PERCEPTIONS OF THE CITY: THE URBAN IMAGE IN CANADIAN FICTION

by

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That imaginative literature can be used as a data source for geographical analysis and understanding of place seems a reasonable (and potentially rewarding) possibility, based as it is on the premise that art mirrors life. However the mode in which -- and the extent to which -- literature reflects the society that engenders it must be addressed and clarified. Geographers seem principally to have engaged literature for its capacity to describe landscape and render a 'sense of place,' or to depict individual experience of place. These approaches assume that literature presents a simple, straightforward, representative reflection of either reality or the experience of reality and geographers have too often neglected to specify the links that they assume between literature and geography. Some writers have however suggested more comprehensive approaches to geographical analysis of literary data and others have theoretically addressed the issue of analogical representation in everyday life, in literature and in geographical analysis.

This thesis is concerned with urban imagery as it can symbolically reveal the perceptual framework through which we order and understand our world. It examines the urban imagery that permeates our fiction and that can reveal how we fundamentally view our cities as living places. Thus the focus is on imagery and symbolic depiction, rather than realistic depiction of place or experience; with the application of an ordering framework rather than intuitive interpretation of literary data; with an
explicit mode of analysis that defines the links it posits between art and society. It is fundamentally concerned with the perception of urban place as it is imaginatively rendered.

A preliminary survey of Canadian urban novels of the past two decades revealed two points that became the nexus of this analysis. First, the image of the city is a remarkably consistent one -- and it is remarkable as well for its negative emphasis. The city is overwhelmingly characterized as a menacing presence, a landscape defined by incoherence and disorder, provoking a sense of unease and vulnerability. Second, it became apparent that a framework would be necessary to organize and systematize the urban imagery, to reveal pattern in the amorphous mass of data, and to achieve more than a mere listing or cataloging of images. Further, a definition of the relationship between art and its social context must precede and guide any probing of literature for data. The concept of garrison mentality, borrowed from Northrop Frye and the field of literary criticism, provided the basis from which to develop such a framework. The linked themes of garrison and wilderness proved a comprehensive schema within which to analyze image and reaction in the urban novels. The image of city as wilderness that pervades these works is summarized and is illustrated by examples from urban anthologies; the three types of garrison provoked by this threatening fictive environment are detailed with reference to representative novels.

The literary material, organized in this way, strongly suggests themes current in the work of various urban and social theorists. Such parallels serve to substantiate the hypothesis that image and reaction in fiction correlate closely with perception and behaviour in the everyday world. This suggests that literary symbolism is a valid way to explore
our elemental modes of perception and frames of reference. It also raises further questions of the role of the interpreter — creative writer or social scientist — in promulgating a perspective, and of why a particular society gives rise to a particular vision of itself.
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CHAPTER I

LITERATURE AND GEOGRAPHY: MAKING THE CONNECTIONS

It would seem intuitively obvious that literature can tell us much about things geographical. Both literature and geography deal essentially with the same central area of concern - the human condition, man in and of his environment. Certainly geographers have suggested that a connection can be made between literature and geography:

There is a continuum between values and attitudes, lifestyles, institutions and the bricks and mortar of the physical city. [How] can we grasp such a complex reality? ... We can turn to those whom Ottawa economist Gail Stewart has called the "still unsurpassed experts in the use of social indicators - the artists, poets, dramatists and writers." The appeal to creative literature is rewarding in many ways.¹

The human reality presented by a talented novelist is much more complex than that of which a social scientist is normally aware ... The social scientist can learn to ask questions and formulate hypotheses from literary works.²

How can we know the thought of a people concerning urban spatial structure and landscape? Novels of city life are sources of evidence that on the surface appear to offer a plentitude of information on individual, everyday geographical awareness.³

The skillful novelist often seems closest of all in capturing the full flavour of the environment.⁴

Some novelists have had an even clearer vision of the facts of geography that are of most significance to the average man than do professional writers on geographical subjects.⁵

From the other perspective, those in the literary field also suggest that literature has something valid to say in a geographical context. Indeed the connection between the two fields is underscored by the number of times writers of and about literature fall into
geographical metaphor.

For example:

The authors featured ... have identified the habits and attitudes of the country, as Fraser and Mackenzie have identified its rivers.  

Literature is not only a mirror; it is a map, a geography of the mind. Our literature is one such map, if we can learn to read it as our literature, as a product of who and where we have been.  

Because imaginative literature remains one of our most delicate and accurate means of joining emotion with ideas, public with private experience, I believe that it can provide insights into the relations between mind and environment which are unavailable elsewhere.  

Writing fiction is, in a serious emotional sense, writing social history ... Place and reality have come together, in women's work, extraordinarily. Roy's isolated family in Where Nests the Water Hen gives us a humanized French situation, not a sociological tract. Margaret Laurence's Manawaka is no less Manawaka because it is not on the map. Place is always, to a degree, fiction; your Toronto is not mine, we have different eyes.

It would seem then that practitioners from both sides of that great divide between the sciences and the creative arts recognize at least intuitively that literature and geography have something of significance to say to each other. For geographers, the appeal of literature is obvious. In that part of the discipline which has become fundamentally concerned with the more subjective aspects of man's relationship to environment -- with man's actions in and reactions to place, with place as man perceives it and as it is meaningful to him -- the subject matter is elusive and difficult to secure. Literary expression serves to capture the ephemera of experience and meaning and to present it in manageable form for examination. It offers a portrayal, stilled and distilled, of human interaction with place. The creative writer, his format and
sensibilities more sensitive than a survey questionnaire, more comprehensive and wide-ranging than participant observer research, is able to evoke the reality of the everyday world. Literature provides a reflection of life and of man's experiencing. And it is this function as reflection that makes literature a tempting source for the geographer.

That literature is a mirror of life seems a truism, obvious to the point of banality. The mirror metaphor recurs in various disciplines in work dealing with literature and with place. From Margaret Atwood's assertion that literature is both mirror and map,\textsuperscript{10} to Raymond Williams' position that literature is response as well as reflection,\textsuperscript{11} to William Lloyd's comment that images in literature are "plausible reflections of an underlying reality"\textsuperscript{12} -- all assume the reflective function of literature. Eli Mandel suggests that literature is "a mirroring of experience" as well as the creation of identity.\textsuperscript{13} Audrey Kobayashi notes that in geography literature is often seen as "a mirror of subjectivity."\textsuperscript{14} For literary critic Northrop Frye, "literature ... neither reflects nor escapes from ordinary life. What it does reflect is the world as the human imagination conceives it ..."\textsuperscript{15} And in geography Yi-fu Tuan echoes this sentiment: "Literature and painting induce an awareness of place by holding up mirrors to our own experience."\textsuperscript{16} Literature "mirrors human reality"\textsuperscript{17} and further "mirrors and mediates among the contradictions of society."\textsuperscript{18}

Literature may indeed be more than a mirror, and this mirror may be focussed on different aspects of life or of literature, but the metaphor remains persistent. The power of creative art to reflect life is a deeply embedded theme in work dealing with literature. Indeed, for the social scientist, it is the justification for examining literature as proxy for life.
A. Reflections in Different Mirrors

Although the mirror allusion is a common way to refer to the representative function of literature, that simple euphemism masks some great variations in basic assumptions, in purpose and in the eventual conclusions that attend the examination of literary sources. Literature can be used in different ways to reflect different things in the prism of very different conceptual lenses. One of the principal difficulties encountered in the geographical use of literature stems from a failure to examine these assumed mirrors.

This section will attempt a closer examination of the various mirrors advocated in geography in order to reveal the often unstated theoretical bases of this fundamental assumption that art mirrors life, and will look more carefully at the various purposes for which geographers hold literature up to their various mirrors. As well it will suggest some of the problems and weaknesses that attend these approaches and that lie behind the cliche that literature is a mirror of life.

Salter and Lloyd's summary of the approaches in geography which advocate using literature as geographic source provides a useful starting point from which to review these approaches and to examine the mirror each assumes. The authors characterize these as: (1) literature used to illustrate objective landscape, insofar as it accurately reproduces that objective landscape; (2) literature used to "articulate human experience" of the environment; (3) literature as interpreted at a symbolic level to
demonstrate "valuable insights into the essential nature of space and spatial relationships."\textsuperscript{21}

1. The First Mirror

The first approach is obviously limited in scope and value. Implicit in it is the assumption that the novelist does indeed present an accurate and factual picture of an identifiable place. The mirror assumed in this approach is the simple mirror of realism; it precludes any literary work that is not realistic in tone, form or content, and it does not address either the subjectivity of the author or the question of his representativeness. (These critical issues will be examined in more detail in the next section.) Salter and Lloyd themselves admit that "focusing on the literal description of an objective landscape may not be the strongest method for studying landscape in literature."\textsuperscript{22}

2. The Second Mirror

Instead they advocate the second method -- an approach still based on the premise of literal realism but altered in focus to encompass a more subjective view -- an approach coming from an existential phenomenological perspective. Literature is considered a medium for presenting the subjective meanings of landscape, and authors valued for "their sensitive insights into the subjective human qualities of landscape."\textsuperscript{23} The phenomenological critic deals with the image in literature as it elucidates man's
subjective reactions. As Tuan notes: "Art provides an image of feeling" and this world of subjective meaning, of feeling, reactions and perception is the realm of interest of the phenomenologist. Such analysis articulates "the taken-for-granted patterning of ordinary ... experience," the dimensions and the meanings of the everyday world in which we live.

Literature is considered useful not as it presents factual data about a time and place but rather as it reveals the experience of living in that time and place. It does not show us objective reality (or what Tuan calls God's view of the world); instead it shows us man's view of the world, his particular and partial ways of seeing and experiencing. The writer is psychic cartographer who sketches the landscape of the mind. "Real places aren't on maps" but if what is real and meaningful about the society in which we live cannot be found on maps, it can perhaps be revealed in our literature.

This mirror that Salter and Lloyd flash is an experiential one -- it purports to reflect the landscape as it is humanly experienced. But in fact this glass illuminating subjective landscape experience is fundamentally similar to the previous one: both mirrors reflect literary description as reality, both methods assume that what is written is a valid, straightforward, factual representation (either of the 'real' landscape or of the 'real' way the landscape is experienced).

This assumption of "verisimilitude," as Salter and Lloyd term it, constitutes one of the major difficulties inherent in this type of approach. The authors recognize this problem and suggest several adaptive strategies. Conceding that not all fictive work is in a realistic mode (though ignoring the fact that this mode is becoming increasingly less common), they suggest that only novels that do present a 'true' picture
of landscape and experience are useful for their purpose. All others must be discarded as source material. A tautology is evident here: novels can be used to discover the essence of landscape experience, but we must first know what that essence is before we try to find it, in order to decide whether or not the author is presenting a true or false picture. They further suggest some guidelines to determine the verisimilitude of an author's work -- for example, that the author has had first-hand experience of the place portrayed (which obviously assumes that all fictive locales are simply transcribed real ones); that contemporary critical response to an author's work may be an indication of verisimilitude (which appears to assume that a strong and obvious correlation to factual reality is a criterion of positive critical reaction); that geographers "avoid the problem altogether by consulting only the better known and more highly respected authors of fiction, authors whose entire work, including presumably their use of landscape, is essentially beyond criticism at the level of a geographer's concern." But surely a geographer's concern must indeed be critical, and if he is, as Salter and Lloyd presume, to pass judgement about verisimilitude, his level of concern must be both critical and comprehensive. The assumption that a 'good' or well-known novelist's depiction of place will necessarily be more truthful and realistic than that of a less popular writer seems arbitrary at best. Indeed the whole process of deciding which novels are true and therefore useful and which are not seems arbitrary. Salter and Lloyd do suggest that research involving a number of works set in the same place during the same period would provide a "particularly strong check on the faithfulness of an author's landscape expressions" but they concede that the dearth of such interrelated material and the time required by such studies have led
to the trend in geography to "emphasize less time-consuming studies of a single work by a single author." 30

This criterion of verisimilitude and the necessity of choosing sources that are adjudged to portray a realistic picture is a strongly limiting aspect of this type of phenomenological analysis. (Though indeed it may be argued that that it is not a necessary axiom of a phenomenological approach.) In using literature selectively geographers are open to the charge of exampling, of using literary imagery not to show what is there, what images of place do emanate from a comprehensive study of literature, but rather to merely support what they already think is there, to justify those pictures of and reactions to place that they consider valid ones. As well it precludes vital questions about the literary landscape that other more inclusive approaches do address. For example, a Marxist analysis of literature takes the fictive interpretation of landscape and interaction within that landscape as given, not to be judged realistic or not but instead related to the socio-economic conditions from which that picture of the world derives. An example of such a Marxist study of place is Raymond Williams' *The City and the Country*, 31 a comprehensive assessment of the impact of industrialization and urbanization in England over the past four centuries. Williams uses literary sources to take measure of that change and to illustrate how the image of the city evolved over time and in response to changes in the socio-economic order. He is specifically concerned with the contradictory images of city and country (the former typified as progress, chaos, disorder, isolation; the latter seen as embodying peace, plenty, and social cohesion). He demonstrates that the basic dichotomy between these images in literature, while persistent over time, can be also seen to change significantly
in form and interpretation. This is because the images are directly related to both prevalent attitudes and the actual socio-economic conditions of the time and thus must be seen and understood in the context of a particular history, the context of a process in change. They must also be understood in terms of what Williams calls the force behind "the basic process of what we know as the history of the city and country," the capitalist mode of production.

Our powerful images of city and country have been ways of responding to a whole social development.

The image, at a particular point in time, is 'a response,' and as such reflects a world-view, an attitude, as well as presenting a reflection of actual social conditions.

This more comprehensive approach goes beyond the simple plumbing of literature for facts or factual experience and therefore does not depend on the criterion of verisimilitude. In a Marxist analysis (as in a hermaneutic one), the image is as telling in its distortion as in its objectivity.

The limitations evident in analysis such as advocated by Salter and Lloyd arise primarily from the premise that literature, to be useful, must reflect reality in a direct, descriptive, representative way. This is a very simple mirror; there can be no distortion, no exaggeration, no transformation in its monochrome glass, for it excludes any examination of symbol, allegory or image. It admits only direct, not figurative, representation, fact for fact, place for place, reaction for reaction. Fiction is considered solely as representative and not as representational, as a re-presentation of reality but not as a representation. Certainly the representative function of literature cannot be denied, but nor
should it be defined so narrowly.

Another problem that attends the phenomenological approach when this mode of analysis is so firmly connected to the premise of verisimilitude, is the assumption of representativeness that is associated with this premise. And this assumption itself is open to criticism. Is the artist representative or is he often a member of a certain socio-economic group, an educated and therefore biased elite? (Certainly, our Canadian writers are preponderantly of WASP, intellectual, middle-class persuasion and perhaps this distorts the picture that together they paint of society.) Is the artist's view universal — could it be an idiosyncratic one? By his very sensitivity, his concern with examining and recording, does the artist set himself apart from the mundane world of the rest of us and from the way we perceive things? While he may reveal the interpretation of one man, can we assume that his work reveals the interpretation of Man?

The assumption of verisimilitude has been shown to be problematic because the very concept of verisimilitude is problematic. But the fact that it is an assumption leaves it open to criticism on theoretical as well as conceptual grounds. Tuan has noted that:

From time to time geographers have asked the question
What is the relationship between literature and geography?
Relationship is a vague word, and answers to the question have not been satisfactory.

In work such as Landscape in Literature this significant question goes unasked. The relationship between literature and geography is assumed: theirs is a direct mirror reflecting the simple connection of verisimilitude. There is no attempt to critically address the foundation of this assumed relationship. The preceding section has attempted to suggest that the answers that lie behind these unasked questions are not
altogether satisfactory. Even less satisfactory is the fact that like Salter and Lloyd, most geographers ask such questions only "from time to time," rather than grounding their empirical work on a firm theoretical basis.

This fundamental relationship between literature and geography depends theoretically on the links that we draw between art and society, the vital connections that we assume between the creative work of the writer and the milieu about which and within which he writes. It is these links that underlie the analysis of literature as social document. The broader question that geographers must address becomes: What is the relationship between art and society? For in suggesting that literature can tell us something geographical and valid, we are assuming that there are essential, direct and consistent links between creative art and the society from which it comes.

As Tuan suggested, in geography, these links have not been properly examined. To geographers it does seem obvious that there are links; we recognize on an intuitive level that literature can tell us significant things about landscape, about place, about the social interaction that occurs within it. And further, it would seem to be a singularly useful method of discovering the subjective reactions to and perceptions of place that are increasingly being recognized as a facet of geographical inquiry as important to complete understanding of man and his place as maps or statistics. But the form of the connection between art and society has not been critically examined or clearly stated.

The links may seem obvious, self-evident, implicit, but in not critically addressing the vital assumptions that underlie any attempt to use literature as geographical data, geographers run the risk of
methodological sloppiness, of espousing a theoretically naive position, and of doing 'fuzzy' geography.

The necessity for this sort of critical examination goes beyond the fact that the analysis cannot simply be based on the assumption of a link, for there are indeed several different links that can be made between society and art, several different ways of drawing the connection between fiction and fact of place. There are various approaches, each founded on a general theoretical position, each emphasizing a different way of linking art and society.\(^{35}\) "When we consider the social origins and social meanings of works of art and literature, the procedures which we employ will of course determine our final judgements about them."\(^{36}\)

In not critically examining these links, we also remain unaware of the weaknesses or limitations of the social theory upon which our analysis is implicitly based. Furthermore the absence of critical analysis and the assumption of simple and direct connections preclude critical questions about literature and imagery and society with which theorists in such areas as literary criticism, the sociology of literature and the philosophy of literature are centrally concerned. Addressing Tuan's question of the relationship between literature and geography would also raise important issues of the function of these interconnections as well as their form. For example, why does a particular society choose to present a particular vision of itself? How do such images, the literary depictions of people and place, arise? How do socially powerful images such as those in fiction react back upon society? These questions, which must be central to an examination of literature and society, can be addressed in different ways from different theoretical perspectives, but the fact remains that it is only in the context of an explicit and informed social
theory that they arise at all.

To merely assume that art mirrors reality (sometimes, i.e. in selected works) is to eschew important aspects of the fundamental relationship between literature and geography that Tuan chides geographers for having neglected. To not establish or explicate the theoretical basis of prescriptive or empirical work is to tread on shaky ground, and it would seem that the geographer with one foot in the amorphous realm of literature and one planted on the terra firma of geography is in a somewhat shaky position to begin with.

The type of approach advocated by Salter and Lloyd may be criticized on methodological grounds as well. While this approach makes a valid case that literature can indeed demonstrate the subjective experience of reality, geographers seldom make it clear just whose reality they assume is being examined. Salter and Lloyd state that "the actual literary expression of a landscape suggests a particular subjective view of that landscape." But they neglect to specify whose view in particular they consider to be suggested — that of the fictive characters, the author or society. The subject of this "subjective view" is seldom precisely defined.

In much of this type of work the level of analysis goes unspecified: the world view of the fictive characters is presumed to be that of the author, is further presumed to be that of "people" — society at large. The analysis does not specify whose experience, whose vision of the landscape is being explored, nor does it stay within the terms of that reference. (Again the Marxist approach provides a comparison. A Marxist literary analysis is far more precise about whose view is being considered, for the historical materialist analysis addresses the issue of perception
and attitude at several specified levels: literature is seen to reveal
the writer's attempt to depict the attitudes he recognizes around him
and by which his writing can reflect the world-view of significant social
groups or classes; it can reveal the personal perceptions and attitudes of
the writer himself and show his way of subjectively perceiving objective
reality; and finally it may be analyzed to demonstrate the artist as
-falsely conscious, as he himself is a prisoner of his own socially deter-
mined categories.)

Yet another criticism can be directed at the objective of such an
approach. The aim of many of the geographical studies which use literature
as source material appears to be the collecting and listing of socio-spatial
references from various fictional works. The usefulness of such a catalogue
seems limited, even as its completeness must be suspect. As Aldous Huxley
noted:

We have Shakespearean feelings [but] we talk about them like
automobile salesmen, teenagers, or college professors. We practice
alchemy in reverse — touch gold and it turns to lead; touch the
pure lyrics of experience and they turn into the verbal equivalent
of tripe and hogwash.39

Certainly our writers of fiction have the golden touch necessary to capture
and reveal the pure lyrics of environmental experience. Yet merely listing
these, paraphrasing the paraphrasing of this experience, must jeopardize
both lyricism and purity. It is unlikely that the geographer can reproduce
the intricacy of tone and nuance that makes the author's description so
impelling in the first place. This conundrum in the use of literature
is recognized by Salter and Lloyd who, while admitting that a literary
image of landscape is "an essentially irreducible expression,"40 still
maintain that their primary objective is to communicate, through the
evidence of creative writing, a "sensitive articulate image of the
phenomenon we call landscape." There is no question that the novelist can reveal this sensitive and articulate image; there is some question that the geographer can effectively re-reveal it, summarize or paraphrase this "essentially irreducible expression."

Merely listing images of place, socio-spatial references that may be lumped under the amorphous label 'sense of place,' does not seem to be a particularly useful or methodical way to extend or elaborate our knowledge of man in relation to his environment. If we confine ourselves to listing fragments we are collecting impressions that remain essentially unique, disconnected, unrelated. Certainly such a method will suffice if our more limited goal is "to develop a keener eye;" to be more sensitive to landscape (as Salter and Lloyd purpose) or to strive for "a more creative geographical description of landscape actuality and potential," or if we turn to literature primarily for its evocative power, to use it as a supplemental teaching tool, to "engage in geographical speculation" or to stimulate "personal speculation on the author's use of landscape." But if our objective is to examine literature to further our understanding of man in his social and physical milieu, then such a method abjures questions of coherence, consistency and unity, and, most important, of pattern. For it is this pattern that is useful to our understanding of man and place, that is indeed implicit in the word image.

... the kind of articulation, patterning, and significance we mean by the term "image" suggests that we are looking for impressions and responses that have been raised into the order of thought. And it is this order that literature can reveal. This is one of the fundamental drawbacks of an existential phenomenological approach, for it emphasizes description, not analysis; it is solely concerned with
"the articulation of landscape and experience, not explanation of that experience."\textsuperscript{48} And further: "the desire to see landscape more clearly and completely is a primary concern of geography. This search leads to landscape description ..."\textsuperscript{49} While Salter and Lloyd suggest that sight leads to vision leads to insight,\textsuperscript{50} in fact their interest focuses solely on sight. Their uncomplicated mirror reflects a view, a description, and no attempt is made to go beyond that to vision (which implies an orderly overview of a whole) or to insight, understanding or explanation. This preoccupation with description not analysis, listing not classification, finally limits the value of such an approach, for:

The danger lies in redefining geography as culture criticism, less concerned with gathering data from diverse sources to construct geographical visions of the earth than with piecemeal interpretation of someone else's imagination.\textsuperscript{51}

And further:

The human explorer must be able to do more than convey an image of the whole. He must be able to demonstrate order in unequivocal language ...\textsuperscript{52}

To "construct geographical visions," to "demonstrate order," it is necessary not merely to describe but to classify and analyze, to inter-relate imagery in fiction in order to find patterns within it, and to relate image to reality, for as geographers our geographical visions must be firmly rooted in the real world.

Such objectives, very different from those of Salter and Lloyd, require a method of systematization. Again there is a point of contrast with the approach outlined in \textit{Landscape in Literature}, which rejects the use of any rigid methodological construct and advocates instead interpretation by a "motivated geographer."\textsuperscript{53} By implication such interpretations must be personal, unique and essentially uncomparable -- neither related
to society nor to each other. The authors charge that the strength of literature (i.e. description characterized by intricacy and delicacy of language) is diluted by "methods of objectifying literature such as content analysis and structural analysis."

