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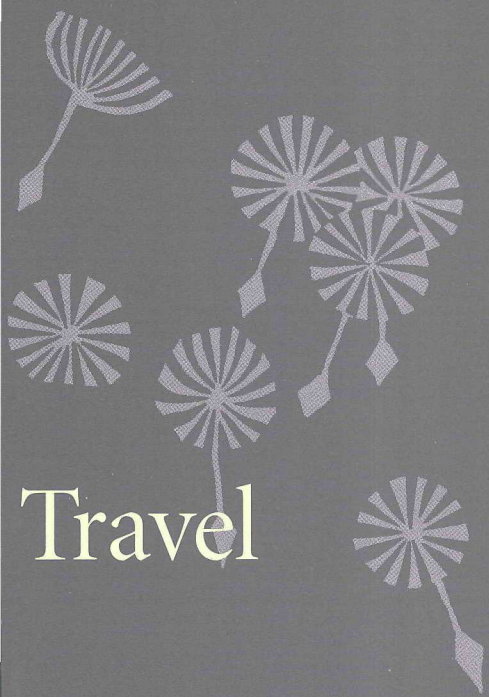

Travel

Canadian Literature / Littérature *canadienne*

A Quarterly of Criticism and Review

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Editorial

"Or Shall a More Enlarged View Prevail?"

Eva-Marie Kröller

In 1839, Thomas Chandler Haliburton wrote seven letters to the *Times*, all in response to Lord Durham's *Report*. The letters were, as historian A. G. Bailey puts it, "written at white heat," and indeed the author's anger leaps off the page even now. Among the suggestions that Haliburton found particularly preposterous was the proposal that a "Central Legislature" modeled on the American Congress should be instituted, with the purpose of "deliberat[ing] upon all external matters; also to regulate the army and navy, the post-office, the coinage, the judiciary, the commerce with foreign nations, and the wild lands." In typically salty language, Haliburton pooh-poohs each of these portfolios in turn, but he is particularly sarcastic about the difficulties he anticipates in arranging the meetings of such a "Central Legislature":

> Are the French Canadians, the Papineaus, and the Vigers, to put on their snow-shoes, and travel through several hundred miles of trackless forest to Halifax? Or are the "able, intelligent, and respectable projectors" of Nova Scotia to concede the post of honour to Quebec, to harness up their moose and reindeer, and speed over the untrodden snow to the capital? It is true there are no hotels on the road; but there would be not a few *ins* in the lakes; and such would be the harmony of these travelling legislators, that the *outs* would not quarrel for their places.

Finally, he has some vitriolic things to say about the putative meeting-place, that is, the capital: "shall it be the small island in the Tamawaska

Lake, in the heart of the forest, between the lower and upper provinces, or shall a more enlarged view prevail? Shall we regard the convenience of succeeding generations, and place it in the desert, midway between the Pacific and Atlantic?" The problem envisaged by Haliburton has, of course, since been solved by the establishment of Ottawa, although he accurately predicted some of the wrangling that preceded it.

Haliburton's vivid translation of political dogma into concrete terms has, however, more extended echoes. Every period of nationalist fervour in Canadian history appears to have come with elaborate journeys deliberately organized to follow the tracks of those who first explored the length and breadth of the country, both to pay homage to their accomplishments, and to illustrate how much more effective communication has become in the meantime—the difficulties of the territory being such that, in the resulting publications, arduous expedition and the relative comforts of tourism often exist side by side. The titles alone occasionally read like small epics. Viscount Milton's *The Northwest Passage by Land: Being the Narrative of an Expedition from the Atlantic to the Pacific, undertaken with the View of Exploring a Route across the Continent to British Columbia through British Territory, by one of the Northern Passes* (1865), for example, coincided with Confederation, while the building of the railway produced George Munro Grant's *Ocean to Ocean: Sandford Fleming's Expedition through Canada in 1872* (1873), followed a decade later by Fleming's *England and Canada: A Summer Tour between Old and New Westminster* (1884).

In *1967: The Last Good Year* (1997), Pierre Berton describes several such journeys undertaken as patriotic mnemonics on the occasion of the Centennial. In addition to "a 3,283-mile trek by paddle and portage" following "the historic voyageur route from the headwaters of the North Saskatchewan to Montreal," projects included a re-enactment of Laura Secord's walk from Queenston to Beaver Dams, a hike by the citizens of Galt to Guelph to celebrate its founder's birthday, a duplication of the march of William Lyon Mackenzie's rebels from Lloydtown to Toronto, and another of the "Loyalist trek from Edmundston, New Brunswick, to Notre-Dame-du-Portage on the St. Lawrence," as well as "a one-thousand-mile, forty-five-day canoe trip [by fourteen Nova Scotia Micmacs] from Cape Breton to Montreal to relive an 1894 treaty signing between their people and the Quebec Iroquois." The latter was pointedly undertaken in a spirit that challenged the definition of historical chronology and of "nationhood" advanced by the organizers of the Centennial.

Not all of these journeys have written records to go with them, other than the ones provided by newspaper reports, but there were also efforts to lend literary cachet to such undertakings by employing well-known writers to write about their travels in different parts of Canada. Macmillan of Canada launched a series entitled "The Traveller's Canada," with Robert Kroetsch's *Alberta* and Edward McCourt's *Saskatchewan* as inaugural volumes, followed by Harold Horwood on Newfoundland, Michael Collie on New Brunswick, Scott Young on Manitoba, Paul St. Pierre on British Columbia, and Edward McCourt on the Northwest Territories and the Yukon. (So far, I have been unable to locate volumes on Ontario and Quebec, omissions that fuel the suspicion that "The Traveller's Canada" was preoccupied with the "outlying regions," that is, everyone except Ontario and Quebec.) Judging from Eli Mandel's review of the first two volumes in the *University of Toronto Quarterly*, these books were received with muted enthusiasm because, as he probably rightly suspected, a series organized by province was less conceived as travel-writing than as federalist propaganda. "Our provinces are political, not geographical entities," Mandel concludes, and the diffuse mixture of historical, sociological, topographical, and ecological detail presented in the volumes did not convince him otherwise. Kroetsch's *Alberta* was reissued by NeWest Press in 1993, with a new chapter ("Alberta, Twenty-Five Years after *Alberta*"), an afterword by Rudy Wiebe, and a photo essay by Harry Savage, but in general the series appears to have dropped out of sight fairly soon. However, the volumes still deserve some attention because they shed an interesting light on the intersections of the factual and the fictional in authors like Kroetsch and McCourt, on the impressive knowledge of local culture these two bring to their task, and finally on the ways in which, at their best, the narratives superimpose imaginative versions of the provinces on the political ones.

While the Centennial "travels" described in Berton's book derived authority from their historical antecedents, "The Traveller's Canada" uses literary models for the same purpose. Particularly extensive are the ones evoked by Edward McCourt, who seems to have started a small industry of travel-writing, producing not only the two volumes mentioned above, but also the description of a trip across Canada trying out the newly completed Trans-Canada Highway, in *The Road Across Canada* (1965), once again published by Macmillan. To illustrate the comfort in which he and his wife were able to travel from Newfoundland to Vancouver thanks to the new road, McCourt begins by naming his adventurous predecessors, Thomas Wilby

("an excellent Englishman") who published *A Motor Tour Through Canada* in 1912, Percy Gomery from Vancouver who produced *A Motor Scamper 'Cross Canada* eight years later, and finally the photographer Ed Flickenger who completed the run in a well-publicized forty-day journey from Halifax to Vancouver in 1925 under the sponsorship of an automobile firm. From the beginning, McCourt calls upon classic travel-writers and classic authors in general to legitimize his undertaking, and the sheer number of such allusions makes one suspicious that he thought of the whole thing as a trifle crude and in need of literary enhancement. In Newfoundland, he cites Boswell and Johnson; in Nova Scotia, he is reminded of something that Charles Dudley Warner, "Mark Twain's collaborator in *The Gilded Age*," had to say about Baddeck; at Green Gables, he thinks of the Brontës' Haworth as the "only . . . other shrine so crowded with devotees"; John Buchan briefly appears when the story of "Greenmantle, the Kakabeka maiden" is rehearsed near Fort William; Boswell and Johnson appear yet again when the drive through Manitoba reminds the McCourts of an earlier tour through the Scottish Highlands; Edgar Allan Poe, Rudyard Kipling, and Rupert Brooke make an appearance in the other two prairie provinces. Vancouver, finally, seems to defy literary comparison because it strikes the author as "in some respects a monstrous creation," and one that he appears in great haste to leave behind. On English Bay, where "the worlds of modern sheltered urban man and axe-wielding pioneer reach across a century and touch one another," Mc Court observes with an almost perceptible shudder how "[e]lderly ladies and gentlemen impeccably dressed in costumes vaguely reminiscent of Edwardian days stroll along the promenade morning and afternoon," and "invalids and the very old from rest-homes near by sit in wheel-chairs and stare with dim eyes at the ships in the bay."

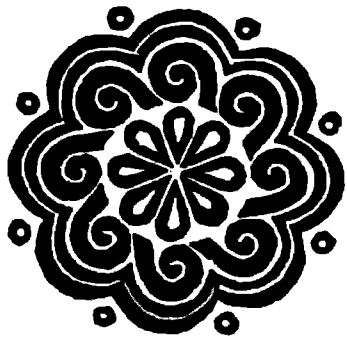
McCourt does also mention Canadian authors and artists along the way (E.J. Pratt, Fred Cogswell, Hugh MacLennan, the Group of Seven), but they rarely fulfill the ritualistic function of the British and American authors he cites. Indeed, in the one location where the work of a Canadian author appears to have single-handedly created the mnemonic of a place, he permits himself an extravagant outburst against Lucy Maud Montgomery:

> Let us not begrudge Lucy Maud Montgomery the uncritical adulation of thousands of youngsters and grown-ups. She was sentimental, she violated all the rules of plausibility, her knowledge of human nature was superficial, she had no philosophy, and, naively believing that God's in His heaven all's right with the world, no tragic view of life. But she possessed the power—beside which more sophisticated literary talents are as inconsequential vapours—to breathe life into

the people of her imaginings; and in Anne of Green Gables she created a character who has become a part of North American folklore.

However, his own efforts to seek a more sophisticated route to the *genius loci* of Saskatchewan met with a critical response that, ironically, duplicates his fastidious recoiling from the popular and the naive. In his review of McCourt's *Saskatchewan*, Eli Mandel is seriously irritated by McCourt's determination to mythologize his province as a latter-day Samarkand and Troy, but as a native of Estevan and therefore a connoisseur of "the *real* Saskatchewan," he is particularly annoyed by McCourt's determination to make the place into a lush pastoral: "'A man might do worse,' McCourt remarks, 'than retire to Maple Creek and grow hollyhocks.' He might, but I can't imagine what it would be."

Mandel's wit makes, I think, an apt conclusion for reflections that began with an account of Haliburton's testy response to the presumptions of his own age. Much remains to be done in the research of Canadian travel-writing in general, and in "national" cross-country travel in particular, which did not always fulfill the kind of mandate its sponsors had in mind and required adjustments in title, selection of material, and explanatory prefaces and post-scripts to make it "work." Solange Chaput-Rolland's *Mon Pays, le Québec ou le Canada?* (1966) deserves a close look in this regard, as does Eugène Cloutier's *Le Canada sans passeport: regard libre sur un pays en quête de sa réalité* (1967)—but that's enough material for another editorial.



Elana Woolf

Distressed Façade

A building not in time with its sign.
Sun-baked, wind-wiped, dirty-white

ivy-eyed.
What weather won't make money will—
on a dime.
Distressed façade—
brown brick (behind baked layers of old paint)
has a line—it's good and hard.
Noon cuts me some sun but the heat doesn't reach.
Not all that's light warms.
Magnificent March
unscrupulous day—
ironic as Antarctica—
too human-cold for sex yet all ablaze.

Norman Ravvin

Tragic Tourism and North American Jewish Identity:

Investigating a Radzanow Street, a Mlawa Apple and an Unbuilt Museum

You must remember that my past is over there, across the water. There is none of it here . . .

–Henry James

Travel in Soviet Europe was tourism at its most predictable: the stone-faced government guide; strict restrictions on where one could and could not travel; and at its most strange, legendary disappearances, people bundled into the trunks of KGB cars when caught photographing their ancestral home. Even this tableau—a slapstick exit if it weren't so awful—had an expected quality to it when narrated to a North American. Post-Cold War travel in Eastern Europe is the direct opposite, with the market economy making headway in most corners of the ex-Communist countries, and a new willingness among North American Jews to explore parts of Europe that had once been home to their forebears, but which they had rejected in the postwar years as a source of shame. A motivating factor behind this willingness to travel to Eastern Europe is the increasing role played since the 1980s by the Holocaust in North American Jewish identity. Among American and Canadian youth, tours linking visits to Auschwitz and Jerusalem have helped map out a view of history both tragic and triumphant that is all but normative in contemporary communities. A related, but different, development is the increasing numbers of survivors and their children who visit both the sites of killing centres, and their ancestral towns and cities.

Writing in 1992, Jack Kugelmass pointed to a "current American Jewish fascination" with Poland, while setting this fascination in historical context (384). Totally forgotten, as Kugelmass points out, is the fact that after World War I, Jews were travelling from America to Eastern Europe

> in significant numbers; there were American travel agents and European steamship lines advertising regularly in the pages of the mass-circulation Yiddish-language daily, the *Forverts*, and, according to the newspaper accounts, during the 1920s transatlantic liners were filled during the summer months with Jews heading to Poland or the Soviet Union. It is true, of course, that many who made this journey did so for motives quite different from those that guide the leisure-oriented tourist today. Quite a few travelers were sent as delegates of various *landsmanshaftn* (hometown mutual aid societies) to bring vital relief money to fellow townspeople in Eastern Europe; others went to see families they had left behind, or to start new ones by finding a spouse; some went as artists and scholars to perform, paint, or study. (385)

The idea of any form of tourist trade between Poland and North America after World War II might only be proposed with the blackest of humour. And the trend for many North American Jews, for at least thirty years, would be to evade, or repress, or simply reject the memory of Eastern Europe as home.[1] In his recent study, *Delayed Impact: The Holocaust and the Canadian Jewish Community*, historian Franklin Bialystok points to this erasure of Eastern Europe in the imagination of postwar Canadian Jews:

> immigration barriers had been lifted, economic prosperity and the emerging welfare state had erased the vestiges of the Depression mentality, and Israel had been established . . . . These individuals were bent on advancing from the fringes of the Canadian mosaic into the mainstream of Canadian society. They were a community in transition, from the immigrant neighbourhoods to the suburbs, from the plethora of storefront synagogues, union halls, and ideological groups to large-scale congregations and service clubs. Yiddish culture . . . was vanishing in the 1950s, as the Jewish community had gained the acceptance of most Canadians . . . . As for remembering the Holocaust, for most Canadian Jews it was a painful reminder of Jewish powerlessness, of submission to unbearable dehumanization . . . . Simply put, the vast majority of Canadian Jews remained estranged from the memory of the Holocaust. (69-70)

One form of vicarious return available to speakers of Yiddish and Hebrew after the War was the *Yizkor Bukh*. Meaning simply Memory Book, these collections of survivors' memorials to their towns and cities appeared in startling numbers, portraying prewar European life—characters, landscapes and folkways that had been obliterated. Survivors were asked to reminisce about life before the War, while photographs and detailed kinship records were often included. But with the fall-off of Yiddish, and the relative ignorance of Hebrew among young North American Jews, *Yizkor Bicher* quickly became the focus of scholars' interest and the reverence of the elderly.

Kugelmass points to a number of reasons for the resurgence of Jewish travel to Eastern Europe in the 1980s, as well as for its continued popularity

today: a general 1970s fascination with genealogy; a new responsiveness and improved conditions in Eastern Europe; the "emergence of the Holocaust as a subject of popular Jewish discourse"; and the impact of TV shows like *Holocaust* (1978) and the film *Shoah* (1985), which made Poland seem less remote (though not necessarily an attractive vacation option) (Kugelmass 406-07). The majority of Jews who visit Eastern Europe do so as part of organized tours, stopping at death camps, sites of Jewish resistance, and often concluding in Israel. Hasidim from America and Israel visit the burial sites of their grand rabbis, leaving written pleas for providence, much as visitors do at Jerusalem's Western Wall. Another brand of returnees travel to Poland by themselves, or trailing a half-hearted relative; these people "rent a car and head to the town, village, or city that they, their parents, or their grandparents came from" (388). These travellers, according to Kugelmass, are "not tourists in the strict sense" because they do not intend to enjoy themselves (388). They "go to Poland to see the past," but why go somewhere, Kugelmass wonders, "with the intention of not having a good time?" (396, 402). I asked myself similar questions as I made my way from Denmark to Warsaw in the late spring of 1997. Certain suppositions haunted my decision to go—I feared being swept up in the contemporary motivation connected with visiting Poland—but I had a very specific and personal motivation: I was writing a novel set partly in contemporary Poland, which I didn't feel I could portray without a proper visit.

Many of us have history on this continent that is only one or two generations deep. I am a westerner by birth, and a first-generation Canadian. My mother was born north of Warsaw, my father south of Moscow. And even though my mother's family first settled in Canada at one of the semi-legendary Jewish farming colonies in south Saskatchewan, and my father's family were among the oldtimers of Calgary's century-old community, I have always, quite unconsciously, thought of my family history as having taken place in Europe. An interesting view, considering that only one close relative, my maternal grandmother, spoke at length about her life in Poland. My father—the most Canadian of Jewish types—could only joke about the two or three words of Russian he'd learned in his father's house, one of which was *chleb*, bread.

During my teenage years and twenties the vogue for return trips to eastern Europe took shape, but this was not an open possibility among many of my closest family members. One uncle did go to Russia in 1972, mostly to see the Canada-Russia hockey series in Moscow. And my grandmother talked constantly about her two home towns near Warsaw—Mlawa and

Radzanow—without any inclination to revisit them. Jewish Mlawa and Radzanow had been obliterated along with most of her family. *What was there to visit?* was the question that didn't need to be asked.

Four years after my grandmother's death, I began work on a novel that is set partly in her old home towns. I've used these places before—in an earlier novel and short stories—but in those cases my grandmother's stories and my own research made up for the fact that I had never been to Poland. The action of the more recent novel takes place, in part, in contemporary Mlawa and Radzanow, as well as in contemporary Vancouver. To get things right I would have to go to Poland. But still I hesitated. Somehow, I resisted becoming part of the wave of North Americans exploring eastern Europe, a group one critic has called "tragic tourists" (Lippard 118).[2]

Since the novel I've been at work on deals with the entanglements of Jewish life in Poland before the War and not with the Holocaust, I was not drawn to visit the places of the dead—Treblinka, in fact, is only an hour and a half from Warsaw by car. My goal was to imagine Poland before the War, as a place of living Jews, and after the War, as a place of living Poles, to some extent haunted by the Jewish dead. In telling the story of my travels I want most of all to tell a good story, but also to examine what Canadian Jews might mean when they refer to "our history." At the same time, I hope to suggest some of the dangers and difficulties of the kind of tour of recovery, or better, discovery, that I embarked on.[3]

It happened that the demands of foreign travel and the demands of fiction were jointly served by my decision to hire a guide in Poland. Sometimes, when I say I'm a writer, the first question asked is, *Where do you get your ideas?* Young writers wonder this as well, as they try to decide what it is exactly they're supposed to describe in fiction. In my decision to bite the bullet and pay Zbigniew Polakowski his fee of $100 US a day in exchange for his intimate knowledge of the area north of Warsaw, I inadvertently stumbled upon an unusual method for creating a character: I found I'd rented one.

The morning Polakowski came to my hotel in Warsaw to meet me and discuss our travel plans, he was dressed quite formally, as a businessman might. He carried a wide portfolio in which he had many maps. These he showed me to make a point—to draw a line around the Mlawa forest on the town's outskirts, or to mark off the distance between one town and another. But once we'd joined up a few days later to look around Warsaw, driving a car Polakowski had rented because his was in the shop, I came to appreciate

his sense of humour and likeability. There was eccentricity too—the way he would repeat place names in a tone appropriate for the consideration of philosophical terms. Vis*tula*, he would say into the windshield, and then *Vis*tula, as though the change in emphasis deepened the meaning of the word, suggested its full power and importance.

Polakowski was average-sized, maybe sixty-five. He wore his hair quite long, parted on one side and brought around over his forehead and the crown of his head in a way that, on him, looked rakish. A band of hair across the back of his head was mustardy yellow, but the rest was white. He was probably handsome as a young man, whereas when I met him he exuded character and confidence, as well as humour. He was a boy during the War, and his father was executed at Katyn by the Russians, along with hundreds of Polish officers, but he had an impassive view of this: his father had fought in World War I, been decorated, and when you fight, it's always possible that you will suffer the consequences, and not your enemy. He said nothing of a mother, or siblings, of a wife or children. The most personal story he told had to do with the time he guided the Lauder family—Ronald Lauder, the heir to the Estée Lauder fortune among them, who was looking into opening a centre in Warsaw that would support a revival of the Jewish community.

"The man really got me in trouble," Polakowski said, "because when we said goodbye he gave me a bottle of perfume, which he told me only VIPs could get. It was made from a special formula. And I gave it to my girlfriend, who loved it. When she'd used it up she asked if I could get her some more. Which of course I couldn't. *An energetic man like you?* she wondered. But I couldn't explain to her," Polakowski laughed, "that I couldn't just call up Ronald Lauder."

The few other personal things I learned from Polakowski were connected with his political views, and other experiences he had had guiding rich Americans around Poland. There seemed to be an endless stream of these men and their families returning to view the sad little settlements to which their parents had bid good riddance. Of one man, Polakowski recalled the turmoil when his car, with the man and his wife in the back seat, got stuck in mud near a village around midnight. The whole village woke up to help them. And the method the gathering crowd came upon to get the car up on the road was for as many men as possible to encircle it and simply lift it up and out. Though Polakowski said it was obvious the villagers wanted nothing in return, the American insisted on giving each of them five dollars.

"Five dollars!" Polakowski laughed. "In those days a dollar was a fortune. The rent for a month might be two dollars fifty, so to them this was a fortune."

Polakowski told another story of a man who was a collector back home in America of steam locomotives, and who became excited when Polakowski said he knew where one was abandoned in the woods. When they arrived at the site, they found that the locomotive had been picked half clean for scrap, which astounded the collector. To him, this was a kind of abomination. Still, after he'd taken photographs he concluded that the remnants of the machine were worth buying. As they drove off, Polakowski noticed that they were being followed, and soon another car cut them off from the front. They were pulled from the car. The American's camera was confiscated, as were Polakowski's papers. When Polakowski explained the point of the visit to the police who'd headed them off, one of them shouted, "The man is not only a spy, he is crazy!"

My visit to my mother's ancestral towns—Radzanow and Mlawa—included none of this familiar Soviet slapstick. It began at a deluxe hotel in downtown Warsaw, where Polakowski arranged for our snappy rental car. Driving out of the city we passed what seemed at the time to be an amazing sight, so strange in retrospect it is almost unbelievable; a dead man on the road, his head twisted weirdly, his scraped belly showing where his shirt and motorcycle jacket had been pushed up from his waist. The man's big body was at a distance of fifteen feet from the motorcycle, and two helmets, off in another direction, completed the triangle of awful luck on the blocked roadway. Cars passed in the oncoming lane and slowed as drivers stared. Police marched at a distance from their cars. No ambulance was nearby. The man might have been dead no more than ten minutes. This created an optimal contrast, with the woman we passed a block away pushing her dog into the back seat of her car, and another, her hair dyed red, lighting a cigarette outside the iron gates of an ornate palace.

There was rain on the roadway. On the outskirts of Warsaw, Soviet-era housing blocks stood twelve stories high surrounded by trees. We skirted the Vistula, which looked like a long, wide brown bath of mud, and then we veered away along the main motorway. During martial law, on a Sunday like this, one might see ten cars between Warsaw and Gdansk. Gas was rationed and so expensive that highway driving was a luxury. We passed slow-moving toy-sized Fiats driven by red-faced men, their families packed in as tight

as luggage. Riding a bike along the side of the highway was a long, lean man, sitting high on his seat, a flattened hat crooked on his head.

By 9:30 we saw the turn-off for Radzanow, where the roadway crosses the Wkra River. We wound along a road lined with poplar and lime trees.

"Very delicate landscape," Polakowski sighed. "The colours are so beautiful. Fresh green. Fresh and green." And so they were. He pointed to a stork sitting on its nest, which rested atop an electricity pole, and told me there had been a campaign to set the nests above the poles on iron platters, to protect the birds from the wires. We passed a shrine at an intersection, where the devil was traditionally thought to waylay travellers. This was the customary legend that obscured the facts, which are that at the crossroads, in the old days, thieves would hide out, waiting for their victims to pass by.

We approached the centre of the settlement called Radzanow on what my grandmother used to call the Mlawer Gasse, a long, winding roadway. A stork landed, wings wide. There were cows in the field behind houses, and mist over the escarpment where the Polish army made a hopeless three-day stand against the Germans in the first days of World War II. All this seemed a landscape from another planet—a different world entirely from the ferocious getting and spending that had overtaken Warsaw since what Polakowski called the "change in the system." The circus-like hubbub at the casinos on Jerozolimskie, the absolute elation on the faces of young women as they took off their coats in the casino's foyer. The clown act as every second man played at being James Bond, snapping open his cell phone and trotting this way and that, doing some bit of business above the roar of city traffic.

Compare this with the situation in Radzanow, once called a town, but now demoted to what the authorities call a settlement. A thousand people, an hour or so north of Warsaw, amid farm plots, ancient pine forest, the winding single lane that gives way to one of the three or four long main streets that meet at the centre of things, which was once a market, but is now an oblong patch of grass, trees, and paved pathways pointing toward the church where people are gathering on a Sunday morning, coal smoke in the air, the church bell ringing, it seems, a thousand times.

Polakowski stops one old man, explaining that we'd like to see where the Jewish cemetery was. The man explains that it would not be safe for him to be seen talking to us, and he will not show us the cemetery, because the same people are in power who were in power under the Soviets, and he would be a fool to be seen going there. All of this said, seemingly with plea-

sure, not rancour—a breezy brush-off. The next man Polakowski stops is older, at least eighty. He explains that he doesn't live in Radzanow, but has come from five kilometers away to attend church. He is thin, wrapped in a boxy raincoat, a cap on his shrunken-apple head. He says he knows who has the key to the synagogue, if we'd like to go inside. Off he goes, then returns and points at a house a few doors off the central square. We go around back, and Polakowski raises his eyebrows at the set of house keys hanging in the door, a big city guy amused by small town ways. He knocks. A young man answers. He wears relatively expensive-and casual-looking American-style clothes. They talk in Polish. The man shakes Polakowski's hand, then mine. He has boyish good looks, but there is something dead in his eyes, as if he might rather be asleep. He tells Polakowski—as Polakowski explains to me in short-hand translation—that he doesn't have the keys to the synagogue but he can get them for us. His sister is in charge of the library, which is now housed in the synagogue. As he tells us we can go to get them—a drive, he says, of about eight kilometers—the man's father walks up, holding two handfuls of neatly cut kindling. He is stout, with a round face, sharp pouches under his eyes, very little hair except on the back of his head, and crooked teeth centred in a red face. The old man and his son are called Shnigorsky, and the elder Shnigorsky remembers one name connected with my family in Radzanow. He looks at me, pleased, as he tells Polakowski about the Margulies he was chums with as a boy. He remembers what this man's father did, but somehow this information eludes me as we begin our little tour.

We walk up one side of Radzanow's central square and then the other, as the elder Shnigorsky points at houses that were once owned by Jews. Here, he tells Polakowski, a man named Mitgang did such good tailoring the nobility came from the surrounding area to do business with him. Another was a glazier. Here, Margulies had a shop. There Ketlarchik produced cooking oil. The vacant building by the church was Krygierman's, both a tailor and a baker. He points to the building, and even a particular window where a rabbi named Mayevsky lived in an attic apartment with his daughters. I wonder, why does this man remember the daughters? In what strange way were they bound to their father, or together, and how did they become rooted in Shnigorsky's imagination? There is no mention of a rabbi's wife, as if it would be improper to talk of such things.

As Polakowski and the older man talk, the younger Shnigorsky offering little corrections and additions in Polish, another apple-faced octogenarian

moseys up. He eyes us a little warily, says a few words to Polakowski, shakes my hand. I notice that along with this man's appearance we have begun to draw a crowd. Shiftless-looking men of all ages lean on bikes, sit on stoops, or just stand and stare, making no move to come closer, but remaining focused on us as we circulate. I take pictures through the haze of coal smoke. Eventually we get in our car and drive off toward another settlement, this one even tinier than Radzanow. We stop in front of the old man's daughter's house, and honk. Four big dogs come yapping across the yard at us. A young man—the daughter's husband—shakes hands all round. Then the daughter appears, looking as though she has just risen from bed, and returns to the house for the key to the old synagogue. It turns out to be at least four inches long, with two sharp teeth—a skeleton key out of Edgar Allan Poe—and hangs on a chain that clatters the way I imagine a jailer's keys might.

We rumble back along the roadway, passing newish chicken coops that the Shnigorskys explain were built on government loans, but have almost all been bankrupted by competition from bigger businesses in Germany. The father and son are reasonably prosperous for this place, with 36 hectares under plow, a crop of rye and potatoes, plus seven cows, but they laugh when Polakowski exclaims that they are rich men. A rich man in Radzanow, it seems, is a comical idea.

Back at the centre of Radzanow we open the red brick synagogue. It is a hundred years old and smells of mould and damp wood. The *bima* and the ark have vanished, as have the rows of seats. The woman's balcony is in place above us, with views out over the hodge-podge rooftops of the town. (My grandmother told a startling story of a marriage ruined when part of this balcony collapsed during the wedding service.) In the sanctuary, kids' books and Polish history texts are lined up neatly on wooden shelves. The old man points to a shelf he says holds Jewish books, which isn't the case, but I do run across a shelf of material dealing with the Holocaust. Then we are outside again. In my haste I forget to depress the reverse button before rewinding a finished roll of film. I turn the reverse crank and hear the sound of film breaking inside my camera. I open the camera's back, knowing the last 36 shots—of central Warsaw, Lazienki Park, the Warsaw Ghetto and our approach to Radzanow are wrecked. Well. So.

We'll go, says Polakowski, to the cemetery. This calls for another slow rumble along narrow roads. Past the mixture of hundred-year-old timber houses, without plumbing or electricity, and more modern stucco buildings

like that of the Shnigorskys. We stop on a sandy road on the edge of a tiny family farm. We get out. Pass a dog tied up, growling low, and brown hens scattering. Wood has been cut but left unprotected in the recent spring rains. The younger Shnigorsky takes a long leisurely piss on the firewood. We walk up a hill, a soft rise in the landscape marked by a wire running between low fence posts, and stand on a stretch of grassland. This was once the Radzanow Jewish cemetery. Nothing remains of it, but Shnigorsky the younger tells Polakowski, and he me, that if you came here with a spade you would find gravestones. Now, I consider, there's a hopeless kind of work to pass a Sunday with.

