

Anglo-Canadian Modernists in Transit[ion]:  
Collectivity and Identity in Mid-Century Canadian Modernist Travel Writing

by

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## Dedication

I would like to dedicate this dissertation to my scholarly community, my friends from the early days of the *Editing Modernism in Canada* project. You showed me how to persevere and overcome with strength, courage, and dignity. I may not have had a PhD cohort, but I always had you.

# Table of Contents

<b>Dedication</b> .....	<b>ii</b>
<b>Abstract</b> .....	<b>v</b>
<b>List of Abbreviations Used</b> .....	<b>vi</b>
<b>Acknowledgments</b> .....	<b>vii</b>
<b>CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION</b> .....	<b>1</b>
COMMUNITY AND EXILE: AFFILIATION BEYOND THE NATION .....	6
CANADIAN MODERNIST TRAVEL WITHIN CANADIAN MODERNIST STUDIES .....	13
CANADIAN MODERNISTS AS TRAVEL/LING WRITERS .....	22
<b>CHAPTER TWO: EXILE BEYOND RETURN: ZIONISM, NATION, AND DIASPORIC COMMUNITY IN A.M. KLEIN’S JOURNALISM</b> .....	<b>37</b>
KLEIN’S CULTURAL IDEAL: THE “WONDROUS ASCENT” THROUGH PILGRIMAGE TO ISRAEL .....	43
ZIONISM, NATIONALISM, AND COLONIALISM: DESCENT AND REDEMPTION IN MOROCCO AND ISRAEL.....	58
FICTIONALIZING “NOTEBOOK”: <i>THE SECOND SCROLL</i> AS MODERNIST RESPONSE TO “NOTEBOOK” .....	67
KLEIN AND <i>YERIDA</i> : DIASPORIC IDENTITY AFTER ISRAEL .....	79
CONCLUSION .....	86
<b>CHAPTER THREE: COLONIAL COSMOPOLITANISM? RESISTANCE, AESTHETICS, AND MODERNISM IN PATRICK ANDERSON’S TRAVEL WRITING</b> .....	<b>90</b>
SELF-REPRESENTATION AND NARRATIVE AUTHORITY AS COSMOPOLITAN ENGAGEMENT IN <i>SNAKE WINE</i> .....	97
TEXTUAL RESISTANCE: AN ALTERNATIVE READING OF COLONIAL COSMOPOLITANISM .....	108
QUEERING COSMOPOLITANISM, QUEERING NATION.....	118
CONCLUSION .....	136

<b>CHAPTER FOUR: P.K. PAGE’S TRAVEL WRITING: AESTHETICS, COSMOPOLITANISM, ETHNOGRAPHY, AND SURREALISM .....</b>	<b>138</b>
ETHNOGRAPHIC MORAL SUPERIORITY: CIVILITY AND MATURITY IN PAGE’S AUSTRALIAN WRITING .....	142
SURREALIST ETHNOGRAPHY AS COSMOPOLITAN STYLE IN BRAZIL .....	150
“ <b>A SIZE LARGER THAN SEEING</b> ”: SELF-REFLECTION AND SPIRITUAL QUEST IN MEXICO .....	167
REVISIONS AND EMPLOTMENT IN PAGE’S LIFE NARRATIVES TO ACHIEVE A COSMOPOLITAN VISION.....	180
CONCLUSION .....	197
<b>CHAPTER FIVE: REVISIONARY COSMOPOLITANISM, REIMAGINED COMMUNITY: JOHN GLASSCO’S RELATIONAL LOST GENERATION MEMOIR.....</b>	<b>200</b>
DISSEMBLING THE LOST GENERATION: FABRICATION, INVENTION, AND MODERNIST PREMINENCE IN <i>MEMOIRS OF MONTPARNASSE</i> .....	205
REVISION, COMMUNITY, AND FABRICATION ACROSS LOST GENERATION MEMOIRS ....	211
EXPATRIATISM, COSMOPOLITANISM, AND COMMUNITY IN MAGAZINE AND MEMOIRS	222
SUBVERSIVE SEXUALITIES AND QUEER COMMUNITIES IN GLASSCO’S <i>MEMOIRS OF     MONTPARNASSE</i> .....	235
COMMUNITY, HOMOSOCIALITY, AND HOMOSEXUALITY IN LOST GENERATION MEMOIRS.....	239
CONCLUSION .....	254
<b>CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION .....</b>	<b>257</b>
<b>WORKS CITED.....</b>	<b>275</b>
<b>APPENDIX A: PERMISSION FROM SCL .....</b>	<b>292</b>
<b>APPENDIX B: PERMISSION FROM CANADIAN LITERATURE.....</b>	<b>293</b>
<b>APPENDIX C: PERMISSION FROM U OF OTTAWA PRESS.....</b>	<b>295</b>

## Abstract

In the 1940s, A.M. Klein, Patrick Anderson, P.K. Page, and John Glassco contributed to co-edited periodicals, socialized together to various degrees, and enjoyed healthy debates about what constituted modern poetry, what values it should espouse, and how Canada fit into the broader international Anglo-European modernist community with which they felt affiliated. Numerous scholars have explored the ways in which these so-called “Montreal poets” interacted with other modernist traditions while forging a more or less distinct modernist tradition of their own, but few have considered what happened next, after the group disbanded and the writers engaged in their next projects, most of which took them outside of Canada for extended periods of time. I examine journalism, fiction, travel writing, life writing, and memoir written by the “Montreal poets” in the period from 1948-1970 in order to better understand the consequences of transit for the formal, aesthetic, and ideological transitions in their writing. Paying close attention to such tensions, this dissertation maps the emergence of modernist Canadian travel writing, itself an under-explored subgenre of modernism in Canadian literature, and then charts the changes in its scope over the next two decades. I consider how each writer’s navigation of foreign contexts provoked them to revise their understanding of self in relation to others, and challenged their notions about such collective identities as nation, ethnicity, gender, race, class, sexual orientation, and religion.

## List of Abbreviations Used

CAA	Canadian Authors Association
CJC	Canadian Jewish Congress
<i>CJC</i>	<i>Canadian Jewish Chronicle</i>
JDC	American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee
<i>Taiku</i>	<i>tishbi yetaraitz kushoith y'abayoth</i>
TARR	United Nations Technical Assistant Resident Representative
UN	United Nations
UNRWA	United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East

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## Chapter One: Introduction

In the 1940s, A.M. Klein, Patrick Anderson, P.K. Page, and John Glassco contributed to co-edited periodicals, socialized together to various degrees, and enjoyed healthy debates about what constituted modern poetry, what values it should espouse, and how Canada fit into the broader international Anglo-European modernist community with which they felt affiliated.<sup>1</sup> Numerous scholars have explored the ways in which these so-called “Montreal poets” interacted with other modernist traditions while forging a more or less distinct modernist tradition of their own, but few have considered what happened next, after the group disbanded and the writers engaged in their next projects, most of which took them outside of Canada for extended periods of time. This dissertation tells that story. In what follows, I extend an existing narrative about a cluster of Anglo-Canadian modernist poets who lived in and around Montreal in the 1940s and were associated with the Montreal-based little magazines *Preview*, *First Statement*, and *Northern Review*. Foregrounding their interaction with and their literary responses to international travel in order to better understand the consequences of transit for the formal, aesthetic, and ideological transitions in their writing, I examine journalism, fiction, travel writing, life writing, and memoir written by the “Montreal poets” in the period from 1948-1970.

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<sup>1</sup> See Brian Trehearne’s “Critical Episodes” for an excellent summary of the Montreal poetry scene in the 1940s.

As Klein, Anderson, Page, and Glassco moved through new geographical landscapes, the act of travel introduced new substance into their writing, becoming a central locus for their inquiries. The experience of being in transit prompted changes to the style of their expression, as they chose autobiographical modes that challenged them to express their modernist identities in new ways. The experience of physical displacement was also psychological for these writers; their sense of themselves as modernist subjects was challenged and reinvigorated by new experiences with foreign cultures that extended the reach of modernism and modernist community even further than they first conceptualized it in the Canadian little magazines.

Although *Preview* had a subscription base of no more than 150 people at any time during its twenty-three-issue run from 1942-45 (Bentley and Gnarowski), its contributors—including Klein, Anderson, and Page<sup>2</sup>—imagined their potential readership as international, and its content as richly engaged with universal feeling. In the opening “Statement” of the inaugural issue of *Preview*, the editors underscore their determination to “make contact, as a group, with new writing movements in England, the United States and other parts of Canada” (*Preview* no. 1, March 1942). Remembering that time, *Preview* editor F.R. Scott reminisced, “We wrote from Canada, sure, but we were almost on the same level as anybody writing from anywhere else, and we wanted to judge ourselves

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<sup>2</sup> Glassco did not publish in *Preview*, but did publish in *First Statement* in the same era. He maintained relationships with fellow poets, particularly Anderson and F.R. Scott from the *Preview* group. Anderson, Page, and Klein also contributed to *First Statement*, had poetry reviewed in the magazine, and were published by First Statement Press.

in that universal aspect” (qtd. in Bentley and Gnarowski). While the dissemination of magazines like *Preview* helped solidify and extend the creative networks prized by these Canadian writers, it is worth noting that the editors’ interest in forging alliances with other “writing movements” was framed, in part, as a response to their sense of the “frustrating and inhibiting effects of isolation” (*Preview* no. 1, March 1942). Writing, they suggested, was a lonely vocation, particularly for artists like themselves, who favoured a genre and style for which there was limited national interest and support. In her critical article “Canadian Poetry 1942,” Page begins by saying that “three years ago the silence of Canadian poetry was alarming” (8), and that, as of 1942, the poet “ha[d] yet to come to grips with himself [sic] and stop crying ‘Help’” (9). Page goes on to recommend that the alienated poet “identify himself [sic] with people, [and] forget for awhile [sic] the country of his [sic] own head” (9). While Page emphasizes the value of communal affiliation and engagement, she also intimates that the country with which one identified can be the originating cause of the crisis that isolated the poet-artist figure. Thus, she advocated for a breaking with old ties and building up new ones. This productive tension between these writers’ engagement with new cultures and contexts, on the one hand, and their struggles to move beyond the countries “of [their] own head[s]” (9), on the other, is at the core of this dissertation.

The inevitable dislocation of travel provoked these writers to consider their collective and individual identities as modernists, Canadians, and global citizens. Returning, as they did, to the tension between the experience of dislocation and a desire for affiliation, their written reflections on the experience of travel suggest challenges and insecuri-

ties around social and cultural belonging within the communities, cultures, and movements with which they chose to affiliate themselves. Their travel writing explores the complex processes involved in the attempt to achieve belonging and the limitations of that belonging.

In *The World, The Text, The Critic*, Edward Said uses the notion of affiliation to address the process by which modernist writers looked beyond their inherited contexts to a network that they deliberately fostered. Specifically, he argues that modernist writers resisted or challenged filiation, a biologically-driven sense of identity that came from conceptions of the family but included the nation, and instead privileged affiliation as an alternative epistemology that helped them understand the self in relation to unfamiliar contexts and cultures. “What I am describing,” writes Said, “is the transition from a failed idea or possibility of filiation to a kind of compensatory order that, whether it is a party, institution, a culture, a set of beliefs, or even a world-vision, provides men and women with a new form of relationship, which I have been calling affiliation but which is also a new system” (19). Though he indicates that affiliation grows in response to failures in the filial order, he also suggests that affiliation can be exclusionary and limiting, falling victim to the same issues as filiation when “its systems of thought more or less directly reproduce the skeleton of family authority supposedly left behind when the family was left behind” (22). As affiliations become formalized and culturally entrenched, they can ossify and reproduce power dynamics that had been rejected. Said’s suggestion of a dialectic relationship between filiation and affiliation is useful here because, for example, it helps to explain the interplay between cosmopolitan ideals and colonialist ideologies within a single text, or the way in which the nostalgic rendering of a masculinist literary

community in one scene warps into homophobic gatekeeping in another. More generally, the tension that he establishes between filiation and affiliation is useful in understanding the ways in which Klein, Anderson, Page, and Glassco continued to be shaped by the countries “of [their] own head[s]” when recounting their experiences in the countries they visited.

As the writers studied in this dissertation engaged with foreign cultures, they were confronted with the limitations of their own understanding, as well as the assumptions that they took for granted as natural. So, for example, Klein’s assumption of a universal Jewish experience was shattered by his time in Morocco, where he realized his inability to comprehend the subjugation of the Jews living in *mellahs*, while Page’s experience in Brazil helped her recognize the ethical insufficiency of her tendency to celebrate scenes of poverty and violence as beautiful. Paying close attention to such tensions and, indeed, crises in the work of four mid-century writers, this dissertation maps the emergence of modernist Canadian travel writing, itself an under-explored subgenre of modernism in Canadian literature, and then charts the changes in its scope over the next two decades. I argue that each writer’s navigation of their experiences of contexts that were foreign to them provoked them to revise their understanding of self in relation to others, and challenged their notions about such collective identities as nation, ethnicity, gender, race, class, sexual orientation, and religion.

In constructing this dissertation, I have adopted a case study approach that uses chronology to show changes in perspective over time and to establish the momentum and growing development of a distinctive mid-century Canadian modernist travel writing. I have organized the individual chapters chronologically and by author to clearly delineate

this form of modernism. In doing so, my critical engagement is meant to privilege depth of analysis of selected texts over breadth across a wide swath of authors. I have selected four well-known Canadian modernists whose contributions to travel writing have gone under-examined, and I have foregrounded specific texts that have received relatively little critical attention in order to establish the extent and variety of travel writing produced by these writers. When I do discuss better-known texts, I accompany these readings with archival and unpublished materials to extend their scope and make stronger connections to travel. In all cases, as I read the work of a singular author, I place his or her work in larger social and literary contexts and draw connections across the chapters in hopes of weaving the threads of Canadian modernist travel writing into a single critical discourse.

I will devote the remainder of this introduction to defining the theoretical underpinnings of this project, providing a literary historical overview of the period in which the works are situated, and presenting a number of the literary critical narratives around community, modernism, travel writing, and cosmopolitanism that are extended by the travel writing I examine. Then, I situate Canadian modernist travel writing within the larger categories in which it belongs: Canadian literature, Anglo-American literary modernism, and travel writing. I close with a short overview of the case studies I explore in the body of the dissertation.

### **Community and Exile: Affiliation Beyond the Nation**

The travel writing considered in this dissertation explores the political, social, and aesthetic nature of community and exile, including the hegemonic ideologies of colonial-



ism that structure and inform these collectives. Following Benedict Anderson, I understand community as an “imagined” formation (6) that is built on the dissemination of texts. Anderson’s idea of a “deep, horizontal comradeship” (7) relies on a shared sense of readership—of shared values, shared language—to communicate a sense of communal and frequently political affiliation. As he suggests in his careful examination of nationalism’s rise alongside the development of print culture, readership can create a shared community among its membership; he states that “fellow-readers, to whom they were connected through print, formed, in their secular, particular, visible invisibility the embryo of the nationally imagined community” (44). Drawing on Anderson, I suggest that modernist communities were also formed through the circulation of texts that connected their readerships.

In grappling with the significance of community formation and competing notions of community for Canadian modernist writers, I am also indebted to Jessica Berman’s *Modernist Fiction, Cosmopolitanism and the Politics of Community*, which understands community as “a narrative process” (3) and shows that

the tensions between pedagogical models and contemporary enunciations of community thus emerge in these texts as struggles with history, with the question of social identity, and with the tendency of the twentieth-century to equate all community life with national life, and all allegiances as matters of the public realm. The tension also emerges in these texts in the willingness to announce the community as both local and international, private and public at once. (20)

As Berman suggests, modernism offers a way of articulating international connections and communities where text and narrative act as the core. She shows how communities

can be defined against, and in tension with, the nation, relying on the local and the international simultaneously. In my analysis of Canadian modernist travel writing, I rely on Berman's focus on the texts themselves as sites for the creation of community.

In studies of literary modernism, the concept of exile casts a long shadow, particularly in studies of international artistic affiliation. As Caren Kaplan argues,

Euro-American modernisms celebrate singularity, solitude, estrangement, alienation, and aestheticized excisions of location in favour of locale—that is, the 'artist in exile' is never 'at home,' always existentially alone, and shocked by the strain of displacement into significant experimentations and insights. (28)

For most Western—including Canadian—modernists, exile was associated with choice and relative social mobility. That is true of the writers studied here: to the extent that they described themselves as exiles, it was to underscore the smallness of the Canadian literary scene in the early 1940s and highlight the value of artistic affiliation with creative communities in larger cosmopolitan centres, like London, Paris, and New York.

Klein, Anderson, Page, and Glassco also saw themselves as cosmopolitan citizens of the world, as artists with broadly international or extranational affiliations who were influenced by Anglo-American modernist traditions. Thus, they positioned their work within larger conversations by early and contemporaneous Anglo-American modernists such as Virginia Woolf, E.M. Forster, Joseph Conrad, Gertrude Stein, Ford Madox Ford,

Marcel Proust, Henry James and D.H. Lawrence.<sup>3</sup> These Anglo-American modernists explored the negative consequences of nationalism and the limited ability of the nation state to protect the interests of its citizens. Their criticism of nationalism become more trenchant in the interwar period after the devastating losses of the First World War and the ravages of the Great Depression. For example, in her 1938 anti-war treatise *Three Guineas*, Virginia Woolf ardently argues that women should reject national identity: “in fact, as a woman, I have no country. As a woman I want no country. As a woman my country is the whole world” (99). Woolf criticized the nation for the way it excluded women and instead offered cosmopolitanism as an alternative. By making the world her country, she recognized the limitations and exclusions of national identity and discarded the concept as useful to women.

However, such Anglo-American modernist conceptions of internationalism bespoke the privileges of mobility and citizenship even as they rejected nationalism. As Lyndsey Stonebridge claims in *Placeless People: Writing, Rights, and Refugees*, “mod-

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<sup>3</sup> For example, E.M. Forster’s 1910 novel *Howards End* questions the changing nature of English identity by bringing together three families with different values to illustrate the separations caused by race, class, and nation. At the same time, he suggests connection across communities in his hopeful epigraph: “Only connect...” As the epigraph suggests, Forster argues for a cosmopolitan connection across different groups and people to build understanding and goodwill against the barriers created by race, class, and national identities.

ernist literature often seemed to peel itself free of the world, claiming in its own literariness an aesthetic liberation from the constraints of territorial sovereignty” (8). Although she allows that many modernists were concerned with the dangers of nationalism, she suggests that Virginia Woolf’s declaration, “As a woman I want no country,” for all its ardour, may have sounded “whimsical” to refugees like Hannah Arendt and Simone Weil, who wrote from a position of statelessness and were not inclined to celebrate it (31). Unlike Arendt and Weil, the writers studied in this dissertation did not have first-hand experience of “the new statelessness in the 1940s” (5), but they were, like Woolf, Joyce, and so many other European modernists, engaged in the project of renegotiating national belonging and worldliness in its shadows.

Like many of the modernist writers that they admired, Klein, Anderson, Page, and Glassco held Western passports, had a stable national citizenship and were able to travel internationally with few restrictions or barriers. They considered themselves both national and international subjects. None of them gave up their Canadian national identity, and yet their travel writing rarely featured Canada as a point of direct comparison or sustained inquiry. They could assume the stability of their national belonging and did not offer the kind of engaged inquiry those without national security were more likely to reflect upon. Still, Canada was the point of departure for these writers, and, whether implicitly or explicitly, their work is informed by debates about the nature of national and international identity.

Stonebridge argues that for the Anglo-European modernists she considers, “writing was a means of excavating the mind in transit between different modes of political and historical belonging, as well as exploring the suffering of powerlessness” (20). In the

texts I consider, a similar excavation takes place. The transition that these writers experienced prompted a deep consideration of different forms of community or belonging, but their writing about displacement and alienation is coloured by their privileged understanding of citizenship as a given and national identity as inclusive. They romanticized internationalism, but they never experienced statelessness or political exile. They believed that they could find a secure way of belonging extranationally, intellectually engaging in imagining a stateless internationalism without experiencing its realities.

In keeping with Stonebridge, Said, Berman, Kaplan, and other scholars, this dissertation explores a distinctly modernist sense of cosmopolitanism as a form of global ethics or perspective on cross-cultural exchange. This early- and mid-twentieth-century articulation of cosmopolitanism diverges from contemporary readings of cosmopolitanism by scholars like Kwame Anthony Appiah, Martha Nussbaum, Joshua Cohen, David Harvey, James Clifford, and Homi Bhabha in that it tends to focus on exile, anti-nationalism, and community.<sup>4</sup> Paying close attention to these tropes, I attempt to understand their

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<sup>4</sup> The modernist cosmopolitanism I explore in this dissertation remains subject to many of the important criticism provided by contemporary cosmopolitanism scholars, including claims that it is Eurocentric, reliant on Western values, and has been used for oppressive means. For example, Paul Gilroy rightly asserts that cosmopolitanism has distinct “moral sensibilities” (59), and suggests that this moralism is used to “promote and justify intervention in other people’s sovereign territory on the grounds that their ailing or incompetent national state has failed to measure up to the levels of good practice that merit recognition as civilized” (59-60). These “moral sensibilities” come into play in many of the

articulations of cosmopolitanism in relation to Canadian modernism. In doing so, I rely on modernist scholar Rebecca Walkowitz's notion of "critical cosmopolitanism." Walkowitz defines cosmopolitanism as "thinking beyond the nation but also comparing, distinguishing, and judging among different versions of transnational thought, testing moral and political norms, including norms of critical thinking; and valuing informal as well as transient models of community" (2). Walkowitz's "critical cosmopolitanism" introduces modernist literature and aesthetics as central aspects of an analytic and engaged assessment of cosmopolitanism. She explains that this term both "has been used to support or to tolerate imperialism," and suggests that "a commitment to collective agency may be a style rather than an index of transnational politics (4). Walkowitz's caveat is worth emphasizing because cosmopolitanism is often aspirational in the works I study. I read moments of critical resistance to the nation and to colonialism, as well as celebrations of other communal identities beyond these structures through the lens of critical cosmopolitanism.

Cosmopolitanism as a concept is also often treated as a foil to nationalism. In my understanding of the complex relationship between these ideologies, I am influenced by Bridget Chalk's *Modernism and Mobility*, which traces the ways in which cosmopolitanism and nationalism are intrinsically linked by the more rigid definitions of citizenship brought on by the world wars. Because national identity was policed and administered through the growing use of the passport, modernism's cosmopolitanism is inseparable from the reassertion of nationalism: "national identity and geographical cosmopolitanism

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works I study, particularly in my third chapter and my conclusion.

were inextricable and in perpetual tension” (12), argues Chalk, and “we run the risk of neglecting the conditions of literary production if we celebrate the transnational and cosmopolitan modernist perspectives as somehow free of their historical context of heightened security around principles of nationality” (12). With this in mind, I read the Canadian identity of the writers I study as particular to mid-century modernism and suggest that national identity shifts based on the context the writers occupy and the different historical moments with which their works engage. For example, I consider how Anderson’s articulation of national identity was centrally shaped by colonial relations, while Page’s sense of Canadianness was shaped by the protocols of state diplomacy and the conventions of gender roles, and Glassco’s perspective on expatriate community was directly informed by existing narratives about international community. Most obviously, my analysis of Klein’s journalism foregrounds his negotiation of multiple nationalities and affiliations and demonstrates how adopting a single nationality resisted other powerful ways of building affiliation.

### **Canadian Modernist Travel within Canadian Modernist Studies**

While I rely on the work of scholars who think through community and affiliation in Anglo-American contexts, my work applies some of their central questions to Canadian modernist studies. And, while Anglo-American modernism provides a solid ground for reading and understanding Canadian modernism as it was engaged with in this period, I do not consider Canadian modernism a derivative form of Anglo-American modernist conceptions; rather I contend that modernisms need to be read as multiple, and as located both geographically and temporally. While many modernist scholars have worked to

“emplace modernism” (Doyle and Winkiel 3) by pursuing localized responses to modern life, I am particularly drawn to Susan Stanford Friedman’s definition of modernity as a “rupture: a paradigm shift, a geohistorical transformation on a large scale” (*Planetary Modernism* 4) that produces “heightened, often extreme and accelerating change that spreads through the various domains of society—from technological and commercial to the political and philosophical” (4). Modernism, she argues, is the “aesthetic domain of modernity—it helps create that modernity; it reflects it; it responds to it; it challenges it; it reformulates it” (4). Rather than associating modernism with a particular period or style, Friedman represents the creative responses to modernity on a global or planetary scale. Elsewhere, she articulates modernism as a relational term, one which “regards modernity as a major rupture from what came before, [to open] up the possibility for polycentric modernities and modernisms at different points of time and in different locations” (“Periodizing Modernism” 426). Her argument for multiple modernisms helps me articulate a distinct stream of modernist thought in Canada without defining Canadian modernism exclusively in opposition to Anglo-American modernisms, which were also diverse and reflective of an array of widely international influences.

Canadian modernism is distinct from but dovetails with and bolsters up the dominant Anglo-American modernism that has been associated with communities like the Lost Generation, who have often been treated as largely American in their origin and perspective. Dean Irvine calls Canadian modernism its own kind of “lost generation” (“A Modernist Commons” 49), an idea we expand upon in our edited collection *Translocated Modernisms*. In the introduction to this volume, we describe Canadian modernism as its own lowercase “lost generation” because Canadian writers have typically been “written



out of cultural histories of modernism” and yet they have frequently served as “intercultural mediators of the Lost Generation’s translocational crossings and interchanges” (Balfantyne et al. 4). By exploring the travel writing of Canadian authors in more detail, this dissertation considers how Canadian modernism intersects with multiple, competing definitions of what it means to make art and understand the self as a written construct at mid-century.

The growing field of Canadian modernist studies engages with writers primarily from the first half of the twentieth century who identify, directly or indirectly, with literary modernism. As Irvine suggests in his introduction to *Canadian Modernists Meet*, “Canada’s modernists are always enmeshed by and, at the same time, peripheral to [Anglo-American] canonical modernisms. Modernisms in Canada therefore represent transnational cultural formations among the matrices of European and American modernisms—and simultaneously, marginal modernisms on the edges of principal cultural modernities” (7). My perspective on Canadian modernism has been informed by a number of works that have broadened the scope of modernism in Canada and have explored these “transnational cultural formations” that define Canadian modernism in contradistinction to other Anglo-American modernisms. These include Glenn Willmott’s *Unreal Country: Modernity in the Canadian Novel in English*, Dean Irvine’s *Editing Modernity: Women and Little-Magazine Cultures in Canada, 1916-1956*, Candida Rifkind’s *Comrades and Critics: Women, Literature and the Left in 1930s Canada*, Colin Hill’s *Modern Realism in English-Canadian Fiction*, and Gregory Betts’s *Avant-garde Canadian Literature: The Early Manifestations*. In particular, I am influenced by Brian Trehearne’s *Montreal For-*

*ties: Modernist Poetry in Transition and Aestheticism and the Canadian Modernists: Aspects of a Poetic Influence*, which examine poetry written by each of the authors I study. Trehearne's treatment of Canadian modernist aesthetics and his careful corrective to the narrative of little magazine rivalry have encouraged me to think more critically about the continuing role that community and affiliation played in shaping the work of these writers.

Further, Di Brandt and Barbara Godard's *Wider Boundaries of Daring* has reminded me of the important power of collective acknowledgement and naming. In their edited collection focusing on Canadian women's participation in modernism, they underscore the importance of revising literary histories of modernism to include marginalized perspectives. As they argue, the work "offer[s] a corrective to the current telling of Canada's literary history by highlighting the achievement and legacy of our best modernist women poets, not 'alone' but 'together', not as solitary and marginal receivers of modernist influence, but as important makers of it, consciously engaging in a collective, revisionary, 'new' cultural project" (8). Brandt and Godard's emphatic focus on the power of collective thinking has helped me to read the writers of my dissertation together, and as writers of travel.<sup>5</sup>

Finally, my dissertation is also heavily influenced by the 2012 Exile's Re-

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<sup>5</sup> In the modernist context, Bart Vautour, Emily Robins Sharpe and Kaarina Mikalson's project, *Canada and the Spanish Civil War* offers a strong model for thinking collaboratively about transnational collectives.

turn/L'exil et le retour colloquium at the Sorbonne Nouvelle, where I acted as a coordinator. This conference focused primarily on Canadian writers' participation in international modernist networks. Building on the ideas at the conference, I also co-edited and co-wrote the introduction to *Translocated Modernisms: Paris and Other Lost Generations*, as well as contributed a chapter that presented an early version of my thinking on Glassco and relational memoir. This book, and the writing of its introduction, fundamentally shaped my thinking about how to read Canada as a part of international networks. That project and this one share a similar goal: "to piece together the remnants of other lost generations and excavate the remains of networks that conveyed fugitive modernisms in transit—both as they were conceived in Paris and as they were translated and redistributed by modernist travellers moving across the globe" (Ballantyne et. al 4). Though my focus is not exclusively on Paris, I treat travel writing as the "fugitive modernism" that is quite literally in transit in my dissertation. By bringing this narrative into conversation with other larger narratives in the field, I try to do justice to peripheral works that are not traditionally considered a part of the Canadian modernist canon.

In the modernist period, Canadian literature was also criticized for being colonial and derivative of British literature. As a result, some early modern Canadian poets disavowed "national" literature in the interests of appealing to an international audience. At the same time, they also worked to encourage the application of an international standard to criticism of Canadian writing. In a 1928 issue of *The Canadian Forum*, A.J.M. Smith demanded a reevaluation of criticism without a nationalist focus in his article "Wanted—Canadian Criticism." He was concerned that the nationalist bent in Canadian writing dis-

couraged critical responses to literature by promoting the local without assessing its literary value or contribution. He discredited the Canadian Authors Association (CAA) in particular, suggesting that they created “a moral obligation to buy poor Canadian, rather than good foreign books” (600). Indeed, the CAA’s mandate was primarily to “ensure that authors had a more active role in the Canadian literary marketplace” (Doody). As Christopher Doody argues, the CAA had a double agenda to promote Canadian literature and to encourage a high literary standard. However, critics of the CAA suggested that in practice, the association tended more toward promoting than maintaining literary quality.

Modernist writers did not want to be promoted because of their nationality, but because of their literary merit. Smith’s contemporary F.R. Scott suggested as much in his poem “The Canadian Authors Meet” (1927):

O Canada, O Canada, Oh can  
A day go by without new authors springing  
To paint the native maple, and to plan  
More ways to set the selfsame welkin ringing? (21-24)

Scott criticizes those interested in a “national” literature as naval-gazing and derivative. He disdains the ability of writers who rely on nationalist sentiment and overt national imagery to produce something transcendent and new.

In addition to being critical of parochial and derivative nationalist sentimentality, Canadian modernist writers and critics—like Scott and Smith—explored alternative forms of affiliation through international modernism. When Smith wrote his introduction to *The Book of Canadian Poetry* in 1943, he suggested that many Canadian modernist poets operated in a cosmopolitan tradition that reached outward to a broader international

modernist community. Smith famously sparked the “native vs. cosmopolitan” debates in the literary critical magazines of the era when he pronounced that there were two distinct streams of Canadian modern poets: the native, who “concentrated on what is individual and unique in Canadian life,” and the preferable cosmopolitan, who “made a heroic effort to transcend colonialism by entering into the universal, civilizing culture of ideas” (5). This statement is the original definition of cosmopolitanism in the Canadian context. It reinforces the modernist value of literary engagement with great universal (read: Western) ideas, and provides a critique of national literature as somehow derivative of British literature. At the same time, it leaves much room for interpretation and fails to clarify the inherent values of the texts it describes.

Though Smith’s anthology was well received, his distinction between native and cosmopolitan led to critical backlash: specifically, critics disagreed with Smith’s privileging of his own preferred style of poetry, and with the hard and fast distinction between the two groups and their aims. Some of those criticisms were ameliorated by the appearance of the 1948 second edition of *The Book of Canadian Poetry*, wherein Smith presented the concepts of native and cosmopolitan as synchronous and potentially dependent, suggesting that modern poets had “escaped from the limitations of provincialism into a cosmopolitanism that does not reject native sources of strength, but draws nourishment from them, and who therefore have an interest for the reader outside Canada that few Canadian poets have had” (vii). Smith aligned the native and cosmopolitan as two tactics that work together to move beyond the “provincial,” which he associated with past nationalist poetry. By the 1957 third edition, nationalism was no longer vilified, but its contours were reshaped. Therein, Smith defined Canadian poetry as “the record of life in

Canada as it takes significance when all the resources of sensibility, intelligence, and spirit are employed in experiencing it or in understanding it” (2-3). These resources are strategically linked to the cosmopolitan as informed ways of describing the experience of the world, while also recognizing the importance of recording aspects of life in Canada. Philip Kokotailo summarizes Smith’s changing understanding thus: “native and cosmopolitan impulses are not mutually exclusive, [and] can exist not only within the same mind, but also within the same poem” (“Native *and* Cosmopolitan” 34), and thus “instead of simply removing the implied opposition of his two traditions, [Smith] explicitly joined them together” (35). It is in this joining—in exploring cosmopolitan elements that reach outward to other affiliations (in this case, usually modernist literary affiliations), with the specific, localized context—that we see some of the complex tensions that are also present in Canadian modernist travel writing.

At the time, the writers in this dissertation did not respond directly to Smith’s claims; however, in his 1978 introductory note to the Kraus Reprint of *Preview*’s print run, Anderson offers an ambiguous statement on the native and cosmopolitan tensions when he states in reference to the amalgamation of *Preview* and *First Statement* into *Northern Review* that “the two styles, if there were two styles, which I very much doubt, coexisted quite happily” (iv). This statement, which attempts to acknowledge and deny the reality of the native-cosmopolitan at the same time, clearly suggests the impact of hindsight in muddying the past. As I argue in my examination of Glassco’s use of existing memoirs in the construction of his *Memoirs of Montparnasse*, the establishment of literary critical narratives in the decades following modernism shape and inform reflections

on the past. Throughout the travel writing I examine, the time elapsed between the experience and the composition often lead to additional frames and an increased reliance on narrative tropes and existing imagery. Often, the writers use modernist techniques and images to help interpret their responses to new places. For Page, this means describing Brazilian landscapes in her *Brazilian Journal* using the language of modernist art making by using a blend of ethnography and surrealism, while for Klein, this means fictionalizing his journey through Israel, Morocco, and Europe in his *Second Scroll* using a combination of modernist fragmentation and juxtaposition alongside the symbolism and structure of the Pentateuch and its Talmudic commentaries.

To get a clearer sense of cosmopolitan expression at the time of Smith's writing, we can turn to poetry from the same era. Page's poem "Permanent Tourists" from 1948 introduces cosmopolitan ideals about how to appreciate other cultures, while at the same time remaining skeptical about the tourist's consumption of foreign culture. This poem's deep criticism of tourists starts to create a sense of an ethical way to engage with the foreign. The first stanza begins:

Somnolent through landscapes and by trees  
nondescript, almost anonymous,  
they alter as they enter foreign cities—  
the terrible tourists with their empty eyes  
longing to be filled with monuments. (1-5)

Eager to consume, the tourists are empty vessels "longing to be filled" (5), lifeless creatures with "empty eyes" (4) that primarily gawk at artwork and cultural sites without understanding what they see. The transaction is one-way and does not seem to enrich the

viewer or the viewed. And yet, "Permanent Tourists" has two other vantage points. In addition to the tourists being observed, there is also the speaker of the poem itself, and a second-person addressee to whom the speaker offers her observations. The speaker observes the tourists, implying that they believe the old adage that "travel is broadening," but her tone suggests the impossibility of the tourists becoming enriched through travel. The speaker also encourages her thinking in the addressee, with whom she colludes, saying, "Look, you can see them nude in any café" (21). She chides the tourists as visible to the point of embarrassment—they mark their environment because of the ways they clumsily engage with the foreign. The speaker criticizes tourists for their inappropriate and incomplete understandings of how to behave in foreign communities. But instead of positing an alternative, the speaker instead looks outward to others to confirm or deny her position. The position that the speaker inhabits is separate—perhaps that of another type of traveler, the modernist exile. Her tone is critical, self-conscious, and uncertain, but still is clear in its contention that the artist is an elevated and somewhat elite social position of cultural discernment. As Page's speaker indicates, the travelling writer sees him or herself as separate from and superior to the tourist. And yet, the tourist and the exile often occupy a similar position in a foreign environment—uncertainly negotiating the other, passing judgment, and consuming culture without context. Both the tourist and the travelling writer are subject to ethnocentric bias and are susceptible to interpreting foreign culture for their own ends. Canadian modernist literature has been fundamentally shaped by such biases.

### **Canadian Modernists as Travel/ing Writers**



As I have suggested, the literary assessment of Canadian literature as derivative because of Canada's colonial status has clear connections to travel writing, a genre that has also been criticized for its privileging of a European perspective and sensibility in its framing and treatment of other cultures. Now that the authors I examine have been placed within the critical narratives with which they are most commonly associated, I need to ensure they are also placed in the wider genre of travel writing. The works studied in this dissertation do not just happen to have been written while the writers travelled; instead, these works offer sustained, first-person commentary on the experience of travel. I define travel writers as writers who write in the context of countries that they visit, and who produce writing outside their country of primary residence about the other places they have lived.<sup>6</sup> Travel writing, then, is the variety of first-person, autobiographical narratives that the writers produce during or about their time abroad, including journalism, autobiography, life writing, memoir, and fictionalized autobiography. Though travel writing takes multiple forms, I want to suggest that it is unified by its authors' sustained and reflective critical engagement with their personal experiences of foreign cultures.

In most cases, the writers analyzed in this dissertation did not define themselves as travel writers. Instead, they aspired to more "literary" monikers, seeing themselves as poets and artists, or, occasionally, as exiled or expatriate writers. They would likely have seen the "travel" moniker in front of their vocation as limiting their scope or creative ability. The fact that they did not identify and have not been identified as travel writers

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<sup>6</sup> Travel writing can also take place within a country where one lives. However, in this dissertation, I have limited the scope to international travel.

has likely contributed to the somewhat muted response to these texts and the tendency to see them as “one offs” with limited collective meaning or purpose. However, I identify these writers as travel writers because of the significance it brings to the study of travel writing in Canada. As is so often the case in Canadian literature, writers who leave Canada by choice are less acknowledged for the contributions their works make to our understanding of Canadian literature itself. Given the legacy of thematic criticism in Canada, there is a tendency to understand Canadian literature as literature that is *about* Canada or produced *in* Canada.

As a result, writing about Canadians who travel abroad is somewhat scant in Canadian criticism. Eva-Marie Kröller’s *Canadian Travellers in Europe, 1850-1900* is a notable exception. Wendy Roy’s *Maps of Difference* and Hallvard Dahlie’s *Varieties of Exile* are the only book-length studies that include mid-century modernist Canadian writers who wrote about their travels. Roy’s case study of three women travel writers between the 1830s and the late 1960s focuses on the role that travel plays in reporting upon and criticizing colonialism, with Margaret Laurence, and, as a point of comparison, P.K. Page representing the later period. Roy’s emphasis on Laurence’s colonialist attitudes and assumptions in Somalia offers a useful point of contrast to my chapter on Anderson, where I criticize and respond to his sense of colonial authority and privilege in Singapore and Spain. Dahlie’s work, in contrast, opts for breadth over depth, and offers a vast treasure of references to Canadian writers engaged in travel. Dahlie identifies travelling Canadian writers as exiles to demonstrate that “the phenomenon of exile has been a frequently recurring element in Canadian literature” (9). However, he argues that “expatriation out of

Canada has been essentially a solitary undertaking” (7), and so he does not identify a collective pattern or identity for the group (7). Dahlie’s work, while not expressly identified as travel criticism, uses the modernist trope of exile as a thematic lens through which to read works that deal with travel. In some ways, I see my project as an extension of Dahlie’s work by making the express connection from writers-in-exile (or, in my words, writers who travelled and whose travel works engage with experiences of foreign cultures) to travel writing. I continue the narrative of his work by demonstrating the significance of modernist travel, particularly to autobiographical narratives engaged with travel, to the more established body of work on modernism and exile.

Beyond the Canadian context, travel writing criticism has engaged deeply with the ways in which travel writing has reinscribed asymmetrical power relations. Mary Louise Pratt suggests in *Imperial Eyes* that travel writing “produced ‘the rest of the world’ for European readerships” in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (3). Travel writing, particularly during the massive imperial expansion of the Victorian era, served as an important and often titillating way to account for, codify, and define other cultures for a European audience. Contemporary travel writing scholars, including Pratt, interpret works that explicitly reinforce these asymmetrical relations of power in order to both identify and dismantle these harmful narratives.<sup>7</sup> They underscore the ways in which the

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<sup>7</sup> Critical interest in travel writing dovetails with the growing body of scholarship on postcolonial and critical studies of colonialism that started to flourish in the 1980s and 1990s, particularly as influenced by Edward Said’s seminal *Orientalism*. Said suggests that travel writing is one of the primary modes for constructing the binary of Orient and

sense of authority implicit in an autobiographical narrative by a person in a position of great privilege describing other places to people like themselves negates the voices of those most gravely disadvantaged by colonial relations. To help understand this dynamic, Pratt describes travel writing as engaging with “contact zones,” which she defines as “social spaces where disparate cultures meet, clash, and grapple with each other, often in highly asymmetrical relations of domination and subordination” (7).<sup>8</sup> My reading of modernist Canadian travel writing pays attention to such power relations. Thus, I consider how the works in question rely on a colonial gaze, which offers a privileged vantage

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Occident to reinforce the power of empire through Eurocentric textual depictions of the Middle East as exotic, feminine, backward, and static. For more studies that deal explicitly with travel writing and colonialism, see especially David Spurr’s *Rhetoric of Empire: Colonial Discourse in Journalism, Travel Writing and Imperial Administration*, and the edited collections *Travel Writing and Empire* (Clark), *In Transit: Travel, Text, Empire* (Gilbert and Johnston), *Writing Travel: The Poetics and Politics of the Modern Journey* (Zilcosky), and *Travel Writing, Form, and Empire: The Poetics and Politics of Mobility* (Kuehn and Smethurst).

<sup>8</sup> Cynthia Sugars and Laura Moss’ *Canadian Literature in English: Texts and Contexts* uses Pratt’s concept of “contact zones” as a way of engaging with the clash of world views (particularly, Indigenous vs European settler-colonial) at the core of Canadian literature. In some ways, we can interpret all of Canadian literature as engaged with “contact zones” between different cultures, whether at home or abroad.

point on interpreting the foreign for an audience in Canada. Specifically, I seek to identify and dismantle stereotypes present in these works' depictions of foreign cultures and look for moments of resistance against the assumed privilege and authority of the narrator in the texts. In doing so, I foreground moments of ambivalence and uncertainty in their representation of colonial subjects.

In my attempt to read works of travel writing as engaged in a kind of dual vision that is both colonial *and* cosmopolitan, I am guided by Debbie Lisle's *The Global Politics of Contemporary Travel Writing*. Lisle's work builds upon Pratt's and suggests that reading contemporary travel writing requires a double vision because travel writers often attempt to "jettison their colonial heritage by focusing on the harmonizing effects of globalization" (4). She suggests that these two visions, both colonial and cosmopolitan, ultimately act on a continuum where "all productions of difference in the genre—even the most cosmopolitan—cannot escape the regulating force of empire" (261). I see this continuum between cosmopolitanism and colonialism as central to much of the writing I study: even when the authors exhibit a desire to forge cross-cultural relationships and are cognizant of their biases, they also make assumptions about colonialism that "reproduce the logic of Empire through a colonial vision" (Lisle 3). In all cases, Lisle argues that "tropes of power, control and exclusion" often underlie Western texts about other places and cultures (4). Following Lisle, I am reminded to consider how authors who seek to disrupt or undermine colonialism's power by engaging with cosmopolitanism often continue to reproduce exploitative relations.

Klein, Anderson, Page, and Glassco were writing in a period of recently redrawn state lines, where tourism allowed more people to actively witness the world themselves

instead of solely relying on the travel accounts of privileged men and women. The writers no longer saw themselves as the “producers” of the other—and yet their work was often informed by biases and prejudice that reinforced this paradigm. Modernist cosmopolitanism is one flawed way that Canadian modernist writers learned to engage with and understand themselves and Canada as part of a larger global community.

In investigating those biases and seeking to understand them in context, I am indebted to scholars working at the intersection of modernism and travel writing. Perhaps the most comprehensive work on the intersections between modernism and travel writing is Stacy Burton’s *Travel Narrative and the Ends of Modernity*. Burton’s primary task is to establish continuities between pre-twentieth-century and postmodern travel writing. She shows how modernism helped transition between these two quite different approaches to travel writing. Her definition of the salient features of modernist travel writing is of primary interest to this study:

Self-deprecating narrators disrupt the authoritative posture and imperial discourse of earlier travelers. Speculation replaces certainty; the evidence of personal experience trumps documentary data-gathering. Narratives juxtapose multiple voices and multiple modes of representation in open-ended texts that may refuse the established plotline whereby travel reconfirms imperial logic and results in safe travel home. Experimentation recasts travel narrative as a self-consciously literary genre able to represent contingent experience in a globalized, rapidly changing world. Implicitly, it makes the claim that travel is better represented through heteroglossia, discontinuity, and ambiguity than through conventional tropes of exploration and adventure. (51-52)

Burton's theoretical overview of literary style complements the questions I am asking about affiliation and identity. Where she suggests the modernist narrative tropes most persistent in travel writing, I consider how these tropes reflect changing notions of international identity. Following Burton's lead, I track changes in the narrative voice in travel writing, noting that there is a self-consciousness and lack of certainty that can be traced across much of the writing. Modernism brings to the fore the instability of the subject position of the travel writer. The writers' displacement often leads to a turn inward, where they note changes in themselves that also mark a change in the discourse of travel. This process of reflection emphasizes the literary and contingent nature of the travel writing. Much like an attention to modernist and postmodernist discourses shapes James Clifford's reading of the literary elements of ethnography in *Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography* (with Marcus) and *The Predicament of Culture*, modernist writing about travel should be read and understood as contingent, ambiguous, self-reflexive, and multiple.

Predating Burton, David Farley's *Modernist Travel Writing: Intellectuals Abroad* has usefully described modernist travel writing as a way to understand and criticize newly established borders and international relationships. His work, concerned primarily with the interwar period, explores a "late modernism"<sup>9</sup> invested in redrawing and reinterpreting boundaries alongside the changes in identity that these shifts entail:

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<sup>9</sup> "Late modernism" is a term that Farley borrows from Tyrus Miller's *Late Modernism: Politics, Fiction and the Arts Between the Wars*, which argues for particular aesthetic and theoretical concepts linked to the 1930s and 1940s writing by modernist figures including

For many writers of the period, modernism was always about crossing borders and posturing imaginatively against a backdrop of a modern world grown beyond the boundaries of nation, even as the legal boundaries were being redrawn (in the case of Central Europe) and newly inscribed (in the case of the Middle East) after the First World War. (12)

The imposition and redrawing of national lines and the reconstitution of nations outside of their pre-war colonial frameworks are particularly significant to developing new notions of cosmopolitan identity and citizenship. Farley's work helps me to position the complexities of nation in relation to modernism and cosmopolitanism. For example, I discuss the implications of imperialism in the establishment of Israel in 1949 and its impacts on its Jewish communities' articulations of a closed, singular Israeli nationalism. As I argue in Chapter 2, Klein's identity as a Jewish-Canadian was called into question when he confronted the repercussions of adopting the singular religious and national identity imposed by the state of Israel (which itself was imposed by the United States and Great Britain).

Another study that reveals useful tensions in the way travel shapes modernist identity is Kimberly Healey's *The Modernist Traveler: French Detours, 1900-1930*, which emphasizes the extent to which the modernist travelogue operated in a space of internal inquiry about writing and the nature of selfhood: "[t]hrough actual experiences of

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Wyndham Lewis, Djuna Barnes, Samuel Beckett, and Mina Loy. Farley's study includes Lewis, but also engages with other "high modernist" writers including e.e. cummings, Ezra Pound, and Rebecca West.



travel, the writers studied here turn back to a modernist examination of the self and the practice of writing. Although some of these texts are self-consciously modern, the interesting fact is that there is often a subconscious move back to the text inspired by the author's experience of travel" (3). I find Healey's investigation particularly useful for the way she suggests that the genre of travel writing helps to constitute both a modern subject and a modernist writer—the experience of travel functions to prompt a reassessment of the writer's sense of themselves as an author, as a narrator, and as an observer.

The reframing of the self as an international subject is an intellectual and, at times, intensely spiritual process. The identity crises caused by travel produce an existential angst, which, particularly for Klein and Page, demanded a spiritual negotiation. As such, my work is also informed by Alexandra Peat's recognition that modernist travel writing can be understood as participating in both the sacred and the ethical. Peat foregrounds the trope of pilgrimage and argues, "[a]s the pilgrimages undertaken in modernist travel fiction are often attempts to come to terms with the desacralisation of modern life, they are characterised by a growing sense of irony or ambivalence. Modernist pilgrimages are acts of negotiation with the competing claims of history and the mood of the time" (9). The trope of the pilgrimage has literary and ethical significance in modernist writing, as its writers must come to terms with the complex relations of power that both establish a sacred site and create the conditions for travelling to that site. So, even as religious master narratives are dissembled, the spiritual questions raised by modernism demand alternative readings of how the sacred functions in modern life.

