PLACE IN THE POETRY OF JOHN NEWLOVE

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Introduction

This paper studies the role of *place* (especially prairie) in the poetry of John Newlove. Although prairie poetry seems particularly obsessed with place, no study of that poetry treats place otherwise than literally or referentially. Yet *place-as-topos* is a central concept in the rhetoric of invention for both composition and reading. The argument in this paper is that *place* in prairie poetry (represented by the work of Newlove) is a *topos* of invention of both argument and style (figure).

That prairie writing is preoccupied with place has been a critical cliché since the 1950's. Edward McCourt, in a seminal definition, stated that "True regional literature is above all distinctive in that it illustrates the effect of particular, rather than general, physical, economic, and radical features upon the lives of ordinary men and women" (*The Canadian West in Fiction*, 56). McCourt was speaking of course of prose fiction, not poetry, but he might as well have been speaking of both. Carlyle King, trying to avoid the fallacy of regional environmentalism, fell nevertheless into a variant, which might be called the fallacy of regional subjectism: "there are [for example] no Saskatchewan writers; there are only writers," said Professor King, and very sensibly — in view of this assumption — collected an anthology of "writing about Saskatchewan" (*Saskatchewan Harvest*, 1955) which included writers from the prairies (Sinclair Ross) as well as from Newfoundland (E. J. Pratt), all writing about the same place. Both of these examples, in different ways, attest to the effect of place on writers of that place. When that place is the prairie, the effect is most often due to the landscape. As Wallace Stegner puts it, "The drama of this landscape is in the sky, pouring with light and always moving. The earth is passive. . . . These prairies are quiescent, close to static; looked at for any length of time, they begin to impose their awful perfection on the observer's mind. Eternity is a peneplain" (*Wolf Willow*, 7).

In the 1970's, Laurence Ricou did for poetry what McCourt had done for prose: exercising his prerogative as an editor, he assembled a collection of the work of prairie poets that showed that "the prairie is a prominent, and often persistent, focus of the poet's work" (*Twelve Prairie Poets*, 7). It has been suggested that this demonstration was effected as much by Ricou's editorial bias as by the works of the poets, but no one has suggested that Ricou was not at least partly right. Ten years later, Dennis Cooley introduced a new (for prairie literature) reading of the effect of place on poetry. Instead of arguing from the extended reference to place, and relying heavily on the practice and theories of Robert Kroetsch, Cooley argued from the voice of place: "These [prairie] poets . . . wrote out of an increasingly vernacular voice found in the people and events around them" (*ECW*, 1980, 15). But the voice of place is still linked to the environment, including the physical: prairie poems are written in "open forms and rhythms," the models are "idiomatic, open-ended" (17). Significantly, for the argument here being advanced, the reprint of Cooley's special issue of *ECW* was entitled *RePlacing*. (Cooley's later study of the vernacular includes its rhetorical functions — see *Prairie Fire* 8.1 [Spring 1987] — without, however, identifying them as such.)

There is no question that these readings of prairie poetry and fiction, extending over thirty years, have identified a central preoccupation of that literature. Even Eli Mandel, whose perception of place in prairie poetry is somewhat different from those cited above, does not omit reference and literality. Noting that "[t]he theoretical basis of literary regionalism is weaker than the historical or geographical," Mandel offers his "image for the prairie writer" as "the one who returns," that is, as "a man [woman] not so much in place, as one out of place and so one endlessly trying to get back, to find his [her] way home, to return, to write himself [herself] into existence, writing west" (*Canadian Forum*, 1977, 25-26). The place that interests Mandel is a state of mind, "a tension between place and culture, a doubleness or duplicity," a state that is grounded not in "[n]ostalgia, sadness, memory, even affection" of place, but in language and form.

Mandel's image of the prairie poet is an image of a "resident" in the legal and metaphorical sense; his notion of this poet's doubleness manifested in language and form verges on contemporary notions of figure as a "gap" between the signifier and the signified, between "what the poet has written and what he thought" (Genette, "Figures," 47). In Mandel's conception, the poet himself (herself) is a figure of gap-ness in the text: because the figure of the "poet" (ethos) represented in the text (logos) is an instrument of appeal to the reader (pathos), this comes close (as Godard has pointed out, though inadvertently, in "Epi(pro)logue," *Open Letter*, 1985) to grounding poetics in rhetoric. But there is still a great resistance to *naming* the context of all that passes as reading and writing by its traditional name (rhetoric), and Mandel, sensitive as he is to the tradition of which poetry is necessarily a part, cannot bring himself to "eff the ineffable" (the phrase is Robert Kroetsch's, echoing Eliot's delightful "Effanineffable" from "The Naming of Cats" [*Complete Poems*, 209]).

It is well known that even classical rhetoric extended beyond oratory to include reading and writing (Plato, *Phaedrus*, 89; Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, 1404b18; Cicero, *De Oratore*, I.150; Quintilian, *Institutio Oratoria*, Book X). In the Middle Ages (see Murphy, 1974, for a full history), Geoffrey de Vinsauf's *Poetria Nova* (c. 1208-1214) is an eminent example of rhetoric applied to (written) poetic composition; and by the time of the Renaissance, rhetoric had become a model for "the production of the text" (Plett, 356), as the stylistic rhetorics amply demonstrate (Henry Peacham's *Garden of Eloquence* [1577] is only one example). The equation of the aims and techniques of rhetoric and poetics in the eighteenth century (Stone, Chapters 1 and 3) and the development of "belletristic rhetoric" (George Campbell, *The Philosophy of Rhetoric 1776*) continue to be felt, despite the Romantic revolt, through to our own time (Perelman, *The New Rhetoric*).

Through a continuing tradition, then, of over two thousand years, rhetoric has been the art of persuasion in writing as well as in speaking. The notion of *topos* (Gk., "place"; see Lanham's *Handlist* for convenient summaries of the meanings of the terms used here and below) has been a central element in both the art and the tradition. A review of this term, from Aristotle to Perelman, reveals that one definition covers all the known meanings, applications, and instances of a rather ubiquitous concept:

> A topos is a *partial ordering*, that is, a binary relation <—, —> such that whenever <x,y> and <y,z> then <x,z>. ("Chapter 1. Toward a Definition of Topos," unpublished Ph.D. dissertation 1988)

This definition says that a topos has two features: it is a binary relation which is transitive. These two features make the definition a model of the role of topos in rhetorical argument, narrowly conceived. Aristotle's "arguments common to all oratory" (for example, "the greater and the lesser") are topoi in the sense of the definition above, as are his twenty-eight valid "general commonplaces" (*Rhetoric*, 1392a5 ff. and 1397a5 ff.). Following Grimaldi, the so-called "special commonplaces" may be treated as statements of relevant matters of fact to which the "general commonplaces" are applied (178, 182, 186).