We return to the car and rumble off through the mud. Polakowski, with a conspiratorial look, tells me the young man has suggested we have a drink. There is a bar nearby where we can stop for what he calls a *kufelek*, which means, precisely, a small beer. The bar is housed in a trailer that stands in the centre of a muddy piece of ground. Inside, benches and tables are squeezed up against the plywood walls, looking oddly like indoor picnic tables. A woman stands behind a raised counter at the back. She has a young, hard, intelligent face, dyed blonde hair, eyes that squint a bit against the exhale of her cigarette. I ask for five beers, but she brings ten, and there's laughter as she takes five back. Our younger guide opens two of the outsized bottles by angling their tops together, hands me one, and proceeds, open-throated, to pour the entire bottle directly into himself as if we've been doing hard labour and he's got a mighty thirst to quench. There are three young men seated in the bar, lean, hardy and good-looking. They smoke and down beer with ostentatious pleasure while their elders attend Sunday services. Each one points his cigarette into the heaping ash tray and slowly turns it so the glowing butt drops off. Two older, somewhat scruffy men come in and sit with us. As the smoke rises and the beer goes down, Polakowski becomes entranced by a story the men tell—which I will only find out about later, since there is no opportunity to shout translations across the room.

The young men wonder first why I'm there. He's a Jew, explains Polakowski. They are surprised. Had they mistaken me for some roving *National Geographic* photographer?

Ask him what happened to Aronek, one of the young men tells Polakowski. *Maybe he knows what happened to Aronek.* The others laugh. Aronek, it turns out, was a Jew who owned a house near the synagogue; the lone Radzanower to return alive from the death camps. He came back to arrange

to leave for good, and he engaged the help of the second shrunken-apple-headed man we'd spoken to, who'd approached us warily in the central square, asking why we'd come before he shook my hand. Aronek had left some things with this man—six chairs, a bedspread—and made arrangements for him to guard his house. He'd be back to take the things away. Where to, no one knew. But he vanished. Aronek vanished. And the rumour went around that his supposed guardian had killed him in order to keep his property—the chairs, the bedspread, and the house, his prize. The man was accused. He denied the crime. He was half believed, and came up with alibis—Aronek had sent him letters from his new home. *Well, show them,* his townsmen told him. A week later he claimed the letters had been buried in his grandmother's coffin. *We'll dig her up,* the men offered. But here the joking stopped, and the apple-headed man—a younger version of himself, probably wearing a younger man's version of the same oversized cap—managed to evade punishment. He lives to this day, at least until the smokey Radzanower Sunday on which I saw him, in Aronek's little red brick house by the shul. Eighty-two years old. Possibly a murderer, hating the sight of me, as I might be some grand-grand-nephew come Aronek inheritance hunting. All of this came out in the course of five or ten minutes of chatter among thirty-year-old men who knew every in and out and irony of a story more than fifty years old.

It is a dangerous story, Polakowski says to me as I put away the last of a beer and we get up to go. Our young guide is drunk, and we shake his hand as he wavers unsteadily in the mud lot outside the bar.

There was no afternoon finer than this in all my time spent in Poland—this wild eruption of the past, still so present in the imaginations of young and old men, whom we'd found, absolutely by chance, wandering along the old market street, and then downing outsized Polish beers in a trailer decked out as a bar. Even while it was happening I wished a friend of mine who makes documentaries were there to capture it all. But of course, if a camera had been there, if the event had been planned, it could not have turned out this way at all.

After Radzanow I spent a fruitless afternoon in Mlawa—my grandmother's second home—a bigger place half an hour down the road, with a modern economy focused on technology and many new flats built on top of bulldozed prewar structures. Strangely, some transformation overtook Polakowski—an almost Alice-in-Wonderland deflation

of his energy and mettle. He seemed to have lost his interest in engaging passersby in conversation, and suggested I go off for a walk myself.

In Mlawa the synagogue is gone—forgotten—and the cemetery on the outskirts of town is a typical hodge-podge of commemoration and desecration: shards of tombstones, broken up at the order of the occupying Germans, have been gathered and reassembled into an oddly brutal sculpture, made mostly of cement. Only at a distance can a visitor tell that the sticks rising from the cemetery earth belong to a partially submerged candelabrum. The Nissenbaum Foundation, a Warsaw-based philanthropy devoted to refurbishing ruined Jewish cemeteries, has erected a plaque, a brick gate, and a wrought-iron fence that surrounds the burial ground. But the locals have picked the fence apart, removing nearly half of it in the dead of night to make use of it on their own property.

This hopeless cycle of energetic efforts met with vandalism haunts every Nissenbaum project I saw in Poland. The saddest example was in the big old graveyard, dating back to the mid-1700s, across the Vistula in Praga, once a Jewish quarter of Warsaw. There the Germans had forced slave labourers to drag masses of huge stones into piles; gravestones were folded into each other like playing cards, to be used as paving stones. But this gathering is as far as the work went. Polakowski thinks six men could have moved each stone together. And Jews, he reminds me, did this work. But the memorial where a few uprooted stones were gathered and set upright in a circle has been smashed; the front gate and commemorative plaque is splattered with purple paint. Garbage and liquor bottles are scattered around. Is this some kind of redemptive work, to go on repairing and then having these things destroyed? It strikes me as a task out of Beckett or Camus. A hopeless existential challenge. The stones given special attention and set into the memorial have suffered the worst indignity, a second smashing, while those left in piles, unmoved since the War, seem to sleep, peaceful, under the wavering birch. To me, this is a truly awful place. Granted, it conjures the awfulness of the Germans, the stupidity of their ideas, the depth of lousiness of having to do a dishonest day's work for them. But the place itself is awful. A graveyard of graves in tree shadow, within earshot of the Warsaw traffic.

It seems to me now that my disappointment in Praga—my sense of the utter devastation wrought by the vandals of memory—and my satisfaction at Radzanow were not merely coincidental. Rather, these

two places taught me that the possibility of recovering something of the past is most real where there is some form of connection, however tenuous, between the traveller and the place, a fuller sense of why one has gone to a site: an actual name or house or network of livelihood to be traced. All of this, quite to my surprise, reared up at me at Radzanow, where it seemed I could enter the daily life of the place, even for an afternoon, and become a part of the present, which was full, in some shadowy way, of my family's past. As the sites I visited grew larger, and my situation in them more anonymous, such possibilities grew fewer. In Mlawa I walked as much like a ghost as anything else, alien, looking over the shoulders of the overflow church crowd to try and see what made the people go down on their knees at once. Only in the market, when I asked how many zlotys for an apple, did I enter the city's fabric for a moment. The market woman smiled, telling me that if I only wanted one I could have it for nothing. This gift, and her smile, seemed to be a token of welcome, but based on what urge I couldn't say. Possibly she wanted to extend a courtesy to a foreigner as a kind of local gallantry. In the Praga graveyard, there was no hope of any such courtesy. The soughing trees and heaps of gravestones were capable only of breaking one's heart, and they defied any likelihood of a link between the past and the present afternoon. On the edge of the burial ground, in a century-old timber house that Polakowski assured me had once belonged to Jews, a Polish couple washed their car in the sun while their poodle chased soap suds in the street. Somehow Radzanow, a place empty of Jews, turned me into the receiver of a story alive enough to be called dangerous. These were the paradoxes of my Sunday travels in Poland. To get to my history I had to avoid the obvious, the sacred—in Polakowski's words—sites of commemoration and mass death, and explore the most hidden of places where a Canadian Jew's history was fairly freely taken hold of under the eye of nesting storks, over an outsized beer at a corner bar not far from where my grandmother was born in the days before the Bolsheviks.

A number of things have happened since, which have altered the way I initially viewed my visit to Poland—and more concretely, have led me to wonder if I was in control of events as they unfolded there. In the bar at Radzanow, the younger Shnigorsky insisted that he knew a man who had an "archive" connected with the Jews of the town. Would I come and see it? But I had only the afternoon to travel on to Mlawa, and thought I should stick to my plans. Now I'm haunted by the possibility that

further opportunities for discovery were missed. And even stranger: upon my return I attended a wedding in New York City where I met Radzanowers, most of them survivors of the camps, and in one case, of the perverse experiments of Nazi doctors. I proudly told one of these men my tale of Aronek's murder, and he snorted at me, laughing, insisting that he knew Aronek well, and had just visited with him in Israel.

These two codas to my visit to Poland—however confusing and haunting—provide powerful contradictory evidence to one of the key claims made by Jack Kugelmass in his investigation of the impact of "tragic tourism." Poland, he argues, for its Jewish visitors, is a "stage":

> For American Jews, Poland is filled with ready-made props—ruined synagogues, doorposts carrying the impressions of long-removed mezuzahs, crumbling cemeteries, and death camps. These objects are deafening in their silence, and they are scriptless; almost no one within Poland is capable of writing texts and labels for the country's Jewish monuments. Moreover, the country's viability as a stage is enhanced by the fact that it is nearly devoid of actors who might contest the presence of these foreign visitors or attempt to wrest control of the performance. (414-15)

In James Young's recent collection, *At Memory's Edge: Afterimages of the Holocaust in Contemporary Art and Architecture*, a similar portrait appears of Poland as a stage, a mute backdrop against which rites of memory are enacted. "Without the historical consciousness of visitors," Young writes, the sites viewed by tragic tourists "remain essentially indifferent to their pasts, altogether amnesiac" (62). I found quite the opposite at Radzanow, where my own relative silence and modesty allowed the site's past—however accurately it was told—to erupt. By the offer of access to a mysterious archive, or through the legend of Aronek, Poles took every opportunity to "wrest control" of my visit. Zbigniew Polakowski's attentive translation, along with his rare editorial comments ("It is a dangerous story"), had much the same effect.

The richness of possibility that awaits travellers to Eastern Europe is suggested by the recent scandal surrounding the discovery, in Drogobych, a town once in Poland but now in Ukraine, of murals created during the War by the Polish-Jewish author and artist Bruno Schulz. Schulz, it's said, painted pictures out of Grimms' fairy tales for the nursery of a child of a Nazi. After the War the villa that contained them was subdivided, and the nursery became a pantry, where the murals disap-

peared behind a coat of rose-coloured paint and the trailing garlic of a poor Drogobych couple. The artwork was uncovered by a German film maker who had come to Schulz's home town to prepare a documentary on his life. Though the film maker went to some effort to initiate a restoration of the villa and the creation there of a Schulz museum, representatives of Yad Vashem, the premier Holocaust memorial institution in Israel, spirited the murals out of Drogobych. In the midst of all this, Yehuda Bauer, the well-known Israeli historian and Holocaust scholar, was reputed to have said, "Who cares about them in Drogobych?" (Bohlen 10). Bauer's comment confirms Kugelmass's view that Jews return to Poland to act upon it, as if it were a stage, to confirm there memories and attitudes already held. But imagine the strangeness and power, the unpredictability, of a Schulz museum in the author's home town. Imagine the contest of memory that might unfold under the roof of a villa, once owned by Jews, stolen by a Nazi, where one of the greatest modern Jewish writers was ordered to decorate a child's room with fairy tale pictures. Such a place would present an alternative to tragic tourism as we know it, and allow for a different kind of travel in search of a lost past. It seems the opportunity for such a visit has been lost, but regardless of the difficulty of airline connections, the shortage of hotel rooms, and the unlikelihood of a Galician guide of Polakowski's calibre, I'd go.

NOTES

This paper is dedicated to the memory of Zbigniew Polakowski.

1 The 1959 collection *Goodbye, Columbus* included one of Philip Roth's breakthrough stories, "Eli, the Fanatic," which satirized the suburban American horror of all things European and religious. The "scandal" caused by Roth's youthful fiction was partly based on his willingness to address and satirize contemporary taboos. Related to Roth's fictional scenario was the rejection of Yiddish and "shtetl culture" in favour of Hebrew and modern Israeli Zionism.

2 Lippard applies this term to visitors to "tourist targets" that include "murder sites, concentration camps, massacre sites, places where thousands have been shot down, swept away in floods, inundated by lava, herded off to slavery," and many more (118). I make use of the term to refer to the specific attitudes and habits that have developed around visits to Holocaust-related sites. It seems to me unproductive to compare such visits to those made to sites of natural disasters.

3 A provocative discussion of the relationship between Canadian Jews and Eastern European history appears in Richard Menkis's essay "Historiography, Myth and Group Relations: Jewish and Non-Jewish Québécois on Jews and New France." Menkis's argument focuses on the way newcomers to Canada fashion sometimes mythical connections with local history. To examine this aspect of Canadian Jewish identity, he

discusses the myths that have been generated around the French Jew Abraham Gradis and his family, whose merchant ships provisioned New France in its final years before the British conquest. On the Jewish side, commentators have claimed that Gradis played a key role in the early colony's settlement, and that this constituted the bedrock on which early Québec-Jewish identity might be constructed. Gradis's early commitment, according to the historian Benjamin Sack, was proof that Jews have always been committed to the French fact in Canada. Among Québécois historians, such as Guy Frégault and Denis Vaugeois, this claim generated counterclaims, themselves as mythic as Sack's initial narrative. Gradis, these historians claimed, was no friend of New France, and could even be seen, through his relation with certain self-interested colonial officials, to have contributed to the colony's downfall. Menkis's convincing response to these claims and counterclaims is that they tell us very little about Québec history. Abraham Gradis never set foot in the colony, so it is a stretch to claim that his life was intimately bound up with its history. And to push his point home, Menkis reminds us how the "frenetic search for deep roots in the immigrant's country has all-too-frequently diverted the energy and attention of ethnic historians from important issues." Menkis adds, "In the case of Canadian Jewry, the proper background for Canadian Jewish history rests more in the historical experiences of the Jews in England, central and eastern Europe, and more recently North Africa" (33).

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Susan Fisher

"Our Next Neighbour Across the Way": Japan and Canadian Writers

For most readers, Japan as a Canadian literary topic begins with *Obasan*. Joy Kogawa's 1981 novel is not about Japan, but its success made Japanese culture respectable in the Canadian mainstream. Before its publication, Japan was inseparable from the memory of the fall of Hong Kong, a struggle in which two Canadian battalions had suffered terrible losses (Roy 66-68).[1] But the Japanese in *Obasan* were victims, not brutal soldiers, and for non-Japanese Canadian readers, Kogawa's book humanized the Japanese. It was probably the first novel they had encountered in which people of Japanese origin were central characters, and in which the world was presented through a framework of Japanese cultural values. By the early 1980s, other forces (national and international) were at work rehabilitating the image of Japan, but one cannot overestimate the part *Obasan* played in this process in Canada.[2]

Because of its success, *Obasan* may seem a lonely monument, but in fact, Canadian literary images of Japan have a long history. In this article, I examine selected works from the past century and a half. Not all belong to the genre of travel writing. Like many books about distant places, they fall "between the disciplinary cracks" (Kröller 5). One is a castaway's tale, another a polemic in the guise of a memoir; several works from the 1980s and 1990s are novels or short story collections. As I hope to demonstrate, these generic shifts are not incidental; rather, they reflect alterations in the sources and examples Canadian writers have drawn on.

The Deliberate Castaway: Ranald MacDonald's Japan Adventure

In June of 1848, Ranald MacDonald, the first Canadian and the first teacher of English in Japan, arrived on the northern tip of Hokkaido.[3] He had joined the crew of an American whaler with the intention of being set adrift off the Japan coast. His "plan was to present [himself] as a castaway" (131); his "principal motive" was "the mere gratification of a love of adventure—the world within a mysterious veil which then hung, as it still hangs over Japan, unaccountably attracted my roving mind" (68). He chose Japan as his destination because "on the Pacific Coast . . . Japan was our next neighbour across the way—only the placid sea, the Pacific, between us" (120).

MacDonald's plan worked. He was found by Ainu villagers and taken to the authorities. After being handed from official to official, he ultimately was taken to Nagasaki where, towards the end of his ten-month stay, he was living "in clover" (248) with books, four meals a day, servants, regular meat, bread and butter, and even occasional coffee and English papers (courtesy of the Dutch Factor of Nagasaki) (242-43). MacDonald was useful to the Japanese: he taught English to fourteen pupils, three of whom ended up interpreting in the negotiations with Commodore Perry.

In a sense, MacDonald's "Japan: Story of Adventure" is a castaway's tale, with obvious echoes of *Robinson Crusoe.* When MacDonald first makes landfall in Japan, he spends two days on an uninhabited island, living "a Robinson Crusoe life" (154). But whereas Crusoe has no real contact with exotic people (save faithful Friday), the drama of MacDonald's story lies in his account of the Japanese he meets. They are not fearsome cannibals but men and women he respects for "their really generous treatment" (260) and "congenial sympathy" (261); he praises them as "the cleverest people I know of: I say 'cleverest' not in the sense of deceit, but in its highest and purest meaning" (244).

Because "the original version of MacDonald's memoir has not survived" (335), it is difficult to determine how much of the "Story of Adventure" is MacDonald's own, and how much was added by his friend and co-writer Malcolm McLeod, a lawyer and pamphleteer from Quebec.[4] McLeod was an energetic propagandizer for the CPR, and he may have viewed MacDonald's story, with its emphasis on the intelligence and shrewd self-interest of the Japanese, as supporting the notion of a cross-country railway to connect with the Pacific trade. MacDonald's own interest in Japan was related to his "Indian birth," which, he claimed, made him decide to go to Japan "from which he was convinced that the North American Indians originally came—

'The land of his ancestors,' he termed it" (39). MacDonald's account of Japan, therefore, nicely establishes the two main lineages of Canadian writing about Japan—the traveller's account of Japan as a strange and distant land, and the special kind of travelogue in which the descendant of immigrants "journeys back to [his] country of origin" (Kröller 5). Among subsequent Canadians writing about Japan, only Peter Oliva (whose 1999 novel *The City of Yes* I discuss later in this article) has recognized MacDonald's account as a significant antecedent.

"This quaint Japan": Sara Jeannette Duncan in Tokyo

With the end of the Tokugawa shogunate in 1868, Japan was no longer a country that Canadians could enter only as castaways (and Japanese leave only under threat of execution). The first Canadian missionaries went to Japan in 1873 (Powles 146) and the first Japanese immigrant arrived in Canada in 1877 (Woodsworth 48; Roy 3).[5] Moreover, trade and tourism were actively cultivated. On the first run of the CPR, one car was named the Yokohama. William Van Horne ("an ardent collector of Japanese porcelain" [Woodsworth 18 n.25]) and his CPR colleagues knew that their railway would tie together not only the disparate parts of a nation, but also Europe and Asia, the West and East. The journey by steamer from Vancouver to Yokohama was a week shorter than the San Francisco-Yokohama voyage (Duncan 56).

In 1888, Sara Jeannette Duncan took the CPR across Canada to Vancouver, where she embarked on a steamship and travelled to Japan on the first leg of a round-the-world journey. According to Thomas Tausky, her account of this trip, *A Social Departure: How Orthodocia and I Went Round the World by Ourselves* (1890), "probably sold better than anything else Sara Jeannette Duncan wrote" (*Novelist* 54), and the chapters on Japan are "by far [its] strongest part" (57).

In a recent essay, Denise Heaps describes *A Social Departure* as a travel satire, and points out the ways in which it resembles such works as Mark Twain's *Innocents Abroad* (1869). Heaps argues that, like Twain, Duncan uses the conventions of sentimental and scientific travel writing to comic effect, deflating sublime moments with bathetic comedy, and mocking the data collection of serious-minded travellers. According to Heaps, Duncan's purpose is "to present an ambivalent combination of feminist grit and unthreatening, fumbling femininity that would appeal to mainstream female readers" (89). But A *Social Departure* is more precisely parody, not satire (Heaps uses both terms), inasmuch as it delivers the familiar satisfac-

shops" (137). SJD and Orthodocia's passion for shopping transcends the usual appetite for pretty trinkets: "to shop in Japan is to perform an elaborate function which operates directly on the soul . . . you never fully know the joy of buying until you buy in Japan [where] [l]ife condenses itself into one long desire, keener and more intense than any want you have ever had before—the desire of paying and possessing"(139).[7] For Duncan, Oriental objects represented an aesthetic ideal, a mark of individuality and advanced taste. An instructive comparison can be made between SJD and Elfrida Bell, the doomed artist of Duncan's 1895 novel, *A Daughter of Today*. Elfrida compensates for her lack of talent by writing about painters and painting, and decorating her London flat with Oriental bric-à-brac, including a Japanese screen and a bronze Buddha (58-59). SJD's shopping expeditions serve the same purpose as Elfrida's manner of living: they provide second-hand aesthetic fulfillment and declare the refinement of her taste.

Basil Hall Chamberlain, the most important interpreter of Japan in the early twentieth century, thought well of Duncan's book: "the liveliest [travel book] is Miss Duncan's *Social Departure* . . . [T]he sense of humour which never deserts her prevents her enthusiasm from degenerating into mawkishness" (70; qtd. in Tausky, *Sara Jeannette Duncan and Her Works* n. 84). That Chamberlain would single out *A Social Departure* is high praise, for, as he notes, there is "literally no end to the making of" travel books about Japan (70). *A Social Departure* has many of the vices of other Japan books of the period: for example, Duncan attaches "little" to nearly every mention of a Japanese person and cannot resist any opportunity to make fun of Japanese speaking English or wearing articles of Western clothing.[8] However, Duncan's frank admission of superficiality, her knowing parody of conventional travel accounts, and her impressionist experiments go some distance to redeeming *A Social Departure* and setting Duncan apart from contemporary commentators on Japan.

From Fairyland to Enemy Nation

The late 1920s and early 1930s were a brief period of what one might call normal relations: Japan had ceased to be a fairyland but was not yet the enemy. A bilingual book published in 1927, *Hatsutabi no nihon/First Tour to Japan*, reflects the calm tenor of Canada-Japan relations. Consisting primarily of brief accounts by young Nisei from British Columbia of their trip to Japan, *Hatsutabi no nihon* belongs to that category of travel account in which the traveller returns to an ancestral homeland. Perhaps because the authors are quite young (most are teenagers), there is very little philoso-

phizing about identity. They report dutifully on their expeditions to Nikko, Nara, and Hakone. Admiral Kuroi guides them in a tour of Tokyo, both of its splendid sights and of its poor neighbourhoods (Ariga 2). Their greatest enthusiasm seems to be for Osaka—"the Manchester of the Orient" (4, 6, 11, 12)—where their guides show them modern factories, with equipment more advanced than that in Europe or America. One young visitor observers, "When you travel through the city of Osaka you wouldn't think you were in Orient" (14). The young Japanese Canadians are impressed by the order and productivity of the society they see; several remark how Tokyo and Yokohama have been speedily rebuilt in the four years since the great Kanto earthquake. But these Nisei do not take any personal pride in the success of the Japanese. Despite their admiration for the Japanese, they identify with Canada, as the closing words of one account suggest: "With deepest regards and respect for Japan I boarded by ship again once more on my return journey to the land of my birth, Canada" (24).

The lack of idealization or of demonization (these young travellers are not all perturbed at being introduced to famous military men like Admiral Togo) is probably a consequence of their relative youth and inexperience. But it also reflects, I think, the optimism or even complacency of the time. It seemed that Japan would smoothly progress to its rightful place among the "advanced" nations of the world. Unfortunately, the determination of the Japanese army to control continental Asia interrupted this process.

Two accounts, one describing the 1930s, and the other the 1930s and 1940s, suggest the complexity of Canadian feeling about Japan during these critical years. In *Hammer the Golden Day* (1981), Hugh Keenleyside recalls with evident pleasure his days as a diplomat in Japan. In 1929, when Canada established independent diplomatic relations with Japan, Keenleyside was sent out to Tokyo to open the legation. His first view of Japan is a nice exemplar of the "arrival scene" convention of travel writing:

> Impatient for my first glimpse of the land that I later learned to love, I had climbed onto the topmost deck just as the golden-red ball of the rising sun was breaking over the horizon far behind us. The morning mists still veiled in light broken formations [in] the water just ahead. At a distance on either side the massive rocks of broken cliffs and rugged shorelines were topped by the green and dark copper-brown of Japanese pines. Walking to the high prow of the ship, I watched as the sun's increasing power dissolved the mists. Suddenly, and almost directly ahead, an immaculate silver-white cone rose above the land as we approached. (265)

This utterly conventional view of Japan, with the cliffs, the pines, and Fuji,

could come straight out of a woodblock print. But it could also be read allegorically as foreshadowing of the "increasing power" of the "rising sun" of Japan.

Lyrical description (even with political undertones) is infrequent in Keenleyside's memoir. His main rhetorical strategy is to demolish myths. The idea, for example, that Japan is a sensualist's paradise is disposed of by his description of an evening with geisha (part of an excursion organized by the Japanese Foreign Office specifically for the diplomat). Keenleyside describes the geisha as "very graceful, beautifully dressed, bright, animated, but doll-like, almost inhuman. They did not impress me as being *women*." (293; italics in original). In the economic sphere, Keenleyside is impatient with what was even then an old saw: the Japanese are imitators, not inventors. To counter it, he offers examples of innovations in Japanese manufacturing (305-6). In the chapter "Canadians in Japan," Keenleyside focuses primarily on three remarkable women—Annie Allen, Caroline Macdonald, and Alice St. John— who were pioneers in education and social welfare in Japan.[9] Here he takes the opportunity to demolish yet another myth: "the superior spirituality of the oriental peoples" (319). Keenleyside asserts that "appalling as has been the persistent guilt of Western civilization in its unnecessary mistreatment of its own and other peoples, the record of the Orient has been even worse"(317). Despite his posture as a demythologizer, Keenleyside does not engage in Japan-bashing.

In contrast, Phyllis Argall's *Prisoner in Japan* (1945) is undiluted vitriol, almost impossible to consume yet instructive for its revelation of a wartime mentality. It is presented as an autobiography, but is plainly an anti-Japanese polemic in which every detail about Argall's life serves her propagandistic purpose.[10] In 1912, when she was three, Argall received "a tea set, of fine, hand-painted porcelain [that] had travelled all the way from Japan" (10). She "carefully and methodically smash[ed] it, piece by piece." Soon after she received a Japanese doll named Hana-chan. Despite its "gay silk kimono and shining black hair," she did not like the doll and remembers muttering,"Hate this old Hana-chan" (10). The doll was taken away. Looking back in the 1940s on these incidents from her childhood, Argall considers them harbingers: "It may be that the smashed tea set and the despised doll indicated an innate tendency to obstruct and where, possible, destroy what the Japanese had produced, and to dislike the people" (8-9).

Argall was raised in Japan: she lived there from 1916 until the late 1920s, when she returned to Canada to study at the University of Toronto. After

graduation, she became principal of a mission school in Formosa, then a Japanese colony. When Argall refused to conform to regulations requiring students to venerate the emperor, she was forced to leave her job. Returning to Japan in 1935, she became a journalist. She worked as a reporter and editor for *Japan News-Week*; her articles also appeared in Canada in the *Star Weekly*. Her knowledge of Japan is by no means superficial, but everything she observes is interpreted to "reveal" some innate perfidy in the Japanese. Even the behaviour of a neighbourhood dog, "a wretched, pint-sized mongrel," is invoked as an object lesson in the nature of the Japanese:

> He would lie low until we had gone by, and then, the moment we were past, would bound out, yapping and snarling and snapping. . . .
>
> "That," said my mother one day, "is typical of the Jap. He'll never face you, but always bites from behind." (18)

Moreover, the qualities that charmed previous travellers to Japan are interpreted by Argall in a new and ominous light:

> Since the days of Pierre Loti and Lafcadio Hearn, the Japanese most often written about, and most avidly read of, has been either a vague ideal full of Oriental art and mysticism, or a grotesque imp full of Oriental artfulness and quaintness. Whichever view we got of him, he has always been the little yellow brother, treading not very cleverly, albeit yearningly, in the footsteps of his big white exemplar. We have enthusiastically taken his rich brocades and gaudy colour prints, not realizing that he has, quite as enthusiastically, been taking our scrap and manufacturing materials. (8)

To Argall, the Japanese are irremediably Other, and nothing about their difference is attractive; they are simply an alien force that must be repulsed.

Although Argall's perspective is extreme, there is no doubt that the well-documented brutality of the Japanese military dispelled the romance of Japan for many years to come.[11] In addition, the conditions of post-war Japan were no incentive to travel. E.H. Norman reported in 1946 that "living conditions for Canadians in Japan are far from easy or pleasant" (qtd. in Roy 213).[12] It is not surprising, therefore, that for more than a decade after the war, little was published in Canada about Japan. In 1962, *Maclean's* broke the silence with Frank Moritsugu's "A Japanese Canadian Goes 'Home'," introduced by the following headline:

> This is what a Canadian reporter who speaks fluent Japanese saw and heard when he took his first look at the jazz-age country the New Japanese are grafting onto an ancient civilization. Probably no Western writer has brought back as clear a picture of the modern Japanese . . .

This introduction elides the memory of the war: the new Japan is being built not on the ruins of the cities the Allies firebombed but on its "ancient civilization." The people building this "jazz-age country" are not the survivors of the war and their children but the "New Japanese."

The title of the article may assert that Japan is "home" for Moritsugu, but he soon contradicts that view:

> Unlike the children of other immigrants, many Japanese-Canadians don't hear the clarion call of the Old Country. The constant fight against the "Once a Jap, always a Jap" epithet, hurled against us by West Coast witch hunters in the 1930s and 1940s, led many of us to underline the "Canadian" and obliterate the "Japanese" in "Japanese-Canadian" until some years after the war with Japan ended. (28)

Moritsugu's episodic article is held together by his persistent search for the "real Japan." He likes Tokyo, even though he knows one is not supposed to: "The Ginza—the area most foreigners see first—contradicts the romantic and exotic mental images of Japan that we westerners carry. But if not 'real Japan,' what then is Tokyo?"(32) When he gets to Kyoto, Moritsugu is relieved to discover that "here is where the picturesque postcard images of traditional Japan come to life" (34). But he notices the "ugly buildings" in the business district. He is sent to stay at a traditional inn, equipped with chairs, TV, and an air conditioner. A tour through other cities—Osaka, Kobe, Hiroshima—reveals that "the westernization so apparent in Tokyo and downtown Kyoto" is everywhere: "it still takes a lot of looking to find traces of old Japan" (36).

His "last hope" lies in Yonago, the city where his parents were born (36). His relatives live in an old Japanese-style house, but "even here, [he] slowly begin[s] to see the inroads of westernization": chairs, western clothes, an electric washing machine, a television (*Wagon Train* is the favourite show of one elderly aunt) (40). Throughout his travels, Moritsugu notes many incongruities of this kind: Elvis Presley's "Blue Hawaii" blaring on the Ginza, then a "rockabilly song" in Japanese "punctuated with 'Yah, Yah"s and 'hey, hey"s" (29); a TV antenna poking out of a thatched roof; a giant English-language billboard beside a Buddhist statue. A young Japanese man explains these contradictions not as "westernization" but as "modernization": "it only seems western or American because we are following the lead of the United States who dominate world culture right now" (40). Moritsugu comes to a similar conclusion: ". . . this dizzily changing westernized façade of Japan is the real Japan" (42). But in the next and final paragraph, he suggests something quite different: "The only unshakable

conviction I reached was that it is unwise to measure the Japanese by our standards just because their façade seems so much like ours" (42). Now, he seems to assert that the "façade" is only superficial and that it disguises an underlying reality. This confusion about surface and essence arises inevitably in the quest for the "real Japan." The governing assumption of this quest is that beneath the layers of modernity and sham tradition awaits a "real Japan." Moritsugu, perhaps because of his own experience as a Japanese Canadian, does not want the task of saying what it means to be "Japanese" or what the "real Japan" is (though clearly this is what *Maclean's* wanted his article to do).