Imagining alternative forms of affiliation also allows for close engagement with many other aspects of identity that are culturally coded and ideologically enforced. For

Anderson and Glassco, the act of travel and the experience of being outside of Canadian cultural norms, allowed them to explore aspects of their sexuality in new ways. In “Travelling through the Closet,” Michael Brown argues that “where we desire enables and constrains how we desire” (186). As such, travel can both open up or limit sexual expression based on the cultural norms and legal systems of place. Similarly, Richard Phillips suggests that travel writing can be used as a medium to “contest contemporary constructions of sexuality, and more specifically to protest against contemporary homophobia” (70). In the 1950s and ‘60s, both Anderson and Glassco were cautious in the way they publicly explored homosexuality in their writing. As Brown’s quotation suggests, Anderson and Glassco were both responsive to the cultural norms of the place where their works were published, and so, were strategic in their presentations of male-male desire. They used the “difference” of the foreign to open up explorations of sexuality, while at the same time protecting themselves from scrutiny. In their works, constructions of heteronormative sexuality are actively contested; however, homophobic attitudes still structure the presentation of these criticisms in these travel texts.

### **Canadian Modernists in Transit[ion]**

To approach Klein, Anderson, Page, and Glassco first as *travel writers* is to change the critical narrative of how and what they contribute to Canadian literature, and also what constitutes a modernist Canadian literature. This dissertation considers how the mode of autobiographical travel narrative—grounded in the lived experience of travel—shaped the ways the writers understood themselves individually and collectively. More generally, it illustrates the prominence and significance of travel to the writers’ individual

oeuvres, and it demonstrates how Canadian modernists significantly contributed to discussions of community, affiliation, and ethics in the genre of travel writing.

To establish the complexity of multiple affiliations, Chapter 2 explores the diasporic identity of Jewish-Canadian writer A.M. Klein and the ways in which it conflicts with two competing national identities, Canadian and Israeli. This case study examines Klein's journalism after the founding of Israel in 1949, when he asked to report on the promise of Israel to donors in Canada. His series of articles, published collectively as "Notebook of a Journey," detail his literal and metaphoric return to the Promised Land and were later incorporated and stylized in his modernist novel *The Second Scroll*. Klein's narratives explore national affiliation and belonging by positing the centrality of two national citizenships alongside many separate identity categories and historical experiences that keep groups from adhering into one cohesive Zionist community. Klein's journalism examines the impact of routinized nationalism on the history of Jewish diaspora, including how historical oppression like the Holocaust in Europe and subjugation under Ottoman rule in Morocco challenge his relatively positive communal affiliation with the Montreal Jewish community. These separate histories presented problems for the idealized unification proffered by Israel—these disparate groups, and new Israeli nationals, conducted a process of nation building that did not fully account for the diverse groups that supported the return to Israel. Klein's work illustrates the inherent problem of a singular Zionist community and a reunified Jewish nation in Israel, given the state of Israel's ongoing pressure to disavow other affiliations. His own reflections of loss and grief about his experiences abroad demonstrate the costs of competing national affiliation on diasporic identity and community which operate outside of the nation.

Chapter 3 turns more specifically to colonial authority and the way that it shapes Patrick Anderson's self-fashioning in his travel writing in Singapore and Spain. I assess Anderson's engagement with what I call a "colonial cosmopolitan" modernist identity. This contradictory coupling sheds light on the ways in which Anglo-American modernist conceptions of cosmopolitanism are deeply rooted in colonial assumptions about power, privilege, and authority in foreign spaces. I suggest that colonial authority—articulated largely as assumed superiority and unearned privilege—shaped Anderson's understanding and articulation of modernist exile. In particular, I focus on Anderson's use of narration, and the ways in which he conflates national identity with other identity categories—namely, race, sexuality, and gender—in order to negotiate his own subject position in relation to foreign cultures. At times, Anderson epitomizes the worst elitism of the modernist cosmopolitan, but the works also contain many moments wherein he thoroughly challenges and debunks colonial power and allies himself with anti-colonial forces. This chapter demonstrates the significant and complex unpacking of colonialism that travel writers and modernists must engage with systematically in order to express an alternative, critically engaged form of affiliation.

Chapter 4 attends to the travel writing of P.K. Page, who demonstrates the ways in which modernist aesthetics can offer a bridge across disparate cultural communities. Page made deliberate use of modernist style and modernist references in her life writing as a way to translate untranslatable elements of Brazil and Mexico to her audience at home. As she recounted and described foreign environments, she experimented with surrealism as a method of representing her dislocation and alienation alongside the vivid aesthetic appreciation she had for the places she visited. As a writer and visual artist,

Page often explored her own tendency to turn what she witnessed into vignettes that ignored context. She demonstrated the idea that representation of the other can be oppressive, even when her intentions were otherwise. Focusing on the tension between ethnographic and aesthetic tendencies in Page's writing, this chapter considers how her travel writing explored the ethical ramifications of modernist art, suggesting both its power and limitations as a tool for affiliation and community building. I also explore the significance of rejecting communal affiliation. I do so with reference to Page's first posting to Australia, where she actively distanced herself from the diplomatic community, preferring to retain her independence as a writer. Though this rejection lessened over time, Page's writing continued to evince a tension between her sometimes contradictory public and private roles as a Canadian poet and her political position as a diplomat's wife.

Chapter 5 returns to one of the best-known literary communities of literary modernism to explore the ways in which its central values have evolved and changed based on communal memory and literary self-interests. I offer a final case study of the master of self-fashioning, John Glassco, whose *Memoirs of Montparnasse* depicts his participation in the Lost Generation community in Paris in the 1920s. Published in 1970, the memoir was heavily fictionalized. As such, it reveals the way in which identity is caught up in continual revision processes at both the individual, national, and international levels. By considering Glassco's work alongside that of his contemporaries Robert McAlmon and Morley Callaghan, this chapter examines the role that memoirists and critics played in shaping, and at times, confining critical narratives about a literary collective.

The conclusion introduces a final case study that contrasts with those undertaken in the body of the dissertation. I examine the political and poetic writing of F.R. Scott, a

fellow Canadian modernist poet who travelled to Burma in 1952 for an explicitly political purpose as a United Nations Technical Assistant Resident Representative. With reference to reportage and poems he wrote during or about that experience, I explore the extent to which his work in each genre enabled him to enunciate the political goals and realities of his role as an international aid worker while also giving him scope to imagine alternative ways of making connections across cultural and power differentials.

Taken together, these case studies demonstrate that Canadian modernism undergoes a major transition at mid-century that impacts its mode of expression and refines some of its major themes. By extending the time period of Canadian modernism to account for the critical works of travel writing from 1948-1970, I underscore the significant impact of international travel on Canadian modernist thought and values. I suggest that the experience of being in transit changed the mode of expression for Klein, Anderson, Page, and Glassco, as they explored autobiographical styles that allowed them to express physical and psychological displacement. Furthermore, my analysis of Canadian modernist travel writing demonstrates these writers' ongoing engagements with community, affiliation and collectivity, as they looked to the printed page as a place for challenging and strengthening ties between modernist thinkers around the world.

## Chapter Two: Exile beyond Return: Zionism, Nation, and Diasporic Community in A.M. Klein's Journalism

A.M. Klein (1902-1972) has been well celebrated for his considerable contributions—as a poet, lawyer, and journalist—to Jewish Montreal and Canada more broadly. Thanks to the 2011 publication of Klein's letters, edited by Elizabeth Popham, his non-fiction writing must be reconsidered in light of what Popham so aptly describes in scare-quotes as his 'public relations work' (xiii) and his dual role as editor of the *Canadian Jewish Chronicle (CJC)* and speechwriter/fundraiser for the Canadian Jewish Congress (CJC). The letters illuminate Klein's relationship with his employer, Samuel Bronfman, owner of Joseph E. Seagram and Sons and President of the CJC (1938-1962), clarifying Klein's dual agenda during what is arguably the most significant experience of his life: his trip tracing displaced Jews of the European and African diaspora back to Israel in 1949, one year after the creation of the new Jewish state.

Indeed, the significance of Klein's travel journalism, and this event to his life, has been prominently featured in the *Collected Works of A.M. Klein* project. Klein's notebooks and editorials were collected in 1982 by M.W. Steinberg and Usher Caplan in *Beyond Sambat* and feature, as one narrative, the serialized "Notebook of a Journey" that Klein published as an editorial-travelogue in the *CJC*. Steinberg suggests that the founding of Israel "was the happy culmination for Klein of years of dedicated labour on its behalf, an event made all the more solemn and exhilarating, momentous, almost Messianic in meaning, by the Holocaust in Europe that preceded it" (Introduction xv). Similarly, in her introduction to *The Second Scroll*, Klein's only published novel, which was also based on these events, Popham describes the novel as "his own effort to come to terms

with the historical redefinition of twentieth-century Jewry, and specifically of his experience as a Canadian Jew who has witnessed the crises and triumphs of contemporary history only from a distance” (xii). In contrast, she describes “Notebook of a Journey” as the novel’s “raw material,” its base, “honed and elaborated in two years of speeches and editorials” (xv). Klein’s journalism from this period is an earlier, rougher and more immediate dialogue about the dual pleasure and pain of his identity as a Canadian Zionist. Thus, in this chapter, building on the work of Klein scholars and editors, I argue that Klein’s journalism best epitomizes the central tension between his public persona as a Zionist, and his private struggle with early Israeli nationalism’s incompatibility with his diasporic Jewish-Canadian identity. Klein’s work highlights the sense of displacement that came from affiliating with multiple national identities. Klein’s journalism questions the role that nation plays in building community by interrogating the ways in which it restricted and potentially destroyed diasporic affiliations that predated and strengthened nation.

Klein’s great commitment to the Zionist cause, and his paid role as a spokesperson for the CJC, frame “Notebook” as a work committed to engaging intellectually and practically with the values and benefits of the new state. In exchange for funding his trip, the CJC requested he campaign on their behalf for about two months, suggesting that “If this were in the business world, I would put it in terms of being under exclusive contract to us” (Klein, *The Letters* 486).<sup>10</sup> Klein’s biographer, Usher Caplan, explains that “Klein’s task was to survey Jewish refugee problems and, on returning, to deliver a series

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<sup>10</sup> Popham also notes that a secondary goal of Klein’s trip was to “scout new liquor markets” for Samuel Bronfman (Introduction *Second Scroll* xv).



of speeches about his trip at fund-raising rallies across Canada” (167). “Notebook” was written in installments and was published with a short delay both during and immediately following Klein’s trip from August to December 1949.

Israel was founded in 1948, based on recommendations from the United Nations to partition Arab and Jewish states. In reparation for the unspeakable loss of life—six million European Jews were murdered—the West—most prominently the United States and Russia—supported the redrawing of state lines to create an independent state for Jews. This plan was endorsed by Jewish leaders, but was rejected by Arab leaders, leading to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, which includes multiple wars and one of the longest ongoing military occupations in the twentieth century. It also led to the expulsion and forced displacement of 85% of the Palestinians from Israel, amounting to approximately 750,000 people who became refugees in the surrounding countries of Lebanon, Jordan, and Syria, or were internally displaced to the Gaza Strip or the West Bank (UNRWA). This land has been contested ever since, with both groups claiming rights over the region. This conflict, while ostensibly between two independent nations, involves larger global interests. European and American powers were instrumental in the division of the Middle East throughout the twentieth century using religious nationalist models as opposed to ethnic or secularized nationalist models. Israel was created as a religious nation, making it an ethnically diverse but exclusionary state that used religion as a central criterion for inclusion. It was in this climate of both hopeful possibility for Jewish reunification and the shocking trauma of Arabic displacement that Klein encountered and responded to the newly created State of Israel.

Many Jewish populations chose to relocate after the war; many of the remaining European Jews chose to leave Europe, and moved around the world to places including Israel, Canada, the United States, Australia, and South Africa. At the same time, the establishment of Israel also caused many non-European Jews to relocate as well. Devorah Hakohen found that in the five-year period after Israel was established, 723,090 Jews migrated to Israel, including over a hundred thousand African Jews, three hundred thousand Eastern European Jews, and almost two hundred and fifty thousand Asian Jews (267). This relocation caused many diverse populations—many of which would have had negligible contact in their country of origin—to come into direct contact. Israel became a culturally diverse state, creating a “unique sociocultural mosaic” (251) with its own cross-cultural relationships and subsequent tensions. As Hokohen argues, this clash of cultures created several rifts in Israeli society: “the ethnic rift between Jews of European extraction and those from Islamic countries,” “the friction between religious and secular Jews,” and “socioeconomic polarization” (251). These ethnic and religious problems impacted governance and a sense of belonging. Though Israeli nationalism was meant to bring about a sense of unity, these vast cultural differences that came from diaspora challenged the possibility of homogeneity and unification.

In this chapter, I argue that Klein's distinctly Jewish diasporic collective identity challenged the notion of national belonging.<sup>11</sup> I consider how Klein's understanding of affiliation was informed by his diasporic collective identity, his modernism, and by his unflagging commitment to Zionism. Paying careful attention to his articulation of Canadian and Israeli identities, I consider how Israeli nationalism affected his sense of communal identity. In doing so, I draw heavily on Klein's journalism. This chapter uses his editorials and speeches in order to better understand the central tension between his public persona as a Zionist and his private struggle with the tension between Israeli nationalism and his own diasporic identity.

"Notebook of a Journey" is characterized by an intense spiritual and ethical engagement with the plight of the Jewish diaspora and criticism of Israel as a redemptive homeland. As a Zionist, Klein identified Israel as a "home" or spiritual homeland, and as a result he considered his journey as a symbol of a larger spiritual journey that spanned millennia. Although many works of travel writing construct a spiritual narrative as a kind of pilgrimage with a linear movement from journey to return, Klein's travel journalism accounted for the generations of exile that preceded his journey, suggesting a far more circuitous narrative movement. He acknowledged the atrocities of colonial oppression of

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<sup>11</sup> Here, I am referring to nation in the context of Israel as a nation-state designed in a religious model built on European notions of nationalism. The Western influence of this nation model is comparable to the redrawing of India as Hindu and Pakistan as Muslim around the same time.

diasporic Jews that culminated in the Holocaust, but also sought spiritual solace in this exilic “return” journey or pilgrimage to Israel.

Lily Cho argues that diaspora acts as an identity category and should be understood “first and foremost [as] a subjective condition marked by the contingencies of long histories of displacements and genealogies of dispossession” (14). For Klein, this subjective condition was a state of mind that directly connected him to displacement and to community. In “Notebook,” Klein affiliated himself simultaneously with his ethnic and national identities. There was a marked internal divide: he identified with a dispersed community of Jewish subjects defined by their shared expulsion and long history of exile from the Middle East, yet as a central figure in the burgeoning Jewish community in 1940s Montreal, he had a strong investment in Canada. With the founding of Israel in 1948, Klein’s sense of loyalty and diasporic consciousness came to a head: entering a national Jewish community caused Klein to question and reflect on his Canadian diasporic identity. “Notebook” confronts his dual responsibilities to his country of adoption and his diasporic spiritual community. This community, for him, represented his understanding of the possibilities for Jewish community by bringing together a concrete group of Jews who appreciated Canadian institutions and values.

In some ways, travelling created for Klein a sense of exile that he did not previously fully understand; it made manifest his position as what Cho terms “unhomely”—a psychic state that she suggests is at the core of diasporic identity (19). Although Klein was well aware of the reach and terror of anti-Semitism, he was not able to clearly distinguish his own plight from the hardships experienced by non-North American Jews until he spent time with them. Though he saw himself as a Jew like any other displaced Jew,

he confronted a wider range of Jewish experience that challenged him to recognize the particularity of his own experience. Through his travels, his understanding of difference within the Jewish diaspora, particularly as it related to power and class, made it impossible to idealize the unified, singular communal affiliation he associated with Israeli nationalism as a resolution of Zionism. At the same time, while Klein continued to acknowledge a sense of shared identity and heritage, he understood that he was only so capable of celebrating Israeli nationalism because of the internal conflict that it created between Zionism and his sense of obligation to the Jewish diasporic communities that did not return to Israel.

Focusing on Klein's travel journalism and asserting its significance within his *oeuvre*, I consider how his journey abroad was shaped by intersecting identities—Montreal and Jew—when they were confronted by conflicting national identities—Canadian versus Israeli. Instead of affirming national identity, Klein's journalism reveals the inherent risks of choosing a national identity to both his real and his imagined sense of a Jewish diasporic community.

### **Klein's Cultural Ideal: The "Wondrous Ascent" through Pilgrimage to Israel**

Klein spent the vast majority of his life in Montreal, and his investment in the Montreal Jewish community was at the centre of his politics and his writing. Although his religiosity has been debated,<sup>12</sup> his sense of Jewishness as a spiritual and a cultural identity was essential to his work. Klein treated his Jewish heritage as a primary responsibility to

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<sup>12</sup> See Brenner, Spiro, and Waddington.

think and act on behalf of a collective, and that responsibility informed both his diasporic and his Zionist identities. In “A Psalm Touching on Genealogy,” his speaker clearly figures the individual self as embodying an entire community:

Not sole was I born, but entire genesis:  
For to the fathers that begat me, this  
Body is residence. Corpuscular,  
They dwell in my veins, they eavesdrop at my ear,  
They circle, as with the Torahs, round my skull,  
In exit and entrance all day pull  
The latches of my heart, descend, and rise—  
And there look generations through my eyes. (1-8)

Here the speaker does not separate himself from his genealogical past but sees himself as literally embodying those who came before him. These generations shape and control his individual actions (“pull / The latches of my heart, descend, and rise—”) and inform his vision and his sense of the world. Klein represented the individual as powerfully embodying the larger community, acting as a representative of culture and heritage. This embodiment was a responsibility to others, but a natural one; Klein’s poem does not present this responsibility as a choice, but as an extension of living. Collectivity was assumed, and Klein’s sense of community and connection to others informed his worldview and his interactions. Steinberg describes him as a “chronicler and champion” for his readers (“A.M. Klein as Journalist” 29); these attributes are perhaps most starkly manifested in his life-long commitment to Zionism and the creation of a Jewish cultural and spiritual centre in Israel to bring together and unify the Jewish diaspora.

Klein's ardent Zionism was linked directly to his sense of a larger diasporic community of Jewish subjects as a kind of "imagined community."<sup>13</sup> Although Klein supported the re-establishment of Israel as a homeland, he largely figured it as the physical manifestation of an already existent community and did not see it as a reversal of diaspora. Steinberg and Caplan have suggested that Klein was most influenced by early Zionist scholar Achad Ha'am (Introduction xiv). This influence is confirmed in an editorial that Klein published in November 1928 in the *Judean*:

[Ha'am] realized that there is in the Jew a talent all his own, a characteristic ability, an individual genius. This must be encouraged and fostered. This must be cultivated. It is obvious that for such a circle of activity we must find a centre, a cultural centre—out of Zion must come learning, and the word of God from Jerusalem. The Jew must cease to be a 'luftmensch'<sup>14</sup>—he must anchor his culture in the soil. (*Beyond Sambation* 4)

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<sup>13</sup> Anderson's argument is usefully employed in the study of Jewish diasporic culture because of the necessary reliance on imagination and a distinct written culture to conceive of a universal Jewish identity. This diasporic culture is not bounded by geographic lines, but instead is made coherent through textual and spiritual affiliations.

<sup>14</sup> In their explanatory notes to *Beyond Sambation*, Steinberg and Caplan define *luftmensch* as "a person 'up in the air' without a definite occupation" (Glossary 488). Klein uses the term metaphorically to suggest that European Jewish culture is unrooted and potentially overoptimistic about its goals and ideals.

This editorial emphasizes the importance of grounding culture in its historical geographic location to gain a renewed sense of Jewish talent and intellectual richness. Klein pointed to the ability of the Jewish diaspora to bring together diverse groups and share cultural knowledge.<sup>15</sup> Klein not only saw himself as a representation of his people but also saw in the Zionist movement an opportunity to restore intellectual strength and prosperity to a dispersed global community. For him, from the earliest stage of his thinking, his own genius, and that of his community, was linked to the possibility of the Jewish state long before it became a political reality.

Prior to 1948, Klein's Zionism was not in conflict with his commitment to his life in Canada in Montreal; his Zionism was not nationalistic in nature. However, after Israel was founded, his dual loyalties became more pronounced. As Israel took its form as a state, it also extended its affiliations through national identification. Wealthy Canadians eagerly supported the development of Israel but were not necessarily inclined to emigrate. Indeed, in his 2008 history of Canadian Zionism, past president of the Canadian Zionist Federation David Azrieli<sup>16</sup> notes that "Canadian Jews' love for Canada has made

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<sup>15</sup> Richard Lemm suggests that Klein's "Zionist vision" includes "Israel as spiritual homeland, creative centre and power-source, land of renewal, and geopolitical reality which redeems Jews from the nexus of historical oppression and Diaspora" (57).

<sup>16</sup> Azrieli's coffee table book *Rekindling the Torch: The Story of Canadian Zionism* was used to support Canadian Zionist fundraising efforts in much the same way as Bronfman relied on Klein to ghostwrite his speeches and publications related to fundraising for Israel in the 1940s, 1950s, and 1960s.



Canadian Zionists ambivalent about the role of immigrating to Israel in building a Zionist identity” (135–36). Thus, in 1949, at this determining moment for Jewish Canadian Zionists, a commitment to Zionism did not necessitate emigration to Israel; instead, it could be illustrated by a literal or metaphoric pilgrimage. Klein, operating in his capacity as a journalist, acted as a witness for the English-speaking Jewish public in Montreal. By narrating his travel experiences in Israel, and using the framework of ascent, he represented Israel as a nation and as a spiritual centre for his Canadian audience at home. He brought a part of the Israeli community back to his Montreal Canadian community through his journalism. Although his Zionism before the trip was unflagging, his journalism reveals that, when he travelled to Israel, he began to find that aspects of his intersecting identities were irreconcilable—as were his dreams of Israel as an idealized diasporic community.

As an ardent Zionist, Klein placed ideological weight on the idea of travelling to Israel as a kind of spiritual ascent or *aliyah*, the word used for those who “ascend” to the Holy Land, usually through immigration. Although his writing suggests that he never contemplated emigration to Israel, it does indicate that he saw his trip to Israel as a kind of spiritual *aliyah*. Klein developed several references to *aliyah* in “Notebook” and *The Second Scroll*. In his first entry, his narrator describes Israel as “the primal hearth, the original home” for which he must “make ready to look from the heights of the plane upon the Promised Land” (“Notebook” 340). Seeing this spiritual place, particularly from the grand elevation of the plane, invokes a sense of spiritual levity that seems to transcend time. When Klein revised his notes as his novel, the link to *aliyah* became more fleshed

out.<sup>17</sup> The narrator of this novel, like Klein, is on a personal and spiritual journey to see Israel. As he leaves for Israel by air, he is struck by the way the physical ascent connotes the spiritual, “Warmed by the sun beating through the porthole, my mind was dreamily in communion with the murmur of the motors humming through aluminum. They made me whatever music my mind willed, ululative, messianic, annunciatory. It was as if I was part of an ascension” (*Second Scroll* 45). Flight is both a physical act and spiritual act—by participating in the former, he gets closer to the latter. His sense of the spiritual is informed by the physical experience of his journey. In both cases, Klein developed the return to Israel as a symbolic *aliyah* or spiritual ascent.

Anthropologist Jacob Climo explains that, just as returning to Israel is linked to ascent, leaving Israel is linked to “descent” or *yerida*. *Yordim* is the word used for those who descend or make *yerida* by leaving Israel, and *olim* is the word used for those who have made *aliyah* by moving to Israel (114).<sup>18</sup> *Yordim* is a disparaging term; *yordim* choose exile and distance themselves from the spiritual and cultural nation that Israel embodies. Climo describes the experience of *aliyah* for Americans as an “important spiritual

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<sup>17</sup> Further, the “Gloss Gimel” section of *Second Scroll* describes a Messianic vision in the Sistine Chapel that includes “ascensions, *aliyoth*,” which Zailig Pollock describes in “The Myth of Exile and Redemption in *Gloss Gimel*” as establishing that “the redemption of exile is complete.”

<sup>18</sup> Climo suggests that *aliyah* became a part of Zionism after Prime Minister David Ben Gurion declared that all diasporic Jews should return to Israel after the state was founded. Thank you to Zailig Pollock for drawing my attention to this distinction.

paradox” because, “On the one hand, the return to Israel symbolizes reunification with the idealized lost community of biblical days, while on the other hand, in order to make *aliyah*, migrants must separate from their living relatives, leaving behind in America their parents, siblings, and grandparents” (121). The opposite, we can infer, also contains this paradox: though *yordim* choose to return to their communities and nation-states, they do so in the position of the spiritual exile. Making *aliyah* creates a false “choice”: to be separate from the natural and spiritual “home” of Israel or be separate from communal and national affiliations. The connotation of *yordim* is that they choose the descent, the secularized space, over the ascendant place where spirituality and nationality appear to merge. The significance of making *aliyah* informed Klein’s travel journalism, while his decision to return to Canada reflected some of the shame of making *yerida*. The weighted meanings of being *olim* and *yordim* are clarified by Klein’s travel journalism and expounded in his writing upon his return.

Klein’s travel journalism offered his initial impressions of his trip as an unstructured return narrative—and account of a spiritual *aliyah*—for the reading public of the *CJC*. Significantly, though he presented his views in a newspaper, he frames the entries using the genre of the “notebook,” which connotes a more immediate, reflective account of personal experience than the conventional reportage of a newspaper. A notebook implies that the work is unpolished, offering a fresh perspective that is often private and deeply intimate. It also suggests a more direct connection to his readers, a kind of insider’s access that would bring his subscribers closer to the experience of being there with him as he experiences Israel for the first time. He develops a distinct narratorial voice for this writing that is welcoming and highly engaged. Given the deep personal and

communal significance of the establishment of Israel as a restored homeland for Jewish people around the globe, this choice to operate across genres and juxtapose different writing styles works to transform the objective space of the newspaper into a more philosophical and reflective space. In “Notebook”, Klein attempted to think with his readers, instead of thinking for them by offering a definitive conclusion on what Israel “meant” for the Canadian Jewish readers of the *CJC*.

Again, somewhat counterintuitively for newspaper reporting, Klein did not present his journey chronologically; rather, he began with entries by stating his initial excitement over Israel, then described the atrocities that he witnessed in Morocco and Europe, but at the end of his account he returned, somewhat disenchanted and doubtful, to a detailed consideration of Israeli politics and its implications for diaspora. “Notebook” dramatically reframes his physical and emotional pilgrimage from Israel to Casablanca and Europe as a reflective circular structure: Israel, Casablanca, Europe, and Israel again. When Klein returned to a discussion of Israel at the end of the series, it was without the same joyous possibility that he expressed at the beginning, and instead he offered a far more cautious, restrained account of Israel’s failure to acknowledge diasporic Jewish communities. By tracing this progression through “Notebook,” I illustrate where his intersecting identities come into conflict and how tropes of travel and journey serve to articulate differences within Jewish ethnicities within the Jewish diaspora. “Notebook” plays with genre in order better account for the political and spiritual uncertainty of the experience Klein documented.

Initially, Klein presented his trip enthusiastically; he clearly was supportive of the Israeli nation and its burgeoning nationalism as an extension of Jewish spiritual ascent.

Caught up in these sentiments are a clear sense of destiny, using spirituality to justify one's right to a particular place. The tone in the early entries corroborates the idea of Israel's cultural and spiritual transcendence and embraces *aliyah*. The initial entry of 12 August 1949 sets the tone for the early entries by using a polyvocal approach to capture the spiritual meanings at the core of this trip for Klein individually and the larger Montreal Jewish community.<sup>19</sup> The narrator begins by briefly recording his travel itinerary in a reportage style, and then he immediately moves to a rhetorical revision in which he emphasizes the significance of this experience: "Who can describe, what master of language can communicate the emotions which most thrill the heart of a Jew, scion of sixty generations of exiles, when at last, after two millennia of tribal banishment, he turns again his face in expectation of a return, albeit temporary, to the ancestral soil?" ("Notebook" 340). Klein's narrator establishes his pilgrimage as a triumphant return full of possibility. First he acknowledges his status as a reporter and social commentator, and then he builds anticipation by allowing his learned and religious commentary to give way to school-boyish glee. Israel here exists only in its ideal form: it is ancestral and linked to a patrimonial spiritual inheritance. The serious political and religious complexities and asymmetrical relations of power that allowed the state to come into being are ignored in his excitement. On the eve of his journey, the narrator plays the role of the pilgrim by combining spiritual

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<sup>19</sup> Klein used twelve different voices. The first half are literary and secular, and the second half are religious, building upon one another as layers of commentary moving from the biblical style of verse to the Mishnaic (Jewish law) and Talmudic style, ending abruptly with the "[p]lain, unvarnished fact" (341).

fervour with uncontained excitement, acknowledging Israel exclusively as Zion and himself as an ardent disciple.

The initial entries suggest that Klein sought to rejoin a lost community; his pilgrimage was to witness a reconstructed community on the site of a historical one. The spiritual nature of the pilgrimage and the framing of an idealized Israel were prominent in his second article as he didactically wrote his journey into Jewish history. Klein referenced the wandering of Moses when his narrator reflects, “There is also, as with me, the miracle of *kvitzas haderech*—the road condensed—the path to Jerusalem made a journey of two days instead of a forty years’ wandering” (345). At times, the narrator’s pilgrimage verges on prophecy fulfillment. The sense of urgency and responsibility accompanying his journey suggests that some kind of Messianic return is made possible through his journey to the new Jewish state. Adding to the spiritual significance of the pilgrimage is his realization that his arrival in Israel corresponded with the return to Israel of Zionist Theodor Herzl’s body. Klein described Herzl thus: “You are yourself the fulfillment of Ezekiel’s prophecy—have not the bones come to life? [I]s not a new breath breathed into the body of this people?” (356).<sup>20</sup> Klein saw Herzl as a Jewish champion; his historic return to Israel had actualized and made material the idealized conditions of Zionism, acting as a symbol for unifying the disparate and downtrodden Jewish populations. He is

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<sup>20</sup> This reference seems to be to Ezekiel 37: 1–12, especially 12: “Therefore, prophesy to them and say, ‘This is what the Sovereign LORD says: O my people, I will open your graves of exile and cause you to rise again. Then I will bring you back to the land of Israel’”.

represented as a Messiah figure, which Klein corroborates through his narrator's own holy act of witnessing. When Herzl's body is exhumed and transferred to Israel, Klein treated it as a moment of miraculous return: "But to-day with my own eyes I was witness to his return. I saw him come, I saw him enter, I heard him welcomed" (353). Using his knowledge of the Torah and its commentators, Klein suggested a coming of the Messiah associated with the return to Zion. Thus, his journalism promoted the spiritual significance of return, dovetailing directly with the connotations already associated with *aliyah*.

In Klein's journalism, the spiritual experience of place frequently justified the political authority and ownership over that space: while invigorating for Klein and empowering for his audience, the turn to *aliyah* can be seen to harken back to travel writing accounts couched in manifest destiny that justified the hostile takeover of a physical space. Though Klein was far from acting like the imagined British explorer Pratt glosses as the "monarch-of-all-I-survey" (197), Klein's claims demonstrate similar assumptions about ownership that were justified by religion. Klein did not question his community's right to the land because it was associated with his religious affiliation and with a spiritually transcendent experience. The significant difference here came from the fact that Klein identified as part of a persecuted religious minority, and so did not wield the same sense of power and privilege as the European travellers his work spoke back to. When he spoke, he spoke as a post-Holocaust Jew recovering from the trauma of World War Two, though inflected within that voice was also the experience of a colonizing agent who displaced others in order to occupy this newly ceded ground.

The use of spiritual ascent painted the changes to the physical space as positive. As Israel engaged in renaming and branding using religion and language, Klein eagerly

pointed to the “the imaginativeness with which commercial and industrial objects are named” and cheered for the Jewish history represented in the naming of streets: “[T]he directory of Tel Aviv is a dictionary of national biography. . . [Y]ou can’t cross an intersection but you traverse the memory of Jewish worthies, ancient and modern” (“Notebook” 349-50). Klein’s narrator suggests that language and names restore historical roots in the city and cause celebration by connecting the modern with the ancient. He also found this connection across time in scenes of worship and study, often turning living people into transcendent figures or tropes and imagining a distinctly spiritual form of diasporic unity. While visiting Safed, he witnessed a boy studying the Torah with a mentor: “They were not only not of Israel, they were not even of this globe, but transcendent with immortal longings” (365). Here and elsewhere Klein imagined Israel as a scene of miracles. His narrator suggests that this feeling is widespread: “It manifests itself everywhere in Israel” (366). There are many points where he is caught up in, and overwhelmed by, his trip as a moment of biblical fulfillment, particularly given the spectre of the Holocaust: “[T]he greatest wonder of the age . . . [is] the fact that precisely at the moment in history when European Jewry stood under threat of complete annihilation, at that moment it is that the State of Israel is established! . . . That prophecy is fulfilled. Out of the very darkness, illumination came forth” (369). Instead of privileging this political gain for the Jewish state, Klein emphasized the spiritual and cultural renewal that came from communal affiliation. The early entries strive to establish the *aliyah* of being in Israel after generations of exile. This resolution was a source of wonder and spiritual engagement that Klein actively shared with his readers to establish the significance of his pilgrimage and solidify Jewish claims to the land.



The position of the traveller helped Klein to think through some of these complexities. While Klein initially interpreted the creation of the State of Israel as a marker of spiritual transcendence, early celebratory moments were marred by later entries that more closely interrogate the people and politics of the new state and are more critical of *aliyah*. He recognized his position as a visiting Canadian national by identifying some tensions between new Israeli citizens and Western visitors. As a visitor, he was not in the same colonizing position as the new citizens, but remained separated as an observer whose primary affiliation lies elsewhere—at home with his Jewish Canadian community. These tensions questioned the ascendant nature of diasporic community and created a further divide between visitors who identify as tourists and other types of travellers.

Klein tended to see himself as a pilgrim of sorts and, like Page's narrator in "Permanent Tourists," he was skeptical of tourists. His joking entry of 2 September 1949 offered a list of "Ten Don'ts for Americans Tourists" ("Notebook" 351) to help police tourist behaviour in the new state. Though he was writing for a Canadian audience, Klein framed this list of inappropriate behaviours for "Americans," which implied that this type of visitor is separate from the readership of the *Canadian Jewish Chronicle*. In this list, Klein's narrator admonishes "Americans" for overemphasizing their contributions to the founding of Israel, for directly comparing American ingenuity to Israeli limitations, and for expecting others to piously welcome and serve them. In short, they were presented as forward and unappreciative of Israel's political and spiritual significance. His narrator notes in point 3 that "not everyone likes to be photographed" (351), and then, argues in point 8 that Americans should "shed their preconceived notions of the exotic," explaining in blatant, racist language that "Arabs, it is true, are very picturesque, so are rags—but

there are worthier things to note than a darkie on a donkey” (351).<sup>21</sup> Implicit in the narrator’s tone here is a disparagement of tourist culture, and of tourist interest in gaping at and photographing the other. Klein saw this consumption of poverty as inappropriate, but failed to see his own implication in colonial power relations and racial bias. He disregarded the significance of Arab displacement, implying that spiritual sites were more worth recognizing and recording than the demeaning byproducts of the creation of the new Jewish state. The tourist was the source of much derision—a shared joke between Klein and his Canadian reading community that was structured around a sense of natural superiority based on the way one consumed and interpreted culture.

In the “Ten Don’ts” article, Klein did not want to be associated with tourists, or acknowledge the material conditions of Arab expulsion, but did actively seek affiliation with the new Israelis. However, we see some vulnerability about his own sense of belonging in his addition of “One Don’t for Israelis.” In this entry, his narrator appeals for Israeli empathy: “Please remember that the American Jewish tourist is *also a Jew*. He is in the country only because he is interested in the future of Israel. It’s not his fault if he didn’t have to go through the ordeals you went through” (352). In some ways, this

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<sup>21</sup> This comment stands in stark contrast with Page’s ethical quandary over the beauty of a Brazilian *favela*, which is explored in Chapter 4. Page was particularly drawn to the beauty within scenes of poverty, and spent much of her journals contemplating when and if beauty can trump ethics. Klein, however, was more concerned with good taste and suggested that a fixation on the picturesque qualities of the “exotic” was intrusive and misguided.

“don’t” acted as an apologia for his own status and for other potential tourists/pilgrims: Klein protected both himself and his Canadian readers by attributing these behaviours to “Americans” and “tourists,” neither of which completely encapsulates his identity as a Canadian pilgrim. And yet, at the same time, in the desire to acknowledge the shared affiliation of being Jewish, Klein blurred the lines between himself and the tourists he criticized. The tensions at play in this list policing cultural behaviours suggest that the spiritual splendour that Klein initially attributed to Israel must be tempered by Israelis who may not have had his high aspirations. This “don’t” acknowledged insecurity about being a visitor in Israel, betraying feelings of alienation and rejection by the Israeli population.

Though Klein’s initial experience of return was very much taken up with *aliyah*, his intense focus on the spiritual and communal benefits for himself and those whom he considered “his people” illustrates his inability to fully acknowledge differences among Jews or understand his appropriation of others in shaping his diasporic vision. His attempts at universal vision reveal his own biases and privilege in his empathy for other Western Jewish travellers. However, Klein was not an emigrant but a pilgrim who chose a temporary exile; although he did not call himself a tourist, his privilege positioned him as such. He was witnessing Israel for Canada and thus was closer to the American tourists whom he shamed than to the newly minted nationals. His sense of collective identity was always already informed by his national identity and his experience of Israel was shaped by the Canadian cultural privilege that allowed him to universalize his experience instead of critically engaging with it. The list of “don’ts” starts a slow process of incomplete reconciliation in which Klein attempted to make sense of these disparities in his transcendent vision of *aliyah*.

## **Zionism, Nationalism, and Colonialism: Descent and Redemption in Morocco and Israel**

For Klein, Zionism was linked to a spiritual and communal ideal: a reunion of and return for the oppressed and dispersed diaspora. Given this ideal, Klein operated under the assumption that reuniting and assimilating Jews into a new nation would happen naturally. However, “Notebook of a Journey” provides troubling evidence of how *aliyah* and the establishment of Israel were fraught with nationalism and colonialism. There was no pure Zion because the establishment of Israel was not just a holy return but also a political project in nation building inflected by postwar nationalism and settler colonialism. When Klein left Israel for Morocco, his spiritual pilgrimage had already been darkened by a sense of how the West and Israel gained agency through the oppression and subjugation of others. Further, as I will show, his experiences in Morocco illustrate how North American and North African Jews failed to unify, and his journalism ultimately attests to Zionism’s complicity in nationalist and colonialist projects.

In contrast to his hope for the new Israel, Klein’s description of his time in Morocco is transformative and bleak; he witnessed the despair and suffering of some of the remaining exiled Jews. He devoted considerable time and energy to describing the horrific conditions of Jewish populations in Morocco. Perhaps his most moving passage attempts to define a Casablanca *mellah* for his Canadian readers: “A mellah, then, is a ghetto—not a metaphorical ghetto: the neighbourhood which is the result of Jewish gregariousness, but a literal ghetto, a ghetto established, a ghetto by law ordained” (357). Klein’s narrator sharply contrasts two different frameworks for ghettoized Jews, with the

affable community of Montreal Jewish neighbourhood on the one hand, and the historically forced confinement of Jews in Casablanca<sup>22</sup> on the other. Klein attempted to pass on to his readers, many of whom would identify with this first definition, his own horrifying realization: “[F]or thousands this is no temporary ordeal, but their constant element!” (360). His experience here was one of human rights violation instead of spiritual transcendence, and the “Notebook” suggests his active attempt to come to terms with something outside of his worldview—the Jews in the mellahs and their subjugation were beyond his initial thinking about participation in a shared communal identity. His narrator’s witnessing reveals his privilege in contrast with the relations of power that govern diaspora around the globe. However, as he witnessed the complicity between nation and empire, his unified vision became uncertain.

“Notebook” attests to the hopeless descent in Morocco from the new hope of Israel. It was in Morocco that Klein distinguished between his Canadian experience as a Jew and a North African Jewish experience. In “Notebook” his narrator acknowledges that his “experience had been confined to western Jewries” and that “To speak of the concepts of democracy as one speaks of the Jews of Casablanca is, of course, to speak of concepts stranger to each other” (361). Klein’s unified imagined community of Jews was undermined as he experienced for the first time the way that oppression can reduce agency to the point of *mellah*. His treatment of the *mellah* harshly criticized systematic anti-Semitism and emphasized the role of external colonial forces in subjugating and degrading Moroccan Jews.

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<sup>22</sup> Jews were confined to a *mellah* beginning in the 1400s (Tigay 122).

French colonialism in Morocco was also linked to Jewish decline and subjugation by both Arabic and European powers. Though it was not explicitly stated, Klein's jarring realization of the West's (and thus his) partial complicity in Jewish oppression abroad and the incongruence between democracy at home and abjection in Casablanca significantly informed "Notebook." Klein acknowledged the role that the state played in creating and denying agency among its potential subjects. His own biases allowed him to largely attribute this injustice to Arabic rule, though he was aware that Casablanca was a French colony:

One is set to wondering whether all this, even under the enlightened French Government, is not the result of design rather than of helplessness,—the desire to establish, so that the exploited may be content, a helotry even more exploited than they,—the desire to maintain the triple hierarchy; the bureaucracy of the colonial metropole, the illusory sub-élite of the Arab medina; the untouchables of the mel-  
lah! (360)

Klein's narrator primarily sees the Arabic contribution of "Moslem masters" to Jewish social injustice. He suggests that the discrimination is "part and parcel of the fabric of Moslem thought" (360). But this anti-Islam bias does not erase or limit the power of France as a colonizing agent. The systems mutually reinforced one another, with Muslim prejudices reinforcing the colonial "design" that kept Muslim masters complacent by giving them limited power over the further subjugated Jewish population in the French colony. The narrator's observation reveals his bias in his juxtaposition of these two mutually reinforcing colonial agents.

As the focus of Klein's journalism turned to Europe, his attention remained fixed on colonialism from the point of view of Jewish refugees. This viewpoint was another limitation of Klein's diasporic vision—he primarily fixated on a Jewish identity, to the detriment of other groups that were forcibly displaced to bring about a Jewish state. Klein actively distinguished between the asymmetrical relations of power that oppress the Moroccan Jews and the comparable relations of power that shaped Israel's formation.<sup>23</sup> Notably, the displacement of Palestinians to create a state for diasporic Jews was largely excluded from "Notebook." The narrative of restitution after the long history of anti-Semitism distorted the settlement of Israel by effectively erasing the more sinister aspects of nationalism and colonialism: displacing one set of people to settle another. "Notebook" questions the power structures of nationalism and colonialism, yet it reinforces these systems by failing to acknowledge the way that Israel recreated and reinforced aspects of colonialism from both Klein's home country and sites of empire in Africa.

Edward Said's *Orientalism* demonstrates the ways in which Western travel writers structured relations of power through the depiction and imaginative interpretation of Middle Eastern cultures. Orientalist discourses and ideologies deny the subjectivity of the diverse peoples throughout Asia and the Middle East and use Eurocentric, white and largely male perspectives to construct the Orient in relation to the West. This history of Orientalist travel writing is linked to the spiritual through the act of pilgrimage, where the

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<sup>23</sup> The Zionist movement has frequently been criticized as a form of settler-colonialism akin to the invasive settlement of Canada by British and French colonies. See Golan for a historical overview of these debates.

traveler would journey to the Middle East to interact with and attempt to recover Christian relics. According to Said, the Orientalist project stemmed from pilgrimage to Biblical lands. He argues that “most of [these pilgrimages] in fact were attempts either to relive or to liberate from the large, incredibly fecund Orient some portion of Judeo-Christian/Greco-Roman actuality” (168). This history of Orientalist thought fundamentally shaped conceptions of the Middle East. We can see this ideology at play in Klein’s travel to Israel. Though his religious claim was Jewish instead of Christian, he operated under this same Western understanding of the Orient. Klein did not identify with the negative aspects of Israel’s colonial project, in part because of the spiritual ascendance he associated with *aliyah*. Instead, he read settlement in Israel primarily as an opportunity for those oppressed under colonial regimes elsewhere.

One particularly resonant instance of Klein’s Orientalist views on settler-colonialism appears in his article of 30 September 1949, where his narrator describes Yemenite refugees waiting in Marseilles for transportation to Israel. He imagines hopefully that “the world will learn of one of the most exciting and elevating chapters in a tale of the ingathering of Israel” (“Notebook” 363). While in Marseilles, Klein talked to refugees whose flights to Israel were funded by the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC), a humanitarian organization working to relocate this community as a part of Operation Magic Carpet. During this operation, undertaken between December 1948 and September 1950, the JDC airlifted approximately 48,000 Yemenites on almost 450 flights from Aden to Israel, after the Yemenites had trekked across 200 miles of desert (American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee). Klein’s narrator describes quotidian Yemenite immigration experience thus:



[T]hey issue, the dark little men, from the magic carpet which was their transport (in more than one sense) and fall to the ground, and kiss it. This is for them a great fulfillment—answer to prayers, inauguration of a great new age. They rise from their embrace of the dust of their languishing, and turn to their guide, and ask: Where lives here the Messiah? (363)

Here, the narrator delights in the redemption of the Yemenites because he sees their return to Israel as one way to re-establish broken continuity; however, he continues to create a powerful distance between himself as observer and the people he observes.<sup>24</sup> The Yemenites' proud acceptance of their ancestral heritage upon return suggests the possibility of overcoming their past indignities by seeing their mistreatment as a radical break from the natural course of history, and yet, the simple-mindedness with which Klein documented their behaviour suggests a failure to acknowledge their full humanity. Klein assumed a Western bias in his treatment of other "little" people whose migration experi-

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<sup>24</sup> Klein dehumanized the Yemenites, representing them as archetypal figures. We see here an instance of Orientalist ideology, in which the exotic is emphasized without agency: "If the Moroccans are handsome, the Yemenites are beautiful. . . They all look like paintings of the east; as they walk down the streets, the Bible comes alive" (363). Klein's inability to come to terms with the hardship and oppression that he witnessed prompted a turn toward the literary: he rendered refugees as aesthetic objects, once more disconnecting the lived experiences that he witnessed from the broader spiritual and literary narratives within which he placed them.

ence he oversimplified. Though this moment was meant to celebrate one cycle of oppression being broken, it also reinforced other cycles of oppression, including new cycles that were created by this process of settler-colonialism.

After Marseilles, Klein's time in Europe was only briefly accounted for in the "Notebook" entries, which instead foreground Israeli regions and politics. His decision to avoid following up his images of Yemenites and Moroccans with European representations of Jewish oppression seems to self-reflexively acknowledge the problem of celebration in the aftermath of the Holocaust. Instead, Klein returned to a discussion of regions of Israel beyond Jerusalem and Tel-Aviv and then focused on the politics of the new state. Most important in these later entries is the obvious tension between the spiritual, often figured in terms of continuity with the past, and the actual, which seemed to be disconnected from this ideal past. It is in these sections that Klein most directly confronted the incompatibility of Israeli nationalism with his diasporic vision of unity among the Jewish peoples.

Klein's attitude toward Israel shifted when he began to see it as a political entity with its own nationalism and exclusionary political identity. In particular, Klein was hesitant to support an ultranationalistic Zionism that denied the value of diaspora and looked forward to its disappearance. In his entry of 21 October 1949, he attempted to come to terms with how widespread this ideology appears to be in Israel. His narrator states that "They call it *shlilath ha-galuth*, the negation of the Diaspora. The protagonists of this philosophy . . . maintain that now, the State of Israel being established, Jewry in the Diaspora is doomed" (369). While he states that he initially viewed this position as being held only by "diehard Chauvinists" and "bitter disillusioned Jews," the narrator explains that

“this kind of thinking was popular even with people who did not pose as philosophers. The native-born youth, for example, is in some measure already infected with it” (369). Throughout this article, the narrator suggests that exclusionary Israeli nationalism is popular among the young who “scorn the sophistication of the Diaspora” (370). Although the position is widely held, Klein’s narrator trivializes it and suggests that it might be treated as a “transitional manifestation” (370). Nonetheless, this entry established Klein’s sense that, instead of fully embracing and sharing among diverse diasporic Jewish cultures, the national sentiment within Israel would lead to the radical exclusion of Jews who had not chosen permanent settlement there. Nationalist exclusionism was not representative of his sense of Jewish culture. The narrator states, “It does not spring from the natural thought ways of our folk, but surges up only as [an] answer to contemporary history” (370). By framing nationalist sentiment as recent and implicitly unnatural, Klein attempted to avoid attributing these attitudes to Zionism itself, but he could do so only rhetorically. Although he trivialized and limited the force of these ideologies, they persisted throughout his final entries on Israel. With his more nuanced appreciation for the diversity of Jewish experience, as well as his new attention to the links between colonialism and nationalism, Klein’s separation of ascent and descent became muddled.

