated with the urban identity, reflecting the perspectives engendered by post-9/11 New York. Through stories of loss and grief and characters from all walks of life, it creates a new urban landscape fusing the experiences of loss and healing with the city's architecture. And by vitally connecting stories from the 1970s to their consequences in the 2000s, it also attributes the depth of history to the workings of urban architecture, recreating the towers as the symbol of post-traumatic New York City.

Unlike Spiegelman's work, in which the post-traumatic city suffered a sense of discrepancy and further exploitation of its ideological aspect, McCann, aware of the brands of ideological exploitation that Spiegelman struggled with in his treatment of the 9/11 attacks, consciously avoids this ideological exploitation and instead focuses primarily on bringing physicality back to a highly interpretable act; it opens with a tightrope walker on the South Tower taking his first step into the air. With Petit's name mentioned only in the acknowledgments, the event is introduced almost anonymously; the stunt is presented not as a symbolic, ideology-motivated act or a special person's

accomplishment, but as a series of simple, quasi-unconscious body movements that echo the impulsive nature of the act itself— "if he saw oranges he wanted to juggle them, if he saw skyscrapers he wanted to walk between them" (131).[39] The event is described in as neutral and material a way as possible; in the ensuing chapters, the novel follows the artist's preparation leading up to the walk, focusing on the texture of experience. The motivation for the walk is described as fundamentally innocent and bodily—to rewrite, expand, and "go beyond equilibrium" (164). It is also an act "of divine delight," in harmony with the city, in which he prepares himself "to be wholly in touch with the filth and the roar" (239). It is so romantically simple that essentially, he only performs his feat because "the towers were there" (243). By conveying the bodily sensations of the act itself, the novel attempts to cast this far-reaching visual phenomenon, out of reach for everyone besides the tightrope walker himself, as a real and tangible act.

The event also neutralizes the buildings where the act takes place, foregrounding their materiality; the novel presents the towers as devoid of palpable meaning, instead referring only to their physicality: their roles as anchors at the beginning and at the end of the tightrope, a high vantage point, and an empty focal point on which the eyes of spectators converge. More attention is brought to the cable wire on which the artist walks and the "two hundred and ten feet and the distance it bridged" (162). Thus, the walk shifts attention from the actual towers to the space between them, opening up new spaces in the exploited and saturated urban space of New York City. As the focus moves from the concrete materiality of the towers to the space between them, the

relationship between the towers and the streets on the ground also takes on new characteristics. Just as the tightrope walker's trajectory vividly reveals the existence of unexplored space between buildings, the towers, once understood to be the final form of the city's development, connect with the unlikely spaces that constitute New York City: the deck of a ferryboat from Staten Island, a weather helicopter in the sky, and also non-physical places such as cyberspace, which was in its crude, proto-internet incarnation, all of which suggest new space in the city, waiting to be explored.

With the towers redefined, free from ideological discourse but materially associated with the many small spaces connected to the stories, the novel further redefines the architecture of the city. Symbolized by the tightrope walk that temporally connects the towers and uncovers the space between them, the stories told in this novel, which chronicle the experience of loss and the ties that it can forge between individuals, touch upon the presence of two new planes that exist between two seemingly separate elements in the city: up/down and in/out. In this regard, the novel reexamines the up/down and in/out combinations that characterized the urban landscape in previous chapters.

Park/Bronx: Up and Down united by losses

"—Because if he was alive it couldn't possibly be Mike Junior." (99)

Following a group of mothers who lost their sons in the Vietnam War, the work

revisits the city's "up and down," the geographic and social divide created by union and division among women in different social standings, which has been a defining trope in modern New York City novels. Four women from different parts of the city who meet anonymously via newspaper ads converge in a Park Avenue penthouse that belongs to Claire, a wealthy housewife of a judge who lost her engineer son in a terrorist bombing in Vietnam. A shared sense of loss is what keeps this haphazard group of women together; traumatic memories, triggered by the presence of the tightrope walker, connect the group emotionally. Just as the corporal sense is stressed in depicting the tightrope walker's act, the sense of trauma is also presented as material: "the simple things come back to us. They rest for a moment by our ribcages then suddenly reach in and twist our hearts a notch backward" (81). As epitomized in the quote above, the presence of a young man walking in the sky is both a reminder of the fact that their sons are no more and a window to the risks involved in being young and skillful. The bond between the women is formed by the physical, felt presence of trauma, which is powerful and bodily and can transcend the social divide, and is also felt by whatever catalyst triggers it. Hence Claire's feeling expressed here is genuine: "We have our boys. They are brought together. Even here. On Park Avenue. We hurt, and have one another for the healing" (114).