Since Moritsugu's article, other Japanese Canadians have written about the journey "home" to Japan, with similar uncertainty about what it means to be "Japanese." In *The Japan We Never Knew*, David Suzuki and his co-author, anthropologist Keibo Oiwa, present portraits of a range of dissenters, individualists, and radicals in Japanese society. Their purpose is to dismantle the myth of Japan as "monolithic, homogeneous, and conformist" (3) and to find people who "negate the Japanese stereotype" (3), a task for which Suzuki and Oiwa are well-suited. Suzuki, who grew up "with a Japanese name and an Asian face in a racist society" (306), is Japanese ethnically, but not culturally. Oiwa, who did not learn until he was an adult that his father was Korean (307), is Japanese culturally, but not ethnically. Thus, their histories challenge any easy definition of "Japanese" as either a racial or a cultural designation. Their book's focus on the diversity of Japan seems a natural outgrowth of their own mixed identities, but Suzuki finds further justification in biological terms: "One of the most startling lessons of twentieth-century biology has been the discovery that *diversity*—genetic, species, and cultural—is a critical part of long-term resilience and survival" (6; italics in original). The value of cultivating diversity is a political message, not only for the Japanese, but presumably for Canadians as well. Like many recent books, *The Japan We Never Knew* uses Japan as a source of object lessons; here, the lesson is not a positive one about productivity or industrial management but a negative one about the dangers of political and ethnic intolerance.

If Suzuki interprets Japanese culture in terms of his own disciplinary and political concerns, another Japanese Canadian, the poet and artist Roy Kiyooka, has done much the same in recording his journeys to his parents' birthplace. In works such as "Kyoto Airs," *StoneDGloves*, and *Wheels: A Trip thru Honshu's Backcountry*, he writes about Japan through a Japan-influ-

enced Anglo-American poetics.[13] Part of the force behind the post-war rehabilitation of Japan was the Beat Generation's interest in Buddhism and traditional Japanese literature. Anyone following American poetics in the 1960s and 1970s could not fail to have captured some of the *japonisme* of the period through writers such as Kenneth Rexroth, Gary Snyder, Philip Whalen, and Allen Ginsberg. During this period, Japanese design also became fashionable, particularly the Zen aesthetic of rustic refinement. For example, in 1976, an exhibit at the Vancouver Art Gallery entitled "Tsutsumu: The Art of the Japanese Package" drew enthusiastic crowds (see Oka).

Canadian passion for things Japanese has grown steadily since the 1970s. This revival of interest in Japanese culture is evident in two novels published in 1985 with nearly identical plots.[14] In Ann Ireland's *A Certain Mr Takahashi*, two sisters in Toronto fall in love with the man next door, a concert pianist from Japan. Their infatuation with Mr Takahashi induces virulent adolescent Japanophilia: they study the language, discard all their bedroom furniture, wear yukata instead of nightgowns, write notes to each other in short crypto-haiku lines, and ponder intensely Okakura Tenshin's *The Book of Tea.*

In Sarah Sheard's *Almost Japanese*, a young Toronto girl named Emma idealizes the Japanese musician next door because he represents the delicious opposite of her own dreary life: his kimono versus her school uniform, his spartanly elegant living space versus her family's cluttered home. He becomes her obsession, and as a result, "everything Japanese became magic" (32). She goes one step further than the Potter sisters of Ireland's novel: after graduating from high school, Emma works in a Japanese grocery store until she has enough money to go to Japan in pursuit of him. Once in Japan, Emma finds her romantic obsessions fading (at least temporarily) as Japan itself becomes the focus of attention.

Whereas Ireland's *A Certain Mr Takahashi* is a conventional narrative, *Almost Japanese* is a mixture of fragments. It begins with an inventory of body parts, each part (feet, nose, hips, and so on) illustrated with an enigmatic anecdote. There is a diary of the musician's comings and goings, as witnessed by Emma from her bedroom window. The final third of the novel is Emma's travel diary of Japan. Much of this narrative unconventionality could be described as Japanese-influenced. There is, for example, the list headed "Tools of enlightenment," which consists of sentences like "A tile shatters against a tree" and "A handful of hair floats to the floor" (57). There

are gnomic quotations from Japanese authors. Two major sections have titles containing Japanese words: Emma's account of the musician's stay in Toronto is entitled "The approach (*kyohan*) to a bridge"(21) while her diary of Japan begins with "The Bridge (*o-hashi*) of Dreams" (87). Since one of the diary entries records a visit to Uji, famed in Japan for its associations with the *Tale of Genji*, the final chapter of which is "The Floating Bridge of Dreams," this section title seems intended as an allusion to hopeless love, Japan-style. Sheard, however, is not at all precious about the *japonisme* of her narrator. While Emma is deeply affected by the tea ceremony she participates in, and by her experience meditating in a Zen temple, she does not lose her wry appreciation of ironic contrast:

> I stood on a bridge and all down the canal, as far as I could see, branches sagging with blossoms trolled in the current. A raft of petals, caught under the bridge, quaked below me. As night fell, the geisha began emerging, making their way to the nightclubs, their *geta* clip-clopping across the cobblestone bridges. Another living woodcut. I walked back to the main street where I passed two well-dressed young men lying face down in vomit. (100)

Sheard employs here the stylistic convention of the static tableau that both Duncan and Keenleyside employ (or "living woodcut," to use Sheard's own phrase), but the note of bathos struck by the two drunks redeems it from sentimental archaism.

While poets such as Kiyooka and Joy Kogawa were experimenting with Japanese poetic forms as early as the 1970s, Sheard's experiments represent something new in Canadian prose about Japan. In *Almost Japanese*, Sheard uses models from Japanese literature, assuming that her readers know enough to appreciate parody when they encounter it. She does something similar in her 1995 piece, "Tokyo Pillow Book," an episodic travel diary that pays homage to the classical Japanese genre of the pillow book.[15]

By the 1980s, most Canadians did know something about Japan: sushi, sake, kimono, tatami, and kabuki did not need italics or definitions.[16] As a consequence, in order to produce the exotic effect, writers have had to provide more recherché touches of authentic Japan—as, for example, Sheard does with her generic borrowings. Moreover, conventional travel accounts have virtually disappeared, and in their place have appeared fictionalized versions of life in Japan, in which the "real Japan" is figured not as a premodern dream of geisha, haiku and *ukiyo-e*, but as the shabby world of commuters, office buildings, love hotels, and bars—what Tzvetan Todorov (referring to Japan and Hong Kong) calls "the exoticism of skyscrapers and electronics" (266).[17]

Gabrielle Bauer's *Tokyo My Everest* (1995) straddles genres: classified on the copyright page as "Japan: Description and Travel," it reads like a novel, not a travel book. In fact, it neatly fits the pattern of the Oriental quest novel in which a "restless Western dreamer takes temporary refuge in the East, hoping to find either physical stimulation or spiritual enrichment or, preferably, both; instead, said dreamer finds only the limitations of his/her own culture, a culture to which s/he nonetheless returns, suitably 'enlightened' by the experience" (Huggan 182). When Bauer flees from her "half-life" back in Canada (15) with a one-way ticket to Tokyo, she is convinced "that only a Japanese man would give me the key to Japan and uncover my reason for being there" (29). If finding an apartment, getting a decent job (i.e., not teaching English in a crummy private school), and making friends constitute the arduous approach to base camp, then finally getting her Japanese boyfriend is the summit of Bauer's Japan experience:

> "I love you," he says simply, looking me straight in the eye. If Tokyo is indeed my Everest, then this has got to be its pointy peak. Wrapped in fog, hearing the magic words from Tetsu. (206)

Inevitably, like a shipboard romance, the affair ends, and Bauer is devastated: "Coming to Japan had been an attempt to . . . try on a completely different self. My sense of failure was deep and wide" (215). The romance was not merely with a man, or even with Japan, but with "a completely different self" (215). Bauer is a sexual tourist and all tourists, as Graham Huggan has asserted, "are self-involved even as they seek out the cultural other" (208).

If Bauer's memoir is an old-fashioned Oriental quest novel, other recent Canadian novels about Japan try to escape this mode. Will Aitken's *Realia* employs bizarre plot twists (involving designer drugs and inventive sex) for his tale of how a Canadian girl (possibly a man in drag) ends up having an affair with a Japanese pop star. A parody of the Orpheus myth, *Realia* also imitates the fantasy mode of the contemporary Japanese writer Haruki Murakami (in his acknowledgements, Aitken lists Murakami along with Kenzaburo Oe and Yasunari Kawabata as influences). Turning to models derived from Japanese literature not only signals a writer's special knowledge and therefore his or her authority; it is also a way to represent the irreducible strangeness of Japan, for still, even in its thoroughly modern (or postmodern) phase, Japan is strange to someone reared in Vancouver or Toronto or St. John's.

Peter Oliva's 1999 novel *The City of Yes* is narrated by a young Canadian teaching English in Japan. His experiences are woven into a fictionalized

biography of Ranald MacDonald. These two Canadians are linked through a third character named Endo, a Japanese teacher and lexicographer who is researching MacDonald's life. Endo's name alludes to Endo Shusaku (1923-1996), the Catholic writer whose novel *Silence* (*Chinmoku*; tr. 1969) describes the spiritual journey of a Portuguese priest in seventeenth-century Japan. Oliva's narrator recognizes that "all travellers re-invent the places they visit" (161); in this case, Oliva re-invents Japan through the history of Japan's contact with foreigners during its centuries of isolation. The story of Ranald MacDonald not only adds adventure to *The City of Yes* (the fictional potential of teaching or studying in Japan has been fairly well exhausted by picaresque books like Matthew Kneale's *Whore Banquets* and John David Morley's *Pictures from the Water Trade*); it also makes the point that interpreting Japan for the foreign reader has a history, one which Oliva cannot escape. The complexity of this novel, which shifts from MacDonald's story to the narrator's to Endo's, reflects Oliva's struggle to free himself from simple-minded exoticism. The results are sometimes strained, especially when, as in the opening sequence, he attempts what the book jacket calls "the delicacy of a brushstroke artist." Haiku-like phrases that are used as chapter headings—"wild geese/Balloons from Japan/Fade to black"(5)—and the sumptuous cover reproduction of a Hiroshige print suggest that the romance of old Japan is not dead yet.

"Knowledge," as Tzvetan Todorov has pointed out, "is incompatible with exoticism, but lack of knowledge is in turn irreconcilable with praise of others; yet praise without knowledge is precisely what exoticism aspires to be. This is its constitutive paradox" (265). Steven Heighton's short stories in *Flight Paths of the Emperor* unfold within this paradox. They are exoticist inasmuch as they savour the strangeness of Japan—its language, its traditions, its placenames, its food, and its peculiar brand of English. But there is knowledge here as well. There are sometimes more allusions and narrative complexity than the stories can bear (a point noted by Geraldine Sherman when she reviewed them in 1993), but their density is also their strength. "A Man Away From Home Has No Neighbours" is made up of seven separate sections, joined only by the various ways in which they demonstrate the truth of the title (a Japanese proverb). The situations range from the Rape of Nanking to the internment of the Japanese Americans, the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-5, and the suicide of one of its heroes, General Nogi. The great Japanese modernist, Natsume Soseki, made General Nogi's suicide after the death of the Meiji emperor in 1912 the central symbolic event

of his novel *Kokoro* (1914; trans. 1957). By including Nogi in his own story, Heighton borrows resonances from Japanese fiction. *Flight Paths of the Emperor* teems with such resonances, and they are central to his depiction of the mutual entanglement of Japan and its foreign Others.

In *Floating Shore*, Japanese Canadian writer Sally Ito presents two distinct groups of stories about Japan. The first group deals with Japanese people, ranging from a failed Christian evangelist in a remote village to middle-aged newlyweds honeymooning in the Canadian Rockies. The stories in the second section are told by a first-person narrator, a Japanese Canadian studying in Japan. Even when these stories describe Buddhist temples and Japanese gardens, they do not have the suspect glitter of exoticism. "Mishima," a story partly set at the famous temple Kinkakuji, involves a Chinese student hot on the trail of his own "theory" about Mishima's suicide, an ambitious Japanese poetess (she collects books inscribed to her by Octavio Paz and Margaret Atwood), and a broken-down American translator (modelled on Howard Hibbett). Ito convincingly evokes a range of milieux, both in the expatriate community and "inside" Japanese society; her treatment of the Japanese literary world, where translators and globe-trotting littérateurs mingle, seems particularly well done. The short story form here fulfills certain confessional, self-discovery purposes that we associate with the travel memoir, but it also frees Ito to adopt multiple perspectives and thereby explore various zones along the Canada-Japan border. The narrator of "Furyo," who wants to be a writer, muses about form: "What if there was a story that was just a series of unconnected moments—moments that left only a vague impression, fleeting and light, of a person or a place?" (196). Japanese fiction is often described as having just this kind of impressionistic plotlessness. Perhaps the narrator's question indicates Ito's wish to present her encounter with Japan in an appropriately Japanese manner, as "a series of unconnnected moments." Fortunately, Ito also provides more substantial narrative satisfactions. *Floating Shore* is a remarkably nuanced account of a Japanese Canadian (and Canadian student of Japanese literature) encountering her ancestral homeland.

Conclusion

When Hugh Keenleyside opened the legation in 1929, about a hundred and thirty people registered themselves as Canadian residents of Japan (278); most were missionaries. In 1980, there were 1,698 Canadians registered as foreign residents in Japan; by 1985, this number had doubled. Despite the

problems in the Japanese economy in the 1990s, the numbers of Canadians attracted to Japan kept growing, from 8023 in 1996 to 9185 in 1999 (*Japan Statistical Yearbook*). Gabrielle Bauer's memoir gives an accurate picture of how most of these people live: they watch American television, socialize with other English-speaking expatriates, and save money to pay off debts back home. Nonetheless, among their ranks have also been writers like Ito and Bauer, who speak Japanese, and Oliva, Sheard, and Heighton, who have some knowledge (beyond what the *Lonely Planet* guide can provide) of its history and culture. The result of their encounter with Japan is writing that goes beyond travelogue and even attempts to infuse into Canadian fiction elements of Japanese literary traditions.

NOTES

My thanks to the reviewers of this article for their helpful comments.

1. Anti-Japanese feelings in Canada (particularly BC) did not of course originate with the war, but they were reanimated by it. F. Leighton Thomas's scurrilous pamphlet, "Japan: The Octopus of the East and It's [sic] Menace to Canada" (1932), claimed that "the Japs [had] grabbed the fishing on the B.C. Coast" (5). Even a work of scholarship, *The Japanese Canadians* (1938), edited by Harold Innis, made a similar claim: "While the Chinese are confined to a few industries and seem content to remain in them, the Japanese are competing all along the line with an aggressive efficiency which confounds the Whites" (xxii). Dorothy Duncan's patriotic cross-Canada travelogue, *Here's to Canada* (1941), lists in an ominous tone the business interests of the Japanese: "In Vancouver alone, the Japanese operate more than a hundred grocery stores, a hundred and forty automobile salesrooms . . . and they own any number of lodging houses, apartment houses, restaurants, barbershops, dress making shops and fish shops . . . . Wherever they go they attempt to dominate the field . . ." (275-76). These "well-entrenched prejudices" were, as Patricia Roy notes in her study of Canada-Japan wartime relations, "stimulated by Japan's aggression, by atrocities committed on Allied troops, and by wartime propaganda" and consequently "allowed for precious few distinctions between Canadian citizens of Japanese origin and Japanese nationals" (218).
2. *Obasan's* importance is perhaps most evident in the fact that both Ed Broadbent (then MP for Oshawa and leader of the federal New Democratic Party) and Gerry Weiner (Minister of State for Multiculturalism) quoted from it on September 22, 1988, the day when the redress settlement was announced (qtd in Miki 148-50). Patricia Roy, in discussing how attitudes towards the internment and the Japanese in Canada have changed, asserts that "Joy Kogawa's powerful and popular novel *Obasan* has had great emotional impact" (xi). In the past twenty years, *Obasan* has become "a staple in many ethnic literature courses" (Lo 98) and a frequent choice for high-school reading lists.
3. The son of a Hudson's Bay company official and a native woman, MacDonald was born in the Oregon Territory, near the mouth of the Columbia River. He spent part of his childhood in Fort Langley and Kamloops; he attended a school in the Red River Settlement. Although his birthplace became part of the United States, MacDonald seems to have considered himself a Canadian: one version of his narrative was entitled

A Canadian in Japan, and, when his adventuring years were over, MacDonald returned to "my native land, or rather to that portion of it (British Columbia) which had been left to the Old Flag by the Oregon Treaty" (249).

4. Jean Murray Cole's afterword to the 1990 edition examines the authorship question in some detail.
5. Shotaro Iida, in his introduction to *The Forgotten History of the Japanese-Canadians* (volume 1), dates Nagano's arrival to 1875 (Shibata vi).
6. The role of *japonisme* in Impressionism is well documented (see, for example, Kleiner, Mamiya and Tansey, 912).
7. Duncan's enthusiasm for Japanese things was (and remains) a common response. The narrator of Pierre Loti's *Madame Chrysanthème* ships home from Japan eighteen cases of "bibelots les plus précieux" (283). The Canadian writer Geraldine Sherman, in her 1999 *Japan Diaries*, reserves her most enthusiastic commentary for forays to flea markets where she buys antique kimono and other souvenirs.
8. Thomas Tausky claims that the "more sober articles" on which *A Social Departure* was based are not so flippant, and "provide evidence that Sara saw more to Japan than quaint foreigners who couldn't speak English properly" (58-59).
9. Margaret Prang's 1995 biography, *A Heart at Leisure from Itself: Caroline Macdonald of Japan*, provides an engaging look at Macdonald's accomplishments. For fuller discussions of the remarkable activities of Canadian missionaries in Japan, see Ion and Powles.
10. Although it is clearly propaganda, Argall's book was published by a well-established British firm, Geoffrey Bles, which produced, among other things, popular mysteries and the works of C.S. Lewis.
11. See Roy for a comparative discussion of the treatment of "enemy aliens" by the Japanese and by the Canadians.
12. In "From Kure to Hiroshima," a brief article that appeared in the *Canadian Forum* in July 1947, an American journalist, Harry Roskolenko, described Hiroshima as "a composite of desolation in which contrasts are abysmally violent, lurid, too arresting for the appreciation of the camera-eye alone. It is human grief, slant-eyed, wearing spectacles, saying 'Very sorry' to the man with the question." The "whole nation," he wrote, was "sick and awaiting hospitalization for mental, physical, and political diseases" (82). Clearly, in Roskolenko's view, the Americans were applying the right cure.
13. Joy Kogawa's 1974 collection *A Choice of Dreams*, contains a number of imagist poems about Japan—another example of a Japanese-influenced poetic being "repatriated" to describe Japanese scenes and experiences. More recently, poets Sally Ito and Terry Watada have done something similar. See Fisher for a fuller discussion of Japanese influences in Canadian poetry.
14. Perhaps the figure of the Japanese musician in Toronto is based on Seiji Ozawa, music director of the Toronto Symphony from 1965 to 1969. Both Ireland (1953-) and Sheard (1953-) grew up in Toronto.
15. Hiromi Goto's *Chorus of Mushrooms* (1994) could also be cited as an example of Canadian fiction with Japanese literary influences; I do not examine it here because it does not deal explicitly with travel to Japan.
16. *Sushi, tofu, karaoke, kabuki, tatami, shoji,* and *kanji* do not appear in the 1967 *Gage Dictionary of Canadian English* or the 1970 *Winston Dictionary of Canadian English*; they are included in the 1999 *Gage Canadian Dictionary.*

17. Conventional travel writing is, of course, still being produced. Geraldine Sherman's *Japan Diaries: A Travel Memoir* (1999) and "Tokyo Story" in David Rakoff's *Fraud* (2001) are recent literary (as opposed to practical) accounts of Japan. But such works tend to deliver familiar set pieces–for example, descriptions of Japanese teens in strange clothing or of Tsukiji, Tokyo's famous fish market.

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Eric Trethewey

Learning The Future

When are they coming home? the small girls ask.
And ask and ask, while the wrack of wintercold
grips the house. Thirteen this hard winter, he knows
only to feed the stoves, stoke the feeble fires
with wood he's cut—wet, still green—from the burned-over
acres of spruce and fir surrounding their old place.

He tries to persuade the oldest of his younger sisters
to wash the dirty dishes piled high in the sink, the water
from the well cold in buckets, and find something
simple for a meal: soup from a can, a bowl of leftover
beans and some bread. But she doesn't want to,
or doesn't believe she's able. And she doesn't try.

Outside again, he saws the wood and splits it,
fine blown crystals of snow stinging his face,
and armloads the stove-lengths in to feed the fires, pausing
only then to warm leftovers for the three shivering girls
who ask again, *When are they coming home?* He tries
to reassure them, put their fear to sleep, though after three days

of this he's no longer confident himself. Draped in heavy
sweaters too large for them, the girls try to get lost
in one game or another until he herds them up to bed, covers
them with ancient army greatcoats. Then he comes down the stairs
to cut more wood, feed the fires, keep them burning, each act,
though he can't know it yet, etching itself into expectation.

Denise Heaps

"You Are My Wife!" "Good-bye City Life!": Mrs. Philomena Orford and Mrs. Tom Manning Journey North

Traditionally, a woman married to a professional man whose work entailed travel—diplomats, colonial officers, missionaries, explorers, and the like—found herself literally transported by the exigencies of her husband's occupation. Once abroad, she was expected to perform supportive roles in public and in private, such as attending official functions, entertaining colleagues, providing domestic enclaves with emotional and sexual companionship, and/or participating directly in her husband's work. As a version of what sociologist Hilary Callan classifies as the "incorporated wife," her identity was "an intimate function of her husband's occupational identity and culture" (9). The incorporated wife appears in a number of travel books by well-known Canadian women writers, including Margaret Laurence's *The Prophet's Camel Bell* (1963) and P.K. Page's *Brazilian Journal* (1987). The travel writers and texts under consideration here, however, are now largely unknown. *Journey North* (1957) chronicles Philomena Orford's 1936-1940 residency on Baffin Island with her husband and three daughters, while Mrs. Tom (Ella Wallace) Manning's Arctic peregrinations with her husband during the 1930s are described in *Igloo for the Night* (1943; 1946). The authors of these well-written, humorous, and engaging narratives represent a small subgroup that has so far been neglected by the recent flurry of critical and historical analyses of narratives about the Canadian Arctic and sub-Arctic. Studies have concentrated on narratives by male explorers and adventurers (see Armitage; Belyea; Christopher; Greenfield; Harrison; Horne; Hunt; Krans; MacLaren; Venema; West) and,

more recently, female explorers and adventurers (see Grace; Laframboise; Smyth; Goldman). Arctic narratives by the incorporated wife offer alternative visions of self and place.

The primary scholarly rationale for this analysis of Orford's and Manning's narratives, as relatively early Arctic travel books by Canadian women, is their historical, biographical, and theoretical relevance to three interrelated areas: gender, genre, and geography. In journeying to the Canadian Arctic, Orford and Manning enter gendered geography, that is, a region historically perceived as fit for white male exploration and adventure but too harsh for white women to venture into. In writing Arctic travel books, Orford and Manning transgress into textually masculine terrain as well, and what results is an interesting departure from the masculine Arctic narrative. Orford and Manning, while being among the earliest Canadian white women to travel the furthest north, were not the first women to travel and write the Arctic, and so their works may partly be read in the context of their female predecessors, such as Canadians Agnes Deans Cameron and Mina Hubbard, Britain's Clara Vyvyan, and American Josephine Peary. Orford and Manning struggle, as did women before them, to find their place in the Arctic and in Arctic narrative. However, their role as incorporated wives brings a special inflection to this challenge. Both women, in writing about their journeys, offer insight into the creative, varied ways they conform to and contest their roles.

Part of the recent proliferation of books about the representation of the Canadian Arctic by adventurers, explorers, poets, novelists, film makers, and artists, John Moss's *Enduring Dreams: An Exploration of Arctic Landscape* blends lyricism with Arctic narrative and critical meta-narrative. From Moss's perspective, the Arctic functions as "a medium of desire" for non-Native writers (xii). For Arctic "outsiders," it is an elusive landscape that inevitably gets lost in the representation of it. Descriptions of the Arctic, he underlines throughout, are reflective of the writer's needs for a particular personal experience, an ideological or philosophical construct, or an aesthetic vision. The Arctic may function as a medium of desire for those who have never actually been there as much as for those who have. What results is an "imagined Arctic," a landscape almost purely of the mind and imagination that acquires its characteristics through the representations and desires of others who have been there and have attempted to "capture" it through various media (28-29).[1]

Judging from the scarce biographical material available on Orford and

Manning and the opening sections of their books, these women had very different desired and imagined "Arctics." Orford's "Arctic" completes the migrant's stereotypical trajectory from Old World penury to New World riches. Marcus Robinson's brief "Life of the Month" obituary for Orford in the February 1997 issue of *Saturday Night* mentions that Orford (née McLauchlan) immigrated from Scotland to Canada with her family in 1925 at the age of seventeen after the family business collapsed (17). In Depression-era Ontario, she supported her parents by working as a stenographer and an accompanist at a silent movie house until marrying Thomas John Orford, a medical student at Queen's University (17). Little changed in Orford's economic situation after marriage. In the opening pages of *Journey North*, the scene is set in the 1930s, and the young couple is surviving the Depression in the rural community of Markham, Ontario, scraping by on farm produce bartered by impoverished locals for doctor's services rendered. Orford recounts her initial, naïve reaction to learning of her husband's new posting as medical officer for the small Inuit settlement of Panuk on Baffin Island. As her husband reads the perquisites of the job in Panuk, Orford becomes increasingly enthusiastic about the prospect of living rent-free with a year's supply of food, two Native servants, and monthly cheques deposited directly into a bank account. A financially stretched housewife and mother of two young girls, Orford finds the Arctic appeals to her desires for domestic comfort and economic security. She even goes so far as to envision herself in a lovely outfit made entirely of white fox, thus fashionably colour-coordinated with the Arctic landscape of her imagination.

There is certainly a dash of humorous self-irony in this imagined Arctic of movie-star glamour, 1930s style. However, Orford clearly views the Arctic as a welcome means of escape and temporary settlement at the expense of the Inuit and on Inuit land. Ever since Henry Hudson declared the Arctic "profitable to those that will adventure in it" (qtd. in Armitage 16), the sub-Arctic and Arctic regions have been the subject of dreams for various kinds of gain, initially, as S. D. Grant observes in "Myths of the North in the Canadian Ethos," as sources of fur, maritime, and mineral resources (19). The vision of the North as a fund of resources acquired additional vigour after Canadian Confederation in 1867, fuelled by nation builders who promoted expansion and settlement beyond the borders of the northern as well as the western frontiers (Grant 24-25).[2] Large-scale white settlement in the Arctic never flourished. As Orford recalls in *Journey North*, before departure

her friends celebrated her journey for "[p]ushing back the frontier of Empire." After her first, disillusioning glimpse of Panuk, she remarks, "[w]hoever thought that one up had never seen the east coast of Baffin Island" (11), implying that the Arctic is a potential white settlement in imperial imagination only. Nevertheless, the Arctic Shangri-La that Orford conjures up before departure is the extension of such expansionist dreams.

A contemporary of Orford's, Ella Wallace Manning (née Jackman) accompanied her husband on a two-year Arctic odyssey in the late 1930s. The opening sections of *Igloo for the Night*, the record of her icy adventure, convey Manning's Arctic dreams and expectations, which form a marked contrast to Orford's visions of domestic bliss. As in Orford's case, only traces of biographical material about Manning are available, such as Joanne Strong's 1984 article in the *Globe & Mail* that heralds Manning as one of Canada's "unsung heroines" (L7). Strong notes that Manning, a Nova Scotian and graduate of Dalhousie University, was living and working in a Montreal office in 1938 when she received a most unconventional and irresistible marriage proposal via telegraph from Thomas Manning, the leader of a British Canadian-Arctic cartographic expedition. That proposal opens *Igloo for the Night*:

> IF YOU WISH TO JOIN ME AT CAPE DORSET THIS SUMMER FOR TWO YEARS I SHALL BE PLEASED THINK WELL FOOLS RUSH IN CHARGE EXPENSES TO ME WITH THE HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY EXTRA CLOTHES ETC UNNECESSARY I SHALL NOT BE ABLE TO RECEIVE A REPLY. (11)

On a journey to England in 1935, Manning had met her future husband, a recent Oxford graduate who, in embarking on a career in Arctic exploration and natural science, had just returned from his first Arctic expedition (Strong L7).

In her travel book, Manning places her husband in a lineage of celebrated Arctic explorers, including Frobisher, Davis, Hudson, Bylot, Baffin, Monk, Fox, Middleton, and Parry, "all of whom added to the knowledge of the Arctic while continuing to search for the long-sought north-west passage" (30-31). Many of these men, she notes, visited and charted the south and south-east coasts of Baffin Island, leaving the west coast relatively unexplored and unmapped, an oversight her husband wished to amend (31). In extending an invitation for his fiancée to join him as a participant incorporated wife, that is, as fellow expeditionary, Thomas Manning offers her an opportunity long denied her sex, thus revealing that he is no "Doubting Thomas" in terms of women's abilities to endure Arctic travel. Lisa Bloom

argues in *Gender on Ice: American Ideologies of Polar Expeditions*, her examination of nineteenth-century and early twentieth-century Arctic exploration narratives, that women conventionally remained considerably south, "living within the bounded spaces of everyday life, marriage, the workplace," while the "explorer represented the epitome of manliness. Men such as these . . . were destined to rise to power and glory. They could not be held back. A woman might on occasion have dreamed of a life of heroism ... but she would have abandoned her dreams by conforming to the role expected of her sex" (6).

The Arctic of Manning's desires and imagination is a perilous frozen landscape traversed by heroic white male explorers and cartographers who are in the business of expanding the Empire's knowledge of the world, and she longs to be among them. After reading the telegram, Manning's initial disbelief at her luck is quickly supplanted by a fear that the *Nascopie*, the Hudson's Bay Company ship en route to Cape Dorset, would sail without her. Not a moment is wasted in hesitation. Her elation over her imminent marriage appears inextricably bound with the prospect of Arctic adventure and exploration. Aboard the *Nascopie* en route to Cape Dorset, she is dismayed to find that the waters show "not a ripple in interest in the most important event of my life" (15), but whether the "event" is her marriage, her expedition, or a combination of the two is not clear. Within a month she is a twenty-nine-year-old newlywed crossing the largely uncharted western side of Baffin Island aboard a *komatik* (dogsled) and her husband's small craft, the *Polecat*, roughing it in caribou skins and sealskin boots, dining on bannock and pemmican, and sleeping in tents and igloos.