Klein was devastated not to see Israel as an imagined diasporic community given physical form, a nation that was given a physical and spiritual homeland; instead, he interpreted Israel as a distinct and discrete state with the same governing principles and political agenda as his own country. Klein saw community as distinct from nationality; his entries in “Notebook” reveal that these distinctions were not shared among the newly adopted Israeli nationals. Klein saw Israel, in all its cultural diversity, as moving toward a

homogeneous and unified political identity that bore little resemblance to his dream of a universal affiliation among Jewish peoples.

Before his journey, national affiliation was of secondary importance to Klein. He was Jewish first and Canadian second. Klein saw Jewishness as transcending other markers of identity—especially nationality—that were the products of exterior forces that denied Jews’ full creative potential. What he discovered on his trip was that nationality was integral to his worldview and that his Canadian identity shaped his values. Klein’s Canadian identity offered a particular representation of the difficulty of negotiating diasporic subjectivity in the context of the resurgence of nationalism at mid-century. Furthermore, his concern with the erasure of his identity as a Canadian, linked to his sense of himself as a diasporic Jew in Montreal by the nationalist agenda of Israel, revealed that his national identity was just as integral to his sense of self as his Jewish identity, though they no longer seemed to cohere.

“Notebook” explores important tensions between the possibility of an imagined Israel that supports a universal community of Jewish subjects and the limitation of Israel to fully align with Klein’s vision of the state as a unification and celebration of a diasporic spiritual and cultural communities. Although in “Notebook” Klein presents Israel’s establishment along prophetic lines, and infused its political actions with great spiritual significance, he also sought to limit the aspects of Israeli identity that alienated and disrupted his sense of diasporic community. He supported the re-establishment of the Holy Land as an ardent Zionist, but he was wary of how this translated into the nationalism and colonialism of the new State of Israel. When his pilgrimage ended and he returned to Montreal, he did so with a reaffirmed sense of the conflict between national and diasporic identities.

## **Fictionalizing “Notebook”: *The Second Scroll* as Modernist Response to “Notebook”**

As a mode of travel writing, “Notebook” creates complexity by its genre-crossing combination of personal notes and journalism. We can see the immediacy of Klein’s experience in his expression; his closeness to what he saw means that the text feels somewhat undigested, offering us a more direct account of his experience than would be possible otherwise. “Notebook” includes various styles—from lists and directives to spiritual exegesis—to help translate and disseminate his experience quickly and efficiently. However, as Klein became more removed from his travels, he had the opportunity to reflect upon the significance and meaning of what he experienced. In his novel *The Second Scroll* he revised the experiences of his travel and his “Notebook” entries in a much more indirect format, creating a work of autobiographical fiction that rehashed the same events through a new, modernist lens. *The Second Scroll* provides a more abstracted way of interpreting his experiences abroad that also allegorize his lived experience travelling to Israel, Morocco and throughout Europe, as a quest narrative that encapsulates the experience of the Jewish diaspora. As a work of modernist autobiographical fiction, *The Second Scroll* brings together rich allusions and deeper connections that were not possible in the more immediate, personal journalism of “Notebook.”

While “Notebook” reveals the gap between the potential power of diaspora to create community and the more hegemonic power of the nation state, *The Second Scroll* renders these tensions as an unresolved spiritual and aesthetic ambivalence. Klein used modernist style, including difficulty, rich allusion and fragmentation, to make sense of his

travels abroad, and translated “Notebook” into a quest narrative with an unsuccessful resolution. *The Second Scroll* frequently lifts passages directly out of “Notebook” and continues to incorporate Klein’s voice into the narrator’s. Klein returned to the concept of pilgrimage to understand Israel’s spiritual significance, but used central tropes of modernist fiction to call that significance into question. In *The Second Scroll*, the experience of pilgrimage to Israel is framed in an increasingly destabilized spiritual and national context. This spiritual ambivalence also reflects Klein’s new feeling of ambivalence toward diaspora, particularly as an alternative to nationalism.

Ambivalence in travel writing has been closely associated with literary modernist style. As I indicate in my introduction, Peat argues that modernist writers engaged with travel as a way to come to terms with increasing ambivalence and insecurity about the nature of the sacred. Without the security of clear religious conviction, modernist writers often craft pilgrim-type characters who undertake spiritual and ethical pilgrimages to help understand and come to terms with the significance of spirituality—or its absence—for the modern subject. The trope of the pilgrimage also enabled modernist writing to explore the complex relations of power that both establish a sacred site and create the conditions for travelling to that site. This conceit was certainly true of Klein, who employed the idea of a spiritual quest or pilgrimage to translate his new perspective. While “Notebook” reflects upon a journey that ends in discovery, however imperfect, *The Second Scroll* adopts a quest narrative instead of a journey narrative. Here, the quest motif emphasizes the search without a resolution.

*The Second Scroll* was published in 1951,<sup>25</sup> two years after “Notebook” was published serially in the *CJC*. The unnamed narrator is a poet-translator on a quest to craft a translated anthology of poetry celebrating a nascent creative class in Israel. Spiritually, the narrator is simultaneously engaged on a search for his missing Messianic Uncle Melch. That search extends his trip through Europe, Morocco, and Israel. Klein made abundant autobiographical references in his portrayal of the narrator, and included large sections paraphrased or directly taken from “Notebook.” The novel creates a model of continual searching by using a Talmudic commentary structure that is structured into ten parts. The first five sections are named for the five books of the Torah, and the second five sections act as a corresponding “Gloss” for each of the first five sections, which are named using the first five letters of the Hebrew alphabet.<sup>26</sup> The Torah, the scroll which contains these five books, is directly referenced in the title of the novel, implying that this

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<sup>25</sup> Klein’s manuscript was rejected by Knopf in April 1950, but he submitted a revised manuscript that was accepted in September 1950 (*Second Scroll*, Textual Note, 109). Because no extant manuscripts of the first draft exist, I base my reading on the critical edition of *The Second Scroll* edited by Elizabeth Popham and Zailig Pollock, whose copy text was the first print edition.

<sup>26</sup> Genesis is glossed by Gloss Aleph, Exodus by Gloss Beth, Leviticus by Gloss Gimel, Numbers by Gloss Dalid, and Deuteronomy by Gloss Hai.

work can be read as a second scroll, or a new Torah based on modern events.<sup>27</sup> These organizing principles suggest that Klein wanted his readers to consider the possibility of a modernist holy work, and used the unfulfilled quest alongside commentaries on that quest to emphasize the search and its unresolved tensions.

Both Zailig Pollock and Dean Irvine<sup>28</sup> have identified a tendency in Klein's writing toward dialectic. In my reading of the "Notebook," we can see some of these initial dialectical tensions between diaspora and nationalism in Klein's act of witnessing Israel as a miraculous union of dispersed cultures and condemning its treatment of diaspora in favour of nation. Pollock suggests that Klein saw dialectic in terms of "an endless alternation, symbolized by a swinging pendulum," and argues that Klein adopted a modernist

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<sup>27</sup> Elizabeth Popham refers to it as a "new Haggadah, a Passover liturgy for contemporary Jewry" (Introduction *Second Scroll* vii), instead of as a whole new Torah. She justifies this stance using an earlier article from the *CJC* where Klein suggests the need for a new Haggadah with a careful editor to better represent contemporary events. Given that Klein actually adopts the language and structure of the Torah itself, I do not think this designation takes the spiritual significance of the work far enough and am inclined to agree with Steinberg, who determines that the *Second Scroll* functions as a "twentieth century Pentateuch" ("A Twentieth Century" 37).

<sup>28</sup> Irvine contrasts Klein's postcolonial modernism with a diasporic modernism, suggesting that he sought to reconcile his Jewish identity with his Canadian identity in the modernist and Jewish magazines he wrote for and edited (particularly the *CJC* and *Preview*) ("Dialectical Modernisms" 598).



approach to the dialectic to express “genuine ambivalence” (*A.M. Klein* 154). Further, he argues that instead of moving toward reconciliation via progression between thesis and antithesis, Klein’s movement between two extremes did not suggest the same kind of productive force (154). Pollock instead turns to the Jewish Talmudic tradition to better describe Klein’s dialectic. He suggests that the term *taiku*, an abbreviation for *tishbi yetaraitz kushoith y’abayoth*, best describes Klein’s sense of unfinished reconciliation. The term is used when rabbis of the Talmud have been unable to agree upon which reading of the Talmud is correct, and the matter is left to the Messiah.<sup>29</sup>

The ambivalence of *taiku*, and of the unresolved dialectic that both Pollock and Irvine have noted in Klein’s writing, are at the centre of *Second Scroll*. Klein returned to and fictionalized experiences from “Notebook” that established ambiguity by constructing a narrative where there is a quest for resolution and a known Messiah-figure that is discoverable and (almost) reachable. As a result, *The Second Scroll* aligns and juxtaposes the spiritual and the modernist stylistically to show the growing presence of nationalism and the undermining of Jewish diaspora. The text articulates the incomplete nature of quests for spiritual or cultural wholeness. Ultimately, we can read Klein’s representation of contemporary Israel in *Second Scroll* as *taiku*, an unresolved dialectic to be left to the divine. But, as I will demonstrate, this unresolved tension had massive emotional and spiritual costs. The murder of the prophetic Uncle Melech and the narrator’s failure to identify creative cultural renewal in the poets of the country suggest that the spiritual and

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<sup>29</sup> *Taiku* is defined within the *Second Scroll* by the narrator as “the question abides” (55).

creative potential of Israel is uncertain, and that the establishment of Israel does not resolve Jewish history or engender a spiritual and communal rebirth. Existentially, *Second Scroll* strives for a resolution between nationalism and diaspora, and between spirituality and modernism, which ends unresolved.

Klein's sense of Messianic prophecy in contemporary events, clearly established in "Notebook," informs the structure of the novel and reinforces the pilgrim motif. He used the spiritual to make sense of the massive migration of Jews to Israel, imposing his own experience and travels on an epic framework that draws comparison with Joyce's *Ulysses*.<sup>30</sup> In the novel, events from Klein's trip are re-ordered to correspond with the genesis, exile, and return structure of the Torah. The narrator leaves Montreal and visits Jewish refugees in Europe awaiting transportation to Israel at Marseilles to reflect on the genesis or root cause of exiled Jewish populations. Then he travels to Rome to deal with spiritual disillusionment and the temptations of converting to Christianity as a form of exile from Jewish identity. Next, he goes to Morocco to understand those lost and forgotten by diaspora, until he finally travels to Israel with the hope of spiritual and creative renewal. The plot structure of the novel places emotional and spiritual events into a linear order. The books of the Torah operate as rich allusions that suggest parallels between the path to exile in the Torah and the path to redemption in *Second Scroll*.

However, like the Torah, the formal narrative is interpreted by a series of commentaries. After the end of the formal plot of the novel, a literary commentary is offered

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<sup>30</sup> For more extensive discussion of Joyce's influence on Klein, see Weir, Heft, Edel, and Popham's edited collection of Klein's letters.

on each section of the text. The effect of ordering the plot in this way places Israel both at the centre and at the end of the novel. This doubling privileges Israel's prominence and emphasizes the return structure, as we reengage with earlier material from the viewpoint of the aesthetic commentary. Thus, *The Second Scroll* acknowledges the repetitive, cyclic nature of exile and return, but does not resolve the tension or ascertain concrete meaning from this process.

With this understanding of the structuring principles of *The Second Scroll*, we can now examine the way that the novel deals with nation and diaspora. The end of the plot—the death of Uncle Melech—is particularly significant because of his martyrdom at the hands of Palestinians. Though the assailants are not identified, Melech's death was “perpetrated upon Israel's territory” (Klein, *Second Scroll* 60), where he was shot and then immolated. Melech—treated as a spiritual Messiah in the novel—dies at the hands of a political, state-driven conflict. As such, the redrawn state lines of Israel and the forced displacement of Palestinians are linked to Melech's death, nationalism and the struggle for political identity are at the root of this event.

At Melech's funeral, diaspora is repurposed for the nation. Melech is treated primarily as a political martyr. The narrator observes the funeral as a Zionist union under the banner of nation: “In the clouds of dust they came, from all parts of the country and from all classes of the population, corteges of cars and pilgrimages on foot, climbing the hills of Galilee. It was a convocation of mourning; it was also a national demonstration” (61). Diaspora has been co-opted; though people from diverse places are brought together, this union has altered its fundamental relationship between individuals. Melech's spiritual life

is given political significance as a tool for nation-building. Spiritual connection has been replaced by national affiliation.

Further, the ascendant nature of Israel is also called into question by Melech, whose characterization and funeral present a significant departure from the treatment of Herzl and Herzl's funeral in "Notebook." Herzl is presented as a tangible savior-figure, whereas Melech remains inaccessible. Unlike Herzl, Melech is a survivor of atrocity and not a hopeful advocate for Zion: Herzl had actively campaigned for the reestablishment of Israel in pre-Holocaust Hungary in the 1890s because of increasing Anti-Semitic tensions, while Melech directly experienced the brutal violence of early twentieth-century pogroms in Russia and the Holocaust in Poland. It is only through Melech's acts of witnessing in Russia and Poland, as well as his experiences as a Jewish refugee in camps in Marseilles and as an advocate for social justice in Morocco, that he goes to Israel. Thus, Klein's representation of Melech's experiences of brutality reduce the triumphant nature of *aliyah*, and the recent history that led to the creation of Israel is emphasized over the spiritual return: more generally, *The Second Scroll* foregrounds loss, which questions the redemptive nature of Israel's creation. The spiritual quest cannot fail to acknowledge the historical conditions that form the present: the narrator and the Messiah figure both must witness and articulate genocide that stems from nationalist exclusion.

The transcendent nature of pilgrimage is called into question by atrocity, making it impossible for an exclusively spiritual engagement with Israel. The narrator does not complete his quest; he does not see Melech until after he has been martyred. This frustrates his pilgrimage: "Across the continents I had looked and searched for my kinsman, and now that I had found him—I would not ever look upon his face" (61). Through his

funeral speeches by unnamed community representatives, we see that Melech is read as a martyr but also as a symbol of modernity:

In quiet tones, as if they were talking to their own souls, they spoke of Uncle Melech and of how he had become a kind of mirror, an *aspaklaria*, of the events of our time. They spoke of the influence he had already exerted upon his contemporaries, of his philosophy, of how he had through the sheer force of his existence again in our life naturalized the miracle. (61)

Here, the power of the miracle as it was presented in “Notebook” is reinvoked, but it is displaced through unclear voices that are not affirmed by the narrator. The narrator is reporting the perspective of others, but does not readily align himself with these views. Because Melech’s death marks the end of the plot of the novel, the narrator’s response to Melech remains unresolved, with his own feelings and interpretations unshared. While Herzl symbolizes the values that lead to the cultural renewal of Zionism, a triumphant victory over death through a return to consecrated ground, Uncle Melech seems to represent the victims of Jewish atrocity, including pogrom and Holocaust. Melech is a Messiah figure lost to the ravages of modernity, representative of the great loss that creates Israel. Significantly, it is in violent death that the crowd reads him as representative of the miracle and possibility of Israel. The nation unites through violence, anger and loss. The idea of Melech as a mirror of the modern suggests that one of the main conditions of modernity is an unresolved tension and ambiguity. It is clear that his death has meaning—but which meaning—is left in flux.

The tension between diasporic Jews and Israeli Jews is also foregrounded in the novel. In one crucial scene, on the flight to Israel, the narrator discusses diaspora with a

fellow passenger. Much like Klein's narrator in his early "Notebook" entries, the passenger is an idealistic Western Jew who theorizes the spiritual significance of the formation of the State of Israel as a unifying force across Jewish cultures. The passenger does not acknowledge the atrocity that has led to the formation of Israel, nor its political ramifications. Instead, he travels purely as pilgrim. As an assimilated Jew, this journalist "wanted to feel himself a part of" this historic moment, and provides an analysis of Zionism (45).<sup>31</sup> The passenger suggests that diaspora had removed Jewry from time, because they were reduced to existence without essence. This allowed them to weather the Holocaust, because they could not die. Now, through Israel, they were able to acquire essence once more and have the same transcendence of the past (46-47). This perspective is idealistic in nature, attempting to universalize Jewish experience while also attempting to de-historicize it. More than any other character, the passenger's theories reveal the problematic and incomplete logic of modern pilgrimage, showing the inability of a pilgrim to reconcile modernity with spirituality.

In contrast with the passenger, the narrator begins to understand his own journey more complexly as he grapples with both history and nation building. The narrator has

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<sup>31</sup> Solomon Spiro offers an extended analysis of the "Passenger's Theory" in Appendix D of *Tapestry for Designs*. Spiro suggests that the passenger seems to be iterating a version of the work of Leon Pinsker, who later inspires Herzl. Given its resonance, the description of Herzl's miracles in "Notebook," I interpret it as being more in line with Klein's own incomplete and inconsistent logic about the spiritual and cultural possibility of Israel.

objections to the passenger's theories that more broadly reflect on the nature of pilgrimage: "I could not refrain from taking issue with many of his assertions. They seemed to me to be too facile, too glib; his novelties were largely verbalizations; there was much that his theory too gallantly ignored" (47). Klein's representation of the passenger suggests some of the problems North American Jews have in contextualizing and understanding Zionism and Jewish history as concrete and not theoretical ideas. Though the passenger attempts to universalize Jewish experience and remove it from history, his placement against the narrator's increased awareness of difference reveals the limitations of his point of view. In contrast, the narrator sees the ways that the passenger's view is informed by his national identity, and further, how it is shaped by privilege at having been removed from the atrocity that led to Israel's establishment as a state.

In the narrator's quest for new poetry in Israel, there is one more set of tensions between diaspora and nationalism. In another direct paraphrase of "Notebook," the narrator realizes that Israel's greatest poetic contributions are linked to the negation of diaspora and to nationalism. He first finds poetry in the use of Hebrew in the marketplace. The narrator realizes that many Israeli nationals "style themselves [as] Caananites—more aboriginal than the aborigines" with an "insularity that repelled" the narrator (*Second Scroll* 52). The narrator explains that he sought "a completely underivative poet," but could not find one (54). While he was looking for an indication that the new national community could move beyond nationalism and offer something original, he sees creativity once more as being informed by nation building.

Though the nation is a subject of concern for the narrator, it is not always treated negatively. In one of his broadest statements about creativity and Israel, the narrator

chooses to read the country itself as an epic: “In the streets, in the shops, everywhere about me. I had looked, but had not seen. It was there all the time—the fashioning folk, anonymous and unobserved, creating word by word, phrase by phrase, the total work that when completed would stand as epic revealed!” (55).<sup>32</sup> The narrator redeems his quest for poetry by changing the parameters of the search. When the narrator sees the miracle of this new poetic engagement, he describes it as “the poetry of the recaptured time” (57), which alludes to the passenger’s reading of Israel in the pages prior. In his moment of discovery, he falls into a similar trap to the passenger, where he attempts to see what he wishes to see while ignoring inconsistencies and problematic logic. The tensions remain unresolved, and, perhaps, *taiku*.

There is no doubt that *Second Scroll* places great spiritual and cultural significance upon the establishment of Israel. However, at each moment of celebration, there seems to be a contrasting moment that undermines it. Klein chose not to resolve his trip into a neat narrative, even when he made use of fiction to alter and rearrange the original events of his journey. As a result, *The Second Scroll* suggests that Klein saw much hopeful spiritual and cultural possibility for Israel, but that these possibilities were somewhat undermined by the material conditions and political state of Israel as it is actually experienced.

Though the *Second Scroll*’s protagonist searches for a kind of ascendance through an initial experience of making *aliyah*, this ascent is called into question by the atrocity

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<sup>32</sup> There are echoes of Page’s distinction between the tourist and the traveller in the narrator acknowledgment that he “looked, but had not seen” (55).



that continues to plague the newly formed state. For Klein, the power of modernism was linked to juxtaposition and dialectic. On the one hand was an ideal, reaching out to a universalized community where an ascent, whether spiritual or aesthetic, was possible. On the other was the experience of *aliyah*, as articulated through the experience of the narrator of the *Second Scroll*, the physical pilgrimage to Israel, the actual return, was possible, but its spiritual significance remained ambivalent. The narrator does not experience the ascent, but is left in a liminal position. His journey continues, and, through the commentary structure of the last sections, becomes cyclical. It is a journey of constant returns, without ending, without ascent, and without resolution.

### **Klein and *Yerida*: Diasporic Identity after Israel**

Where “Notebook of a Journey” underscores the gap between the potential power of diasporic community and the more hegemonic power of the nation-state, *Second Scroll* explores these gaps as a series of unresolved tensions that end in ambiguity. However, Klein’s late journalism upon returning to Montreal acknowledged the presence of diaspora within a Canadian national context. Klein’s last written documents articulated his growing sense of failure and loss upon his return to Canada. Return was linked to *yerida*, and Klein engaged with what it meant to participate in a Canadian Jewish diaspora after Israel provided a potential resolution to diaspora. In his writing, he confronted the derogatory assumptions of *yordim*, even though his trip did not make him an *oleh*. Berl Frymer describes *yordim* as “citizens of a new galut [exile], temporary immigrants, permanent tourists in transit. Their legal status is not important. They are there to stay” (104). The experience of *yordim*, particularly so shortly after the founding of the Jewish state, was

fraught with a sense of failure: those who return to their nation after visiting Israel participated in a chosen self-expulsion from the Promised Land that isolated them from diasporic communities that had not attempted to make *aliyah*. *Yordim* have lost the power of a strong diasporic communal identity and are further victimized; *yerida* is a personal choice and thus cannot draw strength from the communal experience of diaspora, the shared experience of loss.

Building on Pollock's articulation of Klein's desire to create "a vision of the One in the Many" (*A.M. Klein* 3), Lucas Tromly suggests that, "instead of Klein's ideal of a metaphysical unity which rises out of diversity (the One in the Many), the enemies of the Diaspora are divisive in their efforts for political totalization (the One or the Many)" (38). Klein's understanding of this polarizing trend away is clearest in his public speeches and journalism directly following his trip. There the Israeli nationalism that attempts to separate *yordim* from *olim* went against his vision of diaspora as an imagined unifying force. His hopeful Zionism before his trip eventually gave way to a harsh realization that the broad sense of diasporic Jewish community was in danger of being undone by Israeli nationalism.

Klein's first speech on his return from Israel was tailored as an appeal for North American donations to the larger Zionist cause (Caplan 171) and was framed using propagandistic language. Klein delivered the speech on 24 October 1949 as a part of the CJC convention in Toronto. Keeping this in mind, it is unsurprising that he chose to structure his appeal using keenly honed pathos with an eye for the strengths of Canadian Jewish cultural identity. He once again restructured the events of his trip to emphasize a progression out of Europe and toward Israel.

In this speech, Klein describes European refugee camps, a familiar subject, and uses this emotional appeal to introduce his audience to the inhabitants of Casablanca's *mellah*, who in contrast are "unobserved and unnoticed, unpitied and unwept" ("Transcription" 206). The rest of the speech pulses between miraculous possibility and difficulty. Klein identifies many limitations of Israel, difficulties linked to the large number of refugees and the relatively small economy, but he continues to use the frame of miracles to emphasize the power of refugees returning home and in particular the impact of Operation Magic Carpet for Yemenite Jews. To conclude, he attempts to connect the Canadians in attendance to these experiences abroad.

This first attempt to reconcile his status as a Canadian Jew upon his return compares North American Jews to Moses. Klein explains that the North American community is "The Moses of our era—and I do not want to carry the comparison too far—the Moses of our era is Canadian and American Jewry—in this respect: we do not enter the Promised Land, but we make possible the Promised Land" (212). Here Klein acknowledges that this group is alienated from Israel, but he still attempts to create a strong spiritual and representative link between the communities abroad and the Zionist mission. Although Moses functions as a central prophet in Jewish thought, he is linked to exile and not to return. He is linked to the wilderness and to the wandering, leading the people toward Israel but ultimately being denied entry. Because Klein was fundraising among North Americans, this choice of appeal is significant because of its acknowledgement of the sense of distance and alienation that Moses experienced: Moses leads the people to the Promised Land but remains outside it. Unlike other Jewish groups across the globe, North American Jews were somewhat removed from the mass return to Israel. Although

they contributed to rebuilding the Jewish state, they must reconcile their desires to support the cause with their reasons for remaining in exile. Klein was highly attentive to the national identity of his audience, and used this locatedness to promote a form of humanitarian diaspora that invested in Israel as a new Zion.

Klein understood Moses's spiritual power as an alternative to the more derogatory *yerida*, the chosen exile, and so he frequently substituted this more positive figure to explain Jewish-Canadians' relationship to Israel. However, his journalism continued to confront the experience of return as negative, as one of descent. Unlike modernist notions of exile, which frame exile as a more positive escape from the limitations of one's own culture or homeland, for Klein, chosen exile was linked to a dislocation that was abandonment by and of a community. For him, being exiled was being cast out. The ideals at the heart of Zionism—Israeli nationalism and its inherent spiritual transcendence—were hostile to his identification as a diasporic Jew. Instead of being an answer to perpetual Jewish oppression and victimization, he read Israel itself as continuing to denigrate diasporic Jews by denying their value.

In one of his last major published series, "In Praise of the Diaspora," Klein mourned this identity and the inevitable dissolution of his Montreal community that he foresaw as resulting from Israeli nationalism. Diaspora is treated elegiacally in these articles, as he mourned the death of his spiritual and cultural identity as a diasporic Jew. "In

Praise of the Diaspora” appeared in the *CJC* in seven installments in January and February 1953.<sup>33</sup> Written ostensibly as a memorial address, this speech came to terms with what Klein saw as one of the inevitable consequences of Zionism: the destruction of positive elements of diaspora. He wrote the speech as a formal eulogy from the point of view of deep personal loss. Heike Härting describes this condition as “diasporic melancholia,” which “does not abandon the idea of diaspora but designates an affect of the traumatic ways in which the nation-state seeks to regulate and instrumentalize diasporic life” (189–90).<sup>34</sup> Klein’s sense of community was confronted by a state that delegitimized his sense of imagined community and connection across diaspora. This series of articles directly confronted this mourning and suggested ways in which grief itself was undermined by the establishment of Israel.

Once more Klein returned to a central persona to personalize the conceptual and spiritual impacts of the historical changes to diaspora caused by formation of the new

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<sup>33</sup> My reading text comes from *Beyond Sambation* and not the original *CJC* files (463–77).

<sup>34</sup> Härting is interested in how vulnerability shapes postcolonial and diasporic subjects as melancholic citizens. I see her reading as somewhat distinct from Cho’s definition of the term “diasporic melancholia” (“Affecting Citizenship”), which links affect, particularly feelings of fear and experiences of violence, to the process of citizenship. Härting refers to Klein’s specific mourning of diaspora at the hands of Israel, while Cho is interested in the way that affect allows the tensions between diaspora and citizenship to manifest.

state. He asked his readers to mourn the loss of diaspora as they might a close family relation. When he initially describes diasporic death, he personifies diaspora, calling it Uncle Galuth: “From an idea, from a mere concept of time, a vague cold image of space, the Diaspora changed, it subsumed bone, it took on flesh, it became—a person! *Galuth!* Uncle Galuth! One who had been real and warm and human, and was no more” (“In Praise” 467).<sup>35</sup> Klein cleverly collapses diaspora and exile in Galuth, evoking the complex ways in which the two concepts come together and ultimately die as one. The ideal of diasporic community is linked to an exile that no longer exists in the same manner when a nation has been re-established. For the Canadian Jews who made up much of his readership, there was no diaspora without exile. The way that the community understood itself in relation to its spiritual centre had fundamentally shifted, and this shift brought with it tangible losses. Galuth is described as “the family’s most colourful son, eager and adventure-some,—a kinsman widely travelled, easy of manner,” with an “irresistible” personality (469-70). These traits, not readily associated with exile, express the best aspects of Jewish diasporic cultures and communities, the results of surviving and travelling after initial banishment. It is in this description that we see a way of understanding and belonging beyond the confines of nation states.

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<sup>35</sup> According to the glossary provided in *Beyond Sambation*, the word *galuth* can be translated as “exile” or “diaspora” (Steinberg and Caplan 527). Härting usefully expands on the short note provided in *Beyond Sambation* when she suggests that “Klein’s ‘favourite uncle,’ Galuth, named after the Hebrew word for exile, metaphorically embodies the Jewish diaspora” (189).

By celebrating diaspora through characterization, Klein attempted to reconcile his guilt over and mourning for the dissolution of diasporic communities with the establishment of Israel. The article explains the pressure to “keep silent, and while inwardly pondering the diaspora’s merits, stifle its speech, standing mute as to those merits for decorum’s sake” (466). Klein understood first-hand the public relations campaign at the heart of Israel’s continued success as a country and thus avoided pointed criticism in his reflection on the real losses associated with nation building. Yet he directly positioned the creation of Israel with the loss of diaspora: “There it rises, the State of Israel, the fulfillment of a millennial dream, a present help, the vindication of the past, the future’s promise, the very antonym and negation of the Diaspora!” (467). Given that his entire motive for travelling was to gain insights that would support his fundraising efforts for Israel, this realization was an intensely fraught personal conflict. By representing Israel as the negation of diaspora, Klein, and all Jews who chose not to return to Israel, were placed antagonistically in opposition to this process. So, to overcome this opposition, he used death to pay homage to diaspora without jeopardizing or standing against Zionism. Diaspora was not *yerida*—it was not an abandonment of Israel—yet, by mourning the death of diaspora, Klein could express the sense of loss that he experienced as a result of the creation of Israel. Death replaced exile, and mourning signified a kind of descent, if only into sadness and despair.

In “In Praise,” Klein chronicled the many contributions of diaspora to diverse fields of Jewish spiritual and cultural life. He listed important events that allowed a celebration of diaspora and explained that ultimately, the message of diaspora is “recreation”: “a message which issues out of every item of the inventory, each the memento of some

lesson, each now entered into the apparatus of our culture” (472). Because of its resistance to stagnation, diaspora created the conditions for growth, development and sustainability. These challenges to reimagine and innovate were at the core of Jewishness for Klein. His experience of diaspora allowed for the development of a communal culture and vision wherein the individual parts contributed to the whole overall wellbeing.

Ultimately, Klein represented the experience of diaspora as one of development through travel. He reflected on the dispersion of Jews as a result, suggesting that this diversity has strengthened and heartened his people and will continue to do so: “[H]e is vindicated; at the hour of his death he is seen in the true light, exemplar, model, inspiration” (477). The experience of diaspora was motivating and aspirational. In perhaps his most powerful statement, Klein suggests that diaspora offers a sense of wholeness: “It was a fulfillment, then, this Dispersion, and not a crude scattering, the Grand Tour designed to teach abroad what could not be learned at home, the arc penultimate to the completed circle” (473). Here his personal journey seems to mirror the narrative that he constructs for diaspora: through travel, Klein can better comprehend and understand his Jewish Canadian identity in its distinctiveness and better articulate the national and diasporic communities with which he affiliates himself.

## **Conclusion**

In 1955, Klein resigned from his role as editor of the *CJC*. He stopped writing and withdrew from the Montreal community in which he was so invested. Although his personal journey was tragic, his sense of diasporic community was helpfully nuanced by travel abroad. Klein understood that diasporic communities, though disparate, have a lot



to teach us about strengths that extend beyond the bounds of nation. His experience of travel as recorded in “Notebook of a Journey” contributed to his renegotiation of his identity as both a Jew and a Canadian. His travels undermined his initial hope for the possibility of a cultural Zionism that bolstered and celebrated his sense of diasporic communal identity.

Klein’s careful negotiation of the spiritual quest or pilgrimage for a creative diasporic culture was undone by travel. Klein’s writing illustrates how spiritual journey narratives perform the ideologically oppressive work of nationalism. It also demonstrates the value of modernist ambivalence to encourage a continued search for resolution without providing one. Klein’s work offers an important critique of nationalism that anticipated the criticisms of Canadian nationalism in the decades to follow. Klein’s journalism was written on the verge of Canada’s own literary nationalist movement in the 1960s; however, his warning cry about the need for diasporic vision was not heeded in the decade that followed his withdrawal from public life. In some ways, Klein’s writing acted as a warning about the ways in which cultural nationalism homogenizes, excludes, and deliberately uses other powerful narratives, including the spiritual, to control and limit affinities and connections across disparate populations.

The hopeful possibility of pilgrimage, tinged with the spiritual reality of thousands making *aliyah* to the new state, initially created a sense of celebratory ascent for Klein as a life-long Zionist. However, instead of a straightforward affirmation of the new state, his experiences ultimately led to great mourning over the loss of diasporic communities, a mourning that became a more pronounced elegy for diasporic ideals following his return to Canada from Israel. At the same time, Klein also learned to celebrate and

communicate the benefits of diaspora, in spite of the powerful force of nationalism. For him, the experience of exile was magnified by his trip to Israel, and this journey fundamentally changed how he understood community as a national and diasporic subject. His journalism identifies the loss of affiliation that takes place in the movement from heterogeneous dispersal to homogeneous nation.

Klein offered a nuanced articulation of exile at mid-century that was challenged by the experience of travel. He understood the exile associated with *guluth*, the Jewish diaspora, as creating the conditions for the formation of an imaginary affiliation that could cross the world and connect disparate Jewish populations with very different experiences. Diaspora, for Klein, was life-affirming. Through travel, however, Klein began to question the power relations that complicate an equal or even equitable access to this life-affirming affiliation. He found that many subjugated populations cannot and do not benefit from diasporic experience. For them, it is nation, and the creation of Israel, that provides an affiliation that raises them out of their circumstances (of course, at the cost of the people whose land is taken). At the same time, Klein also contemplated a different experience of exile, one that he associated with *yerida*, a descent away from Israel, as a kind of chosen banishment and a break with a long-standing and desired affiliation he had spent his life fostering as a Zionist.

Klein's travel writing, particularly his travel journalism, reveals the bias inherent in Canadian assumptions about cross-cultural affiliation, particularly when it comes to settler-colonialism in Israel. The next chapter also foregrounds questions of bias in the context of colonial power relations, but it does with reference to Patrick Anderson's

travel writing about Singapore and Spain. Though I explore Anderson's complex negotiation of colonial privilege in that body of work, I also demonstrate that his sense of entitlement was challenged by anti-colonial resistance that countered his desire to aestheticize his subjects. At the same time, I suggest that, as with Klein, Anderson's role as a Canadian national led him to reconsider how he understood himself in relation to others in nationalized and colonized communities to which he did not belong.

## Chapter Three: Colonial Cosmopolitanism? Resistance, Aesthetics, and Modernism in Patrick Anderson's Travel Writing

In *The Book of Canadian Poetry*, A.J.M. Smith defined the cosmopolitan writer as someone who makes “a heroic effort to transcend colonialism by entering into the universal, civilizing culture of ideas” (5 [1948]). In the Canadian literary milieu of the late ‘40s, “colonial” was a pejorative used to describe works deemed to be unaware of or uninterested in modernist conversations happening among artists and writers in the major city centres of the English-speaking world. In contrast, to be “cosmopolitan” meant to be worldly, international, and party to those conversations.<sup>36</sup> Although Smith and his associates—including Klein, Anderson, Page, and Glassco—tended to understand cosmopolitanism in opposition to colonialism, the opposition was a false one inasmuch as the cosmopolitanism they espoused was less about engaging with cultural difference and more about gaining entry into a literary community that emphasized civility and sophistication. The broader connotations of both colonialism and cosmopolitanism were largely undiscussed by these writers—and their acceptance of both settler-colonialism and empire building was implicit. Certainly, this implicit acceptance was the case for Klein. Though his use of modernist tropes like ambiguity, allusion, and fragmentation demonstrated an

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<sup>36</sup> To be clear, the writers studied in this dissertation did not define themselves as cosmopolitan. This was a term that was primarily applied *to* the writers, by critics and by other writers. As I indicate in the introduction, the term was introduced by Smith, who used it to mark what he perceived as a positive change in the quality of Canadian writing, bringing Canadian poets onto the international modernist stage.

uncertainty and ambivalence about both religious and cultural forms of nationalism, he did not, for the part, consider the colonial logic attendant to his justification and contextualization of the Jewish settlement of Israel and the expulsion of Arab people. Patrick Anderson's travel writing betrays a similarly provocative tension between cosmopolitan cultural engagement on the one hand, and the often unwitting or disavowed affirmation of asymmetrical power relations on the other. Like Klein, Anderson perpetuated colonial assumptions in his writing; however, Anderson was more expressly Eurocentric and engaged with his unearned privilege primarily because of explicit anti-colonial resistance. While Klein used modernist style to express the alienation of religious and national collectives, Anderson used modernist style to attempt to mask his sense of personal alienation. While both authors' travel writing embodied colonial values to different extents, Anderson more expressly juxtaposed colonial and cosmopolitan ideologies in his travel writing. Anderson's travel writing demonstrated the ways in which his works were dependent upon and reproduced colonial systems of power that worked against the aesthetic aims of interconnection and cross-cultural communication.

Travel writing has a long history of colonial violence and has often privileged the subjectivity, authority, and experiences of white, heterosexual, able-bodied, cis-gendered men from European countries as they interpret other places, cultures, and peoples. When colonial subjects travel and write about colonized places, their writing risks authenticating the imperialist desire both to know and control others. Thus, as Debbie Lisle argues, colonialism and cosmopolitanism "exist in a complex relationship with one another—sometimes antagonistic, sometimes symbiotic, sometimes ambiguous" (5). Though these

two concepts often are mutually reinforcing, bringing them together can also offer resistance that challenges the power inherent in both. Anderson's travel writing, while inherently shaped by his privilege as a white, male settler-colonial, also clearly articulated how modernist visions of cosmopolitanism make space for resistance to the systemic power of colonialism. With reference to Lisle, we might say that it presents "incomplete articulations of power that offer compelling moments of resistance" (23). Building on Lisle while also pointing to the Canadian modernist tradition that has shaped Anderson's work, I explore the value of reading Anderson's travel writing as what I call "colonial cosmopolitanism," a form of cosmopolitan thought that brings its contradictions to the fore.<sup>37</sup> Anderson's travel writing, with its inward gaze, self-critical narration, and engagement with cultural difference is both critical of and beset by colonial ideologies.

Before I explore the tension between cosmopolitan ideals and colonial ideologies in Anderson's longer prose texts in the 1950s, I want to briefly establish the cosmopolitan style of his prose work in *Preview* (1942-1945). I present Anderson's initial cosmopolitan vision in a Canadian context to trace its development before he travelled elsewhere and encountered competing notions of national identity and intercultural exchange. In addition to serving as the general editor of *Preview*, Anderson contributed poetry, journal entries, editor's notes, short stories, reviews, and articles. Throughout its run, Anderson was

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<sup>37</sup> Colonial cosmopolitanism can, perhaps, be understood historically as a foundation for the settler gaze in the Canadian context. See especially Wendy Roy's reading of Anna Brownell Jameson in *Maps of Difference* for a sense of how worldliness can be conflated with colonial practices.

also its most frequent contributor, with forty poems, nine short stories, and five reviews and articles (Precosky). As such, he had a key role in shaping and articulating the magazine's cosmopolitan ethos, which is implicit in his introduction to the 1980 reprint of *Preview*: "our subjects—the poor, the deprived, the young and uncertain, the decadent bourgeois, the members of minority groups, the conscripts—bulk larger than any question of formal aesthetics or even, indeed, of forging a Canadian literature" (Introduction iv). Here, Anderson suggests that the magazine's mission is defined by its choice of subjects—primarily those without power. Further, he suggests that *Preview*'s contributors care about the plights of others and want to support their social progress.<sup>38</sup>

The narrator in Anderson's *Preview* stories frequently presents cosmopolitan attitudes as politeness or civility toward other cultures. This is not surprising because, as Daniel Coleman argues, "White Canadian culture" has been and "is obsessed, and organized by its obsession, with the problem of its own civility" (5). Polite behaviour has shaped a Canadian mythos that reinforces itself as much by exclusion as inclusion, where "whiteness still occupies the positions of normalcy and privilege in Canada" (7). This

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<sup>38</sup> Anderson used the word cosmopolitan only comparatively, when describing the writers at *First Statement* as *Preview*'s "opposite and rival," and generalizing that their work was characterized by "distrus[t of] modernism and cosmopolitanism" (Introduction iv). He locates the cosmopolitanism espoused in *Preview* in the French-English dualism of Montreal: "I cannot but think that our proximity to the French kept our characteristic mixture of nationalism and internationalism alive. Certainly a Canada without its complementary culture was unthinkable" (v).

was also true of *Preview*, a journal very much defined by the white, middle-and-upper-class desire to improve the lives of the less fortunate through polite acceptance and good deeds. Along with privilege, civility also included a sense of altruism as a marker of superior moral behaviour. For example, in the semi-autobiographical short story “The Americans,” Anderson’s narrator asserts his own cosmopolitanism by contrasting his behaviour at a summer hotel in Quebec with that of the French-speaking locals and the visiting Americans. The narrator describes his interaction with the local French-speaking population thus: “Among them you put on the French gestures and ceremoniousness without the grammar. A poetic world of connotations and grimaces, carefully avoiding the subjunctive” (7). He positions himself and, through the second-person, the reader, as participants who appreciate culture and actively engage with it; it is through this engagement that the narrator displays his civil attitude. Though he acknowledges his limited language skills, he also denigrates the French locals as having “ignorance disguised in an idyllic simplicity, [that is] almost assimilated into one’s personal landscape” (7). This strategic positioning suggests the narrator has some civility that the French locals do not, but that at the same time, the narrator takes pleasure in indulging in what he sees as a simpler way of life by taking on and embracing that simplicity. While charmed by his new environment, the narrator maintains a sense of superiority vis-à-vis the people he encounters.

In contrast, the American guests of the title indulge in a similar sense of superiority but without an appreciation of the local culture and attitudes, and with a number of distasteful beliefs about minority cultures. The Americans are described as the core of the Canadian summer hotel industry, and are valued for their money: “Scarcity increased



their aura, the casual god-like American look, and war made them even more Olympian—they were post Pearl Harbor, bathed in the light of history, more than life-size in a great democracy’s new found strength” (8). The narrator’s early observations place Americans in a position of power, but their larger-than-life significance distances them from both the other guests and the local people. The Americans’ power gives them a sense of entitlement, but does not endow them with the cosmopolitan sensibility that is framed as a kind of acceptance and politeness to people from other ethnic backgrounds. The narrator suggests that he and his wife only spent one evening with them, uninterested in having a friendship because of the American characters’ blatantly racist and anti-Semitic views. Without recounting a full conversation, the narrator notes that they describe a black community as “a Harlem of slashing razor-blades, raped girls and unbearable arrogance over which hovered, of course, the unmistakable negro smell,” and later, in the same conversation, they describe Jewish people as having “a bad streak” (9). In contrast, the narrator presents his own views humbly, suggesting that he and his wife argued with the Americans. He relies on negation to present Canadian attitudes as morally superior; unlike the Americans, he and his wife Peggy “were quite objective” because “[they] based [their] opinions on what had been [their] experience” (10). The narrator’s cosmopolitan attitude is presented here in both his judgment of the Americans and his informed politeness in the way he treats others. Indeed, by reading himself as separate from the inappropriate Americans, the narrator shows his own cosmopolitanism not as a form of active advocacy, but instead as a form of smug complacency. The narrator does not address the Americans’ bad behaviour, but stops short at distancing himself from it.

Unlike the narrator, who attempts to absorb the local culture and incorporate it into his “personal landscape” (7), the Americans remove themselves from their surroundings and fixate on the negative: “In that atmosphere of camaraderie and light they appeared increasingly suffering and melancholy. The weather was their new grievance... [and] they never went farther afield than the square in front of the church. And the language—they didn’t know French” (11). Much of the comparative work of this story happens simply by painting the Americans negatively, and, by passing judgment on them, asserting the narrator and his wife as a superior kind of people.

The closing lines of “The Americans” offer a demonstration of Anderson’s cosmopolitan ethics in action. The narrator celebrates the dual cultures of Canada by taking on the language of the hotel operators. As the Americans leave, the narrator and his wife “were busy ordering breakfast from Rita—orange juice, fried eggs and coffee, in jubilant French” (11). The narrator’s final joyous act—speaking the language of his environment instead of insisting that the hotel operators conform to his language—advocates for the simple and everyday ways of embracing cultural difference. Nonetheless, much of the “jubilation” in this story also comes from a kind of smug superiority—the narrator behaves better than the Americans, and that makes him more civil and cosmopolitan in his attitudes.

“The Americans” clearly demonstrates some of Anderson’s cosmopolitan beliefs, and also highlights the central way he interpreted his surroundings: through privileging his own point of view and experience. Anderson’s narrator, in this story, and throughout his prose works, reads other characters through his own perceptions, recording aesthetic sketches of their behaviour and description. He tends to let his narrator dominate, and

leaves secondary characters undeveloped, such that they operate largely as foil characters. Precosky describes Anderson's narrators across his short fiction as "more important to the stories than any action which takes place in them." This navel-gazing tendency, this inability to extend vision beyond the confines of the self, is a central problem in Anderson's prose. Often, Anderson's foils are limited in scope; they are outlined only to be discredited as straw men. Other characters are limited in their dimensionality, used for demonstration and then cast aside in favour of a more complete reflection on the self. He relies on simple binaries that reduce those around him. He often dehumanizes other cultures (like the "ignorant" locals), and offers more direct comparison of attitudes and beliefs only among others with similar backgrounds. Anderson's ethics in *Preview* are cosmopolitan—but these ethics compare attitudes only among other white English-speaking people; the assumption of Anglo-American cultural superiority remains a central aspect of this vision. Anderson's early prose writing set the stage for his international travel writing, where he continued to rely on these existing assumptions, but also more directly confronted the ways his attitudes were complicit with colonialism, entitlement, and privilege.

### **Self-Representation and Narrative Authority as Cosmopolitan Engagement in *Snake Wine***

Through travel, Anderson productively confronted his own prejudices and assumptions, even though he did not usually resolve them. In Anderson's mid-century travel writing, colonial cosmopolitanism was tested against other competing notions of how to live and define oneself in an international context. Travelling to Singapore readjusted Anderson's literary persona and assumptions, but the Singaporean context revealed

the extent to which his cosmopolitan worldview was invested in colonial power and maintenance of the status quo. By foregrounding questions of voice and their relevance for Anderson's treatment of collective identities, nation, and colonial privilege, I consider Anderson's articulation of cosmopolitanism in *Snake Wine*.

*Snake Wine*, published in England in 1955, is based on journals Anderson kept while working in Singapore as a lecturer at the newly formed University of Malaya from 1950-1952. The text, written from Anderson's perspective, narrated his observations about Singapore's culture, city life, academic structure, and political strife, with an emphasis on the way these things impacted him. Anderson used inconsistent self-representation through a central narrator in the text to critically engage with the limitations of his own cosmopolitan vision. The work is a kind of modernist collage—bringing together parts of the travel experience without creating coherence or unity. The first third of the text is constructed as long, unaddressed personal letters, and the rest is written episodically, relaying key moments in his trip. There is a stark contrast between the unstructured personal letters, and the clearly formed and more structured vignettes of the latter half of the text. The move from the unstructured personal letters to the more structured, narrative anecdotes is abrupt and unexplained, and speaks to a blatant disregard for the conventions of the linear travelogue. Rather than follow typical travel narrative plot structure (such as quest, guidebook, pilgrimage, or itinerary), the text controls subjective experience through a carefully developed narratorial persona in a way that both illustrates the subjective nature of the account, and also subtly reveals the author's uncertain narrative control.

If we read the changes in structure from beginning to end as intentionally modernist, *Snake Wine* reverses expectations—fragmentation and stream of consciousness do not

follow structure, but instead come first. The text draws attention to its own construction and composition; the changes in structure reveal the degree of editing and manipulation of experience from the raw, more visceral journals to the more stylistically contained short story vignettes. The turn toward a more structured narrative pattern, perhaps, speaks to a reigning in of authority from a text that is starting to get away from Anderson's own goals. The narrator's uneven presentation of authority, his blend of uncertainty and blunt assertiveness, reveal a subject attempting to reconceptualize his relationship to others while trying desperately to hang on to his own sense of self.

In Anderson's prose, the narrator is often highly self-aware, and yet, often is extremely superficial. Modernist autobiography, and in particular, travel writing, frequently thematizes concerns with authority and foregrounds a questioning self-awareness of the role of narratorial authority. Modernist travel writers often use their narrators for critical and comedic effect, using their conditional authority to demonstrate irony. As Stacy Burton suggests, modernist travel writers tend to question "the presumption of narrative authority" (30) and emphasize the narrator as a character in the story. This increasing self-awareness of the role that the narrator plays in subjectively shaping and positing himself or herself in relation to the text denies the impersonal remove associated with an omniscient narrator. Undermined authority is manifested in Anderson's work through the inclusion of narrators who are self-critical, narcissistic, and superficial in their treatment of others. These narrator figures demonstrate the limitations of their knowledge and authority, and emphasize their own flaws and idiosyncrasies.