But the rhetorical tradition shows also that topos and rhetorical argument encompass much more than enthymematic reasoning. Regarding the range of topos in the classical era, Bornscheuer notes that "almost any formal or thematic viewpoint, logical or psychological tactic of disputation, objective fact or fictional image, concrete example or symbolic code may attain the rank of a topos" (208; my translation). Historically, the range of topos extends even to the figures of rhetoric, as the following summary indicates:

(1) classical rhetors speak of both metaphor and the later figures as techniques for the "invention" of style (*Rhetoric*, 1410b5-15; *De Oratore*, III.156); metaphor, in particular, is based on the topos of analogy of similarity;

(2) in the Renaissance, rhetoric is reduced to stylistics; the stylistic manuals list most of the classical topoi as figures (Peacham's list includes aporia, paradox, syllogismus, climax, antithesis, distributio, partitio, divisio, et cetera); the tropes,

furthermore, are grounded ever more clearly on the classical topoi (see Fenner's Ramistic *The Artes of Logike and Rhetorike*, 1584);

(3) in the twentieth century, a full explication of all the classical figures is achieved using the Saussurean binary, sign = <signifier, signified>. (Group Mu *A General Rhetoric*, 1981, 25-45).

In short, the figures function as places where style is invented; they are bases for rhetorical arguments, broadly conceived, because they either are or are based on classical topoi; and they have the same formal structure as the topoi. To consider a figure as a topos is to recognize this tradition.

A few remarks on trope as topos may help to clarify this point. Traditional definitions of metaphor from Aristotle to Richards have consistently exhibited a binary structure (e.g., metaphor as vehicle/tenor in Richards, *The Philosophy of Rhetoric*, 97) which lends itself readily to treatments derived from the Saussurean notion of sign. Similarly, the symbol, which is synecdochic in nature (Coleridge, *The Statesman's Manual*, 30-31), may be treated as an iterated series of binaries using the work of C. S. Peirce (*The Collected Works*, 2.222, 2.230, 2.295, and *passim*). Metonymy is a substitution, hence also binary; and irony (two meanings) shares this structure. That the tropes' binary structure is transitive is obvious (Group Mu).

In the two major models of rhetoric, topos (in the sense of the definition and the tradition) occupies a central position. Aristotle favours a triad, ethos / logos / pathos, in which the topoi (his sense) and the figures are located in logos (*The Rhetoric*, 1355b, 1356a, 1358a, 1382a-1393a, 1397a-1400b); rhetors following Cicero employ the first three elements of a five-part division, invention / arrangement / style (omitting memory / delivery), with the topoi (his sense) embedded centrally in the first and the figures in the last (*De Oratore*, 1.142-43). A combination of the two with the above definition of topos forms the model of reading for this study (arrangement is omitted because the genre studied is predominantly the lyric):

$$\text{topos (invention)} \left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{figure (style)} \\ \text{argument (matter)} \end{array} \right. \left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{ethos} \\ \text{logos} \\ \text{pathos} \end{array} \right.$$

Such a scheme, incorporating more than two thousand years of the practice and theory of reading and writing, suggests that the topoi play similar roles for readers and for writers. If one thinks of composition as a movement from invention to arrangement to style (the Ciceronian model), then the topoi provide the arguments, the forms, and even the figures, approximately in that order (Sloan, "Readinto Milton Rhetorically"; Murphy, *Renaissance Eloquence*, 1983). Reading reverses this movement: beginning with the "finished text," the reader likely perceives the figures first, notices the larger form next (as in, say, genre), and gets the argument last, moving therefore from style to arrangement to invention. Writing and reading do *not* of course proceed this simply, but if a general heuristics of the writing/reading acts is wanted, then rhetoric provides a model. As Thomas Sloan notes, "invention in rhetorical reading . . . mean[s] exactly what it meant in rhetorical composition, finding the thought already present in the materials" (397). Alternatively (the Aristotelian model), the text (logos, poem) establishes an ethos by representing within itself a narrator who has been much studied in the poetics of fiction (on narratology, see Chatman, *Story and Discourse*). This narrator may be overt ("I") or covert (the "consciousness" behind the poem or its overt narrator), and his use of particular topoi determines his ethos. Similarly, the topoi presuppose and appeal to a reader (pathos), either overtly (a named addressee or "you") or covertly (anything in the text is "readable").

A topos of particular relevance to prairie poetry is literal "place" itself. This topos, which derives from Cicero's *De Inventione*, appears most clearly in Quintilian under both "arguments drawn from persons" and "things" (*Institutio Oratoria*, v.x.23-31 and 37). Curtius notes its wide use in epideictic poetry (narrative and lyric) in the Middle Ages (*European and Latin Literature in the Middle Ages*, 153-59); Wilson discusses its role in the praise or dispraise of men and their deeds in the Renaissance (*The Arte of Rhetorique*, 24 ff.); and the topographical element in Romantic poetry attests to its continuing influence. In brief, this topos is a relation between a place and the things (persons, deeds, objects) belonging to or associated with that place: if the place is praiseworthy, valued, or preferred, then so is the thing; the attributes of place transfer to the thing in place. Whether considered as an instance of <place,thing> or <if,then>, whether technically a trope or a figure, this topos is a partial ordering in the sense of the definition above.

An Early Example

Direct references to the prairie abound in John Newlove's poetry. From his earliest published book (*Grave Sirs*, 1962) to his latest (*The Night the Dog Smiled*, 1986), Newlove grounds his work in a referential space and time: a boyhood in the Verigin, Saskatchewan, home of Doukhobors; growing up in Regina; leaving, endlessly crossing, and finally returning to the plains of Saskatchewan. Hundreds of literal references to person, place, and thing combine with occurrences of the words *prairie* or *plain* to establish a symbol of the poet's imagination, a symbol whose values include despair and hope, the multiple extremes of the human condition, and the desire for and loathing toward home. Newlove and prairie are as inseparable as Newlove and the personae he adopts — the sad-funny-thin-grey man and his double, the fat man.