Certainly content analysis is neither suitable nor subtle enough for such a sensitive data source, and structural analysis (by which they presumably mean literary analysis of form and style rather than content) should be the concern of the literary critic whose objectives are quite different from those of the geographer. However, it should not be concluded that no framework of analysis can be applied to literature, merely that the analysis must be suited both to the medium and the objective.

It may be argued that many of the criticisms that have been directed against the phenomenologically based approach espoused by Salter and Lloyd -- against the concept of verisimilitude, the emphasis on description and on listing, and the limited objective of increased sensitivity in landscape reading -- are not necessarily intrinsic to the phenomenological approach but rather reflect the cultural geographical bias from which Salter and Lloyd and other geographers have applied this approach. For indeed their focus is on the cultural landscape and, more specifically, on 'reading' and describing such landscapes in the context of culture patterns as well as in terms of cultural artifacts (houses and gardens, for example) which reflect individual decisions. They read landscape as it reveals the relationship between culture groups and the built environment. Their emphasis is on this landscape itself, not on understanding man in the landscape or explaining his actions and reactions, his social interaction within this landscape.
In summary, these criticisms of current geographical work in this vein perhaps derive more from its focus on a cultural approach that necessarily does not address the social questions that are considered pivotal in this thesis, and from the fact that its theoretical basis remains virtually unexamined. The simple and uncritical supposition that art mirrors reality ignores the larger issue of the relationship between art and its social context on which that assumption must be grounded. The definition of such relationships should precede and thereby guide any probing of literature for data. The ingenuous assumption that literature has something valid to say about society is intuitively (and it may be shown theoretically) sound. But indeed it must be demonstrated, addressed and clarified, and in the process it becomes evident that the relationship is not so simple, nor so limitedly useful, as has been assumed in geography. The realistic mirror of Salter and Lloyd proves too simple; it neglects many unexamined a priori that lurk beneath its shiny surface. This is not to reject an existential phenomenological approach -- for indeed its basic premise that literature is a valuable tool for elucidating experience of and reaction to place is critically important, but merely to suggest that the position must be examined and not assumed by geographers, and that it has, in the version adopted by some geographers, conceptual and methodological weaknesses. We must be aware of the range of our mirrors.

These criticisms -- conceptual, methodological and theoretical -- provide a basis on which to summarize the focus and the objectives of this thesis. The concern is with imagery, not "verisimilitude" (an approach in which all urban imagery rather than just selected works can be incorporated); with pattern and order, not description; with the application of a framework, not "geographical speculation" or "motivated interpretation;"
with an explicit mode of analysis which has the capacity to define the links it posits between art and society and which addresses the question that Tuan has raised. This metaphorical mirror must necessarily be more complex and comprehensive than the ones so far examined.

3. The Third Mirror

The third approach to the geographical use of literature outlined by Salter and Lloyd appears in some respects to be the one most compatible with the orientation of this paper. They assert that the interpretation of literature "at a more fundamental and more symbolic level"\(^55\) may provide "valuable insights into the essential nature of space and spatial relationships."\(^56\) They cite Tuan's "Literature, Experience and Environmental Knowing"\(^57\) as a useful example of this approach but caution that the methods he advocates will not necessarily "put geographers at ease in attempting to grapple with such elusive meanings."\(^58\) While conceding that the use of literature to reveal meaning at a symbolic or metaphorical level may be applicable to some literary landscapes, they also note that "uncertainty and even confusion may be unavoidable"\(^59\) and that such an approach appears more appropriate for students of literature than of landscape. They dismiss it as a "last resort"\(^60\) for geographers.

It would appear that Salter and Lloyd are directing their criticism at one facet of a multi-faceted approach. Indeed it is this attention to the various facets of literary analysis that makes Tuan's approach an appealing one. In the article cited by Salter and Lloyd, Tuan has listed the several ways in which the analysis of literature can expand and extend
geographical knowledge. It can reveal objective data and historical fact (to which Tuan consigns the "humble status of rather unreliable data"^61); of more critical concern is the use of literary material to indicate a distinctive viewpoint or conceptual frame; even more valuable is its capacity to articulate experience, to reveal the experiential world insofar as "literary art uses words to realize images of experience."^62 (Thus far the geographical uses of literature outlined by Tuan do not seem to be incompatible with those suggested by Salter and Lloyd. His specification of the function of literature to reveal a conceptual framework perhaps goes beyond their terms of reference but is not incompatible with their general approach that emphasizes meaning. However the fundamental difference in Tuan's approach becomes apparent in the examples he uses to illustrate the latter use of literary data. The five examples of perceptual/cognitive experiences that may be explored through literature are: the perception of absence, the physiognomy of places, the world of fleeting light and noises, ambiguous perceptual interpretation and attitudes toward nature. These are not experiences of substantial places, not reactions to particular and real places — as is the focus of Lloyd, for example, in his investigation of the literary description and experience of late nineteenth century Boston,^63 or in the examples outlined by Salter and Lloyd of landscapes of settlement and landscapes of agriculture.^64 Rather they are shared and familiar reactions to anyplace; they reveal the way man experiences environment rather than how he reacts to a particular environment or type of environment. The focus is on experiencing rather than on the experienced specifics of a certain place. Thus, if Salter and Lloyd's use of the term "student of landscape"^65 encapsulates the focus of their interest, Tuan might better be labelled a student of environmental knowing.)
Further, in deference to the structuralist predilection of Tuan's phenomenological cum-structuralist approach to geography, he suggests that literature is useful in demonstrating the innate ordering patterns of man's mind -- the predisposition to organize into bipolar opposition and to mediate between these contradictions, the elemental motifs of opposition that are inherent in myth and cosmological symbol. Certain types of literature, he asserts, can illuminate "favored patterns of thought." (It would seem to be this aspect of the representative function of literature that Salter and Lloyd find elusive, uncertain and inappropriate.) Finally Tuan notes that the study of literature is significant to environmental knowing since literature and the images it presents and legitimizes have a reciprocal impact on our society and on our learned ways of perceiving.

The common thread that unites these various proposed uses of literature is Tuan's focus on cognition and perception. The underlying theme of his approach is its firm phenomenological grounding -- he is vitally concerned with how man knows and experiences his world. But rather than narrowing this focus to the confines of realistic re-presentation, he expands it to include symbol, image and mythic representation. Thus works do not have to be evaluated for their faithfulness or reportorial accuracy of depiction, for all creative works come from and reveal perception and modes of experiencing. Symbolization, rather than being regarded as 'untrue' to the reality of our environment, indicates forcefully and dramatically how we see and react to that environment. Response to environment is important in that it tells us something critical about response, rather than merely about landscape. Tuan advocates an inclusive rather than a selective approach, in which accuracy is not problematic. Indeed Tuan addresses the question of accuracy by redefining accuracy -- to
emphasize accuracy of meaning rather than depiction.

The appeal of the mirror that Tuan outlines is two-fold: first, it clearly and inclusively specifies the various levels of insight that can be garnered from literature and is dialectical in its recognition that the images manifest in literature react back upon, even as they come out of, a social context. It is a comprehensive approach. Finally, it encompasses symbolic and metaphoric depictions of milieu, not merely descriptive ones. Tuan incorporates these into his structualist model of man; yet this recognition of the symbolic can be incorporated into a non-structuralist paradigm as well. These metaphoric images and symbolic depictions reveal dramatic evidence of impression and response to place. For Tuan, "favored patterns of thought" are indicative of an innate structure of mind. The landscape depicted in literature reveals a landscape of mind. Less ambitiously (and from a non-structuralist position) "favored patterns of thought" about place, as revealed by images, show how man habitually responds to the environment he experiences, the conceptual frame through which he sees and understands his world. Such images reveal the reaction to landscape rather than, as Tuan extrapolates, the landscape of mind. As Mandel was quoted earlier, images are responses and impressions raised to the order of thought. It is these images as they symbolically reveal conceptual frames, impressions, and ways of perceiving, not necessarily as they reveal the workings of man's mind, that are of interest here and that give Tuan's approach a broader appeal even outside a structuralist paradigm.

The significance of symbolic representation to theoretical understanding has recently been examined by David Livingstone and Richard Harrison in their study of the interrelationship between metaphor, myth
and model. They explore the role of analogical thinking in scientific investigation and, more specifically, the significance of myth and metaphor in the development of geographical epistemology. Metaphor, myth and theoretical models all "involve a quest for new perspectives on phenomena." A myth, which derives from a metaphor, is "a dramatised cosmic framework" which is "always explanatory." Such symbolic representations as myth and metaphor, besides having the capacity to generate new theoretical models (the aspect of the relationship upon which the authors focus) are also shown to have explanatory value insofar as they reveal man's "particular ways of ordering experience." They "function epistemologically in the social reconstruction of reality." In other words, symbolism can reveal the conceptual frame through which man orders and understands his world. Thus:

The categories we most require in order to deal with these [literary] cities are therefore not historical, sociological or epistemological but metaphoric.

As geographers our interest should be comprehensive and therefore our categories, as Tuan advocates, must include the metaphoric.

Several weaknesses evident in the approach advocates by Salter and Lloyd are avoided in Tuan's more inclusive approach. For example he is careful to stipulate that literature can be read at different levels. At one level it reveals the perceptions and reactions of the author; at another it explicates the particular attitudes, values and customs of a people; and finally it can demonstrate ubiquitous human characteristics and responses insofar as literary works aspire to the universal. Literature is "simultaneously confession, ethnography and universal symbol." Salter and Lloyd propose to concentrate on the ethnographic aspect, but they implicitly include the singular and subjective, though without
defining it as such, nor specifying what part of their analysis refers to the author's viewpoint, opinion or technique (the confession) and what part to the fictive characters (the ethnography). These are assumed to coincide. (They of course reject the symbolic and ignore any aspect of the universal for they admit only description of experience of particular landscape.)

Tuan carefully distinguishes between the three — stressing the unique uses of each and, by implication, the necessity for clearly defining and separating these levels of inquiry. 76

Tuan explicates his mirror: "Literature mirrors human reality." 77 He carefully signifies the various levels of reality that are reflected and recognizes that the image can flash back upon society. The theoretical basis for his approach is explicit (clearly the same phenomenological/structuralist stance evident in his other work 78). He directs our attention to the relationship between geography and literature and to the ensuing questions that must be posed. As well Tuan is aware of the larger issues that lurk behind a marriage of literature and geography — for example, in "Humanistic Geography" 79 he explores the relationship between art and science. His mirror is a multi-faceted one. And, as will become evident, many of these facets will be borrowed and incorporated into the mirror that will be developed in this analysis of Canadian fiction.

The approach Tuan advocates seems comprehensive and theoretically informed. However because it is a synoptic approach, it does not fulfill another critical requirement outlined earlier: it does not provide a specific framework for analysis. Tuan uses literary examples to illustrate the points he makes and to demonstrate the uses he foresees for literary data but he does not give an example of a comprehensive application of the approach he prescribes. His work does not reveal a methodical way to put
these theoretical suggestions into practice. (Further, the use of unrelated
literary examples leaves him open to the charge of exampling.) The broad
brush that Tuan uses to sketch his overview of literature and geography does
not paint in such intricacies as how to proceed with an empirical piece
of work.

Unlike Salter and Lloyd (who posit a method without examining its
larger context or theoretical underpinnings) Tuan carefully examines the
larger context, persuasively argues that literature is a useful data source,
explicates the levels on which it can be approached, and addresses the
underlying theoretical issues -- but he gives little indication of how
to proceed.

In commenting on the merits of an approach to literature such
as Tuan's, David Seamon notes:

Such analysis [of imaginative literature] perhaps best provides
a phenomenological function, in that it articulates the taken for
granted patternings of ordinary and extraordinary geographical
experience, and gives them a presence that concerned students
can organize and then probe in greater depths. 80

The organization of such subtle and ephemeral data is the principal chal-
lenge facing "concerned students" in any geographical study of literature.
It is necessary to focus this data within a coherent framework, to discover
the pattern that appears and to order images and themes that characterize
the perception of places. For such a task an organizing framework is
essential. The images reflecting back from the mirror must be ordered,
even as the mirror itself must be examined and defined.
B. A Framework Suggested

The framework proposed in this analysis will be derived from one suggested by Northrop Frye. As will be shown in a subsequent chapter, Frye's model, grounded as it is in idealist structuralism, will be substantially altered in the transition from literature to geography. Nevertheless his concept of 'garrison mentality,' certainly a central paradigm in Canadian literary criticism, provides the basis from which to organize and clarify the main themes that characterize the urban experience in contemporary Canadian fiction.

For all its subsequent influence on literary criticism and analysis in Canada, the term garrison mentality appeared in Frye's writing not as a defined or definitive model but as little more than a metaphor, a direction for analysis proposed en passant in his concluding chapter in Literary History of Canada. It is sketched in few sentences:

If we put together a few of these impressions, we may get some approach in characterizing the way in which the Canadian imagination has developed in its literature. Small and isolated communities surrounded by a physical or psychological 'frontier,' separated from one another and from their American and British cultural sources: communities that provide all that their members have in the way of distinctive human values, and that are compelled to feel a great respect for the law and order that holds them together, yet confronted with a huge, unthinking, menacing and formidable physical setting -- such communities are bound to develop what we may provisionally call a garrison mentality. In the earliest maps of the country the only inhabited centres are forts, and that remains true of the cultural maps for a much later time.  

From this short and provocative reference has blossomed considerable critical work. What first appeared as "an historical reference to an
actual state of mind characteristic of pioneer communities,"\textsuperscript{82} has been elevated to the status of myth. As myth, the concept of garrison mentality has become an important one in the structuralist analysis of Canadian literature. Writers and analysts such as Atwood, Moss, Lee and Mandel either espouse, transfigure or reject Frye's paradigm (for which they are graced with the labels "Frigian, half-Frigian, or quarter-Frigian,"\textsuperscript{83} or indeed anti Frigian.

There has been considerable controversy over the relationship of the 'garrison mentality' concept to Frye's overall mytho-poeic structuralist approach, the suitability of the model as a universal concept applicable to the whole of Canadian literature and, as a historical model, its relevance to current writing. But these controversies have all arisen within the discipline and thus are fundamentally concerned with questions of literary analysis, the examination of literature as literature. Because the model (or rather a substantially altered version of it) will be used in this paper to examine literature as social document, in terms of what it can tell us about the society from which it springs, the efficacy of the concept as a literary model is not of concern. Nor is its veracity as a made-in-Canada myth. Instead the concept of the garrison in Canadian fiction provides a useful way to reveal the patterns, to organize the jumble of themes that become evident through a survey of urban fiction, and to attempt to relate and thereby define more clearly the Canadian experience of urban place as it is revealed by our writers.

One of the things fictional writers can do is lay out the cards a little differently so that the pattern can be more clearly seen...\textsuperscript{84}

The next chapter will introduce these themes at a general (and uncritical) level. Chapter III will then outline in detail the basic
changes that will be superimposed upon Frye's model to make it both suit the primary objective of organizing the data and elucidating the pattern, and to counteract what I feel are fundamental weaknesses inherent in the structuralist model itself. In Chapter IV this model, revised and extended, is applied to a representative cross-section of contemporary Canadian novels; the basic pattern that recurs in fiction dealing with the urban experience becomes evident. Chapter V suggests that both this pattern and the model come to display interesting parallels to the work of other social and urban theorists. The model, though used initially in order to merely focus the amorphous data within a coherent framework, seems as well to provide an insight into the process behind the pattern. In effect, the material, organized in this particular way, strongly suggests themes current in other areas of social science. These similarities, which imply that our actions and reactions in the 'real world' can be understood in terms of a perspective that closely resembles the image that obtains in fiction, raise larger questions regarding the role of the interpreter (be he author or social scientist) in promulgating a perspective. They also raise questions of the relationship of reality and fiction and broad social, literary and intellectual traditions. Such issues will be raised, discussed but not definitely answered in Chapter VI -- a strategy dictated by both the nature of the questions and the scope of the thesis.

The process of investigation that has been outlined in Chapters II through V provides a graphic illustration of the interrelationship between metaphor, myth and model that is delineated in the work of Livingstone and Harrison outlined earlier. They posit a relational schema between symbolic representation and theoretical models that prescribes the
connections that this analysis of Canadian urban fiction substantially demonstrates. Central to the analysis is Frye's mythic construct of garrison mentality. The analytic framework is premised on literary myth. This myth is transferred from the realm of literary criticism and used metaphorically as an ordering device to examine the socio-spatial behaviour that is portrayed in literature. The metaphor of garrison/wilderness is then liberated from its literary context and applied to the 'real world' to suggest parallels between image and reaction in fiction, and perception and behaviour in everyday life. From the literary myth (itself generated by metaphor) comes the ordering metaphor that is applied first to the literary universe from which it specifically derives and then, by implication, to the 'real world.' This sequence illustrates the "metaphor-myth-model" model that Livingstone and Harrison schematize and that explicates their contention that metaphoric usage has explanatory value and should be articulated and developed.

Beyond these procedural and epistemological similarities, the example Livingstone and Harrison use to illustrate the analytic potential of analogical thinking -- the frontier myth -- is strikingly similar to the organizing concept around which this thesis revolves. They describe how the frontier symbol has been used in two separate studies "as metaphor to the dimension of time and as model for understanding aspects of contemporary inner-city social behaviour." This thesis examines yet another aspect of frontier imagery and serves to substantiate their contention that scientific models are indeed systematically developed metaphors.

Livingstone and Harrison suggest that myth is "a valuable heuristic instrument in the development of models for the understanding of society;" literature, according to Frye, "is conscious mythology."
Footnotes

Chapter I


4Donald W. Meinig, "Environmental Appreciation: Localities as Humane Art" in Western Humanities Review, no. 25, p. 4.


9Marion Engel, Communiqué, May 1975, p. 6.

10Atwood, Survival, p. 19.


Idem, "Literature, Experience and Environmental Knowing," in Environmental Knowing, p. 269.


Salter and Lloyd, Landscape in Literature, pp. 3-6.

Tuan, "Place, an Experiential Perspective," p. 161.


Tuan, "Literature and Geography," p. 203.


Salter and Lloyd, Landscape in Literature, p. 5.

Ibid., p. 5.

There is some controversy about whether Williams' work incorporates a truly Marxist viewpoint - a criticism raised by other Marxists. They charge that his analytic framework juxtaposes culture and industrialization rather than culture and capitalism. Thus he does not situate his analysis firmly in the capitalist accumulative process, the context of the class struggle. Two points arise in this regard: first, in labelling Williams' analysis a Marxist critique, it is perhaps important to do so within the terms of his own definition of Marxism. He argues that Marxism, rather than "being a settled body of theory or doctrine" has become an "open and flexible tradition of thought." He recounts that, having put aside a more rigid Marxist tradition, he then discovered an active and developed Marxist theory in the work of Lukács and Goldmann. He obviously considers his mode of analysis to be fundamentally, though modified, Marxism and he presents and defends these modifications in Marxism and Literature. Further, it would seem that in The Country and the City Williams does incorporate the mode of production as the central social force in some chapters (e.g. ch. 17) although it must be admitted that in others he does deal more generally with the process of industrialization.
and seems to be more interested in the process itself than in the impelling force behind this process.

32 Williams, The Country and the City, p. 363.

33 Ibid., p. 356. 34 Tuan, "Literature and Geography," p. 194.

35 For example, a phenomenological approach has been outlined, facets of a Marxist approach are used to illustrate certain points and a structuralist approach will be described in detail in Chapter III.


37 Salter and Lloyd, Landscape in Literature, p. 4.

38 In the article "Signatures and Settings" in Dimensions of Human Geography, ed. Karl Butzer, Dept. of Geography Research Paper 186 (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1978), Salter's concept of signatures itself demonstrates this confusion. He considers that landscapes in fiction are "scribbled with the signatures of men and epochs" (p. 74) and advocates analysis of literature in terms of two categories of signature — behavioural and structural. But the most fundamental and obvious signature imprinted upon a literary work — that of the author — is ignored in the analysis despite being so strongly suggested by the very image of signature that is invoked as an ordering principle.


40 Salter and Lloyd, Landscape in Literature, p. 2.

41 Ibid., p. 2.  42 Ibid., p. 8.  43 Ibid., p. 2.

44 Salter, "Signatures and Settings," p. 70.

45 Ibid., p. 83.  46 Ibid., p. 75.

47 Mandel, Another Time, p. 45.

48 Salter and Lloyd, Landscape in Literature, p. 3.

49 Ibid., p. 2.  50 Ibid., p. 28.


53 Salter, "Signatures and Settings," p. 75.

55 Ibid., p. 3.  56 Ibid., p. 3.

57 in Moore and Golledge, *Environmental Knowing*.


59 Ibid., p. 5.  60 Ibid., p. 5.

61 Tuan, "Literature, Experience and Environmental Knowing," p. 261.

62 Ibid., p. 263.

63 W.J. Lloyd, "Landscape Imagery in the Urban Novel" in *Environmental Knowing*.

64 in *Landscape in Literature*.

65 Ibid., p. 5.


67 Ibid., p. 267.


69 Livingstone and Harrison, "Meaning Through Metaphor," p. 100.

70 Ibid., p. 98, quoting Cassirer.

71 Ibid., cited on p. 106.  72 Ibid., p. 99.  73 Ibid., p. 99


75 Tuan, "Literature, Experience and Environmental Knowing," p. 270.

76 However it should be acknowledged that in "Landscape Imagery in the Urban Novel" Lloyd makes an allied but less subtle distinction. He claims that only the "individual character geographies" (i.e. the "thought, dialogue and behaviour ... attributed by authors to specific characters" (p. 279) are useful for analysis; the author's depiction of place as narrator is not useful, indeed is properly the realm of the geographer rather than the author and is valuable only as landscape description. This would seem to ignore the fact the individual character
geographies are as much a product of the author's creative imagination as are the more descriptive background passages that he incorporates into the story. Indeed these passages reveal the author's perception of and subsequent image of place as much as any of the percepts and reactions he ascribes to his characters. One cannot edit out the author; instead of trying to do so, it is necessary to be conscious of that level of interpretation and to address it clearly in analysis.

77 Tuan, "Literature, Experience and Environmental Knowing," p. 269.


80 David Seamon, "Phenomenological Investigation of Imaginative Literature" in Environmental Knowing, p. 289.


83 Ibid., p. 168.

84 Marion Engel in Eleven Canadian Novelists, interviews by Graeme Gibson (Toronto: Anansi, 1973), p. 89.


87 Livingstone and Harrison, "Meaning Through Metaphor," p. 106.

CHAPTER II
THE URBAN IMAGE

Research for this project involved reading as many urban-oriented novels as I could find, focussing primarily on Canadian works written during the past two decades. During the course of this reading it became evident that there has been a relatively small amount of Canadian fiction set in the urban context, surprising in view of the prominence of cities, both demographically and historically, in this country. Furthermore there has been little critical discussion of urban literature; indeed Canadian literature has been most widely analyzed as regional literature.

In the process of becoming familiar with the novels, a composite picture of urban life began to take shape. "... To read novels is to gain impressions ..." The impression emerging from this pastiche of images was remarkably consistent and persistent -- and it was remarkable as well for its negative emphasis. The city in Canadian literature is a menacing presence. Recurring imagery evoked visions of hazard, hardness, coldness, incessant speed, clamor and confusion. Alternately, though far less frequently, the setting was blank -- undifferentiated, sterile, unimportant to the story, meaningless: a place defined primarily by its placelessness, its facelessness. But the predominant impression of city as setting was one of pervasive threat and hostility, an atmosphere provoking a profound sense of unease. It was characterized by complexity and confusion. It was a landscape without order or coherence, difficult to comprehend and
therefore difficult to deal with. The sense of control over environment was tenuous; the sense of control over one's own life and destiny even more so. Indeed the milieu of the city dweller was portrayed as controlled, if controlled at all, by anonymous external forces, nameless faceless others.