In the journal section of *Snake Wine*, Anderson's narrator is quite self-indulgent, presenting himself as insecure and somewhat superficial. He is concerned with his self-

perception and wants to appear as a comfortable and successful man to his fellow passengers on his voyage to Singapore. From the beginning, Anderson fashioned himself as cosmopolitan:

Two things give me the confidence to imagine that I am a man of the world and an experienced traveller: the phrases uncoiling inside my head and seeming more and more apt as drink succeeds drink; the timeless solitude in which, with no immediate preoccupations, I can flatter myself with the facts of my private existence until they acquire a beautiful if fatuous significance. (12)

This initial frame for cosmopolitanism is shallow at best: well-travelled, worldly. These are markers of privilege more than markers of ethics. When the narrator is most vulnerable, the colonial privilege he relies on for his cosmopolitan attitude is made most apparent. It is clear that he is anxious about his status, and uses alcohol to overcome the insecurity that underlies his most assertive statements. At the same time, the narrator also asserts a kind of exuberance: “How astonishing to be thirty-five years old! How extraordinary to be an adopted Canadian, especially when this involved a ‘professorship’, however minor, at McGill University in Montreal! And how intoxicating this new freedom is, sailing away to take up a reasonably senior post in the English Department of the University of Malaya!” (12). The ebullient statements combined with the multiple exclamation points seem compensatory; he comes across as trying to earnestly perform the role of a cosmopolitan gentleman.<sup>39</sup> Anderson’s narrator is consciously aware of his inability to

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<sup>39</sup> These assertive exclamations resonate with, and possibly allude to, Joseph Conrad’s autobiographical short story “Youth,” where a similarly naïve and uncertain man attempts

fully embrace displacement, and yet we see him attempting to identify and perform a cosmopolitan identity that familiarizes the foreign and constructs a more certain and positive identity for himself. Thus, cosmopolitanism is presented as an eagerness for adventure, and a comfort with it, all presented with self-assertion and authority.

In these early pages, Anderson's narrator seems caught up in the desire to *appear* cosmopolitan—he introduces himself with a list of his social capital, which specifically includes his chosen (thus “adopted”) citizenship as a Canadian. He frames cosmopolitanism as a particular kind of elite privilege—a combination of social and ethical attitude of civility with a knowing, privileged access to the world as a white settler-colonial with free mobility in a British-controlled colony. His nationality here is a marker of prestige; both his freedom of movement and his relatively straightforward immigration are rooted in his status as a subject of the British empire moving through both types of British-controlled colonies, the settler colony of Canada and the economic colonialism of Singapore.

Anderson's Canadianness is a kind of affectation, an almost aesthetic quality. Indeed, as Robert Druce notes in his short biography, Anderson's nationality “was a status in which he took great pride throughout all his remaining years of self-chosen exile from Canada” (243). Put differently, Anderson used his nationality as a marker of difference

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his first journey to the East. For Conrad, his first journey is also his first adult job, and he exudes “Fancy! Second mate for the first time—a really responsible officer! I wouldn't have thrown up my billet for a fortune!” (4). It also features a shifting narratorial stance and draws attention to the discrepancy between the younger, more romantic Marlow and the comparatively crusty and ironic older Marlow.

from his fellow British subjects in Singapore—and continued to rely on this difference in much of his life writing. By choosing to identify himself as Canadian (and indeed, he became a Canadian citizen in 1945 and lived in Canada for a total of ten years), Anderson conflated his cosmopolitan assertiveness with modernist aesthetics, relying on his colonial power while reorienting himself in empire as a “different” type of citizen, all without losing his mobility and his agency. He was set apart, and potentially a bit morally superior, by his choice to forego the mother country by choosing settler colonialism. The social capital associated with cosmopolitan attitudes and ethics is part and parcel of Canadian modernism. It is a way of understanding and valuing knowledge and culture that is, in great part, colonial in its expression and attitude.

Anderson relied on colonialism to frame his sense of the cosmopolitan, which revealed cosmopolitanism’s complicity in asymmetrical power relations. He immediately explored the new power and authority he had gained as a white settler-colonial subject in a colonized country, and did not question the colonial structures he encountered. For example, his narrator anticipates “the kind of life [he] can expect [in Singapore],” by daydreaming: “[*W*]hat sort of servant shall I have? Shall I have a Malay, or an Indian, or a Chinese? And shall I be able, through him or her, to grapple with the country, understand it and love it? (Of course, romantically, I love it already.)” (*Snake Wine* 26). In his desire to really “understand” the country, the narrator is eager to build relationships that will help him to gain a more intimate knowledge of his new home. At the same time, the power relations of servant-master reveal an inability to “know” or “love” this place. Embodied in his romanticization of the servant is an obvious Orientalism: the East is both se-



ductive and submissive to colonial power; the servant acts as a synecdoche for the country as a whole. So, even in this early moment, the narrator's desire to become a part of this new life is undermined by his colonial desire not to actually acculturate, but instead to control and represent this new space from his own authoritative position.

Anderson fetishized the East and romanticized colonial oppression as a form of worldliness or cosmopolitanism. His narrator admits that "the idea of having a servant has been almost an obsession with me, as a symbol of luxury, a challenge to my imagination and tact, and an opportunity to get into direct relation with the East" (43). Clearly, then, Anderson interprets the servant as a marker of cultural capital, as a "symbol" that is meant to help him develop his own subjective responses to Singapore. By objectifying and symbolizing his interactions with his potential servant, he also attempts to deny their material reality as products of Empire. He relies on tropes of modernist primitivism,<sup>40</sup> and its link to the romantic past, to avoid directly confronting this reality.

Modernist primitivism goes hand-in-hand with ethnography to create and reinforce a sense of colonial superiority in Anderson's travel writing. His ethnographic impulse<sup>41</sup>—to describe and, thus, know and tell what he sees—is coupled with a romanticized, Orientalized, and very limited context for what he is witnessing. After a co-worker

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<sup>40</sup> Primitivism offers modernist authors "metaphorical escapes from modernity" (Rossetti 124). The use of this trope, and in turn, "primitive," non-Western subject matter in one's art helped to remove the artist from their own socio-political conditions.

<sup>41</sup> For more context on the correlations between modernism and ethnography, see Paul Peppis.

demeaningly describes her shout for “Boy!” as “The Call of the East, you know” (31), Anderson describes the servants as “not boyish in the least but sometimes quite decrepit and alarming: very silent and with mask-like faces—a submissive blankness without real civility only emphasizes some queerness in their features: twisted eyebrows or a smile full of gold teeth” (31). Anderson interprets as he records what he sees, noting a lack of civility that betrays his own sense of morality related to colonial enlightenment. The servants are a canvas that are defined by their otherness—they are strange and unusual, and without personality or culture. Something similar can be said of Anderson’s description of his work as a teacher of the British literary canon; clearly, he saw himself as bringing culture, and enlightened understanding, to those who had none of their own. Note the way the narrator describes his students in his initial reflection as “polite and reticent figures... exotic crystallizations of polished dark heads and alert eye glasses” (*Snake Wine* 42). It is as though he is describing objects behind glass in a museum. There is significant lack of humanity in this description—what he does not know, he reduces to objects. The transaction is one way—the students receive from him—and he retains all control, authority and knowledge. His ethnographic gaze reinforces his colonial values.

However, Anderson also queried the consequences of his own ethnographic impulse. For example, the narrator of *Snake Wine* criticizes the unselfconscious authority assumed by his acquaintance, an agricultural advisor to the Singaporean government. He described his acquaintance as overly serious and high-brow, and in particular, ridiculed the anthropological remarks made by him and his wife; the couple’s behaviour causes Anderson’s narrator to reflect, “I felt myself turning uncomfortably away, partly no doubt because I dislike knowing less than anybody else” (101). As he listens to them

describe life in a *kampong*, he reflects on the wife's ethnographic impulse further: "I wondered if she shared with me a contradictory attitude to being in the know, if she was glad of it and at the same time felt it to be embarrassing, because it separated her from other people. Or perhaps she wasn't in the know at all?" (101). The narrator tellingly aligns himself with the wife and questions her beliefs at a remove. In doing so, he suggests that his own ethnographic gaze is born of self-doubt rather than authority, and that it operates as a tool for reducing the anxieties of the recorder.

Further, ethnography can also be read as a kind of cover for Anderson's sexuality—as I demonstrate later in this chapter. Though Anderson was closeted at the time,<sup>42</sup> his queer identity was given some expression via modernist primitivism. The narrator openly acknowledges his own paternalism and desire for control in his selection of a fifteen-year-old Ah-Ting as his servant. He remarks that Ah-Ting's "boyishness is not purely professional, who is in fact prodigiously small, young even to pathos and ferociously efficient" (42-43). Anderson's many and lengthy descriptions of Ah-Ting have an ethnographic quality, but are also grounded in queer eroticism. In a passage purportedly describing the control Ah-Ting has as holder of the household keys, Anderson's narrator turns abruptly to the sensual, as he notices:

[H]is brief shorts into which his smooth pale thigh disappeared only a few inches from my face, flesh at once taught, plump and reticent, so that it possessed its own locked-up look, for it neither varied in surface tone like a white man's skin, nor did

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<sup>42</sup> See especially Justin D. Edwards, Robert K. Martin, and Brian Trehearne (*Montreal Forties*) for readings of Anderson's homosexuality.

it secrete, as do the gleaming skins of Tamils and Malays, a deep intensity of purple or a series of shifting yellows and mauves.” (77)<sup>43</sup>

While couched in an ethnographic observation about the roles the servant occupies in his household, Anderson’s voyeuristic description is sexualized and idealized. Ah-Ting’s body is both aestheticized and Orientalized in order to allow Anderson to express desire that would otherwise be seen as deviant or pedophilic. The servant fulfills a number of representative roles for Anderson—colonial dominance, romantic primitivism, and, acceptable homoerotic sensualism and desire.

The aestheticization and Orientalization of Ah-Ting are all tactics used by the narrator to deny Ah-Ting, and the servant class more generally, status as fellow humans. And, Anderson fully recognizes this practice, excusing it as an “elaborate personal indulgence” (202) without questioning its impact on the people around him:

I like people and things for the way they look. But liking them is dangerous, demanding contacts and action and leading often to disappointment, and so it seems to me that I tend to scurry back with my visual images to my cell... And then, to spiritualize what is appropriated in this vivid but lonely fashion, I turn my experience into a symbol and, since symbols last when impressions fade and die, I approach the world again with a whole set of imaginative preconceptions. (202-03)

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<sup>43</sup> This attentively described male body has strong resonances with Anderson’s *Preview* poem “The Drinker,” which was used as the basis for John Sutherland’s accusation of homosexuality. Again, see Edwards and Martin.

Anderson appears to understand his appropriation of others for his visual pleasure as a modernist practice that makes his life more pleasurable and keeps him from his feelings of isolation. In fact, this passage seems to suggest that the aesthetic symbols are preferable to real contact—reinforcing his notion that the superficial is easier to control and to enjoy than a sustained, mutual relationship with the “people and things” (202) he would rather indulge in privately.

Anderson’s framing of the foreign as aesthetic symbols compromised his commitment to cosmopolitan ideals. In fact, literary critic Philip Holden argues trenchantly that Anderson’s writing acts as an “exemplary failure” (483)—significant because of the larger theoretical problems with the colonial cosmopolitanism that the work seems to encapsulate. Holden argues that “despite [his] ethical commitment” (491) and “his best intentions” (492), Anderson’s writing was “ultimately conditioned by his position within inescapable colonial discourse and colonial structures of governance” (492). His emphasis on the visual and the personal stripped away the necessary social and political reality of his experiences. As Holden rightly points out, “If this technique releases him from the prisonhouse of colonial discourse, it also effectively prevents any real knowledge of others, and ultimately produces a form of solipsism” (490). For the most part, Anderson did not engage across the boundaries created by colonial discourse, but avoided deep relationships with others by withdrawing into himself and keeping his interactions somewhat superficial. Holden’s argument stands: Anderson’s failings were the failings of modernism and cosmopolitanism. And yet, in my reading of the text, there still is room for resistance from the margins and from Anderson’s construction of the text. In *Snake Wine*,

other characters and decolonial politics resist the narrator's narcissism and aestheticization, suggesting that there is more to the work of colonial cosmopolitanism than the biases imposed by its author via his narrator. Additionally, the narrator's response to this resistance, and in particular, the critical self-reflection he undertakes about his power and relative privilege as a result of resistance, suggest some of the positive work Anderson undertakes in critiquing colonial cosmopolitanism for himself.

### **Textual Resistance: An Alternative Reading of Colonial Cosmopolitanism**

Though I agree with Holden that Anderson's cosmopolitanism is not enough to save his writing from "failure," I think a careful reading of resistance within the text suggests this failure is partial and is actively contended with by Anderson himself. A careful reading of resistance within *Snake Wine* suggests a more complex engagement than the narrator's initial elitism and Orientalism. While *Snake Wine* makes use of colonial privilege and modernist primitivism as strategies for interpreting Singapore, the text also engages more fully with the broader implications of Canadian modernism as a transnational project that reinforces colonialism during a period of intense anti-colonial resistance and decolonization at mid-century. Anderson's narrator is critical of his own colonial presence, and the other characters in the text often act as anti-colonial agents who question the narrator's authority.

In Singapore, anti-colonial resistance, both violent and non-violent, forces Anderson's narrator to confront the markers of his own identity and the asymmetrical relations of power that have allowed him to freely travel and teach his cultural canon in a colonized classroom. Anderson could not simply exile himself from the aspects of culture and

society that he wished to dissociate from through aesthetic interpretation and narcissism. Instead, his work takes into account alternative perspectives that both assert and question his agency. *Snake Wine* evaluates how decolonization impacts the safety and identity of colonizing subjects.

Though *Snake Wine*'s initial journal entries assert the narrator's power, this power is resisted in several ways. Most notably, Ah-Ting's agency functions to question the absolute representational power of Anderson's narrator. In small and large actions, Ah-Ting fails to adhere to the narrator's desires and expectations. For example, Ah-Ting refers to the narrator as "sir," which frustrates him because it does not provoke the same pleasure "of the more romantic *Tuan* which the *amah* had always used" (43). As their working relationship develops, the narrator is less and less successful at asserting his will—Ah-Ting refuses to live at the house (45), is a poor pupil of English (86-87), and chooses when the house will be locked and when dinner will be served even if the narrator expressly states otherwise (88).

At the same time, the narrator's students radicalize at the university and he finds himself sympathetic to their cause; he visits student detainees from his modern poetry group, including future lawyer and activist James Puthucheary (243), and his colleagues see him as an anti-colonial sympathizer (243). These acts of resistance, along with Anderson's increasing awareness of the anti-colonial sentiment across the country and on his campus, foreshadow the major shift of the narrative structure in the last two thirds of the text. The resistance of Ah-Ting and other Singaporean suggests that, if incompletely, *Snake Wine* presents colonized individuals with agency and power to resist. In presenting

these anti-colonial agents, Anderson's text demonstrates the power of collective identities to construct and undermine systems of power.

Though Anderson's narrator frequently chooses escapism and superficiality, the political upheaval in the city requires that he engage more directly with anti-colonial sentiments and Singapore's ensuing political unrest. Far from being a place that exists to fulfill Anderson's desires, Singapore prompted Anderson to become more politically and intellectually aware of the impact colonial rule has had on all of the people involved, including colonized Singaporeans and British colonial agents. In addition to resistance by characters in the text, events also resist his narrator's control and show collective identity's power to dissemble. In these key moments, the events challenge their description and demand a more thoughtful engagement with cultural difference. During a night out drinking, Anderson's narrator is caught up in the Maria Hertogh riots.<sup>44</sup> Having provided the reader with almost no historical context for Singapore, beyond his discussion of the

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<sup>44</sup> On December 11, 1950, after only minutes of deliberation, a Singapore court ruled that a child adopted and raised by Muslim parents should be returned to her Dutch Catholic biological parents. Given that the court was part of the colonial legal system of Singapore, the Muslim parents determined that the legal system was biased against them, resulting in a riot targeted at Europeans and Christians. Over three days, eighteen people were killed, including seven Europeans and Eurasians, and 173 were injured. Two buildings were burnt to the ground and 119 vehicles were damaged. The death toll for these riots was the highest of any violent incident during Britain's rule in Singapore. See Aljunied and Lee.



Malay, Indian and Chinese cultural groups in terms of their status as possible servant types (26, 43), the narrator starts a new entry: “It’s odd to think that three days ago I came quite near to being killed” (58). As part of a violent response to anti-Muslim sentiment amongst Anglo elites, the narrator is physically threatened. After being trapped in a bar bathroom, he is pushed out the back door of an expatriate bar by its owner just as a busload of rioters arrived to hunt for Europeans. He is followed up the street, and only loses his captors due to the darkness of the alleyway and the quick thinking of his drinking companion. This encounter causes him to assess his feelings of natural superiority. He reflects, “what was most frightening about it was that it tapped hidden reservoirs of hatred toward the Europeans [...] And of course my conventionally romantic attitude toward the Malays has suffered quite a setback” (67). While this statement still implies a strong colonial bias, Anderson’s narrator acknowledges that his sense of the Malays was reductive, and reflects that his reliance on that limited view put him at direct risk of violence.

The riots are a turning point in the text; after this recounting, the narrative quickly shifts to self-contained episodes in the later sections that question or undermine the narratorial objectivity and confident articulation of colonial privilege in the first third of the text. The chatty diary entries are replaced with more carefully-organized vignettes, which suggest a need to revise and control a representation that was previously more immediate with more casual assumptions of superiority and knowledge. Though the narrator’s tone retains a sense of superiority, the shift in the text’s style seems to indicate an increasing

uncertainty with the values he espoused so freely in the initial pages. The text draws attention to its own composition, and, by extension, brings a more self-critical, self-aware element to the narrative's values and assumptions.

The narrator's character is also impacted by this change as he employs different strategies for connecting with his place; he moves to the outskirts of the jungle, seeks out the company of the locals, and begins to engage with his students more personally, encouraging their attempts at modern poetry and creative writing more generally. He retreats from participation in university society parties and attempts to disappear into what he determines to be a more "authentic" Singaporean lifestyle, explaining his desire to "plunge in deeper, not merely to observe but to become personally involved" (106). While this desire could be read as an act of self-preservation following the riots, the narrator's actions can also be read as a partial ideological realignment. The narrator's confrontation with anti-colonialism reveals the powerful agency of the Other as his colonial privileges are threatened at both a real and a symbolic level.

In addition to reflecting on the limits of his stereotypes of Malay, Indian, and Chinese identities, Anderson's narrator begins to grapple with the ways that his collective identity as a Canadian and British subject limits and stereotypes him. Later in the text, Anderson's narrator actively seeks to reject the implications of his colonial identity. Here, the narrator attempts to get closer to a more powerful connection with the people and the place of Singapore. His role as an educator and settler-colonial implicates him in the social structures he attempts to escape. While at no point in the text does Anderson's narrator completely eradicate his romanticizing, Orientalist tone, he does grow to question some of its implications. For example, he remarks:

It is very difficult in a colony to be just an individual—you are always an individual-minus, a representative of something no longer very clear or very confident, [...] while you are out on your own, and probably disclaiming your privileges as a European, you will move under the glamorous spotlight given to you by your colour. Life with your fellow white men is dull; life with the natives too mysterious and flattering to be quite secure. Nobody likes the British as a ruling class any more, except perhaps for some hero-worshipping Malays—least of all the British themselves. (156)

Here, Anderson's narrator deftly confronts the ways he must negotiate the privilege of his collective identity and his marked body as he moves through the various social spaces of Singapore. His awareness of his status as a settler-colonial and its associated privileges are shaken. He wants neither the responsibility, nor the burden of guilt, associated with his colonial privilege. These moments of critical self-reflection are as integral to the text as the narrator's superficial readings; his experiences in Singapore provoke a crisis of identity and force him to reflect on his complicity in Empire.

Furthermore, Anderson's narrator demonstrates some of the positive possibilities of colonial cosmopolitanism in his characterization of colonial servants in his chapter "Profile of a City," where he describes Singapore as beyond his grasp and encapsulates the ways in which the city is on the verge of change. He juxtaposes the interests of outsiders with the interests of the local people: "The result of friendly inquiries will be not a sense of the bewildering richness of native life, but a lack of information, coupled with considerable apathy on the part of those appealed to" (154). Instead of reading white outsiders as somehow knowing better, he suggests that many of their desires are misguided

and that their lives are not glamorous or in any way worthy of attention. He expresses the loneliness and isolation of the settler-colonial, coming to realize “we’re all Colonial servants, all insuperably white and money-making and child-breeding and ultimately irrelevant” (163). Further, he begins to rethink the concept of the cosmopolitan as inherently worldly:

People who have never lived anywhere more glamorous than Surbiton, never been abroad, certainly never embraced the cosmopolitanism of an Arnold or T.S. Eliot, suddenly find themselves regarded as *Europeans*, for this is the official recognition of anyone with white skin; your Identity Card declares it to be your “race.” Even Empire Builders prefer not to call themselves British. (158)

Here, Anderson’s narrator acknowledges that much of the privilege he associates with whiteness is undeserved. He sees his status as unnatural, and the application of particular markers of that status, like cosmopolitanism, as unearned and incorrectly applied to most colonial agents. Anderson contrasts people from Surbiton, a suburb in London, with modernist thinkers he believes have a true and rich internationalist understanding through modernism like Arnold and Eliot. Though Anderson did not define what this cosmopolitanism entails, we can glean that travel, and familiarity with a larger frame of reference than what is offered by a suburb, is a minimal definition. Added to this definition, we can infer, is a cultural reference that comes from art-making and writing; ostensibly the fact that these are distinguished writers suggests that engagement with ideas, particularly around notions of culture and modernity, are what make cosmopolitanism important to a figure like Anderson.

Likewise, the narrator represents Singapore as place that encourages isolation and alienation instead of a richer, more universal experience of belonging and affiliation: “Singapore is a city where nobody really belongs, where no culture is indigenous, no memory authoritative, no attitude other than immature” (153-54). Here, we see Anderson engaging with cosmopolitan ideals, though this term is not used. In the context of cities, a cosmopolitan city is large and diverse; in the case of Singapore, it also means the descriptors above, which he saw as isolating. This generalization brings up a central truth for his character: he sees value in connection, particularly when it comes to the security associated with hegemonic ideologies that often provide a sense of a dominant culture, narrative and attitude. However, in the cosmopolitan city of Singapore, these qualities are detrimental; his position as a settler-colonial keeps him from knowledge, experience and belonging, even though he remains in a position of power. Anderson interprets Singapore’s multicultural population and its complex political history negatively. He sees its political upheaval and cultural diversity as creating the conditions for alienation and isolation but not the conditions for a different kind of cosmopolitanism. Implicit in his view is an idea that homogeneity creates belonging, suggesting that Anderson continues to struggle with the hierarchical mindset imposed by colonialism—he cannot embrace a sense of plurality as a trait for intercultural affiliation in the same way he can understand a dominant culture controlling from above.

Though Anderson may have misunderstood the value of the cosmopolitan city, he continued to seek belonging. He moved to the jungle to be closer to nature, and lost himself in the throng of the city centre, but he still felt separate and alienated, suggesting that Singapore resisted his attempts to control it and make it his own. He states: “You

can't become a functioning member of the community, but you can imagine yourself *hiding* in its attractive foreignness, *intuitively understanding* the primitiveness or innocence or vitality of which you feel it to be the expression, and *drowning* in an atmosphere where aesthetic stimulation suggests deep significance" (*Snake Wine* 198). The flourish of italics emphasizes that Anderson's narrator is aware of the effects of his own aestheticization. He remains lost in aesthetic stimulation, not in the real place, which he determines is not fully accessible. In the end, the narrator's idealized city is no different than his idealized servant: it is a product of colonial power.

After several months in his new home in the jungle, the narrator and his housemate Gerald (a fictionalized version of Anderson's partner Orlando) are accosted by a group of Chinese men who threaten to shoot them. After this event, there is an abrupt end to the text and a lengthy epilogue written from the narrator's hospital bed. The narrator feels defeated by Singapore:

Months had passed. Gerald was gone; I had resigned from the university, not without misgivings which I knew would grow and grow as the months and years went by, but in what seemed at times no more than a fit of romantic revulsion, another gesture in a life that was becoming all gestures. (253)

The narrator realizes here that his life has become "all gestures," and that his colonial superiority cannot be maintained. Instead of escaping his status as a colonial agent, the narrator is removed from his residence by rioters, and subsequently becomes the victim of his own wit. In the epilogue we learn that he suggested a British soldier might be a Communist, and he was beaten badly. Ultimately, it is his experience with a fellow colonial, and not a native subject, that fully implicates him in Singapore's political climate. With

broken ribs and a fractured jaw, the narrator begins to realize that he cannot resist and reap the benefits of colonial power effectively.

The narrator's failure to engage with Singapore as a real, concrete, and politically unstable space is ultimately the major cause of his isolation and disappointment. In the final pages he reflects:

I knew perfectly well how much I should regret Malaya and how often my mind would return to it in imagination, to make a fresh start under more favourable circumstances and to calculate how different things would have been if I had immediately found a house, or even a room, of my own. (287)

Ultimately, Singapore remains a primitivist backdrop for his imagination and a place of alienation and despair. In his Woolfian plea for a room of his own, he indicates that the conditions of the place are hostile to him, that he cannot exert his own agency under these conditions. By failing to acknowledge the socio-political conditions of Singapore, and particularly, the growing anti-colonial sentiment in the country, Anderson's narrator adopts a modernist perspective that values a universal internationalism over particularity and acknowledgment of difference, a reflection that directly confronts modernity at mid-century.

The various representational practices Anderson adopts in *Snake Wine* serve as an important contact zone between two vastly different responses to modernity. While the narrator is looking to escape from Britain and subsequently from Canada, he realizes that his affiliations and identity markers cannot be disregarded. At the margins of this text, anti-colonial sentiment colours Anderson's narration, and ultimately leaves him unsatis-

fied with his experience of travel. However, throughout *Snake Wine*, Anderson never assesses what it means to be a settler-colonial in Canada; it is only in Singapore that he represents himself using the collective identity of colonial agent. Although Anderson does not overcome his urge toward modernist primitivism and romanticized Orientalism in *Snake Wine*, the book's structure and its rendition of the anti-colonial resistance undermine the narrator's authority and criticize his colonial privilege in significant ways.

Patrick Anderson's work highlights the complicity between colonialism and cosmopolitanism in modernist travel writing. As Holden asserts, "Anderson's predicament makes us reconsider contemporary valorizations of modernism as political practice and the limits of literary cosmopolitanism" (491). So, Anderson's cosmopolitanism should be read as a flawed political-aesthetic project that sometimes attempted to understand and make sense of difference using observation and experience to draw generalizations between diverse people across geographic and, colonial, boundaries.

### **Queering Cosmopolitanism, Queering Nation**

As I suggested earlier in this chapter, one other significant aspect of Anderson's colonial cosmopolitanism is the ways it allows him to express a queer identity. Queer expression, like Anderson's modernist romanticism, comes at the cost of superficial readings of the other and a deep focus on Anderson's own interiority and subjectivity. But, at the same time, given Anderson's own history of homophobic oppression, the ability to openly discuss homosexuality is, at times, potentially freeing and transformative.

For Anderson, travel functioned as a kind of escape from social norms and expectations, allowing him to test alternative lifestyles and attempt to live out his fantasies. In



*Snake Wine*, this is manifested in his narrator's superficial representations of politics, and his eager forays into colonial privilege via servitude. Perhaps Anderson is most reflective of his own rationale for travel when he writes about the value of travel in the introduction to *Over the Alps*, his critical work on the travel writing genre:

Travel can be a kind of second life. Freed from routine and the compromises it necessitates, having shed a good deal of responsibility and perhaps acquired rather grander spending-habits than are normal at home, the traveller assumes a less inhibited and even a hazardously free personality. (30-31)

Anderson writes for the same reason he travels: to refine and reshape his identity through the distance he places between himself and the world. Indeed, appropriation of others is the cost of being a bit more "hazardously free." Anderson achieves some stability and control over his sense of self through travelling and representing his experiences in narrative. Through the act of narration, Anderson uses literary techniques to project onto others his own wishes and fears, whether they are idealized or demonized. In order to confront the realities of modern life at mid-century, Anderson constructs his narrators in relation to, and often outside of, a world and subject position in which he is not completely at home.

By the 1950s, high modernism was codified and canonized; it was relatively entrenched as a literary genre. In *Canadian Poetry 1920-1950*, Brian Trehearne remarks that Canadian modernist writing in the 1950s underwent an "inward turn," and began to engage more strongly with "the right to individual consciousness and individual liberties" (440). He qualifies that "this inward turn was not a retreat so much as a determination to rediscover the grounds and stability of individual consciousness and belief" (440). I hope

to extend his analysis with a particular focus on the way the self is constituted in relation to the instability of colonialism in Anderson's writing. With this inward turn in mind, I read homosexuality as a way to challenge colonial identity and question its authority.

While Anderson wrote little poetry in the 1950s, his autobiographical work *Search Me* partook in this "inward turn" and began to reflect on the complex relationship between the inner self and the performed self, both in social interaction and as authorial personae. It is possible to read Anderson's careful construction of his narrator as linked to his concerns about how to perform his masculinity and his sexual identity. By engaging with the past in parallel with his move through various physical places, *Search Me* makes strong connections between travel and alternative opportunities for self-construction and projection.

Perhaps one of Anderson's main contributions to literary studies is the way he was able to queer and question the world around him. Through travel writing, Anderson was able to explore representations of homosexual identity with fewer social repercussions. The use of modernist techniques in that body of work helped him to critically engage with his own interiority to reflect on queer identity. By linking the homosexual to the foreign and to the outsider, Anderson was able to dissect difference and divergence from heteronormativity. Thus he began to engage with a different notion of cosmopolitanism: one interested in intercultural relationship that acknowledge, and even celebrate difference and heterogeneity. Hannerz suggests:

Cosmopolitanism is first of all an orientation, a willingness to engage with the Other. This entails an intellectual and esthetic openness toward divergent cultural experiences, a search for contrasts rather than uniformity. To become acquainted

with more cultures is to turn into an *aficionado*, to view them as artworks. At the same time, however, cosmopolitanism can be a matter of competence, a competence of both a generalized and a more specialized kind. (103)

In Hannerz's reading, a cosmopolitan attitude is tied to a kind of sociological (even colonial) interest in difference and a desire for comparison. This attitude brings with it an openness toward different ways of living that make space for more nuanced thinking in terms of identity, including sexual identity. As an ethics or attitude, cosmopolitanism encourages openness and flexibility that, while still betraying its ethnocentric bias, engages with, and is challenged by, that difference. As Ken Plummer suggests, "cosmopolitan sexualities set an agenda for legal and political change, as well as a utopian imaginary and a critical way of thinking" (74). Cosmopolitanism is transformative in the context of sexuality because it provides a framework for understanding queer identity positively, as a natural part of difference, which contravenes some of the homophobic ideologies that otherwise taint Canadian norms. Thinking about sexuality with a cosmopolitan attitude creates the space for radically new ways of understanding and celebrating sexuality.

Though cosmopolitan attitudes can help develop a sense of sexual acceptance, Anderson was still limited by the viewpoints of his day, and by his own past trauma. He remained preoccupied with controlling his narrative voice in *Search Me*; as the title suggests, this text focuses largely on the self, and in particular, on the various narrative layers that protect a vulnerable inner self from judgment.<sup>45</sup> In the opening pages of *Search*

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<sup>45</sup> The title also resonates with a well-known, earlier work concerned with unreliable narration and queer subjectivity, Fredrick Philip Grove's *In Search of Myself* (1946). While

*Me*, Anderson discusses the way he constructs himself for others and the role that narrative plays in validating this performance: “Was the book that I might one day write about it all no more, then, than the product of an autobiographical obsession in the course of which I attempted to convince myself that I existed by ‘going over’ my memories, [...]—a painful probing Narcissus of a book, a desperate book about existence?” (14). His invocation of Narcissus acknowledges criticism of autobiographical writing as a form of obsessive self-love in the face of social anxiety. Here Anderson suggests that *he* is his own audience, and that his primary, eagerly-sought purpose, is to seek his own reflection. Further, the pain and desperation he invokes indicates that this self-reflection is not straightforward; the agonizing process of refining his memories also signals shame and self-loathing.

*Search Me*, as the title suggests, offers a controlled access to the self through the self-determination associated with autobiography. In *How Our Lives Become Stories*, Paul John Eakin asserts that the self is a relational, socially-constructed concept. However, he argues that in the production of autobiography, the use of the first person allows the writer to feel in control because the genre itself “promotes an illusion of self-determination: *I* write my story; *I* say who I am; *I* create my self” (43). So, when Anderson refers to his own identity construction, instead of creating a stable sense of self, these moments

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Grove’s title highlights the narrator’s role in self-determination, Anderson’s title looks for this subjective determination from others. Grove emphasizes a narration of his personal journey, while Anderson implies that the reader ultimately must search within the text to make concrete determinations.

emphasize the constructed nature of the text, often causing the reader to question the reliability and fictional nature of the narrative of self being presented. Even the dust jacket reminds us to separate this text from a factual account of Anderson's life: "fact and fiction are blended to give a picture of a sensitive mind as it wrestles with the problem of its own identity." Anderson's early self-reflexivity in *Search Me* encourages a reading of the text that is less focused on determining a possible truthful, historical account of Patrick Anderson the man, and is more invested in the processes of self-representation, reinvention and reformation in relation to the people and places he encounters.

*Search Me* is about confronting and representing homosexuality, first through his description of early encounters with men and other boys, and later through his reunification with a Canadian friend who is more open with his sexuality. One example of Anderson's early explorations of homosexuality in the text is his fearful pleasure in the punishments of his Housemaster in his boarding school.<sup>46</sup> The narrator describes his Housemaster in almost mythic patriarchal terms: "Most of us felt that he had some esoteric means of guessing at our sex-lives in the course of the brief prods he gave us. [...] when you are taking down your trousers and yielding your loins to his scrutiny, the flirtatious, the masochistic, or perhaps just the emotionally naked, aspects of your sonhood are bound to be

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<sup>46</sup> Other significant gestures toward Anderson's homosexuality include the abandonment of his best friend after an accusation that Anderson is "demi-mondaine" (*Search Me* 112) during a long reflection on this friend's body in the bathroom, as well as his uncertainty about Gerald's absences (91, 93-94), and his regular bedroom visits from the half-naked schoolboy Alex (64-74).

uppermost” (44-45). The narrator expresses fear associated with the shame of exposure in this scene and implicates the reader in these feelings by using the second-person. He aligns exposure with a kind of anticipation. Though he emphasizes a father/son relationship, what resonates is the “flirtatious” connotations of the act, particularly in light of the fact that the boys “prais[ed] him” when he began to gain disfavour in the school, and that the narrator began to see the Housemaster as a part of himself (42). He states that “admiring him, we had to hate ourselves; but he was already in us, the bogey-man” (42). When we learn that the Housemaster was dismissed from the school for a “rest cure,”<sup>47</sup> a situation which draws parallels with Anderson’s own exit from his position as headmaster at Selwyn House in Montreal, we see that the fear of homosexual desire remained a part of Anderson’s self that often was reflected in the desires of others. By confronting his own destabilized sense of self, Anderson’s narrator begins a process of reflection that displaces homosexual identity onto others—both people and places—and thus allows him to examine homosexual desire at a remove.

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<sup>47</sup> According to Brian Trehearne, Anderson goes on to deal with an unclear “nervous disorder” which required a period of convalescence. Trehearne confirms that this disorder was likely Anderson’s anxiety about his own homosexuality, which he is coming to terms with at the time with the assistance of his psychotherapist (*The Montreal Forties* 17-20). Though in *Search Me* this same period is described as an early retirement prompted by a small inheritance, the detail provided by Trehearne perhaps suggests some of the ways that Anderson carefully controls the narrative and projects his own homosexuality onto others.

The narrator in *Search Me* does not come out in the text. Though he maintains a close, undefined relationship with his roommate Gerald, a man who also serves as a housemate in both the jungle in *Snake Wine* and in various boarding houses in *Search Me*, he projects explicit homosexual desire onto other men. Halfway through the text, and after a long rumination on half-naked boys engaging in gymnastics at the schools he is visiting, the narrator brings up his friend Bridge Maitland, someone he is pleased to learn is now living in Grenada, Spain. He explains that Maitland and his companion Gerald have decided to go to Spain on summer vacation to visit him. The narrator pronounces that Maitland is “my greatest Canadian friend” (141), and quite quickly and effusively describes the light his memory of Maitland casts on the boys he is currently observing:

The almost frivolous “serenity” I attributed to Bridge, his tolerance and distrust of puritanism—would be, I couldn’t help reflecting, as my memory of him grew clearer—an excellent antidote to the comical seriousness with which I regarded these boys in the Gym. For while one part of me, noticing the restless independence of their movements, imagined them to be the mad whirl of petals shaken down by some dying flower or figures broken from the frieze who sought to recover both themselves and their closed perfect circle, I felt the rest of myself jeering at the emphasis on coldness and on a kind of frozen purity that these images contained. (114)

The narrator identifies “puritanism” as one of his own vices. He requires someone more serene, more comfortable with himself, to help to reconcile his observations and desires

for the young men he watches. Through the narrator's described memory, Maitland functions in the text as a way for the narrator to reconcile desire and indirectly confront his own sexual identity.<sup>48</sup>

Sexuality is bound up in nationality and cosmopolitan identity in *Search Me*. As Peter Dickinson demonstrates in *Here is Queer*, national discourse has often limited references to queer sexuality in Canadian literature. As a result, heteronormative nationalism becomes a dominant norm through which Canadian literature is discussed and presented. In response to these norms, Dickinson queers the canon, revealing the many writers who work to resist heteronormative nationalism, in order to show that there is, in fact, a "textual *superabundance* of destabilizing and counter-normative sexuality" (4) in Canadian literature. These narratives, however, do not forward the homogenizing narrative of nation; indeed, as Dickinson also notes, "a nation's narrative does not tell the stories of all its citizens" (148). Dickinson's work demonstrates the role that discourses of homosexuality can play in queering and criticizing the nation and its dominant narratives.

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<sup>48</sup> Anderson also emphasizes the role of psychoanalysis in both texts. Anderson explains in Chapter 10, which provides background on Bridge's past with Anderson, that though Bridge "was not actively concerned with [psychoanalysis]," Anderson felt that "it was so much a part of my life in 1944 and 1945 that I have to put it down" (160). By directing our attention toward psychoanalysis, Anderson indirectly prompts us to read the text using a psychoanalytic lens.



Further, Dickinson has suggested that Canadian cosmopolitanism—the version I discuss at the beginning of this chapter and in the introduction as associated with participation in international modernism, elitism, and sophistication—has been caught up with sexual deviance ever since John Sutherland publicly outed Anderson in 1943. Certainly, cosmopolitanism was heavily associated with Anderson in Smith’s initial definitions in *The Book of Canadian Poetry* earlier that same year; so, a criticism of Anderson’s sexuality served as well as a criticism of the cosmopolitan style of writing he produced. Given Sutherland’s strong critical response to Smith’s definition of cosmopolitanism at that time, Dickinson suggests that Sutherland perceived cosmopolitanism as “symptomatic of a deviant sexual disposition” (73). Building on the groundwork provided by Dickinson, I want to suggest that one of the tools Anderson uses to resist heteronormative nationalism in *Search Me* is cosmopolitanism. As nations are sexualized in the text, cosmopolitanism functions as a stylistic lens to queer the nation. Homosexuality is displaced onto two different nationalities—Canadian and Spanish—while the narrator, who is primarily identified with England in this text—describes his sexuality as suppressed.<sup>49</sup> Though Anderson

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<sup>49</sup> In the same way that Anderson largely fails to address the anti-colonial pressures building in Singapore, he offers almost no comment on Fascist Spain. In the 1950s Spain was still under the authoritarian dictatorship of Francisco Franco, and was struggling to retain its colonies. Franco did not concede Spain’s colonial holdings in Morocco until 1956, and also was partially implicated in the Algerian War (1954-62), supporting France’s right to retain control over Algeria.

himself is an “adopted Canadian,” in *Search Me*, he primarily presents himself as an expatriate who has returned home to his country of origin, England. Anderson uses Canadianess in the second half of the novel as a marker of difference and social experimentation.<sup>50</sup>

Following Dickinson, I want to suggest that Anderson performs acts of disidentification in this later work. José Esteban Muñoz describes disidentification as “descriptive of the survival strategies the minority subject practices in order to negotiate a phobic majoritarian public sphere that continuously elides or punishes the existence of subjects who do not conform to the phantasm of normative citizenship” (4). It is a strategy for dealing with dominant structures (in this case, homophobic heteronormativity) that “works on and against dominant ideology” (11) by “transform[ing] a cultural logic from within” (11). In the context of Anderson’s work, disidentification means queering aspects of the text without self-identifying as a queer agent. It means that he works within the structures of heteronormativity to help challenge and change its homophobic assumptions.

Anderson describes Canada’s psychology as having to suppress the violence to become uninteresting but “queer,” linked to withholding its own identity and sense of cohesion. Canada’s violent nature is repressed in favour of a socially acceptable, but ultimately unappreciated control. When the narrator describes his experience in Canada in *Search Me*, it is with an emphasis on psychology:

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<sup>50</sup> Anderson also uses Greece in this way in many of his travel writings. Greece’s history and culture also offer an opportunity for Anderson to observe and comment on homosexuality.

More generally, I suppose psychiatry offered Montrealers a change from the severities and vulgarities of wartime existence; hearing no bombs, they exploded bombs inside their heads. Perhaps a country often obsessed with materialism, or the strident optimism of a nationalist writing and art, actually benefited from a cult of sickness which was also, in a way, a cult of personality. (161)

By investing Canadians with repressed violence, and then describing their need and desire for analysis, Anderson suggests that Canadians need to come to term with their own identities. The metaphor of the unexploded bomb is useful for understanding Anderson's own thoughts on psychoanalysis: the purpose of a session is to explode the suppressed feelings, and not to disarm them. The power of the repressed seems inevitable and not reconcilable. Being "sick" offers an excuse to be reflective and inward looking; suppressed sexuality, thus, can be seen as a reason for self-reflection and the need for writing.

Canada's presence in this text also combines a critical inquiry into national identity and sexual identity in the figure of Bridge Maitland. Maitland, a composite figure that retains many attributes of Anderson, is a projection that quite literally bridges Anderson's authorial persona with his displaced sexual and national identities. We can read Maitland as an agent of disidentification, of a performance that challenges the dominant structure from within. Though Spain functions as the place of the narrator's significant reconciliation, it is Canada that is most frequently rendered symbolically in the latter half of *Search Me*. Spain, like Maitland himself, is an intermediary between the past and the future. Given that Maitland's name is also a play on a small-town community in Nova Scotia

(Maitland Bridge),<sup>51</sup> it seems much more likely that we consider Maitland as an amalgamation of people and thoughts about the narrator's time in Canada meant to represent particular desires and tendencies within himself. The choice of the name "Bridge" seems obvious, as the character is able to bridge the gap between the performed identity of the narrator in the text and the actual lived experiences of Anderson as he comes to terms with his homosexuality.<sup>52</sup> He also bridges past and future, as well as the murkier spectrum of heterosexual and homosexual desire.

Maitland's sexuality is a recurrent theme in the text, and is introduced as part of the narrator's long recap of his time in Canada, sandwiched between his first recent encounter with Maitland and his summary of their early visit. As the narrator admits to

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<sup>51</sup> Patricia Whitney notes that the Andersons toured Nova Scotia and New Brunswick in the spring of 1941 (34), so it is possible that Anderson would have been familiar with this town.

<sup>52</sup> There is evidence to suggest that the fictitious Gerald and the fictitious Bridge were both based on aspects of Anderson's real-life partner Orlando Gearing. Neither Gerald nor Bridge appear in the correspondence sections of the Anderson finding aid at Library and Archives Canada. Various sources report that Anderson first meets Gearing in Singapore (like Gerald in *Snake Wine*), though other sources report that their first encounters were during Anderson's time in Canada (like Bridge Maitland). According to Patricia Whitney, Gearing came back with Anderson when he returned to take up the lecturer position at McGill (44).

Maitland's wife Kay, "I learned a lot from Bridge. I romanticize him as the chap who began to wean me away from my puritanism. Not that I think I've gotten very far" (184). Maitland acts as a kind of role model for the narrator, someone who is able to reject "puritanism," and accepts a queer identity; the narrator both identifies with and disidentifies with him, challenging a straightforward sense of affiliation. Through his friend and foil, the narrator can explore homosexual desire without being implicated. Maitland expresses to the narrator that he is secretly "terribly promiscuous" (175), and that, on receiving a sexual invitation from another man, his response was only to sleep beside him. He states, "I suppose I should have gone to bed with him properly. Maybe that's my kind of promiscuity, though—not to go through with any one thing" (177). Maitland also reflects on the narrator in this scene, remarking that he is "an enormously *ensorious* person" (174). Maitland fears the narrator's response to this admission, but he frames this fear carefully: "Poor dear Patrick, you think I'm a monster now,' he said, 'although you've written all those poems about swimming-pools and statues and heroic warriors'" (178). This gentle chide references several key homoerotic poems from Anderson's time in Montreal, including "Montreal," "Drinker," and "Y.M.C.A. Montreal" (qtd. in Druce 245). Here Maitland alludes to the narrator's own commitment to the male form, making an implicit connection between the narrator's uncertain attraction to men and his own. Maitland's honesty about his own desires, tinged with his own gentle accusation of the narrator, allows him to confront homosexual desire.

Unlike Maitland, whom the narrator treats as a direct foil for himself, Spanish people are eroticized similarly to the Malay and Chinese boys in *Snake Wine*. As in *Snake Wine*, colonial privilege provides a frame for the narrator's homoerotic gaze. The foreign

space allows the narrator to rely on a cosmopolitan attitude as a way to candidly write about sexuality. Anderson is most interested in the *gitanos*, the Spanish gypsies that occupy an artistic underclass in Spain and were at the centre of tourism in Grenada, where Maitland and Kay live. Anderson first introduces the gypsies from Kay's perspective, saying, "Kay regarded the gypsies as parasites whose picturesque ways distracted visitors from the social condition of less exuberant folk" (*Search Me* 202). Typically, the narrator does not offer his own direct response to this statement. Instead, he launches into a description of the caves he visits, and the people who live in them. When he first encounters a fifteen-year old gypsy boy, Ramón, he is enraptured. He states, "There are some faces that seem to lock your attention so completely that you feel a shock of recognition," and further suggests that Ramón may be "the expression of an ideal whose secret existence in your mind they bring vividly alive" (211). The narrator once again uses young men to find a connection with a new cultural group. In the same way *Snake Wine's* narrator hoped to rely on Ah-Ting in Singapore to provide him insight about culture and custom, *Search Me's* narrator uses Ramón to help him understand the gypsies in Grenada.

The backdrop created by the eroticized and exoticized artistic gypsies normalizes homosexual otherness. The narrator suggests that "The violence of the male gypsies' dancing was a violence of character, virile but impersonal. For one thing, it didn't pretend to be more than it was, simply a dance. For another, its very nature was to recognize the limitations of human pride" (215). Here, Anderson reads the violence of the movements positively, as linked to a kind of masculine strength and potency. As his description builds, its homoeroticism grows, and the narrator concludes that the dance signifies "the necessary defeat of sexual ecstasy" (213). By recognizing that it is "simply a dance," the

narrator diminishes the significance of the act, which perhaps is a way to justify a limited interest in the male body or perhaps, given its link to virility and aggression, in sexual acts between men.

Typically, the narrator chooses to play the voyeur to other male bodies; his cosmopolitan positioning allows him to act as a limited participant while gesturing toward his own interest in greater participation. He uses his interest in culture and his sense of worldliness to participate as a person embracing difference; he can use cosmopolitanism to embrace difference instead of affiliating directly with homosexuality. However, unlike the narrator of *Snake Wine*, who tends to objectify the locals, the narrator in *Search Me* explores some of the similarities between himself and the Spanish dancer; he intentionally presents Toto, Maitland's lover, as a foil or brother of his own. This comparison muddies a straightforward reading of the power relationship between the viewer and viewed subject; the narrator does not always rely on power differentials to reinforce a separation between himself and the Spanish others. The scene is not ethnography recorded at a distance, but instead is part of a personal narrative where the narrator implicates himself. The narrator suggests that Toto could be seen as "*mon semblable, mon frère*" (216), a reference to Baudelaire speaking to the reader and acknowledging his participation through the act of reading. Immediately before Toto violently outs Maitland, the narrator launches into a long self-reflexive passage: "I am only too aware of my own fragmented personality, with its frustrated attempts to gain character and being through drink, sex, assumptions of status and success, not to speak of those fantasies of violence which are rarely transmitted into fact" (216). What is implied in this long statement is the narrator's recognition of himself in Toto, though he does not elaborate. Here, the relation

between the two is close. He can relate to, and can even double, Toto before his link to Maitland is revealed.<sup>53</sup>

The narrator uses the travel text—and its freer sexual characters—as a way to identify himself without exposure. He demonstrates how he can relate to and understand those characters, which illustrates how cosmopolitanism makes space for sexual diversity. Anderson queers the nation through closely associating homosexuality with nation. Then, once those connections are established, he presents cosmopolitan attitudes as a way to positively engage with difference without having to come out. Cosmopolitanism provides an alternative framework than nation to embrace sexual difference. This kind of acceptance makes the space for exploring sexuality while remaining closeted. By remaining half-in and half-out of the closet, Anderson's narrator is able to explore the borders of sexual and national identity while retaining some distance from his own position.