In *Journey North*, Orford writes, "On paper, Baffin Island had been the Promised Land. In the flesh, it was something very different" (9). What she finds there is an Arctic resembling the formidable landscape anticipated by Manning. Orford's romance of a tamed, domesticated Arctic is quickly supplanted by an alleged reality of the Arctic, but the latter is in fact another myth, one Sherrill Grace has summed up as the "anti-garden of snow, cold, and endless night" ("Articulating North" 69). Orford's first impressions of Baffin Island gleaned from the *Nanook*, the ship on which she passes six stormy weeks, are of a fear-inspiring landscape that seems both predatory and surreal. In an effort to deal with a panorama she finds "bleak and sort of terrible," Orford narrows her gaze on the towering mountains which rise thousands of feet, "splashing" against the sky like waves about to crash down on her. She forces her eye downwards, to where the tidal mountains

are mere reflections on the sea, but finds them even more threatening, "black and monstrous, lying still and in wait" (7).[3] Orford's dramatic landscape descriptions echo earlier conventional representations of the Arctic as darkly sublime. Nineteenth-century depictions of the far North were influenced by the romantic literary mode of the sublime, which "accentuated the mystery and grandeur of nature" (Grant 21-22). The vision of a forbidding, hostile, and mysterious Arctic gained momentum from 1845 onward, after the disappearance of the Franklin expedition, when members of search parties and other Arctic travellers "employed the 'sublime' to its outermost limits. Icebergs grew to gigantic proportions, spewing forth unimaginable colour and sparkle, as did the land and sea" (Grant 23). For some writers of the Arctic sublime, the landscape evoked wondrous awe, while others like Orford looked through a darker lens and experienced awe and dread.

An Arctic mysterious and dangerous in its grandeur proved most alluring to male explorers and adventurers for whom it was a new worthy opponent to accentuate the danger of their travels, and it no doubt reinforced belief that the Arctic was no place for white women. Some adventurous women, however, were making their way into Arctic and sub-Arctic regions in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, taking advantage of infrastructures provided by Native guides, the Hudson's Bay Company, the R.C.M.P., and Christian missions. Canadian Agnes Deans Cameron, for example, travelled the western Arctic in 1908 with her niece Jesse Cameron Brown, a journey recorded in Cameron's travel book *The New North: An Account of a Woman's 1908 Journey through Canada to the Arctic* (1909). Two adventurous British women, C.C. Vyvyan and Gwendolyn Dorrien Smith, also toured the western Canadian Arctic in 1926, a journey published as *Arctic Adventure* (1961). Some women were also entering uncharted territory, such as Canadian Mina Benson Hubbard, whose 1905 journey through Labrador to the mouth of the George River on Ungava Bay is narrated in *A Woman's Way Through Unknown Labrador* (1908). American Josephine Peary joined her husband, famed polar explorer Robert Peary, on an expedition to Greenland in 1891-92, recorded in *My Arctic Journal: A Year Among Ice-Fields and Eskimos* (1893).

These Arctic narratives by women who preceded Orford and Manning will provide points of contrast and comparison. Orford's domestic narrative, for example, offers a striking contrast to C.C. Vyvyan's account. Heather Smyth suggests, in her recent essay on Vyvyan's *Arctic Adventure*, that when a woman travels, she is escaping "the stranglehold of domestic-

ity" and "the gender expectations that deter women from becoming adventurers" (38). Smyth contends that Vyvyan, in constructing her adventuring traveller's persona, consistently distances herself from domesticity (39-40), and I find the same could certainly be said for Agnes Deans Cameron. Distancing the self from domesticity is no doubt a strategy Vyvyan and Cameron use to legitimize their presence in the masculine Arctic and Arctic narrative. Orford, on the other hand, portrays herself as a domestic adventurer. While Vyvyan takes apparent pride in being the second white woman to journey up the Rat River (13), and Cameron proclaims she is the first white women to "penetrate" Fort Rae (242), Orford, in conspicuous contrast, notes that she is the first white woman to give birth in Panuk (117).

In keeping with a narrative of domestic adventure, Orford's impressions of the darkly sublime Arctic landscape as the ship approaches Panuk are the only passages of its kind in a text where landscape description is rare, a rarity uncommon in Arctic travel narratives. As the ship scuds closer to land, Orford glimpses the settlement of Panuk—"the most desolate sight I had ever seen in my life" (8)—which propels her back to her cabin amidships with the desire never to see Baffin Island again. A different sort of Arctic hero/ine, Orford disembarks from the ship, enters her new living quarters, and is seldom seen outdoors again. In exact counterpoint to the Arctic as "the ideal mythic site where men could show themselves as heroes capable of superhuman feats," and Arctic narrative as a "rich source for the analysis of white masculinity" (Bloom 6), Orford's "Arctic" is a site where she may show herself a heroine capable of superhuman feats, but her accomplishments are decidedly domestic and her resultant narrative is a rich source for the analysis of white femininity. Her domesticity tells us something about the dominant constructions of gender in Canada during the Depression, the decade of Orford's travels, and the post-World War II years, when her travel book was written, based on her 1930s travel journals. In the reactionary 1930s and 50s, women were urged to forfeit their positions in the paid workforce to men. Throughout the first half of the twentieth century, the nineteenth-century ideology that allocated the roles of wife and mother to women and confined them to the home was revived according to national need (see Prentice et al. 156, 264, 349-350).

As a book of domestic travel adventure, Orford's *Journey North* is more firmly entrenched in a tradition of travel writing by domestic incorporated wives than in the tradition of male Arctic narratives. Susan Morgan's *Place Matters: Gendered Geography in Victorian Women's Travel Books about*

Southeast Asia and Catherine Barnes Stevenson's *Victorian Women Travel Writers in Africa* identify British colonial wives whose travel books chronicle a domestic, homebound heroism. Some women minimize the extent of their trials, like Elizabeth Melleville, who prefaces *A Residence at Sierra Leone* (1849) with the claim that she is documenting the trivial matters of daily domestic life, which include a hurricane that destroys her home and fevers that ravage her family. Louisa Hutchinson's *In Tents in the Transvaal* (1877) portrays the experience of making a home away from home as domestic comedy, while others, like Lady M.A. Barker's aptly titled *A Year's Housekeeping in South Africa* (1877) or Emily Innes's *The Chersonese with the Gilding Off* (1885) are litanies of domestic woe.

Orford makes the most of her domestic trials in *Journey North*, making it clear that her hardships are anything but trivial, but she uses a form of domestic comedy to convey her message that satirically slices and dices like the sharpest knife. Domestic or housewife humour, as it evolved in Orford's era, was a middle-class comedic discourse featuring a harried, disgruntled housewife whose plaintive utterances ranged from light-hearted mockery to trenchant satire aimed at house, husband, and children (see Dresner 93, 99). Orford writes domestic humour of the forked-tongue variety, and the rhetoric and tone of *Journey North* suggest that she was evidently tuned into this North American comic convention that would eventually spawn writers like Erma Bombeck.[4] In *Journey North*, her first object of ridicule is the medical residence in Panuk, a modest, square cabin. We learn that it harbours a huge coal range left behind, as she suspects, by a "prehistoric monster" as a "last gesture of defiance before moving out with the Ice Age" (16). When she inspects the bedroom, her taste in interior decorating is offended by headboards "generously ornamented with frenzied brass curlicues," which she christens "the brassmonger's delirium" (17). The family room is a "third chamber of horrors" (18).

In Orford's domestic comedy, the most frequent target of her gimlet eye is her husband. While she does mention his long hours at the hospital, describes his tireless commitment to reducing mortality rates among the Inuit, and occasionally expresses pride in his accomplishments, she often derides her husband at great length as an incompetent fool and herself a fool for marrying him. Orford's mockery of her husband begins innocuously enough. As they sort through the food supplies on day one in Panuk, he finds the precious butter "as if he was Freud discovering people" (27). Sarcasm soon evolves into pungent satire, but Orford's attacks on her hus-

band are usually mitigated by humorously ironic self-representation. She is frequently the butt of her own comedy, as when she describes the perplexed looks some Inuit hunters give her when she accidentally asks for *tingee* (female genitalia) rather than *tinga* (seal meat) for the evening's dinner (92). However, her satiric comedy reaches more complex peaks as we see in her depiction of a family camping trip several months into their residency. Her husband advises his family to keep warm but avoid excessive sweating at night by sleeping naked under fur blankets, and to sustain body heat by wrapping a towel around their heads. Her portrayal of him at bedtime is not flattering: "He was winding a scarf round his head by the time I was ready to lie down. With its fringes sticking out on either side of his face, his resemblance to a walrus in travail struck me as something more than remarkable" (146). The next morning, he tells Orford he could think of better things to do than spend the night with the "wet wash," referring to the nightgown she insisted on wearing to bed that was sweat-drenched by morning. Her rejoinder is that he is at liberty to spend the night with whomever he pleases from now on (147). She then passes the day alone in the tent immersed in a self-ironic melancholia enhanced by vague recollections of a Shakespearean sonnet:

> "When to the sessions of sweet silent thought," I recited silently, "we summon up remembrance of the past." Lovely, beautiful words. Dear happy past when I could pick and choose; when I was sought after and cajoled. Those precious, dead-gone days of youth. Today I was approaching thirty and reminded my husband of the wet wash. A tear splashed on my hand. (148)

When her husband returns mid-day to "wolf" down lunch, she turns from him and dreamily returns to Shakespeare, "that other with the lovely voice" (149), who becomes a romantic symbol of all that her husband is not. Quoting from *The Tragedy of King Richard the Second*, she writes, " 'Let us sit upon the ground . . . and tell sad stories of the death of kings.' But with the blindness of youth, I had chosen this illiterate, who because he could differentiate between one side of the human body and the other, was permitted a degree after his name" (149).

Clearly, Orford's domestic comedy is of the dark variety, and it is at its darkest during her hyperbolic expressions of desire to stab her husband with a nail (86), shoot him with a gun (135), or kill him by some other means (110). Orford never took her husband's life, and in fact their marriage, which survived her book and their lifetime together, was evidently a successful one (Robinson 15). Nevertheless, one cannot help but speculate

about the prick that sets off the wit, and seek the more serious subtext behind Orford's textual performance of dark domestic comedy. Orford's prominent travelling persona is that of the disgruntled wife, a woman who is grappling for a reason to be in and stay on Baffin Island. Orford arrives in Panuk and immediately enters the domestic realm, but the journey initially triggers a crisis in self-definition and purpose because her effort to find domestic occupation is frustrated. Upon arrival, she complains about the enormous domestic challenges she anticipates. On her first morning of residency, however, she awakens to find her daughters dressed and fed and the house tidied by her Inuit servant, Nukinga. The efficiency of her Inuit servants, Nukinga and Killeva, makes her expendable: "I sat down," she writes, "I might as well be comfortable. I might as well not be here at all, for that matter" (34).[5]

Scouting for something to do and a reason for being in Panuk, such as possibly assisting in her husband's work, Orford strolls to the small hospital and peeks through the windows, drawn by the buzz of activity inside. She confesses how she "longed to be a part of it all, be one of a lot of people, but Tom never liked me trespassing on his preserves, so I stayed put" (38). When her husband returns that evening, he rejects her request for any kind of employment at the hospital where she is not needed nor trained to work. Feeling that her husband is lording over the public sphere of the hospital, Orford responds by lording over the domestic sphere. A part of her gambit entails a make-work project in the form of major renovations to the medical residence. Her Native servants unfortunately bear the brunt of the burden as she designs a "Home Beautiful" (59), a separate domestic sphere where she will reign like an Arctic ice queen. Orford describes how she enlists Etonah, Nukinga's husband, to build an extra room, a staircase to the loft, cupboards, and a vanity table, while Nukinga dyes sheets with tea for curtains. Her other strategy is to reclaim domestic duties from her servants, such as organizing and making meals; the boxes of frozen food that must be sorted and stored in the loft become *her* Arctic "wilderness" (24).[6] Above all, Orford wrests child-care responsibilities partially from her servants and entirely from her husband. She furthers her authority in this jurisdiction by becoming pregnant with her third daughter, Catherine. "Now that he knew that I was an expectant mother, I could assume my role as a woman completely in command," she writes as she orders him about the house (86).

Once Orford finds her niche, her attachment to her temporary home becomes consolidated, making her departure from her Arctic "desert of ice"

difficult (see note 3). After a four-year term in Panuk, she welcomes the incoming doctor and his wife by giving them a tour of her domain, feeling the twist of "a dozen knives" as the new doctor's wife "touched and appraised" possessions that were now changing hands (189). As the ship departs from Baffin Island, Tom holds out a handkerchief to his wife, perhaps so she may dry the tears streaming down her face, perhaps as a white flag.[7]

Like Orford in *Journey North*, Manning in *Igloo for the Night* documents the domestic challenges specific to her new Arctic environment, but there are many disparities in their domestic narratives. First of all, Manning's domestic challenges—as reflected in the title of her book—are considerably different since she lives away from the posts and settlements. Ostensibly, her challenges are much greater. Manning's work entails cooking bannock and seal meat with an oil lamp, preparing caribou and seal skins, manufacturing skin clothing, and transforming the interior of igloos and tents into comfortable havens for the uninitiated non-Native. Nevertheless, her depiction of her experience as Arctic homemaker is bereft of the entertaining zest of Orford's housewife humour. Rather, Manning plays down her domestic duties and performs them with minimal complaint. Near the commencement of the book, while Manning expresses appreciation for the way her husband tactfully nudges her into the domestic supportive role he expects her to fulfill by encouraging her to learn Inuit culinary arts, she embraces the work with as much curiosity as trepidation (33). Near the end of their trek, when the thrill of making bannock and sleeping in igloos has worn thin, the couple discovers an abandoned Royal North West Mounted Police barracks and settles in. In euphoric tones, Manning describes the domestic details of making this, her first matrimonial house, livable (219). Her compliance does wear thin, however, when two grizzly white trappers arrive claiming rights to the barracks by permission of the police. Sensing trouble, her husband is ready to strike a deal with these two motley characters, but first he haltingly checks with his wife since the burden falls on her back. She agrees to cook for the men in exchange for shelter, but grudgingly (221).

Manning, however, does not primarily inscribe herself in the domestic sphere as Orford does. As we have seen, the Arctic of her desires is a place where she might transcend gender limitations and test herself in a conventionally white male world of exploration and adventure. Granted, she does not distance herself from domesticity as Agnes Deans Cameron and Clara Vyvyan felt the need to do in the sub-Arctic (Smyth 39-40) because her

identity as incorporated wife who performs some domestic duties is her portal to the uncharted Arctic. It is unlikely that Manning, a Canadian woman in the 1930s, would have found the financial backing needed for solo Arctic exploration, nor is it likely that she would have conceived of a notion so distant from the narrow realm of female professional opportunity. The nature of her wifely incorporation is such that she participates in her husband's work and provides domestic necessities, but the former role provides the focus for her Arctic narrative.[8] Manning sets out with the same fervent enthusiasm as one of her historical and literary precursors, Isabel Burton, the incorporated wife of Victorian explorer, scholar, and diplomat Sir Richard Burton. When Manning writes, "I joined the ranks of those who, to quote a fellow-traveller, 'pay, pack, and follow'" (8), she nods in the Burtons' direction by echoing the infamous dictum Richard Burton delivered to his wife when his consulship in Damascus was recalled and his peregrinations were resumed. Isabel Burton satiated her own potent hunger for adventure by marrying her nation's pre-eminent explorer, thereby providing herself with a virtual "passport to travel" (Blanch 11).[9] Although Manning appears to regard her husband as infinitely more than a passport to adventurous travel, he did function as one.

Moreover, significant comparisons and contrasts might be made between Manning and another of her historical and literary precursors, American Josephine Peary, whose *My Arctic Journal* (1893) is an account of her 1891-92 journey to Greenland with husband Robert Peary. In an essay on *My Arctic Journal*, Linda Bergmann argues that Peary offers a "woman's version of an exploration narrative" (57), although I would add that it is an incorporated wife's version as well, for Peary's identity as wife significantly shaped her experience and her narrative. As incorporated wife on an expedition, Peary works variously as camp cook and as gun-toting expeditionary. She also shares a "leadership position" with her husband by virtue of marital privilege (Bergmann 58). Similarly, Manning accompanies her husband on arduous hunting and cartographic expeditions, assists in the construction of igloos, which involves the strenuous work of shovelling snow and cutting ice blocks, and supervises archaeological digs in Nuwata (36). Bergmann also suggests that Peary depicts her husband and his accomplishments in the best possible light because the journal functioned as a public document promoting polar exploration (58). One might detect similar propagandistic motives at work in Manning's text, which lavishes praise on her husband and his work.[10] However, Manning's travel book significantly departs from

Peary's in terms of gender identification. Not wanting to ruffle feathers down south, Peary "clearly demonstrates that her adventures did not diminish her position as a nineteenth-century lady," and she represents herself "as her husband sees her, as a plucky but conventional American lady" (Bergmann 58). Manning depicts herself as a liberated twentieth-century woman willing to appear more than a little manly and quite unladylike.

In a feminist discourse of resistance, *Igloo for the Night* incorporates Manning's confrontation with a legion of doubters before her departure: men who voice their disapproval of her travel plans, which, because she is a woman, they find foolhardy and inappropriate. One Major Tweedsmuir, a colleague of her husband's who introduces Manning's text, writes, "Mrs. Manning achieved a very great feat, although she makes it all sound so simple." Her achievement is all the greater when one considers the many forces undermining her confidence. The Major is, in fact, one of the first doubters we encounter in *Igloo for the Night.* He admits he initially found the idea of a woman accompanying one of "the hardiest travellers alive" to be "monstrously absurd" and even "criminal" (Introduction). Manning relates her interaction with a male friend at a pre-departure dinner party, who sternly, endlessly admonishes her about women's special susceptibility to a form of madness called "Arctic hysteria" (13). Such doubters, however, only serve to strengthen her resolve, and she remains steadfast in her decision to travel. She finds the Hudson's Bay Company officials unanimous in their disapproval of her plans, which they attempt to foil by giving her the run-around as she attempts to book passage on the *Nascopie.* They also try various methods of dissuasion and intimidation, going so far as to fabricate a story about her husband's disappearance in the Arctic landscape. One particularly objectionable official provokes Manning's ire when he asks, "Do you really think you can travel with him as he does," meaning without "fresh supplies of face powder, nail polish and cosmetics generally?" (12). She looks down her nose at him and answers in the affirmative (12). On her first night aboard her husband's craft, the *Polecat,* as she contemplates the soiled deerskins that will be her bedding for some time to come, the official's voice returns, as does her defiance:

> I shrugged mentally, and said good-bye to clean white sheets. After all, it wasn't the end of clean white sheets. There would still be sheets when we came Outside. That would be something to look forward to. And the voice of my official in Montreal once again whispered in my ear:

"Do you think you can travel as he does?"
"Yes."
I would, too. (24)

In writing of this rugged mode of travel, Manning details her masculine metamorphosis. Within a few weeks, her ladylike accoutrements disappear: she changes her skirt, city shoes, and long hair for a man's shirt, breeches and pullover, a pair of sealskin boots, a parka hooded with dog fur, and cropped hair. Her husband, who calls his wife "Jack" throughout the text, is the one to suggest the new sensible hairdo and clips off his wife's mane with inordinate delight. This nickname, originating from Manning's birth name Jackson (Peake, "Manning & Wife" 2), contributes to the gender ambiguity of this writer who identifies herself as Mrs. Tom Manning on its title page and as Jack within its covers. No doubt Manning's self-inscription as willing Arctic domestic is shaped by her subject position as incorporated wife, while Jack the hardy Arctic explorer is in part her answer to the legion of doubters she encounters. Manning's journey proves that, provided the opportunity, a white woman was capable of entering the conventionally masculine outdoor stomping grounds of the Arctic. Her account of the journey intimates that it is a "masculinizing" experience, albeit a temporary one. She also makes it clear that she will eventually return to her femininity and treasured clean sheets.

Together, Manning and her husband map the Inuit territory of West Coast Baffin Island and "discover" islands that they name after white friends. In so doing, Manning becomes one of Canada's first woman explorers (Strong L7) engaged in the imperialist activity of mapping and naming. However, Manning, while supporting her husband's work, has difficulty identifying herself as an explorer, and in fact persistently underrates her own accomplishments. In her essay on another early Canadian female explorer, Mina Benson Hubbard, Lisa Laframboise notes,

> The role of explorer was not a common one for women at the turn of the century. Although women were writing English-language travel books in ever-larger numbers, often laying claim to "unbeaten" paths, "unknown" territories, and "darkest" geographies, European women almost never travelled into truly "unknown" regions to do the preliminary survey and mapping work that laid claim to a region in the knowledge-making systems of European geography. (12-13)

Hubbard, by virtue of her identity as the incorporated *widow*, led an expedition into uncharted Labrador in the wake of her husband's fatal attempt to do so. In writing her sub-Arctic journey for public and scientific con-

sumption, Hubbard negotiates the conflicting "twin imperatives of femininity and of authority" by presenting herself as unquestionably feminine and as the unquestionable leader of the successful expedition (Laframboise 9). Thirty years later, Manning struggles with similar imperatives, but it seems unlikely that her expressions of self-doubt and modesty are deliberate stagings of femininity. Rather, they strike me as a transparent response to the doubters, whose reservations she appears to internalize, and to being the wife of a seasoned explorer.[11]

Both Mannings trek with a perilously light load, both travel a landscape as unknown to themselves as to the Inuit guide who accompanies them for the first few weeks, both endure subsistence living conditions because their base camp at Taverner's Bay is about three hundred miles from the nearest Hudson's Bay Company post, and both work on cartography. Nevertheless, Manning attributes the success of their venture to her husband: "Now," she writes, "when I know how much my husband accomplished with the little he possessed, I am exceedingly proud of the results of his efforts" (31). She praises his fortitude at the expense of her own, often belittling herself as the tagalong member in an expedition of two. In "Selves in Hiding," Patricia Meyer Spacks examines the twentieth-century autobiographies of five accomplished women, including Emmeline Pankhurst, Dorothy Day, Emma Goldman, Eleanor Roosevelt, and Golda Meir, and finds that "to a striking degree they fail to emphasize their *own* importance, though writing in a genre which implies self-assertion and self-display" (114). She adds, "They use autobiography, paradoxically, partly as a mode of self-denial" (132). To some extent, Manning uses the self-aggrandizing genre of Arctic exploration literature in this way as well, and by identifying herself as "Mrs. Tom Manning" or as "Jack," the "self" known as Ella becomes obscured.

It becomes increasingly apparent in Manning's text, however, that she is one of her husband's most important resources and that her participation is instrumental to the success of the expedition. By referring to her husband's many consultations about navigation with her, she makes it frequently known that he solicits and respects her opinions (64, 105, 161, 163, 188). Occasionally, she even acknowledges her own aptitude:

> I pointed out the place [the elusive Nassauya Point] to my husband rather hesitantly; he is usually so much better at such things than I.
>
> "Yes," he replied slowly, "perhaps you are right. We'll make for it any way."
>
> The little knob which marked my hypothetical entrance stayed small for so long.

> It was not until after mug-up [lunch] that it began to assume any size. Actually it was Nassauya Point and my guess had been good. (155)

At the end of her text, Manning writes an encomium to Inuit dogs, claiming they are "the unsung heroes who make possible the many exploits of famous explorers" (232). Although she never explicitly makes the same claim for herself, or places herself among famous explorers, she occasionally sings her own praises, however faintly.

Taken together, Orford in her comic, frozen-food wilderness and Manning in her manifestation as cropped-haired Jack are fascinating, unfamiliar figures in the traditionally masculine textual landscape of Arctic travel narratives. The prominent "other" in much relational travel writing is ethnographic, but in travel writing by women struggling with the opportunities and challenges presented by wifely incorporation, the prominent "other" is frequently a husband as well as a self, a self seeking legitimacy as traveller in her own right

NOTES

1 Moss's book in part functions as a bibliography of representations of the Arctic by outsiders. Among the many works considered are the photographs of Fred Bruemmer and Mike Beedell; paintings by Lawren Harris, Toni Olney, A.Y. Jackson, and Doris McCarthy; films by Robert Flaherty; novels by Mary Shelley, Jules Verne, James Houston, Yves Thériault, and R.M. Ballantyne; poetry by Al Purdy, Jim Green, and Paulette Jiles; adventure narratives by Robert Peary, Farley Mowat, M.T. Kelly, and Will Steger; exploration narratives by Samuel Hearne, Alexander Mackenzie, Charles Tuttle, Martin Frobisher, Jens Monk, Vilhjalmur Stefansson, and Robert Bartlett; and non-fictional histories, essays, and meditations by Rudy Wiebe, Farley Mowat, Barry Lopez, and Aritha van Herk.

2 As Grant observes,

> The promotion of northern development was serious business, as seen in the 580-page, gilt-edged, leather-bound volume entitled *Our North Land*, written in 1885 by Charles Tuttle, a prominent member of the western expansionist movement. Based on his experience when he accompanied a government expedition to Hudson Bay, he described the region in minute detail, emphasizing the bountiful resources and the more positive aspects of Arctic topography, the climate, and the indigenous people. The concept of a "north-westerly course of civilization" emerges in the first chapter titled "Attraction of the North." This theme is repeated and expanded to the point of arrogance. . . . (25)

3 Orford's introductory poem to Journey North, titled "Baffin Island 1936-1940," prepares us for her ominous first impressions of Panuk:

> Desert of ice, mystic solitude
> Whence none return that once intrude
> Or raise the veil to see behind.

Who gaze upon the violent beauty of your face
Are lost
And must forever wander
Blind.

In Marcus Robinson's brief obituary mentioned earlier, in addition to learning that Orford spent her youth studying classical piano and reading English literature, we are informed that she apparently wrote short stories and poetry in her adulthood, publishing in *The Fiddlehead* (15). Unfortunately, I have not yet located any work by Orford in *The Fiddlehead*, nor have the editors. Thus, the only example I may offer in this essay is this introductory poem to *Journey North*. Significantly, however, Orford does not represent herself as a writer but as a housewife and mother.

4 One of Orford's literary precursors is undoubtedly American Betty Bard MacDonald, who wrote a phenomenally popular book titled *The Egg and I* (1945), a narrative of MacDonald's experience chicken farming in Washington's Olympic Mountains in the 1930s. MacDonald's book was made into a film by Universal Studios in 1947 (McCarthy 82), and has other echoes in popular culture, including the 1960s sitcom *Green Acres*, which has inspired the title of this essay.

In MacDonald's next book, *Anybody Can Do Anything* (1950), the author explains how she came to write *The Egg and I*. In the early 1940s, she met a publisher and informed him that she was going to write "a sort of rebuttal to all the recent successful I-love-life books by female good sports whose husbands had forced them to live in the country without lights and running water" (252); in contrast, she would give a "bad sport's account of life in the wilderness" (252). Orford gives a "bad sport's account" of homemaking in the Arctic, and she does so with the same sarcasm.

5 Catherine Barnes Stevenson refers to the complaints about inefficient Native servants that abound in women's travelogues as the "the housewife's burden" (17). In an interesting reversal of this rhetorical lament, Orford initially bemoans the *efficiency* of her Inuit servants.

6 Orford's domestic wilderness calls to mind some observations made by Margaret Atwood in *Strange Things: The Malevolent North in Canadian Literature*. According to Atwood, the clichéd image of the hostile north altered when white women began entering it in fact and fiction, and she divides these northern-bound women into two waves: "There is a huge difference between first and second waves: the women of the first wave were not in the North woods of their own volition. They were there because circumstances and fate—namely their husbands—had dragged them there" (95-96). In other words, Atwood's first-wavers were incorporated wives. Their husbands, argues Atwood, were frequently portrayed outdoors pitting their desires against a resistant landscape, whereas women remained inside with their family (97). Alluding to Alice Munro's *The Lives of Girls and Women*, Atwood portrays these first-wavers as builders of "linoleum caves" in the wilderness: domestic spaces that either provided precarious shelter from the brutal natural world without or transformed the wilderness into a kitchen (88), an apt description of Orford's journey north.

7 Although this departure from Baffin Island does not mark the end of Orford's experience as a travelling incorporated wife, *Journey North* is her only travel book. According to Robinson's obituary, her husband's medical practice took the family across the country, first to James Bay, then to Regina and Edmonton, and finally to Killam, Alberta in 1981 (15).

8 In Manning's second travel book, *A Summer on Hudson's Bay* (1949), a record of the summers of 1945 and 1946 spent with her husband conducting ground and aerial surveys for the Geodetic Service of Canada, Manning eschews the domestic narrative, an absence foreshadowed in her reaction to the radio broadcast she hears on her first flight in a Canso en route to the Hudson's Bay: "We had a short period of Strauss, fifteen minutes of household hints to which I turned a deaf ear, and then half an hour of Bach" (15). She was the first woman employed by the Geodetic Service of Canada.

9 In *The Wilder Shores of Love*, Leslie Blanch suggests that "[w]hat the Victorian woman could not achieve herself she sometimes achieved by proxy, by *loving*" (11).

10 Manning's flattering representation of her husband offers a striking contrast to Orford's satiric portrait of her husband, which is not, perhaps, surprising when we consider that Manning was on her honeymoon. Nevertheless, neither representation is a necessarily reliable indication or forecast of marital health and longevity. According to Michael Peake's "Manning and Wife," the Mannings divorced in 1960, but as mentioned earlier, the Orfords remained husband and wife until death. This knowledge reinforces the notion that representation of the spousal other may be determined by factors such as generic convention and anticipated readership.

11 The introduction to *Igloo for the Night*, by Major Tweedsmuir of the Canadian Army in England, gives us some sense of Thomas Manning's reputation and experience before his journey with his wife: "Tom Manning is an old friend from Oxford days. He has a reputation for being one of the 'hardiest travellers' alive. A reputation which he gained in 1932, when he crossed Lapland in winter by reindeer sledge, with one companion." Michael Peake's obituary on Thomas Henry Manning (1911-1998), "Lone Wolf of the Arctic," which documents Manning's successful career, catalogues the honours he ultimately received, including the Gold Medal of the Royal Geographic Society, the Massey Medal of the Royal Canadian Geographical Society, and the Order of Canada.