Although trauma brings people over geographical barriers and the catalyst provided by the tightrope walker helps the women forge emotional bonds, at the same time the experience reveals a divide. The women, connected by the memory of lost boys and consoled by each other's presence, are still not free from being on "Park Avenue," as

seen in the previous quote; the difference in social standing manifested in different geographic locations—the sense of divide—is connected to the sense of space. Therefore, the union is threatened by the transgression of space. The section quoted above shows how Claire, anxious about losing the sympathy of the others because of her wealthy social standing, keeps adjusting items in her living space that might unmask the divide. The tension is dramatized in the moment when Claire finds that the other women have suddenly disappeared from the room. While they actually go out on the rooftop to look outside, this physical reality triggers Claire's hidden fear that the others consider her not one of them, but as a snob who "lives in a penthouse but calls it *upstairs*" (85). Claire thinks that their disappearance is directly connected to social misplacement; "They have come to her and then they have stolen away" (104), she thinks, and regrets not meeting "other women, more of her own" (107). In this scene, "Park Avenue" is the place where material and nonmaterial merge, a familiar characterization that falls in line with the novels presented in this discussion thus far. The locale is at the same time a physical place as well as a social, economical divide, generating a stratified atmosphere in the city, with people moving up and down. Other women perceive it to be as fictional as a place in a game of Monopoly, or as a place "'up there,' as if physically so" (77). Claire's husband Soderberg, a judge, is introduced accordingly as an embodiment of the American Dream, a man whose established life consists of his work on Centre Street and his residence on Park Avenue. In his naturalistic, disillusioned view of the city as a "gutter watch," slime evolves in the Bronx, the underside of the city (257). Standing in contrast to Park, the

Bronx exists as the "outside of the city" where the "the real fires were raging, to American Hanoi itself, at the end of the 4 train, where the very worst of the city played itself out every day" (256). Gloria, the only African-American woman in the group, provides a critical viewpoint that redefines this dualism, for she does not "belong" to the Bronx or Park. While the others are giddy about the unfamiliar place, Gloria knows Park Avenue in a way the other women don't. As a scholarship student at Syracuse she had in the past been invited to "the rooms of wealthy folks" (293) to play "the Negro they expected," informing listeners about Dubois, Tuskegee Airmen, and playing Jazz, not classical, on the piano (302). Being from Mississippi from a family of slaves, Gloria approaches the elegant room on Park Avenue as an arena for mask and performance, an awareness maybe only she and Claire share. Though Claire and Gloria seem to have nothing in common, they share the same sensibility towards their surroundings. Moving towards the climax, the novel builds up the tension between the two women when Claire's attempt to connect with Gloria actually reveals the racial and class differences represented in the rooms they occupy. As the women start to leave Claire's room, Claire's desperate plea to connect with Gloria ends up revealing their divergent social standings in the worst possible way: Claire offers to pay Gloria to remain with her, but Gloria is offended and instinctively runs away from the space: "we didn't go freedom riding to clean apartments on Park" (297).

Yet, in the same way that the union of the four women was originally formed by Claire's impulsive, inexplicable act of running out in the snow to mail a letter to

respond to an unknown newspaper ad, this novel further creates the possibility of discovering a temporal, haphazard plane between two separate worlds (90). After storming out of Claire's place, Gloria is mugged on the street on the way home, but returns to Claire's place instead of her own for reasons inexplicable even to herself. Later that evening, in the Bronx, Gloria and Claire become mothers of orphaned girls: an act of sheer impulse that connects two childless mothers for life, a much deeper bond than any geographical/social union.

Like the two towers, two residences that signify two walks of lives are, albeit temporarily, connected to each other. After the scene that lays bare the rift between the women, however, a chain of haphazard events slowly reunites the two—culminating in the adoption of orphaned daughters. In sum, this novel points to trauma, presented as a bodily, physical feeling and the consequent haphazard and compulsive actions it creates, as an agent in overcoming the divide. This realization echoes the temporal, flimsy link between the towers and suggests the existence of a kind of intermediate, incidental plane that does not bow to the rules of the divide between the upper and lower classes. It doesn't resolve the tension or divide, but the consequences of haphazard acts can unite different people, sometimes for life.

OUTSIDE/INSIDE: New Yorkers Elsewhere

"The photo was taken on the same day her mother died." (325)

So muses Jaslyn, Jazzlyn's daughter adopted by Gloria, looking at a picture of the tightrope walk on her flight back to New York City in 2006. For her, the event is far away both in terms of time and space, but, albeit tangentially, is also crucially connected to a defining element of her life. This novel recognizes people who have this kind of relationship with the city, redefining urban identity associated with the material space; as writer Dave Eggers notes in praise, the novel's most important accomplishment is its recognition of the ties to places that lie outside of the physical entity of New York City and the narrowly defined idea of the "New Yorker."[40] The novel acknowledges the presence of these "temporary" New Yorkers as an essential part of the city's collective memory, most significantly in the tightrope walker himself. In doing so, the novel revises the idea of urban space being defined in contrast to the outside. This aspect is better understood if we look at two pairs of protagonists: John and Ciaran Corrigan, a Christian missionary and his brother from Dublin, and Tillie and Jaslyn, a grandmother who is a prostitute in the Bronx and her estranged granddaughter, both of which create a bridge between the 1970s and 2000s and embody opposite, shifting stances towards the city in their respective representations.