However, as in the rest of Anderson's oeuvre, the unreliability of the narrator in *Search Me* adds a level of ambiguity and self-reflection. At the end of the text, the narrator stays at the party and witnesses Maitland pleading for renewed affection from Toto. The narrator spends the rest of the evening with Ramón, but ultimately chooses to go home and seduce Kay. Because this scene is all told as a drunken recollection, the narratorial authority is presented as intentionally unreliable. The narrator reflects that

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<sup>53</sup> The narrator also has his own brief, sexualized encounter with Toto, who accidentally walks through the place where he is having a bath. Anderson describes the siesta as a kind of reverie where he safely exposes himself in a semi-public part of the Maitland's house.



“Bridge’s ‘serenity’ was now revealed as no longer a passive suspension in every kind of experience, aesthetically considered, but a deliberate and stubborn cultivation of history’s private jokes” (221). The narrator’s tone is somewhat derogatory; its implied homophobia seems insincere. Maitland’s “serenity” seems quite similar to the narrator’s own—in a scene that is meant to provide judgmental distance from his outed friend, Anderson’s narrator undermines the contention by pointing to the unreliability of history itself. By pointing to the constructed nature of history as ironically heteronormative, Anderson draws attention to his own text’s ideological construction.

Anderson again undermines his narrator’s position as an aesthetic observer, divorced from action, continually asking us to read between the lines. Ultimately, the narrator does not embrace homosexuality; he justifies his friend’s behaviour as Toto is then described as a “nasty piece of work,” and the narrator reflects that “Bridge’s ‘acceptance’ couldn’t have gone farther than to like the way he behaved; or if not exactly to like, then to be hypnotized by it” (216). In light of the previous passage, Anderson’s narrator is sending off intentionally mixed signals to the reader. After Kay reacts negatively, but implies that this situation has happened before, the narrator chooses not to escort her home, but to stay. He tells Kay, “All this, you know, has a kind of weird fascination for me,” as he justifies both staying at the party, and refusing to police Maitland’s behaviour (218). And yet, later in the text he returns to Kay to start a relationship. Maitland’s open homosexuality pushes the narrator in the opposite direction; instead of being more honest about his desires, he chooses to limply act upon Kay, the heteronormative choice. In the conclusion of the text we see the narrator seizing control over the narrative by displacing these

urges onto another man, and achieving a kind of unsatisfactory, surprise heteronormative romantic end through an abruptly established relationship.

Cosmopolitanism, along with the freedom of travel and the conventions of travel writing, offers an inconsistent, if fascinating way for Anderson to acknowledge sexuality and look for possibilities where sexual orientation is treated with more tolerance, openness, and, eventually, celebration. Though *Snake Wine* does not achieve a utopian vision of cosmopolitan sexuality, it does demonstrate the ways in which cosmopolitanism can help to promote a more nuanced view of sex that is not heteronormative. Further, Anderson is able to queer his text, as well as to queer the national tradition that assumes heteronormativity.

## **Conclusion**

Anderson represents a Canadian modernism, and a colonial cosmopolitanism, that is rife with many of the social issues of its day (and ours): colonialism, class and racial privilege, and homophobia. And yet, through the context of travel, many of these views are challenged and destabilized, if only from the margins of the text. Though Anderson's work is conditioned by his social identity, through modernism's intense focus on the personal and the subjective, we often end up seeing these views for what they are: one set of cultural ideologies that are not static or consistent, and in fact can be questioned, criticized, and even changed.

Colonial cosmopolitanism celebrates the aesthetics of the local, challenges some social norms, and is itself challenged by other norms. Anderson's work exemplifies the warts-and-all cosmopolitanism of Canadian modernism. We should read *Snake Wine* and

*Search Me* not because we should embrace the viewpoint of their author. We should read them for the resistance we see within them, and because their emphasis on self-reflection reminds us to check our own privilege and become more aware of the relationship between objectifying others and the power relations that shape this process. In the next chapter, P.K. Page's writing continues this work of negotiating the complex intercultural and interpersonal politics of being a privileged visitor in a foreign country. I explore her complicity in the asymmetrical power relations caused by her position as a white woman with the diplomatic privileges of an ambassador's wife. Page's extensive travel journals offer a rich opportunity for us to further explore the ethics of appreciating beauty while ignoring its roots in poverty or disenfranchisement.

## Chapter Four: P.K. Page's Travel Writing: Aesthetics, Cosmopolitanism, Ethnography, and Surrealism

Unlike Anderson, who often used aesthetic language as a way of escaping or avoiding complex social encounters, P.K. Page primarily used aesthetic language to translate aspects of foreign cultures that she could not express directly. While travelling in Australia (1953-56), Brazil (1957-59), New York (1960), and Mexico (1960-64), Page explored the possibility and limitations of aesthetics as a tool for cross-cultural communication. For her, aesthetics comprised stylistic practices like surrealism, and the liberal use of rich imagery that emphasized sensation and allusion. These modernist aesthetics connected her experiences and her artistic expression to other art and artists conversant in this shared vocabulary. However, because of this emphasis on the aesthetic, other aspects of culture, including social and political context, were frequently underexamined in her work. Over time, she became increasingly aware of this fact and contended with the ethics of her artistic preference for beauty over context. With this tension and transition in mind, this chapter considers the relationship between aesthetics and cross-cultural engagement in Page's travel writing. More specifically, I trace the development of Page's aesthetically-oriented cosmopolitanism as a primary method for engaging with cultural difference.

As a modernist orientation and practice, cosmopolitanism is not a straightforwardly ethical or philosophical enterprise, but is, as Rebecca Walkowitz argues, vernacular and anthropological.<sup>54</sup> In Page's case, cosmopolitanism describes a method of engagement with multiple modes of affiliation in an anthropological tradition that construes culture as shifting, mobile, and constructed. That orientation was evident in her adoption of a style—a cosmopolitan style—that emphasized “the ability to see and think mistakenly, irreverently, trivially and momentarily over the necessity to see and think correctly or judgmentally” (Walkowitz 18). In arguing that Page engaged in aesthetic cosmopolitanism as a style, I also want to foreground the critical nature of her approach, because Page became increasingly self-critical of her preference to aestheticize at the expense of moral and social contexts and she worked to resist the role that aesthetics play in asymmetrical relations of power. This critical engagement is consistent with what Walkowitz identifies as “critical cosmopolitanism,” “an aversion to heroic tones of appropriation and progress, a suspicion of epistemological privilege, views from above or from the center that assume a consistent distinction between who is seeing and what is seen” (2). In Page's writing, critical cosmopolitanism manifests itself when she reflected upon her impression of other cultures and challenged the power dynamics implicit in those impressions. Her critical

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<sup>54</sup> Walkowitz differentiates between three cosmopolitan traditions: philosophical, which is a “tradition that promotes allegiance to a transnational or global community, emphasizing *detachment*”; anthropological, which identifies “multiple or flexible attachments to more than one nation or community”; and vernacular, which “values the risks of social deviance and the resources of consumer culture and urban mobility” (9).

approach was largely indirect, often retrospective and inward facing, as she primarily responded to her own initial impressions and then explored the limitations of those impressions. Her work is most worthy of attention when it is politically and socially engaged with the ethical ramifications of her aesthetic engagement. This chapter traces Page's development towards an aesthetically-oriented critical cosmopolitanism.

Page's travel writing corresponds with a middle period in her development, after her involvement on the editorial team of *Preview* in the late 1940s, and before her triumphant return to poetry with the publication of *Cry Ararat!* in 1967. It was during this time that Page published her Governor General's Award-winning volume *The Metal and the Flower* (1954) and left Canada with her husband Arthur Irwin for approximately ten years as part of his commitments to the diplomatic service. They were posted to Australia, Brazil, and Mexico before Irwin retired and they settled permanently in Victoria, BC. Throughout her time abroad, Page kept detailed correspondence, both published and unpublished, that explained her various roles as head of household, Canadian diplomatic spouse, artist, and tourist. These travel writings explore cultural difference, using aesthetics to engage her modernist values with the new contexts in which she found herself living. On the one hand, she wrote travel diaries that use modernist techniques to destabilize and describe her encounters with foreign cultures. On the other, she actively reflected upon the power dynamics inherent in using beauty and art as a primary way for appreciating and understanding culture. While she engaged with art to understand culture, she also confronted the limitations of art to sufficiently contextualize and politicize systemic inequalities and uneven power relations.

In this time period, Page relied on aesthetic reaction—visual and visceral responses to beauty—as a kind of metaphoric bridge to connect herself to the foreign cultures she encountered. In an unpublished fragmentary poem Page composed in 1957, she begins by crafting an image of a bridge:

A bridge across a chasm

lariat thrown

shining with deftness

from hill to hill (qtd. in Ballantyne, “Editing Silence” 1-4)<sup>55</sup>

This simple image—a delicate rope creating a connection between two peaks with a large rift in between—evokes one of the central struggles of Page’s middle period: bridging cultures. The image in the poem is active. The bridge is freshly created from the “lariat thrown” (2); its placement is tentative, perhaps even not particularly well situated, and yet it is “shining” (3) beautifully and has its own kind of strength in “deftness” (3). These lines resonate because, during the time Page lived abroad, she used aesthetic beauty and pleasure as a way of spanning the cultural divide between her country of origin and her country of adoption. At times, the connections she made were tentative and rough; often

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<sup>55</sup> This fragmentary poem was unpublished in Page’s lifetime. However, like many of Page’s poems from Brazil, it was published in scholarly articles. Here, I cite it based on the date it was first published in a special issue of *Canadian Poetry*. It can also be found in the P.K. Page fonds in Box 27 File 5 Page 1.

she returned and revised them (tightened them, restrained them) based on her new experiences. Thus, the simple rope bridge is the perfect metaphor for this stage in Page's development.

### **Ethnographic Moral Superiority: Civility and Maturity in Page's Australian Writing**

In Page's initial responses to Australia, she was less critically and ethically engaged in her writing process. Her cosmopolitan attitude was undeveloped; her observational approach marked her privilege and had strong colonial overtones. Like Anderson's travel writing from the same period, Page's Australian journals foreground civility, and show her upholding her sense of social propriety by judging other privileged white people. As noted by Suzanne Bailey, the only scholar who has written on the Australian journals, they are "dominated by incident and anecdote" ("Ethics" 57) and filled with "acerbic social commentary" (Introduction 13). Page's representations of both Australians and diplomats are peppered with examples of uninterested people, unintelligent conversation, and conservative tendencies.

Page's initial impressions seem to have been shaped by her own preconceptions of Australia. Before leaving for Australia, she expressed concern about the country's excessive bureaucracy and formality, worrying that she might become "imprisoned by its flowers & formality while Arthur explores the coral reefs" ("Australian journal" 29 November 1953). When she arrived, these concerns were echoed in her early observations of Australian tidiness and small-mindedness. She characterized Australians as envious of



Canada's comparative economic success and progress as a fellow Commonwealth country ("Australian journal" 2 August 1954), noting, "There is something odd about this experience – although it is unfamiliar it is not unexpected. There is no real surprize [sic] in any of it" ("Australian journal" 18 August 1954). Page saw Australia as directly comparable to Canada, making assumptions about what she should expect. The fact that she felt unaffected by her new location and unsurprised by that response denotes unwillingness on her part to look for opportunities to engage positively with her surroundings.

Instead, Page seemed to take pleasure from judging Australia and dismissing those she interacted with as trivial. Her 1954 poem "Social Note," written at the end of her time in Australia, best reflects this sentiment. The speaker, in a tone heavy with sarcasm, describes "ordinary people" (1) as blandly "kind" (3), as "iodized salt of the earth" (8) who "don't do anything that isn't good. It doesn't matter / what anyone says to the contrary" (10-11). The speaker implies that ordinary people have a limited perspective, suggesting they ignore criticism and are quick to assume their behaviour is without reproach. She emphasizes the ordinary as "natural" (17), suggesting the limitations of both terms. The poem actively confronts the established social norms as unproductive and self-reproducing, with a hint of xenophobia in the way that "they're sorry for anyone who isn't natural" (20). The poem draws attention to the problems of conformity and adopting an uncritical mindset. In the final stanza, the speaker drolly comments:

Ordinary people are everywhere and it's so nice  
because they can meet other ordinary people without a bother  
and from morning to night from beginning to end of their lives  
they can all be natural and lovely and kind and good to each other. (21-24)

It is clear that the speaker feels suffocated by the self-congratulatory nature of “ordinary people” (21). Their behaviour promotes internal group cohesion, but at the cost of critical engagement and openness to outsiders. In this poem, the speaker expresses frustration—both at the problems she sees in others, and, perhaps at feeling excluded or set apart. This frustration reveals a clearer sense of what Page considered proper social behavior, and, more generally established her superiority to those around her.

The sense of propriety Page established has roots in broader international discourses around cosmopolitanism as a form of civility. As Daniel Coleman has shown in *White Civility*, white, English-speaking Canadian literary discourse has employed a self-congratulatory and patronizing “allegory of maturation” (210) in which the nation, represented by white, British elite males, advocates civil behaviour, and wherein the national maturity owes something to the tolerance and civil treatment of others, particularly ethnic and racial minorities. Page, writing in the mid-1950s, suggested that she saw this allegory as natural and applicable across the British Commonwealth—and used immaturity as a major critique of Australia. Though she did not link maturation to treatment of minorities, she was quite quick to indict Australian culture as somewhat underdeveloped because of the insularity of its people. Page reflected:

The upshot of the entire trip & in fact, the growing upshot of our stay leads me to the conclusion that Australians are a cruel & adolescent people. Their whole society is planned for the hale & hearty. Like the adolescent, they are totally pre-occupied with self. (“Australian journal” 30 December 1954)

This emphasis on adolescence demonstrates her sense of ethics as grounded in the concept of civility and in the centrality of maturation as an allegory of a settler-colonies like Australia and Canada coming into their own on the world stage.

One reason for Page's negativity toward Australia may have to do with her uncertainty and frustration with her new, unearned, and unsolicited diplomatic role. As Sandra Djwa explains in her biography of Page, "Arthur's role was both political and commercial. He was expected to stay close to Prime Minister Menzies and External Affairs Minister Casey and make their views known to Canada's External Affairs" (*Journey* 37). Because Arthur had a significant diplomatic role to play, Page, in turn, was expected to follow suit. Page also acted as an international representative for Canada; she attended social functions, ran a house, and managed servants. Thus, she was simultaneously learning two cultures: Australian culture and diplomatic culture. As the wife of a diplomat, she was a central member of the diplomatic community and a physical representation of Canada abroad; at the same time, without an official title, she had no formal duties and her power was social, not political. Her national identity also became newly intertwined with her domestic identity, and her identity as wife and host dominated her position in the public sphere, subjugating her own independent identities—particularly as a writer and artist. As someone with a rich imaginative life and deep creative energy, the performance of domesticity was something Page found unsatisfying. In fact, the boredom she associated with her gendered role as a diplomat's wife likely informs her treatment of Australia.

As a result, the Australian journals are important because they demonstrate Page's commitment to recording difference and mapping the cultural landscape from her uncertain position as a diplomatic spouse. Page's Australian journals were her first attempts at

writing ethnographically, and in particular, an ethnographic account of diplomatic society. Years later, Page characterized her writings from this period thusly: “in my journalkeeping I record what is new to me but I don’t provide any mortar of my own” (qtd. in Bailey, “Ethics” 57). By the end of the Irwin’s posting to Australia, Page was able to clearly identify that her dissatisfaction had more to do with the changes to her obligations as a diplomatic spouse than they with Australian culture:

There is no question but that I really don’t like responsibility. My mind ticks away in a relaxed and happy way when I don’t have to worry about running a house. In a way the whole atmosphere of diplomatic life is alien to me. I like the comforts & the luxuries & there is no doubt my tastes become more expensive all the time, which I find alarming. Can I bring them down to size again when necessary?

(“Australian journal” 9 January 1956)

Even after three years in her position, Page still found the expectations of diplomatic life unnatural and exhausting. They took away from her quality of life and left little time for her artistic practice.

In the literary sphere, Page was also disappointed by Australian modernism, and this perception may have coloured her opinion of Australians. Once again, she assumed superiority, arguing that Australian modernists couldn’t “hold a candle to our brighter lights” (“Australian journal” 14 November 1954). In reality, Australian modernism was

well-developed, outward-looking, and had a clear audience. This sophistication is perhaps best exemplified by the tongue-in-cheek Ern Malley affair,<sup>56</sup> where writers mimicked surrealist poetry to much social acclaim, only to reveal that the work was a hoax designed to mock the pretense and self-conscious difficulty of avant-garde modernist poetry. However, the fact that the hoax poetry was well-received suggests that there was an audience for imagistic and allusive modernist poetry in Australia. In fact, Anouk Lang<sup>57</sup> argues that the authors of the Malley poems used the Eurocentricity of the hoax poems to express a critique of modernism. Thus, it would seem that Page's criticism of Australian coarseness and conservatism failed to contend with the important ways in which Australian writers were mounting public criticism of Eurocentricity and other civilizing discourses.

Page attended a number of writers' groups in Australia, including the Australian Author's Society and the W.A. Writers Fellowship, but she contended that few writers showed interest in collaboration or even conversation about the poetry scene in Canada or elsewhere in the Commonwealth. She reflects that "I was not impressed by the conversation[al] wit or ability to enjoy themselves of these people—even less impressed by their friendliness or interest regarding us or Canada" ("Australian journal" 14 November 1954). Because they were not quick to engage with her own Canadian experiences, she

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<sup>56</sup> For more, see Michael Heyward and Robert Hughes, as well as Ashcroft.

<sup>57</sup> See Lang for a more detailed comparison of Australian and Canadian modernism, including some fascinating explanations for the root causes of the different approaches and outcomes of modernism in the two countries.

perceived the literary community as very insular and conservative. She went a step further, describing the Australian writing groups flippantly as “pure CAA” (“Australian journal” 14 November 1954),<sup>58</sup> an allusion to the Canadian Authors Association, which many Canadian modernists associated with *Preview* mocked for its nationalism and conservatism. Perhaps her own biases and internalized sense of civility quelled her writing process and kept her from collaborative, enriching interactions with the Australian writing community.

As a stark counterpoint to the travel writing, much of Page’s poetry in Australia explored rich images and the value of aesthetic appreciation. It is in the juxtaposition of Page’s two modes of writing in Australia that we see the beginnings of her aesthetic cosmopolitanism. Her time in Australia provoked stark contrasts in her writing: the ethnographic travel writing was biting, but her poetry was rich and well-recognized at home in Canada. During this time, on the Canadian literary scene, Page started to be celebrated on a national scale; in 1954, she won the Governor General’s Award for *Metal and the Flower*. However, she was somewhat disconnected from this reception in Australia, where, according to Sandra Djwa, the book received only a single review (*Journey*

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<sup>58</sup> It is clear that her sentiment echoes that of her *Preview* colleague and ex-lover F.R. Scott, whose frequently-cited poem “Canadian Authors Meet” derides these gatherings: “The cakes are sweet, but sweeter is the feeling / That one is mixing with the *literati*; / It warms the old, and melts the most congealing” (37).

148).<sup>59</sup> Page's sense of isolation seemed to affect her ability to write poetry; she reflected that it stemmed from the "superficiality caused by this kind of life coupled with my own what—whimsicality?" ("Australian journal" 27 March 1956). Page wrote less poetry in Australia, but the poetry she did write dealt thoughtfully with the conflict between a subjective appreciation of beauty and an objective observation of her surroundings. The idea of whimsicality is central here. She was driven by the magnetism of the image, seeing the subjective response to beauty as a curative to the more objective poetic tradition she wrote within as part of *Preview*.

In particular, the poem "After Rain," which was written and published while Page was in Australia, demonstrates her concern with limited perception and ways of seeing. The poem foregrounds "feminine whimsy" as positive. In this poem, after celebrating many separate images of lace in a garden, the speaker realizes she has been caught up in the small images and has missed the bigger picture: her subjective experience of beauty fragments her experience to the point where she is concerned that she missed the objective whole. The speaker concludes the poem by longing for a heart that will be a "size / larger than seeing, unseduced by each bright glimpse of beauty striking like a bell, / so that the whole may toll" (42-45). Here, the speaker recognizes that images, taken individually and removed from context, do not retain the meaning they held when taken to-

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<sup>59</sup> Djwa does go on to note that Page's profile as a poet was raised in Australia as a result of the win, and that she did speak publicly and academically on Canadian poetry on a few occasions.

gether. More generally, the poem bemoans the development of an observing, image-focused mind. The speaker is critical of her own habit of privileging the visual at the cost of all else and finds herself wanting. This poem is one of Page's most important criticisms of her own practice, and it is this criticism that she would continue to develop in her writing on Brazil and Mexico.

Dean Irvine suggests that at the time Page wrote "After Rain," she oscillated between "unsynthesized dialectical pairs" ("Two Giovanni's" 25), such as interiority and exteriority, and subjectivity and objectivity. Similarly, Brian Trehearne claims in *The Montreal Forties* that Page's poetry has a "difficult relation between the part and the whole, between image and *integritas*" (95). Both critics point toward an unfulfilled desire to synthesize or integrate component parts in her work. It is this inability to synthesize or fully integrate extremes in her writing identity that reveals her ongoing difficulty in maintaining sharp extremes.

In Page's Australian travel writing, her sense of the cosmopolitan is wholly undeveloped. However, in her poetry, we see Page exploring aesthetics as she searched for a way to synthesize her external observations that were neither exclusively tied to beauty nor tied to ethical judgment. Her Australian writings were a kind of stopgap in her development; she did not yet have the means to bridge aesthetics and socio-political context.

### **Surrealist Ethnography as Cosmopolitan Style in Brazil**

There is a major shift in Page's writing that corresponds to both this aesthetic crisis in her poetry and her move to Rio de Janeiro, Brazil in 1957. Though she had three



years of experience in the diplomatic service, she found Brazil disarming and overwhelming; she experienced culture shock in far more pronounced ways. She could not apply the same standard of civility in Brazil that she applied in Australia; since this standard was tied to race and colonial privilege, it was not applicable outside of the British empire. Australia and Canada shared similar cultural assumptions, making comparison easy; not so in Brazil. Accordingly, the nature of her travel writing shifted. Marvelling at the culture shock of Brazil brought with it new insights into herself and her relations with others in her writing. They also brought a marked change in style. Page's Brazilian writings are stylistically quite different from those undertaken in Australia. While Page presented Australia from the perspective of a more distanced objective observer, she presented Brazil more subjectively, using her knowledge of surrealist practices and modernist art to represent her cultural observations of Brazil alongside a critical exploration of herself as an artist.

In this section, I consider the travel narrative Page wrote in Brazil, *Brazilian Journal*, which existed both as a published manuscript and as a series of unpublished diaries and journals. I read *Brazilian Journal* as a distinctly modernist ethnography that combines surrealism and ethnography. In exploring the intersection of these two traditions, I draw on James Clifford's "On Ethnographic Surrealism," where he analyses the tension between aesthetics and politics in "surrealist ethnography," defined as ethnographic work which draws on Surrealism (563), and "ethnographic surrealism" (540), which refers to writers and other cultural producers who engaged with ethnography through their study of cultural traditions and artifacts. He suggests ethnographers produce their own form of surrealism in their writing, teaching, and documentation of fragmented cultural artifacts.

Instead of rendering the ethnographer's observations as solely objective and without narrative framing devices, Clifford suggests that early twentieth-century ethnographers acknowledged the "continuous play of the familiar and the strange" through juxtaposition and collage, which, instead of rendering the strange familiar, simultaneously worked to "mak[e] the familiar strange" (542). So, he sees surrealist ethnography as a process where ethnographers engage with modernist principles of surrealism in their fieldwork. Reversing this process, I argue that Page drew on ethnography in her modernist response to Brazil to create her own surrealist ethnography.

In making this argument, I both acknowledge and depart from the work of Suzanne Bailey, who argues that *Brazilian Journal* can best be described as a form of "ethnographic salvage" ("Ethics" 53), which I would associate more closely with Clifford's "ethnographic surrealism" as opposed to "surrealist ethnography". Bailey describes Page's work as engaged in a modernist project of "recuperation of exotic cultures within an idealized, timeless state" (53). Ethnographic salvage means that Page foregrounds cultural objects in her writing, but often strips them of their context in time and place. James Clifford describes this kind of "ethnographic present" as "synchronic suspension [that] effectively textualizes the other, and gives the sense of a reality not in temporal flux, not in the same ambiguous, moving *historical* present that includes and situates the other, the ethnographer, and the reader" ("On Ethnographic Allegory" 218). While I certainly agree that Page used modernist ethnographic techniques to engage with Brazil, I think that Page's use of the surreal allowed her to move beyond the stagnancy of "salvage ethnography"; she engaged in a modernist interpretation of what she saw, but situated herself and her reader in relation to Brazil, and did not construct a timeless "ethnographic present"

that is a central feature of salvage ethnography. Page used her artistic knowledge (and the language of aesthetics) to bridge a cultural gap—I don't see her techniques as ultimately succumbing to the "lure of the exotic" (Bailey, "Ethics" 53), but instead see *Brazilian Journal* as a very serious attempt to use aesthetics to make a cross-cultural connection. Aesthetics don't get in the way of Page's cosmopolitanism; rather, aesthetics are at the core of her cosmopolitanism.

Page used surrealist techniques to engage in her ethnographic writing, including automatism and association. While Page had no direct association with the Surrealist movement in France, there is a clear resonance between her journals and the declarations of Surrealist leaders twenty years prior. Thus, when I describe Page's surrealism, I do so in lower case to indicate its difference from the earlier European modernist cultural movement. In *Le Manifeste du Surréalisme* (1924), André Breton defines Surrealism as "pure psychic automatism by which it is intended to express, either verbally or in writing, the actual functioning of thought" ("First Manifesto"). Further, he characterizes it as a "belief in the superior reality of certain forms heretofore neglected, in the omnipotence of dream, and in the disinterested play of thought." Breton emphasizes a consciousness driven by dream and disinterestedness. His emphasis on the power of association and juxtaposition is echoed in Page's image-driven sensibility. Focusing on her early poetry, Brian Trehearne argues that "the fundamental Surrealist desire to reconcile or fuse the imaginative and unconscious world with the conscious and rational world is also the essential Page longing" ("P.K. Page" 47). I mean to extend this argument with reference to Page's Brazilian and Mexican writing, which clearly illustrate her extended engagement

with surrealism, particularly in her attempts to reconcile the conscious with the unconscious.

Initially, Page presented the surreal as coming from without; she described herself as succumbing to her senses, arguing that she was “seduced” by Brazil, fell in love with the country, and found many of her early experiences difficult to decode with her rational mind. Less than two weeks after arriving in Brazil, Page noted in her diary, “The feeling of being underwater persists. How could I have imagined so surrealist and seductive a world? One does not *like* the heat, yet its constancy, its all-surroundingness, is as fascinating as the smell of musk” (“Brazilian diaries” 3 Feb 1957). She presented surrealism less as a practice than as a sensual encounter that overwhelmed her agency and reflected a dream-like unconscious state: “a thought is barely born before it melts, and in its place so lovely a void one could hardly have guessed emptiness so attractive” (*Brazilian Journal* 37). She described a surrealist encounter brought on by heat that encouraged the unconscious and the sensual at the cost of the conscious and rational.

So, surrealism seemed to invade Page’s observations of Brazil—the combination of intense heat, bold colours, and vivid images stylize her initial encounters and overwhelm her observations. Her sense of attachment to the country, coupled with her expressed inability to objectively articulate her experience, fed and perhaps accounted for the surrealist aspects of her journals. We can see in Page’s writing one of the central principles of Clifford’s idea of surrealist ethnography, a “continuou[s] play of the familiar and the strange” (“On Ethnographic Surrealism” 542). Even while describing something ostensibly mundane like a flower garden, Page juxtaposes images that turn life into art and art into life: “there is a wild plat from the *mato* which puts forth a white lily at the

end of twigs like an old man's thumbs; the flower is as chaste as a Rossetti woman and dies almost as you look at it. And the red banana-flower, heavy as male genitals" (*Brazilian Journal* 106). Nature is humanized, linked to art, and parceled out as incoherent human parts. The images richly evoke the human experience, but also mix it up and reorient it. As a result, the images in *Brazilian Journal* often take on a dream-like quality, with an emphasis on visual richness, coupled with clear descriptions of dislocation and fragmentation both within Page's sense of self and within her rendering of the country.

Page frequently used associations and juxtaposition to collect a central feeling of Brazilian life through descriptive lists:

[I]mmense wet heat and thousands of night insects—*bichos*—conjure up Brazil. And too, tremendous lengths of sand, blinding white in the sun; the facades of white buildings which, for all their contemporary design, look somehow like the ruins in a John Piper painting; pedlars with eagle-shaped kites under a barrage of bright balloons on the boulevard by the sea; black-eyed children in pony carts with coloured nurses in starched white; the faded patchwork of the houses in the *favelas*; women balancing parcels on their heads; crowds at the beaches in the midday heat, minus sunglasses, minus hats, beating out samba rhythms on the blistering hot radiators of their cars. (*Brazilian Journal* 43)

Brazil is imagined as a jumble of images made meaningful through juxtaposition rather than analysis. The feeling and intensity of the scenes as painterly objects takes precedence. Unlike Page's matter-of-fact recording in Australia, this surrealist style of writing generates meaning by connecting a barrage of visual stimuli.

We can see Page engaged with surrealism on other fronts as well. In her first year in Brazil, she wrote fragmentary poems that clearly evoke the surreal. In her series of fragments entitled “Natural History Museum,” she makes the familiar strange by defamiliarizing British anthropological practices. The speaker of these poems presents a series of dead, preserved creatures, including “cretinous” sloths with “loofah fur / and faces by Henry Moore,” “coral snake pretty in brine,” and marmosets who “grow stamens out of their ears” and whose “face the size of the top point of your thumb / looks at you in frustration” (Page qtd. in Ballantyne, “Editing Silence” 165, 161, 162, 163). These images again include references to visual artists, which stylize the animals and exaggerate their features. The poems also complicate orders of nature, combining fauna with flora, and confusing the human and animal. The order and implicit hierarchy of the museum is called into question by these combinations: what is human, plant, or animal? These concepts are undone through mishmash; there are no clear divisions. Further, the practices of preserving nature in this way are revealed to be thoughtless and cruel. Maybe most horrifying is the speaker’s description of birds<sup>60</sup>:

In death as light

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<sup>60</sup> This image is particularly horrifying because of Page’s fascination with birds as an amateur bird watcher. Throughout the *Brazilian Journal* and all of her life writing, she delighted in identifying and describing birds. She also kept notes on the birds she watched, which she kept alongside her fragmentary poems from the same time period for her archival fonds. See Ballantyne “Exile and Inhabitant: P.K. Page’s Brazil” for more information on Page and birds.

straw-stuffed

laid out

12,000 birds

green yellow orange red blue violet (Page qtd. in Ballantyne, “Editing Silence” 1-5)

The excess of this image—more birds than a mind can focus on—demonstrates a clear critique of reducing animals to displays. “Natural History Museum” condemns the colonial practices of the museum, and, by extension, questions the larger role of anthropology. By reading this criticism alongside *Brazilian Journal*, we can see this critique of anthropology could be extended to more traditional ethnographic accounts that attempt to objectively observe and record truths about other cultures. These poems represent another aspect of Page’s aesthetic cosmopolitanism; she uses surrealist techniques to critically engage with both her own cultural traditions and the culture of Brazil.

The surrealist quality of Page’s travel writing can also be read in conjunction with her turn to self-expression in visual arts. She took up drawing and painting in Brazil, and as Michele Rackham Hall suggests, she “began to interpret the visual stimuli of her new home primarily in painterly terms” (32). Significantly, Page was also very interested in modernist Brazilian art; so, part of the way she attempted to understand and express cultural difference was via art:

I grow to love Brazil more each day—even the wide flat corner with some rather awful houses and no vegetation but grass cover. That to me, now, is so like a Portinari painting that I greet it with a special kind of eye. In fact, I think much of my pleasure is a literary pleasure. Had I read nothing and seen no pictures, what would I see? (*Brazilian Journal* 107)

Literary and artistic pleasures create a frame of cross-cultural understanding where otherwise there might be none; thus, at its best, we can read Page's surrealist ethnography as an expression of cosmopolitanism. Page's art—including her visual art, poetry and travel writing—offer a way of expressing cosmopolitanism that celebrates cultural difference and avoids appropriation.

Page's cosmopolitanism, in part, was shaped by her adoption of techniques and styles that emphasized the subjective and immediate nature of a personal response to place. She relied on a shared set of artistic values, a kind of cross-cultural framework, in modernist art to provide a bridge she did not find in "objective" observation. Page's references to art, like her art making, express alterity that is implicitly critical and explicitly comparative. Art becomes a shared global cultural referent—it is understood on a larger, modernist scale that transcends national bounds, even when depicting the specifics of place. Modernist artists imagine on a global scale—and Page evoked this alternative form of affiliation through her dense web of allusions to modernist art.

One concept that is useful to understanding cultural engagement and bridging cultures in Page's work is ekphrasis. Cynthia Messenger suggests that Page uses ekphrasis to understand and relate to the foreign. She suggests that ekphrasis "acts as an intervention—an intercession—traveller/poet and place, the viewer and the subject of the gaze. [...] When a foreign place is turned into a painting, a double distancing occurs: the real scene is reimagined as a painting but one that has life only in terms of the poem" (103). Indeed, Page often describes the foreign in *Brazilian Journal* using painting or artists as similes; she described the city of Florianópolis as being "like a series of Dufys" (142), and a street procession as being "like a Chagall painting" (191), and a palace as being



“like a bad cubist painting” (269). Thus, in Page’s commentary on art, both in her journal and in her poetry, she takes advantage of her removal, her “double distance,” to offer aestheticized commentary on the foreign.

Over the course of the journal, Page discussed numerous modernist artists, and was a frequent visitor to Brazil’s many modern art galleries. Entries describe and review works by modernist artists including Paul Klee, Raoul Dufy, and Henri Matisse<sup>61</sup> as well as Brazilian artists Lasar Segall<sup>62</sup> and Candido Portinari. *Brazilian Journal* is informed by, and demands, a relatively extensive knowledge of modern art techniques—abstraction, biomorphism, pointillism, and expressionism. This common language of modernist art creates the base of its own global culture—tied to a vocabulary of expression, of shared ideas and artistic practices—that connect local culture to a wider network of modernist artmaking through a shared sense of aesthetic cosmopolitanism.

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<sup>61</sup> See references to Paul Klee (161, 197, 241, 248-9, 252, 255), Raoul Dufy (142, 161, 165, 196), Henri Matisse (62, 161, 197), as well as more extended references to Brazilian artists Lasar Segall (80, 122, 183) and Candido Portinari (51, 54, 61, 80, 85, 86, 107, 120, 128, 179, 193, 199). She also makes numerous single references to other modernist artists: Pablo Picasso (96), Marc Chagall (121), Jackson Pollock (122), Ben Nicholson (122), Canadian artists Jori Smith (40) and Pegi Nicol (38).

<sup>62</sup> Segall was originally Lithuanian, but moved to Brazil at 21 in 1912, and spent the majority of his working career there. He is considered one of the most prominent Brazilian modernist painters.

However, other critics suggest that Page's work depoliticized poverty by turning it into an aesthetic experience. This critique of Page is consistent with criticism of modernist aesthetics more generally, which often privilege the visual at the expense of the socio-political, creating a kind of timeless, dream-like space. Nevertheless, critics like Denise Adele Heaps overzealously criticize Page's aestheticism as an "anesthetic of art for art's sake" (358). Bailey's description of Page's work as ethnographic salvage also echoes this sentiment. One of the central features of her argument is that Page presents Brazil in an "idealized, timeless state, made accessible through the work of the artist/ethnographer" (Bailey, "Ethics" 53).<sup>63</sup> The sense of time, particularly in the published *Brazilian Journal*, is "timeless" because of the distance between the time of writing in 1957-59 and the time of publication in 1987. I would argue that what she calls a quality of "timelessness" is actually more a sense of datedness, or historical span, that comes from this thirty-year gap—during which time globalization drastically changed the face of Brazil—than it does from the style Page adopted at the time. In her initial framing of *Brazilian Journal*,

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<sup>63</sup> However, Bailey's criticism does seem to hold up in reference to Page's treatment of indigenous culture in Australia. When Page sees aboriginal art in Australia, she immediately associates it with "[her] own prehistory" (qtd. in Bailey, "Ethics" 59). I agree with Bailey that in this instance, Page's "erasure of difference between the work of indigenous artists and her own ignores the cultural and religious context for these works" ("Ethics" 59). Page's associations are more consistent with Clifford's notion of the "theme of the vanishing native, of the end of traditional society" ("On Ethnographic Allegory" 219) as associated with writing in the ethnographic present in salvage ethnography.

Page also critically situates the book as a “period piece,” and in so doing, starts by acknowledging the specificity and context of its writing, stating “in the interim, [between writing and publication] language has changed; Brazil has changed; I have changed... But for me—then—this is the way it was” (21). She was quick to place the work in historical context. The work is necessarily historical, but this history is given context and is clearly situated within its time and place.

Page created context by engaging directly with Brazilian modernism and Brazilian aesthetics; her impressions of both caused her to more critically engage with her own aesthetic practices.<sup>64</sup> She encountered many celebrated expressions of modernism that corresponded with her own method of aesthetic response before more thorough, reasoned

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<sup>64</sup> Page also adopted other Brazilian attitudes toward aesthetics. In the latter part of *Brazilian Journal* she uses the language of art to comment on Brazilian beauty standards. She began to understand the performative and artistic aspects of makeup:

Suddenly saw one of the very beautiful Brazilian girls with quite new eyes. Saw her as a work of art. From that moment on my whole point of view has changed—become Brazilian. Previously, I had thought one is born with one’s face, one’s responsibility is to keep it clean and looking as attractive as possible, but that was it and there you were, age altering it, death destroying it. But a Brazilian doesn’t think of her face like that at all. For her it is simply the paper on which she makes her poem—changing it when she finds a way of improving it. She stands, in relation to it, as an artist—creating, by whatever way she can, a work of art. And she is an artist. (163)

critical engagement. Notably, she visited and commented on many of the buildings designed by Brazil's famed modernist architect Oscar Niemeyer. Based on an early encounter with his work in São Paulo, Page commented that the buildings that made up a school were "unorthodox and pleasant to the eye until you realize they represent a ruler, a piece of chalk, and an old-fashioned rocking blotter" (*Brazilian Journal* 127-28). The symbol outweighs the function, something Page realized more directly when she stayed at one of his hotels and realized it had no cupboards: "He is evidently interested in form at the expense of people! How disaccommodating!" (128). By interacting with Niemeyer's art, she recognized the need for a balance between the visual beauty and the human context in which something is used.<sup>65</sup>

Scholars have tended to be unduly critical because Page's travel writing is not primarily informed by politics.<sup>66</sup> As Rosemary Sullivan argues, Page's "image-making process can be almost too seductive" (33). In my view, Page's representation of Brazil encourages aesthetic appreciation of Brazil's beauty, while providing a counterbalance in context and political awareness. While Page's focus in *Brazilian Journal* was not on politics, a self-awareness of her political position is evident in the journal. Hannah McGregor rightly acknowledges that "Page's role as an ambassadorial spouse and her poetic identity cannot be separated when considering her time in Brazil" (193). As Page reflected in an

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<sup>65</sup> This remark speaks to the more critical direction of her Mexican period, in which she began to question aesthetics as her primary mode of cross-cultural engagement.

<sup>66</sup> Many scholars fault her for this. See especially Heaps, McNeilly, McGregor, and Bailey.

unpublished diary entry, she did not wish to give interviews because of her “total unbelief in all the values involved [...] I am being interviewed because I’m an Ambassador’s wife. As that I cannot speak freely as a poet (“Brazilian diaries” 18 March 1957). These statements suggest the careful public persona Page adopted; she was not free to provide her own political opinions, nor was she allowed to publicly criticize Canada or Brazil in her position. Clearly, Page’s artistic and political identities were in distinct tension.

A careful reading of the Brazilian manuscript alongside the published journal further reveals how Page thoughtfully excised politically subversive material. The power of the nation, and her dual role as an artist and a diplomat’s wife, informed the artistic choices she made. Thus, the political commentary that critics considered lacking, was in fact removed. Specifically, Page altered the original text to omit “negative comments about Brazilian culture,” “overly intimate concerns about other people,” and “passages about her inner life” (Bailey, Introduction 17). These deletions protected her from libel and maintained a distinction between public and private thought. In her unpublished Brazilian material, she acknowledged that she, at times, controlled what she recorded in the journal: “I automatically expurgate in my mind” (Page, “Brazilian diaries” 23 February 1958). This formal verb choice, with its legal and censorious connotations, suggests the degree of vigilance Page used to constrain the material she recorded and published.<sup>67</sup>

Also, the source material for *Brazilian Journal*, Page’s unpublished journals and letters, had, to a large extent, been written for a particular audience—her mother, stepchildren,

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<sup>67</sup> This careful separation of her private and public roles also appears in the Mexican journals, where Page visually demarcated public and private journal entries.

and friends—that shaped the kind of material she included. Messenger notes that Page’s Canadian correspondence excluded intimate and political subjects out of a desire to “not offend or worry” her audience (111). It was her process to record something for herself, and then send out revised versions of her journals to her family at home.

Of most interest, in terms of politics, are the elisions of negative commentary.<sup>68</sup> Page elided comments like this: “I am a prisoner in an immense house over which I have not the vaguest control or authority... for which doubtful pleasure we are spending more money than we earn” (“Brazilian diaries” 19 March 1957). She made similar observations about the exclusionary nature of the “U.K.-U.S.-Canadian community” as the “same old ignorant crowd” (31 July 1957), a sentiment that partially echoed her account of Commonwealth diplomats in Australia.

While Page privileged aesthetics over political commentary in *Brazilian Journal*, there are still strong moments of incisive criticism. Page’s most critical judgments about Brazilian culture are also criticisms of Canada:

They say that Brazilians have no colour prejudice, even as they say they have found the way to solve the colour problem: intermarriage will produce a white race. When you suggest that their whole argument could indicate that they are prejudiced, you feel uncharitable, knowing that they are so much less prejudiced than we, and why

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<sup>68</sup> She also eliminated statements that emphasized her wealth and privilege. For example, she omitted her complaint that she must “treat [servants] like children and expect nothing more of them” (“Brazilian diaries” 5 July 1957).

are we wanting to find them prejudiced anyway? Does it salve us, in some way?

(*Brazilian Journal* 178)

Here, Page performs a self-reflexive gesture, comparing her own social biases to that of her hosts. Evidently, she saw some progressive tendencies in Brazilian race relations because of the commonality of intermarriage—and yet she realized that the desire to root out people of colour through intermarriage is just a different iteration of racism than what she saw in Canada.

However, given Page's dual positions as a political representative and an artist, some critics expect more trenchant and sustained political commentary. In an oft-cited passage of the published *Brazilian Journal*, she admitted to her aesthetic eye winning out over her awareness of a socially conscious political reality:

We drove today up over the hills and through the *favela*, which should make any sensitive, decent person devote his life to social reform, but I'm afraid my initial reaction was one of fierce pleasure in its beauty. Turning a corner we saw a group of vividly dressed peopled standing against a great fortress of square gasoline tins painted every conceivable colour. (105)

Page started with some joy at the colours of the scene, but then immediately felt guilt that her "initial reaction" did not recognize the gruelling realities of abject poverty. As Heaps criticizes, "one waits for commentary on this social horror" (358), but this passage does not move beyond self-awareness into any kind of explanation about how politics and power shape poverty in Brazil. Heaps takes Page to task for her failure to provide social commentary and acknowledge personal privilege. Page's description of this scene sug-

gests that there is the potential for a problematic displacement of ethics in favour of aesthetics.<sup>69</sup> However, in my mind, Page is quick to acknowledge this progression. She frames the beauty of the scene with self-criticism. As such, I am inclined to agree with Wendy Roy, who suggests that the *favela* scene becomes “part of an incisive commentary on the difficulty of combining social criticism with an artistic sensibility” (“Visual Arts” 74). Page shows and tells the paradox she was working within; by self-consciously highlighting her subjective responses—both her delight in the image and her guilt at her delight—she is critical of her own position as an artist.

Page was at her most astute during her moments of self-reflection, which often brought together the critical and the aesthetic. In these reflections, Page raised concerns about the ethics of treating a country as a personal creative muse: “I think this is me—the sensation type, concerned almost entirely with my own feelings. Isn’t ‘feel’ almost the only verb I use? I don’t think, opine, consider—I feel” (“Brazilian diaries” 27 March 1957). Page primarily engaged with the world through sensation and emotion, but she recognized the capacity of feeling to replace other critical modes of expression. When Page problematized her tendency to aestheticize, she simultaneously problematized her artistic practice. Her concern about political and ethical boundaries suggests a need to

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<sup>69</sup> Bailey’s introduction to the new edition of *Brazilian Journal* has a far more ambiguous response to the ethics of this sequence: “Is it unethical to represent a scene of poverty as beautiful, the very question Page confronts here? Does the possibility of such perception represent only the privilege of the middle class traveller, so removed from poverty that the aesthetic registers first?” (14-15).



move further away from her outward aestheticization, and perhaps turn inward for further self-reflection to gain greater self-knowledge.

Page did not just draw on modernist art as a metaphor, she used surrealism and surrealist techniques as a way to engage in critical cosmopolitanism. While Page has been criticized for not engaging in direct political commentary, her surrealist juxtapositions, to some degree, represent a distinctly political stance. Page was not interested particularly in national politics—instead she poured her creative energy into exploring the language of images as a way to bridge cultures. Page used surrealism and engagement with modernist art as tools to imagine a global identity that crossed international borders. She used aesthetics as her lariat to tether herself to her new place. Beauty and the visual helped her to overcome the initial culture shock she encountered and to engage with Brazil using the shared vocabulary of modernist art. As she continued to develop her travel writing, she became more engaged with questions of representation and the ethics of aesthetics as a primary way to engage with place.

### **“A Size Larger Than Seeing”: Self-Reflection and Spiritual Quest in Mexico**

Many of the ethnographic surrealist techniques that Page adopted in her Brazil writing continued when she moved to Mexico City in 1960. She continued to focus primarily on the visual, letting her sensations take centre stage in her writing while limiting social and political commentary. However, in her Mexican journals, Page’s writing is more directly self-critical and her focus shifts from ethnography to introspective accounting. I see this period as a time of questioning the impact of her aesthetic cosmopolitan-

ism; much of the work in this period reflects on description and its limitations. This questioning aligns with Walkowitz's definition of cosmopolitan style as a modernist style, which, among other attributes, "registers the limits of perception and the waning of a confident epistemology" (20). While Page immersed herself in her perceptions in Brazil, in Mexico she confronted perception as a problem. When Page moved to Mexico City, she devoted more time and attention to the limitations of the perspective she adopted and became more explicitly concerned with the constraints of aesthetics.<sup>70</sup> Page's time in Mexico challenged her to explore her inner life and to question whether her eye should be the primary site through which to engage with and interpret the world. As a result, her diaries include sustained reflections on the ethical, social, and political consequences of her art. Through this process, her approach to surrealism changed from a way of interpreting the other to a way of interpreting the self. Surrealism became a tool for Page's self-understanding. In this section, I argue that Page looked to spiritual and artistic communities to help her gain a deeper understanding of herself in relation to the world.

The initial entries in the Mexico journals use surrealist ethnography to aestheticize Mexico in much the same way Page aestheticized Brazil. However, while Brazil overwhelmed Page with lush, otherworldly colours and shapes, Mexico was initially represented as darkness. Her introductory line is "Black, black, black is the colour of a Mexican night" (*Mexican Journal* 23). Impression wins out over concrete images, leaving a

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<sup>70</sup> Pollock describes this material as "an unbroken, and increasingly frantic, search for the spiritual sustenance that the sensuous richness of Brazil had been unable to offer her" (Introduction 14).

void instead of a well-developed initial description. In this line, Page's invasive eye cannot capture Mexico, perhaps because she could not represent what she could not see. The contours are undeveloped, emphasizing feeling over visual stimuli. Darkness, like colour, took over Page's eye, making the tone of her journals depressing. Both Brazil and Mexico seem to subsume Page's sense of self in her journals, but where her experience of absorption in Brazil creates ecstasy and fulfillment, her experience of absorption in Mexico creates a lingering sorrow and despondency. For Page, representations of Brazil mask a void, where representations of Mexico draw attention to it.