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Kevin Flynn

The Railway in Canadian Poetry

In his essay on the railway in Australian literature, Russell McDougall outlines some reasons why the railway has not been a resonant image in Australian writing. He points, by way of contrast, to Canada, "where the construction of the CPR has been regarded by a number of writers and critics as a potent symbolism for enacting the sense of nation, steel lines running through the disparate regions of the mosaic" (76). His decision to compare his nation's literature to Canada's in this regard seems sensible enough; after all, although our railway history is not substantially different from that of the United States, we adopted the railway as our "national dream," a vision of cooperation and collective industriousness that stands apart from the individualist vision of the "American dream." What is striking about McDougall's comment is that he never cites a Canadian writer or critic who refers directly to the railway. In fact, there exist in Canada only three journal articles on the railway in Canadian literature. One is Wayne H. Cole's 1978 article in *Canadian Literature*, "The Railroad in Canadian Literature," a cursory study of ten Canadian texts which claims that the railway is "the symbol of modern Canada, embodying within it the many elusive dimensions of the modern Canadian identity" (124). The second is Douglas Jones's "Steel Syntax: The Railroad in Canadian Poetry" (1987), which supports McDougall's assumption by stating bluntly that, "[e]xcept in Canada" (35), the railway "has no great attraction for the twentieth-century muse" (34). Like Cole, Jones bases his judgement on a small sampling of texts: seventeen in total, devoting nearly

as much space to Rudy Wiebe's novel *The Temptations of Big Bear* as to *Towards the Last Spike* (an odd imbalance in an essay on railway *poetry*). The third is my own "Destination Nation: Nineteenth-Century Travels Aboard the Canadian Pacific Railway" (1999), which surveys late nineteenth-century travel books and argues that these narratives, whose customary westward progress mirrored that of Canadian settlement, mark "the most easily recognizable roots of a Canadian nationalism embedded in the might of the machine and the special power of the book to propagate it" (191). Three critics is certainly "a number," but it is a rather smaller number than McDougall likely suspected had written articles on this subject.[1] That there are quite good anthologies of British and American railway poetry (Robert Hedin's *The Great Machines: Poems and Songs of the American Railroad* and Kenneth Hopkins's *The Poetry of Railways: An Anthology*) but none of Canadian poetry indicates the slight attention paid to literary representations of the railway in the country that, arguably, most identifies it as a symbol of its national character.

Perhaps Canadian writers have been more interested in the railway, however, than have our critics. As I have noted elsewhere, scores of travel books were published after the completion of the Canadian Pacific Railway, many of them contributing to "the CPR's status as a national symbol of industriousness, progress, and unity" (203). Indeed, the CPR took advantage of the popularity of these books by spinning out its own long, advertisement-laden travel guides, whose repeated encouragements to settle in Canada show that they were intended as guidebooks not just for travellers but also for those who wanted to participate in the building of the nation.

The railway also has a strong presence in Canadian fiction, although it is rarely employed as a national symbol there. The train sweeps through Canadian fiction as surely as it does through the Canadian landscape. Nicholas Temelcoff, newly arrived in Canada from the Balkans, boards a train in Saint John, New Brunswick in Michael Ondaatje's *In the Skin of a Lion*, riding on rails that reach into the Annapolis valley, where David Canaan, the failed artist of Ernest Buckler's *The Mountain and the Valley*, watches a train pass and is reminded of how "the train of your own life went by and left you standing there in the field" (271). From the Maritimes through Quebec, where Athanase Tallard rides the train in Hugh MacLennan's *Two Solitudes* and looks out at French-Canadian farmers who are "bound to the soil more truly than to any human being" (77), and into Ontario, where Robert Ross sits aboard a troop train in Timothy Findley's

The Wars awaiting transport to a training facility, the train continues on its way. On through the prairies it goes, impressing young Gander Stake, in Robert Stead's *Grain*, with the sheer power of its engine and taking the life of Hagar Shipley's son in *The Stone Angel* before it finally reaches the west coast, where a group of track-walkers press themselves against the walls of a tunnel to avoid being killed by an oncoming train in Douglas Coupland's *Girlfriend in a Coma*. From early short stories such as S. J. Robertson's "Home Again, 40-1" (1897) to recent novels such as Wayne Johnston's *The Colony of Unrequited Dreams* (1998), the railway is everywhere to be found—but, judging by its lack of literary-critical treatment, little to be noticed—in Canadian fiction.[2] The response to the railway in our fiction is not nearly so uniform as in our travel writing, nor so baldly nationalist; instead, as the instances listed above will suggest, Canada's fictive response to the railway has been regionalized and individualized, so that a journey by train is less a symbol of national development—or even communitarian interest—than of personal growth.

The same holds true for Canadian poetry, whose lyric "I" has seemed resolutely unwilling to yoke train, text, and nation in the way that travel narratives did. Indeed, despite its nationalist inclinations and fondness for landscape description—traits shared by travel literature of the period—late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Canadian poetry virtually ignored the railway. Counterintuitive though it may seem, until the mid-twentieth century Canada's poets were not much interested in the railway at all. The same ideals of progress that excited travel writers upset the notions of timeless communion with an undisturbed landscape upon which the pastoral poetic consciousness of the late nineteenth century grounded its identity. Because the railway threatened to defile the very landscape in and through which the pastoral consciousness conducted its self-examination, poets of this generation largely chose simply to ignore it. By the 1930s and 1940s the train seemed a more appropriate subject for verse, but there are still remarkably few twentieth-century Canadian poems that treat the train as a discrete aesthetic object in the way that Whitman had a half-century earlier in "To a Locomotive in Winter." The modern poet might see or hear the train, or perhaps even ride in it, but with very few exceptions—Pratt's documentary long poem *Towards the Last Spike* being the most noteworthy—the lyric "I" of modern poetry shares with its nineteenth-century counterpart a penchant for self-examination that precludes treatment of the railway as a communitarian symbol. The personae of modern poems

tend, like their forebears, to be individualists, detached from the concerns and even the presence of a community. It seems clear that there exists a gap between poets whose vision of the train is almost exclusively private and interiorized and a public who views the railway as an important symbol of nation and community.

In the late nineteenth century, Canadian poetry was still absorbed in ideals of god, landscape, and nation. Poetry was not seen as the appropriate genre in which to describe technical change, the sort of material best herded into the preserves of prose in order to keep poetry safe from its influences. Indeed, turn-of-the-century issues of *The Canadian Magazine* are filled with dazzling technical descriptions of mechanical minutiae that nineteenth-century Canadian poetry simply did not treat as art. The "dated formality and elevated subject matter" that Robert Lecker finds throughout Watson and Pierce's anthology *Our Canadian Literature* (57) are symptomatic of Canadian literature's adherence to an Arnoldian conception of poetry as the highest form of art, an adherence that explains Roy Daniells's observation that, despite poetry's status as the "supreme art" in Canada between 1880 and 1920, its attention to current events "hardly exist[ed]" (193). Its gaze was fixed elsewhere.

Turn-of-the-century Canadian poetry was obsessed with landscape, with depicting its minutiae and the mental and spiritual process of its observer, and with creating an idealized space though which the train was seldom allowed to pass. Sir Charles G. D. Roberts's "The Tantramar Revisited," for example, would be a much different poem were a train suddenly to roar through it and disturb the "present peace of the landscape" (55). Although its autumnal seaside setting does not readily conjure images of shepherds tending their flocks in verdant hills, nostalgic preoccupations of this poem with time and change in the rural setting have clear pastoral resonances. Like the traditional pastoral enclosure, defined by Andrew Ettin as "a safely contained and self-contained haven from the hazards of public places and the flow of ordinary time" (11), Roberts's rural setting is bounded on one side by a threatening wilderness ("the turbid / Surge and flow of the tides" [17-18]) and on the other by a road that leads, presumably, back to the city. This was no place for a train. Trains belonged in cities and travel narratives, not in the pleasant countrysides of Canadian poetry.

This opposition between the rural and the urban, and an accompanying opposition between traditional and modern poetic values, is apparent in the treatment of the railway in Canadian poetry. Anxious to preserve their pas-

toral enclosures, early Canadian poets regarded the railway as a threat to a way of life and a way of poetry. The train was a sure sign not only of progress, but also of the dread, implacable enemy of the pastoral idyll: time. Modern poets, who worked with the new language, rhythms, and imagery of the twentieth century, admitted the railway into their verse and employed the train as a setting or inspiration for the ruminations that earlier poets conducted in a peaceful rural setting. This is not to say that all modern poets wrote approvingly of the railway, nor that they necessarily eschewed the pastoral impulse in their work. But the generally stable oppositions between rural and urban, simplicity and complexity, timelessness and history, and, of course, nature and technology correspond so perfectly to oppositions between traditional-pastoral and modern poetic interests that it is impossible to ignore them. A study of the railway in Canadian poetry reveals a literary tradition whose response to the machine is caught between pastoral influences and modern poetic practices, and which imagines the railway in individualist rather than communitarian terms.

Many of our poets have referred to the railway in their poetry. Margaret Avison, Earle Birney, Erin Mouré, P. K. Page, and Al Purdy have all published several railway poems, as have many lesser known poets. Their efforts range from early narrative poems such as Agnes Maule Machar's "Joe Birse, the Engineer" (1899) to abstract poems of mid-century such as Louis Dudek's "Midnight Train" (1947), and from there to more personal and nostalgic poems of the late twentieth century, such as Don Gutteridge's "Canatara" (1982). Tom Wayman's "The Station Agent" (1976), Erin Mouré's reply, "What the Station Agent Never Says" (1977), and the poems collected in Michael Gee's two slim, self-published volumes of *An Anthology of Steam Railroad Poems* (1986) describe the life and work of railwaymen. Isabel Ecclestone Mackay's "Calgary Station" (1912), Winifred N. Hubert's "VIA Ottawa Station" (1978), and, most famously, Archibald Lampman's "The Railway Station" (1888) depict scenes in railway stations, and Irving Layton's "Excursion" (1956) and Elizabeth Brewster's "Coach Class" (1951) depict scenes within a rail car itself. After mid-century, this poetry is increasingly concerned with the ways that rail passage transformed space by imparting motion to its observer, as in Douglas Lochhead's "Poems in a Train—Newfoundland" (1960) and Barker Fairley's "Prairie Sunset" (1984). Absent from nineteenth-century poetry, the image of the train window finally appeared in modern Canadian poems, creating what bpNichol calls "discrete frames in / a continuous flow" (*Continental Trance*, n.pag.),

frames for a newly aestheticized modern Canadian landscape.[3]

Of course, this landscape had already been aestheticized long before the modernists laid claim to it. At the time of the CPR's completion in 1885, however, it was being aestheticized in a very particular way. In *Land Sliding*, W. H. New argues that depictions of landscape "constitute an ongoing history of a culture's relations with place and space" (8). He goes on to say that the Confederation Poets signaled a pivotal moment in that history by insisting that the landscape be "in some measure [. . .] perceived as *home*," thereby dispelling "the trope of the evil, godless, savage, grotesque, barren land" (96). Ettin writes that this feeling of being "at home" (which, I will argue later, is related to the emergence of nostalgic railway poems in the late twentieth century) is also "the dominant impression of the pastoral environment" (135), and it seems clear that the home that nineteenth-century Canadian poets fashioned for themselves was a pastoral enclosure, one in which they could gaze contentedly upon peaceful rural scenery and, in some cases, achieve the "spiritual completion" that Harold Toliver argues is typical of pastoralists still held under the sway of Romanticism (210).[4] In leafing through hundreds of books of Canadian poetry published between 1885 and 1925, I found plenty of evidence of yearning for an idealized union with nature and little at all of poetic interest in the railway.

Take, for instance, Lampman's "Across the Pea-Fields," in which the entire landscape seems to "hum" (1). There is no sense of dissonance here, of the human presence disturbing nature's hushed tones; Lampman's speaker is perfectly in tune with his environment. Although the title of this poem suggests movement, it is clear that the speaker has no wish other than to stay where he is, to "lean and listen, lolling drowsily" and resisting the threatened incursion of the sounds of the city into his pastoral surroundings and sensibility (10). When he mentions his proximity to "blackening rails" (9), he is speaking of fence rails rather than train rails, rails that bound the landscape rather than enable transgressions between rural and urban worlds. Although these rails cannot protect the idyllic setting completely—the distant sounds of the city, "murmurous with mills" (6), are a reminder that although the pastoral enclosure "is a spot for containment, that containment signifies an awareness of the menacing power outside" (Ettin 12)—Lampman strives to create a natural preserve in his poetry and contrasts his peaceful dream of nature with the noisy reality of the city. It is in his poem "The City," appropriately, that his speaker is subjected to "the roar of trains" and not just the distant sounds of urban life (24). Lampman

confines the train to the city in order to protect both the pastoral enclosure and the speaker's mental and spiritual state while he is in it, and in doing so he helps to confirm the divide not just between nature and civilization but also between rural and urban attitudes toward the railway.

Despite Lampman's efforts, the train thrust itself mercilessly into the pastoral consciousness. In contrast to the peace of "Across the Pea-Fields" is the pandemonium of Lampman's "At the Ferry":

> At moments from the distant glare
> The murmur of a railway steals,
> Round yonder jutting point the air
> Is beaten with the puff of wheels;
> And here at hand an open mill,
> Strong clamour at perpetual drive,
> With changing chant, now hoarse, now shrill
> Keeps dinning like a mighty hive. (41-48)

This is a far cry from the landscape's hum in "Across the Pea-Fields." Roberts, Lampman's Confederation *confrère*, writes of a similar spiritual disruption in "The Train among the Hills." The quiet of this poem's first four lines is broken by a slow crescendo, "till suddenly, with sweep / And shattering thunder of resistless light / And crash of routed echoes, roars to view, / Down the long mountain gorge the Night Express" (7-10), rending asunder the "[i]nviolate" "solemn valleys" of the third line. The train, which Roberts calls a "dread form" (12), is a metaphor for death here,[5] for how we are all "To goals unseen from God's hand onward hurled" (14), but it is also a symbol of progress without knowledge of one's destination, which was one of the dangers posed by new machine technology. The response to the train in these two poems is identical to what Leo Marx finds in American literature after the mid-nineteenth century: "The sudden appearance of the machine in the garden is an arresting, endlessly evocative image. It causes the instantaneous clash of opposed states of mind: a strong urge to believe in the rural myth along with an awareness of industrialization as counterforce to that myth" (229).

Marx's comment points toward an ambivalence that resonates throughout British, American, and Canadian literary representations of the railway. For some, the practical benefits of the train for farming, trade, and immigration could not outweigh its detrimental effects on the landscape. It is not surprising that Canadian poetry was slow to embrace the railway when one considers the split literary response to the machine in Victorian England as "both the unwearied iron servant and the sacrificial god to whom mankind

has offered its soul" (Sussman 7). Remo Ceserani, in his study of the impact of the train on the European literary imagination, suggests that this ambivalence is the product of a split between the interests of poets and society. Whereas poets and philosophers viewed the transformation of landscape by the railway as a sign of "derangement in the external and internal life of man," this view "was in explicit contrast to the more positive and progressive ideologies that were dominant among the ruling classes, and new industrial bourgeoisie, that emerged in Europe and America during the nineteenth century" (Ceserani 128-29). In Canada, the railway altered Canada and perceptions of Canada as well. For every Mrs. J. C. Yule, who wrote of the train in 1881 as a vehicle for progress, "Sweep[ing] proudly on its exultant course, / bearing in his impetuous flight along, / the freighted car with all its living throng" ("Canada" 64-66), there were a dozen Canadian poets who would have joined Wordsworth in wondering whether there was "no nook of . . . ground secure / From rash assault" by the railway ("On the Projected Kendal and Windermere Railway" 1-2). Wilson MacDonald's "A Song to Canada" (1918) and Clive Phillipps-Wolley's "A Contrast" (1917) both lament the changes wrought by the railway. MacDonald finds the "span of steel" little more than a symbol of the nation's greed (51) and Phillipps-Wolley compares the Vancouver of 1787 ("A world as its Maker made it—unpeopled, unspoiled, alone" [12]) to the Vancouver of 1887 ("The voice of Nature silenced [by . . . / . . . .] / The scream of the locomotive, the voices and homes of men" [22-24]). Corporate disruption of the landscape through railway progress had profound implications for the pastoral observer. If the landscape with which the pastoral "I" identified was altered, then that "I" was altered too. So the train might indeed be a valuable communications technology, connecting rural and urban spaces to create a national community, but it threatened the individual who dared to believe that he could remain alone and untouched, his identity preserved in a pastoral enclosure of his own mind's making.[6]

Like tracks and trains, railway stations were signs of the incursion of technology and modernity into the traditional rural landscape, casting a long shadow over what were supposed to have been eternally bright Elysian fields. The rural station, with its timetables and waiting trains, shook the faith of the pastoral consciousness in the possibility of respite from "the flow of ordinary time" (Ettin 11). Nathaniel A. Benson's "Station Platform" (1939), for instance, depicts two lovers who are doubly enclosed—in the

pastoral setting's "Green fields and summer skies" (2) and in one another's eyes. But then the train, which will take one of these lovers away from the other, nears the station and disrupts their idyllic union:

> We stood alone as lovers,
> Happy to all beholders,
> And the bloody weight of this damned life
> Hung on our shoulders. (9-12)

Owing again to lingering Arnoldian values, railway stations seemed not to belong in the countryside of Canadian poetry, which partially explains why they were so often portrayed as embodiments of urban hustle and bustle. The commotion inside the station gave rise to a sense of isolation and alienation rather than the peaceful solitude of the rural setting, a feeling that pervades Canadian poetry into the twentieth century. Dorothy Livesay's "Railway Station" (1945) uses wartime images of "flak" and "punctured sky" (15, 16) to depict the assault on her senses:

> Confused, embedded, over-turbulent world
> Whirling and swarming on outbound passage—
> In space churning; in ether resounding,
> Never ceaseless; never without sound. (1-4)

All the whirling, swarming, and churning here induces a kind of psychic motion sickness. It is not just movement but movement away—away from home, away from one's roots, away from loved ones—that causes pain and disorientation in railway stations. Twenty-five years later, in "la gare centrale, montreal," Joan Finnigan calls the railway "this place of torn flesh and the insufficient kiss" (17). "[O]nce beautiful and believing" (60), the people rushing about here are hopelessly adrift, caught in "the netherlands between leaving / and arriving" (55-56). Contact with other people is fleeting and riddled with uncertainty. Contact with nature is impossible because the station's sky contains only "neon stars" (3, 41, 61) that "illuminate / our longing" for meaningful connection (62-63). Like the pastoral enclosure, the railway station is a liminal space. Although railway stations fulfilled important social functions in small-town life—catalogued in Ron Brown's The *Train Doesn't Stop Here Anymore: An Illustrated History of Railway Stations in Canada*—these functions have rarely been represented in Canadian poetry, which tends instead to depict the ways in which the railway facilitates our departure from loved ones and estranges us from the traditional values of rural life.

This sense of estrangement is evoked most pointedly in Lampman's "The

Railway Station," which is the focal point of Lampman's critique of the "noise and commotion, aggression and alienation" (Jones 41) of the urban world. Lampman is deeply affected by the station scene—"the rush, and cry, and strain," "the hurrying crowds, the clasp, the flight" (3, 4). The station here is a foreign land, compelling Lampman to employ diction that is foreign to most of his poetry; the peaceful repose of his pastoral verse does not often require him to use words such as "scream" (4), "smite" (4), and "pain" (6). Even the most dependable of nature's rhythms are rendered meaningless: "The darkness brings no quiet here, the light / No waking" (1-2). After studying his surroundings and meeting the eyes of the station's denizens—"mournful eyes," "eyes that are dim with pain" (10, 6)—Lampman's own eyes rebel against the scene and "grow fixed with dreams and guesses" as he muses on the "dark distresses" and "various agonies" of the people around him (11, 13, 14). The railway station is an affront to Lampman's spirit of romantic pastoralism.

There are some significant exceptions to such negative representations of the railway, exceptions that integrate the railway station into the pastoral setting. Most notable are two poems by Edna Jaques, "An Old Woman Cleaning a Station" (1939) and "Station in the Mountains" (1941). The former describes a woman who "goes about her work in a happy mood" (4), lovingly transforming a station into a home. Indeed, she "mothers little folk" here (10), and "often tired women passing through / Waiting for trains and resting for a while / Are comforted and made to feel at home" (13-15). Her station is more a resting place than a point of departure. For Jaques, the station is not an isolated structure in which travellers are suspended between home and away. It is, however briefly, a welcoming home away from home.

This is even more evident in "Station in the Mountains," which employs the station as the setting for a family idyll. The tension between the natural world and the station is completely dissolved in the poem's image of a mother standing at the open door of a station home, its windows "filled with flowers all abloom" (14). The open door signals a relaxation of the boundary not only between natural and constructed spaces, but also between individualist and communitarian visions. Through this door the traveller, a stranger, may pass in order to affirm his or her sense of home—not the private sense of home sought by the pastoral "I," but rather a sense of community and belonging that informs much later, nostalgic, railway poetry. It is no coincidence that so many of Canada's railway stations look

alike and, moreover, look like homes. Like churches, these structures could, through the sheer familiarity of their form, reflect and engender communal values. The domestic architecture of Canadian stations—a sharp contrast to the "palpably industrial" stations of Europe described by Wolfgang Schivelbusch in *The Railway Journey* (172)—were intended not only to dispel "the fears of English Canadians over an American-style railway and those of French Canadians over an English railway" (Brown 68), but also to invoke a sense of the familiar, a reassurance that these stations, which looked so much alike in distant parts of the country, were part of a common Canadian experience.[7] Despite the communal values suggested by their design, however, Canadian poetry has rarely consented to the vision of the station as home, preferring instead to see it as a place of parting and separation.

Jaques endorses the domestic vision of the station house in her description of the husband and father in "Station in the Mountains," the kindly station-keeper for whom the train is the "bright climax of his day" (14) and who feels the same "pride and sense of ownership" in his work that the old woman cleaning a station feels in hers. The closing lines reveal the basis of his pride:

> How faithful to their jobs these people are
> How great a trust we put in their brown hands,
> The humble guardians of tie and rail
> That gird our country with its shining bands.
> Linking the little places each to each,
> Bringing the whole wide world into reach. (19-24)

In her references to "we" and "our," Jaques makes the leap from describing a pastoral scene to framing a pastoral vision of the nation, each of its "little places," and the people in them, linked to each by the railway. As rare as it is to see a railway station bathed in such glowing light in Canadian poetry, it is rarer still to see a Canadian poem that implies the railway's importance to national sentiment.

It is a particular kind of national sentiment, however, that Jaques has in mind. Even through she embraces the railway as a symbol of community, the community she imagines, even at the national level, is a rural one. Her poems, like the British rural landscape representations discussed by Elizabeth K. Helsinger in *Rural Scenes and National Representation*, "give the abstract conception of the nation a local, lived meaning" (19). For Lampman, the railway has "betrayed the pastoral vision" (Jones 42). For

Jaques, it connects Canada's separate rural spaces to create a national pastoral landscape, so that the whole country is home. She envisions Canada as a cultivated national green space whose peace the railway does not disturb in the least.

A few poets point out that the railway, rather than destroying the garden, can actually transport one to it, that it can facilitate, rather than threaten, the pastoral experience. In Jean M. Douglas's "Travelling West" (1939), the train bears its passenger pilgrims to "another Lebanon" (8) far removed from the urban scene: "The vales and hills stretched forth on either hand / And rich with blossoming orchards the homestead / Smiled in the sun, and life seemed fair and sweet" (9-11). The religious encounter with nature had been poetic stock in trade in Canada since the nineteenth century. But Douglas takes the train, long a symptom of urban blight, and turns it into a remedy. Sophie Kaszuba's 1996 poem "We Left the City and Moved North (Ontario Northland Railway)" performs a comparable maneuver by tracing the train's route from "the delicious poisons of the city" to a place where its passengers can "climb up onto the granite / and open the green door / in the land" (9, 40-42), although her retreat from the city is located in the northern frontier and "dreams of the bush" (30) rather than in the customary green countryside of pastoral verse. Over a hundred years earlier, S. Moore's "The Laurentides and the Lake St. John Railway" (1887) also shows how the railway grants access to a curative countryside:

> O! what a health-invigorating boon
> To go by train to these Laurentian hills!
> . . . . . .
> The air is redolent with fragrant gums,
> And every breath inhaled is health renewed—
> For every grateful sense is satisfied. (90-91, 101-103)

This is not exactly the place, however, for wandering lonely as a cloud. Like the travel narratives of the day, Moore's poem is as much advertisement as literature. There are poets in its landscape, but they are joined by the fishermen, sportsmen, botanists, and geologists who arrive by train. The pastoral enclosure was now open for business, and Moore's depiction of it as a tourist attraction manages to praise the advances of machine technology and the purity of the garden in the same breath:

> [Travellers may] come and feast their eyes, and breathe the cool
> And fragrant air of these Laurentian hills.
> All honor to the men of wealth and skill
> Who planned and built this line which leads to scenes
> Of new delight . . . . (133-37)

Just as Schivelbusch explains happened in Europe, the railway in Canada made "remote regions . . . available to the masses by means of tourism: . . . a prelude, a preparation for making any unique thing available by means of reproduction" (42). Nature, the railway, and poetry are all partners in the "COMMERCIAL ENTERPRISE" trumpeted by Moore earlier in her poem (76).

Their accommodation of the train distinguishes the landscapes described by Moore and Jaques from those of Lampman and his railway-hating compatriots. It might be expected that poets with such divergent attitudes toward the train would have similarly divergent attitudes toward the land through which it sped, but these poets all agree that the rural space is one of peace, health, and rejuvenation. Still, space is only one half of the pastoral equation. The other is time, and it is in their attitudes toward time that these two camps part company. By sustaining "pastoral enclosures where ideal harmony reigns timelessly," traditional pastoralists exerted their control over a specific way of looking at the world, so that the poem, like the pastoral scene itself, was "its own bower where time is suspended" (Toliver 41). It is not at all surprising, then, that most early Canadian poets tried to keep the train, the great symbol of progress in the nineteenth century, out of that bower as much as they could; however, the train, like time itself, kept creeping into their poetry and disrupting the idyll they guarded so fiercely. It is not just that the train threatened to distract or remove people from the pastoral enclosure; it is that the progress and historical advancement that the train embodied threatened the pastoral ideal itself. The tacit assumption on which much Canadian poetry rests is that the train *is* time.[8] It is progress, just as it was for the rest of Victorian society and for Lord Lorne, Canada's Governor General from 1878 to 1883, who proclaimed that the CPR had "a great and useful work to perform in developing the vast country which has called it into being" (27). Pastoral poets were not seduced by mechanical progress, and by rejecting the railway in their poetry they rejected an important basis of Canadian nationalism, one that was rooted in national pride in the railway but that might contaminate the rural character of the nation. Moore and Jaques, however, encouraged traffic between rural and urban spaces and celebrated the progress that allowed it. However, the reaction of most Canadian poets to the train between the 1880s and 1930s mirrors Nathaniel Hawthorne's notebook descriptions, as described by Leo Marx:

> [The locomotive] appears in the woods, suddenly shattering the harmony of the green hollow, like a presentiment of history bearing down on the American asylum. The noise of the train, as Hawthorne describes it, is a cause of alienation in the root sense of the word: it makes inaudible the pleasing sounds to which he had been attending, and so it estranges him from the immediate source of meaning and value in Sleepy Hollow. (27)

Well into the twentieth century, the sound of the train reverberates through Canadian poetry as an accompaniment to dark emotions and the depreciation of the pastoral ideal in life and art.

With the advent of modernism in the 1930s and 40s, however, the railway was not so threatening to poets anymore, nor were poems timeless bowers. Poetic interest shifted "from the bucolic to the urban, from 'regional passions' to the 'abstract'" (Birney, "E. J. Pratt and His Critics" 125-26). Although Ginestier probably overstates the case when he says that "certain poetic genres, like the eclogue and the pastoral, are dead simply because no one is willing to believe in them any longer" (18), it is no doubt true that the effects of the Depression and two world wars gave pause to anyone who might have dared to imagine an ideally peaceful and fecund world. With the new rhythms and urban interests of modernist verse came a new conception of machine technology which redressed the Victorian literary "failure to recognize, and to value the aesthetic qualities of the machine" (Sussman 229). Although the railway captured the public imagination in the nineteenth century because its technological advances "appeared perfectly in tune with the New World character" (den Otter 21), the public who loved the railway and the poet who wrote about it were two very different creatures, particularly in a literary culture that endorsed an Arnoldian conception of poetry. Modern poets, however, saw things a little differently. The poetic imagination could now accommodate a train's whistle into its conception of the Canadian landscape.

The sound of a train—especially at night—continued to exercise an emotional influence on poetry throughout the twentieth century, but not in the same way that it had in the nineteenth. Whereas the whistle interrupted the peace of the pastoral "I," shrieking an unwelcome reminder of the busy world that encroached on his idyllic solitude, it often reinforced the loneliness of modern speakers. In Clara Bernhardt's "Trains" (1948), the whistle sounds like a "human voice" speaking "Of desolation, pain and loss, / And loneliness tomorrow" (7-8). Half a century later, Patrick Friesen's "the wheels" depicts a speaker who, alone in his home and separated from his

lover, "cannot bear the sound of trains" (1). Surprisingly, given modern poetry's tendency toward impersonality, treatment of the sound of a train as a discrete aesthetic object has been as rare in the twentieth century as in the nineteenth. Only a handful of such poems exist in Canada. Martha Banning Thomas's "Railroad Crossing (Winter Night)" (1950) imagines the train's sound creating a "glittering crack" in the night air (10) and Richard Woollatt's "Trains Passing at Night" (1992) performs a similar imagistic turn:

> Brittle Alberta winter night
> amplifies whistles at crossings
> sharp crack
> of dynamite caps
> steam blasts from
> engine flanks (1-6)

Woollatt's and Thomas's efforts aside, Canadian poets have been reluctant, even in the twentieth century, to forsake emotional attachments to the sound of a train in the distance. The observing "I" is as strong in modern railway poetry as it was in the nineteenth century, and is even more forthright in its admission that self-examination is its end; however, while the pastoral "I" ignored or impugned the railway in order to preserve the self from presumably corrosive influences, the modern "I" embraces the railway as only another component of the experience through which the self is constructed.

Unlike their predecessors, modernists eagerly rode the train in order to describe it and its passengers. In "Night Travellers" (1939), Anne Marriott recreates the ethereal scene inside a cramped rail car, the restless movements of her eye capturing perfectly the discomfort of her fellow riders as she catalogues the various "[f]orms grotesquely bent in green plush seats" that comprise her still-life portrait (4). The sexually charged setting of Louis Dudek's "Night Train" (1946) is produced in large part by the rhythm of the train:

> . . . the motion
> Of the railroad's belly pounding under us—
> While within the lighted car, in the loudness,
> Girls sit, their heads bowed over books,
> Ferreting the pages of love, unsatisfied. (12-16)

Both poems—particularly Marriott's, with its reference to a man dreaming "of bombs and gas masks" (19)—use the train as an accompaniment to, and even a reflection of, the perceptions and emotions of the age rather than as a

disruption of these, as it had been for the pastoralists. The train could now mirror the world and a person's state of mind rather than lay waste to them. It could join the landscape as a setting in which to examine one's psyche. It could, perhaps, finally be treated as a bona fide poetic subject. In answer to Ginestier's question about whether the train was "really poetic" (19), Dudek, who wrote a number of train poems, would have replied with an emphatic—and most un-Arnoldian—yes. Dudek realized, however, that the train's aesthetic potential lay not only in its form, which was still rarely the subject of poetic description, but also in its power to move people physically and imaginatively. He recognized that the train influenced people by imparting its motion and rhythms on them, thereby altering their experience and perception of their surroundings.[9]

By the 1940s an entirely new image began to appear in Canadian poetry: the train's window as a frame for the landscape. The image of "pieces of the countryside pass[ing] under [passengers'] eyes, in the frame of the window" is, as Cesarani has shown, common to the railway literature of other nations (131). But this image was absent from Canadian poetry until well into the twentieth century. Robert Finch's "Train Window" (1946) provides an excellent example of this new image. In it, the window frames a modern landscape whose only hint of green is in the colour of a truck that sits, laden with ice, on a cement platform:

> Five galvanized pails, mottled, as if
> of stiffened frosted caracul, three
> with crescent lids and elbowed spouts,
> loom in the ice, their half-hoop handles
> linking that frozen elocution
> to the running chalk-talk of powder-red
> box-cars beyond, while our train waits here. (15-21)

Finch's cold, metallic scene is as notable for its sound as its imagery. He obviously delights in the striking rhythms and consonance of the "stiffened frosted caracul" and "chalk-talk of powder-red / box-cars," sounds more appropriate to a modern urban landscape than a traditional pastoral one.