There emerged a picture of an urban life world of high stress and anxiety, features which engendered the feelings of vulnerability and impotence that often defined the characters and accounted for their actions and reactions. This vision of life in the city portrayed by Canadian writers was marked by an essential isolation. Relationships appear to provide little solace from the loneliness of urban living for they were often depicted as ultimately unsatisfying, emphasizing an intense lack of communication, the danger of trusting or the superficiality of friendship. In many works, disconnection from others was coupled with disconnection from reality, either stemming from the inability to make sense of the seething physical and social environment or from a profound sense of detachment in which setting becomes an inchoate, meaningless flow of background, rather like an unwatched television set that is always left on, to which the protagonist has no essential or immediate connection.

A high proportion of works of fiction that are set in urban Canada depict characters who have come to the city from elsewhere, from small towns or other countries. The city, seen from afar, symbolizes opportunity; it is the catalyst of dreams, and most especially, the dream of 'making it.' But 'making it' becomes making do, disillusionment, weary resignation, the dream quickly shattered by urban reality. It is on this latter aspect of city life that Canadian novelists most frequently choose to focus their attention and nostalgic regret for places left behind pervades their work—a comment on urban life not confined to contemporary fiction but explicit
in writing decades earlier:

The Great City! There's no such place. It's just where people go, bravely enough, to earn the money to get back home. Indeed bravely -- for contemporary fiction shows courage to be essential for survival -- psychic, emotional or economic -- in the urban milieu. And indeed 'home' is 'back' there, for although the dwelling place in the city is often a metaphoric refuge from the discomfiting environment, it is 'back' there that symbolizes the ultimate safety and acceptance, that is truly home. This theme flows deeply through much of Canadian fiction: journeys of return to the small town of childhood, of memory or of mythic forebears abound. Yet it is almost always a temporary return, for there can be no easy escape from the city. The walls and locks that serve to protect also effectively confine and the imagery of entrapment is persistent.

The car is perhaps the ultimate urban symbol. Auto imagery is frequently used by authors as a device to heighten the sensation of stress, isolation from others, detachment from the environment or mechanized, impersonal danger. Interaction with others in this non-human scale landscape occurs by proxy -- encased in cars, over the telephone, through television. Other recurring symbols include locks, fences and institutions (notably hospitals and psychiatric facilities, both of which serve to strip away the last vestiges of personal control over environment and self). Themes of death and old age are common, as is the depiction of psychological disorientation and mental and physical disability. Characters are presented as psychically wizened and stunted, attempting to cope with but often overwhelmed by the demands of their environment.

In the face of this prototypic vision of the city and city life, a small series of anomalies appeared. Certain works eluded this overall
characterization; certain authors seemed to see and in turn portray a significantly different city. For example, Hugh Garner and Mordecai Richler embue the cities of their fiction with a setting that seems broadly personal and supportive, an environment familiar, understood, under control. Similarly Hugh Hood's city-situated novels also exhibit this less menacing demeanor. It is evident that such writers were indeed portraying a different city: in general they were either writing of the city of their recollection -- the smaller urban community of an earlier, slower paced time -- or their novels were set in neighborhoods within the larger city, neighborhoods firmly defined and bounded by lines of ethnicity or poverty. Clearly this was another, though less common aspect of the fictive city that had to be taken into consideration.

More typically, however, the contemporary city in Canadian literature is depicted as a place incoherent and disorderly, a place in which inhabitants feel little sense of control, choice, competence or security. It is a landscape perceived as hostile and inhospitable. The perception of urban place is defined by images of anxiety and by an elemental sense of detachment, of disconnection from environment, from others, and, at times, from reality.

In view of this forbidding portrait of the Canadian urban environment, it seems appropriate that the seventy-second Psalm, which includes the phrase "let His dominion also be from sea to sea," and from which the Fathers of Confederation chose the designation for this country, begins:

Let men flourish out of the city ...

Such a brief summary does little justice to the subtleties of tone, nuance and symbol by which a writer evokes a setting, the sensitive word-picture that paints a sense of place and of life in that place. But
perhaps a more serious limitation of such a summary is its subjectivity -- it represents the interpretation of a single reader, based on the choice of works (despite the attempt to range as widely and comprehensively as possible) of one reader. Since practically no critical work has been done on Canadian urban fiction, it is impossible to confirm the accuracy of this impression by reference to other analysis. However there are a few anthologies of short stories based on urban themes and settings that can serve to establish that the image derived from the novels indeed represents the predominant perception of urban place and that it is not skewed by choice of material or bias of interpretation. The first, The Urban Experience, one of the Themes in Canadian Literature series, is a collection of poetry, fiction and non-fiction. Of the six works of fiction, three are set in contemporary cities, three are recollections of the urban past. Toronto Short Stories, is more explicitly concerned with fiction, with sixteen of the twenty stories dealing with contemporary life in that city, two reminiscences and two stories revolving around the immigrant experience of Toronto. (The third collection that looked promising, Winnipeg Stories, proved to be of little value, since the criterion for selection was not that the works were set in Winnipeg or said something about that urban milieu but rather that "they are stories by Winnipeggers and ex-Winnipeggers and they are about Winnipeg and about other places." The editor has chosen fiction that reveals what she terms "the Winnipeg style" rather than Winnipeg itself. It is also a statement about the relative lack of interest in urban fiction in Canada that I could find no collection of Montreal short stories, although a good deal of city-oriented, English language work has come out of that city.)
The short stories in these two collections, presumably a representative selection, provided a useful sounding board against which to test the validity of the impressions gained from a summer's reading of Canadian novels. And the major themes outlined previously did indeed recur, with varying degrees of emphasis, throughout the anthologies. In The Urban Experience, the city appears as a place of vaguely defined, underlying threat. In the first story, "The Happiest Man in the World," the protagonist, after "locking all his files," proceeds past "the uniformed watchman" to get his car from the security of the underground car-park. Once home he notices with annoyance that his garage door has been left ajar; it too must be kept locked so that "children on the street wouldn't take things from his workbench or spill his paint." Urban life is secured by locks and doors. Indeed life is a passage from one place of security to another: driving home on the parkway he must be wary of the "Friday night drunks and the unmarked police cars that patrolled the road." Both law-breaker and law-enforcer are regarded as threatening in a landscape where the sense of order is problematic.

In this story the city at large appears as nothing more than a series of highways and roads, driveways and parking lots. Indeed the pivotal action takes place in a plaza parking lot when a belligerent driver scrapes the protagonist's car, for even human disagreement is reduced to mechanical interaction. Social acceptance is rendered in terms of the automobile as well — the central character, happily contemplating a new car to celebrate his promotion, is careful to consider that his choice must be "nothing too ostentatious, of course, for the short suburban street in Green Briar Hills." The landscape symbolically circumscribes his choice even as it circumscribes his life.
The suburban setting of this story makes it a notable exception in urban literature, for suburbia has received little attention from Canadian writers. Green Briar Hills, once considered a suburb ("the in-place for families on their way up"\textsuperscript{17}) was now "a part of the city to those who lived in the newer subdivisions further out,"\textsuperscript{18} swallowed up by the encroaching city despite the natural and rural pretensions of its name.

Garner's story reveals a man suddenly precipitated into an acute awareness of his discomfort with his time and place. The picture of urban society is bleak: a shallow world of superficialities and appearances. It depicts the protagonist as a solitary individual, cut off from his detached and distant wife, even as she presents a perfect picture of an executive wife; cut off from his son (with whom he is unable to communicate, reaching the boy and finally establishing a relationship only through a violent act that he abhors); cut off from his co-workers (who do not 'really know' him and whose reaction to his promotion is jealous antipathy); cut off from his family (a letter from his sister brings a sharp pang of regret over their estrangement, and his desire for more children and nostalgia for the family mealtimes of his childhood all symbolize the feeling of family that he realizes has been lost); cut off from his neighbours (for social interaction has been formalized -- "we owe them an invite"\textsuperscript{19} --, subject to rules and undertaken for the purpose of status maintenance -- for example, to announce his promotion); and finally, alienated from a society whose ethos he has never before consciously examined and which he finds he does not share. It is a bleak picture of a man truly alone, suddenly realizing the depth of his estrangement. He marvels "sadly at the universal meanness shared by all the frightened, frustrated people"\textsuperscript{20} who share his urban life space.
The sense of place depicted in Hugh Hood's "Flying a Red Kite" is equally bleak, as the terms he uses to describe the city reveal -- "sweaty bath of shimmering glare from the sidewalk," grimy, clamoured, trampled, pushed furiously, the "jitter of the city." Again the persistent image of shuttling movement is featured, as Hood graphically depicts the sensation of being trapped in a hot bus, encapsulated by windows that would not open, fellow passengers who would not move. It is only when the protagonist climbs the mountain above the city, its clear dry air, sunshine, green foliage and wild raspberries painted in stark contrast to the stifling environment from which he has momentarily escaped, that he can get the red kite to soar, symbol of competence and control and ultimately, of freedom.

Fog, in the piece by that name by Ethel Wilson, blankets the city, signifying "danger and warning," a "relentless blank," rendering the "unpleasant part of Mt. Pleasant" in which old Mrs. Bylow lives, as grey as her life. Her world has shrunk to the lonely confines of home and tentative journeyings to the corner store, to a "closed-up dry well of boredom" and loneliness. Yet even that shrunken world proves ultimately hostile, for Mrs. Bylow is fatally injured by boys who have just robbed and killed Wong Kee in his grocery store. She is "... wiped out by forces quite outside herself like a moth in a storm (not much more and no less)" -- forces that Wilson firmly connects to the anonymity of the city, to the foggy grey landscape of disorientation and concealment. Wilson's simile is apt: the urban environment she portrays is indeed stormy.

Jack Ludwig's "Requiem for Bibul" is set in the city of a different era. The richly populated, intensely personal environment of pre-World War II Winnipeg provides a marked contrast to the anonymity of contemporary Vancouver that Wilson depicts. The setting echoes the central theme of the
story. It is a world of people known and familiar, accepted in spite of their eccentricities, of place described with warmth and affection, a polyglot world rich with character and characters. The harsh economic reality of the time is reflected in Ludwig's picture of the landscape:

Into the lists Malkeh dragged the keening wagon, onto the "island" in ruins like a medieval city... Foundationless hovels kids might have built out of assorted-sized decks of cards sagged, leaned at crazy-house angles to astound Pisa. Gates tipsy as Malkeh's wagon swung on one hinge from a last lost post; dry cracking wood fences leaned in surrender toward the ground...

But the social reality is just as sensitively revealed -- a picture of a warmly textured world of interaction. Ludwig juxtaposes two points of contrast to this urban world remembered -- within the story Bibul leaves for rabbinical school in New York. His friend's caution neatly catches the essence of the milieu that Ludwig has detailed: "... doesn't the idea of a city the size of New York scare you? You'll be strange. Winnipeg's a village..." Within a year Bibul is dead, his life symbolically stifled by the heat of the metropolis. The second counterpoint takes the form of a narrative comment when Bibul's friend, as narrator, brings the recollection to the present. Winnipeg has become a city comparable to the New York of decades ago, where indeed many find themselves 'strange,' strangers. The city has changed physically, socially, vitally. He laments that "I cannot find Bibul's like in Winnipeg today" and that "someone waved a T-square wand over the old island, bringing in the 90-degree angle unknown in Bibul's far-off day. Progress pretends Bibul's "island" never really existed." Winnipeg has been homogenized and sanitized into a place of strangers, of "River Heights, Silver Heights, Garden City, places of Togetherness, Betterness, Spotlessness, the polite answers Comfort has given to the sad old questions of Civilization." Civic virtue
has obliterated city life: "The fact remains I cannot find Bibul's like in Winnipeg today."\(^3\)

The final two stories, "The Great Electrical Revolution" by K. Mitchell and "The Saga of the Fine-toothed Comb" by J.H. Gray also reflect back on times past. Like Ludwig, these authors make no attempt to soften the harsh facts of reality -- the economic hardship of the Depression, the ever-present threat of unemployment, the prevalence of racial prejudice and tension. Yet they also point up, less self-consciously than Ludwig, the supportive aspects of the urban past. In their recreations the environment, for all its harshness, is perceived by its inhabitants as reasonable, manageable, human, essentially humane. For example, in "The Great Electrical Revolution" Grandad achieves symbolic (though short lived) victory over the Light and Power Company -- "Cut off my power, will they?"\(^4\) In those days, the ominous "they" who control the city and the lives of its citizens were not perceived as impregnable, as Grandad proved by tapping into the power line and gleefully furnishing free electricity for himself and his neighbours. In those days, a man could retaliate; his destiny still lay in his own hands. A strong sense of self-determination and purposefulness characterizes both these stories and contrasts with the sense of resignation and ineptitude with which the characters in the three contemporary stories cope with their urban environment.

The perception of the city that is contained in these six stories from _The Urban Experience_ echoes the imagery in the novels and also portends a similar vision of the city in the second anthology, _Toronto Stories_. Again the contemporary city is depicted as a place of anxiety, an environment in which people are always aware of their essential vulnerability.
"For heaven's sake, it's only Toronto," Greta said. She worked in Detroit for three years and she never lets you forget it, it's like she's a war hero or something, we should all admire her just for the fact that she's still walking this earth, though she was really living in Windsor the whole time; she just worked in Detroit which for me doesn't really count. It's where you sleep, right.  

This sense of vulnerability underlies much of the action in the stories and predicates the reaction of characters to their environment. "You can't spend your whole life in the Filing Department or cooped up in your own apartment with all the doors and windows locked and the shades down." In "Home Grown in the East End" this sense of vulnerability leads to the ultimate defensive posture in which the son retreats to the attic, withdrawing completely from the outside world, which "saw only his hand reaching out for necessities then drawing in again ... He had diminished to signs and traces." Even this protective diminution failed to shield him from reality however, and his body is found frozen beneath the attic window.

He had pushed and squeezed and thrust himself through the narrow space that had been his hold on life, hurtling to the earth in silence and landing with a great mellow thud.

This 'narrow space' in a protective wall also appears in "Something for Olivia's Scrapbook, I Guess." A fugitive girl, deaf and mute, is hidden from the authorities in a shed -- "You could drill a hole in the wall and charge a dime to peek in." The comment is made facetiously but the symbol endures: reality, the outside world, can always breach the barricade. In this story the authorities are the enemy and the institution threatens, both personified by the ever-present 'they':

"They're going to put you in jail, do you know that? Or they're going to send the men in the white coats for you. Either way, there's going to be nothing left of you ..."

One character "had diminished to signs and traces;" of another there would be "nothing left." The urban reality erodes identity, crushes
spirit and symbolically extinguishes self.

Concurrent with the themes of threat and vulnerability is the theme of escape. Death of course is the ultimate escape, whether by accident (as in "The Premeditated Death of Samuel Glover"), suicide ("Home Grown in the East End", "Death of a Friend"), hanging ("Adrift"), murder ("House of the Whale") or old age ("The Old Lady's Money"). Indeed six of the twenty stories in this collection involve death. The compulsion to escape the stresses inherent in the environment is depicted in forms less extreme as well, and it is significant that escape is usually psychological -- into daydreams,\(^1\) or withdrawal into self -- rather than physical escape from the city. The deaf mute is the ultimate symbol of detachment from others and from environment\(^2\) as are the mentally retarded or neurologically impaired who represent another form of escape from urban reality. Four of the twenty stories in this anthology are set in or involve psychiatric facilities.\(^3\) Detachment from others as well as from reality is featured prominently; the few relationships portrayed are depicted as empty and unsatisfying. Communication is problematic -- sharing a landscape does not imply sharing a world. A piece of music is "a communiqué from the other country where she lives."\(^4\) "He was always moving on to another world that they knew nothing about."\(^5\) "... a stranger from a country she had never dreamed of visiting."\(^6\) "I might have known from the start, the two of us, -- worlds apart -- were bound to have our share of [disagreements]."\(^7\)

Isolation is basic to urban life even at the most casual levels of social interaction: on the subway "strangers to the city talk right out loud, and -- very worst -- sometimes they look across the aisle and catch their fellow travellers eye-to-eye."\(^8\)
The car is frequently used to delineate something essential about city life. In "The Premeditated Death of Samuel Glover" it is the instrument by which 'fate' kills Glover. In "The Butterfly Ward" the setting is "the hospital in the big, shining car city, so many cars here, with streets of sparkling light at night ..." But these streets of sparkling light represent a network of danger with images of fast moving, anti-human traffic often serving to heighten the atmosphere of tension within a setting.

The picture of the physical environment parodies that of the social milieu. It is a city characterized by hard planes, cold surfaces, by extremes of heat and cold.

When I moved here, twelve years ago, other homes like this surrounded it. Now when I look out the window past the two oaks that survive in the front yard, I see metal balconies and concrete.

Behind us was Bay Street and I turned and let my eyes roll down the narrow canyon toward the lake. "That's the Wall Street of Toronto," you said. "Street of money, street of walls."

But the physical environment of the city cannot be disconnected from the people who live in it: "At first I spent a week in Vancouver, watching the people carry the city back and forth in little bags."

Nor can it be disconnected from the reaction of those who live in it: "Some days I hate the city, it smashes up against me -- a jungle of smoke and flesh. And then there are other times, when it lives again for me, and its life presses out of the new air, starting again."

The city indeed has an autonomous (though often threatening) existence: "... and it was as though the building was alive, shivering, with bones and sinews and tendons, with a life of its own. I didn't trust it ..."
The picture of place sketched by a writer can neatly distill the geographer's socio-spatial map:

Far from the city centre, the buses had the blank serenity of people on their way to church and the further away one got, the paler and more homogeneous the faces seemed. Heading back, on the other hand, the buses and trains would become microcosms of cosmopolitan fervour: the Greek and Jamaican and Chinese returning home from factories and fish shops, chattering in a language they would have identified as English, though no English-speaking person could hope to understand more than the occasional word.

Misunderstanding, confusion, is perhaps the single definitive characteristic by which Canadian authors epitomize urban reality:

In the city a ferry is a big boat. They're like painted pictures. From far off they look so clear and real. Real the way you imagine things to be real. Or the way you want them to be. But up close they look lousy. Dirty and cracked, and the kind of real that makes you feel old and tired.

In the city, reality is tenuous and shifting; illusion becomes, "up close," disillusion. And in these short stories anxiety and disillusionment, confusion and unease are the predominant reactions to and within this fictive urban environment. These few examples demonstrate that the same vision of urban reality that obtained in the novels also permeated the anthologies. Furthermore, this analysis of the anthologies reveals an image of the city and of city life that has been derived from characterization and thematic focus as well as from physical description and symbolic reference to the setting. Intertwined, theme, character and background serve to present a composite vision of the urban experience. These three elements are, of course, related -- first, in terms of literary technique (as, for example, an author uses setting to enhance theme and, vice versa, when theme serves to intensify the feeling or mood of the setting; as the characters' imputed reactions to and within the environment reinforce and extend the picture of place depicted or conversely, in the device of pathetic fallacy,
where aspects of the environment portend plot or character development). Further -- and perhaps of more interest to the geographer -- these three elements are related insofar as they can each separately address the mood, tone and ambiance of the landscape and together can contribute a composite word-picture of place. Thus the summary goes beyond gathering graphic details of description limned from the texts and illustrates the broader approach to using literature as social document.

In this chapter an attempt has been made to present (and to justify as well as to illustrate by reference to examples from two anthologies) the prototypical vision of urban place. A collage of imagery has been convoked, the accretion of examples plucked from the works, perhaps at best offering a broad overview, a feel for the urban portrait -- indeed the type of impression that began to take shape in my mind as I read the novels. Yet ultimately this is only an overview. And if the objective of this exercise is, to borrow the words of Salter and Lloyd, to go beyond sight to vision and insight, then clearly this is only the first step in the process of trying to arrange and ultimately better understand this unwieldy, rewarding material.
Footnotes

Chapter II

1 In 1971, 76.1% of Canadians lived in urban centers and one in two lived in census metropolitan areas (with populations of over 100,000). Source: Canadian Urban Trends; National Perspectives, vol. I, ed. D.M. Ray (Ottawa: Copp Clark in association with the Ministry of State for Urban Affairs, 1972).

2 Eli Mandel has examined the city in poetry in a chapter by that name in Another Time; Esther Bobak is working on a doctoral dissertation on the Canadian urban novel (unfinished at this writing); a few theses have explored the treatment of specific cities in Canadian literature, e.g. Anthony Kilgallin, "Toronto in Prose and Poetry" (M.A. thesis, University of Toronto, 1966).


4 This treatment was especially evident in the more recently published work of some of the younger writers. These works (e.g. Canadian Healing Oil by Juan Butler, Five Legs by Graeme Gibson) tend to be surrealistic in tone, sometimes experimental in style and often taking the form of an internal dialogue or exploration in which the environment is of little immediate concern. These novels that said nothing, either symbolic or specific, about cities or city life further reduced the small number of urban-set novels that could be used as material.

It is important to note that it is not the style of surrealism or psychological realism per se that precludes a novel from being useful as a source of data (indeed some of these works of psychological realism, a form current in the past decade, proved a valuable source of comment, both literal and symbolic). Rather it is their focus on the inner landscape, sometimes to the exclusion of any reference to the external one, that limits their function as urban indicator.


6 John Stevens, ec., The Urban Experience (Toronto: McMillan, 1975).

The fact that these examples, like the overall impression, were 'plucked' from their context tends perhaps to exaggerate the negativeness of impression, and to overemphasize their relative importance within the literary work itself. Isolated and strung together, rather than appearing as background or incorporated thematically or symbolically within the larger context of the story, the imagery assumes much more impact than when it functions merely as part of the story. In any separate work the vision of the city is unlikely to be as singularly malevolent as this compendium suggests; the examples reinforce each other, compounding a
picture that appears extreme. Yet any distortion of impression is one of quantity not quality, for the examples have been carefully chosen to be representative of the perception of place that does occur in the work.

58 Salter and Lloyd, Landscape in Literature, p. 28.
CHAPTER III
THE FRAMEWORK REVISED

The preceding section has briefly illustrated some main themes characteristic of Canadian urban literature and has introduced the prevalent images of the city as living place. From this preliminary survey of the literature, two points emerged which subsequently became the nexus of this thesis. The first is obvious — that the urban social environment was overwhelmingly portrayed either as empty and meaningless, peripheral to the story and eliciting little response, or more typically, as hostile, menacing, uncontrolled and unordered, engendering feelings of detachment, uncertainty and impotence. The degree of consensus about this latter imagery is itself significant; very few exceptions were evident. Second, it became apparent, as noted earlier, that a framework or model would be necessary to organize and clarify this data, to reveal pattern in the various reactions to urban living and to achieve more than a collection or cataloguing of urban imagery. For to list this imagery is merely to paraphrase it and to remove it one step further from its source in the real world of experience. This is surely data that must lose something in translation (or transcription). To attempt to convey this image is important, but it is not an end in itself. It is merely a preliminary step -- a data-gathering, a reconnaissance.

These two considerations led to the search for a suitable framework and ultimately to the choice of Northrop Frye's garrison mentality model.
It encompassed both terms of reference: it served to provide a framework (or, more precisely, the basis for developing one) and it was formulated on the premise of a hostile environment. That it came from a literary tradition seemed especially appropriate.

A model, however, cannot be adopted naively, merely transferred uncritically from literary criticism to serve geographical purposes; it must be examined within the founding context of Frye's literary criticism, informed by the social theory on which it is implicitly based. In adopting a model, it is necessary to be critically aware of the kinds of links, the forms of connection between art and society that it assumes.