John Corrigan, an Irish missionary from Dublin who came to New York in 1974, makes his home in the South Bronx. Corrigan's story is that of redefining his ideological conception in the city. He enjoys being in the place where his family name doesn't get pronounced right; through his ingenuous and sincere idealism that can spark people alive, he connects with the community, the elderly, prostitutes, and hustlers (43).

He falls in love with a Guatemalan nurse with children who is also looking for a home in New York away from a civil war (68). He is, in a sense, reborn, for in consummating this love he both violates and conquers his most fundamental beliefs. To contrast Corrigan, who was suddenly killed in a car accident, therefore retaining his saintly integral personality and remaining forever exempt from the consequences of his actions, his brother Ciaran, who witnesses John's days in the Bronx, lives a more complex life. Ciaran comes to New York to take refuge from terrorist violence in Ireland—an incident in which he loses the tip of his earlobe. His feelings towards the city, generally a source of disgust, are the opposite of John's. Ciaran's home is irrevocably Ireland. Traumatized by the experience of his brother's death, he takes all the stories back to Ireland, keeping them to himself (150).

The other link between the 1970s and the 2000s is between Tillie, Jazzlyn's mother, who committed suicide in jail after losing her, and her granddaughter Jaslyn, who is adopted by Gloria with her sister and grows up to do social work in post-hurricane Louisiana. These two women, like the Corrigan brothers, are opposed in that while Tillie was bound by the social and physical city and unable to free herself from it, Jaslyn is detached from the city and its ties. Tillie is associated with the geography of New York in a way that is quite different from Claire or Gloria. She is on the street, trapped in a social downward spiral; she starts on the prime location of a "chalktown" stool, among predominantly white prostitutes on Lexington Avenue, while enjoying her "flash" place in Midtown East, owned by her pimp. From this place, however, she is violently chased

away to the Bronx, under the Deegan Expressway and the project housing (214). When she is arrested, contrary to her will, she is tried and incarcerated in Manhattan, which she finds as remote as a foreign country. McCann does not romanticize life on the street, but recreates Tillie's limited thoughts and voice to convey her powerlessness in a way that echoes her geographical limits. As Tillie in jail finds herself caught between the dreamlike memory of a night spent in the luxurious room of the Sherry-Netherlands with a man who recites Rumi's poetry to her, and her reality as a heroin-addicted prostitute on the street, she emerges as a tragic figure whose life is torn between the ideal city, epitomized by the unreachable Manhattan, and the material one of the Bronx.

It is a significant contrast then, that Tillie and Jazzlyn's stories of entrapment in the city are lost to Jaslyn, who, despite her best efforts, cannot find tangible proof of her past in New York; not in Ireland, where she went to hear Ciaran's stories, or in the Bronx, her physical home until the age of five, a home that fails to evoke any feelings (346). She stays at the Regis with her money, but the luxurious Manhattan hotel is without any lure that it had for Tillie. At the same time she is free from her past, and does not have to suffer the binds and constraints that Tillie faced; as she goes on living, embracing the complexities of the word "mother," Jaslyn lives on with the complicated notion of "home."

Ciaran and Jaslyn are presented as people who keep their New York experience as the most integral part of their identity without being physically tied to the city. They choose not to make the most crucial part of their beings explicit; Ciaran, now a successful

IT entrepreneur in the economically booming Dublin, chooses not to tell Jaslyn that he married Lara, the woman who killed his brother and Jaslyn's mother in the accident (341). Ciaran lives on, embracing his brother's existence in New York, bringing it all back to his home in Ireland. It is same for Jaslyn, who redefines herself as a Yale-graduated accountant, washing over stories of her upbringing that makes her an "outland stranger with wild ancestry" (328). This particular relationship that people have towards New York, a complicated home for its inhabitants, comes through in Jaslyn's thoughts on an Italian doctor she meets on the plane:

> So he knows the city, she thinks. He's been here before. This place belongs to him too. Another surprise. She's always thought that one of the beauties of New York is that you can be from anywhere and within moments of landing it is yours. (332)

This is a moment of discovery of the city as it is perceived and shaped by those who are and are not physically there. As the tightrope highlighted the in-between spaces as crucial dimensions of the city, this plot discovers the urban subject defined and affected by the in-betweenness of location and history. Ciaran and Jaslyn are not only a link between the city's past and present, but also a connection to other places affected by terrorism/catastrophe, tied by loss, hurt, and trauma: 1970s Ireland, 2000s Louisiana, and 2006 Afghanistan, where Jaslyn's sister is. By constantly interweaving different historical

times and places, the novel shows that nothing can exist in a pure and independent state, even the urban experience of a given city.