In another of his poems, the nearly identically titled "Train-Window" (1966), Finch uses the window frame to turn scenery into images on a moving canvas, "the diesel / Fling[ing] land and sky back on the easel" (1-2). It may be that Finch's poems demonstrate just what the pastoralists had feared: a passenger sits behind his window and observes the passing landscape dispassionately, intellectually engaged with it but spiritually discon-

nected from it. Dudek, however, denies any such disconnection between subject and object in these images. In "From a Train Window" (1986), he uses concrete images to construct an abstract poem, suggesting, as the movements of the lines and imagery of the poem do themselves, that there is no boundary between the space inside and outside the window, nor between observer and landscape:

> A reeling swallow
> dips
> and rises—
> a score running across the snow noteless,
> a fan, a train-yard
> a pen-nib, a
> twisted cable . . . (1-7)

Writing, nature, and technology coalesce for Dudek's modern observer, whose roving eye replicates the organic form of the noteless score he describes. The window frame does not separate passenger and scenery. It serves, along with the person who looks through it, as a conduit between landscape and locomotive, albeit one better suited to a modern consciousness than a traditional one.[10]

Dudek's and Finch's landscapes are different from one another, and different in turn from those of the pastoralists, but they are equally reflective of their observer's state of mind—just as they were for Lampman and his cohorts. Lampman's readers are expected to understand that his poetry's scenic description is often a projection of its speaker's mental state, but modern poets often foreground this function of landscape in their work. In P. K. Page's "Reflections in a Train Window" (1954), the window doubles as a mirror and the passenger is "a woman floating" in it, "transparent" (1-2). The image of the mirror is one of self-examination and the exploration of identity that Page so often engages in, but there is more to the image than that. The two poles of the poem's Christian imagery ("Christmas" [3], "saint," and "haloed" [13] versus "stigmata" [5], "martyr" [6], and the prick of thorns) point to the woman's suspension between joy and suffering, which is in turn an apt description of the traveller's liminal position: "She is without substance, ectoplasmic" (12). Paulette Jiles creates similar imagery of a train-travelling woman who professes to "like it here in the middle element where this / express is ripping up the dawn like an old ticket" ("Waterloo Express" [1973]). Whereas the pastoral mindset resisted the train because it disrupted the illusion of the timeless bower and thus the ideal of

a stable identity, Jiles embraces the transformation that this disruption occasions.

Page and Jiles present a communal railway experience no more than do the pastoral poems, or later poems by Finch, Dudek, and countless others. Indeed, Canadian poetry has played virtually no deliberate role in engendering shared public interest in the railway—a surprising circumstance given the widely held assumption that literatures reflect and engender national values, and that the railway would be so convenient a means of doing so in Canada. Maurice Charland's argument for the railway's central role in the public conception of the nation is compelling, but it is an argument that has not been reflected in our poetry:

> In the popular mind, Canada exists more because of the technological transcendence of geographical obstacles than because of any politician's will. Thus, technology itself is at the centre of the Canadian imagination, for it provides the condition of possibility for a Canadian mind. (201)

You would simply never know this from reading Canadian poetry, which has never seemed interested, whether in the hands of traditional or modern poets, to get the train and the nation together in the same poem.

There are, of course, a few significant exceptions to this rule, chief among them E. J. Pratt's long poem *Towards the Last Spike.* From the standpoint of form, Pratt's poem is unique because its documentary narrative—distinct even from other long poems of the railway such as bpNichol's *Continental Trance* and "Trans-continental"—allows Pratt to circumvent the limitations of the introspective "I" of lyric poetry. Pratt's blank verse is not particularly experimental, and despite his obvious interest in technology and the "new particles of speech" ushered in by science (*Towards the Last Spike* 346) it actually contains very little of the scientific diction that Pratt, almost alone among Canadian poets, found so musical. But by treating the construction of the railway as a narrative, divorced from the workings of the private mind except insofar as he depicts the imaginings of characters such as Sir John A. Macdonald and William Van Horne, Pratt approaches his subject with an objectivity absent from most Canadian railway poems.

This is not to say that Pratt is a poet without passion. However, whereas most railway poets write about private passions, Pratt depicts national ones in *Towards the Last Spike.* His objectivity is crucial to his thematic project in the poem. Simply by depicting the construction of the CPR—the vision, the labour, and the political wrangling leading up to its completion—*Towards the Last Spike* takes on a monumental task, one attempted (in scope, if not

in style) in our literature only by Alan Sullivan's novel *The Great Divide: A Romance of the Canadian Pacific Railway* (1935). A number of critics have, like James F. Johnson, compared Pratt's work to that of the railway builders themselves:

> As Van Horne laid steel rails over some of the most intractable regions of mountains and muskeg in the world, so Pratt, on the level of the poetic imagination, surveyed the terrain, discovered the passes, and made accessible to the imagination vast expanses of Canadian history that must have seemed, at first glance, very uninviting to poetry and myth. (150)

As daunting a project as this is, Pratt sets an even more difficult task for himself. He labours to express a vision of the nation, and indeed of humanity, that accounts for individualist and communitarian impulses and attempts to resolve them in a way that other Canadian railway poetry does not. Pratt recognizes that the nation, like the railway, is the product of a partnership between individual and corporate efforts. To that end, he takes care to represent the vision and energy of individuals such as Macdonald and Van Horne and the massed will and effort of the thousands of Canadians who helped build the railway though their tax dollars and labour. Moreover, he insists on integrating the two sides, on demonstrating that they are mutually dependent: without the vision, the labour cannot take place; without the labour, the vision cannot be fulfilled. Without each other, there can be no nation to which the individual and the community belong.

Al Purdy shares Pratt's vision of the railway as a means through which the individual can experience the nation. "Transient" (1968) describes "the nationality of riding freight trains thru the depression" (59) by recreating the adventures of a young man hitching a cross-country ride aboard a box-car:

> After a while the eyes digest a country and
> the belly perceives a mapmaker's vision
> in dust and dirt on the face and hands here
> its smell drawn deep thru the nostrils down
> to the lungs and spurts thru blood stream
> campaigns in the lower intestine
> and chants love songs to the kidneys. (45-51)

This is a powerful, visceral statement of how the train enables an intensely personal identification with the nation. The national panorama of Purdy's "Canadian" (1950) performs a similar gesture. Forty-odd years earlier, the station-to-station stops of W. H. Porter's acrostic panorama in "Canadian Scenes from Eastern Coast to Western Isle" (1907) show how the railway

bound cities together in national unity. Such expressions are countered, however, by an equivalent number of poems that use the train to suggest important ways in which our national identity is fractured. F. R. Scott's "All the Spikes but the Last" (1957) is a well known retort to the nationalist assumptions of Pratt's *Towards the Last Spike.* Seymour Mayne's "Passengers" (1977) contrasts travellers who pass through Ottawa as they "barrel towards their destinations / in times of perennial depression" (3-4) with federal politicians who "take to the air / and pass over as if on / high burnished chariots" (11-13). The train is also the subject of bill bissett's poem of national class consciousness, "The Canadian" (1967):

> . . . i did en
> vision th society of fact in Canada
> as a train, its peopuls classd, & sub-
> classd, according to th rank & station,
> . . . . . .
> its peopuls cut off from each other by
> such coach cars & compartments. (23-26, 29-30)[11]

These examples aside, the vast majority of Canadian poetry does not consider the railway and the nation in close conjunction. Certainly the railway, despite massive cuts to its passenger service in the late 1980s, continues to stir national passions in Canada. Events such as the Ottawa International Writers Festival's VIA Rail Great Canadian Literary Tour, books such as Ron Brown's *The Train Doesn't Stop Here Anymore* and Ted Ferguson's *Sentimental Journey: An Oral History of Train Travel in Canada*, and national contests sponsored by businesses such as Home Hardware in which customers are offered the chance to win a cross-country rail trip, are all reminders of the place that the railway holds in the popular national consciousness. So why have Canadian poets so rarely appealed to this sentiment in their verse?

The answer to this question may lie, ultimately, less in the clash between pastoral and modern poetic modes than in the nostalgia that is the basis of the popular attachment to the railway. Nineteenth-century Canadian poets were intent on imagining a pastoral enclosure that stood as an example of the "original condition of human life" (Ettin 45), and seemingly could not bear to acknowledge that the railway threatened to change this state so soon after its inception. Modern poets, intent on reckoning with the rapid pace of change in the twentieth century and with their own experiments with form and language, preferred to think of the train in local terms, as one of

many settings and symbols of a world whose chief characteristic was its modernity, not its Canadianness. Furthermore, nostalgia was not a tool near at hand for either of these groups. Their close physical and temporal proximity to the landscapes that inspired them left the pastoralists little cause to engage in nostalgic reverie, and the edict of impersonality did not encourage nostalgic ruminations by modernist poets. Only recently, since about 1980, have Canadian poets made an effort to treat train, landscape, and nation together under the umbrella of nostalgia. They have done so by suggesting that the train and the landscape that the pastoral poets fought so hard to keep it out of have both become endangered species, that they are both important to Canadians, and that they are, after all, both symbols of home—the same concept of home that informs the pastoral ethos. Anne Marriott's "Transcontinental" (1985) reminisces about the way that the sight of the country from aboard the train affected a young girl whose "skin grew tight / threatened to split / holding in all the wonder" (20-22) and who found a sense of community sitting on seats "that shone from the shifting / of a thousand bottoms" (29-30). In "Humber Valley Railway Trestle" (1983), Raymond Souster remembers standing with other boys on a railway platform and thinks of how different, how much simpler, life was back then. In "The Train Set" (1991), Michael Hulse recalls watching trains with his parents:

> ever
> since, whenever
> I've sat on that hillside, I've been the child
> I once was in that wide-eyed world
> watching over a train set with my mother
> and father till it was dark, loving to see
> the trainlights and fireflies, the headlamps of cars
> as shooting stars. (20-27)

All of these poems endorse a pastoral vision in their longing for a return to origins, for a chance to recapture an "innocent past that has yielded to a decadent and turbulent present" (Ettin 127). But they do so in a most modern way, by musing on the train in order to overcome the passage of time and rediscover an innocent and unspoiled Canadian experience. What these poems dream about, ironically, is a railway that can take one back to the pastoral space and embody its principles—a railway of the sort that takes the readerly "you" of Stephen Leacock's *Sunshine Sketches of a Little Town* back to an idyllic rural home that is a symbol for a once-innocent nation: "I

don't know whether you know Mariposa. If not, it is of no consequence, for if you know Canada at all, you are probably well acquainted with dozens of towns just like it" (13). Leacock insists in "L'Envoi: The Train to Mariposa" (*Sunshine Sketches* 181-86) that you can go back home again, that the individual can return to the community and renew his sense of belonging, and that the train performs a certain magic by transporting people back to their roots. What Leacock shares with these late-twentieth-century poets is a dream of a pastoral railway, a dream that is rooted in nostalgia for the nation in a form so pure that none of us has ever experienced it because it has, regrettably, never existed. Given the impossibility of recapturing these elusive origins, it is perhaps a sign of prudence that Canadian poets have otherwise steadfastly refused to address the role of the railway in the nation's mythology, despite having given us so many and varied poems about the railway itself.

NOTES

1 I am referring here specifically to literary-critical texts, since these are the focus of McDougall's comment. A simple library search does, of course, turn up a mountain of non-fiction books treating Canadian railways in relation to trade, history, politics, engineering, and so on, and magazine and newspaper articles on the railway have been ubiquitous in Canada since the late nineteenth century.

2 A thorough survey of the railway in Canadian fiction is neither possible nor necessary here, but such a catalogue would surely include the following: Earle Birney's *Down the Long Table*; George Bowering's *A Short Sad Book*; Hugh Garner's *Cabbagetown*; Frederick Philip Grove's *The Master of the Mill*; Paulette Jiles's *Sitting in the Club Car Drinking Rum and Karma-Kola: A Manual of Etiquette for Ladies Crossing Canada by Train*; Joy Kogawa's *Obasan*; Sky Lee's *Disappearing Moon Cafe*; Hugh MacLennan's *Barometer Rising* and *Each Man's Son*; Sinclair Ross's *As For Me and My House*; Gabrielle Roy's *Bonheur d'occasion*; Peter Unwin's *Nine Bells for a Man*; Geoffrey Ursell's *Perdue: or How the West Was Lost*; and Rudy Wiebe's *The Temptations of Big Bear*. I have also collected in my research a fairly substantial body of short fiction by lesser-known writers.

3 The poems I refer to in this essay represent only a small sampling of the more than 300 I have collected, and which I am currently assembling in an anthology of Canadian railway poetry. Although selective, the poems I address in my discussion are indeed representative of Canadian railway poetry. Confronted with my research results (and my own realization that they would not fulfill my expectations that there should exist a large body of poetry celebrating the importance of the railway to Canada), I simply followed the material where it led.

4 As my earlier reference to "Tantramar Revisited" will suggest, I am employing an inclusive definition of the pastoral here, one that does not follow Paul Alpers's dictum that "we will have a far truer idea of pastoral if we take its representative anecdote to be herdsmen and their lives rather than landscape or idealized nature" (22). I prefer to fol-

low the examples of Toliver, who has "extended the principles of the old shepherd poem freely to literature that abandons many of its conventions while illustrating its themes and attitudes" (vii), and Ettin, who argues that adhering to a restrictive definition of the pastoral limits our appreciation of its influence on literature (2) and points out that "more modal than generic examples of the pastoral occur in literature of the last two centuries" (69). I use the term "pastoral" here not just as shorthand for a rural setting, but to encapsulate certain attitudes toward that setting—and toward time, history, technology, and the nation—that will become clear as I proceed.

5 The railway is commonly used as a dark metaphor in other literatures. See Sussman; Duff.

6 Condemnations of the railway's despoliation of the landscape were not limited to nineteenth-century poetry. Earle Birney's "Transcontinental" (1945) comments upon the way that the railway has left the earth "creased with our coming and going" (17) and the sexual imagery of Mary Ainslie's "Northern Rail" (1933), in which rails "embrace" the land and trains "Come tumbling through this tunnelled mound" (16, 26), suggests a figurative rape of the pastoral landscape by rail technology.

7 Brown reminds us that station houses did also function as real houses, homes to "many Canadians [who] were born in, got married in, lived in, and died in railway stations" (127). In subsequent pages, Brown describes the living quarters of station agents in detail.

8 See Schivelbusch 42-43 for a consideration of how the railway altered rural time by making it dependent on the standardized time necessary to railway schedules.

9 For more on the way that the train altered space by accommodating its passengers to a moving landscape, see Schivelbusch 55-57, 59-60.

10 To trace the development of this window-frame image in Canadian railway poetry, see Amoss, "Locomotive Smoke Shadows"; Bates, "Prairie from a Train Window"; and Avison, "Sketch: From Train Window (Leamington to Windsor) in March" and "Beyond Weather, *or* From a Train Window."

11 A similar class-conscious inquiry of nationalist representations of the railway is conducted in Garner's *Cabbagetown* and Birney's *Down the Long Table.* Canadian fiction has proven no more interested than our poetry in propagating a technological nationalism grounded in the railway.

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Shane Rhodes

Still Life with Apple

There is an apple on the counter
by the telephone.

There are no messages. If anyone calls
they will not, I think, get through.

If there is light through the window
it is morning, if not, evening.

If there is noise, it is the sound
of noise. No lights blink.

No electronic whistles.
Nothing calls for our attention.

The apple sits in this crust of air.
There are so many ends to green

when even light gives up on colour.
Something about it says it was picked

by hand and placed in tubs with russets
and spartans. Something about it falls

with the weight of rock in mountain passes
rock that takes three days to push away

and on the third it snows
and they let the cars through.

Cold flesh and bruised light.
Even here no one talks

of death or a family's slow
twistings in the air, only why,

in autumn, before snow,
the mind is so held

by fruit.

Pierre Rajotte

The Self and the Other: Quebec Travellers in the Middle East at the End of the Nineteenth Century

S'il n'y a pas d'Ici sans Ailleurs, et vice-versa, on conviendra du moins que l'examen d'une identité collective, quelle qu'elle soit, gagnera à prendre son matériau non seulement dans ce que la collectivité dit d'elle-même à tel moment, mais aussi dans ce qu'elle dit, en même temps, de son Autre (ou de ce qu'elle pose historiquement comme son Autre). (Halen 8)

Travel accounts of voyages to the Middle East are unthinkable without the question of representation of the Other. Numerous recent studies of nineteenth-century European travellers address the subject,[1] focusing on works such as the Middle-East travel writings of Chateaubriand (1811), Lamartine (1835), Nerval (1851), Gautier (1853), Renan (1878), Doughty (1888), Chevrillon (1893, 1897) and Loti (1895), all of which provide an eloquent testimony to the evolution of the Other through the nineteenth century. As Todorov has written, Chateaubriand's texts in particular, "susciteront d'innombrables imitations et influenceront, directement ou indirectement, le genre entier, et, à travers lui, toute la perception européenne des autres" (315).

Quebec travel narratives are no exception. At the end of the nineteenth century, an increasing number of Quebec travellers were making pilgrimages to the Holy Land, aided by advances in transportation (especially the steamboat, which reduced Atlantic crossing time to less than ten days) and the opening of the Holy Land from Turkish control in 1868, as well as the creation, in Paris, of "un comité composé d'ecclésiastiques et de laïques pour préparer l'organisation de caravanes, assurer par des relations déjà établies en Orient la sécurité et la bonne direction des voyageurs, et enfin

servir pour la réduction des prix, d'intermédiaire officieux entre les pèlerins et les compagnies qui se chargent d'ordinaire du transport pour ces contrées" (Provancher 8-9).

Quebec was a society shaped by religious principles and ultramontane values, which gave destinations like Italy and the Middle East genuine appeal.[2] Rome was a sacred place to French Canadians, a kind of Catholic Promised Land chosen by God as the site of His terrestrial representative.[3] Jerusalem, on the other hand, represented a kind of *imago mundi*, a centre of the world, which allowed them to return to the source of Christianity and, therefore, to engage in a form of apologetics. "Dans ces derniers temps d'impiété et d'affaiblissement de la foi," Father Léon Provancher wrote, "les pèlerinages ont semblé se réveiller, comme pour opposer une nouvelle barrière à la libre pensée qu'on prêche de toute part" (8).

Guided by this spirit of devotion, many French Canadians, particularly members of the clergy, dreamed of setting foot on "le sol sacré" (Dupuis 312). "Nous ne sommes pas des touristes," Bishop de Goesbriand clarified, "mais des pèlerins; ayons garde de l'oublier" (27). Several of the pilgrims published accounts of their voyages in periodicals[4] and books.[5] Four years after returning to Canada, for example, Father Joseph-Médard Émard published *Souvenirs d'un voyage en Terre Sainte* in 1884. The same year, Bishop Louis de Goesbriand published *Voyage en Terre Sainte* and Father Léon Provancher, *De Québec à Jérusalem: journal d'un pèlerinage du Canada en Terre Sainte en passant à travers l'Angleterre, la France, l'Égypte, la Judée, la Samarie, la Galilée, la Syrie et l'Italie.* In 1886, Gaston P. Labat's *Les voyageurs canadiens à l'expédition du Soudan ou Quatre-vingt dix jours avec les crocodiles* appeared. In 1892, Father Henri Raymond Casgrain offered his memoirs of voyages in Italy and the Holy Land to readers of *La Semaine religieuse de Québec.* Father Joseph-Fernand Dupuis released *Rome et Jérusalem* two years later and, finally, Henri Cimon, who accompanied Father Casgrain in 1892, published *Aux vieux Pays* in 1895 (followed by two subsequent editions in 1913 and 1928).

For most of these authors, a trip to the Holy Land fulfilled a profound hope, not the desire for exotic escape longed for by French Romantics of the early nineteenth century but a return to the origins of Christianity. The Orient gave Quebec travellers the opportunity to admire *in situ* relics that anchored the foundations of their religion. It was a place of cultural significance often disproportionate with the actual environment; indeed, a notable gulf existed between the physical Jerusalem and its mythic and symbolic

importance. In this sense, these voyages were part of a ritualistic return to the Holy Land as readers of the Scriptures imagined it to be. "Il nous est impossible d'oublier un instant," Father Provancher noted, "que nous foulons à nos pieds la terre des merveilles, la terre des miracles, la terre des mystères, car à chaque pas que nous faisons, ce sont des événements bibliques, évangéliques ou historiques que chaque localité rappelle à notre souvenir" (143).

In this context, it might be assumed that Quebec travel narratives offered few depictions of Oriental people, whether Turkish, Arab, Jewish, Persian, or other. Indeed, from the outset it is clear that the first objective of Quebec travellers, mainly members of the clergy, was not the encounter with the Other. They were there to visit the Holy Land, and the Other seemed an obstacle in the way of this quest. The cities and villages were not a part of their destination; the customs of the Other were far removed from the Biblical existence that Quebec pilgrims were hoping to find, and they needed to ignore the Other in order to preserve the biblical "mirage" they carried in their luggage. As R. Jouanny describes, "le voyageur est en quête du temps de l'Histoire, temps de la légende biblique ou du rêve oriental, temps hors du temps, et se trouve confronté au temps contingent d'un monde dont le fait même qu'il soit en devenir lui apparaît comme une trahison" (270-71). The pilgrims preferred landscapes of ancient ruins and uninhabited sites such as the desert, which spoke of eternity and where they could relive a mythic past: "Rien de plus facile," Provancher wrote, "que de le peupler, par la pensée, de tous les grands personnages bibliques qui ont marqué de l'empreinte de leurs pieds le sable sur lequel nous volons en ce moment emportés par le souffle de la vapeur" (171).

If the Other was not entirely overlooked by some travellers, it was regarded with scorn, accused of the destruction of celebrated sites. Anti-semitic prejudice was rampant. According to Henri Cimon, "la désolation règne aujourd'hui en ces lieux. Les hommes n'ont pas voulu reconnaître le Messie qu'ils attendaient, et le déicide a apposé un sceau de malédiction sur toute la contrée. Il y règne un deuil de mort" (172).

Throughout the many books published in the nineteenth century (called, by Abdeljilil Lajomri, "le temps du mépris" [83]), it is possible to see a growing awareness and a general acceptance of the Other. What was this perception of the Other and what motivated it? I have touched on the question in *Le récit de voyage: aux frontières du littéraire* (1997) by discussing the specific notion of intertextuality in connection with travel in the Near East,

or what I call "the Other through another's eyes." In the present study I look briefly at three general tendencies: the representation of the Other through another's eyes, the representation of the Other transformed into the Self, and the representation of the Self transformed into the Other.

The Other through another's eyes

A study of Quebec travel accounts at the end of the nineteenth century demonstrates that the Other was of interest mainly when it corresponded to the mythic Orient. Generally speaking, travellers represented the Other using stereotypes that provided a convenient way of limiting otherness or keeping the unknown within familiar boundaries. Thus Orientals, however different from one another, were converted into the archetypal characters that made up the Orient's immutable "landscape," most notably among these the dragoman or Oriental interpreter, the saïs, the fellah, the bedouin, the patriarch, the muezzin, the veiled woman, and so on. Father Casgrain writes:

> Un des traits les plus caractéristiques et qui peint bien l'Orient est celui qu'offrent les cavaliers montés sur de petits ânes que suit au grand trot le valet à pied qui, un roseau à la main, aiguillonne la monture. Un autre est l'aspect des femmes musulmanes qui au premier abord ressemblent à des religieuses vêtues de noir. (356)

For Western travellers, the East embodied the dream of permanence: "immuable, il continue le passé, sans le modifier" (Berchet 18). It satisfied nostalgia for the origins that pilgrims had so far experienced only through paintings and books. "Oui, pour le chrétien pieux, et surtout pour le prêtre," Father Provancher noted, "visiter les Lieux-Saints, c'est ouvrir un livre qui sera sa lumière de tous les instants" (551-52); through travel, one could "traverser ces mêmes contrées que les héros d'Homère, de Virgile et des autres classiques que vous avez étudiés, ont illustré[e]s de leurs noms et étonné[e]s de leurs exploits!" (551). More important still, the travellers went to observe *in situ* the biblical Orient. Any young woman they encountered became Rebecca or the Virgin Mary, any Bedouin a patriarch. To borrow Jean-Claude Berchet's expression (18), they were re-actualizing myths, finding living examples of an imagined reality. In this sense, the pilgrims were involved in symbolic verification:

> Je voulais voir de plus près si je ne retrouverais pas chez ces jeunes filles juives cet idéal de la beauté des filles de Sion, dont la mère de Jésus est le type le plus parfait, de cette beauté qu'ont chantée les poètes, à laquelle les prophètes ont si

> souvent emprunté des termes de comparaison. Pulchra es et decora, filia Jerusalem . . . nigra sum sed formosa. . . . Et de fait, il ne me fut pas difficile de reconnaître que ces figures juives étaient bien les plus régulières, les plus agréables de celles que nous rencontrons dans ces contrées. (Provancher 341)

Here, representation presupposes an *a priori* perspective. A young Jewish woman's objective reality was obscured to fulfill an ideal of beauty, to correspond to a predetermined model (and stereotype). Young women were looked upon as miraculous survivors from the past, embodiments of a traditional view of the Middle East, where modern visitors were thus able to see female figures from the Bible.

Escaping the bonds of stereotype was not easy. Travel accounts are constrained by the ineluctable presence of an observed or extra-textual reality. Further, the expectations of readers already familiar with contemporary writings on and ideas about the Middle East must be considered. In a way, the act of writing about the voyage duplicates a liturgy. Its goal is not the discovery of the Middle East, but rather its rediscovery according to ritual formulas and cultural archetypes. Isabelle Daunais explains why travellers prefer what others have already seen and written about: "Dans le jeu de renvois et de superpositions des livres aux livres, le récit se construit dans un rapport d'addition et de soustraction, d'ajouts et de silences. On ne dira pas ce qui a été dit (encore qu'on finisse souvent par le répéter), on y ajoutera des variantes qui deviendront l'objet du récit" (26). Dominique Jullien adds that under these conditions "le récit de voyage relève donc, par essence, de la variation sur un thème commun. L'aventure individuelle de l'auteur devra s'y raconter sur le fond de représentations collectives" (7). The travellers' challenge was therefore to write about an otherness that already belonged to history and literature. Some undoubtedly sought originality by avoiding clichés. But more often they reinforced clichés with greater detail or created new ones.

The rare openness toward the dragoman or Muslim religion bears witness to this variation on the common theme. The dragoman, or Middle Eastern interpreter, had long been the principal contact between travellers to the Middle East and the Other. In the nineteenth century, most authors condemned the dragoman as incompetent and parasitic. Quebec travellers generally shared this opinion. On their arrival in Alexandria, most denounced the harassment they faced from *moukres* and dragomans offering their services—the "onzième plaie d'Égypte," in the words of Joseph Émard (290). Others, such as Fernand Dupuis (344-47) and Henri Cimon (204), con-

stantly allude to their guides' alleged incompetence, particularly regarding sites related to Christianity.

For Henri-Raymond Casgrain, on the other hand, the dragoman was an appreciated guide who kept travellers out of trouble. Unlike other authors who focused on their difficult first contact with the dragoman upon arrival in Alexandria, Casgrain described the unhappy moment of separation. If other travellers emphasized the fact that they felt harassed at the beginning of the voyage, Casgrain insisted that he had become attached to his servant:

> Dans la matinée du 16 mars, Simon Sélek, le fidèle drogman qui, d'Alexandrie nous a accompagnés en Terre Sainte, nous attendait à l'embarcadère. Il n'a pas voulu nous quitter avant de nous avoir conduits jusque sur le bateau qui devait nous transporter en Grèce. Le brave guide s'était attaché à nous, et nous avions pris l'habitude de voyager sous sa direction. Il faut dire que Simon Sélek est un type à part parmi la race des drogmans. (428)

Although Casgrain describes his dragoman as an exception to the rule, his discourse nonetheless suggests a spirit of rapprochement. Discredited by most travellers, the dragoman and his status are here reconsidered. However, Casgrain's representation is in fact just another variation on the theme of the "grotesque Oriental." He substitutes the cliché of the "incompetent," "hypocritical" and "parasitic" dragoman with that of the "infantile" and "amusing" guide, thus recalling servants from Molière and Beaumarchais, or epic and picaresque characters. Casgrain wrote:

> Notre drogman tient à la fois de Sancho Pacha et de Gil Blas. Les courses qu'il a faites, les aventures dont il a été le héros ou le témoin, fourniraient le thème d'une Odyssée. . . . Au demeurant Sélek est le meilleur garçon du monde, doux et obligeant à nous faire regretter les oignons d'Égypte. Il nous a servi gratis des scènes d'un comique qui plus d'une fois nous ont fait oublier les fatigues du voyage. (428)

Clearly, the pilgrim was unable to escape the stereotypes that had expanded into a considerable repertoire of nuances over time. Stereotypes from different eras also co-exist in the same text. Rare expressions of openness toward Muslim religion illustrate the point well. In part, the interest expressed by travellers in Islam is borrowed from Lamartinian romanticism which was enchanted with the strong and expressive faith of Islam. Sarga Moussa recalls:

> À Jérusalem il [Lamartine] va jusqu'à déclarer que la voix du muezzin est "bien supérieure . . . à la voix sans conscience de la cloche de nos cathédrales." Affirmation scandaleuse pour de nombreux lecteurs contemporains et qui, certainement, contribuera à la mise à l'Index du *Voyage en Orient*. (89)

At the end of the century this representation of the muezzin had been incorporated into the stereotypes propagated by pilgrims to the Middle East. Almost all our authors, following Lamartine's example, expressed their admiration for the "cloches vivantes" (Cimon 193) that were the muezzins. But contrary to Lamartine (who attempted to place the two traditionally opposed religions at the same level, occasionally appealing to Islam as a model of piety[6]), the admiration professed by other authors was rarely anything more than a pretext for stigmatizing Muslim religion. Casgrain writes:

> À trois heures sonnant ils se levèrent et commencèrent leur chant sur un ton grave et lent, modulé par de superbes voix qui se répondaient dans l'espace avec une poésie indéfinissable. Nos cloches sont très belles: nous ne cessons de les admirer; mais il faut convenir que ces cloches humaines ont des accents, un genre de beauté qu'il serait absurde de nier. Pourquoi n'annoncent-elles que la plus fatale des erreurs, une doctrine qui conduit au plus honteux esclavage et à la barbarie? (380-81)

In Casgrain's text, two stereotypes from different eras come into play: Eastern despotism, a myth maintained since the seventeenth century,[7] and the exotic fantasy of Romantic literature. The tension between the two concepts cannot be reduced to an opposition between the stereotypical and the personal, but rather confirms two contradictory visions of the Middle East which co-exist in the same text and which leave little room for true otherness.