It is pointless to list here the poems in which "prairie" occurs as a place of reference, either as literal word, or as "plain," or as generic term for specific words, or for that matter as symbol with a great range of values. All the poems usually considered to be Newlove's "major poems" contains the word "prairie" — with one exception: "The Fat Man" (1968) is set in a city beside the ocean which, because prairie has by this time been equated to the sea and because the fat man's double is the thin man, is a trope of prairie. Significantly, the three arguably most important works in the Newlove canon — "Ride Off Any Horizon," "The Pride," and *The Green Plain* — are set in the prairie, contain the word "prairie," and are about the prairie. The critical cliché that Newlove is a prairie poet is therefore well founded even if it is not sufficiently grounded (see Barbour, "John Newlove," *ECW*, 1980). If such a grounding were undertaken, it would demonstrate that "prairie" serves a rhetorical function in the poetry: it is a fundamental topos which generates the invention of Newlove's argument, constitutes an essential figure in that argument, and establishes an ethos and a pathos. My argument, in other words, is that Newlove is a prairie poet in a rhetorical sense: his major topos is a binary pair <x,y> of which one term is or belongs to "prairie."

A book such as *Elephants, Mothers & Others* (1963) is heavily and obviously indebted to the prairie as place and experience, but as early as *Moving In Alone* (1965) Newlove uses prairie as a topos. "East from the Mountains" (*The Fat Man*, 1977, 28; for ease of reference, all citations, unless otherwise indicated, will be taken from this collection), for example, situates its narrator away from the prairie on the west coast looking east and back in time. A stanza by stanza summary:

> (1) a "single, faltering, tenuous line of melody" is "displayed by a thin man's lungs" in winter (introducing a sound/sight synaesthesia into the poem);
>
> (2) an abstract question — "what to say?" — is answered by "Oh, say nothing. / But listen to the . . . wind" (replacing the thin singer by the wind);
>
> (3-4) the wind's song, however, is silence, snow, the white land, the cold, shining sun (synaesthesia);
>
> (5-6) the injunction "To listen to the . . . wind" is repeated, and this act yields several visual effects: it removes "the idea" of hills and reveals "the real geometry of the land"; this geometry has "no single distinction to ruin / the total wholeness of sweep / of the earth" but follows "the tentative line of a gully" to become "lost at last" in Qu'Appelle where it disappears in perspective like "the tentative line" of the railway;
>
> (7-8) the wind indicates the spaces between cities and covers the sounds of rural and town speech;
>
> (9) this speech ("so hard / to hear what someone is saying," stanza 8) is compared to the singer's weak melody;
>
> (10) and the poem ends with "o tired and halting song!"

The larger figure in this poem is synaesthesia — wind-sound turns into prairie-sight — but this figure is based on two synecdoches: <wind,sound> is a synecdoche in which "sound" is part of the whole, "wind"; and <sight,prairie> represents those visual images in the poem that are parts of the seen prairie. Because they share middle terms drawn from the senses, these synecdoches combine transitively to yield <wind,prairie>. This transition more or less expresses the poem's argument, part of which is the evident intervention of the *narrator* and an appeal to the *reader* (marked by the "senses"). But the argument is enhanced by the references to the singer's breath (first and last stanzas), which suggest that the pair <singer,breath> may combine with the pair <wind,prairie>, since both breath and wind are air-in-motion, to yield <singer,prairie>. Putting the two together, we obtain the following analysis of the poem's fuller argument:

> <singer,breath> and <breath,wind> and <wind,sound> and <sound,sight> and <sight,prairie> together imply <singer,prairie>.

The argument proceeds entirely by figure: in order, these figures are synecdoche, metonymy, synecdoche, metonymy, and synecdoche, yielding the concluding metaphor. That the association of this singer with the prairie proceeds paradoxically by way of the wind which overpowers both speech and song, yet is made the vehicle of both, is countered by the naturalness of each element of the series. The reader who (intuitively) follows each step in this association, that is, who accepts this series of conventional, figurative relationships, will conclude with the poem that the "thin man" sings "prairie." In so doing, the thin man (Newlove) draws upon a traditional topos of the lyric: poem-as-song or <poem,song>.

Three Major Poems

It has been said that "Ride Off Any Horizon" (*Black Night Window*, 1968; *Fat Man*, 41) is one of the two quintessential prairie poems in Newlove's work (Wah, "Contemporary Saskatchewan Poetry," 1986, 216). A rhetorical analysis of this poem not only justifies this judgment but reveals why the judgment is correct. The title is itself a powerful combination of two symbols, a particularizing synecdoche followed by a generalizing synecdoche, repeated six times within the poem. "Ride off" is *pars pro toto* for "leaving"; "horizon" is *toto pro pars* for "prairie." Both individually and together, these two synecdoches are very rich: ride suggests several modes of travel including train and horse; horse suggests Sidney's imagination and Wallace Stevens's noble rider; horizon evokes the mythic union of earth and sky; it also suggests "any direction will do," circularity, and the end of the world (falling off the horizon is specifically noted in the poem's third part).

A triplet is repeated (more or less) at the beginning of each of the six parts of the poem: "Ride off any horizon / and let the measure fall / where it may." The second line of this triplet places one highly charged word in six contexts redolent with inevitability. "Measure" is judgment (and the larger trope of the whole triplet suggests a reading like "leave the prairie any way you can and let your judgement of it be what it is"), a musical term (recalling the musical analogy in "East From The Mountains"), and a poetical term (in prosody, measure is a rhythmical period, that is, a repeated structure of stress patterns). Measure presupposes repetition; "measure" is part of a refrain; measure therefore serves a reflexive as well as a referential function in the poem. This "measure" is inevitable, for the context established by the phrase "let [it] fall where it may" is *que sera sera* (note the ethical shrug, as in "I'm not responsible").

Yet, the measure hardly falls randomly. One of the delights in reading Newlove is his employment of the larger trope of irony (including, as it does, a continuing doubleness and duplicity): it was seen in "East" (one is enjoined to "listen" and ends up "seeing"), it occurs here again in the contrast between apparent chance and actual selection, and it will form the basis of his third major collection, *Lies* (1972). The places where the measure falls in this poem are "on" childhood memories, "among" the detritus of prairie history, "off" the edge of the known, childhood world, "on" (a night in) a prairie town, against the British in the Riel rebellion, and finally on the prairie's "other," namely, the cities elsewhere. The structure of this list of places is a movement from the general to the specific in two kinds of history — personal (moving from general memory to specific fear and specific sexuality) and public (moving from prairie history to native history) — concluded by a movement away from the prairie altogether. Each "fall" is a harsh measure indeed: the memory is hot, bad, dirty, cheap, and narrow; prairie history includes death, loss, depression, dryness, emptiness, dust, wreckage, defeat, and sadness; a childhood fear is black and annihilating; the night in town is hot and poised on the edge of wariness; the British are damned for their murder of the native peoples in the Riel uprising; and the cities are cold and empty, their inhabitants staring fixedly at the blockage of their visions. These negative judgments of prairie would have to be called mere escapism were it not for the concluding judgment of the cities. By comparison, the prairie is judged much less harshly than the city: on the prairie, it is at least possible to have a vision of an infinity of choices suggested by riding off imaginatively in any direction whatsoever; in the city, this premise simply does not obtain, for "the concrete horizon, definite, / . . . / stop[s] vision visibly."