To coincide with this worldview, the twin towers, as well as the other high-rise buildings in the city, are rewritten with a revised sense of history. The novel frames these structures between old ideas and the revisions made by new understanding. Judge Soderberg, Claire's husband who happens to rule on both the tightrope walk and prostitution in the Bronx, understands the tightrope walk as a genuine product of New York City, as a product of its disregard for the history: "The city lived in a sort of everyday present. It had no need to believe in itself as a London, or an Athens, or even a signifier of the New World, like a Sydney, or a Los Angeles. No, the city couldn't care less about where it stood." He stands by its uniqueness as "the only place that ever existed and the only one that ever would" (247). His theory touches on the city's perpetual presence and its belief in uniqueness—the lack of a sense of history that prompted constant renewal, change, and progress.

This observation about the city's uniqueness in history is placed in context by Gloria's musings, which mold New York as layers and connections of the material to smaller stories: "It had never occurred to me before but everything in New York is built upon another thing, nothing is entirely by itself, each thing as strange as the last, and connected" (305). What Gloria sees from her viewpoint overwrites the judge's view and opens up interpretations of plurality: "My second and last marriage was the one that left me eleven floors up in the Bronx project with my three boys—and I suppose, in a way,

with those two baby girls. Sometimes you've got to go up to a very high floor to see what the past has done to present" (306). Gloria's buildings operate from the material viewpoint, providing props and spaces that create temporary, incidental connections. Skyscrapers were once the embodiment of the city's latest state, the avant-garde of progress and the promontory of history. But now, high-rise buildings are settings for people to look at the city, the creators of the surrounding spaces, elevations that illuminate the layers that constitute the city.

In sum, in telling the stories centered around the funambulist stunt that took place at the World Trade Center, McCann reconnects the buildings to the post-9/11 urban space. Rather than connecting them to a major narrative of national ideology, however, the author reconnects the towers to dramatic yet personal events—human stories of loss and healing that took place in the city on a summer day in the 1970s, chronicling several strands of ordinary people's lives, big and small incidents that shaped their existence. Opening up to the larger context of city life in an entirely new way gives a different meaning to the presence of the towers. In their two works, both Spiegelman and McCann examine the urban space of New York after 9/11, a defining event in which the fusion of material and ideal aspects that had constructed urban architecture in modernity finally crumbled. The city suffered the aftermath of the destruction of the buildings not only as a material loss, but also as subsequent ideological exploitation of the city. The process of healing and reconstructing the space also involves architecture, now redefined, while the urban space embraces a new brand of urban subjectivity.

This project traced the change and development of representation of the city in modernity, during which New York grew into an urban environments an embodiment of the ideas associated with it, and became the capital of unparalleled modernity. As we have seen in the examples discussed in this chapter, 9/11 can be conceived as the defining moment in which these two intertwined elements fall apart, creating a traumatic aftermath in which the city struggles to redefine the towers. As apparent in McCann's novel, which reconnects the towers with the urban space consisting of relationships with other places, new post-9/11 New York novels provide a lens for seeing the city as an arena of new individual identity formation. Together with a new generation of post-colonial novels such as Joseph O'Neill's *Netherland* (2008) and Teju Cole's *Open City* (2011), as well as Charlie Kaufman's cinematic works such as *Synecdoche, NY* (2008), contemporary New York novels continue to explore and redefine the urban identity in relation to New York's urban space, revisiting and redefining its ever-changing built environment.

Epilogue: In the Air, Under the Ground

To Live, Read, and Represent the Changing Ground

As I have discussed in the prologue, Aida Makoto's *Picture of an Air Raid on New York City* is an example of "The Art of Ground Zero," defined by Noi Sawaragi as an artistic response to changing social climate of the mid-1990s following two catastrophic disasters in 1995, one natural and one human: the M7.0 earthquake in Kobe and the terrorist attack on the Tokyo subway system. In its image of a burning city and bomber planes flying in the shape of an infinity loop, the artwork symbolically connects traumatic memories of the city: the present calamity and the memories of destruction during World War II. In the epilogue I revisit this work once again, focusing on another implication of this work that connects to the future—that peril does not exist in buildings or the city itself but in the air—now ever more relevant in light of recent larger catastrophic events that struck Japan in 2011.

In Aida's artwork, the sense of trauma does not belong directly to the image of the city destroyed, but predominantly an atmosphere filled with the constant possibility of attack; the airplanes overhead in the New York air raid picture could arrive at any time without facing any resistance, and they form the centerpiece of the work, holographic and brightly colored. In *Cold Burn* (2001, fig.9), which operates in the same themes, the artist paints a banal Tokyo suburb under explosions that evoke the image of an air raid, showing that although not seemingly so, we are living on the brink of wartime.

Fig. 9. Makoto Aida, *Teion Yakedo (Cold Burn)*, 2001, C type print, (330 x 450cm), © AIDA Makoto, Courtesy of Mizuma Art Gallery.