Under such circumstances these travel accounts can hardly present a clear image of the Other. Given the authors' often contradictory reflections, the reader is unable to discern how writers actually perceived the Other. One cannot determine, for example, whether or not, in their view, the Bedouin is brave. According to Father Cimon, "le bédouin du désert est fort et brave. Le vol est dans ses habitudes, mais le vol à force armée et non à la dérobée" (218). In the eyes of Father Provancher, however, "la lâcheté fait le fond de son caractère. La rapine à la faveur de la nuit, va mieux à ses dispositions que le brigandage à découvert, l'attaque en pleine face" (391). "Sous le rapport religieux," Father Émard wrote, "le sectateur du Coran est maintenu dans le fanatisme et l'ignorance" (84). Yet Father Provancher appears to believe the opposite when he states: "Allez donc, grands moralisateurs modernes, prendre des leçons de tolérance et de philosophie des mahométans Turcs!" (228). At times the Arabs "ne manque[nt] pas de dignité" (Cimon 202), while at other times they are "des figures rebutantes, des yeux fauves, et semblent faire parade de la saleté des guenilles qui les couvrent à peine"

(Provancher 406). Authors envy the Oriental's "liberté d'action presque illimitée, [car] on dirait qu'ici chacun est maître partout" (Provancher 367); however, they condemn his doctrine, which "conduit au plus honteux esclavage et à la barbarie" (Casgrain 381). The Arabs have "l'air défiant, la mine très peu rassurante" and are "indolents, ignares et replongés dans la barbarie" (Provancher 112); but they are also "fort gentils, vifs, pétulants, au regard subtil et intelligent" (165).

These contradictions indicate the extent to which the authors are constrained by their own prejudices, the expectations of their audience, and the rules of the genre. Their writings face the seemingly insurmountable difficulty of recognizing an otherness created by a collective unconsciousness. Caught between the clichés of common memory and the literary styles of the day, the authors have little access to alternative approaches.

The Other in the Self

In addition to giving writers the opportunity to evoke the mythic Orient or to adapt themselves to the literary styles of the century, openness to the Other presupposes that it be brought into the Self. Travellers could account for the difference with the convenient inversion that reduces otherness to an anti-self. The process works as a heuristic principle: it allows understanding and gives meaning to an otherness that would otherwise remain completely opaque. "L'inversion," François Hartog writes, "est une fiction qui fait 'voir' et qui fait comprendre: elle est une des figures concourant à l'élaboration d'une représentation du monde" (227). Or, as Michel Tournier formulates it, "un concept isolé offre à la réflexion une surface lisse qu'elle ne parvient pas à entamer. Opposé à son contraire en revanche, il éclate ou devient transparent, et montre sa structure intime" (12). Therefore, to represent otherness and make it easier to understand for Western readers, many travellers created a catalogue of traits which stood in opposition to practices in the West. According to Father Provancher, for example, "les orientaux sont l'envers des occidentaux":

> Chez nous, nous écrivons de gauche à droite; en Orient on écrit de droite à gauche. Nous saluons les femmes et nous en demandons des nouvelles; en Orient on ne les salue jamais, et on n'en demande pas de nouvelles. Nous ôtons notre chapeau en signe de respect; en Orient on ôte sa chaussure. Chez nous les femmes vont la face découverte et se couvrent la poitrine; en Orient on va la poitrine découverte et on se voile la face. Nous avons des vêtements étroits; les orientaux en ont des larges. Nous baissons la tête pour affirmer; eux la relèvent. (487-488)

Some of the contrasts may have been designed for aesthetic effect to provoke surprise in readers surfeited by the abundance of detailed description. But more often than not, the inversion of observed qualities in Western and Oriental people implies the ideological finality of religious conversion. "De l'inversion à la conversion," to borrow from the expression of Francis Affergan, "l'innocence, la nudité, la douceur apparente des mœurs permettent, comme un creux attendant d'être comblé, l'entreprise de la conversion"(86). Practically all travellers, who were for the most part members of the clergy, describe at length the benefits of a Catholic education offered to young Arabs, notably by Franciscan missionaries. Otherness is therefore altered, recovered by the Western drive to make the world over in its own image (and thus for its usage). The following passage, which reports on young girls at an orphanage run by Catholics, illustrates this transformation, as well as the reduction of the Other into a semblance of the Self.

> Dire ce qu'il a fallu de patience et de dévouement pour plier ces caractères orientaux, dont la paresse fait le fond, à des habitudes d'ordre, de propreté et de travail, ne peut être compris que par celles-là seules qui ont eu à lutter contre ces obstacles, surtout dans le début. Mais à présent le pli semble bien pris, les plus jeunes n'ont qu'à suivre et imiter leurs devancières pour faire des filles d'ordre, rangées, de tenue convenable. Immense bienfait de l'instruction chrétienne et surtout catholique, qui pourrait se lasser d'admirer ici comme partout ailleurs, tes inappréciables résultats! Ces jeunes filles aux allures policées et pleines de réserve, au maintien décent et propre, semblent former une caste nouvelle au milieu de leurs compatriotes. Elles ne leur ressemblent plus que par le langage, encore arrive-t-il même que très souvent entres elles c'est en français qu'elles conversent; car l'éducation est avant tout française. Si on leur conserve le costume du pays, c'est toutefois avec une manière toute différente de le porter, qui dénote de suite que les règles de la modestie et de la bonne tenue sont connues et qu'elles savent s'y conformer. À l'encontre des musulmanes, elles ne redoutent nullement de se montrer la figure, mais sont très attentives à se couvrir la poitrine. (Provancher 353-54)

This was no longer a representation of the stranger, but a way of turning the stranger into something no longer strange. When different, the Other is either of little interest or draws hostile reactions. Once reduced to the Self, and therefore stripped of its true identity, it suddenly becomes a phenomenon worthy of the reader's attention, while at the same time accentuating the benefits of religious conversion. The Other is then no longer a representation of other worlds, but rather the object of a civilizing mission. "En arrachant ces pauvres indigènes à leurs croyances absurdes," Father Provancher wrote, "on leur inculquera en même temps des idées d'ordre et

de travail au moyen desquelles on pourra en faire des citoyens utiles et respectables" (346). Gaston P. Labat was ecstatic with the work of Franciscan missionaries in Muslim countries and particularly with the results in two "jeunes néophites [*sic*] du christianisme":[8]

> Quelle différence entre ces enfants de la Vérité et ceux de l'ignorance! quelques milles plus bas, la mosquée froide et mercantile enseignant les vices et la rapine à ses renégats; ici, dans une oasis perdue, deux jeunes lys, fleurissant sous la hampe du sanctuaire et aspirant sans cesse à la rosée du Ciel. N'avais-je pas raison de dire que la civilisation porte ici semence. . . . je leur détachai une médaille au chapelet que je tiens de ma pauvre mère, et je la leur donnai. Un général recevant la croix du Grand Turc n'aurait pas été plus fier! (96)

After meeting a converted Arab woman, now a nun in the Catholic Church— the height of cultural integration—Father Provancher could not but admire such apostolic success:

> Arabe de nation, elle avait reçu son éducation à Beyrouth où elle avait fait profession . . . . Elle parlait très bien le français. Les enfants du désert admis à la profession de la pratique des conseils évangéliques, n'est-ce pas Agar devenant l'égale de Sara? Esaü recouvrant son droit d'ainesse? Qu'il est beau ce spectacle de la charité chrétienne qui fait de tous les enfants d'Adam de véritables frères, quelque soit leur couleur, leur nationalité, leur degré de civilisation, leurs habitudes de vie! (429)

Ethnography gives way to ethnocentrism, anthropological observation to proselytism. For many travellers, otherness was not so much a question of race or language, but rather of religious practice—to the point that even an unconverted Muslim provoked their admiration simply because of his religious fervour. As a result, the Self may be considered more other than the Other. According to Father Provancher,

> La voix de ces prêtres de l'erreur [muezzins] n'a rien du solennel de nos cloches, cependant ces appels et ces invocations d'Allah (Dieu) sur tous les tons, avec l'âme qu'on y met souvent, ont quelque chose qui impressionne et qui contraste singulièrement avec les prétendues lumières de notre civilisation qui s'efforcent de nos jours, de faire disparaître même jusqu'à l'idée de la divinité de parmi le peuple. Oh! combien de fois je me suis dit, en entendant ces appels réitérés à la prière: comme les coryphées de la libre pensée et les athées qui conduisent actuellement la patrie de mes pères à sa perte, pourraient avec profit, malgré la jactance dont ils se targuent, venir prendre ici des leçons de sagesse et de haute philosophie de l'ignare muezzin. (129-30)

Evidently, openness to the Other was not an end in itself, but rather a means of denouncing the liberalism threatening Western society. Since at the end of

the century the unanimity of the Catholic faith was no longer assured, and there were no guarantees against defection, appreciation for the Other provided a lesson to be learned. "Ils savent mieux pratiquer leur fausse religion que nous-mêmes, qui sommes en possession de la vérité" (Émard 87). As such, the Other embodied the myth of the "noble savage." Simultaneously objectionable and admired, the Other had a dual role by providing the perspective of a man uncontaminated by the "errors of the century." Against all expectations, the Other is no longer a Muslim with whom the reader suddenly discovers some affinity, but rather the liberal, the freemason, the free thinker. Nevertheless, Muslim religion is not really considered for its own sake.

The Self in the Other

Openness to the Other required that this Other no longer be of an otherness, but rather become an idealized Self. However, the reverse is also possible. Openness to the Other is sometimes associated with transformation of the Self into the Other. We know, for example, that French travellers Nerval and Lamartine dreamed of being Other and camouflaged their physical identity to blend into the indigenous mass. Quebec travellers did not adopt this radical approach, but nonetheless manifested an interest in cultural mixing. Virtually all of the authors studied here described at length their meeting with Westerners serving as intermediaries between the pilgrims and the Arab world. These "arabized" Westerners prepared travellers for their encounters with the Other, a task that could only be accomplished by a person with a foot in both worlds. Most often they were Franciscan missionaries who had lived in the Middle East for many years. Saturated with local customs and language, they embodied the possibility of cultural interpenetration. Father Cimon wrote:

> Le père Berer connaît les mœurs des Bédouins et les a adoptées; ainsi ce géant de près de sept pieds n'aime pas à faire usage de chaise. La langue arabe lui est devenue plus familière que sa langue maternelle; il nous en dit la richesse et la poésie, et son caractère biblique; elle n'est pas du tout la langue dégénérée que parlent les Arabes et les Turcs. (218)

Whereas Chateaubriand considered cultural mixing a flaw, this sort of blending was increasingly perceived as allowing access to the Other. Although the result was still an indirect otherness, it permitted the questioning of certain prejudices. For Léon Provancher, meeting a French nun who spoke Arabic was a revelation:

> Un peuple qui n'a que des aspérités, des bonds et des chutes dans sa langue, doit nécessairement posséder un caractère âpre, rude et grossier, sinon brutal. Telle était la conclusion à laquelle j'en étais venu, lorsque j'entendis une religieuse, de haute éducation et de fort bonnes manières, maniant la langue de Mahomet avec une délicatesse qui n'excluait pas une certaine élégance. Ces sons hachés, grinçants, qu'on ne croirait pouvoir s'échapper sans grand effort de la poitrine, revêtaient, en passant sur des lèvres féminines et françaises, une élégance qui ne manquait pas d'un certain charme. Jusque-là j'avais cru que les doux épanchements, les tendres effusions du cœur ne pouvaient se trouver chez ce peuple, vu que ces sentiments me paraissaient incompatibles avec son langage aussi bien qu'avec ses allures extérieures. (127)

Once again, openness to the Other is one of interposed literature. In fact, a recurring motif in Romantic travel narratives is an appreciation for the intermediaries who, by their cultural mixing, served as a bridge between cultures. Sarga Moussa argues that Romantic travellers idealized some figures, such as the French consul in Beirut, Henry Guys, or Lady Esther Stanhope,[9] because they bridged a cultural divide. Most of the missionaries described by the travellers in this context have a decidedly mythic dimension. Despite their Western origins, they embody the primitive Orient, timeless and patriarchal in the very land of the patriarchs. Brother Liévin is a perfect illustration. According to Father Casgrain, the travellers' first objective upon arrival in Jerusalem was "se mettre en relation avec le frère Liévin, ce moine franciscain si connu du monde catholique depuis qu'il a publié le *Guide-Indicateur de la Terre Sainte*" (377). A Belgian by origin, Brother Liévin was also the living portrait of the patriarchal virtues:

> Le frère Liévin est un vieillard de soixante-dix ans, Belge de naissance, qui habite la Palestine depuis trente-trois ans. . . . Avec sa robe de bure, ceinte d'une corde blanche, sa tête rasée, son visage placide, d'où tombe une abondante barbe blanche, il figurerait bien dans un tableau parmi les prophètes d'Israël. (Casgrain 377)

Oscillating between patriarch and Western missionary, Brother Liévin is a symbol of the ideal of cultural mixing advocated by Romantic authors such as Lamartine, Gautier and Nerval. Venerated by Arabs, particularly "à cause de sa belle barbe" (Émard 24-25), and by pilgrims "à cause de sa piété, de son affabilité, et de son empressement à nous faire profiter de sa science si profonde" (Émard 25), he personified a harmonious balance of opposites. The coexistence, if not fusion, of these two images in one person is obtained through a double reversal: on the one hand it reverses the exclusive focus on the missionaries' European origins, and on the other, it reverses the

Bedouin stereotype, which at the end of the eighteenth century moved "du statut de créature effrayante à celui de modèle de vie libre et patriarcale" (Moussa, "Limites de la description" 231).

There are many more examples that demonstrate more openness to Romantic literature on the Orient than to the Orient itself.[10] Apparently, no personal representation of the Orient could exist, since each single experience occurs on a road already well travelled. The reader need only recall the question of the perspective given to the Other. For centuries, most travellers to the Middle East limited their depictions of the Other to its differences, denying it any right to a perspective of its own. But in some travel accounts from Quebec, the Other is occasionally granted its own perspective, announcing a change in the conditions of the encounter. At most, some travellers were aware of the effect they had on the Other, bringing out their own difference to themselves. "Leur regard", Léon Provancher wrote, "semble nous dire qu'ils sont étonnés de notre étonnement à leur vue, ne croyant, eux, faire que ce qu'il leur convient de faire" (317). As Sarga Moussa demonstrates, this type of meeting "trahit un trouble de l'identité chez celui-là même qui devrait rester maître du regard" (*La relation* 60). This indicated to what extent the traveller considered himself the Other in the eyes of the Middle Easterner. "Diacres, servants avec leurs habits en drap d'or ou leurs tuniques blanches, nous lancent de toute part des regards de curiosité, mais sans aucune manifestation de mécontentement ou d'opposition à notre intrusion" (Provancher 317). This exchange of perspective represents a significant displacement by revealing to intermediaries their reciprocal otherness, or even more what Moussa calls "le traumatisme de la rencontre" (62). This situation was probably uncomfortable to the observed observer, but also encouraged a kind of mutual understanding. "Si la langue est souvent impuissante pour se faire comprendre, les yeux parlent en son lieu, et la communauté de sentiments sait se faire comprendre du cœur" (Provancher 370). This "droit de regard" granted to the Other is also borrowed from Romantic travellers. The egocentric approach represented by Chateaubriand, which dominated until the 1830s and reduced the Other to a degraded image of himself, was thereafter replaced by the idea of being viewed by another. This raised the question of identity: who am I in the eyes of the other? From the perspective of observation, the Middle East now became a subject in its own right. The Other gradually acquired "un droit de regard sur le regard" (Moussa, *La relation* 60).

A number of facts, both motivational and methodological, therefore

hampered the natural representation of the Other. The travellers' discourse was thoroughly shaped by Western culture. Most often they built bridges between the two worlds by finding more or less approximate analogies likely to give readers an understanding of the Other and, in so doing, "il[s] attire[nt] l'Autre dans la sphère culturelle des interactants de la communication" (Magri 401). Under such circumstances, according to Véronique Magri, "le discours sur l'Autre se réduit à un discours du Même au Même sur l'Autre qu'on essaie de ramener encore au Même" (405).

Conclusion

Accounts by Quebec travellers to the Holy Land provide very specific insights into their perspective of the Other. For most authors studied here, a pilgrimage to the Middle East was a pure voyage to countries of the past and was offered as a kind of collective anamnesis that reduced encounters with the Other to virtually nothing. Their focus on the Other was not a recognition of otherness, but the cult of a bygone past and a "mirage biblique" that upheld conventional admiration (Dupuis 307). Some travellers did begin to take notice of and observe the Other, but never really let go of stereotypes. Rather than try to understand and explain the human reality inherent in the Other, writers used it to prop up their aesthetic aspirations, to adjust to nineteenth-century literary styles, or to bolster their ideological aims, denounce liberalism and magnify the works of the Catholic Church. These ways of representing (or not representing) the Other are far from being specific to Quebec travellers; the Western world in general attempts to appropriate the Other by transforming it into absolute legibility. The Oriental existed only to the extent that the traveller made him transparent with the help of the writer's own prejudices. Numerous critics of the genre have pointed out that the travel narrative therefore becomes an instrument of power over the Other, appropriating its past, present and future. As Edward Said (1978), Rana Kabbani (1986) or Bénédicte Monicat (1996), among others, have demonstrated, "Écrire une littérature de voyage implique nécessairement une relation coloniale. L'on prétend que l'on voyage pour s'instruire, mais en réalité, on voyage pour exercer son pouvoir sur un territoire, des femmes, des peuples" (Monicat 46).

In the minds of Quebec travellers, as for most travellers of the nineteenth century, the Orient was not a one-dimensional entity. Although often linked to processes of negation or exclusion, and to xenophobia, the Other was also an appealing object of exotic fascination. As Hans-Jürgen

Lüsebrink has pointed out (using the works of Mario Erdheim), these two diametrically opposed approaches have "en commun de semblables stratégies d'évitement psychologiques (*Vermeidungsstrategien*) détournées de toute tentative sérieuse de compréhension et de connaissance de l'Autre" (53). Pilgrims failed to think critically about either their own perceptions or the Orientalism that conditioned them. Generally, travellers never saw themselves through the eyes of the stranger, became conscious of their own strangeness or achieved an understanding of their cultural predispositions as determined by the social and ethnic group to which they belonged. None adopted an exceptional attitude like the British traveller Richard Francis Burton: to Burton, the Orient in general and Islam in particular were systems of information, behaviour and belief, in which "to be an Oriental, or a Muslim, was to know certain things in a certain way, and that these were of course subject to history, geography and the developments of society in circumstances specific to it" (Said 225).

In fact, perception of the Other, as much in its rejection and exclusion as in its exotic idealization, reveals the hidden face of identity, as advanced by Julia Kristeva. Nineteenth-century French Canada, as a society seeking to protect its nationality, used otherness not to destabilize, but rather to reinforce a Catholic and French Canadian identity. Consequently, the most common approach at the time was to use the Other's culture to confirm oneself, and more specifically to find the elements of the writer's own culture in that of the Other. Upon arriving in Saint-Jean-du-Désert, for instance, Father Cimon sees in Saint John the Baptist's mission an illustration of French Canadians' destiny:

> Saint Jean-Baptiste est le patron des Canadiens-français. Comme le saint précurseur, notre peuple a sa mission. Comme lui, il s'est préparé dans les épreuves à la remplir. Les débuts ont été rudes dans un pays neuf et sauvage; il a grandi au milieu des persécutions; il a souffert pour conserver sa langue et sa religion. Que deviendra-t-il? S'il est fidèle à sa vocation, il paraît appelé à de nobles destinées sur cette terre du Nouveau-Monde. (197)

In surveying the Other, late nineteenth-century travellers could not avoid describing the Other in indirect terms, using preconceived notions and preestablished cultural models. Whether the mediation is reiterated, reviewed or corrected, the representation is reduced to the Other among others, the Other in the Self, or the Self in the Other.

NOTES

1 See among others: Barthélemy, Berchet, Droulia and Mentzou, Kabbani, Magri, Moussa, Redouane, Thomas, Todorov, Zinguer.

2 This is also true for their Protestant counterparts in Canada and elsewhere who travelled avidly to these places. See Kröller.

3 Regarding pilgrimages in Italy, see especially Pierre Savard and Pierre Rajotte (forthcoming).

4 Some publications, such as the *Semaines religieuses de Québec et de Montréal*, the Franciscans' *La Petite revue du Tiers Ordre* and the *Annales de la Bonne Sainte Anne de Beaupré* advertised and recommended group pilgrimages, and published correspondence from several pilgrims.

5 At the end of the nineteenth century, accounts of voyages in the Middle East comprised only fifteen percent of such works produced, but these were particularly representative of the several ways that existed of expressing otherness in Quebec travel writing of the era. See Rajotte (151-76).

6 "Ce culte [musulman]," Lamartine wrote, "est plein de vertu et j'aime ce peuple, car c'est le peuple de la prière" (103).

7 See Stelling-Michaud.

8 Regarding Egyptian soldiers, whom he considered to be "lazy and dirty," Labat wrote: "Je crois cependant qu'ils deviendraient bons, s'ils étaient européanisés" (143).

9 Even by the century's close, Father Provancher dedicated two pages (539-40) to the ambiguous figure of Lady Stanhope. She died in 1839, but travellers who had read the Romantics still were not able to avoid the stereotypes she had created.

10 Although French Canadians were suspicious of French Romantic literature, they seemed to appreciate Romantic travel narratives about the Orient, starting with Chateaubriand's account in which he praises Christianity. More specifically, Chateaubriand's and Lamartine's travel writings were frequently quoted by French Canadian travellers.

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Timothy Findley 1930-2002

Mourning Lessons

Timothy Findley
Elizabeth Rex. Blizzard. $17.95

Reviewed by Anne Geddes Bailey

In *Elizabeth Rex*, the winner of the 2000 Governor General's Award for Drama, Timothy Findley returns with his usual flair to a period of theatrical history which has consistently held western audiences, critics and writers in its thrall: Elizabethan England. On Shrove Tuesday 1601, Queen Elizabeth awaits the execution for treason of the Earl of Essex, a man she loves. To distract herself, Elizabeth invites the Lord Chamberlain's Men to perform for a private audience and later passes the night in conversation with them. The Queen is captivated by Ned Lowenscroft, a male actor, dying of syphilis, who played Beatrice in that evening's performance of *Much Ado About Nothing*. She is intrigued by his ability to play strong, independent women, but she also suspects that this female role-playing has robbed him of his manhood. He is not at all impressed by her masculine will-to-power which enables her to order the execution of her own beloved and prevents her from acting on emotions he defines as feminine, in particular love and forgiveness. Elizabeth proposes that they try to rectify the situation before daybreak: "If you will teach me how to be a woman . . . I will teach you how to be a man."

Although Elizabeth's proposal suggests that "being a man" and "being a woman" are identifiable and stable categories of behaviour, the play constantly reminds us that they are not. At times, gender is determined by costume, make-up and staged dialogue, while at others, it is determined by stripping away the very accoutrements of gendered behaviour. On the one hand, the play suggests that both Ned and Elizabeth must stop playing roles and confront their "real selves"; yet, on the other hand, Ned and Elizabeth finally reach these "real selves" through performances in which they imagine acting on their grief in ways which are absolutely impossible in reality.

The confrontation between Ned and Elizabeth is, however, not the only drama occurring within *Elizabeth Rex*. Framing the events on Shrove Tuesday and Ash Wednesday 1601 are William Shakespeare's dying moments many years later. Although he had rewritten bits and pieces of the Queen's conflict into his new play, *Antony and Cleopatra*, only at the moment of his own death can he recognize his own inability to reveal and perform his "true self" that evening. Unlike Ned and Elizabeth, who finally do enact scenes of truth-telling, Will, ever the observer-artist, hovers in the background and is challenged only once to acknowledge that he, too, mourns a lost love, but he is never truly required to perform his grief before an audience. In that sense, his sorrow remains, apparently, *unlived*: "What should a person wear to die in? I have been so many . . . lived so many

lives. And all the while, my own life burning down around me while I barely noticed it—failed to live it." Within this narrative frame, the questions raised about gender become secondary to a process which Findley identifies as human rather than masculine or feminine: "What emerged, for me, from this barn filled with contradictions and emotional conflicts, was a sense that neither gender nor sexuality, politics nor ambition, are as important as integrity."

Whether Findley's conclusion is a disappointment or a triumph will depend upon one's political conviction. The play may dissatisfy feminist critics, since Ned, the man, is clearly able to teach Elizabeth more about being a woman than she is ever able to teach Ned about being a man. He, it seems, does not really need to be taught his masculinity at all—only to rechannel it into live performance in the same way he has already been performing his femininity. Elizabeth, by contrast, is doing both rather badly, as her performance of masculinity is cold, heartless and cruel and her femininity nearly extinguished. Although, in the end, the men seem to have the greatest insight into grief and love, this does not rob the play of its power. *Elizabeth Rex* is a complex exploration of how sexual identity, political ambition and professional detachment affect desire, love and loss.

Alphabet of Suffering

Eleanor Bailey
Idioglossia. Random House $32.95

Lucy Bending
The Representation of Bodily Pain in Late Nineteenth-Century English Culture. Oxford UP $99.50

Reviewed by Rachel Poliquin

Galileo Galilei wrote that "the book [of the universe] cannot be understood unless one first learns to comprehend the language and read the letters in which it is composed . . . without which it is humanly impossible to understand a single word of it; without these, one wanders about in a dark labyrinth." Such diligent scrutiny distinguishes two recent books as they seek to learn the letters and decipher the opaque language of suffering induced by emotional darkness or physical pain.

Bailey's luminous first novel exposes the private voices of four generations of mothers and daughters, which are shaded with disappointment and sadness. When Grace is committed to a mental institution, her daughter, Maggie, is left to spend her childhood on a cruise ship under the absent care of her drunken, ventriloquist father and to be tutored by an ancient atlas and the endless passage of foreign ports. When she is eleven, a new comedian with a silent past joins the crew, and at fifteen, a pregnant Maggie returns to her grandmother, Great Edie, in London, leaving behind the games and magic of childhood and the sea. Flashing between the ages of Maggie's life, Sarah (her daughter), Grace and Great Edie, the story reveals the disenchantment seeping through the generations to settle in the various moulds of madness, promiscuity, bitterness and seclusion. The unique languages of the women's shared suffering are muffled, rendering each isolated and indecipherable to the others. It is with equal parts anguish, tenderness, and wit that Bailey teases out the characters' acceptance of the intricate and inescapable realities of belonging to one's own past and ancestry.

Idioglossia is a big novel, beautifully crafted with delicacy and restraint. The surprisingly acute and crisp characterizations unfold with a slow and almost protective care, and although the subject is dark, the story crackles with exuberance and humour. Refreshing in a story encircling women's suffering, the male characters are neither villainized nor devalued but deliver

pin-pricks of emotional stillness in lives otherwise creased by disappointment, emptiness and aloneness. The only predictable character is Sarah, who initially conforms to the disenchanted thirty-something gen-xer, radiating undirected anger as she lists between unfulfilling jobs. However, even here Bailey curves the narrative unexpectedly by accentuating the recuperative powers of the older, softer values embodied in the warmth of family and the now-guilty pleasures of home-making.

Lucy Bending's recent study of pain in nineteenth-century English culture is no less of a delicious text than Bailey's and it reads like a novel. Bending states that "pain has no innate meaning, but rather is subject to the diverse social and political aims of those who chose to interpret it." By investigating techniques of "mapping physical sensation onto a particular constellation of language," Bending exposes the imperialistic and discriminatory forces engaged in giving language in the mid- to late nineteenth century to the otherwise incomprehensible presence of pain. In her first two chapters, Bending situates the discussion in the overlapping and conflicting discourses of the priest and the scientist. With the decline of a Christian rationale for the moral efficacy of suffering and the introduction of chloroform in 1846, the medical paradigm prevailed, shifting the meaning of suffering from spiritually corrective and character building to pernicious evil, and pain from a mystery to a problem. As pain became increasingly avoidable, it came to be seen as an index of qualities other than piety or sin such as civilization, class, moral rectitude and aesthetic refinement. Within the blurry nineteenth century understanding of the processes of pain, neurological elitism could be justified physiologically: a refined and delicate nervous organisation enabled the "exquisite sensitivity of gentlemen" whereas the coarse and jumbled nerves of the "vulgar" blunted agony and thwarted any delight in the genteel arts. At the bottom of such "hierarchies of suffering" were the savage, the criminal and the insane whose insentient flesh was reasoned to preclude feeling pain either physically or vicariously, a belief that legitimized brutal experiments and all but denied their humanity.

Using the Victorian novel as the backbone of her discussion, Bending demonstrates the power of literature to produce and propagate cultural representations of suffering. Bending adds intensity to her argument by investigating not only sermons and medical texts but such diverse subjects as fire-walking, tattooing, freak shows, earthworms, vivisections, floggings, pornography and the "craze" of vitriol-throwing by spurned lovers, thereby not only accentuating the obsession with suffering but also the centrality of the novel in the cultural imagination. Bending examines the meaning of a writhing earthworm in the writings of Darwin, Hardy and Emily Bronte; she teases out the same rhetorical strategies at work in antivivisection pamphlets, *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* and *The Island of Doctor Moreau*. In disagreement with Virginia Woolf's claim that "language at once runs dry" when charged with describing pain, Bending divulges the verbosity with which pain was impregnated and she skilfully negotiates the polemic debates over suffering, revealing the nineteenth-century's interpretation of pain to be far from monolithic. One of Bending's provocative sources attacks biblical justifications for flogging, by rendering absurd its didactics. A young student becomes incensed to read the "mystic scribbles" imprinted on his backside by the school master: "I *must* see what, in their wisdom, they had written with sticks, using my skin for parchment."

Idioglossia is a word defined as a secret language between a few people or a lallation—the babble of babies or the murmur

of lunatics. Whether exposing the vicissitudes of physical pain or the indistinct murmurings of sadness, both writers brilliantly succeed to set the "dark labyrinth" of suffering aglow, dislodging pain from linguistic lacunae and silences.

Le carrousel critique

Marie-Andrée Beaudet, ed.
Bonheur d'occasion *au pluriel: lectures et approches critiques*. Nota Bene. n.p.

Reviewed by Gloria Nne Onyeoziri

Marie-Andrée Beaudet annonce le double objectif de cet ouvrage collectif, didactique—"introduire aux principes méthodologiques de quelques approches critiques contemporaines"—et critique: revisiter un texte canonique de la littérature québécoise (*Bonheur d'occasion* de Gabrielle Roy). Maintenir l'équilibre entre ces deux objectifs n'est peut-être pas aussi facile qu'on le croirait. Ne risque-t-on pas de présenter un ensemble relativement partiel des approches critiques possibles? Si les auteurs de *Bonheur d'occasion au pluriel* n'en ont pas moins réussi à produire un ouvrage critique stimulant et d'un intérêt certain, c'est qu'ils ont reconnu, au-delà de ce "carrousel critique" évoqué par Beaudet, les interdépendances, contradictions et conflits d'interprétation possibles, bref, le caractère problématique et ambigu de la lecture.