The figures in "Ride Off Any Horizon" are four: first, the combined synecdoche in the opening triplet; second, the multiple-valued synecdoche "measure"; third, the repetition of this triplet; fourth, the amplification through repeated application of this triplet to the two kinds of prairie history (personal and public) described above. But this poem's argument is very different from the argument in "East," which moved forward by a series of carefully controlled conventional figures: here the reader is moved forward by repetition and amplification, lulled into believing the poem's appeal to chance and its apparent condemnation of prairie life, only to be awakened by the last stanza's surprising shift to an even more severe condemnation of the city. Perhaps, we say, the prairie wasn't so bad after all; perhaps, we say, here in the last stanza is the rhetorical reason for the poet's use of repetition (it makes shock possible); certainly, we agree, the vision, measured by its extension, is very bleak and becoming even bleaker. Finally, the poem contains, within these four major figures, a number of lesser figures, one of the most important of which occurs in part three:

> off the edge
> of the black prairie
>
> as you thought you could fall,
> a boy at sunset
>
> not watching the sun
> set but watching the black earth,
>
> never-ending they said in school,
> round: but you saw it ending,
>
> finished, definite, precise —
> visible only miles away.

This is a topos of apocalypse, figured by a boyhood fear of falling off the edge of the prairie where it meets the sky at the horizon. Its larger connotation includes the sailor's fear of sailing off the edge of the sea, an apt fear certainly for a migrant poet who judges the place which he escaped *from* less harshly than the place he escaped *to*. That this is a crucial, imagined-yet-real event for Newlove will become clear below.

It is fairly evident, then, that the landscape of the prairie is the locus of the early Newlove's imagination. In fact, it is landscape generally, not specifically prairie, that comprises this locus, and it is the imaginative not the "real" landscape that is rhetorically important. "The Double-Headed Snake" (48) is Newlove's clearest, early statement about "the natural sublime," that is, about the relation of the landscape to the imagination (Barbour, 277). This poem is an exercise in enthymematic reasoning based on the topos "greater and lesser." Its only lines suggest that the "feel" of the mountains and the "feel" of the prairies are somehow opposed; they move to a statement of a major premise — "What's lovely / is whatever makes the adrenalin run"; and, omitting the minor premise, they conclude "therefore I count terror and fear among / the greatest beauty." But "the greatest beauty" (applying the topos) is "to be alive," and this beauty is related to "remembrance," though it "hurts" and is "foolish."

Stanza two repeats the major premise ("Beauty's whatever / makes the adrenalin run") and substantiates the unstated minor premise by an example — "Fear / in the mountains," engendered not by cold and place but by remembrance of the

Indians' stories of "the double-headed snake," makes the adrenalin run. Part of the conclusion of stanza one (that fear is a beauty) follows. Stanza three, again repeating the premise, provides another example of "fear at night on the level plains," again engendered not by cold and place but by "no horizon / and the stars too bright" and by the remembrance of winter's blowing snow brought on by the "wind bitter / even in June." By this time the opposition in similarity between mountain and plain is rather strong, and it is explicitly stated in the fourth stanza: "And one beauty cancels another." This stanza gives three examples of such cancellations: in the mountains, the plains "seem" safe; in Saskatchewan, the mountains "are comforting to think of"; and in the foothills, both "seem easy to endure." One fear (that is, beauty) may cancel another when its place is absent. Remembrance without place inspires no fear or terror.

The last stanza therefore concludes the argument for remembrance in place as the greatest beauty (which was suggested in stanza one, is implicitly argued by each example of beauty so far given, and is clarified by the stanza on cancellation):

As one beauty
cancels another . . . ,

[like, or because, fear (experienced in mountains or plains) cancels fear (remembered away from plains or mountains)]

. . . remembrance
is a foolish act, a double-headed snake
striking in both directions

[so, or therefore, remembrance alone is foolish in both places].

Thus, *remembrance in place*, which inspires fear and terror (which are beauty), is the greatest beauty. And what is this *remembrance*? The poem does not tell us, of course, but it is evidently an active, deep, imaginative response to the landscape, involving place as experience, place as memory, but clearly going beyond both. What the poem does say, does argue, is that remembrance in place is the greatest beauty.

Beauties, in other words, may be ranked: mountains and plains are less beautiful than the fear and terror they inspire; fear and terror are less beautiful than remembrance evoked in place; remembrance in place (being alive, forgetting nothing) is the greatest beauty. The topos "greater or lesser" therefore argues strongly for the priority of the imagination in place over place itself, over feelings inspired by place, and over mere memory.

"The Double-Headed Snake" explicitly argues what is implicit in "Ride Off Any Horizon" — that the escape from an entrapment in mere place is imaginative. Contra Atwood (*Open Letter*, 1973), Newlove knows very well how to escape; and it is not surprising that she discusses neither "Ride" nor "Snake" in her early and important article. A closer reading of Newlove is Jan Bartley's amendment of

Atwood (*Open Letter*, 1974). She reads Newlove as a mixer of "positives and negatives," a poet who sees what is, despairs, and offers some hope nevertheless. Bartley claims that Newlove's hope is seen in his "courage," his "craftsmanship," and his "versatility" (47); she gives pride of place, at least thematically, to "The Pride," Newlove's second most important prairie poem, because it offers a positive vision.

"The Pride" (1977, 67), despite its technical achievement, is flawed by naïveté (at best) or racism (at worst). It is Newlove's personal ride on a troika of "image," "ghost," and "story" to a dubious affirmation of "this land is my land." Part 1 employs the by-now-familiar technique of repeating a generic term (image) amplified by specific images of the native peoples in their empty land (pawnees, teton sioux, arikaras, cree, athabaskans). Part 2 fills the spaces with the ghosts (legends) of Indians from the coast to the plains: ethlinga, raven, thunderbird, and d'sonoqua the wild woman. The distinction between memory and remembrance (see "Snake") is evoked, for the "ghosts and memories" are waiting "to be remembered." Part 3 raises a distinctly Eliotian question: "But what image, bewildered / son of all men / under the sun" is yours to worship and to make you whole? Part 4, very short, presents an image of the western country moving quickly through time from the past to the present. Part 5 gives us an image of early eighteenth-century warrior life as remembered by an old Cree and told to David Thompson, followed by the narrator's meditation on the nomadic ways of the plains peoples, moving restlessly with the wind, following the buffalo, and "wheeling in their pride / on the sweating horses, their pride." The word *pride* turns the poem sharply from its ostensible subject (the Indian on the plains) to its real subject (the narrator's attitude to the Indian and the plains, namely, pride of place). This subject is developed in Part 6 as a poem, not a story:

> Those are all stories;
> the pride, the grand poem
> of our land, of the earth itself,
> will come, welcome, and
> sought for, and found,
> in a line of running verse,
> sweating, our pride.