It should also be noted that neither in *Picture of an Air Raid on New York City* nor in *Cold Burn* are the buildings given any particular importance or actually destroyed, diverting the focus from the architecture. What instead dominates these pictures is the idea of permanent fear; direct malice comes from up in the air, which to Aida seems more fearful and pervasive than the actual material destruction of the city and constitutes the main component of World War II trauma. Japan is known for natural disasters, and the resulting continuous architectural changes – constant rebuilding and renovation – do not cultivate much attachment toward the buildings' material aspects. The source of the

trauma is perceived as fear of something unusual from the sky or underground, something that we are helpless to defend against, not exactly the fear of dramatic change in the shape of the city.[41] It is indeed a cold burn, something that damages lives slowly in imperceptible ways, pointing to a deeper trauma on the Japanese psyche, that of the atomic bomb and the subsequent contamination by radioactive isotopes.

The sense of permanent anxiety and possibility of an attack in Aida's art highlights both connections to the past and predictions of the future. In a way, the air raid unearthed what was buried in the unconscious, the sense that there is something unnamed in the air and under the ground that would haunt the city. That very feeling suddenly found another manifestation 16 years later, when another pair of natural and human disasters hit Japan in an unimagined scale on March 11th, 2011. The M9.0 Great East Japan Earthquake paralyzed the eastern half of Japan, including Tokyo, and the subsequent tsunami completely destroyed the northern coastal area, killing more than 20,000 people. Panic gripped the nation over the next few days as it gradually became apparent that nuclear reactors at the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant had exploded and begun to melt down, scattering unprecedented amounts of radioactive isotopes in the air. Now, almost six months later, the situation is far from resolved. There is still the almost certain possibility of an aftershock as strong as the initial quake as Japan enters the active stage of crustal movements. The troubled reactors are also still volatile; though no deaths have been caused directly by the accidents, emergency evacuations have rendered more than 40,000 people homeless, creating a vast stretch of

land that will be off limits for the foreseeable future; the real "trauma" is in the land. The temporary sense of national unity that bolstered the nation in the face of the immediate danger has faded, giving way to anxiety and disbelief as social and emotional divides surface.

It is such an unclear state of affairs that it is too early for cultural representation to give any substantial response. Still, I believe that it is important to recognize that these divides of fear and anxiety have always been present in society, and now people are finally forced to face them. To better understand these rifts, one must revisit the cultural representations of the 1990s, which reflect a crucial turning point in Japanese modernity and thus provide a historical context to the current problems.[42] It is also more important than ever to listen to smaller stories, to avoid reducing and condensing individual experiences into a larger phenomenon, as these experiences will sustain individuals and communities alike. It will take decades to see how the trauma is understood and represented, how people will embrace the fact that indeed we have been and always will be living on a shaking, changing ground, surrounded by a brand of permanent anxiety for which there are no real countermeasures. I believe that narrative in its many forms will play an important role in this process, in attempts to seek ways to rationalize, come to terms with, and, most importantly, remain optimistic living on this changing ground.

Notes

[1] *Nihon Zero-Nen Ten* (*Japan Ground Zero*), curated by Noi Sawaragi (1962–), November 20, 1999–January 23, 2000, Art Tower Mito, Ibaragi. Curating direction from Sawaragi: "After the collapse of the Cold War structure of the world, all sets of values have come to appear equally valid. Under such circumstances, how has contemporary art in Japan responded? That is the question that this exhibition attempts to answer. Eleven artists are introduced, including the late Taro Okamoto and the photographer Shomei Tomatsu—both giants who pioneered their own individual artistic worlds in the postwar era—and others such as Takashi Murakami and Kenji Yanobe, whose careers started to get going in the 1990s." (Sawaragi, *Japan Ground Zero* handbook)

[2] According to Aida, this work is a mixture of three traditional tropes of Japanese art: *Rakuchū-rakugai-zu* (inside and outside Kyoto city), *Jigoku-ezu* (a scene from hell), and *Semba-zuru* (thousands of origami cranes). Cutout combat planes in style of origami cranes are printed on holograph paper so that the planes shine in rainbow colors as if they were made of mother-of-pearl, another traditional panel-art technique of Japanese–Chinese origin (*Monument for Nothing* 218).

[3] The biggest earthquake since 1923 hit Osaka-Kobe city on January 17th, 1995, killing 6,434 and injuring more than 43,000. Then, on March 20th, there was a terrorist attack by

a religious cult group *Aum Shinrikyo* on the Tokyo subway system using the nerve gas Sarin, which killed 13 and affected more than 4,300, including 50 severely injured. It remains the worst terrorist attack in Japanese history since the end of World War II (*The Asahi Shimbun Yearbook of 1995*).