The analytical procedures employed by Frye and implicit in the theoretical base of the model originate in the mythic — structuralist critical theory that he espouses. This method of defining the relationship between art and society is a dominant paradigm in the field of literary criticism. While it is fundamentally a structuralist mode of explanation, in its own field it is commonly identified by the label mythic, perhaps because the term structuralist in literature has become firmly associated with linguistic structuralism, semiotic theory and writers such as Barthes. And since structuralism in literary criticism does not deal with the structure of words, of language (as, for example, does Barthes), but rather with the underlying structure evident in the works themselves, taken as a whole, perhaps mythic is a less confusing label to apply to this mode of analysis. As well, the term distinguishes the model more clearly from a Marxist approach which can also take a structuralist mode. However, the terms structure and structuralist will appear frequently in this section because the mythic mode of literary criticism is essentially a direct descendant of Lévi-Straussian structuralism, cultural
anthropological theory applied to literature.

Frye's theoretical work has been definitive in the field of literary criticism. He approaches literature, not in terms of explaining, analyzing or understanding any single text, but from a holistic perspective which focusses on literature as an integral unit. He advances a specific conceptual framework whose principles apply to literature as a whole and which "has an end in the structure of literature as a total form as well as a beginning in the text studied." Further, "existing monuments of literature form an ideal order among themselves and are not simply collections of the writings of individuals." It is this overall order that is the focus of Frye's concern and which is the basis for the schematic structure upon which he sets up elaborate taxonomies. The framework centres on his concept of mythos; he defines the role of myth in literary criticism as a "structural, organizing principle of literary form." These myths express basic views of man's destiny and they become the recurring plots and metaphors of literature. They form the categories and themes within the structure of which Frye analyzes literary works. As is typical of a structuralist mode of explanation, this mythic and symbolic structure can be diagrammed into complex patterns of opposition.

Thus Frye is concerned with the general, thematic and archetypal similarities in literary works. He sees these categories, this schema, as universal and suggests that the function of literary criticism is to examine various works in terms of this overall order. The focus is on the underlying structure or form rather than on the content or context of the work. The method, therefore, constitutes a formalist approach to literature -- an approach in which a work is analyzed in terms of its relationship to other works; it is to be understood in and of itself,
without any reference to the biography or times of the writer. "It can be analysed objectively, without recourse to personal taste or to such fields as history, political science and psychology."\(^5\)

In view of this literature-as-self-contained-system approach, it would seem that Frye and other literary critics would have little to say about the links between art and society. Indeed society does not appear to come into their analysis at all; literature is seen in terms of an autonomous conceptual universe, apart from society. As Frye concludes, literature is made out of other literature, not out of life,\(^6\) and, further, that "the imaginative element in works of art ... lifts them clear of the bondage of history."\(^7\) Thus his conceptual schema is predicated on a fundamental separation of literature and its social dimension.

But this is perhaps an oversimplification for Frye does address the issue of the social context of literature and criticism.\(^8\) In *The Critical Path* he notes that:

... seeing literature as a unity in itself does not withdraw it from a social context: on the contrary it becomes far easier to see what its place in civilization is. Criticism will always have two aspects, one turned toward the structure of literature and one turned toward the other cultural phenomena that form the social environment of literature.\(^9\)

Frye advocates a balance of both these aspects, a unification of this duality (hardly a surprising position for a structuralist, for the fundamental schema of structuralism is the diadic, dialectical framework that permits the mediation of bipolar oppositions). For Frye the unifying principle that effects this reconciliation is the imagination of man. Thus:

*Literature ... neither reflects nor escapes from ordinary life. What it does reflect is the world as human imagination conceives it, in mythical, romantic, heroic and ironic as well*
as realistic and fantastic terms ... [It] is the world man exists and participates in through his imagination.\textsuperscript{10}

Thus in the structuralist analysis imagination is the key link that connects art and society, that subsumes both categories, that permits the concept of a transcending literature that is still firmly anchored in the "real" world. Imagination is, in Frye's terms, the creative force of the mind; in other words, the structuring power of mind. From this we can conclude that his concept of structure is intrinsic to the mind of man, one that exists as an ordering principle rather than one that is inherent in the world, external to but discoverable by the mind of man.

Imagination, he suggests, "creates reality."\textsuperscript{11} It also creates literature. And insofar as art and reality (the real world, society) are products of man's imagination (i.e. his categories for understanding), they are linked. The fundamental structuring power of man's imagination is basic to and underlies both a work of art and society as man creates and perceives it. It is thus the essential connection between them, as well as being the schema through which both art and society must be understood.

The mythic structuralist method of analyzing literature deals not with the landscape of environment but rather with the landscape of mind. Its focus of concern is the mythic structure, not the social dimensions revealed in a work of art. Therefore it does not deal with social conditions, interaction with others or any social or historical context of place. Nor does it incorporate any view of literature as a social force or agent of change. Since both art and society essentially reflect the same basic structure, art can have no effect on society, just as in this formalist mode of analysis, society has no effect on art.
Within this formalistic literary focus, the world, real or perceived, is inconsequential and it therefore seems difficult to find much relevance in this method to geographical inquiry.

Thus the social theory on which it is based would seem to impose severe restrictions on the value of the garrison mentality model as an explanatory framework for our purposes. Garrison mentality is, for Frye, essentially a mythic structure; literature is analyzed to reveal the pervasiveness of this myth in the literary imagination. It is a theme related not to external reality but "to a social imagination." Conversely, the objective of this study is the analysis of literature to reveal modes of perceiving, images of place, reactions and behaviour. Its terms of reference are firmly set in the real world. Thus changes must be made to Frye's model and, more fundamentally, to its theoretical basis.

A careful reading of the article in which Frye outlines the mythos of garrison mentality reveals the relationship he posits (or implies) between the spatial order, the social order, the garrison mentality and literature (See Figure 1, p. 60). The spatial order of that formative era was characterized by "defensive isolation of scattered pioneer communities;" this historical nature of communities "engenders" a garrison mentality. This garrison mentality in turn "produces" literature. "Imagination creates reality" and thus the garrison mentality, as a structure of the imagination, also influences the attendant social order, which Frye describes as unified and homogenous. (Early settlements were "communities in which writers were dogmatically sure of their derivative moral and social values." The garrison mentality underlies both the social order and the works of literature and thus they are related: "the literature [the garrison mentality] produces tends to be rhetorical,
an illusion or allegory of certain social attitudes." Further "we have said that literature creates a detached autonomous mythology, and that society itself produces a corresponding mythology ... to which a great deal of literature belongs." But Frye's interest is confined to that autonomous realm of fictional and fictive mythology; neither society, the social mythos nor the connections between literature and society concern him. The social order is as peripheral to Frye's interest as it is to the idealist-structuralist schema that he is elaborating. His focus is on literature as it reflects the garrison mentality. His mirror is a mythic prism, a glass that reflects the innate structure of man's mind, the collective imagination that forms and informs creative literature. He holds literature to this glass to illuminate the interconnection between fictive work and myth.

Literature ... neither reflects nor escapes from human life. What it does reflect is the world as the imagination conceives it ... This "literary imagination" is, he concedes, a "force and function of life generally," but his analytic emphasis is on II and III in the schema -- literature as it reflects the garrison structure of mind, and the garrison structure as it 'produces' literature -- and not on "life generally." Nor does he address (indeed barely acknowledges) the interconnections between the social order and this mythic theme of garrison.

While such a paradigm is undoubtedly useful within the context of literary criticism, its deficiencies for the social scientist focussed ultimately on society, on environment and on "life generally," are apparent. While Frye's basic concept of garrison/wilderness is clearly valuable, it is obvious that the model cannot be adopted uncritically but must be changed in focus, in intent, and in theoretical grounding.
The second schema (Figure 2, p. 60) indicates the scope of these changes. In this paradigm both the social and the spatial order are seen as providing a context for the development of a garrison mentality. The construct itself is not mythic but refers rather to a way of perceiving, a conceptual frame, an image-ing. Indeed it is revealed in literary work as image. Furthermore the analytic focus of this schema (as indicated by the broken line) is not as narrow as Frye's: (III) literature, insofar as it reveals images of (II) the garrison mentality, reflects (I) the socio-spatial order from which context that image of garrison arises. The garrison model becomes the link between art and society, between fiction and the socio-spatial order. The garrison mentality has become a double-faced mirror: holding literature up to one side will show us images of the garrison; at the same time the other side of the mirror will reflect the actual social and spatial environment from which this image, this way of perceiving — and this literature — has ultimately come. (It is the former reflection, of course, that is of concern here, that will provide the mirror whose glass will reflect the patterns characteristic of urban fiction. It will serve as the framework within which the data from literary sources can be focussed and analyzed. But it is important to note that the schema incorporates the other side of the mirror as well, that it addresses the real world as well as the fictive, and thereby elaborates the critical connection that is assumed between them.)

The garrison mentality itself has become the mirror — figuratively set midway between II and III, between the real and fictive worlds, reflecting both but also serving as a focussing lens through which the experience and perception of reality is transposed into literature. This doubly reflective yet also refractive mirror is a more complex symbol than
II. 'influences'  
III. 'produces'  

I. SPATIAL ORDER 'engendered'  
   (defensive isolation; the historical nature of communities)  

II. GARRISON MENTALITY  
   (an ordering principle; a mythic theme revealing a structure of the mind)  

III. LITERATURE  

(* "the literature [the garrison mentality] produces tends to be rhetorical, an illusion or allegory of certain social attitudes"16.)  

Figure 1: FRYE'S CONCEPT SCHEMATIZED

Figure 2: THE SCHEMA REVISED
the mirrors examined in Chapter I. Though it appears intuitively obvious that literature can be seen as social reflection, the simile proves to be more complex than those simpler versions indicated.

In this model the question of the relationship between the author and society (i.e. is the author representative or does he present a biased, personal or idiosyncratic view?) is not problematic. The social and physical environment (which both artist and others presumably share) provides a context for the development of a way of perceiving. Thus to the extent that the artist and others share a common context, at a general level they share common ways of perceiving, categories of understanding, ways of ordering their world that will in turn be evident in the creative expression of the author.23 "A way of saying implicitly establishes a way of knowing."24

Significant theoretical changes have been made to Frye's version of the garrison mentality paradigm to encompass the complexity, to incorporate the social as well as the spatial order, and to draw more specific links between reality and fiction. The analytic emphasis (broken lines) has changed in response to the more pronounced social focus of geography vis-à-vis the self-contained realm of literary criticism.

The earlier section revealed Frye's theoretical basis to be formalist -- his focus is on the form of the creative work within a literary context of analysis, within the autonomous world of literature. He notes that: "discursive verbal structures have two aspects, one descriptive, the other constructive, a content and a form"25 His emphasis is wholly on the latter. By contrast this analysis (and this model) approach literature not in terms of form but of content and, as well, of context -- for the extra-literary, socio-spatial context is fundamental to such an analysis
of place. The preceding evaluation of Frye's basic structuralist position also revealed it to be an essentially idealist stance, whereas this analysis seeks a pattern socially grounded, anchored in community. For Frye the garrison model principally serves to illuminate a basic, innate and underlying structure of mind; in this analysis the garrison model functions to provide a method of linking art and society.

The two paradigms also differ in scale of analysis. Frye's construct is a holistic one (as, by definition, is any structuralist mode of explanation); the revised schema is predicated on an individualistic or micro level of explanation. Frye speaks in collective terms: the "Canadian imagination," the "social imagination." The [social] imagination has its own modes of expression." He asserts that "communities ... develop ... a garrison mentality." In contrast, the second model addresses such issues in individual terms -- persons develop a garrison mentality. The focus is on the individual experience of the socio-spatial environment, the subjective reaction to reality, the individual perception of garrison as it is revealed by garrison/wilderness imagery.

These changes to Frye's paradigm have resulted in a model that is more explicitly social and is based on a fundamentally different theoretical perceptive. However the revised model still has Frye's complementary concepts of garrison and wilderness as its focal point; it still revolves around the notion of garrison mentality. Yet even this conceptual basis did not go unaltered in the transition from literature to geography. In the process of applying the model to contemporary fiction in order to analyze reaction to urban place, a pattern soon became evident which proved consistent and comprehensive. This in turn necessitated further alteration to the model. While these consisted only of changes in
definition and not in structure or intent, nonetheless they altered the model even further.

The images of garrison and wilderness indeed remained notable in a body of work produced a century after the era of specific social and spatial conditions that led Frye to formulate this concept. Furthermore they still retained their ordering capacity. But it became apparent that the objective referents of both notions had altered. Imagery of wilderness no longer literally referred to the untamed physical environment; instead the metropolis had metaphorically become the wilderness. As can be seen from the summary presented in Chapter II, the city itself was perceived and depicted as hostile, problematic, an environment of uncertainty, risk and insecurity. The literary evidence supports Tuan's observation that "as a state of mind, true wilderness exists only in the great sprawling cities." The image of community -- once garrison -- had been subsumed under the label of wilderness. However the other half of the paradigm, the concept of garrison, did not disappear in this shift in image, this altered perception of place. A wilderness, however redefined, still necessitates a garrison. And the garrison was found to persist in contemporary urban fiction in three major forms -- the garrison remembered, the garrison transplanted and the garrison contracted. These three themes, to be expanded in the next chapter, constitute the pattern that was sought. They provide the basis of the framework that organizes the material into a comprehensive relationship.

That such changes of definition within the model are necessary to make it applicable to contemporary experience seems hardly startling. It is obvious that a physical wilderness of defensive isolation no longer exists as an immediate and hostile presence in contemporary experience.
It is equally obvious that our concepts of community (as well as our actual communities) have altered over the past century.

Indeed Frye never intended that the garrison mentality model should apply only to the era from which it was derived. In his writing is contained the suggestion that it would be modified accordingly. "As the center of Canadian life moves from the fortress to the metropolis, the garrison mentality changes correspondingly."\(^3\) The changes that Frye focussed upon were the changes that came from and within the literature itself, e.g. the change from rhetorical to dialectical, from narrative to lyrical forms,\(^3\) and the change from a literary tradition expressive of the moral values of the group to a tradition that questions the status quo, that rebels against "the anti-creative elements in life ..."\(^3\) The writer becomes part of a literary tradition that is "increasingly more of a revolutionary garrison within a metropolitan society."\(^3\) It is these changes in literature qua literature, and in the relationship of the writer to society, that Frye analyzes in terms of a garrison mentality. It is the analysis of literature as social document and the relationship of literary content to society that is the central concern in this paper. For literature, as it reflects society, may also be analyzed in terms of a garrison, with a changed society proffering a changed definition of garrison.

Not only did the concept of garrison mentally persist in contemporary fiction but it appears to be an underlying theme throughout the urban literature. It proved to be a useful and inclusive analytic concept which exposed the pattern that lay behind the disparate jumble of urban imagery. In sum, it proved a useful framework for organizing and understanding the fictive reactions to and characterizations of urban place.
Chapter III

The word reconnaissance is appropriate in a semantic sense, deriving as it does from re (again) and cognoscere (to know). Its roots imply getting to know again, becoming reacquainted with what we already know — even as fiction articulates essences and experiences that we 'know' at an immediate level but do not articulate. It makes concrete the ephemera of essential experience so that we may recognize it, come to know it again. As Margaret Laurence comments (in Margaret Laurence by Clara Thomas (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1969), p. 43), she strives to "put down on paper what everyone knows but nobody has thought of saying ..."


3Ibid., p. 16. 6Ibid., p. 341.

5Maclean’s magazine, March 1978, p. 36f.


8Although it may be argued that his interest seems primarily to focus on the relationship between society and literary criticism, as suggested in the subtitle of A Stubborn Structure: Essays on Criticism and Society; and of The Critical Path: An Essay on the Social Context of Literary Criticism.


14 Ibid., p. 165, summarizing Frye's approach.

15 N. Frye, "Conclusion," p. 345 — "The literature it produces ..."


20 This neglect of the social context and its impact is not, of course, unique to Frye but is a common stance in Canadian literary analyses. For example, Desmond Pacey concludes in "The Canadian Imagination" in Essays in Canadian Criticism (Toronto: Ryerson, 1969) that "the Canadian imagination thus far is mainly a function of a landscape and a climate and only secondarily of a society." (p. 234).


23 This point will be expanded at some length in Chapter VI.


26 Frye's idealism is evinced, for example, in his conclusions that "imagination creates reality" (noted earlier) and that both art and reality are products of the mind of man.


29 Ibid., p. 334.

30 Ibid., p. 342. It is unclear whether Frye is merely referring to collectivities, is guilty of reification, or is positing a Jungian collective consciousness. A sentence near the end of the article suggests the latter: "Yet I keep coming back to the feeling that there does seem to such a thing as an imaginative continuum, and that writers are condition­ed in their attitudes by their predecessors, or by the cultural climate of their predecessors, whether there is a conscious influence or not." (p. 361).


33 The origin of rhetorical literature, according to Frye, can be explained in terms of the unquestioned social and moral values charac­teristic of a garrison and a garrison mentality. This proves fertile ground for what he terms 'a dominating herd mind' that questions only
what is different from itself; never its own ambient values. As Frye cites Yeats ("Conclusion," p. 343), "we make rhetoric out of quarrels with one another, poetry out of the quarrel with ourselves." Frye regards the internal changes in Canadian literature from the 'rhetorical impulse to assert' to the 'poetic impulse to construct' to be a sign of maturation of the Canadian literary tradition.

CHAPTER IV
THE FRAMEWORK APPLIED

The preceding chapter has outlined the framework within which a clearer, more coherent picture of urban images could be systematized. As well, it indicated the first result of applying that ordering framework to the novels. As the concepts of wilderness and garrison were extended beyond the historical, literal and theoretical context in which they originated, they became expansive enough to encompass changes in definition. Most clearly, the city had come to be seen as wilderness; in contemporary fictive vision, community, once garrison, had metaphorically shifted to threat. (The words of Livingstone and Harrison succinctly apply: "Like the old frontier concept, which was itself based on metaphor, the new frontiers are analogical extensions of certain characteristics derived from this potent historical image."  

The vision of city life that was summarized in Chapter II can easily be subsumed under a definition of wilderness — even as the dictionary definition progresses from "a tract or region uncultivated . . .," to "an empty or pathless way or region," to "a confusing multitude or mass," to finally "a bewildering situation." 

Thus the image of urban place that predominated from a cursory review of the literature appears consistent with the first half of the wilderness/garrison construct. This aspect of the construct provides us with a neat label, a summarizing concept, an image to encapsulate the imagery. And it is in terms of such an image of wilderness that the
garrison mentality can be justified and understood, for the image provides the rationale behind this 'way of thinking.' However, it is the second complement of the framework that offers the most useful ordering capacity of the model and that, further, permits the inclusion of those anomalous visions of city outlined in Chapter II. For if the concept of wilderness summarizes the urban image, it is the concept of garrison that holds up for analysis the reactions, responses and attitudes that result from such an image, and that can explicate behaviour in terms of perception.

The garrison mentality -- and its various manifestations -- constitute the basis of the model and the focal point of this analysis. It remains to demonstrate that garrison mentality is evident in Canadian urban fiction and, more specifically, the forms in which it occurs.

Armed with the ordering concept of garrison mentality, it was necessary to return to the novels to determine whether the complementary theme of garrison was evident in the literature. Three types or manifestations of garrison, mentioned briefly in Chapter III, were discovered and labelled: the garrison remembered, the garrison transplanted and the garrison contracted. These modern fictive versions of garrison, whether psychic, symbolic or literal in form, constitute three different responses to an imaged urban wilderness. Although they differ significantly, as will become evident in the succeeding sections, they are allied by the fact that they can each be seen as, and explained in terms of, a reaction to urban wilderness. Furthermore, together they appear to constitute an inclusive set of categories within which the garrisons rendered in the fiction seem to fit.
A. The Garrison Remembered

Of the three categories of garrison mentality evident in Canadian fiction, the most prominent is the garrison remembered. This garrison takes the form of the small town -- of childhood, of memory, of mythic forebears. In these urban novels the smaller community epitomizing order, acceptance, coherence and manageability is presented as symbol of safety and security. Of the three categories of garrison this one corresponds most literally to Fry's original garrison (although his complementary concept of wilderness has of course shifted in both context and location). The small town is perceived as garrison against the hostile urban environment in which the characters live, and the journey of return to this place of security is surprisingly common in urban fiction. Indeed this category could equally be labelled 'the retreat to the garrison' for it very often involves an actual visit or return.

The small town is an important point of reference not only in urban-set fiction, but in Canadian fiction in general. A disproportionately large number of Canadian works are set in the small town and its significance in this broader tradition has been widely addressed. The incidence of its use and the emotional intensity of its portrayal combine to suggest that the image of the small town has particular significance for the literary imagination.

What is particularly significant in the specifically urban fiction is the juxtaposition of this small town vis-à-vis the urban present, as it serves to symbolize something fundamental about the urban state of mind.
Commenting on this relationship, novelist Robert Kroetsch has said:

"Our roots are very much in small towns and rural communities. Yet we're an urban people. We have come into our urban centres with a way of thinking that dates back a generation ... This is what's really fascinating about Canada right now. How in hell do we go about inventing these brand new cities? Calgary, Edmonton and Vancouver are surely the three most interesting cities in Canada because each one of them is full of people trying to define a new version of urban."

Kroetsch attributes the significance of the small town to our roots -- roots to which in fiction we often return when the business of inventing cities (or merely surviving in them, since inventing implies a degree of participation and control that the fictive vision of the urban experience denies) becomes too onerous. And while the journey of return to the small town may represent a journey back to actual or spiritual beginnings, it can equally be seen in terms of a retreat from present urban reality to a prototypical garrison, and thus as a manifestation of garrison mentality. For the image of small town that appears in the urban fiction would seem to display the major characteristics of garrison that Frye outlined: confrontation with a menacing presence (in this case the urban environment) and "a great respect for law and order." As well it provides a counterpoint to the urban milieu of hostility and incomprehensibility. The essence of this contrasting vision of place is well summed up by novelist Alice Munro: "... I loved the order, the wholeness, the intricate arrangement of town life." If disorder, detachment and fragmentation symbolize the urban wilderness, then the 'wholeness' of the town must appear as haven and retreat. The literary image also aligns well with Frye's definition of "communities that provide all that their members have in the way of distinctive human values and are compelled to feel a great respect for the law and order that holds them together." For with security comes
rigidity; with safety comes dullness; with familiarity comes loss of privacy; with being accepted and labelled comes the prison of expectations. The psychological garrison walls that serve to unite and protect also confine, and the parochial, stultifying aspect of the close and closed social order of the small town is realistically rendered in this fiction. The portrait is not sentimentalized nor simplified. Indeed, literary analysts have identified this paradoxical image (a place both loved and hated, supportive and suffocating) as the basic characteristic by which Canadian authors define the small town. But the small town that is so realistically rendered is more important as a symbol than as a place, more telling in what it signifies than how it is described, more significant in its function in the urban literature than in its form. For although the description affords a realistic picture of the town and life therein, its primary function in this analysis is not that it details any (or every) small town, but rather that it symbolically represents garrison.

The essence of the small town and its role as a revealing reference point to the urban state of mind are summed up by literary critic Eli Mandel:

> Once we were at "home" in the world, in the definable local place. Once we knew the little town with its square streets and trim maple trees, almost within echo of the primeval forest. Or did we dream it? "Mariposa," Leacock says, "is not a real town." And he goes on to suggest in ... Sunshine Sketches where he dreams of how one returns to that other place, other time, that it exists only as a version of the town that we in cities think we remember. Mariposa is not a place; it is a state of mind.\(^{11}\)

It is as a state of mind that the small town in urban fiction will be addressed, as a manifestation of the garrison mentality which is, after all, nothing more or less than a way of perceiving, a state of mind.
There are several variations on the theme of journey of return to the small town: it can take the form of either permanent, temporary or nostalgic return. The Glassy Sea and Joanne by Marian Engel and The Diviners by Margaret Laurence are examples of the first category. The Box Garden by Carol Shields, The Honeyman Festival by Marian Engel, The Weekend Man and In the Middle of a Life by Richard Wright and Jennifer by David Helwig all contain or refer to a journey of temporary return. And such novels as Fifth Business by Robertson Davies, Lives of Girls and Women by Alice Munro and The Stone Angel and The Fire Dwellers by Margaret Laurence present a reminiscent return to the small town of childhood or earlier life, a flash-back in the mind's eye to times past and places past.  