More specifically, "a single line" with its "sunlit brilliant image" will shock us beyond desire into the recognition that, alone but not lonely, we "have roots," and by dwelling on these "rooted words," by formulating and contemplating "'the unyielding phrase / in tune with the epoch'," we will achieve "the [desired] knowledge of / our origins, and where / we are in truth, / and whose land this is / and is to be." The knowledge is now unequivocally spelled out in the seventh and last part. We are the new Indians: they "still ride the soil in us"; "we become them";

"they / become our true forbears"; and "we / are their people, come back to life again."

The technical achievement is stunning: twentieth-century poetics (image, phrase, line) becomes the basis of a claim to the land; the implicit argument of the first six parts is revealed with consummate clarity in the last part (the images have all been "of" the Indian and "by" the poet, the "unyielding phrase" is also coloured white, and the "line of running verse" is Newlove's very own). Indeed, the proof of the truth of the claim in the seventh part is parts one to six. At the centre of that argument is a sequence of synecdoches:

images (of plains Indians) → image (as an element of poetics)
→ poem (of the land).

These synecdoches carry the argument forward to its conclusion, though they do not appear in the poem in exactly this order. In the poem, the generic term "image" comes first; it is followed by specific images of "Indian"; next, a specializing synecdoche, "ghosts," reduces native legend and mythology and prepares us for the generalized "image" and Christian overtones of the narrator's question; specific images are now replaced by the general image of "the country" from which its native peoples are absent; when a specific image of "Indian" is introduced, the poem turns, on the general term "pride," away from the Indian's false pride in the horse (a legacy of the white man) toward the true pride in the white man's poem of the land; most importantly, "image," which previously functioned as a generalizing synecdoche (as a general term for many specific images), now becomes particularizing (it is a specific part of that whole called poetry). The poet's claim to the land, in other words, is precisely that he is able to write the poem of the land by incorporating many specific instances of "image" within an abstract, general term and by changing that abstraction into a particularity within the larger context of poetry. Shelley's "unacknowledged legislator" here manipulates a take-over of the land with a sequence of binary topoi which constitute the poem's argument:

<[poet],specific images> and <specific images,image> and <image,poem> and <poem,land> imply <poet,land>.

This rhetorical analysis ("finding the thought already present in the materials," Sloan) hardly needs to be made by the reader: it is sufficient, rhetorically speaking, that s/he feels the force of the poem's argument; indeed, it is better that the force be felt and not examined, for analysis reveals the argument is naïve, is perhaps too generous: the argument is a "poetic" version of a popular response to Indian land-claims ("at least we did something with the land"). The Indian never turned the land into a poem, whereas "The Pride" does exactly that. The great technical achievement, then, seems blighted by the latent racism that Monkman sees lurking in almost every literary appropriation of Indian history by Euro-Canadian writers (*A Native Heritage*, Conclusion). Assimilation, my native students continually remind me, is but the other face of appropriation. As Lenore Keeshig-Tobias writes in a recent review of W. P. Kinsella's "Indian" writings, "Maybe now it is time for him [the narrator, Silas Ermineskin, but by simple extension also his creator] to melt back into the prairie bush" (*Books in Canada*, 1987, 25).

Some General Places

Black Night Window, then, reveals Newlove as an already skilled rhetorician, employing *figure* (chiefly synecdoche) as a *topos of place* in argument. Newlove himself has indicated his preference for symbol and synecdoche (though he did not put it quite that way, echoing Pound instead with "I try to produce the thing itself," Bartley, "An Interview with John Newlove," *ECW*, 1982, 149). The care and intensity with which Newlove persuades also undercuts the second half of Cooley's suggestion that Newlove was "the first to produce a large collection of impressive Prairie poems, written in open forms and rhythms — structures that evidently suit a large part of Prairie experience" (17). Exactly the opposite is the case: the forms are traditional, rhetorical, and can hardly be called "open," whatever that means. Nor does "Newlove's style exhibit a strong distrust of rhetoric and conventional form" (Denham, 248); it exhibits rather a profound use of both rhetoric and form. Similarly, the rhythms are classical and tightly controlled, as the second major collection (*The Cave*, 1970) demonstrates. Newlove does not think that some structures "suit the Prairie experience": his starting point is rhythm — "The first thing that brought me to poetry was rhythm" (Bartley, 1982, 141); and "It [the poem] mostly starts with sound. Rhythms for me" (143). One rhythmical device that Newlove uses is of course simple repetition (and it may be noted that repetition is the basis of all prosody), but there are others, equally potent. Off-rhyme is a favourite device: the line of melody becomes "lost at last" in Qu'Appelle ("East from the Mountains"); the sought-for poem "will come, welcome" ("The Pride"). And one poem, "The Prairie" (*Fat Man*, 80), bases part of its appeal on "figures of words" (metaplasms), or sound-play.

"The Prairie" is a poem about prairie poetry. It develops its argument by figuring words as excrementa (stanza 1), the prairie as food-source that animals transform into words (stanza 2) which turn out to be insufficient for both history and scene for the alienated narrator (stanza 3) who therefore becomes a perpetual migrant, a seeker of "god or food or earth or word" (stanza 4). The poem admits tacitly that the vision of "The Pride" has failed — but the ability of the prairie to generate poems continues unabated. The words that the poet "compiles, piles, piles" (1970; "compiles, piles, plies," 1977) are so many "dried chips / of buffalo dung" excreted by the "beasts / / the prairie fed." The buffalo roam, men roam as beasts, and the poet too roams endlessly: this is an argument for authentic belonging, but the poet knows he does not belong, that "bred / on the same earth [he] wishes himself / something different, the other's / twin, impossible thing." The migrant poet, in other words, figures *both* authenticity (the native animals and peoples are nomads) and alienation (he is "never to be at ease," that is, he is not native).