[4] Yamaichi Securities, one of the Japanese Big Four security brokers, filed to close business in November, 1997, as a result of series of defaulted interbank loans. (*The Asahi Shimbun Yearbook of 1997*). For thorough analysis of Japanese society in the post-bubble era, see Yoda and Hartoonian's *Japan after Japan: Social and Cultural Life from the recessionary 1990s to the Present.*

[5] Hiroki Azuma (1971–) is an era-defining philosopher who pointed out the effects of Japanese postmodernity in the genres of subculture, namely defining "otaku" (narrowly translated as "nerds" or "geeks") as a representative state of postmodern subjectivity. His *Otaku: Japan's Database Animals* is a thorough theoretical work on the sociocultural change in the rupture of modern ideology triggered by the several defining events that occurred in the 1990s. Azuma also closely collaborates with another important figure in the post-modern Japanese culture scene, Takashi Murakami (1962–), who works vigorously in introducing contemporary Japanese art (the most successful example is *Little Boy: The Arts of Japan's Exploding Subculture*, curated by Takashi Murakami, April 8–July 24, 2005, Japan Society, New York, which won the AICA-USA award in 2005). For his observations on the centrality of the trauma of World War II in postwar Japanese culture, as well as his artistic manifesto, see *Superflat* and *Little Boy*.

[6] In 1989, Mitsubishi Estate Co. Ltd purchased the Rockefeller Center buildings. In 1995, the company went bankrupt, selling them back except the Time-Life and McGraw-Hill buildings.

[7] For example, Roland Barthes' *Empire of Signs* (1970) or William Gibson's "the sprawl series," *Neuromancer* (1984), *Count Zero* (1986), and *Mona Lisa Overdrive* (1988), are interesting cases of such a phenomenon; both writers are inspired by their experiences in Tokyo, conceived in a way related to their home cities of Paris and Los Angeles to reveal Tokyo's unforeseen characteristics.

[8] For the Chronology of *Sister Carrie*, see Pizer 576.

[9] Richard Lehan, in stressing importance of *Sister Carrie* in American literary realism and naturalism, points to the thematic connections between *Sister Carrie*, *The House of Mirth* (*Realism and Naturalism* 195–6) and *The Great Gatsby* (204–5) in how their main characters are formed. This dissertation argues that this connection should also include the use of urban architecture.

[10] To further understand this point, development in other media should be considered as well. Especially notable is the development of the cartoon, for its aim is somewhat similar to realist literature: see De Haven and Nadel for development of the genre. In that sense, among the most important is Winsor McCay's serial newspaper cartoon, *Little Nemo in Slumberland*; making a dream the central subject that enables all sorts of impossible material metamorphoses, this is a landmark work that captures the kinetic urban space of turn-of-the-century New York. It uses a steady rhythm by placing the

frames of the same shape and size, creating a dynamic artwork propelled by motion, rather than story. The discussion on Art Spiegelman in the last chapter will return to this aspect. Another important subject concerning the city and motion is the representation of New York in short films, Edison's Kinetoscope films, as opposed to short films which depict life in other cities like the Brothers Lumière examined Paris. Musser's article, "At the Beginning: Motion Picture Production, Representation and Ideology at the Edison and Lumière Companies," touches on the choice of subject based on different motivations and viewpoints.

[11] H. L. Mencken, "The Dreiser Bugaboo," *Seven Arts* 2 (August 1917), 507–17; reprinted in *Critical Essays on Theodore Dreiser*, 19–26.

[12] The distinct imagery of the cities Dreiser came to possess leads to another question about Dreiser's concern, shared widely with American novelists who treated the city: What constitutes Midwesterner and the New Yorker (for instance, compared to that of Fitzgerald). Biographies show Dreiser's identity formation as a "Midwesterner" and a "New Yorker." This should also be considered in relation to Dreiser's older brother Paul who was a popular songwriter and had a big influence on Dreiser, and Loving's biography and Ellen Moore in *Two Dreisers* as equal foregrounds, which were basically the idea of a New Yorker.

[13] For Dreiser's own coverage of the Brooklyn Strike, see Pizer 427–433.

[14] The recent edition of the introduction to this work stresses the author as the product of the cultural context. See, for example, "The Theater of Being: Personality and Performative Identity" by Curnutt (29–36).

[15] For the representation of the Japanese butler in this novel, which rarely is the subject of studies of ethnic stereotype in Fitzgerald's works, see Yoshiko Uzawa's work on Togo Hashimura which explores representation of Japanese in the early twentieth century and traces the formation of the Japanese stereotypes as the "harmless and comical" Asian.

[16] "F. Scott Fitzgerald in New Novel Reverses Horatio Alger Formula." *Newark, [N.J.] Evening News.* March 4, 1922. pp.8.

[17] In relation to this quote, the dreamy elevator sequence of *Page Miss Glory* (1936), which conveys the lightness and movement and suggests the limitless possibility of flying upwards, should be considered. It is a short animated film from the *Merrie Melodies* series, credited to Leadora Congdon, but said to be directed by Tex Avery. This film not only graphically captures the art deco aesthetic, but also reveals the essence of urban romanticism in a way intertwined with the physical structure of urban architecture; first, it picks the high-rise hotel as quintessentially urban, contrasting it to the country inn. Second, the hotel is a romantic and dreamy place, much like the fictional figure of the actress it is associated with.