As in Brazil, Page's surrealism at the beginning of *Mexican Journal* continued to be based in painterly images, ekphrasis, and allusion. Colour continued to be pervasive; it governed Page's impressions, keeping the focus on the visual. For example, she characterized the country as "quite totally grey" (*Mexican Journal* 29): "The ground is grey and the houses are made of the ground [...] The houses are either unfinished or falling down but the impression is that the people live in a world of rubble and it is very depressing although it has a kind of fascination" (29). The ubiquity of the greys appears to hold an aesthetic "fascination" that ties poverty to visual stimulation, but her sense of Mexico as a grey world did not stir her passion. What makes her observation surreal is the monochromatic continuity she imagined between what she saw and her interpretation of it—Mexico seemed to exist without colour in greyscale.<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>71</sup> Perhaps even more surrealist is the way she evoked the greyness as dust in her early reflection on the Mexican way of life: "my impression is that they live in dust, build from

Though Page continued to engage with surrealism, more often than not, she forwent ethnographic observation in favour of critical self-observation. As Margaret Steffler argues, “The black and grey tell us more about Page’s state of mind and lack of direction than they do about the country. She is recovering from the sensual ecstasy of Brazil with nothing to replace the loss of intensity” (10). As Page began to perform her duties as a diplomat, greyness may have reflected her dark mood: “the pressures of the moment—all the calls, all the Canadians, all the parties—leave one rather like a negative print of oneself. The darks much more prominent than the lights” (*Mexican Journal* 41). Page suggested that the impression left on her by her experience is linked to darkness, but evoked her official duties, and her fellow Canadians, as the real cause of this feeling. In describing herself as a photographic negative, she linked her own sense of personal darkness to the greys and blacks she associated with Mexico on arrival.

In Brazil, an engagement with surrealist art spurred Page to paint and offered her a way to imaginatively engage with her environment, but in Mexico surrealism spurred her to reconsider her perceptions and change herself. Page felt a new kind of sensual surrender—depression—which in turn made her both more self-critical and less engaged with her surroundings. She felt she was living through “ghastly half deaths” (*Mexican Journal* 103) that stripped her of her sensitivity and sense of perception. She even related this experience to a changing view about art in general: “Have become increasingly disturbed about the whole world of abstractions [...] they offer no ‘resistance’ and that is a

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dust and even eat dust,” which she further explains by describing tortillas as “grey, the colour of adobe” (*Mexican Journal* 32).

very emptying experience for the artist, leading one ultimately to the blank sheet of paper” (73). Page’s emptiness in Mexico suggests a kind of exhaustion with modernist art making.

Page’s time in Mexico revealed a broad sweeping depression, connoted by the colour grey, but also by a new confessional, self-reflection. Increasingly, the journal entries emphasize her emotional state: “Feel almost as if I don’t exist” (106), opens one entry. Another early entry suggests that she experienced depression as disorientation: “Once I thought I knew the route, that I could even see the promised land; I had even stepped within its gates. But an earthquake demolished it and by some fluke left me alive. I had then to start a new map, and like Meaulnes, I had almost no facts to put on it—nothing known” (114). Despite feeling lost, Page was also compelled to start fresh, to recreate the map, and engage in a new search for meaning. This journey was largely an internal journey, but it also consisted of a careful renegotiation of her aesthetics and sense of the surreal. Page was pushed to be more critical, and to see the world differently as a result of her art. She moved from representation of the other to a representation of the self; instead of being engaged by the otherness of her surroundings, she was incapacitated by the strangeness of her self.

Although poverty continued to draw Page in aesthetically, she began to question the value of appreciating the beauty before critically engaging with its social reality and larger society ramifications. In this text, she is quicker to identify her instinct to privilege beauty with what she calls the “primitive” (*Mexican Journal* 187), suggesting both the ethnographic salvage tendency Bailey points to in her reading of *Brazilian Journal* (“Eth-

ics” 53) and the more general appeal of the primitive in modernist art. Through the perspective of her husband Arthur Irwin, Page became more critical of her own preferences, and of her modernist instincts, and learned to juxtapose her point of view more sensitively:

I am compulsively drawn by the primitive. Arthur feels the primitive represents poverty and disease which he deplors and, in the deploring, cannot see its beauty. We fall on the same sides of this line with a bullfight: I say I know it is cruel, the killing is vile and the *picadors* horrible, but for all that it still has an extraordinary beauty. Arthur says it's barbaric and cruel and if there is beauty it's a beauty I don't want to see. The same re the badlands... the terrible eroded high lands here. I say what beautiful forms and colours. Arthur says it's a terrible land, neglected and unloved, it gives the people who live on it the minimum of food and a life of hardship. How can it be beautiful? Whether he has a more highly developed social sense or a less highly developed eye, I wouldn't know. (*Mexican Journal* 187)

These two perspectives reveal Page's aesthetic distance from her experience. Though she knew that what she witnessed was negative, she continued to be overpowered by the visual appeal of the colour and the performance. Arthur recognized the brutality, and sublimated the beauty; but for Page, knowing was not as important as feeling, and so she sublimated the socio-political context. By placing Arthur's account alongside her own in this scene, Page seems to draw attention to her own inadequacies and self-doubts; she recognized the need to account for the scene as Arthur saw it. As such, this scene acts as a reflection on the privilege of the surrealist ethnographer: of being able to choose what to record and frame it without context or judgment.

In *Mexican Journal*, Page presented Arthur as a kind of moral compass that pushed her toward a more careful self-reflection. He is infrequently discussed in both the published and unpublished Brazilian material, but in Mexico Page's interpretation of his perspective serves as a carefully included foil to her own. The beauty of the bullfight is a recurrent trope (*Mexican Journal* 48, 187) through which Page juxtaposed her love of the colour and the performance with Arthur's intense hatred of the brutal violence and senseless death. She admitted that "Arthur thinks I am pretty unconnected to the world I live in" (188). Thus, through Arthur, Page contended with the limitations of her perspective as an artist. This distance, or disconnect from the world she lived in, something thematized in Australia and Brazil in different ways, was fully problematized in Mexico.

Though Page was engaged in more self-critical reflection, she still grounded this reflective process in surrealism. In addition to Arthur, Page also came to depend on Surrealist painter Leonora Carrington as a spiritual and artistic guide. Carrington taught Page a number of painting techniques, including how to use tempera (*Mexican Journal* 162), a medium Page would come to favour in her own artistic practice. More importantly, she helped make sense of Page's depression and general malaise in Mexico. Carrington was part of the original Surrealist movement in France; after moving to Mexico, she was at the centre of the Surrealist movement there, incorporating indigenous Mexican culture and beliefs into her style (Aberth). She was also interested in the occult, fantasy and satire, and incorporated these into her extensive writing and painting. Notably, though, Carrington's surrealism was an expression of her schizophrenia—her creativity and her insight both came from an altered state of consciousness. She called this a way of accessing

“the fourth dimension” (Page, *Mexican Journal* 190), something that Page wanted to do, but following a path other than mental illness.

Throughout their friendship, Carrington encouraged Page to focus more on the psychological and interior aspects of surrealism—dreams, astral projection, and other altered states of consciousness. Each of these aspects helped Page to see and know herself differently. At the same time, Carrington also worked with Page to define the reasons for her artistic practice. Page reflected that Carrington “thinks writing less ‘useful’ as the ‘other’ does not enter it as it does with painting” (112). This comment raises questions about Page’s own motives—and allowed her to think through her transition to paint. Based on this reflection, Page reflected, “I paint in order to externalize something that seems to me beautiful” (112). In this way, Carrington provoked some of the values that underpin Page’s creative process. Page relied on Carrington to help her see the world differently, and, as a result, came to know herself differently.

In terms of Page’s surrealism, Carrington’s mentorship helped to account for the distinct shift in Page’s writing from projecting the surreal onto the external world, to attempting to represent the inner world, and her own negotiations with her spiritual self. Sometimes this pull was quite negative, while at other times, liberating. Page summarized Carrington’s explanation of the positive power of mental illness: “the ego dissolves or explodes or whatever and one is completely at one with the universe and that this is a kind of ecstasy which no sanity can approximate” (71). Page was compelled by the positive power and certainty that comes with this kind of connection to the universe; she was intrigued by the possibility of transcendence and sought to recreate the effects Carrington



describes through mental exercise. It allowed her to acknowledge that “it was as if I existed in two-dimensionality whereas [Leonora] had additional dimensions” (142). The allure of the unconscious is the power of transcendence and increased interconnection—Page wanted to tap into this space to achieve some semblance of this dimensionality.

Page also approached the study of spiritual practices in a cosmopolitan way. The second half of *Mexican Journal* focuses on Page’s study of spiritual practices from around the world. In addition to her existing mentors, she sought out spiritual guidance from several branches of psychology and a number of world religions. Carrington introduced her to several prominent thinkers, in particular G.I. Gurdjieff, and new spiritual practices in the form of the Subud. Both of these influences encouraged Page to “work on one’s self” (Djwa, *Journey* 183). She began a detailed process of “self-remembering and self-observation,” which she described as “the analysis of what function is operating and how” with the goal of “consciousness over mechanicalness—good over evil” (Page, *Mexican Journal* 197). Page recognized how a lack of interest and distance encourage an unhelpful “mechanicalness” and she actively worked toward a self-awareness attuned toward self-improvement and more conscious thought.

This inward turn, driven by external perspectives on how to engage spiritually with the world, is its own kind of cosmopolitanism: Page submitted herself to the knowledge of others and became a pupil seeking knowledge instead of imparting it. She realized that she was “the filter that prevents the understanding entering me” (200) and connected this recognition directly to the visual, and the way she used the eye to interpret the world:

Rods and cones. I can see 'god' if I look with the rods. It's a night-seeing. Seeing in the dark involves the rods—a kind of indirect sight. If I look directly I see nothing.

If the light ever comes perhaps I'll be able to use my cones. (200)

Page recognized that there are two layers to her perception that were linked to the two parts of the eye—one, which she understood to be linked to the spiritual, and one hyper-focused on the image.<sup>72</sup> Page's second sight, from the rods, entailed increased sensitivity and a movement beyond the detailed image itself. The cones, which were the central focus of Page's image-hungry sense, restricted her seeing. It was only upon careful contemplation that Page realized that her previous attention to the image had resulted in a larger blindness.

The turn inward to connect with the outer world necessitated a major shift in Page's perspective. In her introduction to *Mexican Journal*, Margaret Steffler describes this shift as a change in Page's subject position as a life writer. She argues that Page "relinquishes her position as confident and articulate observer and recorder, exchanging clarity for vagueness and certitude for doubt in risky attempts to penetrate rather than simply appreciate the colour and light that have attracted her" (12). The ramifications of this power shift are central to understanding Page's movement away from aestheticism. Page

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<sup>72</sup> David Hickey foregrounds Page's nuanced understanding of the eye: "the anatomy of the eye also provides the opportunity to create two distinct categories of perception: those direct observations that make use of the eye's cones—that is, those photoreceptors that provide the bulk of sensory information to the brain—and those sidelong glances that employ its rods, which are sensitive to faint light" (108).

no longer wanted to simply be delighted by the image, but instead she wanted to more clearly understand the relationship that existed between her and the world outside herself.

Surrealist techniques continued to inform this process. Page also engaged in thought experiments alongside spiritual practices to help encourage her toward this new way of seeing. Specifically, she dabbled in astral projection (*Mexican Journal* 237) and turned to Subud, an Indonesian form of spiritual practice. She developed this new sense of herself in relation to others by engaging in the Subud practice of *latihan*, where through a series of exercises one connects with God.<sup>73</sup> She described it generally: “Was ‘opened’ this morning. No panic. Rather peaceful. Left me wordless—still feel it’s easier not to talk and infinitely relaxed with a curious sensation between my shoulder blades. No singing or clapping nor weeping such as went on about one” (206). What seems significant here is the remove she has from her words—she is compelled to silence. Instead of trying to interpret and engage through language, the *latihan* encourages reflection through other means. This quieting of her mind, of focusing inward instead of outwardly

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<sup>73</sup> *Latihan* is described by Subud practitioners as spiritual training to lead toward an inner awakening. Subud Britain describes it as a “process of spontaneous inner receiving it is different for everyone, and often changes with each *latihan*. In letting go and allowing the subtle energy within to move through us, we are better able to follow our inner guidance, which varies from physical movements and sounds, to inner sensations and understanding. It is possible, in this state of quiet acceptance, to feel a deeper connection with the whole.” The movement began in the 1920s, and was founded by Muhammad Subuh Sumohadiwidjojo. See also World Subud Association.

engaging in speech, marked a major change. Instead of trying to represent or express what she felt with her sense, she engaged with it internally.

Though Page seemed to superficially grasp the nature of the *latihan*, she was discouraged by her need to be active in a passive spiritual act. After several months of practice, she met with the leader of the Subud movement, Muhammad Subuh Sumohadiwdjojo, known as Bapak. Following a personal *latihan* in which Bapak criticized Page's mind as "too active" (*Mexican Journal* 223), she rejected the practice, though she remained invested in trying to access her unconscious self.

Throughout the journal, she engaged in other forms of psychological interpretation to assist with her spiritual journey. Dream interpretation was one of Page's more successful methods of accessing the unconscious. Though there are only fleeting references to dreams in much of the travel writing, Page maintained separate "Nite-Books" where she recounted and interpreted her dreams. As Sandra Djwa notes in her biography of Page, dreams are regularly reflected in Page's fiction, and signal "a change in her consciousness" (*Journey* 195). Late in *Mexican Journal*, Page recounted a birth dream: "Dreamed last night that I—as I am today—was in a passage that was very crowded and narrow [...] And then, in the dream, it occurred to me that I was being born" (228). For Page, this dream marked a significant change in her sense of identity. She saw herself as an adult being reborn, marking a new or growing sense of self-awareness thanks to her extensive study and spiritual practice.

Interestingly, Page's spiritual quest resulted in a different form of silence. Page rejected her journals as an appropriate place to document this quest, perhaps to demonstrate that language was a barrier to her spiritual growth. Significantly, *Mexican Journal*

to some degree trails off without clear resolution of Page's spiritual quest. Though Page discovered Sufism, a spiritual practice that became "her central preoccupation of her last months in Mexico" and an ongoing influence throughout the rest of her life (Steffler 18), this discovery prompted a silence in the journal. Page discussed poetic silence as being central to her time in Brazil (though she still wrote poetry) and stopped discussing spirituality at the end her time in Mexico, when she finally found some spiritual solace. In order to facilitate this silence, Page took the division of her writing one step further and chose to keep her notes on Idries Shah and Sufism separate. These notes, unlike the majority of her papers (which she deposited in Library and Archives Canada in the late 1980s and early 1990s), were not added to her archival fonds until just before her death. Bailey and Steffler interpret this omission as a part of Page's narrative building: "The excitement derived from the discovery of Sufism in her final months in Mexico does not accurately reflect the dark emotions she associates with her sojourn in that country and thus is not part of the story" (97). While I think this reading would make sense if Page had published *Mexican Journal* in her lifetime, it does not account for her careful omission of this material at the time.

I believe that this omission speaks to her growing desire to explore without words, and to preserve a part of herself separately from her writerly persona. The conclusion of her personal, spiritual journey is a gap for self-preservation and personal reflection that is not part of the sense of self she wishes to share with the world. As she made clear, many of her notes and journals were shared, and so even distinguishing public from private materials may have not adequately protected the sanctity of her spiritual quest. Given that this quest regularly caused her to confront language as its own limitation, it makes sense

that this central aspect of Page's identity remained unwritten or written separately from her other reflections.

As Bailey and Steffler note, "the most startling gap in the manuscript of the Mexican journal is Page's silence about the increasing amount of time devoted to the study of Sufi material" (97). Though the Sufi material appeared to be a turning point in Page's spiritual practice, she no longer felt the desire to record or articulate herself in relation to these discoveries. We can read Page's inward turn as an active response to surrealist ethnography, and in particular with the ethical consequences of appreciating beauty and creating art without critical reflection on herself as the creator of art representing the other.

### **Revisions and Emplotment in Page's Life Narratives to Achieve a Cosmopolitan Vision**

In the years after Page returned to Canada, her commitment to refining her cosmopolitan vision continued. She continued to engage with the places that she visited, and, through that engagement, achieved a more critical outlook. In this final section of the chapter, I examine some of the ways that Page continued to push herself toward ethical cosmopolitan engagement through her later poetry, travel reflections, and revision processes. It is through these narratives, which were very much tied to Page's construction of her own self-identity as an artist, that she completed her study on aesthetics as a cultural bridge.

Perhaps Page's largest hurdle during her time abroad was the disconnect between her public and private sense of global relations. As the wife of a Canadian ambassador, Page had to publicly represent the nation state. A diplomat's main function is to represent

the interests of their country of origin in their new environment; by extension, the spouse of a diplomat must also uphold national values and serve their state, but without the same political power and agency. The spousal role extended the official role of diplomat into the private sphere—Page and women like her organized domestic tasks that reinforced the position of their spouses—management of the household, organization of parties and dinners, and upkeep of official residences. They reflected the public nation in the private home. As a result, in her correspondence and other records during her diplomatic service, she self-consciously acknowledged her role as a representative of Canada and expressed concern about her own limitations and failings; her public persona may have upheld nationalism as a central tenet of international relations, but her private writings revealed her strained ability to perform this role.

In *Mexican Journal*, as in her Brazilian manuscripts, there is a clear distinction made between the public-facing Page and her private life.<sup>74</sup> Page's Mexican writing revealed the very formal separation she established between her diplomatic public life and her private spiritual life. As Page continued to pursue her spiritual life, something that she saw as intensely private, she wanted to ensure that her public role did not overlap. She revealed, shortly after having had her picture taken as part of a group with Bapak, the visit-

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<sup>74</sup> The publication of Sandra Djwa's literary biography of Page, *Journey with No Maps*, in 2012, and the removal of many restrictions on her archival materials (including the material in Steffler's edition of *Mexican Journal*), emphasize some of the starker contrasts between the public and private Page.

ing Subud practitioner, “Certainly there are few things I can think of that are more distressing to me (superficially) than being part of a mob in this kind of context (shades of Oxford Group no doubt) and identified: the Canadian Ambassadors” (*Mexican Journal* 226). At least superficially, she was concerned with being identified as part of a spiritual minority. Her reference to the Oxford Group, a popular Christian organization and movement known for “moral re-armament,” self-assessment, admitting wrongdoings, and making amends, perhaps alludes to its connection with Carl Jung.<sup>75</sup> Page made clear that she was not concerned about being identified as herself in this photo, but instead being identified by her public role. Like the psychologist who was called out for supporting reform Christianity, Page did not want to be a diplomatic spouse affiliated with an unorthodox spiritual practice. Page recognized her role as a public figure and national representative. She acknowledged that she was responsible for maintaining a public presence and could not risk public backlash because of her private inclinations.

In the second volume of Page’s journals (beginning in September 1962), the divide between personal and political was represented physically. She used paper with the Canadian Embassy crest to denote her personal writing, and her plain paper recordings were her official, diplomatic accounts. She carefully divided her work, and yet she troubled her own distinctions by labeling the divisions unusually. Bailey and Steffler call this “a kind of perverse trickery, [where] the public mark indicates the private narrative” (96).

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<sup>75</sup> Jung suggested to one of his patients that he seek out spiritual guidance. Since that time, Jung has been associated with the movement, though he was not a member and did not advocate those specific philosophies (Jung 8121).



Though this choice may seem perverse, perhaps it speaks to some of Page's internal conflict about maintaining these distinctions. Her private narrative was made private, perhaps, because of her public role. Once her husband took up his official title, she in a sense became a public extension of his private life. In the same way that she was-and-was-not a formal representative of state as the diplomat's wife, her private self and her private writings both were-and-were-not an extension of the diplomatic title. Further, the reversal of public and private may be a form of irony. The private was formally sanctified by the official nature of the stationary, but that paper was itself a marker of her public identity. She recognized the interpenetration of the two identities, even when she attempted to rigidly separate them. By creating some critical distance to reflect upon her two roles, she may have determined that the formal, official work she needed to do was the private and aesthetic work of her spiritual journey.

In addition to the formal difference between her public and private writing, there were also differences evoked by Page's style, tone and degrees of specification. As Steffler suggests in her introduction to *Mexican Journal*, there are two contrasting styles in the text:

a detached style in which she critically and humorously observes and evaluates herself as the ambassador's wife interacting with those around her... contrasts with the deeply engaged style used to convey the passionate relationships that flourish in her non-diplomatic roles and life, which she definitely describes from the inside out.

(11)

The two 'voices' of the text mirror the separation Page increasingly enforced between public and private. The diplomatic entries are short, informal and impersonal; almost like

point-form recounting. For example, Page reflects, “Had a dinner party this week that seemed to go alright. Had to have it catered which increases the cost terribly. But at least some of the burden of our social guilt is shed” (*Mexican Journal* 72). There are no details about who attended, what was eaten, or the cause of “social guilt.” The tone and style suggest that the event was an obligation. In contrast, the following entry goes into great detail about a painting technique she tried with Leonora: “I am working on a gesso base—layers and layers of it sanded and polished until it feels like human flesh. I must say there is a kind of sensuous pleasure in it” (72). Though these paragraphs are written days apart, they are remarkably different forms of accounting.

Page presented the gendered labour of diplomacy as a difficult burden with few rewards, and many personal tolls. Page found the process dehumanizing for her, and for the women she visited on her mandatory social calls: “large house after large house, each apparently housing one isolated woman. And how alike we are for all our different nationalities” (45). The isolation of the formal position of diplomat’s wife seemed to be the main affiliation the women shared. Isolation seems to strip away difference, but through reduction. Lack of agency, a sense of isolation and a sense of confinement within their roles connected the diplomatic wives of Mexico. At other times, Page was candid but brief about how her public position affected her. She reflected on 3 July 1961, “July 1<sup>st</sup> is over and it didn’t rain. However it managed to make me almost suicidally depressed, what with one thing or another” (130). Though she included only these two short lines, the emotional impact of this statement is intense. Her gendered public role as the spouse of a state representative oppressed Page, limiting her personal freedoms because of the immense burden of performing nation.

Though the costs of performing the nation were high, Page's representation of Canada as a diplomat's wife tended to be publicly lauded. While Page indirectly acknowledged the difficulty with which she approached her duties, the journal does not indicate that others saw her as inadequate. There are few moments of exhilaration related to Page's public duties in Mexico, with perhaps the exception being the visit of Canadian Prime Minister Diefenbaker and his wife only a month after arriving. In the entry recounting the event, there is a brief glimpse of how Page was perceived by others. She was told that the party they threw was "the most elegant party of the season and praise and compliments of all kinds [were] showered upon us" (*Mexican Journal* 39). While Page may not have delighted in her role, she certainly appeared to perform it well.

In order to continue to perform a stable, positive representation of Canada as a diplomat, Page policed her own statements and behaviour. There is even at least one case where Page pasted a crest onto plain paper in her journal (Bailey and Steffler 96), further indicating the intentionality with which she controlled the narratives and maintained their separateness in her writing. The choice to revise a public text into a private one, indicated by the addition of the crest, suggests an increasing wariness related to the public reception of Page's personal reflections.

After Page returned to Canada, she began to shape a retroactive account of her time abroad that more closely attended to the ethical and political aspects of representation. Two of her best-known poems about Brazil, "Brazilian Fazenda" and "Macumba: Brazil," were published following her return and critically responded to her experiences there. Both poems deal with significant aspects of Brazilian culture, and both revise ma-

terial that was originally presented in the Brazilian diaries. “Brazilian Fazenda,” first published in 1966, combines experiences from two separate visits Page had to plantation farmland. Fazendas traditionally ran on slave labour, and the first of Page’s recorded visits happened on May 13, 1957, the same day slavery was abolished in Brazil in 1888. The poem is framed with the seriousness of this coincidence “that day all the slaves were freed” (1), which adds a gravitas to the poem. However, the reflection in the final stanza, shows the distance the speaker feels from the freedom or whimsy of past experience. She reflects:

Oh, let me come back on a day  
When nothing extraordinary happens  
So I can stare  
At the sugar-white pillars  
And black lace grills  
Of this pink house. (19-24)

Though this poem combines two separate experiences from the journals, Page chose to confront the political significance of visiting on the anniversary of the abolition of slavery. Here, we see a criticism of the innocence of the speaker. Pollock describes one of the central differences in these two accounts as the addition of “childlike details that are missing in the diaries” that seem to indicate innocence, like “merry as Christmas” and the

animal sound “moo.”<sup>76</sup> Though the speaker may want to focus on the beauty of the scene, and winsomely reflects on lost innocence, it is clear through the structure of the poem that ethics win out over aesthetics.

In “Macumba: Brazil,” published in 1976, we can trace the evolution of Page’s critical responses to witnessing a Macumba New Year ceremony over two diary entries and ten drafts of the poem. The final poem, written clearly as a kind of ethnographic field note observation without direct engagement by the speaker, builds up its description in each line, through the repeated phrase “they are”:

they are cleaning the chandeliers  
they are waxing the marble floors  
they are rubbing the golden faucets  
they are burnishing brazen doors  
they are polishing forks in the *copa*  
they are praising the silver trays (1-6)

The speaker observes and notes the activities of the group. In the initial stanza, “they” are associated with domestic labour, including cleaning, waxing, and polishing, positioning the actors in the ceremony as part of the servant class. By mid-poem, the descriptions switch from daily servant tasks to Macumba ritual, “they are buying herbs at the market / they are stealing a white rooster” (11-12), and “their” race is implied in the lines, “they

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<sup>76</sup> Forthcoming in *Digital Page*. With thanks to Zailig Pollock for advanced access to the poem’s revision sequence and editorial notes via email correspondence 6 August, 24 August and 23 November 2017.

are dressed in white for macumba / their eyes are like black coals” (13-14). The speaker is engaged with social commentary on the scene, suggesting a more ethical practice than simply passing judgment; however, the distance of the speaker implies an objectivity that continues to assert privileged distance.

Pollock notes a number of additional features in “Macumba: Brazil” that demonstrate Page’s movement toward personally and critically engaging with the significance of the ceremony. For example, in the Brazilian diaries, Page initially commented “as long as we were sky high, and looking down like God, the ceremony was beautiful” (qtd. in Pollock, *Digital Page*). This line implies the need for separation—the need to observe without context, with Page wanting only to enjoy the aesthetics of the scene. In the unpublished Brazilian diaries, particularly after moving to see the scene up close, much of her initial responses were negative. Though this negative response was not replicated in the poem, in the first draft, it is present as pitying condescension. She ends the poem, “they are poor and abused / but they walk proudly in the sun” (Pollock, *Digital Page*). The published version omits this line. By the time Page produced the final, published poem, she had significantly reconsidered the ethics of her initial encounter with Macumba, and presented it in a more ethical, though not entirely free of judgment, format. I see “Macumba: Brazil” as a continued, but incomplete study in the ethics of observation and the need for further self-reflection on the role and position of the artist.

A reflective line from the short poem “Storm in Mexico” also suggests Page’s desire to engage in further revision and become more politically engaged with the environment around her. The speaker describes her experience of a storm while in an old car surrounded by donkeys, badlands and indigenous herders. The final line of the poem is “Our

hearts uneducated” (10). This line, disconnected from the descriptive style of the rest of the poem, concludes on a critical note. We can see the speaker relying first on creating the scene, and then reflecting on the need for more education. This line pushes the poem toward deeper engagement with the political and social context of her environment and the need to move beyond the visual nature of the scene. In this way, Page’s retrospective poetry about her travels seem engaged in a similar critical revision process to that of her prose writing.

At the same time that Page represented and revised her experiences in poetic form, she also began to critically reflect on her identity as a writer; this critical engagement responded to some of the soul searching of *Mexican Journal*. Building on the distinctions she established in those journals, she started to narrativize her past in short essays focusing on her chosen public identities: writer, traveller, and artist. Each of these autobiographical texts emplot and revise her previous life writing in order to encourage particular narratives. Prior to publishing *Brazilian Journal*, Page published two short texts on her identity as a traveller and a writer, “Traveller, Conjuror, Journeyman” (1970) and “Questions and Images” (1969), both of which address the places she lived as central to her creative process. Tellingly, Page wrote that when editor George Woodcock asked for autobiographical writing, she explained that she “couldn’t do what he asked, but contributed these two pieces” (Pollock, Editor’s Introduction iii). Indeed as Pollock notes in his introduction to *The Filled Pen*, a selection containing both works, “these two pieces *are* autobiographies. But they are autobiographies of the imagination, the only kind of autobiography that Page is interested in writing” (xiii). Page’s revisions to her life writing, and the life narratives she produced upon returning to Canada, speak to the lessons she

learned from recording and sharing her experiences as a diplomat's wife. As she selected narratives for public consumption, she restricted the personal, particularly the emotional and spiritual, and focused on her creative process and her tourism instead of the political context of her travel writing.

In "Questions and Images," Page established the aesthetics of Brazil and Mexico that are solidified in her later published texts. In that essay, Brazil is associated with emotional intensity and rapid-fire image accumulation, as a country which "pelted [her] with [the] images" in the title (34). To establish this emotional intensity and sensory overload, she positions her readers to receive a similar sensory experience through four paragraphs of immediate, aesthetic description:

Drums from the *favelas* beat like one's own blood, accompanied by the deep bass viol of frogs in the lotus pond; volleys of rockets shattered the black night air, air wet as a sheet and rank with the smell of decaying jackos. Insistent, less obtrusive, the tiny fret of tropical vegetation, the sibilance of bamboos. (34)

Such descriptions incorporate and intermix the senses: the musicality of the environment with the visual resplendence of the lotus pond, the pungent odours with the overpowering humidity on the skin. The images at the core of this representation are multi-sensory and encourage a similar stimulation and emotional investment to Page's own description of sensory overload. The surrealist aesthetics are well-established in this narrative.

In "Questions and Images," both countries, usually presented in their generality as nations and not their particularity as individual places, are treated as stages in Page's



*Künstlerroman*.<sup>77</sup> Their complexities, and, particularly their peoples, are often entirely absent. Page associated the countries with her own subjectivity, and thus, the “Questions and Images” essay also establishes some of the critical problems of her style: depoliticization, decontextualization, and a lack of agency for others. As Hannah McGregor suggests, “Brazil [is treated] as an episode in Page’s aesthetic development [...] to elide Page’s position as an ambassador’s wife, contributing [to its] fetishization and related depoliticization” (186). She suggests that Page favours “timelessness” and presents the places where she lived as “largely unpeopled, ahistorical and apolitical” (188), creating a significant “representational hegemony” (188). The journey becomes one of artistic development in part by taking the other people and their agency out of the narrative. These places become images primarily through careful selection of sensory experiences that ignore the people that create, live and work in those places.

Page’s decision to strip away the political and historical elements of “Questions and Images” was self-protective and helped her to avoid her association with the political role in the places she lived. However, this process also demanded a response in the form of critical questions. She controlled the narrative of her diplomacy in the frame of her art,

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<sup>77</sup> In “Questions and Images” Mexico seems to exist in a primitive state, untouched by modernity: “the villages seem unchanged since the beginning of time” (38). Here Page’s references to timelessness verge on salvage ethnography. Indeed, she positions herself as an explorer who discovered something lost to time. The “timelessness” of Mexico is consistent with her own narrative of the place as a “night world” (38) linked to dream and thus outside of the regular patterns of time.

focusing on the immediate stimulation of Brazil and Mexico. However, she also demonstrates how she defined herself in process, seeing the roles she took on as a series of labels and masks. Describing her first visual art show, she reflected that she “had acquired another mask, another label” (“Questions” 39), indirectly acknowledging her public persona as a performance. Immediately following this revelation, she adds another dimension to this acknowledgement, asking, “which is the mask and which is the self? How distinguish, let alone separate, two such seemingly interpenetrating matters” (39).

Though Page distanced herself from the roles she took on and the identities she performed, she suggests that these concepts are not easily divided. She questions the nature of subjectivity and the relations between one’s sense of private self and one’s public performance of that self. Indirectly, then, this piece acknowledges the distinction between self and other that seems missing from this essay in her treatment of Brazil and Mexico as extensions of herself. Though she appeared to dehistoricize and flatten them, these questions suggest that she did so, perhaps, to draw attention to the process (her art) that allowed this process to take place.

Her decision to focus on art, and to present her autobiography in artistic terms shows her choosing critical self-reflection over ethics and politics. The journeys she discussed are primarily inward, associated with her own sense of life narrative. She con-

flated Brazil with her poetic silence, pondering, “I wonder if “brazil” would have happened wherever I was” (37).<sup>78</sup> This framing of the country as an event she experienced demonstrates a central aspect of her worldview: she wanted to show places as she interpreted them, and not separate from those interpretations. So, while she celebrated the places she has travelled with her artist’s eye, she left them devoid of context in these pieces; they seem to not exist outside of her interpretation. And, yet, by drawing attention to this labeling, this reduction of Brazil to “brazil,” her poetic silence and rebirth as a visual artist, she demonstrates the nature of the limit is intentional; she wanted to privilege the subjectivity, while showing that this framing was what she is doing.

The second essay, “Traveller, Conjuror, Journeyman,” foregrounds revision and return in shaping Page’s public persona. Again, this text is about the complexities of subjectivity in relation to art. It is a philosophic reflection about Page’s creative process in poetry and painting, emphasizing her craft as a series of returns and repetitions, “remembering, re-membering, re-capturing, re-calling, re-collecting” (41). This essay thematically presents Page’s creative muse as coming from exotic stimulus (travel), spontaneous magic (conjuring) and revision (the craft of the journeyman). In her adoption of each of these titles, Page responds to the way these experiences intermingle in shaping her subjectivity. Unsurprisingly, these concepts, and their emphasis on a return, are closely tied with revision. She saw her art as a response to her longing to have “the senses themselves

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<sup>78</sup> This same sentiment returns a decade later in *Hand Luggage*, where she stated, “I wonder today, looking back, if ‘Brazil’ / was destined to happen wherever I’d been” (60). The country’s meaning for her was still tied to her creative development.

merge into one supra-sense” (45). Through bringing together her senses, Page engaged in an act of spiritual progression, seeing mental progress as akin to the physical journeys she had taken.

Interestingly, as with Page’s life narrative, travel is framed as both a physical and mental activity in “Traveller, Conjuror, Journeyman.” Sandra Djwa notes that this essay also points to the influence of Sufism on Page, suggesting that “the act of creating leads to transportation” (*Journey* 230), which Page summarized at the end of the article as “alternate roads to silence” (“Traveller, Conjuror, Journeyman” 47). Page used art and expression as a way to access alternate parts of herself, and, through this opening, to experience a sense of subjective growth. It is unsurprising, then, given her clearer sense of the rationale behind her creative process, that she chose to impose the *Künstlerroman* pattern on her previous life experiences. By seeing Brazil and Mexico as a part of her spiritual progression through art, she could more clearly reconcile and understand her past.

By the time she chose to return to the Brazilian diaries for publication, she retroactively imposed a narrative that suited what she saw as distinct stages in her spiritual journey. To shed a bit more light on how this narrative is imposed, it is useful to compare the published *Brazilian Journal* to its manuscript form.<sup>79</sup> A close comparison of the two

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<sup>79</sup> Christopher Doody has prepared a side-by-side comparison of the two texts available to scholars on request that will eventually be included in the *Digital Page* initiative. For more extended commentary on the differences between the two journals, see Bailey’s introduction to *Brazilian Journal*.

versions of the published and unpublished Brazilian writings reveal the strategic additions Page made. The surrealism of the text remains unaltered; Page did not add more imagery to enhance the surrealist aspects of the text. However, she did make additions to emplot the narrative of *Künstlerroman* or artistic development that were somewhat latent in the earlier stages. Of particular note is Page's addition of her first encounter with drawing. This episode, in which she fired her first domestic servant, has frequently been alluded to in interviews and promotional discussions of *Brazilian Journal*. This turning point in the narrative does not exist in the diaries; her first experiences with drawing were written later, as she prepared the work for publication.<sup>80</sup> This significant addition draws attention away from the diplomatic nature of her time in Brazil and focuses attention on her identity as a modernist artist.

She also wrote her 2006 autobiographical long poem and memoir *Hand Luggage*, which presented her as a traveller.<sup>81</sup> Here, she really enforces the polarities of her experience, suggesting she is a "borderland being" who was "deceptive, full of disguises" (9) and in the next line "a private person" (9). The long poem offers insight into her view on appropriation of others: "Is a story not ours / whatever its origin? Some would say no. / I

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<sup>80</sup> See entry for 13 June 1957 and compare to 15 June entry in *Brazilian Journal* 89-92.

For more commentary on the significance of this change, see Eleanor Wachtel.

<sup>81</sup> In addition to her revision and publication of *Brazilian Journal* in 1986, she published two excerpts from Mexico, "Settling In" and "Malinalco, Mexico 1962" in 1994. These two short pieces establish the basis of her Mexico narrative as a dark, personal struggle and as the night to Brazil's day.

would argue the other side” (38). The persona suggests that appropriation is a natural part of art, indicating a modernist sentiment that Page had not directly expressed elsewhere. As much as possible, Page avoided discussing politics and diplomacy in the memoir. She offered some short descriptions of her responsibility to perform calls and reflected that during her time in the diplomatic corps, “I lived / two lives, maybe three. Of the lives that I lived / I loved, without doubt, the official life least” (75). The memoir reinforces her conscious decision to keep this part separate from her other lives, which are at the fore in the text. She did not shy away from her own narrative making; she embraced it and acknowledged her role as storyteller. Again, in this text, Page acknowledged her manipulation of events and experiences, noting when she gets “off track” (34) and when she telescoped events and inverted timelines: “Chronology here is askew. So what’s new?” (90). *Hand Luggage* draws attention to its construction; her frank, self-reflexivity brought her art to the fore, providing a framework that allowed contradiction, multiplicity and manipulation. Instead of trying to achieve objectivity, much of the revisionary work of Page’s later life writing engaged with the subjective, incomplete nature of autobiographical accounting.

Page’s reflections on her travel, particularly in her published writing in the decades following her return, drew attention to their own revision and the emplotment techniques she used to craft a narrative focused on artistic development. This careful framing of Page-as-artist encourages a view of Page through a self-critical lens. It is clear that Page saw her role as diplomat as a constraint upon her practice, and so, in her personal, autobiographical narratives, she encouraged a reading of her life and accomplishments

that is focused on her chosen identity as artist. This failure to acknowledge her representational privilege as a connection to a public official leaves her work at times seeming ethnocentric and naval-gazing. However, this decision also reinforces the aesthetic of surrealism we find in her travel material. Page shows place through a highly stylized, immediate and personal lens, engaging her experience in the language and style of modernist art. The fact that her self-representation was fragmented reflects the immediacy and subjectivity of her surrealism. Perhaps this itself can be read as a form of resistance—a rejection of her political role, of its ability to define and constrain her through its attendant responsibilities and performances, in favour of a cosmopolitan sensibility that transcends nation.

## **Conclusion**

This chapter has argued that Page's interpretation of the world through image—with its emphasis on the appreciation of beauty—foregrounds individual connection and transgresses cultural and national boundaries, acting as a cultural bridge. At the same time, this chapter has traced Page's development of a cosmopolitan ethos, arguing that Page's travel writing is particularly significant for the attention she draws to the ethical boundaries of cosmopolitanism. Like Anderson, her privilege enabled her to understand cosmopolitanism as a style that allowed her to engage with the other primarily through modernist art. Also like Anderson, Page came to criticize this behaviour and find new modes of artistic engagement with travel. Unlike Anderson, she did this by engaging with new media and through a spiritual journey.

Her process of self-evaluation is simultaneously a criticism of the modernist tendency to aestheticize and appropriate or decontextualize other cultures. Like Klein, Page recognized the limits of these practices and she experienced a spiritual and aesthetic crisis. By tracing her various transitions within and finally away from the aesthetic problems of her own modernist practice, we can see the limitations, both physical and aesthetic, that shape the boundaries of cosmopolitanism when juxtaposed with the encounter of the other in travel writing. Page revealed that the visual and the image cannot be removed from their socio-political context and so her own modernist practice of celebrating art at the expense of politics and morality could no longer be sustained.

Additionally, Page exemplifies a deep engagement with psychology and surrealism that explores the possibility and limitations of automatism, dreams, and other aspects of the unconscious that her Canadian modernist counterparts failed to consider and rectify. While these aspects loosely correspond to surrealist principles and tactics, her engagement with the unconscious moved beyond artistic practice and into the realm of the spiritual and mystic that shaped her artistic vision upon returning to Canada. Page's privileging of the inner self and of the surreal as a representation of a "fourth dimension" moved Canadian modernism beyond the aesthetic and external and into a deeper realm of critically reflective expression.

Page, like Klein, engaged in deeper and more critical personal reflection as a result of her time abroad. Their reflections on travel are sobering, revealing aspects of their identity that they struggled with and worked through as they continually returned to the critical insights they gained from their experiences abroad in their later works. In some ways, the next chapter stands in quite stark contrast to what came before it; though no



less rigorously engaged and no less reflective on his experience abroad, John Glassco, the author I discuss next, engages in playful fabrication as a way of interpreting his rollicking adventures in Paris decades before. He uses the time in between his initial experience and the publication of his memoir to invoke rich comparisons, using an existing affiliation narrative, Lost Generation memoir, as a starting point. He is not trying to build an affiliated network, but, instead, is interested in exploring how a community is built and maintained through text.

## Chapter Five: Revisionary Cosmopolitanism, Reimagined Community: John Glassco's Relational Lost Generation Memoir

In the introduction to this dissertation, I assert some of the ways in which Canadian modernism came to be dominated by particular narratives, such as the debates in the Montreal little magazine culture, or the prominence of poetry as a modernist art, that over time blocked out alternative modernist formations operating outside those narratives. In the subsequent three chapters, I have worked to unearth the role and significance of travel writing as one of these alternative sites of modernist engagement. Klein, Anderson, and Page all used travel writing to foster new affiliative networks that more critically engaged with transnational modernist communities. In contrast, John Glassco used travel writing to explore the ways that affiliative networks are remembered and recalled in literary history. This chapter suggests that travel writing is also a crucial site for revising and reconsidering existing affiliative networks, and that travel writing can challenge narratives that have been constructed around the best-known and most beloved transnational modernist community, the Lost Generation.

All of the writers in this dissertation were directly or indirectly influenced by the allure of expatriatism as it had been culturally entrenched by the prominence of the Lost Generation<sup>82</sup> writers in the 1920s. Expatriates in Paris epitomized and, often stood in for

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<sup>82</sup> The Lost Generation was first used as an epigraph to Hemingway's *The Sun Also Rises* in 1926, and was then developed in his posthumous memoir, *A Moveable Feast* in 1964. It was first attributed to Gertrude Stein (and her car mechanic), who used it to describe

modernist culture and thought for later generations.<sup>83</sup> While initial critical emphasis in modernist studies was on the literary and artistic production of the period, over time, critics became equally fascinated by the cultural communities that produced that work. Thus, retrospective life writing, including memoir and autobiographical fiction, has become integral to the study of modernist cultural thought and communal practice. Marc Dolan argues that literary critics and memoirists together contributed to “the 1950s and 1960s represent[ing] the heyday of the Lost Generation, particularly in terms of both secondhand studies and firsthand accounts” (24). It is the retelling and framing of the period by participants and critics that has crystalized this period and its values for a wider audience. It is also in these retellings that the lives of literary expatriates in 1920s Paris were re-examined and revised. With particular attention to the work of John Glassco, this chapter explores the role of Lost Generation memoirs in both establishing and resisting notions of authenticity in individual and communal identity formation. I consider how modernist expatriate cosmopolitanism has been revised through reflective memoir, and its attention to community relations. More specifically, I consider how the memoirs responded to one

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Hemingway. She suggested that its generational qualities are “hav[ing] no respect for anything” and “drink[ing] yourselves to death,” (61) and is complicated by Hemingway who later dissociated from it and referred to it as a “dirty, easy label” (62).

<sup>83</sup> See especially Craig Monk’s *Writing the Lost Generation*, Marc Dolan’s *Modern Lives*, Humphrey Carpenter’s *Geniuses Together*, and Arlen J. Hansen’s *Expatriate Paris: A Cultural and Literary Guide to Paris of the 1920s*.

another, telling related narratives that supported some dominant ideologies and challenge others.

Lost Generation memoirs are more than just a series of individual works; its complexity as a genre is best considered relationally as a corpus, with each work speaking back to and being informed by the accounts that preceded it. In part, the narrative of the Lost Generation's expatriatism that literary critics know today comes from an imagined community: the sharing of similar stories, confirmed via different accounts, and consecrated by literary scholars. In *Writing the Lost Generation: Expatriate Autobiography and American Modernism*, Craig Monk explains, "many expatriates sought to define themselves by relational autobiography, implying throughout their works the importance of their involvement with others" (141). Relational autobiography, as Monk presents it, suggests that these narratives rely on the other related autobiographies for meaning; relational works are meant to be read as part of something larger, creating a tight referential network of relations that point outward to other texts. In other words, Sara Ahmed, building on Edward Said, describes a "politics of citation" as a form of "a successful reproductive technology, a way of reproducing the world around certain bodies" ("Making Feminist Points"). The works in this chapter engage in a politics of citation that formalize and consolidate power around the Lost Generation, and the largely homosocial male narratives that were written about this group retrospectively. These relations set up a hierarchy and a frame for supporting Lost Generation identities through community building. These individual accounts, taken together, reinforce a public, literary historical narrative of collective memory about the Lost Generation as a community.

Autobiographical theorist Paul John Eakin argues that autobiography encompasses narratives beyond the development of a singular, unified self, in part because autobiographers include narratives in which identity is constructed collaboratively and relationally. Recognizing the shift to plural understandings of individual identity, he explains the role of the autobiographer:

As makers themselves, autobiographers are primed to recognize the constructed nature of the past, yet they need at the same time to believe that in writing about the past they are performing an act of recovery: narrative teleology models the trajectory of continuous identity, reporting the supreme fiction of memory as fact. ‘You’ and ‘I’ and ‘she’ and ‘he’ and ‘we’—the dialogic play of pronouns in these texts tracks the unfolding of relational identity in many registers, in discourse with others and within ourselves. The lessons these identity narratives are teaching, again and again, is that the self is dynamic, changing and plural. (*How Our Lives* 98)

Eakin is acutely aware that the act of telling is pluralistic, incomplete, and relational. The self is presented comparatively with and against others, and the desire to produce “continuous identity” is limited by the “fiction” that an individual memory or account can be taken as authentic recounting of lived experience (98). Sidonie Smith and Julia Watson usefully build on this contingency of memory in *Reading Autobiographically*, where they define memory as an “intersubjective act” (26) that accounts for the relationality of individual memories as being “situated in cultural politics” (25) that reflect upon and reshape cultural memory. Communal memory, shared across a particular group, both informs and shapes an individual text, and at the same time, the individual text shapes and reframes our understanding of a larger cultural memory.

In this chapter, I focus on one particular text that functions to reframe the cultural memory of the Lost Generation, the compelling memoir *Memoirs of Montparnasse* by Canadian poet, critic, pornographer, and memoirist John Glassco. With this text's late publication in 1970, a Canadian perspective on the Lost Generation emerged. *Memoirs* was immediately celebrated for its novelistic structure and extensive dialogue. The memoir cheekily plays with truth and fabrication while constructing an expatriate community filled with intrigue, name dropping, and sex. It is a text that is overtly aware of its predecessors and the key questions of authenticity that accompanied their reception. Fellow memoirist Malcolm Cowley referred to it as "one of the truest books about Montparnasse" (148), while Brian Busby, Glassco's literary biographer, describes the text as "the untrustworthy keystone under which one must pass when considering Glassco's story" (3). *Memoirs of Montparnasse* is both of these things; it is a self-aware, relational text that is as much a commentary on Lost Generation memoirs as it is an example of the form.

As such, I ground my reading of Glassco in his own complex reading and writing practices, suggesting that he is acutely aware of the shifting and contingent tellings of previous memoirs chronicling the Lost Generation. In doing so, I define relationality as an autobiographical practice that takes into account an awareness of alternative constructions of the past, other claims to authenticity, and the shifting nature of the individual self in relation to these narratives across time and space. What makes Glassco's text unique in characterizing the Lost Generation is the way in which it actively questions and undermines the authenticity of collective memory while simultaneously questioning the authenticity of a single, authentic self. As Glassco consciously and continuously reshapes

and repackages his own identity, he also criticizes and opens up competing representations of the Lost Generation community. By highlighting factual inconsistencies and disparities, *Memoirs of Montparnasse* destabilizes the appeal to truth that is typical of the genre. As such, and because it draws attention to the conventions adopted by Lost Generation memoirs as a particular subset of the genre, *Memoirs of Montparnasse* foregrounds the extent to which fabrication, misremembering, and literary artifice figure in critical accounts of this period. With this in mind, I trace the way Glassco plays with ideologies associated with the Lost Generation and reinforces the communal nature of the period and its narratives. In doing so, I read Glassco's *Memoirs of Montparnasse* against the work of his fellow memoirists Morley Callaghan, Kay Boyle and Robert McAlmon, as well as against McAlmon's autobiographical fiction *The Nightinghousls of Paris*, all of which present versions of the same period of time at the end of the 1920s.