As noted above, however, one topos in "The Prairie" is sound-play. Besides the "compiles, piles, plies" of the first stanza, the poem features masses/massifs/mastiffs; "words, verbs"; "fed, foddered, / food . . . fostered" in stanza two; a string of -ing sounds (barking, meaning, roaming, something, thing, twining, meaning, migrating, seeking); and the concluding sounds of god/food/earth/word. The overt figuring of the poem as music ("East from the Mountains") has become actualized as sound distributed throughout the poem; and the sounds of the key words of the poem are repeated in the concluding line. The poem's sound points to its thought: for the poem is in effect a *distributio* of "word" (piles of excrement, derived from the prairie, insufficient to establish authentic belonging or being-in place, and a cause of endless searching) followed by a *recapitulatio* (or summary). Sound, the basis of this poem's rhythm, is closely modulated to thought, and it seems that Newlove's rhythms are not open, either.

"The Prairie" is prototypical of *The Cave* because it foregrounds the basis of any topos, the binary or "double." Not only is the double the measure of the narrator's impossible desire ("Desire is what I write about, mostly" (Bartley, 1982, 146)), but it is a major characteristic of the language used to express that desire. Thus, "the words do not suffice" is an *inexpressibility topos* (Curtius, 159-62), expressing what is ostensibly inexpressible (<expressible,inexpressible>). The "lie" emerges strongly as a motif in *The Cave* and becomes a theme as well as a technique in Newlove's next book (*Lies*, 1972). Lie and truth (<lie,not-lie> or <truth,not-truth>) are contrasted, compared, and explored in a great many poems in *The Cave*: some use the word "lie" in its double sense ("You," 14; "You Told Me," 16; "Any Place I Look At," 22; "Take These Three Months," 23; "Strand by Strand," 24; "Remembering Christopher Smart," 57); others play on the differences and similarities between "lie" and "truth" — here are poems of despair in love, of beauty within despair, of the un-reality of reality. Indeed, the title poem deals with the dichotomy of appearance and reality which is one of many variations on the doubleness of truth and falsehood.

"The Last Event," a poem about death and war (not reprinted in *Fat Man*), may show how doubleness is incorporated into the topos of place. Much of the underlying imagery is prairie: "Great heaps of captivating skulls, stretched tents of our human / skin, filling the dark plain with mementos" sets the scene. Men have searched everywhere and have departed, learning nothing. War and sickness and death are all that is left in the desolate plain, but situated in this place is a series of duplicities or paradoxes: knowledge, which kills, of course, or is born of misery and surpasses understanding to become "the consummate poise of / a falsified death"; "hands carefully searching for the slack lax vaccine / of warring love"; "fever . . . and a desire for fever"; and, everywhere too, the play on sound, manipulated to make order out of the "Black chaos . . . below."

The Cave marks a lessening in Newlove's overt use of prairie as topos. The topos has gone underground, so to speak, and is now recognized as the same topos as the sea: "The flat sea and the prairie that was a sea contain them [the men waiting in the cities]" ("The Engine and the Sea," *Fat Man*, 76). At the same time, the topos continues to function, ever more subtly, in both figure and argument. "The flower / is not in its colour, / but in the seed" ("The Flower," 97), for example, uses an organic figure particularly applicable to wheat (whose flower is the colour of the rest of the plant) to make a statement about rhetoric and poetry. It argues that the colour (of rhetoric) is not as appropriate a synecdoche for its flower (poetry) as is the seed (invention or thought) which generates it. The *flower* is in the *seed*, and not vice versa, just as invention precedes style, just as style is more than the mere dress of thought.

Lies (1972), a fuller exploration of the binary structure of topos via the double doubleness of "lie" and "truth," locates the exploration in the prairie in only a few poems, one of which is (nearly) the title poem. The speaker in "White Lies" (*Fat Man*, 101) is away from "home" (prairie) in a rainy place where the atmosphere is "Glum glue." It is "summer," and he "seem[s] to remember those winters":

> The hard-surfaced snow
> would have stretched tightly
> over the low hills, vast pearls
> glowing in the night of five o'clock,
> white lies.

The question, evidently, is *what white lies*? The snow? The pearled hills (its sounds — pearls, lies — evoking Shakespeare's "Those are the pearls that were his eyes" in *The Tempest*)? The too-early night? Or, the winter, or even the whole lot of memories? The recapitulatory position of "white lies" at the end of the stanza suggests they refer ultimately to all these memories and therefore to memory itself. The white lie of mere memory is therefore *not* the imaginative "remembrance in place" of "The Double-Headed Snake" which, we recall, was "the greatest beauty." There is no run of adrenalin in a narrator who says "The winter shines, I think."

Two other poems in *Lies*, "If You Would Walk" and "Like A River," modulate several of Newlove's concerns. "Walk" (1972, 50) recovers the horizon of "Ride Off Any Horizon" — "One long look down the undulating line of prairie / leads to the horizon"; a hypothetical walk through the fields is repeated to evoke blackbirds flying up, dust-devils swirling behind you, and an endless search for the once-seen horizon; and the walk is recapitulated in the "return through the swaying fields and rattling birds / to your own known house, of which you are the core, / more easy as you close the rasping door," recalling and changing the dis-ease of the speaker in "The Prairie." This poem has some lovely rhymes and employs a very long line, two features found also in "River" (1972, 51) which contains, in my opinion, Newlove's finest off-rhyme: "we will go on, until we are gone." This rhyme occurs appropriately in a poem in which a plane leaves one city for another as "the sunset flows like a river into the blackening sky." A plane/plain rhyme is implied, for the scene is a "prairie sunset" in a land once peopled by "raiders" and "nomads" who have now been replaced by jet-setting wanderers. An earlier identification between the plains Indian and the wandering poet is here repeated; an earlier identification between prairie and sea is here narrowed in the simile linking river and sky.

Sea and land provide the binary structure of "Why Do You Hate Me?" (*Fat Man*, 117). Briefly, the opposition between sea and land is developed as an opposition between "you" (swimming fish, curving trajectories of blood) and "I" (dull grain, planted in rows), and concluded by "you's" hearing ("hate") the opposite of "I's" saying ("love"). A fine, little poem, "Party" (1972, 69), uses the implicit opposition in a very different manner. At a party, "you" is berated by a speaker (an implicit "I") in such a way as to make clear that you/I are the warring halves of Richard Lanham's bifurcated Western self, that uneasy pair called *homo seriosus/rhetoricus* (*Motives of Eloquence*, Chapter 1). The speaker takes the opportunity for full rhetorical flight in a rhetorical question of great seriousness:

> How, trapped in rhetoric's parabola, now constrained
> to faster and faster invention, what lie
> can you explain?