[18] This discussion is better contextualized if considered with John Dos Passos's *Manhattan Transfer* (1925) and Nella Larsen's *Quicksand* (1928) and *Passing* (1929), novels that share a similar setting with Fitzgerald's but suggest a different sort of the city. *Manhattan Transfer* treats the city with the same sense of motion, pushed to its limits in this work. It locates the city's essence in its haphazardness, randomness, and social variety and mobility, rather than in its romance. This novel basically shares a setting with

the novels discussed in this dissertation, featuring a rags-to-riches hero and an actress in the hotel. However, the act of rising and falling socially is rendered more dynamically, featuring the jumping off a bridge over a river. Nella Larsen's novellas, *Quicksand* and *Passing*, provide a suggestive counterpoint. She depicts Chicago, New York, and Europe through eyes of a black middle-class woman who is half-Danish, and portray them as series of places she is not part of. Her observation depicts New York City in the 1920s as dreamy and innocent, but in a way different from Fitzgerald.

[19] J. D. Salinger's *Raise High the Roof Beam, Carpenters* (1955) pays homage to this scene, using conversations about missing Tom Collins ingredients to represent the tension among people accidently gathered in Seymour's apartment.

[20] Mark Goble's "Delirious New York" touches upon the difference between James's view of the city in *American Scene* and his Old New York stories such as "The Jolly Corner," perusing Koolhaas's observation of the city's crowdedness with James's observation.

[21] But as "May Day" presented moments in which two separate worlds represented by two avenues immerse and coexist, in this novel, the idealistic city seen from the outside and the trivial, materialistic space of which the city's inside consists, presented as a contrast, are not entirely separate, but affecting each other; these moments are given symbolic importance, affected by Fitzgerald's "prodigious lyricism," as named by Curnutt (89). There are also moments in which the trivial commodity gains a mystical meaning. One obvious example is "the eyes of Doctor T. J. Eckleburg." Another moment

is when Daisy starts crying, touched by the richness of the colorful variety of Gatsby's shirts (42). This scene is particularly interesting because it refers back to a shopping scene in "May Day" where Gordon comes to the painful realization of his fall from his former class as his friend carelessly and innocently picks from an abundance of collars and neckties (859).

[22] Alternative titles are *Hoppity Goes to Town* and *Bugville*. For the film's making and subsequent fate of the Fleischer Studio, see Dial. For more a personal account of the event, see the biography by Max's son Richard.

[23] Hayao Miyazaki (1941–) is director who is known for features such as *My Neighbor Totoro* (1988), *Spirited Away* (2001, winner of the Academy Award for Best Animated Feature, and the Golden Bear at the 2002 Berlin International Film Festival), and *Ponyo* (2008).

[24] Miyazaki and his Studio Ghibli work on archiving and reprinting of lesser-known animated features; this issue of *Neppu* is the most comprehensive guide to this film to date.

[25] Music by Hoagy Carmichael. Senri Ōe explicates how the music incorporates the rhythm of construction in the Fleischer issue of *Neppu*.

[26] For a historical example of this phenomenon, see Miller's article that shows how actual modernist architects such as Wright, Burnham, and Sullivan are considered heroes in Chicago after the big fire. For Rand's particular interest in Wright's architectural philosophy and how it is reflected in characterization of Roark, see Berliner.

[27] In this sense, Hoppity should also be contrasted to another animation that characterizes

the era, *Superman* (1941–3). Both films feature the hero in New York buildings, and *Superman* features anti-communistic ideas more strongly, and is much closer to Rand's vision.

[28] For more on the Randian idea of Egotism and Egotist, see Burns and the extensive annotated material by the Institute of Objective Studies.

[29] Male sexuality is an important part of iconography concerning Roark, who is introduced to the novel first and foremost as a strong masculine physique (4); there are intrinsically entangled issues about sexuality and desire about this character. For an extensive discussion on sexuality and homosexual desire in this novel, see Sciabarra. It is notable that also in this respect integrity in material and ideal is pursued; the heroic spirit manifests as respective physical features. It is repeatedly stressed that Roark is not only an architect but an able manual laborer, as epitomized as the figure of Roark drilling in the Francon quarry scene; see Burns for the fruitful exploration of its cinematic representation of bodies. I would add to the discussion that there are moments in the novel that this tendency manifests almost as phrenological; in Roark's characterization, Rand pushes her point that the character's inner qualities are congruent with outer behavior, saying that Roark is born without "the ability to consider others" and "any religious brain center" (731). Roark is conceived to be perfectly "integral," and his quality is as organic to the extent that he is said to have a face "closed like the door of a safety vault; things locked in safety vaults are valuable" (52), stressing how the physical is inseparable from the person's character. Ultimately, Roark's body itself, as the embodiment of creative power, becomes almost a visual sign that evokes admiration

and/or resentment in people. The opposite is also true and the way Rand extends a sense of misogyny and physicality to naturalize inferior quality is most visible in the depiction of Ellsworth Toohey, whose act is of "a revenge for his obvious physical inferiority" (732). Elaborated in extensive detail, Rand describes Toohey's disingenuous nature with his weak physique and eerie character, establishing that it is naturally connected to his physical inferiority.