The theme of the small town as garrison will be illustrated in greater detail by reference to Joanne by Marian Engel, which recounts one such return — a retreat from the city, from an urban lifestyle and, more especially, from a disintegrating marriage. The book examines the death-throes of a relationship and acidly comments on the life style that spawns, or at least sustains, such marriages. It details a woman's struggle to break the bonds of social expectations and to find herself.

In this work life in the city is characterized by a superficiality that is shown to pervade every facet of upper middle class urban existence in Toronto. The atmosphere of urbane facade is introduced in one of the opening chapters in which Joanne comments that the party she and her husband are giving is to "cultivate people," "it's a working party ... You don't have to worry about making brilliant conversation with [the guests]. You just tank them up. Lead them up to the bar and say 'Fill 'her up.'" For such social gatherings, setting is more important than self.
"It doesn't matter how I look, though I try to be decent. The house has to look good, but I don't exist in all this."\textsuperscript{14} Indeed Joanne's identity is realized solely through her husband and children and house: "... the agony of not knowing what footing I'm on with Bill, which amounts to not knowing who I am anymore."\textsuperscript{15} And later, when her children are taken by her mother-in-law: "My life, my personality, my whole being went down the kitchen drain. I became a transparent entity, Mrs No-One ... without my children I am nothing."\textsuperscript{16} "... The me I know has for eighteen years been determined and defined by her environment ..."\textsuperscript{17} Identity and sense of self for the urbanite -- and especially the middle-class woman in this milieu -- are precarious.

Life consists of little more than superficialities: "They're hollow people, the Laurences. You wear good clothes and go to church to keep appearances up."\textsuperscript{19} And the price of maintaining that sleek surface is high: "I'm not sorry that I refused both to hold down a paying job and keep your smart, smart home and model children ready for house tours and cocktail parties. I see no reason to work from 8 a.m. to 11 p.m."\textsuperscript{19} Gradually the protagonist becomes aware both of the emptiness of this lifestyle and the emptiness of her marriage. "The big bourgeois life. Doing everything yourself but under someone else's rule. Buying expensive food he was never coming home to eat, catering to people who don't give a damn."\textsuperscript{20} "... I lead a trivial life."\textsuperscript{21}

Cracks begin to appear in the surface of an urban life world obsessed with, indeed defined by, surface appearance.

It's her birthday. She has all her chandeliers blazing. The apartment is aglitter with all the shiny birthday presents from all the years: all the china birds and flowers and
bonnetted ladies, all the crystal vases and gilt candlesticks.
For a moment everything looks pretty and perhaps even happy;
but ...  

But indeed no one is happy. The protagonist recites a litany
of broken relationships, of lonely, unhappy people. "We're shedding our
husbands like leaves. It's autumn, of course." She laments that she
has no one to confide in:

... Whom will I tell? My good friend Myra, who'd love
to know what's going on in this house and would tell every-
one? Heartha? She's too bound up in her own life ... My
mother-in-law Bertilla, who's ... sure her dear son Bill
married beneath him? Relationships are unsatisfying and people are lonely both within them
and outside them. "At the moment she's terribly lonely, and its a different
kind of loneliness than mine ... She's still looking for someone who
will be permanent company ... searching for someone to give all her con-
fidences too." 

The protagonist comes to see the emptiness of her marriage and
to realize the extent to which she has tried to compensate:

How I have consoled myself in this marriage with things!
I own so many things, so many pointless things.

Unifying two independant spirits requires an enormous
effort. We tried to do it through our lifestyles --
within things, objects, possessions. It didn't work.

Indeed her house in the city, a renovated "great red brick cavern" is
itself the most symbolic diversion. "What I really feel like doing is
getting down to work on the house" "Better to clean out my bureau drawers
and not think idle thoughts." Office routine, like housework, helps
compensate for the lack of order, the essential unmanageability of life.

I like office work. Its like house work, blissfully
finite. You deal with things in order and order ensues.
But such small pockets of order cannot dispel the essential disorder that lies beneath the smooth surface of the social and physical environment. In this milieu "... the little man will never win and I'm the little man. I'm worse off than that though: I'm the little woman."\textsuperscript{32} (As indeed the central theme of the book is an examination of the socially-defined role of women in upper middle class urban society.) Her powerlessness is evinced in many ways: "I love being at the cottage where there's no telephone. Here I'm a slave to it. Why do I have to answer it?"\textsuperscript{33} And it surfaces as outrage when her ten year old daughter is fondled by a stranger in the subway.

It turns out that thirty-two men have this year pinched, pummelled, mauled or touched her. She hates it ... it's only been touching. But it scares her. With all the little kids who've been murdered in hotel rooms and vacant lots, she knows she has to be careful.\textsuperscript{34}

The city, frightening to her child, is alien to her, though not to her husband who fits smoothly into the world she increasingly sees as superficial. "To him there aren't any strangers in this town;"\textsuperscript{35} to her everyone is a stranger -- even the man to whom she is married.

If urban life is symbol of superficiality, then Engel presents the small town as the contrasting symbol of reality. The protagonist takes her two children and moves to the Ontario town where she had lived for a year as a child. It is a metaphorical journey back in time, as well as back to the basics, to the things that matter in life.

... I've rolled my calendar back and I'm living my mother's life forty years ago, struggling with realities instead of cocktail parties.\textsuperscript{36}

And the realities of small town life are not all pleasant. Financial problems loom; the rented quarters have mice, bugs, dirty linoleum and
insufficient heat; with her job comes constrictions on her freedom; the school "was built in 1894 and sits on the side of the hill looking vigorously punitive. When I took them up its high institutional steps into the front door, and trailed them between high windows, grey tongue-and-groove wainscoting and green cast iron radiators ... I wanted to scream and run away."37 At first impression, "the people have grey cross faces and no spring to their step. Their faces are closed. "We've always done it this way," they say."38 Reality has a grey demeanor. But she soon realizes that people in the town are fundamentally caring and helpful. The school principal finds her a job, gives advice:

It'd be a long walk but I grew up here, too: I can show you the shortcut."39

I was suddenly watery-eyed with gratitude. The town's great stone face softened for me ... I felt all aflutter with sentimentality: looked after again.39

She runs into an old friend Merrill, another refugee from the city and from a broken first marriage, who is "tremendously pleased with his new life and his joy radiates as energy. He's living with Jane in a log house in the country north west of here."40 He too 'looks after' her, finding her a place to live, seeking assistance from the network of townspeople he knows. She finds caring concern in the person of Mrs. Brodhurst who nurses her sick son: "A fat woman in a big apron, out of another time. I had forgotten there was such kindness in the world."41 Such encounters lead her to muse over "... a town where people look so grim and are so kind."42 Reality here has little to do with appearances. Nor does it always have a pleasant facade:

Suddenly a sepulchral voice said, "May I help you." and there loomed out of the darkness a grey woman with the world's largest goitre on her neck. ... Poor woman. She takes the bland appearance off modern life: Andrew will never forget that in 1973
there was one person in this world that didn't look like a Barbie Doll.\textsuperscript{43}

As the people in the town are real, so are the relationships she sees. Rosie is "a deliciously unlikely person: big and gutsy, but not gross; no, she stands for something I value and haven't seen much of lately, independence and pigheadedness and strength."\textsuperscript{44} Rosie's relationship with her farmer husband, with whom she lives only sporadically, is an unconventional one, but one founded on true caring.

"Hey, Pete, they're here, Merry Christmas."

The driver opened the back gate of the truck, whistled, stomped and two enormous heads poked out: buffalo. Bison. A male and a female, great big humped real things.

Pete sat down on a stump and wiped his eyes on the back of his big red wrist. Rosie had worked double-shift for a year to earn them.\textsuperscript{45}

Visiting Merrill and Jane was "like walking into a homespun fairy tale ...

... I would cheerfully have stayed all night in their warm rooms of wood and apples and candlelight."\textsuperscript{46}

People are interconnected, accepted for what they are, tolerated in spite of their eccentricities, there to help in times of trouble. The strictrues that such interconnections imply are detailed as well, for Engel's message is that reality includes both pain and pleasure, but it is ultimately more rewarding than living under the anaesthetizing superficiality of modern urban life.

The physical description of the town further suggests this illusion of safety, of garrison. Fresh from the city, the heroine meditates:

It's a lovely town, as if that matters. I mean, aesthetics don't make money. But some perverse conservative strain in this city has preserved a graceful Dutch-looking city hall, a gothic federal building, and a firehall with wooden lettering on its gable.\textsuperscript{47}
Later, it comes to matter; the beauty, solidness, the sense of place become more valuable to her and money matters less.

... the downtown is still just fine. Not hacked up as much as most Ontario towns -- overlaid with tile signs but not destroyed by pick, hammer and wrecking ball, and the buildings that are left are remarkably fine. The stonemason who put the place up had a field day. There's a factory a few blocks down the river near the kids' school that is really grand, a place with big buttresses. And the Federal Building across the river from me has great loopy stone decorations on its towers and cornices ... I can feel us settling into this place.48

In the description of towers and buttresses and foursquare stone buildings are evocative echoes of garrison. Coupled with the solidity of the buildings are their links to the past, to ancestors and tradition, further symbol of permanence and security:

The house is beautiful though: it was built by her mother's people in about 1845, and has three-foot-thick walls and window seats.49

The physical order of the town, like the social one, comes to imply security, a place to 'settle in.' To return permanently to Toronto and to the house that she inherits is "a temptation, now I'm back here ... But it's frighteningly busy after our little town."50 Her children concur: "It's nicer in the country. We can go a lot more places by ourselves."51 When they return to the town -- "we're home again."52

I think, we've started a new life here. Its not as easy and privileged as the old one was, but it has its own flavour. We have a few friends, we'll find more, we can go to the Y and the library, and out in the country to Rosie's and Merrill's. We've a landlord, a doctor, Mrs Brodhurst and a list of babysitters. Why, we exist. That's a miracle.53

They exist in a real sense that she found so lacking in the superficial urban world, in a web of interconnections with others, in a place where life is lived at the level of reality not of appearance. And those interconnections, as much as the solid stone and brick walls of the old
town buildings and the links to the past they represent, become the garrison from which "to see life steadily and whole." 

B. The Garrison Transplanted

The second type of garrison evident in the urban literature is similar to the small town/garrison remembered in form and features. Here again the garrison is represented by community; again it is a community that is broadly supportive, personal and familiar but whose constrictive, less desirable characteristics are displayed as well. However the location of the garrison has shifted — the small town has been transplanted into the heart of the city, immediately surrounded by the urban wilderness. A portrait of the prototypical village-in-the-city emerges and in every such portrait, neighborhood is defined by ethnic homogeneity or low economic status.

This category incorporates into the schema some of the novels that had appeared to be anomalies in the face of the fictive vision of the city — those that had rendered the city and city life in a positive focus. The radius of that focus proved to be a narrow one however, aiming only at a small particular section of the city; the urban environment at large is no less a wilderness — indeed it appears even more hostile and unmanageable when contrasted with the protective 'village' within it. This category includes the powerful novels depicting the immigrant experience of Canadian cities, such as Crackpot, by Adele Wiseman, Under the Ribs of Death by John Marlyn, Storm of Fortune and The Meeting Point by
Austin Clarke. (Since the author of such work is likely to be an immigrant, the criterion that only Canadian authors should be considered in this analysis has been strained by this category. Similarly one of the most striking examples of a fictive village-in-the-city is the portrayal of St. Henri in The Tin Flute (Bonheur d'Occasion) by Gabrielle Roy -- a novel excluded by the fact that it was written in French.) Certainly the vivid portrayals of the Jewish urban community can be considered in this group, e.g. A Good Place to Come From by Morley Torgov and the novels of Mordecai Richler set in the St. Urbain Street area of Montreal. The nostalgic reminiscences of city life of times past can frequently be included as well. Such works as Cabbagetown by Hugh Garner and The Swing in the Garden by Hugh Hood, both set in Toronto half a century ago, detail the close-knit community of the smaller city in simpler times. They nostalgically, sometimes sentimentally, describe life in city neighborhoods which were often outgrowths of villages encompassed by metropolitan growth and which retained their identity, had a history and therefore a sense of community and stability. Time past, city past, a social order past -- such works often reveal a look back through the rose-coloured glasses of nostalgia and a yearning for a simpler way of life.

That these various examples of urban village can be construed as garrison will be illustrated by reference to one of Mordecai Richler's works, The Apprenticeship of Duddy Kravitz. The underlying leitmotif running through this novel set in a Jewish immigrant enclave is the division into insider and outsider. This dichotomy is presented at several levels: Richler explores the separation between the Jewish community and the gentile city at large, between the prosperous second or third generation and their immigrant parents and grandparents, between family and
others and, most pointedly, between self and others. This latter constitutes the pivotal theme in the novel, which depicts the self-serving, driving opportunism that motivates Duddy Kravitz and finally estranges him from his milieu, his family and his friends.

This main dramatic thread of the narrative, elaborated especially over the last two-thirds of the book, says little about aspects of or attitudes toward specifically urban places. It does, however, revolve around a central image of place that signifies something fundamental about life in the urban wilderness. Ironically, it is unspoiled farmland north of the city that Duddy struggles to obtain which is the focal point of the book, and that represents for him the epitome of power and success. For "a man without land is a nobody." This land is not perceived as retreat from the urban milieu; rather from first glimpse Duddy is enamoured with its speculative potential, its development possibilities:

He could watch the lake over her shoulder and in his mind's eye it was not only already his but the children's camp and the hotel were already going up.

To own such property is to taste power: "I'm giving you five minutes to get off my land. I'm king of the castle here, sonny."

But the price is high. 'A man without land is nothing ... Well I'm a somebody. A real somebody.' The price is Duddy's estrangement from those who mean most to him -- from Yvette and Virgil whose love and trust he abuses, from his grandfather whose acceptance he sought, indeed at the cost of every relationship that had meaning for him.

The land is yours, he thought, and nothing they do or say or feel can take it away from you. You pay a price ...

Apart from this symbol of land beyond the city as power and financial status, the main narrative recounting the price of Duddy's selfish and
all-consuming ambition says little about aspects spatial or urban. It is in the secondary themes of separation into insider and outsider that a sense of place as garrison appears most strongly. Such separation also implies links — seeing themselves as separate from outsiders strengthens the bonds that define the group as insider. Both the separation and the links are shown to be acted out in the landscape, are portrayed spatially as well as psychically, and denote garrisons in many important respects.

The most dramatic example of this division into insider and outsider (and the one most illustrative of garrison) is found in the depiction of the neighborhood that is presented in the first chapters of the book. St. Urbain is an area well defined by spatial boundaries and by social and religious ones as well.

... There were already three gentiles in the school (that is to say, Anglo-Saxons; for Ukrainians, Poles and Yugoslavs, with funny names and customs of their own, did not count as true gentiles), and ten years hence FFHS would no longer be the Jewish high school. At that time, however most of the Jewish boys in Montreal who had been to high school had gone to FFHS.  

The streets around St. Urbain that bound the Jewish immigrant enclave comprise a familiar and, despite its chaotic appearance, an orderly world:

To the middle-class stranger, it's true, one street would have seemed as squalid as the next. On each corner a cigar store, a grocery, and a fruit man. Outside staircases everywhere. Winding ones, wooden ones, rusty and risky ones. Here a prized plot of grass splendidly barbered, there a spitefully weedy patch. An endless repetition of precious peeling balconies and waste lots making the occasional gap here and there. But, as the boys knew, each street between St. Dominique and Park Avenue represented subtle differences in income. No two cold-water flats were alike ... No two stores were the same either. Best Fruit gypped on the scales, but Simley's didn't give credit.

The various neighborhood meeting places serve a social function and intensify a cohesiveness sustained by mutual interaction. For example, Eddy's Cigar and Soda provides both setting and audience for Max's storytelling,
a milieu in which he is accepted, admired and in which he feels at home:

Not just like that, mind you, because before he could begin Max required the right atmosphere. His customary chair next to the Coke freezer, a hot coffee with a supply of sugar cubes ready by his side, and a supporting body of old friends. Then, speaking slowly and evenly, he would begin ... ⁶²

Richler's passages describing the FFHS Cadets marching through their neighborhood graphically suggests the interconnection between the boys and their milieu. "Turning smartly right down Esplanade Avenue they were at once joined and embarassed on either side by a following of younger brothers on sleighs, little sisters with running noses, and grinning delivery boys stopping to make snowballs." ⁶³ "... past the Jewish Old People's home ...," ⁶⁴ past Mel Brucker's father's store -- recently burned. "Mel had expected it because that afternoon his father had said cheerfully, 'you're sleeping at grandmaw's tonight,' and each time Mel and his brother were asked to sleep at grandmaw's, it meant another fire, another store." ⁶⁵ Past the synagogue where "led by the arm, drum and all, Lionel Zabitsky was pulled from the parade" ⁶⁶ -- his grandfather needed one more man for prayers. "Past Moe's warmly lit Cigar Store where you could get a lean on rye for 15 cents and three more cadets defected; ... one of the deserters ran into his father who was on his way home from work." ⁶⁷ The neighborhood was bound by a close web of interconnections, comprised of people, known and familiar, as well as places:

Simcha's hard thin dark figure was a familiar one in the neighborhood. Among the other immigrants he was trusted, he was regarded as a man of singular honesty and some wisdom ... Simcha's shop was a meeting place. ⁶⁸

The bond between those within the neighborhood was important and sustaining. "'A boy from the boys', he said, 'that's what you are.'" ⁶⁹ Such connections remained even for those whose economic success permitted
them to leave the old area, such as Jerry Dingleman, locally known as
the Boy Wonder:

The Boy Wonder was only a St. Urbain Street boy to begin
with, he remembered his own early hardships and he liked to
lend a helping hand ...70

The links of people and place that defined this milieu of support and social
order were strong; equally well depicted is the separation from the rest
of the city that metaphorically served as garrison walls and that further
strengthened these links. They -- the outsiders, the non-Jewish, the
others -- are regarded with suspicion: "... they'd still make us trouble."71

A distance exists between the teachers at FFHS (outsiders) and the parents
of their charges:

Fanning themselves [the parents at the graduation ceremony]
watched as the staff filed in, silent and severe, and took
their places on the platform at last. "White men," Panofsky
said sourly.72

Teachers and students exist in an uneasy atmosphere of mutual misunder­
standing and dislike; the teachers are aware of their essential separation and
their role as outsiders. "Once in the tavern Mr. MacPherson was careful
to seat himself two tables away from the nearest group of labourers."73

Indeed any authority was regarded as external and very often arbitrary:

'Hey, did I tell you about last week? The cops caught
this young punk from Griffintown trying to steal the radio
out of Debrofsky's new Dodge ... Anyway the cops took the
kid into the can and broke his arm.'74

Physical symbols of separation from the rest of the city are as
pervasive as the social ones. And the strongly defined vertical stratifica­tion of the physical landscape takes on particular significance.

Westmount was where the truly rich lived in stone mansions
driven like stakes into the shoulder of the mountain. The higher
you climbed up splendid tree-lined streets the thicker the ivy,
the more massive the mansion, and the more important the men
inside. Mr. Calder's place was almost at the top. 'Jeez,'
Duddy said aloud, getting out of his car ... Below, the
city and the river hummed obligingly under a still cloud
of factory fumes.75

In the first part of the book which recounts Duddy's adolescence
in the area, St. Urbain is depicted as a supportive and familiar milieu,
the essence of garrison. But the walls that protect also confine and
the rest of the novel revolves around this struggle against these psychic
and physical boundaries, his determination to leave the confines of the
neighborhood, and his subsequent estrangement from its social and moral
order.

The outside world offers opportunity and the potential for exploita-
tion, and Duddy exploits it to the fullest. The ultimate schemer, he
manipulates every situation and contact to his advantage. But the city
outside St. Urbain is hostile and manipulative in return. His brother's
attempt to renounce his Jewish roots, to move permanently into the univer-
sity world of WASP companions and fraternity parties and to leave behind
the garrison walls, results in his being used and almost destroyed by
those whose acceptance he craved. Leaving the physical milieu of St.
Urbain was no guarantee of integration into the city outside; the walls
remained.

'They inhabit a psychological ghetto,' he had said, 'and
dare not step outside of it ...'76

More successfully than his brother, Duddy dared to step outside, but in
doing so he lost touch with his essential human connections, the integrity
that bound him to a social and moral order. His grandfather stepped out-
side the walls only in his dreams; when presented with the land that he
had convinced Duddy meant freedom and manhood, he renounced it.
'Have you read any Yiddish poetry?' ... 'Certainly not,' Dingelman continued. 'But if you had you'd know about these old men. Sitting in their dark cramped ghetto corners they wrote the most mawkish, school-girlish stuff about green fields and sky. Terrible poetry, but touching when you consider the circumstances under which it was written. Your grandfather doesn't want any land. He wouldn't know what to do with it ... They want to die in the same suffocating way they lived ...'.

The walls of the garrison are strong. And the world outside the garrison of St. Urbain drawn by Richler is indeed a wilderness — a wilderness of a particular kind:

Autumn leaves floated on the still surface of the lake ...
'A wilderness,' Max said.
'Sure,' Duddy said, jumping up and down, 'a goddam wilderness, and remember it, goddam it, take a look, goddam everything to heaven and hell and kingdom come, because a whole town is going up here. A camp and a hotel and cottages and stores and a synagogue — yes, Zeyda, a real shul — and a movie and ... well everything you can think of.'

Duddy's wilderness is the urban jungle of materialism, opportunism and greed and his foray into that wilderness serves to sever the vital bonds that link him to his own world and to a social and moral order.

There's a brute inside you, Duddel — a regular behemoth — and this being such a hard world it would be the easiest thing for you to let it overpower you ...

His driving ambition to make it in "such a hard world" led Duddy outside the supportive and ordered garrison, forced him to play by the rules of the jungle, and ultimately, brutalized him.
C. The Garrison Contracted

In both preceding categories the garrison has been represented by community — either the urban neighborhood of the past, the low income or ethnic enclave within the modern city or the small town that seems to embody the essence of what we call community. The final manifestation of garrison differs in an important respect for garrison is no longer signified by community in any form; instead the walls of the garrison have shrunk inward to enclose the solitary individual, to protect and defend self. The individual has become the garrison while the city environment remains the essential wilderness that erodes identity, sense of self and personal control.

The retreat to the walled-off enclosure of self appears in two major variations in Canadian fiction. The first depicts a withdrawal into self coupled with (and symbolized by) a physical retreat from city to a remote area. Ironically, in this version, Frye's primeval forest wilderness has become a place of solace. Its meaning has shifted from threat to respite, a place that embodies both physical withdrawal and psychic renewal. As the garrison has shrunk to the level of the individual, so the search as well as the answers are couched in individual rather than social terms; other people are left behind in the city. The superficial relationships that are portrayed are both symptoms and symbol of what is wrong with the city and its way of life.
In one sense these novels demonstrate a physical journey back to nature — the untouched and unspoiled places that the city has obliterated even as it can obliterate identity. And as the urban environment threatens to distort or destroy self, this real or 'natural' self can only be rediscovered away from the pressures of the hostile city in a 'natural' environment. Thus it is in one sense a journey of escape from the urban wilderness, in another, a journey to a 'natural' environment to regain the non-urbane self. These journeys appear in such well-known novels as Bear by Marian Engel, The Stone Angel by Margaret Laurence, Surfacing by Margaret Atwood, and as a lesser theme in Laurence's The Fire Dwellers. Surfacing will be examined in greater detail to illustrate the characteristics of this garrison transformed into self.