It is hard to free myth (seriousness) from reality (rhetoric).

The Green Plain

Nineteen seventy-seven saw the publication of selected poems from 1962 to 1972 (*The Fat Man*), and Newlove's deliberate choice of the thin man's double for the title only emphasizes the binary topos discussed above. He published no books of new poems between 1972 and 1981 when *The Green Plain* appeared. That book (with Preface, 1981; reprinted without preface, *The Night the Dog Smiled*, 1986, 19-23) is John Newlove's master prairie-poem. The Preface, "An Accidental Life," is helpful in understanding his thematics (but not his poetics); the poem itself is a coming-home to the prairie; and the prairie is both an altogether imaginative and a completely literal place. Technically, *The Green Plain* is more accomplished than "The Pride"; philosophically, it is unmarred by questionable social assumptions; formally, it is a long lyric which places itself in direct opposition to that locus of modern poetry, *The Waste Land*, whose title it parodies. Whereas Eliot celebrated (in a mournful way) loss, Newlove celebrates (in a mournful way) recovery;

where *The Waste Land* marked an apogee of poetic despair, *The Green Plain* marks a perigee of muted hope.

In his Preface to the poem, Newlove articulates the centrality for him of a childhood vision of loss obliquely noted in "Ride Off Any Horizon": "a crystal image" of "a tangible vision of paradise" which "was broken, ruined abruptly after an eternity" by himself as a very young child. As he points out, "Most of what I write seems to me to go back eventually to that day: to the real knowledge of the existence of a veritable paradise and the real knowledge of the tiny monster, the ogre, lurking in like a shadow in that greenness" (Preface). This Blakean vision of experience within innocence, realized in the marriage of heaven and hell that is represented by his work before 1981, is now re-examined in the garden called the green plain.

Because *The Green Plain* comes at the top of a poetic cycle, one expects (and finds) that it re-interprets much of what has come before, both in Newlove's and others' works. Stanzas 1-3 restate the "crowded world" motif of "In the Crammed World" (*Fat Man*, 126): filled with humans and monsters, the world surrounds the narrator with dreams and rain; he wonders whether "civilization / [is not] only an ant-heap at last." Stanza 4 reiterates one of Newlove's central claims to authenticity in place — "Even the nomads roaming the green plain, for them / at last no land was ever enough." Escape — riding off any horizon, in other words — seems impossible and doesn't really solve anything: we prefer "small farms" to "stars," and "all the places we go / space is distorted [by us]" making "the symmetry of the universe" which is our own symmetry seem unsalvageable (stanzas 5-6). Stanza 7 asks again the question in "The Pride," but now in even more general, cosmic terms: "Which myths / should capture us, . . . / or are they the same, all of them?" In stanzas 8-10, the narrator re-dreams a figure evoking Blake's "Nobodaddy," Stevens's "major man," Pratt's "truant [Panjandrum]," and tentatively identified with "Gulliver": this "giant sprawled among stars" is a "huge, image of us" — stupid, slow to learn, capable of delight, ending in hatred. But he is "an image only," an image of a disaster which never happens though "we [do] lose joy and die." The rhetorical questions of meaning in stanza 11 include the image of "the ruined crystal" of the Preface; stanza 12 counters with an image of forests, beautiful in their own being; and 13 corrects Heraklitos: "It is not time that flows but the world." This ceaseless flow of the world moves poets (stanza 14) to speak of spring (stanza 15), and here occurs the poem's first overt reference to prairie — the flowers' perfumes and colours are "rural as the hairy crocus or urban as a waxy tulip." Stanza 16 — by its fragmented sentences, its staccato questions — suggests that the prolonged meditation is leading to the despair implied by the poem's opening lines on the meaning of civilization and echoed in stanza 17 ("Fly-speck, fly-speck"). Then comes the poem's turn and centre (stanza 18):

> And the land around us green and happy,
> waiting as you wait for a killer to spring,
> a full-sized blur,
> waiting like a tree in southern Saskatchewan,
> remarked on, lonely and famous as a saint.

Stanzas 19-22 (the last) state the poem's answer to the question of civilization and meaning: "we live / inside the stars," but "the mechanisms by which the stars generate invention / live all over and around us" and constitute "this only world." The world — variated and spreading, happy and flowing — flows also "through the climate of intelligence" which is a "beautiful confusion," seeing and marvelling. The last words are a lament: "O Memory. . . ."

The key stanza (18) of this central prairie poem situates all of "us" as well as "you" (the narrator and the reader) on a "green and happy" plain, "waiting for a killer to spring" (the killer will not spring, however), "waiting like a tree" in Saskatchewan. The topoi <poet,tree> and <tree,prairie> again yield <poet,prairie>; but the middle term *tree* measures the last of several developments in the narrative ethos: the poet was first a singer whose voice was the wind which overcame it, then a wanderer like the plains Indian, and now a rooted, remarkable tree. Such a development is insignificant unless the prairie changes from brown to green as it becomes a garden: <prairie,brown> and <brown,green> and <green,garden>, however, do imply <prairie,garden>.

Newlove's prairie garden is a peculiar and astonishing place. It is raining, but the rain is "arguments and dreams." It is crowded with "small human figures and fanciful monsters," with "forests [of people?] between us." Time's arrow circles back on itself in this garden: prehistoric animals ("dinosaurs") jostle for place with the plains Indian ("nomads"), the citizens of India, and all of us ("Fly-speck, flyspeck"). The garden is "spreading" and "flowing" and "burning." Overhead shine the cold stars.

There are many possible readings of this garden. It is first of all a centre-piece of Christian mythology, post-Edenic, and redolent with revision (the tree is the most obvious instance; the motif of immanent fall is another). It is also a contemporary version of Spenser's "Garden of Adonis" (*Faerie Queen*, III, Canto vi) with its theme of cycles of generation and regeneration presaging his later and more secular vision of mutability (VII, vi, vii, and especially vii.58). It is Blake's "Argument" in *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* — "Roses are planted where thorns grew, / And on the barren heath / Sing the honey bees. / / Then the perilous path was planted . . ." — and Pound's "*paradiso terrestre*" ("Notes for Canto CXVII et seq."), that "green world" that pulls down man's vanity (Canto LXXXI). But most of all, the garden that is a green plain is Eliot's waste land, radically challenged and updated.