[30] The impossibility of conceiving the perfect tower was manifested in the film version, where it actually needed to be materialized. See Burns for Rand's unsuccessful attempt to commission Frank Lloyd Wright, and how the final result disappointed her (133).

[31] *The American Effect—Global Perspectives on the United States, 1990–2003*, curated by Lawrence Rinder, July 3–October 12, 2003, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York.

[32] Aida comments as such in a description provided by the artist: "Some have said this picture was a 'prediction,' but I created this piece rather as an 'impossible' fictitious historical painting. So I was all the more stunned by the images of the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks. As planned from the start, this piece was exhibited in the Whitney Museum of American Art's exhibition 'The American Effect' (2003), whose selection process occurred before the attacks. I heard that it incurred a lot of displeasure from New Yorkers. I would like to applaud the curator's courageous decision" (*Monument for Nothing* 218).

[33] For numerous examples from the twentieth century, see Page, *The City's End: Two*

Centuries of Fantasies, Fears, and Premonitions of New York's Destruction. Kirshenblatt-Gimblett collects examples of media's immediate retrieval of New York-related disaster imageries after 9/11 attacks, including an attraction ride at Empire State building in which a player should navigate an out-of-control plane piloted by aliens through Manhattan skyscrapers (16–9).

[34] For examples of psychoanalytic reading, see Orban and Kuhlman.

[35] Spiegelman, by criticizing conspiracy theory and the attractiveness of such a theory, seems to tell of the danger of easy interpretation of the written phrase. There is an irony on Spiegelman's part in the fact that two years later, the insecure feeling in the same poem seemingly suggests American military intervention rather than terrorism. Since he mentions the difference between poetry reading and visual representation, contrasting the former's intimacy and inclusiveness to the latter's distance and singleness, it might be necessary to consider how the visual representation is different from a narrative (11). For an interesting case of the same sort, an art project inspired from a prophetic quote from E. B. White's *Here's New York,* see Kirshenblatt-Gimblett (20–22). On the same note, another more recent example that comes to my mind is the excerpt from *Moby Dick*, in which Ishmael muses upon his fate being a part of "the grand programme of Providence," which attracted attention about this novel's prophetic quality at the time of the USSR's invasion to Afghanistan back in the 1980s, and recently, at the US intervention to Iraq. The example that I have actually encountered is the debates on [H-AMSTDY] mailing

list, March 21–March 29, 2003, and on [Ameka-ml], March 30–April 5, 2003.

[36] Kirshenblatt-Gimblett collects moments of writings and tributes made by mural artists in the debris on the wall (29–31).

[37] Louis Menand's essay on Maya Lin depicts the artist conceiving debris as the symbolic element of disaster: at a downtown restaurant after the attack, "At some point, she noticed that her hand, which she had rubbed inadvertently against a wall, was smeared with ash. It was a while before she could bring herself to wash it off" (266). It is an important observation in light of the role of materiality in her memorials.

[38] From James Marsh's *Man on Wire* (2008), a documentary film on Petit's life.

[39] This is the quote from Petit's actual statement published in the newspaper interview next day. (Grace Lichtenstein on *The New York Times*, August 8, 1974.)

[40] Dave Eggers' blurb for the novel: "Leave it to an Irishman to write one of the greatest-ever novels about New York."

[41] Two catastrophes in 1995, both of which came from underground, bred a substantial amount of artistic output that focused on "underground" images. In his novels, Haruki Murakami focuses on this "undergroundness." His interest in World War II is also different, as his thematic concentration is the atrocities generated by social conditions, namely the acts of the Japanese army in Manchuria. It will be fruitful to compare these two approaches in the context of the Japanese social response after 1995.

[42] There are some artists and writers from two decades that will be worth revisiting in this context. First is Japanese noir in the 1990s, especially works by Natsuo Kirino

(1951-), who in *Out* (1997) depicted the precarious state of the social underclass—Chinese gangsters, Brazilian Japanese, and exploited housewives—to address the divide between the city and the countryside, shades of domestic colonization that came to the fore in issues surrounding the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant. Another artist worth reevaluating is *Gokiburi Konbinat*, a performance-dance troupe founded in 1994 and led by Toshiyuki Saito (1969-). Born in Fukushima, Saito examined the same issues as Kirino in a series of theatrical works; one of their street performances portrayed Fukushima people homeless and deformed from the electric plants that serve Tokyo. On a different note, also noteworthy is the work of multimedia artist Naohiro Ukawa (1968-), who creates installations on "calamity high," the psychological effects of natural disasters. "A Series of Interpreted Catharsis," two installations created in 2004 and 2007, artificially recreate a strong typhoon and earthquake and their aftermath.

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