The second version of the self-as-garrison does not involve physical retreat from the city but psychological retreat into self. Falling within this category are the novels of psychological realism (a form increasingly common over the last decade) as well as the surrealistic novels that explore, often in experimental style and format, the inner landscape of mind. Examples of these are The Garbageman by Juan Butler, Place d'Armes by Scott Symons, A Short Sad Story by George Bowering. Characteristic of such work is the persistent use of interior monologue — a device of dramatic irony that serves to heighten tension but that also emphasizes the inner, singular focus of the work. Many of these novels are written in the first person singular (the 'I' novels of individual experience), or in diary form (as in Cabbagetown Diary by Juan Butler, Combat Journal for Place d'Armes, subtitled A Personal Narrative by Scott Symons, and the diary format of The Day Before Tomorrow by David Helwig.
Indeed many of these novels are concerned completely with the interior landscape and make little or no reference to the exterior landscape. Because of this it is difficult to categorize some of these impressionistic works as urban novels. Others, while ostensibly set in the city, are so lacking in any reference to the setting beyond their nominal situation in it, that they can be included in this category only in the broadest sense. However there remain a number of books that are set specifically in cities and that contain explicit comment on that environment. Richard Wright's *The Weekend Man* will be used to elaborate the type of statement that such novels make about the city and the extent to which this statement can be seen as a manifestation of garrison.

In both these versions -- the self-as-garrison coupled with withdrawal to the bush and the inward exploration of self as the last and ultimate garrison -- the city environment is not necessarily the predominant landscape. Indeed city is symbol and affective force more often than physical setting. The landscape here is either internal (therefore placeless) or the bush, a place untouched by man. The implication is that ultimate solutions must be found outside the man-manipulated landscape, either in the landscape of the mind which is an atomic, internal place or in untouched landscapes which permit transcendence of physical place.\(^1\)

Often in these stories place is no longer setting; location is no longer city. City is not setting but symbol, a pervasive symbol of modern, urbanized industrial life. Nonetheless that this inner place is still garrison and city is still (indeed more explicitly) wilderness will be demonstrated with reference first to *Surfacing* and then to *The Weekend Man*. 
Surfacing, by Margaret Atwood, is a rich panoply of symbolism, working on many levels, addressing many questions — or, rather, addressing the single elemental question of life and meaning in many forms. It is replete with images of death and life, of life in death and of death in life. These bipolar oppositions are transposed into myriad forms — captivity and freedom, losing and searching, pleasure and pain, past and present, male and female, technological capitalist society (America) versus the unspoiled natural wilderness (Canada), and, the most significant opposition and one which constitutes the underlying theme of the book, rational logical thought versus instinctive, 'natural' feeling. The former, reason, constitutes the veneer of civilization; the latter, emotion, is to be discovered (or rediscovered) in nature.

The protagonist has been truncated by civilization, in and by the city which she has temporarily left; she sees herself as half a person who grieves "the missing part of me." She has denied her animal, emotional self, unable to feel even as "logic excludes love." She has "allowed herself to be cut in two ..."

The other half, the one locked away was the only half that could live; I was the wrong half, detached, terminal. I was nothing but a head ...

At some point my neck must have closed over, pond freezing or a wound, shutting me into my head; since then everything has been glancing off me ...

Away from the city (symbol, as will become evident, for the logical, rational turn of mind), back to search for her father on the uninhabited island of her childhood summers, the heroine comes to recognize this amputation of feeling — "the loss, the vacancy." She realizes that in the natural environment she can rediscover the atrophied side of her being and reconnect the two halves of self. Her father, a disciple of rationality.
"His way. Everything had to be measured" and found true vision, the "sacred places, the places where you could learn the truth;" in her search for him she too finds such awareness. She experiences a primordial unity with the living things around her that permits her to release that "other half" of instinct and feeling: "Feeling was beginning to seep into me ..." Alone on the island she physically as well as psychically melds with her environment:

I am not an animal or a tree, I am the thing in which the animals and trees move and grow, I am a place. But this elemental unity, achieved through the tension of her dead father and her aborted child, must be temporary.

I have to get up, I get up. Through the ground, break surface, I'm standing now; separate again.

And separate from primal life but made whole by her participation in it, she returns to the city and civilization, the place where she must live.

It is a solitary inner search, unshared -- for true communication is ultimately impossible. "Language divides us into fragments, I wanted to be whole." Language is logic. The narrator is referred to only as 'I' and her relationship with those who accompany her to the island, her lover and friends David and Anna, is superficial and detached. "I am by myself, this is what I wanted." Anna is "my best friend, my best woman friend; I've known her two months." Of her lover she says "I'm fond of him, I'd rather have him around than not." David and Anna's marriage is revealed to be a relationship of mutual hurt and humiliation, fueled by subterfuge.

On one level her journey to the island is a search -- for her father, for her other half of self. At the same time it is also a retreat. As a child she had discovered that "... the only defense was flight,
invisibility" and her retreat to the island is a flight from urban reality, from her life in particular, and from modern technological society in general. (The latter is symbolized in the novel as the United States, with the American despoiling of the pristine Canadian north a recurring theme.) The city becomes another important symbol of this detached destructive way of living. Relationships within it are depicted as unsatisfying and communication impossible. She recognizes

If I go with him we will have to talk ... we can no longer live in spurious peace by avoiding each other ... For us its necessary, the intercession of words; and we will probably fail, sooner or later, more or less painfully. That's normal, its the way it happens now ... 

'Now' is the city: "After that we'll travel to the city and the present tense." City is a place of captivity: "... a rope noosed round my neck, leash, he will lead me back to the city and tie me to fences and doorknobs." The city is where there is "electricity and distraction" and the image of electricity reappears throughout the book to signify America, technology, machinery, mechanical danger, -- even as the power company has desecrated the lake with its dam and its surveyors have killed the heron, flying its body like a flag.

Straight power, they mainlined it; I imagined the surge of electricity, nerve juice, as they hit [the bird], brought it down, flapping like a crippled plane.

The city is associated with work. "My work, my deadline, the career I suddenly found myself having, I didn't intend to but I had to find something I could sell." And the meaninglessness of work in the city is reaffirmed in a "Department of Manpower manual, young people with lobotomized grins, rapturous in their padded slots: Computer Programmer, Welder, ..."
The city is a place of threat. "Then back to the city and the passive menace ..."¹⁰⁸ "How have I been able to live so long in the city, it isn't safe."¹⁰⁹

That is what used to bother me most about the cities, the white zero-mouthed toilets in their clean tiled cubicles. Flush toilets and vacuum cleaners, they roared and made things vanish, at that time I was afraid there was a machine that could make people vanish like that too, go nowhere, like a camera that could steal not only your soul but your body also.¹¹⁰

The city, where things are made to vanish (elemental things like waste and dirt) also destroys something natural, primordial in man's being. City people are atrophied in the elemental skills of survival: "They were from the city, I was afraid they might chop their feet [cutting wood]."¹¹¹ "Joe sits on the ground: he's breathing hard, too much city ..."¹¹² And finally: "I can't see them clearly but I can smell them and the scent brings nausea, it's stale air, bus stations, nicotine smoke, mouths lined with soiled plush, acrid taste of copper or money ... They are evolving, they are halfway to machine ..."¹¹³

Although city dwellers mouth platitudes: "This is good ... it's good for us to get away from the city,"¹¹³α they are anxious to return. And indeed they bring the city with them into the bush, literally and imaginatively:

But David says "Naaa, why read when you can do that in the city?" He's twiddling the dial of his transistor radio ...¹¹⁴

We ought to start a colony, I mean a community up here ...¹¹⁵

A colony of the city, an imposition of the urban ethos on the wilderness -- surely not, despite his hasty correction, a community -- for in this novel there is nothing of community in the vision of city.
If the city is menace, distorting and destroying a vital part of the human self, then the bush provides the contrasting image. The city is present; the bush is past:

The future is in the North, that was a political slogan once; when my father heard it he said there was nothing in the north but the past ...\textsuperscript{116}

They live in the city now, in a different time ...\textsuperscript{117}

"This is the twentieth century"
"No it isn't," I said. "Not here."\textsuperscript{118}

The northern wilderness is symbol of a way of life past, a way of life where man was in touch with himself and his environment. He was whole in his essential connection with nature and the natural side of himself. And the bush is the place to regain that vestigial unity: "The truth is here."\textsuperscript{119}

Again, this is a solitary objective which cannot be regained in community. It is seen in terms of the "two anonymities -- the city and the bush."\textsuperscript{120} The one threatens and erodes self; the other offers redemption. But the route to rediscovery of the atrophied feeling side of self lies finally through madness -- the rejection of rational thought, as indeed going mad is termed becoming "bushed."

Bushed, the trappers call it, when you stay in the forest by yourself too long. And if insane, perhaps not dead: none of the rules would be the same.\textsuperscript{121}

"Madness is private"\textsuperscript{122} for the garrisoned self is ultimately alone and the effort to rebuild the damaged psyche must be a solitary one. Atwood presents an archetypal journey into self, a retreat from the city to the wilderness paralleling a psychological retreat from all that the city symbolizes -- threat, impersonality, soul-destroying mechanization. The garrisoned self finds solace and wholeness in the wilderness.
As may be evident from the foregoing, Atwood's symbolism is a structuralist's delight, a treasury of oppositions that can be interpreted at many levels. Because the interpretation here has focussed on the city/self/wilderness imagery, it is hardly a comprehensive critical analysis -- leaving out or briefly skimming much of what Atwood has to say about male/female relationships and roles, the American cultural 'invasion' of Canada, life and death, and the central imagery of water as absolution. This necessarily partial view reflects the objective, which was not to attempt an in-depth analysis of a complex book. Rather it was to examine the picture Atwood draws of the city and the individual as beleaguered by urban reality, attempting to restore self and repair the garrison that has been breached.

The novel chosen to illustrate the second category of self-as-garrison, *The Weekend Man* by Richard Wright, is a less complicated, less intricately patterned work than Atwood's *Surfacing*. The imagery is more direct, the view of urban life sketched in less obtuse, less symbolic terms. The structure as well as the imagery of the novel is more straightforward. The pivotal theme is the essential emptiness of the life of urban man and the novel documents the reaction of the bewildered and bemused narrator to his situation. It reveals a retreat from urban wilderness to the sidelines of life, from meaningful contact with people to mere spectating upon the lives of others, to a world peopled by television programmes and fantasy. It is a retreat into self ("living in your own weird little world") both to escape and to attempt to make sense of the urban milieu.

(It is important to recognize that both Atwood and Wright are commenting generally on life in technological industrial urban society.)
They depict not just a vision of urban life but, more broadly, of twentieth century capitalism and materialism within the city. Their commentary flows from a broader context. But the role of the urban setting in the novel is an important one for the city plays a focal role in the depiction of life. It serves to summarize a lifestyle that, while not solely or simply attributable to the city is nonetheless integral to the city. At an everyday level we do not live in an industrial capitalist technology; we live in a city. 

More specifically (and not typically, for depictions of suburbia are unusual in Canadian fiction) it is the suburban milieu that Wright describes.

... Union Place is a part of metropolitan Toronto; a large suburb that has wandered east of the city along the lakefront and then northward to meet the Macdonald-Cartier Freeway. It's much like the environs of any modern city; flat farmland which has been paved over and seeded with trim brick bungalows, small factory and office buildings, service stations and shopping plazas ... and now at least three or four dozen high-rise apartment buildings have climbed to the sky ... I myself live in one of those towering boxes ... 

The life he lives, like the setting, is an essentially urban one. The winds "scream down the grey canyons of these buildings in search of flat streets and schoolyards;" the apartments compartmentalize their inhabitants -- to make any meaningful contact beyond "polite acquaintance" is impossible. The girl on the neighboring balcony "looks right through me to a point beyond my head. I am as invisible to her as the balcony I stand on ..." Indeed the protagonist's primary contact with those around him comes from his balcony, high above, cut off from interaction: 

... stepping out onto her balcony to reconnoitre. This is a usual practice with people who live in apartment buildings like Union Terrace. We are always stepping out onto our balconies to reconnoitre ... Some like, myself, have telescopes.
The military imagery emphasizes the aura of battle; life in the urban wilderness necessitates vigilance. And it also emphasizes detachment, a looking down on life — a distance suggested further by the telescope that brings things close only visually, that permits an optical illusion of closeness. The protagonist states (but does not lament): "Most of the time I keep unto myself. I have no friends worth speaking of nor do I seek any." "I was all set to invite her to my apartment when overnight a chill developed between us. The temperature dropped alarmingly and the great solemn river that flowed between our souls congealed to ice."

"He will not stop at my office door for I keep it closed and anyway Ron doesn't like me."

Relationships are fraught with problems. At dinner with his estranged wife the protagonist notes that "Molly relishes the distance between us and the high ground she now occupies." Another woman withdraws from a relationship because she "does not want to complicate her life." The central character maintains a formalized relationship with his brother, who addresses him in "that tone of mock severity used by all older brothers when talking to younger brothers they've never really known."

Urban life is menacing and overwhelming and withdrawal into self seems the ultimate solution, although it is one to which not all the characters resort. Molly frantically attempts escape into other diversions:

This yoga business is another of her special diversions and it will lead her down the same path. On some non-committal Tuesday in February she will cast it aside and then we will all be in for a bad time. It will go the way of the French lessons and the folk singing and the volunteer work for retarded children.

Another character finally explodes in pent-up rage at the office Christmas party — "disturbing the waters with his heavy boatload of grievances."
Only now he has taken a punch in the mouth for his troubles."

The setting is invariably depicted as uncomfortably: stiflingly hot, freezing in winter, unremittingly depressing.

The rain has taken away the last of the snow and has left Union Place the color of an old bruise. Its dark-brown streets now stand waiting in the drizzle for nightfall.

Three dominant symbols echo throughout the book and serve to re-emphasize the atomism and impersonality that city life imposes. The first is the recurring device of connecting car and identity — a particular car is linked to a particular person who otherwise exhibits little uniqueness. People are described by the car they drive; it becomes their most distinguishing personal trait, an extension, indeed often the only distinctive feature, of self. Wright uses images of traffic flows pouring in and out of the city, activity in parking lots, behaviour at traffic lights as metaphor for human life and often as sole evidence of human interaction. For example, the only occasions the protagonist has seen an old high school friend are car-connected:

Once in front of Loblaws on a broiling July day I watched him load a Ford station wagon with parcels ... Another time a couple of years later, a man who looked very much like Harold nodded to me gravely from the front seat of a station wagon as it went by on a wet Sunday afternoon ...

The automobile is metaphor for death as well as life: the parents of the hero died in a traffic accident.

The second image that Wright uses frequently is television and the role its fantasy world assumes in the protagonist's life. It fills his evenings and weekends with "a torpor too flat for words" and becomes not only proxy for but preferable to human contact.

In fact I do believe that if one of us were to suggest that it might not be such a bad idea to forget about the drink, bid each other farewell and make our separate retreats
into the night, the other would not mind at all ... I would like nothing better than to climb into my snug little Dart and drive away ... Channel Six is showing a movie from the late forties tonight.\textsuperscript{142}

Life is peopled by old movies and television personalities.

The final set of recurring images revolves around the activity of shopping, "... innocent custom of our land,"\textsuperscript{143} and the Union Plaza in which this asocial, time-filling, formalized activity takes place. People shop ritualistically, their actions and appearances carefully orchestrated to project and protect -- anonymity: "like many persons who find themselves alone in public places, he does not wish to appear ill at ease ..."\textsuperscript{144} "It is a carefully arrived-at posture and has probably taken years to perfect."\textsuperscript{145} The Plaza itself appears frequently to shape the story -- thronging but impersonal, deserted at night, mocking the real emptiness of the holiday. "An abeyant melancholy seems to cling to the store fronts and to the Christmas lights which blink solemnly out at the empty parking lot."\textsuperscript{146}

These images of psychic and physical separation from milieu, the retreat into self and the resultant vacuousness of daily life are portrayed by Wright directly as well as symbolically. Life in the city has become little more than emptiness that must be filled (an emptiness well captured in a few spare paragraphs of description on page 142, for example). And further: "we now find ourselves cast up on lonely shores; two tired strangers trying to be polite to one another."\textsuperscript{147} "We are likely to wake up tomorrow to the same ordinary flatness of our lives;"\textsuperscript{148} and to "this lonely business of living a life;"\textsuperscript{149} to "the numbnness of daily passage;"\textsuperscript{150} to "the old familiar gloom, the baffling ordinary sadness..."\textsuperscript{151}
The search for meaning within self is not an easy one:

... unlike a monk of old I would not tell my beads or pray to the Heavenly Father. It has been clear for some time now that the Heavenly Father had taken off and was now living among the stars of another galaxy. 

Material success does not seem to offer an answer; indeed "The truth is that I am not a success because I cannot think straight for days on end, bemused as I am by the weird trance of this life ..." Life is overwhelming, incomprehensible and even retreat into the innermost corner of self produces not answers but only detachment and loneliness and, at best, a place of security from which to cope in the urban wilderness.

In the final paragraphs, the central character stands on his balcony as "the damp cold seeps up through the cement," gazing down at the Shopping Plaza, "a bereaved look about it," and then up at the night sky. He muses that "perhaps in the new year on another fine night" he will seek out the north star, that ancient guiding light. But for now all he can do is "... wait for sleep and try to remember what it is I was supposed to do." Unlike Atwood's protagonist, Wright's hero finds neither solace nor answer but only lonely desperation within his solitary garrison.

In summary: in these representative selections Canadian fiction appears to present three different manifestations of garrison mentality. These analyses, while only suggestive and certainly not comprehensive, serve to indicate the criteria that seem to define garrisons and to show how different authors give form to an essential vision of garrison.
Insofar as they are reaction to an image, these various garrisons can expand our picture of that urban image. But as they are reaction to image, they can also expand our understanding of reaction. The implication that literary images and reactions have something useful to say about our perception and behaviour in the 'real world' will be explored in the next chapters. The metaphors that underlie and define the fictive experience appear to have potential to do so in the 'real world' of social behaviour as well -- thereby substantiating the comment of Livingstone and Harrison that a metaphor is "not an illustration of an idea already explicitly spelled out, but a suggestive invitation to the discovery of future similarities."159
Chapter IV


3 As in Chapter II, the novels were used as the primary source of data. Although the short stories proved useful in demonstrating urban imagery (and in substantiating in a concise way the impressions gleaned from the broader reading of the novels), this genre is much less satisfactory as source of evidence of garrisons. The necessarily tighter, sharply focussed and more restrictive format must deal leanly and specifically with a single theme; the scope is narrower.

The novels were selected according to several criteria: they are all English language works (since French Canadian novels constitute a different genre, express a fundamentally different ethos and should, I feel, be studied separately or comparatively); they are novels published during the past two decades; the novel is either set in a Canadian city or the city plays a significant role if other than setting; and the authors are Canadians and writing in Canada. (This latter eliminated a large number of works including those of Brian Moore (e.g. The Luck of Ginger Coffey), Leo Simpson (Arkwright) and expatriot author Mavis Gallant. It also necessitated value judgements: whether to include for example the works of Mordecai Richler although he had lived and worked overseas at various times). It also eliminated such novels as David Helwig's The Day Before Tomorrow which contains many urban references but is set in London, and Austin Clarke's The Prime Minister which documents a return to the Caribbean.

4 It should be noted that the total number of urban-set novels is small, and the number useful in this endeavor is limited further by the criteria of Canadian author and setting, etc. Therefore the categories will contain only a few novels. This small number of representatives is less important, I feel, than the fact that the categories seem to be comprehensive (i.e. the urban novels can all be contained within this schema) and that together they display a pattern that seems both logical and consistent. Nonetheless there is a drawback in categorizing what is in fact a small number of works (about 25 novels in all); the caveat remains that a novel or novels may have been overlooked that constitute another separate category.
For a comprehensive literary analysis of the small town in Canadian novels, see, for example, Verna H. Reid, "Perceptions of the Small Town in Canadian Fiction" (M.A. thesis, University of Calgary, 1972).

Ibid., p. 1.


Indeed Laurence's Manawaka, a basic reference point in all her Canadian-set novels, is perhaps the best known fictional town in Canadian literature. It plays a pivotal role in her work and is an important force on both her characters and the shaping of her stories.


Ibid., p. 6. Ibid., p. 7. Ibid., p. 84.

Ibid., p. 84. Ibid., p. 55. Ibid., p. 20.

Ibid., p. 107. Ibid., p. 27. Ibid., p. 17.

Ibid., p. 27. Ibid., p. 1. Ibid., p. 10.

Ibid., p. 50. Ibid., p. 86. Ibid., p. 5.

Ibid., p. 15. Ibid., p. 15. Ibid., p. 49.

Ibid., p. 8. Ibid., p. 5. Ibid., p. 11.

Ibid., p. 1. Ibid., p. 78. Ibid., p. 79.

Ibid., p. 80. Ibid., p. 84. Ibid., p. 13.

Ibid., p. 110. Ibid., p. 42. Ibid., p. 106

Ibid., p. 93.

Ibid., p. 122. Emphasis hers. The word 'real' runs like an echo through the second half of the book which depicts small town life,
e.g. the process of separating from her husband was "... a nightmare of finding out how the world really works." (p. 57)

64 Ibid., p. 79. 67 Ibid., p. 73. 68 Ibid., p. 103.
69 Ibid., p. 120. 70 Ibid., p. 127. 71 Ibid., p. 128.
72 Ibid., p. 133. 73 Ibid., p. 134. 74 Ibid., p. 134.
76 Ibid., p. 100. 77 Ibid., p. 311. 78 Ibid., p. 313.
79 Ibid., p. 313. 80 Ibid., p. 8. 81 Ibid., p. 13.
82 Ibid., p. 23. 83 Ibid., p. 40. 84 Ibid., p. 40.
85 Ibid., p. 42. 86 Ibid., p. 43. 87 Ibid., p. 43.
88 Ibid., p. 45. 89 Ibid., p. 151. 90 Ibid., p. 131.
91 Ibid., p. 173. 92 Ibid., p. 63. 93 Ibid., p. 17.
94 Ibid., p. 108. 95 Ibid., p. 171. 96 Ibid., p. 185
97 Ibid., p. 311. 98 Ibid., p. 308. 99 Ibid., p. 279

80 This novel focusses on the urban life of isolation and loneliness engendered by an essential lack of communication, from which the heroine tries to temporarily escape to the wilderness and to a lover she meets there. That the city is symbol of the emptiness of life within it and that it is ultimately inescapable are neatly captured in the last lines of the novel: "She feels the city receding as she slides into sleep. Will it return tomorrow?" (p. 264). Sleep, the deepest retreat into self, is the ultimate escape.

In The Stone Angel Margaret Laurence strikes not just this final category of psychological garrison, but many notes in the overall schema of garrisons. The protagonist Hagar, living as an old woman in the city with her son and his wife, rails against her restrictions, the narrow lonely confines of her existence. Much of the book narrates her reminiscences as she takes refuge in the memories of her earlier life in the town of Manawaka -- a vivid portrait of a proud enduring woman and of a familiar yet repressive town. As a final gesture of rebellion against her helplessness and to escape being institutionalized (ultimate symbol of dependency), Hagar manages to plunge herself into the forest. Symbolically the city is associated with old age and its attendant confusion, the bleak prison of narrow and confining life; the small town is associated with the past, the vitality of youth, the connections of community and interaction (albeit often restrictive ones); the forest with escape from the city and dependence on others, a final attempt to assert herself, to regain charge of her life.
Even as this single novel compresses several different variations of garrison mentality, so, taken overall, Margaret Laurence's Canadian-set work seems to capture something elemental about the garrison/wilderness view of place. As noted earlier, her novels revolve around the fictive town of Manawaka, the necessity of leaving and the inevitability of return, its imprint on those who come from it and its influence on those who remain. Her portraits of this town and the juxtaposed cities summarize many aspects of the garrison/wilderness dichotomy.