### **Disassembling the Lost Generation: Fabrication, Invention, and Modernist Preeminence in *Memoirs of Montparnasse***

Glassco's text destabilizes the foundation of truth and authenticity of memoirs. While memoirists generally downplay the fictional techniques they employ in order to establish their accounts as factual and documentary, *Memoirs of Montparnasse* emphasizes fabrication, foregrounding the contingent and constructed nature of Glassco's account and actively acknowledging the relationality upon which the text is grounded. Misremembering is key to the memoir genre, and not a fault or flaw within the genre. Moreover, fabrication and invention are significant for our understanding of community because they foreground the "imagined" and constructed nature of the community itself. *Memoirs*

*of Montparnasse* draws attention to the print culture that normalizes particular narratives of the Lost Generation, and then pokes holes in the veracity of their claims.

Glassco reorients the assumption that Lost Generation memoirs factually appeal to a realistic and accessible image of literary expatriates in the 1920s by playing with time and characterization. *Memoirs of Montparnasse* uses a series of frame narratives to situate itself as a “lost” manuscript set during 1928 and 1929, but ostensibly written in the early 1930s while the narrator was recovering from tuberculosis. In the preface, Glassco describes the text’s provenance, suggesting that the text was thought lost, and then surprisingly rediscovered in the late 1960s, when the text was submitted for publication. In the preface, Glassco emphasizes the authenticity of his discovery. He elaborates, “I have changed very little of the original. . . This young man is no longer myself; I hardly recognize him, even from his photographs and handwriting, and in my memory, he is less like someone I have been than a character in a novel I have read” (*Memoirs* xxxi). This distancing authenticates his “lost” memoir by highlighting the gap between the time of writing and the time of publication. By deliberately distancing the older preface writer from the “young man” narrator, Glassco positions the text as being contemporaneous with early memoirs of the 1930s, even though it was not published until 1970. However, its late publication date capitalizes on the newfound interest in the period generated by the surge of memoirs in the 1960s. The late discovery framing device establishes *Memoirs*’ preeminence over his contemporaries, even though its publication happened significantly later. At the same time, it appeals to historicity as a way to create credibility.

The frame narrative also disrupts the unification of the author into a single self, creating a distinct separation between Glassco the prefacer and his characterization in the



text, reminding us that, as Eakin argues, “the self/identity or selves/identities [autobiographers] seek to reconstruct in art are not given but made” (*Fictions* 8). Put differently, Glassco’s text dissolves his central authority as author by reiterating his self through multiple narrative frames. This disjunction is further complicated by the fact that there are two versions of the narrator within the main text: there is the character “Buffy,” Glassco’s nickname, who narrates the 1920s action in the present tense as “I,” and then the hospital patient narrator/writer, also identified as “I,” who reflects on the events of the text as he composes them in italicized sections.

In other words, there are at least three Glasscos populating *Memoirs*: Glassco is marked as the author “J.G.” in the 1969 preface (xxxix); he is introduced as the hospital patient narrator beginning in chapter four in 1932; and he is referred to as the character Buffy who serves as the protagonist living abroad in Paris in 1928-29. While each of these positions are related to one another, they do not coalesce, but instead remain disjunctive, each a narrativized “character in a novel [Glassco had] read” (*Memoirs* xxxix) that does not provide a direct or complete link to John Glassco, producer of the text in the late 1960s.<sup>84</sup> Instead, as Stephen Scobie suggests in *The Measure of Paris*, the “I” of John Glassco’s memoir “has three different referents—author, narrator, and protagonist—but in practice, there is always slippage between the three” (36). The relationship between

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<sup>84</sup> Thomas Tausky also separates Glassco into distinct selves, based on the manuscripts to print. The manuscript character is “Buffy,” who eagerly participates in a wider variety of sexual activities, whereas the published “Glassco” is a “cleverly contrived blend of intensely literary conversation and the theory and practice of hedonism.”

these three positions illustrates Glassco's interest in relationality across time and space when conveying different aspects of memory and relationship.

*Memoirs'* authenticity and coherence is further complicated by intentional fabrication on the part of its author. Glassco left a series of *avant-textes* that contradict the frame narrative within the text. Using manuscript materials housed in Glassco's fonds at both the Library and Archives Canada (LAC) and the MacLennan Library at McGill University, Thomas Tausky<sup>85</sup> revealed that the text had actually been written in the mid-to-late 1960s. The extant manuscripts, some of which were written in blue ballpoint pen with dates clearly imposed or struck out,<sup>86</sup> were composed in the 1960s as an elaborate counter-narrative written in response to the memoirs by his more famous contemporaries. Glassco's frame story provided his memoirs with an "unwarranted priority" over contemporaneous memoirs (R. Brown 18), permitting him to appear to foresee and retell events that first appeared in prior publications like Morley Callaghan's *That Summer in Paris* and Robert McAlmon and Kay Boyle's *Being Geniuses Together*. As Scobie astutely notes: "The Archives revelations enable us, in fact, to read *Memoirs of Montparnasse* as an almost Derridean deconstruction of autobiography, a volume which places the genre

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<sup>85</sup> In addition to Tausky, Kokotailo has written an excellent and extensive book comparing the manuscripts and published texts, *John Glassco's Richer World: Memoirs of Montparnasse*.

<sup>86</sup> I have consulted the LAC manuscripts a number of times as the project lead in the digitization of John Glassco's archival fonds for the Editing Modernism in Canada project. In December 2011, I photographed the manuscript texts in their entirety.

itself under erasure” (“The Mirror”). Put differently, the frame story in *Memoirs* emphasizes collusion and false memory as central to autobiography. More generally, Glassco’s memoir reveals the important connection between a fictional characterization of the self and the constructed memories of the past in the material production of texts.

Susanna Egan’s work on imposture, identity and self-invention in autobiography can help us to see the impact of Glassco’s falsity, and why it was such an effective fabrication. She suggests that “it takes a village to raise an [imposter]” (9), because imposture comes directly out of the society it was created for. She goes on to suggest that the impact of imposture in autobiography is “not just individual or ephemeral but also at times [is] communal or national” (5). This matters here because the deceit in Glassco’s text is closely tied to existing communal *and* national narratives about the Lost Generation. Its early readers were active participants in both creating the conditions for sensation, and for genuinely believing the lies as truth. Glassco relied on the existing readership for Lost Generation memoirs that predated his publication, knowing that his work would have an audience. He used that knowledge to make the text memorable by using textual cues and planting the manuscript in a public archive that would allow its imposter status to be dramatically revealed. Though his work’s provenance was discovered by Tausky, it is equally true that this discovery was, in part, planned by Glassco as a part of his broader performance of a Lost Generation identity: Glassco intentionally made public the private materials that would reveal the inconsistencies in his story and create more sensation around his account.

Glassco’s decision to sell his papers to McGill University and Library and Archives Canada reveals an inherent understanding of the material value of the fonds in

complicating the reception of his text as autobiography. When the full material and social history of the text is included as part of *Memoirs*, the authorial “selves” multiply to include the various constructions of self in the holographic manuscripts, as well as Glassco’s various authorial personas in his journals, pornography, criticism, and poetry. Brian Trehearne notes that Glassco’s journal, which “covers the years from 1934 to 1961,” was “deposited with many portions cut away, since Glassco wanted to preserve the privacy of certain entries” (*Aestheticism* 211). One can only speculate on what type of material was excised from the text, but it goes beyond the blacking out of names or dates, or the placement of restrictions on particular files, suggesting that the material he did leave was carefully curated for future scholars of his work.

Significantly, Glassco’s subterfuge is linked to a presumed (and desirable) discovery as a fabrication and fits a broader pattern of inconsistent authorial identity across his oeuvre. For example, he wrote *The Temple of Pederasty*, but he attributed it to the pseudonym Hideki Okada and included a critical introduction under his own name; he completed the unfinished pornographic novel *Under the Hill* by Aubrey Beardsley by mimicking its style; and he published *Squire Hardman* under the pseudonym George Colman, *The English Governess* under the pseudonym Miles Underwood, and *Fetish Girl* under the pseudonym Sylvia Bayer.<sup>87</sup> These fragmented, plural selves reflect the strategic production of self that is central to Glassco’s oeuvre, and to Lost Generation memoirs more

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<sup>87</sup> Leon Edel adds to this list more pseudonyms: Grace Davignon, W.P.R. Eadie, Albert Eddy, Silas N. Gooch, S. Colson-Haig, Nordyke Nudleman, Hean de St. Luc (“John Glassco” 114-15).

generally. By drawing attention to the conventions of the memoir, including its use of fictional elements and multiple selves, Glassco's work invites a closer, more critical analysis of the veracity and truth claims provided by the community of texts in which his work participates.

### **Revision, Community, and Fabrication across Lost Generation Memoirs**

While Glassco's *Memoirs* explicitly engages in fabrication, his contemporaries use revisionary techniques to engage in a similar process. At times, their critical ends are similar, for example, to assert their place within a well-known and celebrated literary community; however, they also engage in revision to introduce or undermine narrative cohesion. In all cases, misremembering and fabrication are central to the way in which the memoir is constructed and revised. Glassco's perspective is one of numerous conflicting accounts of the same events and time period. Many narratives leave out key relationships or events, exist in multiple versions and editions, and rely upon hyperbole, generalization, and omission to present the author and his or her associates in a carefully orchestrated, and at times, idealized light. In this section, I read Callaghan, McAlmon and Boyle's revisionary tactics as a contrast to the tactics Glassco deploys in *Memoirs*.

By the time Glassco published *Memoirs* in 1970, the collective memory of who and what constituted a member of the Lost Generation community was already widely established by both literary scholars and the artists themselves. Directly following the peak of modernism in Paris before the Black Tuesday stock market crash, several prominent

Lost Generation artists published memoirs of the era. These include Gertrude Stein's *Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas* (1933), Malcolm Cowley's *Exile's Return* (1933) and Robert McAlmon's *Being Geniuses Together* (1938). These texts emphasize the collective expatriate experience of the Left Bank, detailing the life and avant-garde culture of the interwar period, its excesses, and the production and dissemination of its artistic and critical discourses. These texts established a continued interest in the period and its writers, and, as Craig Monk has argued, "autobiography allowed expatriate writers from the United States to shape perceptions of lives lived abroad" (*Writing* 14). Expatriate memoir constituted an accessible way for these writers to reach a mass audience who may not have read the more difficult modernist prose and poetry initially associated with this writing community.

While these early texts established a collective memory of the Lost Generation, they also produced questions related to authenticity and accuracy. In writing an autobiography from the perspective of her companion Toklas, Stein immediately situated her memoir in a relational mode, eliding the division between autobiography and biography. At the same time, Stein represented her sexuality ambiguously. Similarly, in other memoirs, significant life events and situations were suppressed, particularly those linked to sexuality and non-normative relationships: McAlmon's homosexuality was not addressed in *Being Geniuses Together*, just as Sylvia Beach's *Shakespeare and Company* (1955) avoided reference to her life-long partnership with Adrienne Monnier. In these texts, relational identity was framed in terms of comradeship, friendship, and companionship, but rarely in terms of sexuality.

As the writers associated with the community aged, there was a second resurgence of interest in the period, perhaps fuelled in part by the 1961 suicide of Ernest Hemingway and the posthumous 1964 publication of his memoir *A Moveable Feast* by his fourth wife Mary Hemingway.<sup>88</sup> This second wave of interest in the period saw the publication and republication of numerous memoirs, including Morley Callaghan's *That Summer in Paris* (1963) and Kay Boyle's revised edition of *Being Geniuses Together* (1968), as well as the initial drafting of Glassco's *Memoirs* in 1964 (Gnarowski xiii). Callaghan's text responds directly to Hemingway's death: it focuses on Callaghan's interactions with Hemingway and F. Scott Fitzgerald during a brief summer visit to Paris and is best remembered for the boxing match in which Callaghan knocked out Hemingway. Boyle's text, in contrast, was revised in response to the waning critical interest in McAlmon, and to assert her own affiliation with the Lost Generation. Each of these texts demonstrates different interpretations of the Lost Generation community, and each narrative is informed by its own complex revision and publication histories.

Morley Callaghan, a fellow Canadian whose writing has been closely associated in style with Ernest Hemingway, capitalized on this connection to the Lost Generation when he and his estate revised his works. They used revisionary tactics to reinforce Callaghan's modernist style and literary influence. In the 2000s, Exile Editions (published by Morley Callaghan's son Barry and grandson Michael) re-released Callaghan's work for a

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<sup>88</sup> There are two distinct waves of publication: one immediately following the time period in the 1930s, and a second wave throughout the 1960s. See Monk (*Writing*) and Elspeth Healey for a more representative account of the many interim publications.

new generation of readers. As the imprint's name suggests, it gestures toward Callaghan's association with the modernist movement in Paris, though he was himself more of a tourist than an expatriate, given that his visit to Paris was limited to one summer. The moniker "exile," often synonymous with the Lost Generation, works actively to reinforce Morley Callaghan's placement at the centre of international modernism. Exile, while a general term, certainly gestures toward the Lost Generation,<sup>89</sup> and toward the communal associations of that group's expatriate and avant-garde orientations. Thus, the name "Exile Editions" affiliates the press with this movement, while extending its reach to include other artists who identify as marginalized or resistant in their writing style.

Exile Editions also altered Callaghan's texts to more clearly conform with a modernist style. In these editions, which purport to reproduce Callaghan's original writing, strategic editing choices fortify Callaghan's modernist credentials by re-creating the modernist qualities of his work in places where these qualities were less prominent. Specifically, Exile altered Callaghan's text to emphasize the aesthetic he shared with Hemingway: spare language in a simple style. As Nadine Fladd discovered in her study of Callaghan, the Exile Editions "revise the modernist moment by intensifying the elements of

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<sup>89</sup> In Marc Dolan's discussion of the title "Lost Generation," he suggests it became a "cultural touchstone" (23) and, through literary criticism (including, I would add, the production and republication of texts by publishers and editors), this term led to "expatriate writers of the 1920s being not only 'institutionalized' but even 'formalized'... 'recognized' as a distinct and laudable group of artists and writers" (23-24).



the stories that critics, in hindsight, associate with a modernist aesthetic” (130). The revisions of Callaghan’s stories—done quietly without acknowledgment that the revisions had taken place—provide their own kind of false authentication of Callaghan as a prominent modernist figure. For Fladd, these revisions “play[ed] to the symbolic capital of modernism as a recognizable literary aesthetic,” while at the same time “engag[ing] with the symbolic capital of the Callaghan (and Hemingway) ‘brand’” (133). Like Glassco, Callaghan and his estate participated in a subterfuge to strengthen their relationship to Lost Generation narratives. In both cases, they built on existing truths: they were a part of the expatriate community in Paris; they wrote and published work in modernist styles and in modernist periodicals; and they had met (and sometimes befriended) the figures that loom largest in studies of the period. However, in their published work in later periods, they also relied heavily on the historicized narratives of the period and some subterfuge to capitalize on the notoriety of being associated with the Lost Generation and its writing tropes.

In Callaghan’s memoir *That Summer in Paris*, history is also revised to reflect more positively on Callaghan. Brian Busby notes that a number of incidents recorded in *That Summer in Paris* may be represented inaccurately, and that Glassco felt that it was a “self-serving, ego-driven work” (185). Likewise, Marianne Perz describes the text as “a recreation of events that [Callaghan] imagines, remembers, or wants us to believe has taken place” (2), while Leon Edel notes that “Callaghan had incorporated ‘much extensive reading he did after his days in Paris’” (qtd. in Busby 185). Without a doubt, Callaghan selected memories to record that casted him in a positive light. For example, *That*

*Summer in Paris* culminates in a friendly boxing match between Hemingway and Callaghan, in which Callaghan knocks out his rival. Within the memoir, it represents the culmination of their friendship, but literary scholars suggest that the boxing match was misrepresented and that it did not cement the men's friendship. According to Erik Nakjavani, Callaghan's relationship with Hemingway effectively ended because of the way Callaghan presented the boxing match. Instead of building a friendship, the fallout of the boxing match was a series of "acrimonious letters" (62) where the men threatened each other with violence because a gossip journalist reported falsely on the nature of the match. Callaghan's memoir, published after Hemingway's death, allowed Callaghan to revise the narrative both to more closely and positively associate him with his famous colleague. By framing the match as collegial, Callaghan reinforced his positive ties to Hemingway while downplaying the complexities of their relationship.

Similarly, Kay Boyle's re-publication of McAlmon's *Being Geniuses Together* acted as its own strategic revision of the past to reposition herself and McAlmon more centrally as Lost Generation participants and to reinforce the coherence of the Lost Generation community. The original text was published immediately following the events; the text discusses the 1920s and early 1930s and was first published in 1938. When McAlmon originally released the book in 1938, it was controversially received by other expatriates. As Anna Linzie suggests, "James Joyce, who [was] not portrayed very favorably in the text, called it 'the office boy's revenge,'"<sup>90</sup> while Scott Fitzgerald said, "God

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<sup>90</sup> McAlmon completed a number of clerical tasks for Joyce, including typing and correcting large parts of *Ulysses*.

will forgive everybody—even Robert McAlmon” (Bell qtd. in Linzie). The original publication was a judgmental reflection on the recent past. McAlmon had had no problem naming names, and offered many portrayals that, while potentially accurate, were not usually favourable. The text reflects on life in the Quarter and abroad, but without an exclusive focus on the writing community. However, when Boyle chose to republish it significantly later, it was stripped of much of its controversy and interleaved Boyle’s own memories of the same time period. Boyle’s biographer Joan Mellen refers to it as “the fictionalized memoir of her early life” (47) that is “riddled with errors of fact and omission” (458). In addition, the text was heavily revised and altered in its new version. While the original text was non-chronological and organized by topic, Boyle’s revision provides a chronological structure, omits over a third of McAlmon’s original text, and adds enough of her own material to dominate over his voice. Indeed, as Monk has revealed, Boyle often spliced together sections from multiple chapters, rarely retaining the original flow of McAlmon’s writing (“Textual Authority” 496-97).<sup>91</sup> She also truncates the time period of the book, omitting all events that take place after 1930, solidifying its timeline with that of the generally accepted Lost Generation experience in the 1920s. The altered text, then, is a substantially different book, and its aims are quite distinct.

Although Boyle acknowledges her late arrival on the Paris scene and suggests that it “disqualif[ied her] as a member of the lost generation,” she shores up her affiliation with that group by underscoring the depth of “dialogue she never ceased having with

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<sup>91</sup> See Craig Monk’s Appendix to “Textual Authority and Modern American Autobiography” for a complete account of how Boyle pieced together McAlmon’s contributions.

Robert McAlmon” (*Being Geniuses* 12). She uses McAlmon to establish her indisputable importance to the literary culture of 1920s Paris, while also reasserting McAlmon’s own primacy of place out of the periphery to which he had been cast over time: McAlmon was deceased, his work was mostly out of print, and he had been largely dismissed by literary critics. In Boyle’s introductory note, she asserts her goal is to “accord to Robert McAlmon his rightful and outstanding place in the history of the literary revolution of the nineteen-twenties” (xi). Boyle’s revision functions similarly to Callaghan’s, in that her primary goal is to more clearly situate both herself and McAlmon more closely with the Lost Generation community.

The revisionary nature of *Being Geniuses Together* also extends to the way that community is presented in the text. By building on Boyle’s own connections and emphasizing McAlmon’s literary relationships in the revision, a more coherent group of writers is constructed. Boyle’s revision brings together multiple literary communities, including McAlmon’s early compatriots at Contact Press like Joyce and Hemingway, and Boyle’s compatriots in little magazines like Ernest Walsh (editor of *This Quarter*) and Eugene Jolas (editor of *transition*). However, Monk notes that McAlmon’s original text was not interested in framing a coherent community. He states that McAlmon “refuse[d] to draw the self-conscious connections essential for defining a single community of writers” (“Textual Authority” 489) and that “preserving a sense of unity was of no importance to [him]” (490). Monk is disparaging of Boyle’s revision, and suggests that it succeeds only because of its failure: “Boyle is unsuccessful in sustaining this centripetal effect throughout. Like modernism itself, the array of characters at the heart of the book defies easy classification; tensions spill out and reveal the inner contradictions of the group” (491). I

disagree with Monk over the goal of Boyle's revision. I do not think the text is attempting to create the sense of a coherent group; rather, by expanding the scope of the community, she attempts to show its fluctuations and, in this incoherence, better represent the scope of a literary community. I am more inclined to agree with Linzie's suggestion that Boyle "allow[s] the pieces to resist and displace the impossible fantasy of a held-together autobiographical truth," and that we should read the text as a fundamentally "'dueling' autobiography." In some ways, the revisions reveal more clearly the process of narrative construction surrounding the Lost Generation. By bringing together McAlmon's writing in the early 1930s and Boyle's writing in the early 1960s, Boyle's revision of *Being Geniuses Together* demonstrates within a single text the complex interrelations and revisions that we can also trace across multiple memoirs of this period.

However, another McAlmon text, *Nightinghousls*, also adds to this discussion through its own publication history. This work of autobiographical fiction closely follows the relationship of Kit (McAlmon) and two Canadians from Montreal, Sudge (Glassco) and Ross (Taylor). Editor Sanford J. Smoller suggests that it is likely that McAlmon wrote this text in between 1945 and 1947 (xxxvii). Although the text was not published until 2007, McAlmon did share it with Glassco in spring of 1947. Busby notes that "he returned the carbon without comment, bringing his nineteen-year friendship with McAlmon to an abrupt end" (123). The novel is explicit and sympathetic about the complex homosexual relationship between Sudge and Ross, and provides much insight into Sudge's family, including divulging "at least one Glassco family secret" (122). The truthfulness of this fictionalized text ended the friendship and, perhaps, contributed to McAlmon's decision not to publish the book during his lifetime. Given that in many

ways this text could be read as the most truthful and least revised account of the period (particularly because it was unpublished and was only minimally revised), it is fascinating that this text revises reality as fiction, while Lost Generation memoirs in this section primarily revise fabrication into truth.

*Memoirs of Montparnasse*, then, self-consciously responds to the memoirs and autobiographical fictions that predate it. Glassco revises and reshapes collective memory of the period to serve his chosen grievances and inaccuracies. In turn, his work also criticizes the limitations and unacknowledged falsities that shaped and grounded earlier portrayals. For example, he expands and details the longstanding companionship Graeme Taylor and he shared with Robert McAlmon, and he actively discredits and caricatures Morley Callaghan. Boyle is present in *Memoirs*, but is represented primarily as a brief romantic foil and writing partner. McAlmon acts as a guide and benefactor to Buffy and Taylor, taking them to Luxembourg and Nice, and largely supporting them financially as their own resources dwindle. Each of these characters are included in *Memoirs* in a way that responds to their own memoirs; the characters' functions in *Memoirs* shine a light on Glassco's interpretation of their texts.

In *Memoirs*, fabrications are not limited to Glassco, who acknowledges his propensity for lying. His narrator admits early on that he is "a great practitioner of deceit" (32) and that, because of his complex relationship with his father, is "an accomplished liar" (32). To reassert this theme later in the text, Glassco also questions veracity in the writing of Boyle and McAlmon. Through Boyle and McAlmon's characters, Glassco questions the value of accuracy as a primary goal of the autobiographical mode. Late in the text, Buffy is able to take over a job previously held by Diana Tree, the fictionalized

name of Kay Boyle in the text. Note the playful way Glassco introduces the task in the voice of Diana Tree: “I’ve been typing out the Dayang Muda’s memoirs, which have been superbly ghostwritten by Kay Boyle” (159). Tree, a fictionalized Boyle, comments on the fine writing of the separate character the ghostwriter Boyle, a figure separate from herself. Though this job is supposed to be typing up an existing manuscript of a memoir, it turns into an exercise in fabrication. Glassco comments that “Boyle had managed, with consummate skill, to make everybody ridiculous except the putative authoress, who was an incredible mixture of saintliness and naiveté” (161). Here, Glassco uses Boyle to foreground the constructedness of character in memoir. More specifically, Boyle is presented as a gifted writer putting her craft to good use in constructing an interesting, if untruthful, account of the Dayang’s life.

In contrast, McAlmon’s character in *Memoirs* problematizes truth by being a boring but factually accurate writer. Glassco implies that several of McAlmon’s publications from the era, including a possible draft of what would become *Being Geniuses Together*,<sup>92</sup> were written while he was living with Taylor and Glassco in Luxembourg (*Memoirs* 65). He describes McAlmon’s fictional storytelling as “obvious literal transcriptions of things set down simply because they had happened and were vividly recollected. There was neither invention nor subterfuge, when the recollections stopped, so did the story” (66). McAlmon’s retrospective narration, though written as ostensible fiction,

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<sup>92</sup> Given the timing of this trip, it is unlikely that McAlmon was primarily working on this memoir. Glassco notoriously confused McAlmon’s titles because he thought the narratives were very similar (sometimes even suggesting that they were interchangeable).

is not entertaining because it is too literal a recording; it reveals his scant imagination. The autobiographical writer must not just transcribe, but must re-present the past with an eye for entertainment. Accuracy is less important than good storytelling and awareness of fictional devices—invention and subterfuge—that characterize his own work. This reflexive passage on writing suggests that even the autobiographical mode requires these techniques to provide style, tone and interest in the actual. When we look at the way that both Boyle and McAlmon are presented as authors in *Memoirs*, it is clear that Glassco privileges invention and fabrication as markers of good writing. In this way, *Memoirs* shows us what we should value in a memoir: a good story about the Lost Generation is better than the reality.

While Glassco's revisionary narrative is well-established in the critical literature, each of the authors in this section engaged in similar revisionary projects for their own ends. Each of these texts seems to partially destabilize the others; even as each text seeks to provide a singular narrative about the period, all of the texts rely on relationality in the context of the Lost Generation community. Together, these texts operate communally to produce a distinctly modernist approach to memoir, in embracing contradiction, fragmentation, and an unclear line between fact, fiction, and fabrication. It is when these works are read against one another that these blurred lines really begin to come into focus. Now that I have established fabrication as a central component of Lost Generation memoirs, I mean to explore the role of politics and communal identity as other key components of the genre.

### **Expatriatism, Cosmopolitanism, and Community in Magazine and Memoirs**



Another key feature of the heavily revised, community-based narrative of the Lost Generation has to do with the cosmopolitan style often associated with expatriate life. Why did Anglo-American artists choose to leave their home countries? Why did they flock to Paris in particular? A short answer may be tied to culture differences, including a more progressive tolerance of gender and sexual expression, freely available alcohol during a time of Prohibition throughout much of North America, an established artist class, as well as economic differences, because the devaluation of the franc post WWI meant that Canadian and American dollars could travel much further than at home. Glassco's reflections early in *Memoirs* link these:

... with the franc at four cents we were much richer than in Montreal. Here I must say that I don't think the rate of exchange is always given its proper importance as an element of the charm of Paris: to be able to live well on very little money is the best basis for an appreciation of beauty anywhere. (12)

Economics informed the aesthetic and started the community formation: living well on less created better conditions for expatriate artists to thrive. Beauty was revealed to those who could afford it. Since expatriates benefitted from the exchange rate, they got to occupy a higher social stratum than the locals who worked in their own currency. These various factors created the ideal conditions for aesthetic cosmopolitanism, as an artistic response to expatriate culture.

Amongst writers affiliated with the Lost Generation, the experiences in and connection to a variety of communities and the growing international market for modernist memoirs helped create a self-consciously cosmopolitan ethos and a transnational sense of community. By drawing on and modulating Benedict Anderson's suggestion that nation

is a “cultural artefact” (4) born of a print culture tied to capitalism, I suggest that Lost Generation memoirs created a print culture that complicated a national reading: the networked community that Lost Generation memoirs created and that its characters espoused is best understood as a cosmopolitan community that exceeded and disrupted the nation.

Cosmopolitan perspectives resulted from the pervasive sense of community in Montparnasse, both as a real, lived community, and as an imagined narrative community strengthened over time and history by recollection in memoir and literary history. In understanding cosmopolitanism in relation to community, I draw on the work of Jessica Berman. In *Modernist Fiction, Cosmopolitanism and the Politics of Community*, she challenges Benedict Anderson’s notion that an “imagined community” is tied to nation, stating that “nationality is not necessary to ideas of community” (9). In the context of the Lost Generation, I argue that the text-based community that these texts produce through repetition, theme, style and politics is cosmopolitan. However, we can read this cosmopolitan community’s formation and circulation using a similar system to what Anderson describes when he states that through engaging in a national print culture “these fellow-readers, to whom they were connected through print, formed, in their secular, particular, visible invisibility, the embryo of the nationally imagined community” (*Memoirs* 44). Through readership, connection to place, and, in particular, the growing capital market for memoirs about modernism, the cosmopolitan community grew.

The memoirs present community in distinctly political ways.<sup>93</sup> However, the political depth of the claims to cosmopolitan identity in Lost Generation memoirs vary widely. While many writers identified with the temporary status of expatriate, only some used their unique position to question nationhood or citizenship. For those who engaged politically, many adopted a cosmopolitan outlook that saw international affiliation as a distinct and more universal way of relating to others beyond the limitations of national identity. Some Lost Generation thinkers participated in an explicitly political cosmopolitan project in the 1920s, while others were affiliated through communal associations and publication in magazines associated with these sentiments. Take, for example, the little magazine *transition*, which published short stories by Robert McAlmon, Morley Callaghan, Graeme Taylor, and Kay Boyle in the late 1920s. Glassco describes *transition* as “the best review in the world” where “we liked everything... but the work of Gertrude Stein” (*Memoirs* 25). He suggests a strong affiliation with editor Eugene Jolas’ “crusading spirit” (25) and reveals that it was in that magazine that he first encountered most of his idols, including Joyce, a large group of European Surrealist writers, as well as his first reproductions of modernist painters “almost unknown in North America” (25).

This affiliation also has to do with the politics espoused in the magazine. The editors of *transition* epitomized the politicization of expatriatism as cosmopolitanism. They describe a form of political universalism that promotes seeing across national lines: “We don’t want to be good Europeans, but good universalists. Asia, Europe, the two Americas

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<sup>93</sup> Given the distance between the time of the events of these texts and their publication as memoir, politicized views are often more representative of the time of publication.

interest us as much as any narrow ideological Fascistic conception of the West. There can emerge a beautiful rivalry out of such a universal competition of the spirits” (Jolas, Paul, and Sage 168). This explicitly political statement is couched in the artistic realm; through art, alternative affiliations emerge. The editors also promote the possibility of new humanism, which they define artistically: “We are interested in the West as a means for new artistic expressions. But we wish to see a new humanism born of the synthesis of inter-continental conceptions” (Jolas, Paul, and Sage 167). The editors present literature as an agent of political change that actively brings together disparate cultures. “New humanism,” in this presentation, suggests an alternative way for humans to relate to one another, using art to bridge cultures and build affiliation and community. Significantly, these writers actively imagined a mode of affiliation that replaced the nation with the idea of larger, more amorphous “inter-continental conceptions” (Jolas, Paul, and Sage 167). Although *transition*’s authors and readers may not have been as consistently or expressly political as its editors, the magazine engendered a strong sense of affiliation and a frequently political sense of solidarity.

However, this theoretical cosmopolitan stance did not directly translate to memoirs of the period, which often depoliticize the work and lifestyle of expatriate artists. In one of Kay Boyle’s sections of *Being Geniuses Together*, she paraphrases *transition*’s cosmopolitan stance, and follows it up with her own aside, “I had to admit that I was not at all certain what they meant by that” (235), though “they at least approached a definition of the nature of my own undefined revolt” (236). Boyle’s aside suggests that the politicized artistic process of *transition* provided some clarity for her. However, while her writing was not self-consciously cosmopolitan, her sense of “undefined revolt” points to

an unconscious engagement with these themes as a kind of resistance against prevailing identity categories, including, perhaps, nation.

Glassco's perspective in *Memoirs* is consistent with Boyle's sense of "undefined revolt" (*Being Geniuses* 236). Glassco's sense of cosmopolitan identity began with a rejection of Canadian culture and a desire for escape.<sup>94</sup> In *Memoirs*, there are elements of bourgeois life in Montreal with which he does not wish to identify. For example, he states that he and his companion and fellow traveller, Taylor, "were united by comradeship, a despisal of everything represented by the business world, the city of Montreal and the Canadian scene, and a desire to get away" (*Memoirs* 1). Scornful of the bourgeois pursuits

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<sup>94</sup> While the Lost Generation has been primarily treated in an American studies context, this affiliation was not limited to America. However, Lost Generation culture becomes American through retelling, and this revisionary narrative has ignored the powerful cosmopolitan nature of the community, and has denied the contributions of Canadians, like Glassco. Canadian modernism is distinct from but related to the dominant Anglo-American modernism associated with the Lost Generation writers, who have often been treated as largely American. Dean Irvine calls Canadian modernism its own kind of "lost generation" ("A Modernist Commons" 50). In the introduction to *Translocated Modernisms*, Irvine, Marta Dvorak, and I develop this idea of a Canadian modernist lost generation, using the lowercase to emphasize that Canadian writers have typically been "written out of cultural histories of modernism in Paris" and yet, they have frequently served as "inter-cultural mediators of the Lost Generation's translocational crossings and interchanges" (4).

of education and money-making, he reflects, “What do I mean to do with my youth, my life? Why, I’m going to enjoy myself” (3). Glassco defined his politics in opposition to the “traps” of capitalism, family and nation: “I had no commitments except, in a vague way, to remain uncommitted. I had no wife, no job, no ambition, no bank account, no use for large sums of money, no appetite for prestige, and no temptation to acquire any of them” (85). He saw “commitments” as restraints, and thus, was motivated to avoid these snares. He did not wish to earn a living, relying instead on a small monthly income from his father. One of his chief concerns about writing was that even it can become “another trap” if it becomes a form of “gainful employment” (85). Though he saw writing as a part of his identity, he did not want his creative process to be marred by the structures of work or the reliance on it as an income.

Glassco also defines his cosmopolitan identity as distinct from, though somewhat dependent upon, the larger transient international presence in Paris: tourism. In *Memoirs*, Glassco and Taylor are decidedly anti-tourist and see their stay in Paris as distinct from that of the many tourists who visit Paris on holiday. They establish ground rules, including specific areas they will not travel to: “The Grands Boulevards, Montmartre, Passy, and the Champs-Elysees we agreed to regard as out of bounds, and we absolutely refused to enter the Louvre” (24). This anti-tourist sentiment reveals some anxiety about the nature of their expatriate lifestyle; easily mistaken for or aligned with tourists, they insist upon and reiterate their distinction from those visitors whom they see as unsophisticated consumers and interlopers. After all, Montparnasse itself was a tourist destination, with the Lost Generation as the main attraction.

However, Glassco's distrust of tourism is complicated by McAlmon, who, in his novel *Nightinghousls*, writes that "no Quarterite's existence was complete unless he or she was playing a major or minor role in some history" (110). One character in *Nightinghousls*, Lady Mart, based on Lady Duff Twysden, became her own attraction in the Quarter, in part due to desperation, because she was the base for the heroine in Hemingway's *The Sun Also Rises*. In McAlmon's depiction, Lady Mart, who was living hand-to-mouth, "would be pointed out to tourists and romantic young men" (72). Due to her fame, she was able to take tricks from tourists. Lady Mart exemplifies the commodification of the expatriate lifestyle, and its destructive costs. As the literary community's notoriety grew, with it came seedy, exploitative dealings that intentionally brought money into the community, but without the supportive economics that came from within the community itself. The community fractured at its margins and relied on unequal economic power relations to both create distance from and exploit tourists with their holiday spending. In some ways, Glassco's distrust of tourism was supported by the larger writing community; scorn for tourists is also frequently reflected in the travel narratives of the period.

The Lost Generation also experimented with anti-capitalist actions by developing their own economic system. The origins and investment of money in artistic endeavours figures prominently in many memoirs of the period. One distinct characteristic of these texts is that expatriate writers informally used an alternative economic system based on the patron model of the nineteenth century with the "haves" sharing with the "have-nots"

to build up the intellectual class.<sup>95</sup> Those with money, like Robert McAlmon, offered patronage for others to publish through their press houses and little magazines. McAlmon famously used the money he derived from his ex-wife's family to start the Contact Publishing company, and proceeded to publish "Hartley, Williams, Hemingway, H.D., Mina Loy, Stein, Barnes, and Robert M. Cotes" (Smoller xxi). McAlmon was also a patron to artists, quietly undertaking grand gestures like paying for Emanuel Carnevali's convalescence in a sanatorium (Boyle, *A Twentieth Century Life in Letters* 603), opening his home to Glassco and Taylor on several occasions, and jovial communal gestures like regularly picking up the tab at the bar, buying a meal, or providing all the liquor for a party, for a wide range of people living in the Quarter.

Glassco saw Ethel Moorhead, who ran *This Quarter*, as being similarly charitable as a patron. He states that she supported all sorts of writers: "it did not matter whether they were good or only promising writers, it was enough for her if they were sick, starving, or discouraged" (*Memoirs* 109). Similarly, in *Nightinghous*, Kit (a fictionalization of McAlmon) emphasizes the charitable nature of Sudge (Glassco) and Ross (Taylor): "They had a tremendous but concealed ability to scent down-and-outness, with merit, and

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<sup>95</sup> See especially Lawrence Rainey, who argues that this intentional shift was to defy popular markets and foster intellectual elitism. He describes the modernist patron culture using Pound as an example: "a world withdrawn from public life and insulated from the grim imperatives of a commodity economy, a sphere in which literary culture was a privatized medium of symbolic exchange for an exiguous aristocracy of sensibility, a court of intellect now patronizing Ezra Pound" (37).



beneath their scornful assertions lay quickness of sympathy” (McAlmon 60). This desire to sustain the community and to support its most vulnerable members inflects many of the memoirs. Though few boast of their own charity (particularly McAlmon), these gestures are fondly remembered by others. Generosity is a core feature of this community; it broadened access to the writing sphere for more people, and also encouraged the easy sharing of ideas and sustenance of all kinds. At the same time, it helped to keep the community closed, affirming its reputation as an elite group of chosen intellectuals.

The aesthetic nature of the Lost Generation cosmopolitanism is also based on the assumption of a shared vocabulary. The shared language of modern art and literature operates as a kind of dialect that informs the expatriate experience. The artists participating in the community supported each other’s work and were expected to be fluent in both classic and contemporary modern literatures. This language of art—more so than English or even French—built up affiliation within the group. When Glassco decided he wanted to meet people in the Quarter, he did so through artistic and literary references. At the first party they attended, Glassco was introduced to the French Surrealist poet Robert Desnos. Glassco told him about his interest in Surrealism, to which Desnos responded:

“You like Breton?” he said. “I will introduce you to him. But first, you must read his *Nadja*, which has just come out and which is the greatest novel of the century.

You must also read Peret, Eluard, Fargue, Vitrac, Soupault, Schwitters, Sternheim, Marcel Noll and myself, although I am presently being prosecuted for obscenity.”

(*Memoirs* 17)

Participation in this shared community was demanding and intellectually rigorous. If Glassco was interested in seriously pursuing Surrealism, he was expected to be familiar

with all of the works that are connected to that artistic practice. Though Desnos was willing to offer an introduction to André Breton, Glassco had to become expertly familiar with and conversant about key figures and their works.

As we see elsewhere in *Memoirs*, it was not enough to just know the works of authors; members of this community also had to cultivate critical assessments and judgments of each work and its artist. Though Glassco was young, he made space for himself because of his wide reading. In a conversation with Diana Tree (a fictionalized Kay Boyle) and Emily Pine (Thelma Wood), Tree comments to Pine, “This boy has read so much... and his judgments are original, though not to be relied on. I don’t think he likes my own work, and I wonder what he thinks of yours” (*Memoirs* 33). Glassco’s tendency to freely criticize others’ work is somewhat shocking; however, his interpretative skills save him because they show he is imaginative and deeply engaged in literature. They establish that he has the critical vocabulary to gain entry to the community.

In *Memoirs*, people are also included and excluded in literary circles based on the assessments of trusted confidants. For example, Glassco’s McAlmon at one point comments in *Memoirs*, “Well, Fitzgerald says he is good, so he is probably lousy” (74); since McAlmon disagrees with Fitzgerald, he is able to dismiss the work of another based on this material. At times, the reliance on others also creates exclusion. Glassco portrays McAlmon as failing to participate adequately because he relies more heavily on his social relationships with the community than with his reading knowledge. When Glassco’s McAlmon is confronted by Callaghan for being familiar with some writer’s work, he fires out, “Right! I haven’t read Joyce or Hemingway. I don’t have to, I know them” (75). At another point, McAlmon is presented as falsely representing what he has read. In an

aside, Glassco states, “I had heard him dismiss Milton, Spenser, Donne, Wordsworth, Thackeray, Conrad and Meredith (he had read only a few pages of each, but enough, as he said, to get their quality)—as well as any living author one could name” (187).

Glassco implies that McAlmon only pretends to be intellectually rigorous because his opinions are formulated without sufficient proof. He also suggests that McAlmon is overly reliant on social relationships instead of being well read. These interpersonal dynamics speak to the literary currency of the group; the shared language must be backed up by the shared critical knowledge of modernist literatures. Glassco’s cosmopolitan attitude is based on exclusivity, literary competence, and a clearly defined set of shared values and actions.

However, these jibes at McAlmon’s expense also introduce the relationality at work in the text and trouble Glassco’s reading as definitive. Given that McAlmon was responsible for typing out large sections of *Ulysses* (*Being Geniuses Together* 119) and published Hemingway’s *Three Stories and Ten Poems* (Smoller xxi), it is likely that he had, in fact, read their work. As a result, we can infer that Glassco’s McAlmon is based on invention; Glassco’s McAlmon does not represent a man, but instead functions primarily as a foil to Glassco in the plot of the memoir. Even though Glassco treats McAlmon as a foil in his own text, this depiction also informs the construction of McAlmon’s role in the larger communal narrative within which the memoir is operating.

Much of the community’s character is reinforced by the novelistic qualities of *Memoirs*; Glassco uses dialogue to reinforce communal affiliation. Within the text, characters are constantly engaged in direct conversation about literature and are seen passing judgment on each other’s personal lives. In one bar scene, Ford Maddox Ford joins them

along with Narwhal (Man Ray), and they discuss a conversation Ford had with his friend “Willie Yeats” (*Memoirs* 30) about joy in poetry. At a party at Gertrude Stein’s, rebels, led by Glassco, talk rambunctiously about sex in Jane Austen novels. As a rule, Glassco the narrator acts simply as a reporter; he cultivates a sense of remove by listening. Instead of name-dropping, he populates his memoir with others who are that way inclined.

This tactic also works in *Memoirs* to establish a pecking order and to pass judgment indirectly. Glassco primarily disparages Callaghan via McAlmon, who, speaking to Callaghan about his friendship with James Joyce, chides, “what do you want to do in Paris, go around like a literary rubberneck meeting great men?” (*Memoirs* 75). In scenes like this one, Glassco has other characters parrot his known sentiments and work out personal grievances passively.<sup>96</sup> He points out a distinction between genuine belonging in a community and acting like a tourist. Callaghan’s overeager desire to meet literary greats places him as a fan, and not an active player in the community. By suggesting that Callaghan understood fellow artists primarily as attractions, Glassco represents him as an outsider.

In summary, the self-consciously cosmopolitan community that existed within and was supported by Lost Generation memoirs like Glassco’s was ironically exclusive, like high modernism itself. It was characterized by the intentional departure from one’s country of origin. The cosmopolitan community retained the security of the expatriate without the liminal marginality of the immigrant or the presumed vulgarity of the tourist.

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<sup>96</sup> Glassco and Callaghan had a notably rocky relationship, as I detail later in the chapter.

The community was based on a certain degree of economic safety and was frequently critical of capitalism.

### **Subversive Sexualities and Queer Communities in Glassco's *Memoirs of Montparnasse***

If critical cosmopolitanism engages with alternative forms of affiliation in international contexts, then the nature of this affiliation is worth exploring. While nationalism is often linked to structuring principles like capitalism and patriarchy, alternative forms of identification and affiliation can offer different structuring principles that embrace a wider spectrum of values. The cosmopolitan attitude of Lost Generation memoirs is, in part, grounded in a criticism of heteronormativity that opens up the spectrum of sexualities beyond those sanctioned by the nation. This spectrum is very evident in Glassco's work, which consistently uses sex as a tool for subversion and critical reflection on individual and communal identity.

The authenticity and construction of queer modernisms is a contentious issue for writers who suppressed their sexual identity in their writing. Modernist scholar Anne Hermann historicizes the term "queer" in her study of modernist memoirs, *Queering the Moderns* (2000). She adopts a modernist definition of queer in order to bridge the gap between queer sexuality in contemporary theory and the lived experiences of queer modernist writers. "By focusing on the memoir," she "seek[s] to bypass a developmental model of subjectivity that posits identities as fixed and/or discovered by considering processes of queering not in terms of outing a secret or recuperating a stigmatized identity, but as 'resistance to regimes of the normal'" (10). Hermann's definition of a queer text focuses

on undermining normative values and using plurality and dissonance to resist master narratives that attempt to rewrite static, categorical notions of sexual normativity. When she addresses queer sexualities, she suggests that her definition “means not challenging identities to justify desire, but desiring in ways that make strange the relations between identities” (7). Her approach foregrounds desire without containing it to categories such as homosexual and heterosexual. Instead, it seeks to defamiliarize the categories themselves. Building on Hermann, I want to consider how desire challenges normative masculinity and heteronormativity as components of Lost Generation memoirs. Specifically, I mean to establish that Glassco both criticizes and conforms loosely to heteronormativity by challenging the careful policing of sexuality in Lost Generation memoirs.

The retrospective “queering” of modernity must be historicized, not least to avoid the risk of denying the historical context and ramifications of “coming out” in print in the 1920s—or, for Glassco, in the 1960s and 1970s. *Memoirs* emphasizes diverse sexual identities that are consensual but unstable. Glassco’s coming-of-age narrative is caught up in sharing lovers, watching erotic films, dancing homoerotically, writing a pornographic novel, attending and working at brothels, and flirting with hints (or in the case of the manuscripts, quite explicit passages) of sadomasochism. *Memoirs* chronicles long-standing but ill-defined sexual relationships with literary men and fictionalized women, including McAlmon and Taylor, as well as the characters Stanley Dahl and femme fatale Mrs. Quayle.

Despite Glassco’s extensive representations of sexuality, critics Richard Dellamora and Andrew Lesk assert that homosexuality has a contentious place in *Memoirs*.

In the published version, all explicit homosexual references are excluded; there are, however, graphic descriptions of sex and long discussions about Glassco's thoughts on homosexuality included in the manuscript versions. While Dellamora argues that the published text actively queers heteronormativity through a "camp modernism" that "is characterized by emotional excess, anticlimax, parody and pastiche" (263), Lesk asserts the opposite, claiming that the published text has "'straightened' (homo)sexual conduct" (177). He suggests that Dellamora's reading fails to acknowledge the social history surrounding the text, stating, "Glassco . . . cannot be reduced to the mere textuality that constitutes the *Memoirs*, since the social sphere surrounding its production does not exist separately from the text" (179). While this makes sense, Lesk fails to reconcile his own argument with Glassco's decision to sell his manuscripts to the archives, as well as the public role Glassco took on as a pornographer in his criticism and in interviews. In contrast, I would suggest that Glassco chooses to subvert the normative nature of heterosexuality, in part, to trouble the broader assumptions made in this text and elsewhere, that the Lost Generation's experimentation often stopped at the bedroom door.<sup>97</sup> He works within the framework of heteronormativity to dismantle that norm within the community. Indeed, Glassco goes so far as to establish a new norm for heterosexuality that freely incorporates a wide spectrum of sexual acts, exchanges, and relationships.

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<sup>97</sup> Of course, Glassco was not the only modernist who experimented with sexuality in his writing. For example, see the lesbian relationship between Gertrude Stein and Alice B. Toklas.

However, Glassco's work also operated within other communities and markets, and necessarily responded to the conventions of Canadian publishing standards in the 1970s. Lesk calls attention to the censoring of homosexual sex acts in the text but does not acknowledge the excision of explicit heterosexual sex, including sadomasochistic acts, from the published version. As Faye Hammill notes, "sex permeates the *Memoirs [of Montparnasse]*, yet the reader never actually sees it happening" (291). While the sexual revolution of the 1960s and 1970s offered new forums for open expression of alternative sexual identities, it is important to note, as Dellamora does (259), that sodomy was not decriminalized in Canada until 1969, the time at which Glassco was seeking publication for his manuscript. As a result, the choice to tone down and edit out explicit sexual material may have been linked to external social factors, including decisions by Glassco's agent and the publisher. These factors notwithstanding, Glassco continued to suppress explicit descriptions of sexuality in his published text, even though he constantly refers to the importance of sexuality in shaping his young life. While the text itself is not explicitly pornographic, it establishes a sexual spectrum that it discusses frankly as a part of Lost Generation life.