Fortunately for us, Newlove has not attempted to mirror the five parts of *The*

Waste Land, though there are many structural parallels between the two poems. Eliot's bored *belladonna* is matched by Newlove's doltish "Gulliver." The flow of *time* marked by the seasonal movement in the parts of Eliot's poem is replaced by the flow of the *world* in Newlove's. Both poems employ sharp shifts in rhetorical situation — compare Eliot's "Winter surprised us" and Newlove's "Rain surrounds us" to the subsequent individualizations of "I think we are in rats' alley" (Eliot) and "Now a dream involves me" (Newlove). Eliot's use of Dante's fire is as different from his predecessor's as Newlove's. Each poem offers a synecdoche of itself in its title and central image — the waste land and the green plain are literal-imaginative places drawn from a traditional topos, namely, the topos of place. The fisherman-poet with the arid plain behind him (<fisherman-poet, waste-land>) tries to escape the waste land; the tree-poet with the green plain around him (<tree-poet, green-plain>) assumes the garden as his natural habitation.

Eliot ends *The Waste Land* on a note of practicality: the thunder has spoken three rules for living (give, sympathize, control); the narrator somewhat confusedly intends to put his fractured world into some semblance of order ("These fragments have I shored against my ruins"); and the last line is a Hindu benediction, "shantih," repeated a trinity of times. Newlove's meditation — which has teetered on the brink of despair — resolves itself in the image of a tree in a fruitful plain. The old centre (Yeats) has not held: Newlove's centre is not an attempted recovery (like Eliot's) of the old images now lying about in ruins; Newlove's centre is the imagination. Where *The Waste Land* lamented lost beliefs and attempted to put Humpty together again, *The Green Plain* offers a relation among the ideal ("stars"), the actual ("green plain"), and the imagination of the poet (the "tree") which accommodates both by being rooted in the earth and pointing to the heavens.

It may help to have Newlove's argument before us:

> The mechanisms by which the stars generate invention
> live all over and around us
> and yet we refine machines, defer
> to tricks as discovery. Everything is always here,
> and burning.
>
> There are no surprises, there is only
> what is left. We live
> inside the stars,
>
> burning, burning,
> the mechanisms. (Stanzas 19-21)

The "mechanisms" are not machines but living, burning entities teeming "all over and around us" in the green plain. One of the "mechanisms" is man, that means "by which the stars generate invention." Man "live[s] / inside the stars" as well as in the green plain: this (apparent) paradox is "what is left," the kernel of Newlove's vision. The poet's imagination mediates between heaven and earth: <plain,tree> and <tree,stars> yield <plain,stars>.

Paradox, as has been recognized since antiquity, is the core of the "human condition." Aristotle introduced a "Prime Mover" (motivated significantly like Lucretius' atoms by love) to avert the paradox of infinite regress of "first" causes; Sir Thomas Browne heartily asserted that paradox moved him to ecstasy rather than despair because it led to God; others have been less enthusiastic — the melancholia of Romantic irony, the fear of loss of belief in Matthew Arnold's "Dover Beach," Yeats's assertion of that loss, and Eliot's attempt to recover — all these attest to the centrality of paradox in the disease called humanity. (See Colie, *Paradoxica Epidemica*, for a study of paradox in Renaissance thought; Marvin Minsky's *The Society of Mind* demonstrates an "artificial intelligence" expert's attempts to escape paradox in our time.) Newlove's contribution to the continuing debate about the problem is startlingly resolute: to state the paradox in a singular manner for his time and his place, and that is all. The contrast to Eliot is sharp: Newlove is very conscious of the consequences of paradox for belief (Eliot is not); Newlove confronts paradox, directly stating one (Eliot does not); Newlove does not beg the question of escaping paradox (Eliot does). Thus Newlove can end the poem by praising "this only world . . . flowing through the climate of intelligence," which is to say engaging the imagination actively ("looking," "seeing," "marveling"). This imaginative activity goes by various names: here, "invention"; in "The Double-Headed Snake," it was called "remembrance." Recalling that "remembrance" is not memory, we see why the poem closes with the invocation "O Memory": the muse, Mnemosthene, is necessary but not sufficient for the imaginative act, and the invocation is both a lament and a recognition.

In a curious footnote to *The Green Plain*, Newlove underscores the negative aspects of his muted hope with heavy irony. "The Light of History: This Rhetoric against That Jargon" (1986, 57) alerts us by its title to distinguish "this rhetoric" from "that jargon." Rhetoric is traditionally associated with poetry; jargon is group-specific argot; and Newlove's "rhetoric" is quite clearly his own poetry. Specifically, "Light" takes up the vision of *The Green Plain*, removing death and leaving only an Eden of vigorous life lived in peace and love forever. That the poet considers the Edenic vision "jargon" is emphasized by his use of a syllogistic form (if-then). "When [if] the day comes that these cries [this rhetoric, this poetry]" will be thought "ridiculous," "amusing," and "ununderstandable," "then God bless you happy people." Happiness here depends on ignorance: being unable to "comprehend / sadness or cruelty"; saying "To Hell with it" to "understanding." Again, the ironic conditional:

> So long as the green Earth grows
> and the great stars shine, live on and love each other.

> Being is admirable and the graceful trees in the wind
> sway in concert with you in this ever deathless world.

There is more in *The Night the Dog Smiled*, of course, but nothing to match the culminatory nature of *The Green Plain*. "The Wandering Tourist Comes Home" (14) evokes the earlier wandering poet motif and a sense of (spiritual) homecoming to family rather than place. The very fine "White Philharmonic Novels" (58-68) is, like *The Green Plain*, a summing up, but a summing up of the rhetoric of poetry generally rather than of the topos of place (the technique of that poem is stated within the poem — "arrangement is all"). Hence, the findings in this paper with respect to Newlove's use of the topos <prairie,x> would have to rest with the evidence of *The Green Plain*.

Conclusion

The argument has been that Newlove's major topos is <prairie,x>. As defined above, the topoi are sources of both figure and argument, and the figures themselves may function as topoi. Thus, the notion of topos explicates the sense in which Newlove's poetry is rhetorical: its argument is drawn from a topos, <prairie,x>, which itself constitutes an argument from place. Particular examples of this topos include synecdoches such as <singer,prairie> ("East from the Mountains"), <measure,prairie> ("Ride Off Any Horizon"), <poet,land> ("The Pride"), and <tree-poet,plain> ("The Green Plain"). Other topoi (amplification, repetition, greater-lesser, metaplasm, paradox) are used in poems about both prairie and prairie poetry ("The Double-Headed Snake" and "The Prairie" are notable examples). Newlove's poetry, in other words, demands a rhetorical reading because it is rhetorically based.

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