This latter theme of transcendence through the untouched natural setting, a relatively minor one in Canadian fiction, is particularly strong in the American tradition of fiction and thought. It would appear that wilderness has not been construed as threatening, as is frequently the case in the Canadian fictive experience, but rather as up-lifting and restorative -- a tradition identified with Thoreau, evident in popular mythology (see, for example, Back to Nature by Peter J. Schmitt), in symbol (as in Leo Marx' structuralist analysis of American fiction in The Quality of Man's Environment), and in American intellectual history (e.g. M. White and L. White, The Intellectual versus the City).

81 Margaret Atwood, Surfacing (Toronto, McClelland & Stewart, 1957), p. 108.
82 Ibid., p. 182. 84 Ibid., p. 108. 85 Ibid., p. 108.
83 Ibid., p. 105. 86 Ibid., p. 39. 87 Ibid., p. 104.
88 Ibid., p. 45. 90 Ibid., p. 45. 91 Ibid., p. 108.
92 Ibid., p. 146. 93 Ibid., p. 181. 94 Ibid., p. 181.
95 Ibid., p. 146. 96 Ibid., p. 169. 97 Ibid., p. 2.
98 Ibid., p. 83. 99 Ibid., p. 135.
100 For example, pp. 66, 89, 112, 116, 121, 130.
101 Ibid., p. 192. 102 Ibid., p. 102. 103 Ibid., p. 163.
110 Ibid., p. 118. 111 Ibid., p. 77. 112 Ibid., p. 49.
113 Ibid., p. 183. 114 Ibid., p. 31. 115 Ibid., p. 39.
116 Ibid., p. 89. 117 Ibid., p. 9. 118 Ibid., p. 188.
119 Ibid., p. 151. 120 Ibid., p. 120. 121 Ibid., p. 59.
122 Ibid., p. 60. 123 Ibid., p. 67.

123 Ibid., p. 5. 124 Ibid., p. 6. 125 Ibid., p. 64. 126 Ibid., p. 241.
127 Ibid., p. 244. 128 Ibid., p. 249. 129 Ibid., p. 8.
133 Ibid., p. 231. 134 Ibid., p. 56. 135 Ibid., p. 226.
136 Ibid., p. 203. 137 Ibid., p. 205.
138 See, for example, pages 12, 15, 17, 23, 49, 89, 103, 210.
139 Ibid., p. 90. 140 Ibid., p. 61. 141 Ibid., p. 250.
142 Ibid., p. 149. 143 Ibid., p. 29. 144 Ibid., p. 246.
145 Ibid., p. 247. 146 Ibid., p. 261. 147 Ibid., p. 149.
148 Ibid., p. 10. 149 Ibid., p. 245. 150 Ibid., p. 255.
151 Ibid., p. 258. 152 Ibid., p. 129. 153 Ibid., p. 222.
157 Ibid., p. 261.

In this novel the small town appears as a minor theme, more as a place of origin than of retreat. The protagonist comes from Middlesburg where his brother and family still live and to which he recalls visits. The bleak summary of another character's life includes spending an unsatisfying Christmas holiday in the small town where she was born (p. 142). And on a television talk-show at Christmastime, "It seems that he too was brought up in a small town in New England" and his reminiscences cause the host to comment: "... I think that what we really have here is a beautiful varnished thing in American life ..." He is very excited. It is all too much for him and he can't work it out. I think he would like to cry." (p. 234). The small town is essentially a place of origins and symbol of time and life past. In this novel return is not considered an option or a potential escape from urban life.

In using the garrison/wilderness model to elucidate the pattern of fictive imagery (as was the original intent), the implicit process behind this pattern has perhaps come to be revealed as well. The model has shown a pattern of garrison remembered, transplanted or contracted, a pattern which seems to comprehensively describe the various garrison themes in urban fiction. Frye's model, as well as being altered in other fundamental ways, was reduced to accommodate this more narrow application, as indeed the objective of this analysis was defined in terms far more narrow than his. The goal was merely to discover this pattern, to find a way to systematize a jumble of data that by its nature was clumsy to manage, impossible to quantify, difficult to correlate. Frye's more encompassing objective was to understand the larger processes behind the patterns of literature. The processes he sought were imaginative ones, the ones which explain why, not just how, a work of fiction is related to other works. His processes are couched in terms of mythic imagination and the scope of his objective is evident in the holistic mythic structure that, for Frye underpins and explains the Canadian literary imagination. It is a grand scheme that explains the (literary) world -- pattern and process, how and why.

Although the fundamental question addressed by this study has been how (how the themes of urban experience relate to one another and
form a cohesive and coherent pattern), nonetheless from this model and method come a hypothesis, a suggestion that the model of garrison/wilderness, applied at both an individual and a social level, provides a valid basis for understanding the process behind this pattern. It reveals not only the (fictive) image of urban place but also suggests that certain (fictive) behaviour can be explained as a process of reaction to that image. Thus the reasons for as well as the patterns of behaviour may ostensibly be explained in terms of garrison and wilderness. The garrison mentality, or more precisely, its manifestation in literature, would appear to give us "hints" as to why human beings behave the way they do, as well as "artifacts" that allow us to better chart the patterns of this experience.

Thus perhaps it is possible to expand our limited objectives and to assume, as Frye did, that the model can tell us something fundamental about process as well as pattern. Clearly the answers will be couched in terms very different than Frye's — for the concerns of this study are concrete, social and immediate rather than idealist, the focus the social milieu not the literary one, the ultimate concern real people not fictive characters. Nor are we searching for an intrinsic structure, to be found in either man or society. Nonetheless the garrison model appears to have the capacity to suggest answers to the question of why — not in terms of cosmic order but in terms of human action, reaction and behaviour — and to demonstrate links between image and behaviour. It would seem to have potential as an explanatory device as well as an ordering one, a metaphor that can direct us to speculation about the real as well as the fictive worlds.

The suggestion that the garrison concept, derived to analyze data from literary sources, can tell us something valid about the reasons
behind man's reaction to place may seem a large leap of context, crossing as it does that rigid border between fact and fiction, 'real' and 'imaginary,' objective observation and subjective creation. How can it be demonstrated that such a theoretical literary construct as garrison mentality bears any relation to 'real behaviour,' the 'real world'? Surely not through further reference to literature, to data still once removed from that real world. But there are striking parallels between aspects of this analysis of literature and more traditional work by social and urban theorists that lend credence to the hypothesis that the garrison model may be a valid way to understand the processes of social behaviour in an extra-literary context as well as in the literary realm.

The following quotation from Richard Sennett, neither literary analyst nor geographer, but a social commentator who draws his data from a wide variety of sources, illustrates this parallel:

"Community has become both emotional withdrawal from society and a territorial barricade within the city. The warfare between people and society has acquired a real geographical focus ... This new geography is communal versus urban; the territory of warm feeling versus the territory of impersonal blankness."

"This new geography" is precisely what has been documented so intricately and consistently by Canadian authors fictionalizing the urban experience. That it has a "geographical focus" makes it the concern of geographers; that it is basic to human experience makes it the material of literature. And that Sennett's statement says essentially the same thing about garrisons and community and the urban experience as does the literary analysis substantiates the suggestion that a literary model such as garrison mentality can indeed give us valid insight into actual social and psychological processes.
The quotation can, of course, be related more directly to the categories defined in Chapter IV, translated quite precisely into the vocabulary of the garrison mentality: "emotional withdrawal from society" equates with the garrison shrunk; the "territorial barricade within the city" could be the garrison transformed; "the territory of warm feeling versus the territory of impersonal blankness" might easily describe the metaphor of the small town remembered and juxtaposed against the emotional wilderness of the metropolis. And certainly Sennett's characterization of urban life in such terms as 'barricade,' 'warfare,' 'versus' proves a convincing metaphor for the explicit garrison approach of the literary model.

Such analogies of terminology and category, though striking, are perhaps superficial; deeper similarities are, however, evident between the image of man in society derived from fiction and informed by the focus of the garrison model, and Sennett's version of social man (as elaborated in The Fall of Public Man). Like the fictional accounts, Sennett's analysis is based on a changing vision of community. He charts a shifting in the relationship between man and community in terms of a decline in "public life" (in which impersonal social relations were precisely regulated by convention) and the recurrent rise of "privatism" (the intimate emotional sphere which he claims has spilled over to encompass all our social relationships and which, for Sennett, defines our age). The boundaries between self and the rest of the world have changed -- indeed, according to Sennett, have collapsed; no longer do socially accepted conventions guide and buffer our relations with others in the community. The central tenet of society today is markedly individualistic. Sennett presents an historical analysis to demonstrate that public modes of self-presentation have changed and that
public life -- the socially-governed interconnection of man and community -- has been fundamentally altered.

That the boundaries between self and rest of the world have changed is central to Sennett's position. Such changed boundaries are fundamental to the garrison analysis as well -- for the psychological wall of the psychological garrison is clearly a boundary. The wall previously enclosed the community: it shut in the inhabitants as well as shutting out external threat. To operate within the confines of such a bounded social space, a structure of social interaction was necessary, a structure that Sennett would call the ordered impersonality of the res publica. Frye incorporates this concept in the initial version of the garrison model. He notes that isolated communities surrounded by "a physical or psychological frontier ... provide all their members have in the way of distinctly human values and are compelled to feel a great deal of respect for the law and order that holds them together." What Frye terms order, Sennett discusses as conventions in the public sphere. Clearly both are speaking of the same thing; both view in the same way the boundaries that encircle communities as well as the bonds that entwine them.

In looking at social interaction that occurs in the modern city, Sennett explores "the concrete territories of community ... -- the neighborhood, the quartier." Under the chapter title "Barricades Built Around a Community," he relates the process by which a middle class community ghettoized itself, "built its own walls." "Outsiders ... were to keep away." The city at large was defined as outside, as a threatening force; Sennett suggests that by their very definition of selves as insiders, a garrison was established. What is central about the garrison for Sennett is the fundamental need to regard insiders as intimates and that the
initiation and sustaining of intimate personal relationships underlies the community bond that is then translated onto the landscape. The bond is no longer social but personal; the community is no longer defined by a network of social but of personal interconnections. This view of communities past has obvious parallels with Frye's early garrison and with the literary examples. Sennett's example of a contemporary "walled" community equates nicely with the second type of garrison evident in literature -- the village-in-the-city, whose members are conjoined by links of intimacy. In fiction this intimacy is depicted as being established and sustained by a shared religious, ethnic or economic situation. Sennett regards such intimacy to underlie the expression of community as it is now evinced in the modern urban milieu. The individual increasingly operates in the intimate emotional realm of private relationships. He is garrisoned off, lacking the "principles of public order" (Sennett's terms), the "... order" (as Frye called it), within which to participate socially with others in his larger community. He has suffered disconnection from the impersonal social relations that had previously governed social interaction (and thereby made public life understandable, manageable and safe). This parenthetical point reveals the connection between the view of Sennett and the vision of man in society that emanates from the fictional data and model. Sennett's view is that the decline in the public sphere of interaction has engendered a garrison response (a term which he does not use, but which clearly fits the concept that he is describing). Conversely, previous sections of this paper have suggested that the changing perception of community leads, in reality as in fiction, to a garrison response. Thus it would seem that these versions each posit a different reason for the phenomenon of garrison response -- the first indicting the decline of the
public sphere, the second the perception of urban community as wilderness. Further examination proves that these are two sides of the same coin. Attending the decline of this regulated impersonal social realm must be the consequent difficulty in participating in this realm, in effectively dealing with society at large. While in an ordered and orderly realm we know the rules and public interaction is rendered predictable, manageable and safe, the lack of such ordering conventions must make the social environment appear disorderly, unpredictable, chaotic and therefore unmanageable. Such an environment proscribes our ability to safely or effectively participate and is thus beyond our control. Such an environment will indeed be perceived as wilderness.

The individual's garrison is no longer the well-ordered community; his garrison (and, according to some observers, his obsession) has become himself. Sennett refers to the collapse of the old boundaries and to the redefinition of the line of garrison. The confusion between public and private spheres of social activity that he perceives to underlie much of the angst of modern society, the emphasis on self and the self-referential mode of operating in society all indicate a self garrisoned off from the unordered and threatening wilderness of community.

Public man has fallen; that garrison has been breached from within, but ever the survivor, man has built new barricades against this new wilderness. Sennett is in effect investigating the impact on community of this singular self, this same beleaguered individual that the garrison model revealed. He is exploring the new ways of social interaction that occur because man perceives himself as garrisoned and ultimately apart from his larger urban environment.
Thus there appear to be significant conceptual parallels to the garrison model in the work of an urbanologist like Sennett — in terminology, in his underlying concept of community and in the basic terms of reference of his analysis. Indeed it is probable that Sennett would even be sympathetic to the use of literature as social document, for in his latest book, Authority, he notes that:

It is a common reproach that one can learn more about the complexity of motives and mutual perception from a reasonably good novel than from a "solid" piece of social science research.  

The concept of individual as garrison (with the attendant shift from the perception of community as garrison) aligns itself especially well with much of the work of social interpreters who, like Sennett, are currently concerned with the rise of self and privatism.

Certainly the category of the garrison transformed has its precedents and parallels in urban theory as well. Indeed the image of the small town transplanted into the city, a garrison enclosed and bound together by social interaction, is a common one in sociology. It is a theme invoked by the title as well as the analysis of Herbert Gans in his book, The Urban Villagers.

The urban village of Gans' research displays the basic characteristics of the literary garrison transformed. In fiction all the instances of the transformed garrison involve membership in an ethnic, religious or low income group; as working-class, Roman Catholic, Italian Americans, Gans' West Enders display all three of these criteria.

Superficially then, Gans' reality aligns neatly with the images portrayed by fiction. And as well his analysis can be couched in terms consistent with the garrison model. Certainly Gans found that the West Enders defined the city around them as threatening and hostile. He notes
their functional separation from "the outer world, and their fear of its 'chaotic and catastrophic qualities.'"\textsuperscript{12} This world is "strange and unhelpful;"\textsuperscript{13} the inhabitants adopt "a conspiracy theory to explain the outside world" which breeds further suspicion and "as a result, the already existing gap between the working class and the larger society is widened."\textsuperscript{14} Within this description is ample evidence that the surrounding urban environment could indeed be labelled wilderness.

Gans also notes that the West Enders' definition of the outside world as threat stems from their conviction that they have no control over or within this larger world and therefore no control over their own fate in that environment. This sense of unmanageability is basic to a definition of wilderness in the real world as it was in the literary examples and to the garrison model. In Frye's original paradigm, the country was settled and tamed as population grew and physical nature was subdued; over time the wilderness recedes or, as Frye phrased it, "society....gets more in control of its environment."\textsuperscript{15} This sense of control (or lack of it) is a central characteristic of wilderness, as both Gans and Frye assert.

That the community of the West End serves as garrison against the perceived wilderness is clearly demonstrated by Gans' analysis, but community or neighborhood is socially rather than spatially defined. While Frye's archetypal garrison community was spatially bounded by actual or figurative walls, Gans' community is both bounded and bonded by social interconnections. And these psychological walls, like those of Richler's St. Urbain, are as solid as any stockade; the separation they provide from the ambient environment is palpable. Gans uses the term 'the outside world,' a phrase which reflects the fundamental division between 'us' and 'them,' to describe the West Enders' vision of Boston outside their peer
group society. One of the distinguishing characteristics of their community was its "detachment from the larger society" -- a detachment that reinforced psychic walls. Indeed the problems encountered by those who attempt to leave the community and the low incidence of social mobility reported by Gans attests to the strength of the invisible walls of the garrison. They are as difficult to breech from within as from without.

In Gans' analysis, the walls of the garrison, like the bonds that define the community and the wilderness surrounding it, are psychological constructs. These three vital aspects of the model, (at one time spatial as well as social -- indeed in Frye's model primarily spatial and only consequently social) have in Gans' work, as in the literary renditions, become essentially social. It is clear that the actions and behaviour which Gans reveals and by which he analyzes and defines the urban village can be easily translated into the concepts of garrison and wilderness. The twin themes by which Frye defined his initial garrison -- a community enclosed by a garrison in response to a wilderness and a community bound together in an ordered system of interaction, a shared value system -- also characterize Gans' Italian-American community in inner city Boston. The West End is a contemporary example of what Frye called "communities surrounded by a physical or psychological 'frontier' ... that provide all their members have in the way of distinctly human values, and that are compelled to feel a great deal of respect for the law and order that holds them together, yet confronted with a huge, unthinking, menacing and formidable physical setting..."17

In Boston the order is a social one; the menace psychological rather than physical, yet not any less huge, unthinking or formidable. The value system of the urban village is indeed homogenous and commonly-held,
for a shared value system is the basis of this community that provides protection against the urban wilderness. Frye's image is Gans' reality; the vision of place that Mordecai Richler revealed in fiction correlates well with Herbert Gans' interpretation of this real place.

The two previous examples demonstrate that the basic concepts that were derived from and define the pattern of urban reaction in literature are ones not foreign to social science. Other work can easily be transcribed in the terms fundamental to the model; implicit parallels in analysis can be demonstrated. But there are also examples of work dealing with place that present a more direct and explicit analogy to the ideas presented in Chapter IV.

Perhaps the analysis most obviously congruent with the garrison model is David Ley's study of *The Black Inner City as Frontier Outpost*. This work, as well as being based on a conceptual similarity obvious from the title, points out a central problem inherent in basing analysis on imagery.

In the first section of the book (subtitled "The Shadows"), Ley elaborates the "view from the outside" -- the images of the inner city that are current in the thinking of white America and in the media, and that are assumed a priori within the transactionist tradition in social science.

...The mainstream image ascribed a distinctive teleology of violence and antiwhite feeling to the inner city. It also ascribed a high level of organization and control to the black communities, a theme elaborated more fully through the second image.

The popular stereotype of the black urban area was a community "homogenous, hostile and conspirational." An analogy with Caesar's Gaul is suggested
by this imagery and from it is derived a model of the black community as frontier outpost.

The second section of the book — "The Real" — details participant observation within the community. From this description emerges a picture of daily life that presents sharp discrepancies with the assumptions of the proposed model; indeed the model derived from the popular image is revealed to be diametrically opposed to the 'real,' the actual experience of daily life within the community. The model becomes "elusive and misleading" because it is based on a false image, a vision of place quite antithetical to the perception of the inhabitants. In fact the community proved to be characterized not by an integrated and integrative social system, but by one in which social relationships were problematic; the environment was not one of internal security but of enveloping uncertainty and immanent danger; it did not display a high level of control but instead was characterized by a lack of control. Thus the frontier model (incorporating concepts of an ordered, orderly internal system, organized to withstand external threat and hostile to the outside) seems not to apply to the actual atmosphere of uncertainty and threat that characterize life within the community.

The 'shadow' does not approximate the 'real.' Therefore a deductive model derived from the shadow does not explicate the reality. This conclusion has potentially grievous implications for the literary analysis attempted here, based as it is on image as data and on a model derived from imagery. For it would seem to imply that the relationship of either data or model to reality may be tenuous, since the underlying image may be merely a misleading shadow.
Two points should be considered in this regard. The first is that both the popular and the transactionist images of the black inner city are the views of outsiders. This external view proved erroneous — totally at variance with the perception of those who lived in the community. In contrast the image presented in the work of contemporary Canadian writers is a view from the inside, the interpretation by a writer of and from the society in which he lives and writes. Indeed it may be submitted that the writer is participant observer par excellence, in the semantic if not in the research-specific definition of the word, — participant in the society from which he draws his material, observer by the very nature of his task.

The second point is that, while Ley discarded the outpost model as inappropriate at the community wide level, he suggests that the model in altered form is nonetheless applicable to the reality of life within that community. Clearly the conditions that define the frontier outpost (security arising from a well-defined and organized system, characterized by its level of control and teleology of aggressive defense) did not prevail. At a systems level, the frontier outpost model did not fit the community. This historical analogy, like Frye's historical analogy, could not be transposed intact over time. But like Frye's paradigm, with some changes in definition, scale and emphasis, the model is clearly still of value. For the black inner city is doubtless a metaphoric wilderness — a menacing atmosphere of uncertainty, hostility and physical danger which is on occasion referred to as "the jungle" by the inhabitants.

(Again the issue of control seems central to the definition of wilderness. It is necessary to know the rules in order to feel in control of a situation or environment; Ley emphasizes the difficulty of discovering
dependable rules of behaviour in a social setting characterized by such extreme levels of uncertainty. Life becomes an ongoing quest for cognitive "hard ground"\(^2^4\) on which to base action and interaction. Both the false, stereotypic image and the insiders' perceived reality were defined in terms of control. The outsiders, visualizing the black community as threatening, ascribed to it a high degree of internal control; one of the two characteristics that Ley regards as definitive of the actual environment was an absence of control. (The second characteristic was the absence of a coherent teleology at the community level.\(^2^5\)) Control (or lack thereof) would seem to be a central criterion in the identification of environment as wilderness in the work of social scientists as well as in the fictional accounts.)

That the individual has become garrison is basic to this analysis of the black inner city:

Such a cognitive "shell" between environment and individual or organization is usual, but it seems as if a hardening of that shell occurs under stress. Just as a physical stockade is a product of a hostile environment, so the perceptual structure becomes more rigid when the outside world is hostile.\(^2^5\)

The simile is apt. The individual defends himself by and from within his tempered perceptual shell. This perceptual structure constitutes the individual's first line of defence against a wilderness of uncertainty. But garrisons are invoked at many levels in this environment of extreme stress and high risk.

It is perhaps not surprising that outposts abound in the black inner city -- spilling over every level of social interaction, rather than fitting the neat sparse pattern evident in either Canadian fiction or the other studies examined. That environment, certainly more hostile a wilderness than the others, provokes defensive reactions in extremis.
The perception of uncertainty and lack of control in Gans' urban village and in fiction set in Canadian cities (as in Canadian cities in fact) is far less intense and immediate, producing psychological stress but not such extremes of physical and psychic danger. In those environments, social relationships were not uniformly problematic but often constituted a bonding force. The garrison reaction is consequently less pronounced, less ubiquitous than in an environment where "applications [of a garrison model] are possible over the whole spectrum of human experience." Such a menacing wilderness provokes the multiplication of garrison that Ley details. The symbolic stockade in the black inner city can shrink to many levels:

He clings tenaciously to his cognitive hard ground, his representation of reality, and its physical manifestation, his frontier outpost, whether it narrows to the home, or expands to the street gang, a small group, a corner bar, a community action movement.

That the individual perceives his environment as wilderness provokes the development of a selective, image-based perceptual structure that serves as defence against the extreme uncertainty. The study outlines this cognitive process of reaction to environmental stress. The garrisons that can be identified in the life of the inner city resident are manifestations of this defensive mentality. Thus Ley connects wilderness and garrison in causal terms, linking them through their basis in the cognitive process. From the hostile environment comes an individual perceptual structure predicated on defence against uncertainty; from this mental stance come garrisons acted out at various social scales. Ley is suggesting that the garrisons ultimately have their base in the perception that the environment is a wilderness, and in the cognitive attempt to deal with this perception. He addresses two fundamental questions: why
individuals construct garrisons (i.e. because the environment is perceived as threatening), and how individuals construct the psychological defenses subsequently manifested as physical and social garrisons. This latter question is answered in terms of the cognitive process. The case can be made that this cognitive process, "this perceptual structure," is a more sophisticated version, more carefully construed and elaborated in terms of cognitive and behavioural theory, of garrison mentality. The literary model suggests that the perception of environment as wilderness has engendered a garrison mentality. Ley reveals in detail how a menacing behavioural environment results in the development of a defensive perceptual stance. In both analyses image of environment leads to a mental stance, a way of seeing, which is manifested in behaviour (real and fictional) as garrisons. Ley has explicated the links between the image and the reaction to that image; he has directly addressed those questions of why and how, that the survey of fictional image and reaction served to suggest.