Glassco's narrativization of the pursuit of pleasure performs a similar function to queer normative sexuality in *Memoirs of Montparnasse*. Indeed, Glassco emphasizes "present enjoyment" over the "toilsome life of art" (*Memoirs* 121), as he repeatedly asserts that "[t]he important thing in life [is] to have a good time" (121). However, many of Glassco's descriptions of sexual exploits that depict having "a good time" are undermined throughout the text. He presents Paris as a difficult place to find heterosexual partners, and when he does, these conquests produce anxiety and illness. He attends a brothel



with Taylor and Sidney Schooner, but, when given the opportunity to share women among them, he is unable to perform and is blackmailed by the last prostitute. She exaggerates his impotence, saying, “I need money, you know, so won’t you give me a little tip? Then I won’t tell your friends how *tired* you were” (72). The emphasis on “tired” belies the possibility of other factors impeding his performance. Similarly, he shares his girlfriend Stanley with Taylor, but much to his disappointment and only after discovering their affair (122); he is then further frustrated when she eventually leaves them both for another woman (131). Glassco’s desires are constantly deferred or unsatisfied—he renegotiates his position on having a good time as he realizes the significant social and emotional costs of doing so.

### **Community, Homosociality, and Homosexuality in Lost Generation Memoirs**

The imagined community of the Lost Generation produced narratives that reinforce values which extended beyond the political to the social. In this section, I focus on one of the most contentious topics expressed and repressed in Lost Generation memoirs: heteronormativity in male-male relationships. The nature of the community, which was heavily shaped by patriarchal and homosocial relations that frame the ways of affiliating with the group, changed across the texts, but remained buttressed by the framework of heteronormativity. In Lost Generation memoirs, homophobia structures male-male relations to counter the homosexual desire that exists in these texts. In order to read the sexual overtones of these works, I draw on Eve Sedgwick’s concept of “male homosocial desire,” which, she argues, demonstrates “the potential unbrokenness of a continuum be-

tween homosocial and homosexual—a continuum whose visibility, for men, in our society, is radically disrupted” (1). For Lost Generation memoirists, masculinity and male relationships often include elements of desire that clearly occupy positions on this continuum that challenge heteronormative assumptions. However, the writing attempts to break the continuum by emphasizing friendship bonds on the one hand and blatant homophobia on the other. Masculinity is a major theme in all of the texts; it informs and structures the nature of interpersonal relationships and communal affiliation. With that in mind, this section explores the memoirs’ perspectives on homosocial and homosexual relationships and discusses the implications of heteronormativity for cosmopolitanism and community formation.

While Glassco foregrounds heterosexual sexual conquests and misadventures alongside male friendships, his fellow memoirists Callaghan and McAlmon focus largely on homosocial and heterosexual relationships which reinforce their members’ literary prestige over their indiscretions at the bar, bistro, or brothel. Deviance from homosocial relations grounded in male friendship are problematized in these texts, and often are treated as a condition for exclusion from the insider group. At the same time, in McAlmon’s fictional work, there is an emphasis on homosexuality that undermines the assumed heteronorm. Male-male relations produce a heteronormative masculine relationality by recreating conversations and friendships that repeatedly stylize their interaction as equal members and collaborators in a larger modernist project. Masculine performance is coded into the majority of the actions in these memoirs, serving to establish and police normative gender practice. These memoirs link gender and authenticity, using one of the

signature modernist genres as the space through which these identities are performed and concretized.

As indicated earlier, Callaghan infamously uses boxing as a metaphor for his relationship with Ernest Hemingway in *That Summer in Paris*. His yoking together of friendship with competitive violence reveals a desire to combat Hemingway's literary prowess through a "knock out" which literalizes his desire for consecration as a literary heavyweight. Similarly, McAlmon's original and Boyle's re-writing of *Being Geniuses Together* fails to acknowledge McAlmon's homosexuality. In both texts, references to Glassco deviate from these norms and provide a contrast to the main narrator's normative behaviours. Glassco plays a small but vital role in each of these texts: his position as a marginal masculine figure differentiates his more ambiguous homosocial relationships from those of the hegemonic masculine narratives the other authors wish to propagate.

Callaghan in particular was acutely aware of the way his male relationships shaped and could undercut someone's placement within the Lost Generation community. One of the ways he asserted his narrative authority throughout his oeuvre was by aggressively attacking and dismantling Glassco's character as a writer and as a man. Under the guise of fiction, Callaghan first performed a satirical defamation of Glassco in his 1929 short story "Now That April's Here." Callaghan's story is a flagrant attack on the relationship between Glassco and his lifelong friend and partner Graeme Taylor, and on modernist behaviours that encourage frivolous excess and elitism. He criticizes both the nature of their friendship and the type of literary ridicule in which they eagerly engage. In the story, the "boys" are given different names, but they have the mannerisms and predominant characteristics of Glassco and Taylor. They are described as always together,

often “holding their heads together” (272) in intimate scenarios, laughing at private jokes, and sharing a bed (275). They are also treated as outcasts, not active participants in the community: “they knew everyone in the Quarter, [. . . however,] no one knew either of them very intimately” (272). Callaghan’s story reveals the delicate line between correct, homosocial behaviour in the Anglo-expatriate avant-garde and what he perceived to be its perversion. His portrayal of Glassco was deeply offensive, and certainly coloured Callaghan’s characterization in *Memoirs*.

Callaghan’s *That Summer in Paris* erases the line between parody and libel when Callaghan openly connects Glassco and Taylor to their parodic counterparts. His memoir introduces Buffy and Graeme using the same tropes he used in the original story. Callaghan effectively outs them without consent to fulfill a homophobic agenda of shaming and alienating them. Brian Busby notes in Glassco’s biography that Callaghan’s treatment directly undermined his reputation among his Canadian literature peers in the 1960s: “His years in Paris, an experience that had been so envied by Patrick Anderson, among others, had been exposed as a time of silliness, immaturity and pretension” (186). Glassco was deeply shamed by this treatment, which, in part, spurned his desire to produce a counternarrative.<sup>98</sup> As Louise DeSalvo illustrates in *Conceived with Malice*, modernist writers were known to use their fiction for revenge and defamation. For Callaghan, this fiction took the form of a sexual crime. Robert McGill, whose study of the ethics of autobiographical fiction addresses this relational element, suggests that

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<sup>98</sup> In the North American context, Terry Goldie describes homosexuality as often presented as a “dirty secret” (6); it is this kind of ideology to which Callaghan appeals.

For many people, bonds of intimacy are predicated on exclusivity in terms of shared stories as well as shared experience; as a result, when such narrative monogamy is sacrificed for the public intimations of fiction, authors' seeming indifference to their intimacies can be devastating. In fact, autobiographical fiction has also been described as a metaphorical rape. (4)

When Callaghan satirizes Glassco and Taylor, his defamation challenges the authenticity of his account, and, effectively, is an act of homophobic violence.<sup>99</sup> While Callaghan ostensibly writes *That Summer in Paris* as an autobiographical text, its relational significance cannot be understated. A secondary function of this narrative is to assert a heteronormative agenda and castigate Glassco for failing to meet it.

To further establish this as a personal attack, consider Callaghan's representation of McAlmon, also known for his homosexual desires, in both Callaghan's fictional and autobiographical representation. In *That Summer in Paris* Callaghan describes Glassco and Taylor as "two willowy, graceful young men from Montreal," and then states that he wrote "Now That April's Here" based on a debate he had with McAlmon over their "contrasting views of the boys" (132), which confirmed their identity. Callaghan purposely describes the "boys" himself using language that appears in the original story: they have a "bland and distinguished air" but are largely remembered for their "snickering wit"

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<sup>99</sup> The fact that Glassco stopped corresponding with McAlmon after he sent the draft of *Nightinghousls* suggests he continued to feel the trauma associated with being outed. Because this text also clearly associates Glassco with a fictional portrayal, he chose to sever the relationship to avoid the associations implied in the text.

("Now That April's Here" 132). This section of the text performs a dual purpose: it aligns Callaghan with McAlmon, while undermining the connection that McAlmon has with Glassco. Callaghan affiliates himself with a strong masculine identity, and in the process fails to acknowledge McAlmon's own sexual interest in both men. Additionally, he undermines McAlmon's friendship with Glassco and Taylor when he suggests that McAlmon failed to see that the boys were "laughing at him" ("Now That April's Here" 132). Since McAlmon was considered relatively prominent in the Anglo-American expatriate community at the time, Callaghan excused and erased his sexuality by omitting it in *That Summer in Paris* because McAlmon's presence consecrated Callaghan's own Paris experience. McAlmon's character in *That Summer in Paris* serves to elevate Callaghan's authority, and Callaghan writes him as a heteronormative policing agent, an accomplice to Callaghan instead of Glassco. Callaghan uses McAlmon to rewrite the collective memory in favour of Callaghan's constructed memory, creating a heteronormative allyship that served his ideological values.

Further, Callaghan used the celebrity and authority of more canonical expatriates to bolster his narrative. McAlmon, and later Hemingway, are included in the text in order to authenticate his identity. Callaghan literalizes the central premise of Harold Bloom's *Anxiety of Influence* by toppling Hemingway from his seat of power.<sup>100</sup> The tension between his portrayal of Hemingway, a figure with whom Callaghan wished to affiliate and

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<sup>100</sup> Harold Bloom's *Anxiety of Influence* suggests that male poets write to overcome and respond to the influence of their literary forbearers.

ultimately overcome, contrasts starkly with his portrayal of Glassco, a figure who represented a collective memory of the Lost Generation behaviour that Callaghan wished to undermine and marginalize. This comparative reading practice signals the extent to which Callaghan understood and asserted his own narrative relationally to emphasize his own status as a Lost Generation member.

In response, Glassco's criticism of Callaghan in *Memoirs* targets Callaghan's carefully developed masculine authority. In an even-handed tone, Glassco responds to Callaghan's libellous portrayal in "Now That April's Here" by carefully undermining his credibility as an author. He describes Callaghan and his wife as being "friendly and unpretentious [...] like meeting people from a small town" (*Memoirs* 74), frugal, small-minded, and utterly set upon meeting Joyce. As suggested earlier, Glassco's harsher criticisms are presented from other points of view. Later, when Callaghan returns from his match with Hemingway, not described in the text, its significance is deflected by condescension. Though it is unclear whether Callaghan knocked out Hemingway or just "[gave] him a nosebleed" (128), Taylor comments, "It's a real break for him, bless his heart" (129). Glassco carefully manipulates the conventions of dialogue to make the poor characterization of Callaghan socially-acceptable; instead of offering his own views directly, Glassco affirms Callaghan's representation as generally accepted because it was presented by other community members.<sup>101</sup> Glassco uses the communal to reinforce the

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<sup>101</sup> Though Glassco usually criticized in other people's voices, he criticizes Callaghan's short story "Now That April's Here" in *Memoirs* in his own narrator's voice; he describes the short story "nasty" and "full of holes" (185).

personal. He uses members of the community to undermine Callaghan's character and, more particularly, to cast doubt on his authority.

In contrast, McAlmon's relationship with Glassco and Taylor was largely ignored in the original and revised versions of *Being Geniuses Together*, perhaps also because of their failure to promote a particular representation of the Lost Generation: they were too young, were not famous, and their presence potentially could have casted doubts on McAlmon's sexuality. While *Memoirs of Montparnasse* describes long periods of time in which all of the men live together, *Being Geniuses Together* erased this narrative by focusing primarily on McAlmon's contact with more central members of the modernist community in Paris, including Pound, Joyce and Hemingway. *Being Geniuses Together* ignored McAlmon's homosexuality altogether; this narrative does not fit within the Lost Generation's broad narrative frame as he conceived it. In 1968, when Kay Boyle revised and elaborated upon McAlmon's text, this erasure held, and McAlmon's sexuality remained closeted. Her continued policing of McAlmon's homosexuality affiliated her with a dominant masculinist collective memory, even though she was subjugated by the same framework. In Boyle's revised text, Glassco and Taylor are written back into modernism's masculinist script as "disciples" and "protégés" of McAlmon (266), but mostly Glassco is affiliated with Boyle (332-33). Homosocial relations are framed as a form of apprenticeship, and Glassco's role in the revised *Being Geniuses Together* is primarily as Boyle's friend and collaborator on the fabrication of the memoirs of the Dayang Muda of Sarawak. Glassco and Boyle seemed to best understand the relational power of the memoir; they carefully crafted and revised memoirs to clearly align them with the aesthetic and gender values of the Lost Generation.



While these memoirs enact a very similar narrative of homosocial relations within the Lost Generation community, *Nightinghousls* stands in stark contrast. The primary relationships that are examined in this text are homosexual; the relationship between Sudge and Ross is the central narrative of the text, while the lesbian relationship between Chloe (Djuna Barnes) and Steve (Thelma Wood) is also explored in detail. Both relationships are represented as complex and personal, neither are treated as a type. In the case of Sudge and Ross, the narrator, Kit, celebrates their schoolboyish closeness and the complexity of the power dynamic that shapes their relationship. Kit reflects: “Never in years of knowing the Quarter had I seen so fine an example of schoolboy love and accord. It brought back memories of similar friendships of my own when I was between fourteen and eighteen, but never had my intentness on the details of the other’s life been so complete as theirs” (McAlmon, *Nightinghousls* 14). This early framing of “schoolboy love” blurs the line between a homosocial and homosexual relation: closeness and deep intimate knowledge about another man is idealized, even if it is fleetingly associated with youth. Then, as Sudge and Ross’s relationship deteriorates due to the strain of this constant closeness, Ross suggests that it is economics that necessitates aspects of their relationship: “we wouldn’t have to be together every hour of everyday, talking over only ourselves, if we had enough money... I don’t want to break with him. He so [sic] damn beautiful to watch” (130). It is clear that the relationship between the boys is somewhat unequal, and this imbalance is discussed openly and honestly. The failures of the relationship are not pinned on sexuality, but instead on interpersonal dynamics.

The social repercussions of homophobia are carefully represented in *Nightinghousls*. Though Kit is relatively accepting of diverse relationships, it is clear that negative

perceptions of homosexuality make the characters cautious. For example, Ross tells Kit early in the text that “They [kids at private school] talked about poor little Sudge when we became friends” (24). At one point, Kit implies that Ross has physical desire for Sudge, and Ross becomes enraged and threatens to fight him (46). Sudge also reflects many times on perceptions others have of his relationship with Ross, suggesting that they have “rotten ideas” (134) about the two of them. These sentiments reveal the culture of homophobia that was present in the Quarter circulated within the texts as well. Even Kit’s sensitive portraits of homosexuality demonstrate the authoritative power of a homosocial, sexually restrained author-observer. Kit’s sexual preferences are undisclosed and ambiguous. Smoller amusingly calls his character “sexually abstemious” (xxxiii), notable in a novel that otherwise offers a direct and detailed treatment of the sex lives of others. Kit’s narration of sexuality and intimacy is based on observation instead of experience. His writerly persona observes, but does not act, in sexual situations and relationships. *Nightinghous* promotes an open-mindedness toward sexuality, but that does not fully extend that open-mindedness to self-acceptance and action.<sup>102</sup> The writer-narrator observes, but does not cross the line into, homosexual relations. *Nightinghous* presents a latent homophobic culture that requires a guarded, homosocial, and friendship-oriented presentation of one’s own male-male relations.

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<sup>102</sup> This open-mindedness is consistent with McAlmon’s other fiction. One of his most successful short story collections, *Distinguished Air (Grim Fairy Tales)*, provides a detailed account of gay sexuality, prostitution, and transvestism in Berlin from the perspective on an observer.

McAlmon, Boyle, and Callaghan's writings establish the male-male relationship norms of the Lost Generation community: homosociality and heterosexuality are assumed, with homosocial relationships being highly valued. However, because of this value, they are also the source of intense homophobic scrutiny. When the texts are read relationally, we can see the limitations and boundaries of the community more clearly. While there is certainly variance within the community, the overall politics of modernist masculinity are clear. To conclude this section, I want to return a final time to Glassco's manuscripts for *Memoirs*. This unpublished text, like *Nightinghousls*, provides a fascinating queering of modernist masculinity that was not a part of the published communal narrative of the Lost Generation in the 1960s.

Given the role of the original manuscripts in reframing our understanding of *Memoirs*' authenticity, it is also worth comparing the original manuscripts' treatment of homosexuality. Unlike the published text, which alludes to but does not explicitly describe homosexual acts, the manuscripts take homosexuality as a central theme. In particular, the manuscripts are much more focused on McAlmon's homosexuality and Glassco's responses to his advances. McAlmon's interest in Glassco and Taylor is explicitly sexual, though Glassco distinguishes that he is "obviously far from being the ordinary active pederast" (John Glassco Papers 2.57) and instead is more "avuncular or fatherly" (2.58), "more proud of being seen with two presentable youths than actually covetous of their favours" (2.58). Glassco acknowledges a wider range of attraction, but at the same time identifies McAlmon as both homosexual and pedophilic, linking his relationship with the boys to an Ancient Greek model of sexuality he could publicly perform and display in and around Montparnasse. The visibility or the performative appears to be more

important than private intimacy. In this way, there is a clear parallel to Patrick Anderson's treatment of homosexuality in *Search Me*. We see a kind of disidentification<sup>103</sup> in both texts in which the authors challenge heteronormativity while still ostensibly keeping themselves within its structures. They use other characters to challenge and transform this ideology, all while performing a sense of compliance to the ideology themselves.

In the manuscripts, Glassco treats homosexual acts with a mix of disdain and disinterest; he presents their reality but with a lack of personal desire and identification.

McAlmon's desire for him is depicted as a nuisance:

But, the final proof of McAlmon's incredible vitality was apparent less than four hours later, when I woke to find him in our bed, now quite nude, and, pressed against my back, he was sleeping soundly but the signs of his pleasure were already clotting coldly on my hinder parts. Cursing, I slipped back into my own bed, leaving him with George. (John Glassco Papers 2.80)

This scene extends the published version, in which Glassco simply discovers McAlmon is sharing his bed. The emphasis on McAlmon's semen "clotting coldly" is treated scatologically, a source of discomfort that, perhaps, acknowledges Glassco's more active participation. Glassco's body is frequently juxtaposed against his words: though he does not identify as homosexual, he does participate (however unwillingly) in male-male sex acts.

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<sup>103</sup> As I did in Chapter 3, I borrow this term from José Esteban Muñoz who suggests that disidentification "works on and against dominant ideology" (11) by "transform[ing] a cultural logic from within" (11).

Glassco counterpoises his own homophobic reading of McAlmon and Taylor by positioning his own sexuality as deviant. In a reversal of the published manuscripts, Glassco presents homosexuality as normative for the men of Paris, revising once more the common cultural memory of the Lost Generation. Glassco resets the norm but then continues to place himself against it. Instead of embracing a homosexual identity, he actively refuses it: "I had of course already had a number of homosexual experiences, but they had been quite one-sided and I had found the practices and postures which they involved stupid and inadequate [ . . . ] I was so utterly heterosexual [ . . . ] But I would never have thought of refusing my person to any man who really wanted it" (John Glassco Papers 2.57-8). Glassco sets up the norm and then fails to adhere to it. Though he is "utterly heterosexual," he suggests that men are entitled to his body, and he always consents. These contradictions could be read in alignment with Andrew Lesk's argument about Glassco's uncomfortable closetedness, but I think they speak instead to the limitation of identity categories to encapsulate and describe desire. Glassco's body refuses to be inscribed by action, but instead opens up a space that denaturalizes the connection between identity narratives and lived experience. The body becomes a site of performance that is malleable and is able to both respond to and evoke power.

In the manuscript texts, the importance of shifting power and authority to sexuality also develops the imbalances described in the published text. The sadomasochistic relationship between Glassco and Mrs. Quayle is expanded, and Glassco's other main heterosexual relationship with Stanley also takes on a sadomasochistic quality. The sexuality of the memoir brings it more in line with Glassco's pornographic writing, which moves it beyond the style of the literary memoir of the expatriate in Paris. While critics

acknowledge sexuality as a pervasive feature of *Memoirs*, few have directly connected *Memoirs* with Glassco's largest body of work on sexuality—his pornography.<sup>104</sup>

Glassco's representation of sexuality foregrounds pleasure and fantasy; authority is redefined in terms of consent and submission, playfully celebrating deceit as an integral part of the production of pleasure, not something that undermines it. Fraser Sutherland notes in his biographical essay on Glassco that "he was not only one of the best pornographic writers of the century, but . . . he laid claim to being one of the best analysts of the genre" (32). By the time he published *Memoirs*, Glassco's pornographic titles included *Under the Hill* (1959), *The English Governess* (1960), *Harriet Marwood, Governess* (1967) and *Temple of Pederasty* (1970). In his own commentary on the genre, Glassco describes pornography's central motive as "to give pleasure, and thus to present another facet of the artist's constant aspiration to reveal, to testify, to point out the path to the enchanted country which he has discovered" ("The Art of Pornography" 113). The genre's blatant escapism and link to fantasy are not dependent on the authority of its authorship. Factuality and truth give way to performances of power in his pornographic texts, where the sadomasochistic submissive is dependent on the production of authority of the dominant.

Many elements of the manuscripts are pornographic in their representation of pleasure, testing the boundaries and limitations of desire. Glassco experiments with flagellation for the first time with Stanley, incorporating it into their very first sexual encounter. Stanley's beating is foreplay for them both, a chance to perform and imitate positions

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<sup>104</sup> See Whitney's excellent bio-critical analysis of the pornography, though it does not connect *Memoirs* to the pornography ("Raptures"). See also Edel ("John Glassco").

of power. Glassco recognizes the staging in which he participates when he first asserts control. Here, sexuality is explicitly linked to the performative: “I had the sensation of being carried into some kind of fictive world, some scene of make-believe whose tone and dimensions made a strong but puzzling demand. It was like being suddenly handed a role” (John Glassco Papers 3.25). Glassco highlights the importance of fantasy in increasing pleasure and resituating power. Though he has no inherent control or mastery over Stanley, he takes on the symbols and language of power in order to excite.

Similarly, the textual nature of pornography is made apparent by Mrs. Porterhouse’s character. Glassco once more emphasizes the textual elements of sexuality as the most enticing. He is most aroused by Mrs. Porterhouse’s lengthy commentary:

As I was [copulating] she kept making comments of a clinical nature on the act we were performing, stressing its physiological aspect: her terminology was extraordinarily precise and erudite, I had the impression of listening to a medical textbook.

The experience was curiously stimulating by its very cold bloodedness. I had never enjoyed myself more. (qtd. in Kokatailo, *John Glassco’s Richer World* 110)

For Glassco, the site of pleasure is the detachment from intimacy in favour of a clinical vocabulary. The actual physical intimacy is described as a performance, and it is verbalized in medical language to desensitize and depersonalize the actual physicality of the act. It becomes an imitation that further defamiliarizes normative sexuality. The physiological narrative of sexuality demands a rethinking of sexual narratives based on love or intimacy, revealing their own status as an “act” or performance that can be imitated and undermined.

The representation of sexuality of Glassco's published *Memoirs* and unpublished archival manuscripts perform important work in queering the homosocial narratives of his contemporaries. The heteronormativity that is implicit in many of these texts is challenged, which underscores the importance of sexual ideologies to the Lost Generation. We can read sexual ideology as one more type of revision that the Lost Generation community had incorporated. This revision functions as a carefully layered critique of Lost Generation memoirs insofar as Glassco's work reveals the ways in which the members of the Lost Generation strategically represented their conflicting sexual identities in memoirs of their imagined community.

The implications of a queered Lost Generation also colour the way we understand expatriatism. Although writers were able to free themselves from some of the social mores of their homes, certain deeply held ideological beliefs still structured the ways that they identified and expressed themselves personally and textually in their writing. Homophobia, and a deep distrust of close male-male relations, reveal the limits of their thinking. Heteronormativity is a structuring relation of community in these texts, which only retrospectively can be undone. Given that the historical context did not support direct criticism of this norm, literary scholars, through archival research, can help to reveal the ways that modernists like Glassco subverted this norm in their unpublished work.

## **Conclusion**

The Lost Generation epitomized an alternative form of affiliation and community that is extra-national. Through the multiple narratives written during, about, and following this period, the Lost Generation emerged as its own form of imagined community. I



have suggested in this chapter that the distinct cosmopolitan attitude of Lost Generation memoirs includes expatriatism, a sense of shared economic and social values, and a patriarchal heteronormativity. These characteristics were shored up by the textual community in and around Montparnasse, including the people who lived as artists on the Left Bank in the 1920s. I have sought to establish John Glassco's centrality to this community and its articulation of a communal identity by emphasizing his refined focus on the constructed nature of these accounts, and by demonstrating his treatment of sexuality and subterfuge. By acknowledging and subverting a pre-existing collective memory about the Lost Generation community in Paris, Glassco's work identifies the ways in which all representations—not just his own—are shaped by subterfuge, false memory, and the desire to present one's best self. His candid portrayals of Paris life and loves demand that individual identity be read as part of larger communities, as competing versions of people and events that play out across time and texts.

Glassco's unique contribution to this dissertation lies in the way his work is able to so seamlessly cross boundaries and connect Canadian modernist practices back to the international modernist movement in concrete and specific ways. His work reveals the ways in which life writing practices in Canada developed and responded to modernist presentations of the autobiographical subject. Likewise, his work reveals how Canadians actively shaped Lost Generation modernist thought and practice and were not passive recipients of a belated modernism. *Memoirs* reminds us that even though the modernism Glassco was responding to is retrospective in nature, when he engages with it, he remakes it, revises it, and represents it anew. In the same way, as literary critics engage with mod-

ernist writers and offer their own interpretations, this engagement also creates and fundamentally alters the communal narratives associated with these texts. It is for this reason that this project has engaged in the task of revising our conception of Canadian modernism to better account for the role that travel writing has played.

## Chapter Six: Conclusion

The United Nations' *Charter*, first signed in June 1945, heralded the dawn of a new era, boldly articulating an international desire for peace and human rights that could help prevent future atrocities on the scale of the Second World War and encourage international cooperation among both newly-independent and well-established nation states. In addition to its aim to "promote social progress" and instill peace, the *Charter* "reaffirm[ed] faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small" (United Nations). And yet, two months after the *Charter* was signed, atomic bombs were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, demonstrating that the dominance of the West remained intact. Though the *Charter* did not formally go into effect until October 1945, this discordance was indicative of the social and political incongruities that characterized international politics into the 1950s and 1960s. The tension between the desire for international cooperation evinced in the *Charter* and the persistence of neo-colonial power relations demonstrated by the Allied bombing of Japan is also evident in the travel writing explored in this dissertation.

Despite obvious differences in purpose and kind, the *Charter* is relevant to the study of travel writing by Klein, Anderson, Page, and Glassco because their work also articulated ideals for international relations and affiliation, and then found that those ideals were difficult to uphold on the ground. On the one hand, their writing demonstrates a clearly vocalized desire to foster intercultural relations; on the other hand, it signals a lack of understanding about how to enact, enforce, and stay true to this desire on an individual or communal level. Whether it is Klein envisioning diasporic community in

“Notebook of a Journey” or Glassco re-imagining the international writing community in *Memoirs of Montparnasse*, the writers studied in this dissertation demonstrate the legacy of colonialism and Eurocentric power structures that defined international values in Western terms and used hegemonic structural inequalities to determine when and how those definitions were enforced: the myopia born of privilege and entitlement often inhibited their expressed desire to foster intercultural communication or internationalism.

To more emphatically underscore the political stakes of the travel writing in this dissertation, I want to conclude by considering a selection of the political reportage and poetry of F.R. Scott, who was a friend and member of the poetic community that included the four writers discussed thus far. A founding member of both *Preview* and the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation political party (later the New Democratic Party), Scott was a constitutional lawyer and, unlike the writers studied in the body of this dissertation, he was deployed abroad with a decidedly political agenda: he was appointed as the United Nations Technical Assistant Resident Representative (TARR) to Burma in 1952. Burma underwent decolonization in 1948 and had a parliamentary socialist government, so the posting likely appealed to Scott’s sense of internationalism, which his biographer Sandra Djwa describes as “an outgrowth of his socialist belief that the ultimate goal of the good society was to share its benefits with others” (*Politics* 250). In Burma, Scott actively participated in a new type of international relations that honoured the privileged expertise of the West, while at the same time promoting more agency and independence for developing nations. Communal political values and a shared vision of a socialist democratic future shaped his internationalism.

Scott described the UN's Technical Assistance program as "a world-wide programme for sharing technical knowledge and skills around the world, so as to enable countries where economic development is less advanced to borrow expert advice from the more developed nations" ("United Nations" 712). More specifically, the Technical Assistance program was intended to improve worldwide economic development by providing mentorship and expertise to transfer the success of developed countries to developing ones. As the resident representative, Scott organized the international experts delivering this advice in a wide variety of fields including economics, industrial relations, social welfare, and education. He also coordinated consultation with the Burmese government on how to effectively plan a socialist democracy. At one point during his appointment, he described the program as "one of the really constructive ideas of our time" (Personal Correspondence 754).

The Technical Assistance program was indicative of a major departure in the way that international relationships were imagined. To some degree, it reduced the significance of the nation in governing international relationships. As representatives of an international collective, the technical advisors operated outside of their national context without representing their nations. The fact that the United Nations ran the program differentiated it from development programs supported by individual powerful nations (often negatively associated with Western foreign aid programs) and from colonial models that imposed control and governance from outside the country. "The United Nations is not a super-state imposing its will on its members," Scott explained, "[e]ach member is still sovereign" and "UN experts are solely concerned with doing the technical job for which they have been invited" ("United Nations" 712, 714). These quotations suggest

that Scott saw the program somewhat idealistically as an extension of his own socialist values, and that he wished to share his own experience as a political and legal expert with a promising fledgling country organizing a socialist democracy.

Scott's participation in the Technical Assistance program can also be understood as an extension of the international modernist vision he had expressed in the little magazines. For him, a modernist vision incorporated both political and artistic imagination in conceptualizing new ways of belonging to the world. As I indicated in the introduction, Scott wanted the writing in *Preview* to be seen as working in a global context. Thus he argued, "We wrote from Canada, sure, but we were almost on the same level as anybody writing from anywhere else, and we wanted to judge ourselves in that universal aspect" (Bentley and Gnarowski). This "universal aspect" was central to his vision as a poet and as a statesperson: his universalism was linked to his sense of the applicability of his writing to an audience of peers who saw their affiliations as extending across national divides. He did not want to be seen as an exclusively or parochially Canadian writer, and he addressed himself to an international audience that he envisioned as connected through a shared appreciation of modernism, an art form he understood to be international in its orientation and appeal. As a poet, Scott believed in an international artistic community united by the shared ideals of modernism. As a political advocate, Scott believed in the promise of an international socio-political community united by its shared commitment to democracy. In both cases, he saw rigorous commitment to ideals as a way to engage on the global stage—which in this case meant trying to work across cultures and beyond the scope of national interest in order to move closer to the more "universal" ideal itself.

Scott's interest in internationalism was shared by the other writers studied in this dissertation, though his particular vision and politics were his own. As a concluding case study, Scott's very clear political agenda serves as a contrast that draws attention to the sometimes murky politics of his contemporaries. Unlike the other writers I study, Scott published no travel writing in the 1950s and 1960s. However, his archival fonds contain writing from this time period that provokes new inquiries into the disjuncture between international affiliation in practice versus international affiliation in imaginative enterprises. The fonds contain reports, correspondence and notes on Burma, in addition to a Burma diary to which Djwa's work refers, but currently remains restricted and inaccessible (Library and Archives Canada).<sup>105</sup> By reading these official UN reports alongside two of his best-known poems about the period, "A Grain of Rice" (1962) and "On Kanbawza Road" (1978), I point to some of the complexities in Scott's modernist political vision, offering a way forward for future scholarship on the intersections between travel and Canadian modernism. In doing so, I suggest that Scott's work brings to the forefront the political significance and complexity of cross-cultural engagement and foregrounds a political stance more forcefully than the four authors studied in this dissertation, who often engaged with politics more indirectly.

After less than two weeks in Burma, Scott issued his first monthly report to the United Nations. It demonstrated a strong sense of urgency; he was clearly concerned with

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<sup>105</sup> For the Burma reports and correspondence, see 5-8 of the F.R. Scott fonds. The diaries from his time in Burma are restricted but include material from 1933-1954. Marked as 91-93, they are located in restricted file vol. 117 (Library and Archives Canada).

the need for more training and education of the Burmese people to govern themselves, making recommendations that all technical advisors “should be urged to pay special attention in their planning to the selection of counterpart personnel and the provision, through all forms of training and fellowships, of the supply of manpower necessary to carry out their suggestions” (Monthly Report 1 738). In this recommendation, Scott demonstrated that he placed great value on the experts as teachers, trainers and mentors, signalling that he understood that advisors were meant to guide without directing, providing insight from their own experiences while simultaneously building on the experiences of their Burmese counterparts. At the same time, though, the recommendation speaks to a residual power imbalance that was a legacy of colonial relations.

Though the 1950s was a period of formal decolonization in many parts of the world, we can see in roles like Scott’s the continued presence of neo-colonial power that set the standard for good governance, culture, and international trade. Scott has been described by historian David Webster as a metaphoric “modern missionar[y]” who spread the gospel of “progress and modernity” to Southeast Asia in order to “shift the imperial order in the region, just as Christian missionaries had been before” (“Modern Missionaries” 88). Webster suggests that there was an inherent colonial contradiction in the role of UN technical advising across Southeast Asia, describing the belief behind the program as “a fair and non-colonial way to develop through skills sharing” that at the same time maintained a “clear continuity between post-colonial development plans laid out by India and other states, with earlier British Colonial Development Acts” (93). In essence, he suggests that Scott was advising another culture on how to be more like a Western power, but he was doing so with a reduced threat of colonial violence, in a gesture of reciprocity.



The sheer scale of the Technical Assistance program in Burma also revealed neo-colonial aspects. At the time, it was the third-largest program of its kind (Webster, “Canadians” 91); there were far more foreign experts in the country than there were Burmese trainees. Scott’s report for May and June of 1952 reiterated his initial concerns about the role of the technical advisors as mentors and trainers. Specifically, he expressed concern that the desire for economic expansion would trump the need for a self-governing and independent Burmese workforce:

Since no government will wish to slow down the pace of progress, the inevitable result, already beginning to show, will be such a large influx of foreign experts that Burma in a few years will seem almost as much “governed” by non-Burmans as she used to be. At this point a reaction against all forms of technical assistance might easily arise. (Monthly Report 3 708)

Scott saw an emergent pattern reminiscent of the colonial resistance of the past decade. Not only was he concerned that the country should have the ability to govern its own affairs, but he was also worried about becoming a scapegoat. His concern that the Technical Assistance program would replace one form of filial relation with another went against his clearly stated desire to build affiliation and a shared network between two cultures.

Scott’s Burma reports betrayed a tension between his idealism and a reality that undermined that ideal. His role as a political representative was to manage and guide change along somewhat prescribed lines. However, his poetry offered him a personal and creative place where he could imagine other changes, including those that he could not enact in his political role. In poetry, the tensions Scott confronted could be imaginatively

explored in order to better understand the limitations and ethical considerations of his role. Unlike his report writing, Scott's poetry allowed him the imaginative freedom to explore questions of agency and to question the power structures that constrained his political work. For example, in his poem "On Kanbawza Road," written ten years after his posting to Burma, neo-colonial realities are overshadowed by an emphasis on cooperation and mutual understanding. In this poem, the speaker participates in the Water Festival, in which the city and its people are cleansed for the new year. The speaker watches "a girl-child / not three feet high" (22-23) providing blessings to everyone on the road, "waiting to sprinkle / each passerby / with symbolic drops" (28-30). However, when the speaker approaches the girl, he reflects on his foreignness and relative power, acknowledging that "I was a white man / standing so far above her / not easy to anoint" (31-33). He sees the distance between them in terms of height, colour, and religion, and recognizes the uncomfortable position occupied by the girl.

The short lines and frequent stanza breaks create a staccato, halting effect that suggests uncertainty, humility, and a growing sense of empathy from the speaker. First, he recognizes why he appears intimidating to the girl; then, in the next stanza, he imagines the fear she might be feeling. These steps in the stanza's development move him empathetically closer to her subject position. He reflects that she likely "never dreamed a foreign giant / might need her blessing" (39-40). With the word "need," the girl is placed in a position of power, suggesting that it is she who could potentially heal the breach posed by the speaker's out-of-proportion size, power, race, and foreignness. The significance of "blessing" magnifies any action she may be about to take so that it operates on both a political and spiritual plane.

Before the girl reacts, however, the speaker thoughtfully responds to the situation with which he is presented. In the poem's concluding stanzas he takes an action that restores some balance and offers a hopeful way forward for affiliation across national, cultural, and gendered divides:

Seeing her torn

between faith and fear

I sat down on my heels

Burmese fashion

levelling my eyes with her eyes

At once her fear vanished

she smiled at me

her little hands

dipped the spring in the bowl

and touched me with the fertility of love. (40-50)

The speaker, through careful reflection and an empathetic desire to connect and share with the girl, observes a simple way to address the power imbalance. By repositioning his body, the speaker no longer looms over her with Western might; instead she sees he is willing to act as a peer, and to partake of and learn from her custom. However modest, this retrospective poem might be seen to imagine what was difficult to construct in the Technical Assistance program itself: reciprocity and human compassion. The "top-down" exchange of Technical Assistance is not present here. Instead, we see two unequal parties

where the one with more power is willing to give some up in the interests of constructing a more equitable relationship.

While I read this poem as a more personal response for redressing inequalities, Stephen J. Troope, Dean of the Faculty of Law at McGill in 1996, reads “On Kanbawza Road” broadly as “a vision of what Western actors must do to achieve a true dialogue on human rights that respects cultural diversity” (169). He reads the poem as a guide for explaining how people with privilege might acknowledge and hold up those whose lack of power came from the unearned benefits of the privileged. “Contact does not presuppose comprehension,” argues Troope, “but a willingness to enter into situations where diverse perspectives and attitudes are voiced is a precondition to any ultimate shared understanding” (174). Troope emphasizes the need for multiple-perspective taking in intercultural communication, suggesting that people must work to imagine others’ points of view if they are to avoid the naval-gazing of a singular perspective. Initial responses to foreign environments are often limited and singular, but reflection makes space for other perspectives. In some ways, it was modernist art, reflective and removed from the initial experience, that showed a way forward for Canadian modernists like Scott. Through poetry, Scott was able to imagine possibilities and alternatives that brought him closer to his ideals.

After Scott left Burma, he reflected on his political engagement in the poem “A Grain of Rice,” which was published in 1954 as part of his second poetry collection, *Events and Signals*. In the poem, Scott constructs a poetics of politically-engaged wonder. He claimed to have written the poem “in Burma, thinking of the Korean war, seeing the monsoon rains, reflecting on man and the universe in which he lives” (Scott, “F.R.

Scott”). The poem begins by emphasizing the vulnerability of “hundreds of millions” (“Grain of Rice” 3) of people to both monsoon rains and wars waged over “[a] flag moved a mile” (12), and then contrasts the speaker’s reflections on reading about the latest development in the war and with the “wonder” (24) of witnessing a new life emerge:

Today, while Europe tilted, drying the Baltic,  
I read of a battle between brothers in anguish.

A flag moved a mile.

And today, from a curled leaf cocoon, in the course of its rhythm,  
I saw the break of a shell, the creation  
Of a great Asian moth, radiant, fragile,  
Incapable of not being born, and trembling  
To live its brief moment. (10-17)

The powerful contrast of the two stanzas not only juxtaposes life and death, it also places hope in Asia in an embattled world. If we read the “radiant” (15) Asian moth as a metaphor for the new states declaring independence in the region, it can be seen as an emergent nation coming into its own. As it emerges from its chrysalis, it does so powerfully and with confidence, “incapable of not being born” (16). In this time of conflict, the emergent nation is vital and luminous, even though it is also “fragile” (15). Scott’s use of a symbol of wildlife, a moth, is also placed within a larger cycle, a natural and self-sustaining “rhythm” (13) that suggests the inevitability and necessity of these new nation states.

In contrast, the war “between brothers” (11) described in the previous stanza is framed as fruitless and unnatural, an aberration of nature. By emphasizing the close filial connection between the opponents, the speaker underscores the futility of their violence. The tension and contrast between the act of reading about a distant war and the immediacy of watching a new life emerge is emphasized by the repetition of the term “today” at the beginning of each stanza. These conflicting states of being do not reconcile until the poem’s end, which places the two acts on the same plane of experience:

Religions build walls round our love, and science  
Is equal of truth and of error. Yet always we find  
Such ordered purpose in cell and in galaxy,  
So great a glory in life-thrust and mind-range,  
Such widening frontiers to draw out our longings,

We grow to one world

Through enlargement of wonder. (18-24)

The speaker is able to put together the experiences described in the previous stanzas because of the “widening frontiers” (22) with which he experiences the world. More generally, the final couplet suggests that collective growth into a singular “one world” happens when foreign visitors engage with “wonder” (24), thus expanding their “frontiers” (22) by simultaneously recognizing both the fragility and “life-thrust” (21) of other lives, and acknowledging the “walls” (18) that limit their knowledge and sometimes incline them to “error” (19). Recognizing that the perspectives of religion, science, and, perhaps, politics, have failed to “wide[n] frontiers” (22), the poem concludes by suggesting that the “enlargement of wonder” (24), with its openness, its humility, and its reverence for lives it

may not fully understand, might foster equitable cross-cultural engagement that is not at odds with national self-determination. The poem articulates an idea of wonder that promises “enlargement” and cooperation without being apolitical or naïve. Indeed, it imagines a politically-engaged sense of wonder that balances awe with humility and political awareness.

“A Grain of Rice” ends with its own manifestary stance on the interconnections that are built globally through the radical potential of politically-engaged wonder. D.G. Jones suggests that this poem signals that “the collective enterprise is no longer national but global. It also emphasizes that it is domestic, not imperial” (“Private Space” 48). Jones’s reading collocates the local and the global, suggesting the power of the personal in shaping the collective. Wonder functions to bridge the personal with the global, and it goes some ways toward temporarily undoing the divisions that we often associate with conflict and war.

In my reading of wonder in Scott’s poems, the attribute of wonder that takes the forefront is a reflective reverence for the other, including other people and other places. In *Reading for Wonder*, Glenn Willmott describes wonder as a powerful and expressive form of engagement with “the mystery of intelligibility and agency in others” (213). Wonder can work against narcissism and ethnocentrism by offering an engagement with others that values difference and acknowledges the limits of its own understanding. Willmott suggests that “to be wonder struck is to arrest thought, to yield oneself, a kind of immersion” (6). The deference and humility of “yield[ing]” to new experience, and the openness to “feeling and aesthetic appreciation” (6) associated with wonder works

against the frequently narcissistic, judgmental attitudes of writers describing foreign people, places, and experiences.

I find Scott's use of wonder evocative and far reaching in its applicability for this project. As I re-consider the various case studies that make up this dissertation in light of Scott's perspective on wonder, I find that the writers had their strongest moments of connection with the places they visited and the people they met when they were willing to embrace the wonder of their new experiences while remaining politically engaged. Often, the writers of this dissertation struggled to balance those two capacities, getting caught up in their own subjectivity. This self-focus works directly against the hopeful possibility of wonder. In fact, Willmott describes narcissism as "the opposite of wonder" (213). He contends that narcissism is a "withdrawal into the self" in contrast to wonder, which he describes as occurring when the "abilities of empathy, imagination, analysis and care [are] loosened from their ordinary service to the reproduction of identity, the self and its interests" (213). For example, despite moments of self-consciousness, the narrator in *Snake Wine* is frequently narcissistic. For this character, imagination typically supports "the reproduction of identity, the self, and its interests" (Willmott 213). Recall the narrator's early days in Singapore, when he daydreamed, "[*W*]hat sort of servant shall I have? Shall I have a Malay, or an Indian, or a Chinese? And shall I be able, through him or her, to grapple with the country, understand it and love it? (Of course, romantically, I love it already.)" (*Snake Wine* 26). The pleasure described in this passage comes from admiring inequality and serving self-interest, reminding us that Anderson's narrators tended to focus his gaze inward while engaging with the world around him.



In contrast, Page perhaps best exemplifies a politically-engaged expression of wonder. Page may have hated her time in Australia, but she opened herself up to fall in love with the colours and cultures of Brazil, making it the happiest and richest time she spent abroad. She submitted her body and mind to her experience, letting sensation overtake her rational judgment, reflecting, “It is hard to get anything done. It is hard to focus. A thought is barely born before it melts, and in its place so lovely a void one could hardly have guessed emptiness so attractive” (*Brazilian Journal* 37). Page enlarged her field of vision and disrupted the primacy of her own thought process, taking in more of her surroundings, and trying new art forms and modes of expression. She expressed humility and awe in her experience of her new surroundings. However, Page did not stop there. She also remained politically engaged and analytical. Hers was a form of wonder that incorporated critical self-reflection such that “empathy, imagination, analysis and care [were] loosened from their ordinary service to the reproduction of identity, the self and its interests” (Willmott 213). At times, Page was agonized to the point of depression because her painterly eye objectified (and sometimes dehumanized) things she found overwhelmingly beautiful. For example, we see her careful reflection on an argument she had with her husband about the badlands of Mexico: “I say what beautiful forms and colours. Arthur says it’s a terrible land, neglected and un-loved, it gives the people who live on it the minimum of food and a life of hardship. How can it be beautiful?” (*Mexican Journal* 187). Critical of Page’s somewhat selfish delight in the wonder of beauty, Arthur remained focused on pragmatic and objective social change. By presenting this exchange, Page engaged analytically, and presented multiple perspectives. Through this juxtaposition, she is critical of the limits of her own initial inclination towards the aesthetic realm.

Implicitly, then, she recognized that wonder needs to be outward looking and politically engaged; even if wonder does create a capacity for empathy, it may not lead to social change or betterment without a critical analysis and reflection. Like Scott, she recognized that humility and reverence for the other have a continued role to play in cross-cultural engagement.

Though I love the hope Scott presents in “A Grain of Rice” when he suggests that affiliations based on wonder will lead to one world, this idea is only partially borne out in this dissertation. I see Canadian modernist travel writers operating in more personal, limited ways to build affiliation. Canadian modernist travel is at its best when its authors are self-critical and reflective, when they attempt to learn from their experiences, acknowledge their privilege and attempt to use it for something good. We see this in the small acts of kindness that the international writing community provided to each other in the form of food, shelter and magazines of *Memoirs of Montparnasse*, and how McAlmon reflected in his fictionalized portrayal of Glassco and Taylor: “They had a tremendous but concealed ability to scent down-and-outness, with merit, and beneath their scornful assertions lay quickness of sympathy” (*Nightinghous* 60). A significant tension in Canadian modernist travel writing is associated with imagining new ways of creating affiliation and belonging that operate beyond the construct of nation. The case studies explored in this dissertation were places for experimentation, for working through the opportunities, challenges, and limitations of trying to “make it new” in a genre of writing that has frequently failed to heed or actively silenced the voices of non-Western subjects. Canadian modernist writers persisted in their efforts. Their experiences also frequently changed their thinking and challenged them to become more engaged citizens of the

world. Their intentions were often admirable, though their output was a flawed testament to the gap between the theory and praxis of international affiliation.

In the Canadian travel writing examined in this dissertation, there exists a strong political and social desire for international networks built on reciprocity and notions of collectivity. We can read these writings as tentative, experimental negotiations with other cultures where the authors engaged with and then reflected upon the wider ramifications of their deeply personal intercultural experiences. But what is also evident in this body of work is the extreme privilege and power these writers enjoyed, even as they explored the deeply felt shock of displacement and alienation. For them, displacement was a choice, coming not from powerlessness, but instead from a mobility couched in the understanding that a Canadian passport provides protection and privileged access to much of the globe. While these writers engaged with the legacy of colonialism, and saw first-hand the way that the West continued to shape the national and international relations of countries far from home during a period celebrated for decolonization, they also enjoyed many benefits from colonialism (in addition to unearned benefits from being middle-to-upper class, able-bodied, white men and women). We can see in their writing a desire to renegotiate national belonging and challenge the systems that assume their superiority must come at the cost of the humanity of others.

In this dissertation, I have explored how the experience of travel, including dislocation and a sense of exile, challenged A.M. Klein, Patrick Anderson, P.K. Page, and John Glassco to engage with their individual and collective identities as modernists, Canadians, and citizens of the world. Though each of these writers continued to be shaped by what Page called “the country of [their] own head” (“Canadian Poetry” 9), including

their roots in strong, local modernist affiliations in the pages of Montreal little magazines and in their Canadian national identities, they were challenged to see and understand themselves differently by their experiences abroad. While for some, travel prompted the need to expand or reconsider the political and creative networks of affiliation within which they participated, for others it encouraged a deeper look inward at the ways in which their own ideological assumptions worked within and outside of such structures. As such, this work has sought to consider how international travel affected the transition of Canadian modernism at mid-century.

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