The garrisons in fiction are evidence of a garrison mentality, a socio-psychological reaction to environment, as recorded by writers. The garrisons in the black inner city are evidence of a cognitive process (an individual perceptual structure), a psychological reaction to environment, as recorded by the participant observer.

Thus we have come full circle -- back to fiction and literary garrisons, to questions of process as well as pattern, the questions of why as well as how that were raised at the beginning of this section. The first two examples (one a broadly interpretive, speculative work, the other a specific, data-based study) served to suggest that the garrison/wilderness model could indeed be applicable to human behaviour in reality as well as in fiction. The last work examined proposes the
mechanism by which an image of wilderness is transcribed into the behaviour of garrisoning. The process suggested in fiction, like the image revealed, seems indeed to be a valid representation of reality. These parallels between fictive image and reaction, and 'real' perception and behaviour tend to substantiate the suggestion of Livingstone and Harrison that metaphor and myth have the capacity to "generate a specific model for the explanatory understanding of some aspect of the real world" and that imagery, "both relying on and generating metaphor" can indeed be "a valuable heuristic instrument in the development of models for understanding society." For indeed this literary model, derived from metaphor through myth, would seem to be a useful explanatory concept, as applicable to certain socio-spatial behaviour in the real world as it is to the literary one from which it derives.
Footnotes

Chapter V


2 Ibid., p. 205.

3 It should be noted here that there has been a successive shift in scale with each chapter -- from the particular (in time and space) to the general (in temporal aspect) to, in this section, the general in space (place) as well as in time. Chapter I outlined the model, which had its origins firmly rooted in the specific socio-spatial order of a particular time. Chapter III, in altering and updating this model, removed it from the particularity of an historical era and at the same time removed the element of causation implicit in the model. No longer did the historical fact of geographic isolation 'produce' or cause a garrison mentality; instead both the social and spatial orders in which Canadians live provide a context for the development of a way of perceiving that may be termed garrison mentality. The scope (and the setting) had shifted from the particular of a specific pioneer time and place to the general arena of observed propensities, then and now. In removing the element of causation from Frye's model, the anchor to a particular time was severed. Chapter V takes this shift in scale yet another step, to expand the scope of inquiry even more widely with references to the North American urban context (indeed with three examples of work done in the United States). It would, of course, have been methodologically neater to stay within the Canadian context (and content), but availability of data rendered this impossible.

Thus garrison mentality, deriving from a limited, particular and causative model, evolved into an ordering concept which could be applied to contemporary communities in Canadian fiction. In this chapter the focus will be further extended from the realm of fiction and a specifically Canadian context to reality and the larger North American scene.


6 Sennett, The Fall of Public Man, p. 294.
In his study, however, Gans found that although ethnic and religious differentiation were indeed marked, the principle differences between the West Enders and mainstream society could ultimately be explained in terms of class variables, or what he termed a "working class subculture." The low socio-economic status of the unskilled or semi-skilled was a significant factor in understanding behaviour and response in the urban village and of course such socio-economic status is often contiguous as well with ethnic or religious group membership.

Gans, The Urban Villagers, p. 231, citing Richard Hoggart.


Ibid., p. 23.  
Ibid., p. 242.  
Ibid., p. 105.

Ibid., p. 20.  
Ibid., p. 244.  
Ibid., p. 252.

Ibid., see flow diagram p. 243.

Ibid., p. 252.  
Ibid., p. 249.  
Ibid., p. 260.

Ibid., p. 252.


Ibid., p. 106.  
Ibid., p. 106.
The social scientist can learn to ask questions and to formulate hypotheses from literary works ...  

This analysis of the urban image in Canadian fiction has evolved into an example of Tuan's dictum. It began by posing a question -- how are urban living places rendered in Canadian fiction? In imposing a framework on the literary data in order to formulate a coherent answer to the question, a hypothesis was introduced concerning why people (in fiction) react the way they do in Canadian cities. This hypothesis derived from the answer to the first question: the city is viewed as a wilderness, and people act the way they do precisely because they perceive the urban environment in this way. The concept of garrison mentality, initially used as an ordering device (to order the imagery into a coherent pattern) appeared also to be an explanatory device (positing a connection between image and behaviour). It served to explain action as reaction. In the search for a pattern, this process of reaction became evident; in posing a question, a hypothesis came to be introduced.

The data, the pattern and the hypothetical process had thus far been confined to the fictional universe. It seemed reasonable to wonder to what extent the literary concept of garrison mentality, as a link
between image and behaviour, correlated to everyday reality. Could aspects of our social behaviour in the urban environment be explained in terms of a defensive reaction to an image, in terms of a garrison mentality?

To substantiate the hypothesis that certain socio-spatial behaviour can be understood as a reaction to a perceived wilderness, some conceptual analogies in the work of several social scientists were presented. The first two examples suggested that the garrison/wilderness concept could indeed be shown to underlie analyses that were not always presented in those specific terms of reference. The final example, specifying actual behaviour and its underlying cognitive process, neatly aligned with the hypothetical process derived from the fictional image and reaction. These examples lend credence to a hypothesis that was, as Tuan advocated, formulated from literary works. They would suggest that garrison mentality is not just a literary construct, characteristic only of the 'literary imagination' (the realm to which Frye confined it) but has application in the 'real world' as well. The broad patterns revealed by mapping the literary terrain show interesting correspondence to analyses of the real world.

That this map of the literary terrain should resemble the social scientists' map of the 'real world' is hardly surprising, if indeed literature is assumed to be more than a simple mirror. For the danger in saying that literature is a mirror is the implication that it is nothing more than a second-hand reflection of something else, a replica once removed from the real, a representation of life. And in an important sense, literature is not merely a representation, a re-presentation of reality; it is instead a presentation -- a presentation of the landscape of mind,
of the way we perceive, image, imagine our world to be. Embodied in literature are the modes of perception, the ways of seeing, that also provide the basis for our actions and reactions in the real world, the same perceptual frame which guides the social discourse that is the object of analysis of the social scientist. These modes of perceiving are expressed in literature even as they are expressed in the actions and reactions of everyday life. The social scientist concerns himself with the social consequences of that mode of perception; the literary analyst with that perception as it is implicit in (and can be revealed by) literature.

In this analysis, the mirror allusion has been altered and expanded. Literature is not simply a reflection of life. Instead both literature and our everyday life reflect the fundamental ways of perceiving, the prism through which we focus, organize and understand our world. In interpreting image and reaction revealed in literature, we are not examining a pale proxy for life. We are mapping at first remove the human terrain of perception and meaning.

... people do not live in their immediate environment; rather they live in their interpretations of their environments.²

A. Putting the Canadian Urban Image in Broader Perspective

While this theoretical (perhaps overly simple) definition of the relationship between the literary and the 'real' world seems appealingly neat and tidy, translating it into the specifics of empirical work serves to raise some complicating questions, (as indeed applying neat theories
to untidy reality often does). To recall two points made earlier: it was suggested that the garrison mentality, discovered by examining the Canadian fictive realm, seems also to be applicable to the American 'real world.' It was further suggested that a conceptual frame extant in a society will be given expression in its collective literature. The obvious question arises: just what social ethos, Canadian or American, is expressed in Canadian literature? Do Canadian authors write as part of a larger North American society? Certainly the anti-urban imagery in this fiction echoes the American anti-urban intellectual tradition that is analyzed by such observers as White and White and Leo Marx. And indeed anti-urbanism is not distinctively North American, for the Canadian imagery is also reminiscent of the tradition of anti-urbanism connected with the broader historical analysis of Western industrialization (detailed, for example, in Raymond Williams' The Country and the City).

The Canadian imagery also bears close correspondence to a vision of the city that obtains outside the literary tradition in the American social sciences -- that scholarly vision of the disordered city evident in the classic sociological work of Tönnies and Simmel, and perpetuated in North American urban sociology and social psychology. Indeed it is interesting to note how strikingly this literary rendition of city corresponds to the social science rendition that has traditionally characterized urban social analysis and to note, more particularly, the similarities between the view of place presented by contemporary Canadian authors and the conception of city outlined in the analyses of Tönnies and Simmel a half century ago. There are significant points of similarity between the literary constructs and the analytical ones:
Simmel suggested that urban life can be seen in terms of individualization, of the forces that the urban environment exerts on the individual, and of "how the personality accommodates itself in the adjustments to external forces." This accommodation takes the form of a distancing from others, an emotional reserve, "a detached rationalistic view of the world." Such adaptation is occasioned by the bombardment of the individual by an excessive number of social and physical stimuli that threaten to overwhelm him unless he can rationally discern between them and concurrently blunt his sensitivity to them. Thus his personality adaptation must stress critical rationality -- as well as an attitude of indifference -- both of which significantly affect the social relationships he establishes with others. It is these adaptive mechanisms that in turn make "an intellectual and individualistic life psychologically possible."

Simmel's conceptualization of overwhelming, often inconsistent and therefore unmanageable urban stimuli, bombarding an individual who takes refuge in withdrawal into increasing intellectualization and individualization, reveals a pattern that is not fundamentally different from the garrison/wilderness construct. He outlines a reaction (as personality adaptation) that echoes the garrison contracted. The psychological process that defines Simmel's personality adaptation might, without distortion, be termed a garrison mentality.

Simmel's classical observations of the city seem to correspond closely to the Canadian writers' contemporary observations. The city they are observing a half century apart must obviously (though, it might be argued, not fundamentally) have changed; what seems not to have changed is the lens through which they observe it.
Such conceptual similarities can also be seen in another seminal work in urban sociology, *Gemeinschaft und Gesellschaft* by Ferdinand Tönnies. Tönnies attempted to explain the changes in the structures of social relationships that were associated with the rise of industrial capitalism. He posited two analytical concepts of social relationship, *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft* and showed that the social structure of relationships in the real world tended to resemble one or the other of these ideal types. The former was characterized by close bonds of kinship, consensus, mutual affection and proximity, common values and identity — the type of relationship pattern associated with the traditional, pre-industrial community. The latter was defined by heterogeneity of value and tradition which served to lessen social cohesion and increase individualism. The social relationships in the *Gesellschaft* mode are contractual and impersonal and the development of this mode of relating is strongly associated with the growth of commerce and commodity exchange. Indeed as relationships become business oriented and cash based, the implicit tendency is to value social relationships in terms of money — "the ultimate essence of interpersonal relationships in the city."  

These two social forms were based in human will — (for Tönnies' explanation of social relationships was couched in psychological terms) — and he posited two forms of will, natural and rational, that lay behind these social patterns. Even as both forms of will are intertwined within the individual, so there can be no pure forms of *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft*. In essence, they are ideal types — ordering concepts that serve to place concrete social relationships on a continuum between the poles they describe. But it is obvious that the relationships characteristic of *Gemeinschaft* occur most purely in the pre-industrial community.
or, perhaps more precisely, in an idealization of that community. For Tönnies bias is toward the (perhaps sentimentalized) past and away from the alienation of urban relationships of self-concern. This artificial social order, "contrived" by the rational will to further individual economic self interest and which underlies an industrializing economy orders an environment where "everybody is by himself, isolated, and there exists a condition of tension against all others."[9]

In their delineation of social relationships, Gemeinschaft and Gesellschaft capture much of the essence of urban wilderness, of small town/urban community supportiveness, and of individual as garrison. Tönnies has explicated in terms of social relationships what Canadian authors symbolize as urban wilderness and garrison of self or small community.

The similarities between the classical social scientists' vision of the city — with its influence traceable from early theorists like Tönnies and Simmel through the Chicago School of Urban Sociology in the 1920's and '30's, to such contemporary social psychologists as Stanley Milgram — and the vision of the contemporary authors are marked. The social scientist in this tradition and the writer seem to see the city through the same eyes — the lens of their perception shows a bleak grey image. Of course it might be suggested that the image may be a function of the colour of their lenses rather than the colour inherent in the urban milieu that they interpret.

Do author and social scientist share a preconceived view of place, an intellectual tradition that they impose upon the city and city life? Have observers (whether creative or analytical) tended to stress the alienating, disordered aspects of the city — a charge that has certainly been levelled at traditional urban sociology? Put another way, both writer
and social scientist are interpreters. The similarities that are evident may be in their interpretations rather than inherent within the object of interpretation; in their common filter — that anti-urban intellectual stereotype to which they are both intellectual heir.

Such speculation raises the broad question of what connection Canadian literature and the urban image it renders have to these larger traditions of thought and scholarship? Both this question and the one raised earlier that perhaps encompasses it (From what society does the Canadian image of garrison mentality emanate?) serve to put the Canadian literary image into a wider context. Such questions suggest others: What is the relationship between this image, this garrison mentality, and the way Canadians actually perceive their cities as living places; between this literary image and the writer's singular, unique experience of place?

Just what is the mirror reflecting?

To attempt to assess the social and cultural influences upon either a society's world view or on a body of creative work that embodies it, is a task beyond the scope of this thesis. But it is necessary to recognize that these influences must exist and that we all, writer and analyst among us, are affected in many and complex ways by our interaction within our society, by our social heritage, our intellectual traditions and patterns of thought. The questions raised are general and answers to them will be conjectured only generally.

At this broad level of inquiry, the model itself can be used to suggest general answers. In the schema outlined in Chapter III, the social and spatial order were seen to provide a context conducive to the development of a garrison mentality. To the extent that this socio-spatial context is shared, a distinctive frame, a way of seeing is shared. But of
course social context is not fixed or defined -- there is no single, simple social context:

To the extent that a Canadian writer does not share his context (as he alone experiences the unique set of events that shape his life and his perception), to that extent his viewpoint is unique, singular, personal, solipsistic.

To the extent that a writer shares an intellectual/educational/social literary content with other Canadian writers, to that extent he shares similar views of environment and a similar symbolic language of representation. Thus the image is part of a literary, imaginative tradition; it is according to Frye, the product of a 'literary imagination' -- which is itself a context in which writers share.

To the extent that a writer shares a socio-spatial national context with other Canadians (defined however vaguely, by geography, nationalism, common traditions) so his work will display a broadly typical shared point of view, a shared heritage of value and meaning -- an ethos.

To the extent that a writer shares the larger North American intellectual context, he is part of an American anti-urban intellectual tradition and his work will display that underlying valuation of urban place. He participates in what has been called the intellectual stereotype of the city.

To the extent that a writer shares the broad historical tradition of modern Western industrialism, so his images, his perception of the city, share and are shaped by these patterns of thought.
It must be recognized that the writer, as indeed any one of us, participates in the social order at all these scales (or, put differently, in various social orders expanding out in ever increasing concentric circles around the focal individual). Thus the Canadian literary urban image is tied to a series of broader contexts, as well as representing a personal experiencing of place, a personal life context — even as these circles, progressively larger, contain each other. The urban image can be interpreted, explained, correlated to its social context, at each of these levels, from the most broad level of a shared background of urbanization concurrent with industrialization to that most unique set of social experiences that constitute a single life.

The Canadian urban image does not just reflect any single one of these social contexts; it reflects them all. As Tuan has commented, literature is simultaneously confession, ethnography and universal symbol.¹⁰

B. The Urban Image and the Urban Reality

'Untidy reality' raises yet another complicating question. By reference to various studies or to empirical data it may be demonstrated that the anti-urban vision is pervasive in the intellectual tradition, in an analytic one in social science, and indeed in the Canadian literary tradition; however it is far more difficult to verify that such an image accurately reflects the sum total of the everyday vision of the Canadian experience of the city. There have been few attempts to gather such
subjective data in a systematic manner. Indeed, evidence gained intui-
tively from personal experience of living in Canadian cities and extra-
polated from various social indices and measures of residential satisfac-
tion or quality of life, would seem to suggest that the general perception
of urban place is hardly as overwhelmingly negative as the writers of
fiction categorically portray. The predominant myth seems discordant
with the mundane reality. Canadian cities appear to be far more benign
in fact than in fiction.

The persistence of high urban residential property values indicating
high demand for urban accommodation, the increasing phenomenon of inner
city neighborhood revitalization in such cities as Vancouver, Toronto
and Montreal and the resultant inflow into central city areas of those
whose economic status allows them a wide range of locational choice —
all seem to indicate that the Canadian city is generally viewed as a desir-
able place to live.

Studies of social and residential satisfaction would appear to
 confirm that the urban environment is not perceived to be as alienating
and anomic as literary evidence suggests. For example, Barry Wellman's
study of interpersonal linkages in Toronto\textsuperscript{11} indicates that supportive
networks of intimates do exist for residents in that inner suburb though
they are not spatially bounded. These linkages are multiple, and each
is discrete — i.e. not interconnected with the other social links that
the individual maintains. Wellman interprets this as evidence that a
sense of community still exists though it has been 'liberated' from its
spatial bounds. "Rather than an unambiguous membership in a single, almost
concrete, solidary community, East Yorkers' lives are now divided among
multiple networks."\textsuperscript{12} It might, however, be argued that such differentiated
networks could be considered symptomatic of the increasing and disorienting fragmentation of urban life, and might be a tribute to man's essential need for intimate social connections despite the restrictions placed on him by an urban environment that does not encourage nor easily offer opportunity for such relationships.

William Michelson, in his study of intra-urban housing moves in Toronto, found that his respondents claimed a generally high level of residential satisfaction in terms of such variables as location, housing type and characteristics, proximity to shopping and transportation, access to work and play. "Thus, although some clear differences in degree of satisfaction are defined, there is hardly any evidence of hostility to any form of housing or location studied, let alone simmering discontent."

Again, Michelson's study might be more indicative of comparative satisfaction (one type and location vis-à-vis another) than of a generally perceived congeniality of environment. Also, as Michelson admits, his data could be biased by the self-fulfilling prophecy of expectations or hesitation about admitting that one's housing choices might be less than optimal. Furthermore, this study applies very specifically to housing and housing types rather than to the overall image of the city. It is an objective evaluation of the physical environment rather than a subjective evaluation of the perceptual one.

This latter point applies as well to other measures of urban satisfaction: for example, the urban indicators used to assess and compare quality of life in 22 Canadian cities in Urban Indicators include 32 variables such as number of missing persons, public library usage, voter turn-out, percentage Canadian born and air quality. Such measurements proceed from and offer a very different approach to urban evaluation than
the subjective, existential vision that has been examined here.

Furthermore, it could be argued that the very benevolence that we instinctively attribute to the Canadian city is derived from and coloured by an inevitable comparison with American cities. The extremes of hostility and personal threat evident in the American experience are simply not present in Canadian cities:

The low level of public safety and the fears for personal and family safety expressed by urban Americans have been a significant factor contributing to the diminished quality of life in many US urban areas and have accelerated the search for the safe suburb or even beyond -- the firm ground where personal control and greater certainty can be achieved. There are also strong and well-known racial overtones to the levels of criminality and the nature of the out-migration; violent street crime is associated with urban non-whites and the out-migration has been predominantly, though not exclusively, white. Urban crime and violence to persons, especially in the inner city, lead to dire predictions which are of limited applicability to the Canadian city.\textsuperscript{16}

The extremes of the urban jungle, like the dire predictions, seem indeed to be of limited applicability to the Canadian city. But while the experience of and in Canadian cities may be mild in comparison, such relative assessments may not necessarily indicate that our perception of urban environment is positive, but merely that it is less negative. In addition the slight demographic shift away from cities and the proportional population growth of non-urban areas in Canada over the past few years\textsuperscript{17} suggest that the city is increasingly being seen as a less than satisfying environment.

This trend is further demonstrated by a recent survey of community concerns\textsuperscript{18} which includes residential satisfaction in 23 Canadian cities by four residential zones -- inner city, mature suburbs, new suburbs and exurbs. In every case but one, the inner zone was the least satisfactory location; the new suburbs (presumably a much less 'urban' environment)
were the most favoured.

Despite such considerations however, it is hard to dispute that Canadian cities are generally benign and mainly satisfying places to live; the fictive image appears to be excessively pessimistic. In view of this apparent discrepancy between fiction and reality, it seems reasonable to question whether indeed the fictive vision is expressive of our national societal response.

The answer to this apparent incongruity again lies within the theoretical mirror. As outlined earlier, the reflection in the mirror is not a simple one-to-one representation, a factual replication. The analysis has attempted to go beyond treating literature as truth or interpreting fictional account as factual account. Thus any discordance between fact and fiction, rather than introducing contradiction, serves instead to raise significant questions: Why does the fictive interpretation overwhelmingly stress the negative aspects of urban life? How does such a persistent (and, it would seem misleading, or at least, exaggerated) image influence our attitudes and perception and in turn our actions and reactions? How does it come about that a particular society gives rise to the particular version or vision of itself that is represented in its literature?

The central question then becomes not whether the fictive image is truly expressive, but how that image is expressive of our national societal response. In his cogent analysis of rural imagery, Eli Mandel notes:

The question we have come to then is not who is prairie man, but what images does he choose? To paraphrase -- not who is urban man but what images does he choose? The analysis clearly reveals that our ways of perceiving are intricately
linked with the process of socialization. Our cognitive and perceptual powers are selective; we see what we expect to see, and socially-produced images must colour that expectation. The choice of certain imagery emphasizes that the meaning of place is socially constructed even as it is individually expressed. And the reason why particular imagery arises in a society tells us something about the society that engenders it.

This exegetic approach is clearly expressed in Scott Symons' novel Place d'Armes. Although the protagonist is referring to a museum, the statement is equally applicable to a literary heritage, as both literature and museum bear witness in much the same way to the society that has produced them.

And then I realize how wrong I am. I realize that this museum is not important now for what it tells us about who we were ... but for what it tells us about who we thought we were (just like academic texts ... but with better, more spontaneous evidence) ... and suddenly, as I recognize this reality ... as I recognize that this museum is not what it purports -- a witness of some distant past, but rather the faith of a past still upon us as to what that past was ... 20

To understand our imagery in its social context is to better understand this reality, to better understand ourselves. Literature can reveal the visions of our present and the myths of our past; it can articulate the perceptions, attitudes and interpretations to which we are unconscious heir. It can help us to know -- in a most significant sense of that word -- how we imagine our world to be. It can help us to know how we fundamentally perceive our cities and therefore what our cities are, for

Polis ... is never more than the aggregation of people who have so joined themselves together, and its members define it. Their perception constitutes the city. 21
Footnotes

Chapter VI


4Cited in Karp, et al., Being Urban, p. 29. This book provides a concise summary of the work of both Simmel and Tönnies and its role in the development of American social psychology.

5Ibid., p. 29. 6Ibid., p. 33.

7It should be noted that Tönnies dealt only with relationships of mutual affirmation; he excluded conflict relationships from his analysis.


12Ibid., p. 1226.


14Ibid., p. 278.


17 The 1976 Census data show a proportional distribution change from 76.1% urban and 23.9% rural in 1971 to 75.5% urban and 24.4% rural five years later. (Census of Canada, 1976, catalogue number 92-807, p. 7-1, 7-2.) This trend is represented graphically in Perspectives Canada III (Ottawa: Statistics Canada, April 1980) on page 11. Chart 1.8 shows the 1976 decline in percentage of total population classified as urban to be the first such decline since 1871.


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CANADIAN LITERATURE