On pourrait voir dans l'essai de Max Roy un exercice de mise en abîme par rapport aux autres études du recueil. Traçant l'évolution historique des lectures du texte-cible, il laisse entendre que les approches de ce recueil constituent la suite de cette évolution. Mais quand il évoque les critiques féministes et existentialistes récentes et le "retour aux toutes premières significations attribuées au roman", ainsi que la confusion inévitable entre analyse et jugement critique, Max Roy résume des préoccupations communes à toutes les études de *Bonheur d'occasion au pluriel*. Comment, par exemple, affirmer la validité référentielle de *Bonheur d'occasion* comme témoignage socio-historique sans nier son caractère innovateur sur le plan formel, si en effet il s'agit d'un roman fermement enraciné dans une tradition réaliste? Si l'on réussit quand même à démontrer, moyennant des analyses très fines, les cohérences formelles de l'œuvre, ne s'agit-il pas d'un travail de récupération, fondé sur un jugement esthétique préalable?

Pierre Popovic constate que la première rencontre de Florentine Lacasse et de Jean Lévesque (l'incipit du roman) relève d'un entrecroisement de codes sociaux tels que celui du "prince attendu" du roman feuilleton et celui de "l'inconnu." Mais la force d'une narration ironique et des voix intérieures des deux personnages produisent "une zone d'individualité irréductible." De la même façon que Florentine et Jean se produisent dans leur devenir, la société se donne comme un être en train de se recréer sans encore savoir ce qu'elle sera: riche d'un "avenir en gestion." La lecture que fait Popovic de codes sociaux repose sur un discours existentialiste non loin du discours sartrien sur la liberté du personnage romanesque: "Il n'y a d'ailleurs pas de grand roman sans cela."

Lori Saint-Martin démontrera qu'un roman réaliste mettant en scène Rose-Anna, une femme subalterne apparemment résignée, n'en constitue pas moins un discours féministe. La narratrice emploie des techniques narratives complexes, telles que la juxtaposition de scénarios (Jean arpente les rues de Montréal comme signe de liberté masculine alors que Florentine *tourne en rond* comme signe de désespoir et de marginalisation) et le jeu du regard (Florentine, refusant son état d'objet, retourne le regard dominateur de Jean) pour faire du discours réaliste reçu un

"réalisme au féminin."

Selon Hilligje van't Land et Józef Kwaterko, l'espace, source de signification sociale, rejoint la dynamique historique de *Bonheur d'occasion*. D'où la présence, dans les deux analyses, de la notion de chronotope. Pour van't Land, le quartier de Saint-Henri, cerné par les autres quartiers de Montréal, devient une prison symbolique (où l'on est tenu par son statut social, sa langue et ses liens avec le passé): "Pour s'en sortir, les personnages doivent effectuer un déplacement significatif dans l'espace." Selon Kwaterko, le corps de Florentine constitue un chronotope (ou "microstructure spatio-temporelle"), un corps "tendu vers le mirage d'une ascension sociale": forme de réification et mise en cause des idéologies du progrès social.

Christiane Kègle conjugue la notion sémiotique de l'inversion des contenus d'un texte narratif et le creux symbolique associé à la figure défaillante du père dans *Bonheur d'occasion*. La rupture sociale et psychologique des lignées paternelles (de père-en-fils, de père-en-fille) correspond au désir maternel ambivalent de Florentine qui, en attribuant la paternité de son enfant à Emmanuel, fait naître un mensonge et un simulacre de l'amour (objet de la quête initiale suggérée par le titre du roman). On peut d'ailleurs s'étonner que Kègle ainsi que tous les auteurs de ce recueil, y compris Saint-Martin qui s'interroge sur l'aspect féministe du roman, prêtent si peu d'attention aux rapports entre les générations de femmes: Florentine, Rose-Anna et la mère de celle-ci.

La dernière remarque de Kègle, à savoir que les éléments de la symbolisation de *Bonheur d'occasion*, "ne semblent pas étrangers au savoir de l'analyste," ainsi que la réflexion de Micheline Cadieux sur sa scénarisation de la vie de Gabrielle Roy comme écrivain, nous rappellent les hantises du "carrousel" des approches. "Mais est-il possible de débusquer l'écrivain vivant, découvrir quel est ce souffle qui l'anime jusqu'à sa mort?" L'approche critique n'est-elle pas une entreprise qui recèle parfois un éloignement?

Sex in the Snow

Carellin Brooks & Brett Josef Grubisic, eds.
Carnal Nation: Brave New Sex Fictions.
Arsenal Pulp $21.95

Michelle Davidson, ed.
Exhibitions: Tales of Sex in the City.
Arsenal Pulp $18.95

Reviewed by Scott Rayter

My title, borrowed from Michael Adams's examination of Canadian demographics and social values, is slightly misleading: while all 32 stories in *Carnal Nation: Brave New Sex Fictions* are home grown, only about half of the 23 authors in *Exhibitions: Tales of Sex in the City* are Canadian. Nevertheless, these anthologies are part of a growing body of erotic literature published by Arsenal Pulp Press, and invite some larger questions about nationalism and sexuality. In his playful introduction to *Carnal Nation*, Grubisic investigates Canada's puritan legacy. Referring to Ross, MacLennan, Laurence, and Findley, he quotes a friend: "If they step outside their decorous selves . . . and mention sex . . . , they're on about the destructive consequences of sexual expression . . . . God forbid anyone has a decent orgasm without losing an eye . . . And sex in Margaret Atwood is always dreary. Just dreadful." Curious about what sex means to writers born during or after the Sexual Revolution, Brooks and Grubisic bring together newer writers (though many have at least one book to their name) who, like Richler, Symons, Cohen and Gowdy, offer "an anti-canon to [this] pantheon of prudery." Are self-deprecating humour and irony particular Canadian characteristics, or are they strategic modes of defamiliarizing some of

the worn-out conventions for representing sex? If the fiction in *Carnal Nation* is sometimes comic, *Exhibitions*, on the other hand, suffers from a certain earnestness and predictability. Perhaps it is unfair to compare the two works: where *Carnal Nation* frequently explores the ways in which sexuality is both constructed and represented, *Exhibitions*, as Debbie Stoller tells us in the foreword, takes a long time to finish: "I would read, get turned on, jerk off, take a nap." Nothing wrong with that, but it doesn't always make for good reading. Overusing words like "throbbing" and "dripping" makes one seek respite, but more out of *ennui* than *le petit mort*.

Under the watchful eye of censors, erotica may become self-conscious—something we encounter throughout *Carnal Nation*. In "Mass Production," Michael Turner, using the anagram "Truman Lee Rich," writes, "Some [Readers] are bored and don't care where this is headed; some are excited by it . . . Janice Levitt, of Newmarket, Ontario, has decided to purchase the book on the basis of this story and the one by Nathalie Stephens. But McGill University's Robert Lecker, who has taught the work of Michael Turner and seems to like the idea of Truman Lee Rich very much, has come to the conclusion that he won't be assigning *Carnal Nation* as a course text, no matter how much he likes the work of Steven Heighton."

Another self-reflexive piece is Annabel Lyon's "Stars": a couple who own a video store had always dreamed of stocking arty films but, driven by consumer demands, find themselves renovating the shop to include an adult section. Is this a comment on writers who want to distinguish their own literary erotica from mainstream pornography? Tess Fragoulis's "Sex on the Rocks," set in Greece, shows the interconnectedness of romance and pornography when one such film is shot on the beach: "It was not often that Karina got the chance to watch two people fucking without a sense of guilt . . . They were not a particularly attractive pair, but were obviously confident enough to share their most intimate moment with the world. That, Karina thought wistfully, must be true love."

The "gaze" also receives close scrutiny in Michael V. Smith's "Gucci," making us aware of our own readerly complicity as consumers of sex. Two friends watch a stripper end his act by guzzling down a coke, moments after he'd had the bottle up his butt while performing a handstand: "the ultimate consumer experience . . . Low-brow. Transgressive. Product. Placement." The fetishization of women by male viewers is subverted in Michael Holmes's "Last Call." By intercutting a female lap dancer's point of view with that of her male customer, we get a complex perspective on the power dynamics of both watching and being watched.

A good deal of humour is also prevalent in works by Carellin Brooks and Sky Gilbert, and in Camilla Gibb's "On All Fours in Brooklyn," my favourite piece. A moving coming-of-age story where the narrator—imagining herself to be Russian royalty, but instead receiving the moniker "'Princess Commie Big Shit' and, occasionally, 'Lezzie'"—recounts her infatuation with "Trudy, who called herself Rudy because she was a girl who believed she was a boy." Still other stories could be called anti-erotic in their depiction of abuse, violence and incest, though I didn't find anything as edgy or brutally graphic as William Burroughs or Dennis Cooper. The final piece, "Winter Earth," beautifully written by Steven Heighton, is elegiac in its focus on the absence of sex in an elderly couple's marriage: "How does it happen for the last time? The lovemaking. Two bodies joining once, twice, a thousand times, then never again."

If *Carnal Nation* has a shortcoming (besides the earnest subtitle and jacket

blurbs, though perhaps they are ironic too), it is the repetition and predictability that are endemic to the genre and thematic anthologies in general; however, a number of the authors subvert the reader's expectations by not including a "sex scene." This narrative compulsion toward "climax" is both the intent and downfall of Michelle Davidson's *Exhibitions: Tales of Sex in the City*, which I found problematic right from her introduction where she calls her book "a tool for sexual pilgrims who seek to discover and invent, with a little titillation along the way." Should we question the motives of those who search out sexual adventure in exotic locales? Thankfully, most of these tales don't enact this colonizing practice. In fact, place, contrary to what she tells us, is often inconsequential. Likewise, much of the sex depicted has little to do with either urban experience or exhibitionism. (Is the title just a marketing ploy?) There are exceptions, of course. In "Daytime and Night," Carellin Brooks, co-editor of *Carnal Nation*, provides an encounter between two women in a London cemetery. With references to ghosts, AIDS and the city's seventeenth-century plague, we see how past desires haunt the present. In an excerpt from his *Autobiography of a Tattoo*, Stan Persky describes the particular kind of homoeroticism that is produced in the army culture of surveillance and control. These stories are effective because they avoid the clichés of some of the others, and pay careful attention to the role that fantasy and memory play in such trysts. While it is commendable that the sex in both collections is gay, lesbian and straight, there are only a handful of works that deal with polyamoury, bi- or transgender sexuality, and few examine race or ethnicity in meaningful ways. Although one's personal tastes will determine one's pleasure in these texts, if you're looking for some accomplished writing you'll find more of it in *Carnal Nation* than in *Exhibitions*.

Politics of the Pint

Robert A. Campbell
Sit Down and Drink Your Beer: Regulating Vancouver's Beer Parlours, 1925-1954.
U of Toronto P $19.95

Brian Keith Axel
The Nation's Tortured Body: Violence, Representation, and the Formation of a Sikh "Diaspora."
Duke U P $35.50

Reviewed by Lindsey McMaster

Promising a view of historical Vancouver seen through the bottom of a beer glass, *Sit Down and Drink Your Beer* presents a lively cultural analysis of the social conventions of alcohol consumption in the bygone institution of the beer parlour. The field of alcohol studies, while not institutionalized on the level of, for instance, working-class history or women's studies, is nevertheless an intriguing area of scholarship for it operates on the proposition that "drinking provides a window on other aspects of society: economic patterns, gender roles, and cultural values." This potential for social insight is fulfilled by Campbell as he investigates the strategies for social control implemented by the officials of the Liquor Control Board, who saw in beer parlours the need for careful regulation of a space perceived by the public as a breeding ground for the worst of working-class excess.

Although Vancouver was virtually founded by its saloon-keepers such as "Gassy" Jack Deighton of Gastown renown, after prohibition (1917-1921) the saloon was singled out as an example of vice and degeneracy. As a result, beer parlours were specifically designed and meticulously regulated to differ from the saloon wherever possible. Parlour rules dictated that there be no saloon-style standing at the bar; customers had to remain seated and were not allowed to switch tables. There was no entertainment, no food served, no beverage

other than beer, no singing, and preferably no women. This latter regulation was lifted only with the implementation of separate women's sections, with their own entrances and washrooms, and further requirements soon specified substantial partition walls to cement the gender division.

Race and gender were troubling categories in the eyes of policy makers for whom anything other than a white male posed a threat to decency. As Campbell recounts, women were objects of suspicion and segregation, the assumption being that a woman in a beer parlour was most likely a prostitute. This in itself had a strongly regulating effect on all women who might enter. Ethnic minorities were also deliberately excluded as were mixed-race couples, which were "defined as a man of colour with a white woman." A white man with a woman of colour was not recognized as the threat to decency and "whiteness" that the former pair represented.

According to arbiters of decency, beer parlours were spaces of moral turpitude and working-class dissipation which required constant surveillance. The tireless regulation of these spaces drew on social codes of decency and respectability, and those denied entry to the parlours were those similarly marginalized by the society at large. By focusing on strategies of moral regulation, Campbell combines historical research with cultural analysis, building on works such as Mariana Valverde's *The Age of Light, Soap and Water: Moral Reform in English Canada*, and *Making Good: Law and Moral Regulation in Canada* by Carolyn Strange and Tina Loo. Campbell may not push his cultural analysis as far as Valverde or Strange, but his lucid and well-documented history illustrates the manic preoccupations of moral reform especially in regard to the cultural politics of public drinking.

The Nation's Tortured Body, while a very different book, also takes on the politics of the pint, here with a more postcolonial edge. Chapter four takes its title from Glassy Junction, a pub in London's largely Sikh district of Southall. With a map of Punjab as its centrepiece, and a selection of Indian beer on tap, Glassy Junction caters specifically to the local Sikh clientele. But the pub is not unaffected by the global politics of the local Sikh diaspora—specifically the fight for Khalistan, an independent Sikh state separate from India. In 1995 the editor of a Punjabi newspaper was gunned down just across from the pub, and rumour had it the murder was related to conflict between different UK-based groups involved in the fight for Khalistan. Investigators identified the roof of the pub as a possible vantage point for the gunman, but the case went unsolved. Meanwhile, in the same year, the Channel 4 show *Big City* did a segment on the pub. Essentially a vehicle for the London tourist industry, the show explored the city for new and amusing hot spots, and it represented Glassy Junction as a delightfully exotic site for the consumption of multicultural difference, but a site also reassuringly familiar as the quintessentially British institution—the pub. Axel is at his best in his close reading of Glassy Junction and the *Big City* commodification of it, exploring the connections and disjunctures between a consumerist version of multiculturalism and the intense politics of the Sikh diaspora, whose sometimes violent fight for a homeland has become a site of contention both for Sikhs themselves and for the various nation-states in which they live.

In Axel's list of acknowledgements, Arjun Appadurai and Homi Bhabha are among the first, and his work certainly reflects and builds on theirs, engaging in a historical anthropology of the Sikh diaspora and thereby expanding the wider field of diaspora studies as well. An especially powerful chapter looks at India's epidemic of torture which targets Sikh men. While one is in some ways accustomed to discussions of

such atrocities in relation to the call for increased human rights awareness, I have never seen torture examined at this level of theoretical and representational analysis—a reading experience both demanding and disturbing.

Axel's focus on the escalating struggle for a Sikh homeland demonstrates the power of this imaginative ideal which has mobilized the loyalties of Sikh populations around the world. And rather than using the vision of the homeland as a way to deconstruct Sikh identity or undermine the notion of diaspora, Axel engages in the more interesting task of understanding how the narrative of the homeland has become such a powerful defining force for an otherwise diverse and scattered population.

Rediscovering the Persian World

David Chafeetz
A Journey through Afghanistan: A Memorial. U of Chicago P n.p.

Alison Wearing
Honeymoon in Purdah: An Iranian Journey. Vintage $32.95

Reviewed by Nasrin Rahimieh

The Persian-speaking or, what the historian Mohamad Tavakoli-Targhi has called the Persianate, world has long been the source of immense fascination for Europeans. Innumerable French, Italian, English and German travelogues written over the past five centuries attest to this long-standing curiosity, originally provoked by the powerful dynasties that ruled the region encompassing today's Iran and parts of northern Afghanistan and India. The civilization the early travellers encountered boasted a productive intermingling of the religious and the spiritual that fostered at once worldly and transcendental pursuits. The quest for the transcendental fueled the creative imagination and cultivated refinements in poetry, architecture and other decorative arts. Scientific inquiry, particularly in mathematics and astronomy, sponsored by princes and monarchs, also flourished.

The foreigners who passed through this world often became translators and mediators between European and Persianate civilization. But with the advent of colonialism and the waning of the Persianate political might, the dynamics of exchange shifted, as did the relations of power. For instance, in 1830 the British Empire decreed that Persian would cease to serve as the administrative language of India, also marking the end of a cultural hegemony. By the nineteenth century Western travellers had either adopted a distinct attitude of superiority vis-à-vis their Eastern counterparts, or a nostalgia for what they saw as a diminished civilization.

In our times, this tradition of discovery and recovery of the Persian world has been affected by radical political changes such as the 1979 revolution in Iran, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, and the subsequent upheavals that left Afghanistan in utter turmoil. David Chafeetz's and Alison Wearing's travelogues fall within this more recent tradition.

A Journey through Afghanistan, originally published in 1981 and reprinted with a new foreword by Willard Wood, Chafeetz's travel companion, is the record of the two Americans' travels in northwestern Afghanistan prior to the Soviet occupation. *Honeymoon in Purdah* relates the adventures of two Canadians, Alison Wearing and a male friend, Ian, who travel to Iran in the mid 1990s, disguised as a married couple and travelling on their honeymoon to avoid the country's prohibition against public consorting of the unmarried.

Chafeetz writes about Afghanistan when

the country knew peace but suffered from economic troubles, poverty and famine. He contrasts the absence of colour, form and image in Afghanistan with a colourful and vibrant life in Iran. Along the Afghan border with Iran, where Chafeetz and his friend travel, they observe a pattern of migration to a wealthy and prosperous Iran that bedazzles some Afghans and frightens others anxious about Iran's disregard for tradition and religion. But such comparisons are not the focus of Chafeetz's eloquent narrative. As he points out, the impetus for the journey to Afghanistan is to find a way of life that has been eroded: "We had come to Afghanistan to meet the nomads. In most of the Middle East ecologically suited to pastoral life, governments found it politically inappropriate to let free, armed tribes roam in the countryside."

Chafeetz and his friend leave behind the trail of young Westerners passing through Afghanistan on their way to India and instead delve into the rich history of Afghanistan, crisscrossed by many languages, religions and ethnicities. Because of their fluency in Persian and their familiarity with cultural history, Chafeetz and Wood are blessed with direct access to the people of the region. They spend long evenings conversing with hosts who, following tradition, receive them in their homes sometimes despite their own reduced means. Chafeetz relives those encounters with intensity and a profound sense of connection with his Afghan interlocutors. When he has returned from Afghanistan and witnesses drastic changes from afar, Chafeetz finds no solace in what he calls "jingo-enthusiasm for the freedom-loving Afghans." Instead he turns to the question the Afghans had asked him: "'Are we not like yourselves, all sons of Adam?'" to which he responds: "Surely they were, and surely there was a tale to be told about that."

The attempt to capture the spirit of a people also informs Alison Wearing's travelogue. The Iran she and her friend set out to discover is diametrically opposed to the images of the country evoked in Chafeetz's narrative. Having been legislated back to a tradition made synonymous with religion, the Islamic Republic appears to be anything but welcoming to women, who must abide by a strict dress code requiring them to cover their hair and body. But Wearing bears with the awkwardness to say nothing of the discomfort caused by the heat to satisfy her curiosity about post-revolutionary Iran.

She finds that despite the nation's image as bent on religious dogma, Iran continues to be captivated by the West. The revolution seems to have merely replaced one form of official orthodoxy, the myth of a progressive and secular monarchy, with another, a republic adhering strictly to Islamic doctrine. Caught between the pendulum swing are the people who have begun to balk at religion's meddling in all realms of life.

Far from being treated with hostility, Wearing and her friend are received with open arms by total strangers who act as their guides and hosts. Travelling on a budget, they take buses instead of planes and stay in simple and sometimes ramshackle accommodation. As a result, they see a side of life in Iran missed by most Westerners who travel there on package tours. These two Canadians' encounters with Iranians go a long way to correct the stereotype of post-revolutionary Iran as a nation hostile to Westerners, even when the Western visitors do not have mastery of their language. Unlike Chafeetz who speaks Persian during his travels and renders the dialogues into English, Wearing filters her exchanges through Persianized English that inadvertently infantilizes the Iranians and detracts from an otherwise complex portrait of the nation.

In the wake of recent tragedies that have shaken the world, one can hope that more Westerners develop a genuine curiosity about Iran and Afghanistan and follow in Chafeetz's and Wearing's footsteps in their attempts to understand the peoples and cultures of the region.

Cultural Memories

Theo d'Haen, ed.

Colonizer and Colonized Volume 2. *Gendered Memories* Volume 4. *Genres as Repositories of Cultural Memory* Volume 5. *Methods for the Study of Literature as Cultural Memory* Volume 6. *Reconstructing Cultural Memory: Translation, Scripts, Literacy* Volume 7. *Travel Writing and Cultural Memory* Volume 9. *Images of Westerners in Chinese and Japanese Literature* Volume 10. Proceedings of the xvth Congress of the International Comparative Literature Association. Rodopi n.p.

Reviewed by Susan Fisher

The XVth Congress of the International Comparative Literature Association, held in Leiden in August 1997, adopted the theme of "Literature as Cultural Memory." This capacious topic attracted over six hundred participants, many of whose papers have been published in this multi-volume series. (Of the ten volumes, only seven are reviewed here.)

Faced with these volumes—7.5 linear inches of book, 2563 pages—I was at first dismayed. Many of the papers delivered at Leiden induced, as I recall, a keen urge to go sightseeing. But on encountering the papers in print, I have been pleasantly surprised. The quality remains wildly variable: next to a stimulating paper, one encounters a pedestrian or impenetrable one. Nonetheless, the unpredictability of these volumes (like the conference that gave rise to them) is in some measure their appeal.

Each volume begins with a standard introduction by general editor Theo d'Haen, explaining that the purpose of the conference was to focus on "the role literature plays as a repository of culture." Acknowledging the obviousness of this function, d'Haen then provides a list of specific questions clearly designed to enable scholars interested in theory, gender and cultural studies to sit down at the same panel with old-fashioned comparatists of the East/West or German/French variety. Some volumes also have individual thematic introductions.

The great strength of the series is that each volume examines its topic in a wide range of national and theoretical contexts. For example, volume 5, *Genres as Repositories of Cultural Memory*, includes papers on the historical novel, the *conte philosophique*, lyric poetry, autobiography, the *journal intime*, the *nouveau roman*, fairy tales and myths. The authors (writing in either French or English) discuss works from Spain, South Africa, Quebec, the US, Britain, France, Argentina, Korea, and China.

Volume 2, *Colonizer and Colonized* (at 640 pages the heftiest of these seven), contains four sections: Asia, the Americas, Africa, and Europe. (Inexplicably, Jonathan Hart's paper on translations of Spanish accounts of the New World appears in the African section.) In the Asian section two articles on Hong Kong (one on poetry, the other on drama) demonstrate that this city's cultural life cannot easily be explained with the usual postcolonial theorizing. Articles on Japanese literature examine Japan as simultaneously colonizer and colonized; here again, the writers point to the inadequacy of postcolonial theory and Orientalism to explain such complex relationships. I enjoyed Ken Ireland's paper on Salman Rushdie and Timothy Mo as "international bastards" (a phrase borrowed from Ondaatje); the title of Ireland's paper promises Ishiguro too, but he never appears. The section on the Americas deals

almost exclusively with Latin America and the Caribbean. One exception is Amaryll Chanady's paper, "Cultural Memory and the New World Imaginary." Devoted largely to theories of cultural identity, it examines briefly the role of the Native in Canadian literature. Citing Leslie Monkman and Margaret Atwood, Chanady describes how uprooted Europeans chose the Native Canadian as a spiritual ancestor. She links this "symbolic filiation" to a similar process in other Creole societies of the Americas. Elizabeth Dahab's paper on "francophonie pluraliste" convincingly shows how many of the themes of Quebec literature "de souche"—exile, alienation, dispossession—are precisely those of the new migrant writers in the province.

In their preface to Volume 4, *Gendered Memories*, editors John Meubauer and Helga Geyer-Ryan make a brave attempt to posit links between gender and cultural memory. Do women remember (and record) differently, or does their gendered experience simply give them different things to remember? The editors do not attempt any definitive answer, but their preface provides a good guide to the volume's varied contents. Some papers deal with authors like Christa Wolf and Audre Lorde who have an international reputation. Others focus on women known only within particular national traditions: women writers in Brazil, modern Chinese writers, a Dutch feminist travel writer. While such papers may not coincide with one's own research areas, they at least show how gender studies transcend national boundaries.

Volume 6, *Methods for the Study of Literature and Cultural Memory*, provides a home for theoretical approaches. Most of these papers are by scholars whose first language is not English (though when people write about theory, it is sometimes hard to tell); this volume needed more aggressive editing. Conspicuous in this company for its clarity is Linda Hutcheon's "Irony, Nostalgia and the Postmodern."

The seventh volume, *Reconstructing Cultural Memory: Translation, Scripts, Literacy*, covers a wide range, from Octavio Paz's translations of Chinese poetry to book club versions of *Gulliver's Travels* in Portuguese. A paper on Korean, Japanese and Vietnamese versions of Chinese classics announces that it is the first instalment in a projected world literary history that will provide a "universal periodization." More modest is Beverley Curran's paper on Daphne Marlatt's *Ana Historic* and Nicole Brossard's *Le désert mauve*. Curran accepts these authors and their sometimes opaque pronouncements uncritically, but her paper does contain previously unpublished interview material with Marlatt.

The committee in charge of the ICLA section on travel writing had organized two earlier conferences, one in Lisbon and the other in Paris. As a consequence, Volume 9, *Travel Writing and Cultural Memory*, has a distinct emphasis on Portuguese texts; moreover, most of the papers are written in French. Volume 10, *Images of Westerners in Chinese and Japanese Literature*, is similarly parochial, though for different reasons. It does not treat the conference theme at all. The editor of the Chinese section, Hua Meng, acknowledges in his preface that "many people have been curious to know why I chose to examine this topic." He answers with a bit of oblique theory-bashing and then sets off to describe his personal interest in "imagology." Perhaps when you belong to the world's most populous nation and have a justified claim to neglect in the annals of "world literature," you are free to ignore the conference theme. The results are not uninteresting, but probably only specialists in Chinese literature will make their way through this portion of Volume 10. For me, the greater interest was to be found in the Japanese section, which includes papers on writers

such as Tanazaki and Nagai Kafu.

I cannot recommend these volumes as books to be read from cover to cover. But I do recommend browsing in them, for, whatever one's research interests or theoretical preoccupations, one is sure to discover something piquant and useful.

Selected and Sanctified

Sandra Djwa, W.J. Keith and Zailig Pollock, eds.

E.J. Pratt: Selected Poems. U of Toronto P $40.00 (cloth) $19.95 (paper)

Angela T. McAuliffe

Between the Temple and the Cave: The Religious Dimensions of the Poetry of E.J. Pratt. McGill-Queen's UP $65.00 (cloth)

Reviewed by Barbara Pell

This volume of E. J. Pratt's selected poems (the first since Peter Buitenhuis's 1968 edition) is the latest product of the Pratt Project, which has already published definitive volumes on his life, his prose and his *Complete Poems*, and will soon publish his letters. Drawing on all these resources, the editors have produced an impressive annotated selection of Pratt's poetry for "the college and university student and . . . the general reader."

Sandra Djwa's introduction provides an excellent overview of Pratt's life and work, briefly relating his biography to the tension in his poetry between "the Christian ideal of a nature reflecting a God of love" and the Hardyesque pessimism arising from his experience of Darwinian nature (a theme she explored fully in *E. J Pratt: The Evolutionary Vision*). She also situates Pratt, not only in a Canadian nationalist context, but also in the larger international modernist movement, succinctly explaining how "in Pratt's own practice, imagism and free verse take their place within the long poem." Djwa then sets all of Pratt's best-known poems within the context of his biographical and historical development. She traces his progress from the post-Darwinian tragedy of "The Ice-Floes" (1922); through the imagism of *Newfoundland Verse* (1923); the parody of puritanism in *The Witches' Brew* (1926); the New Humanism of "The Highway" (1931), "From Stone to Steel" (1932), and *The Titanic* (1935); to his finest myth-making nationalist epics, *Brébeuf and His Brethren* (1940) and *Towards the Last Spike* (1952), and his definitive poems on human potential for good and evil and the determinist universe, "Come Away Death" (1943) and "The Truant" (1942). At the end of this brief but remarkably comprehensive and authoritative introduction, she establishes Pratt's importance in Canadian literature as "a bridge between the Confederation group and the younger poets of the 1940s" and a significant influence on the mythopoeic and nationalist poets of the 1960s to 1980s.

The editors selected the poems for this volume according to "intrinsic merit and representativeness." Their sensible decision "to include only complete poems" results in the exclusion of "The Great Feud"—regrettable, since, as Djwa says, with *Titans* (1926) Pratt was recognized as "the first 'Canadian' voice in poetry," but necessary for a volume that is both scholarly and affordable. All of Pratt's most important works discussed in the introduction plus *The Iron Door* and others are present for a total of twenty-seven poems arranged chronologically by date of composition. Lengthy explanatory notes for each poem (at the back of the volume) include dates, historical and literary references, biblical and classical allusions, and Pratt's own glosses. The editors have even prepared a companion website (www. trentu.ca/pratt/selected) with "much more extensive notes as well as a detailed timeline of Pratt's life and works." A biographical chronology, selected bibliography, index of titles, and index of first lines complete this

very useful volume.

Angela T. McAuliffe has used the resources of the Pratt Project (indirectly acknowledged), her own biblical and theological studies, and extensive research into Pratt's manuscripts to address one of the most problematic issues in his life and work: his religious faith. Citing the extreme range of critical opinions on Pratt's Christianity—from orthodoxy to atheism— she argues that "the diversity of religious positions attributed to Pratt and the image of God that emerges from his poetry are facets of the ironic vision of a man of twentieth-century sensibility who wrestled with God and sought a medium of expression equal to his themes."

Her first chapter outlines Pratt's fundamentalist Methodist upbringing, his education at the "relatively liberal" Victoria College, his rejection of full-time ministry (despite ordination), and his life-long career in the English department at Victoria. Her lengthy synopses of his two theological theses—"The Demonology of the Synoptics in Its Relation to Earlier Developments and to the Mind of Christ" and *Studies in Pauline Eschatology and Its Background*—provide evidence for her argument for Pratt's liberal but orthodox Christianity.

The central four chapters of the book analyze the religious dimensions of Pratt's poetry according to four theological themes. Chapter 2 addresses the same tension mentioned by Djwa: "the reconciliation of the power and the justice attributed to God with divine love and mercy." McAuliffe traces this "religious dilemma" from Calvin, through Wesley, to nineteenth- and twentieth-century liberal Protestantism and Pratt's own "problem of God." But, unlike Djwa, she denies, in a lengthy close reading, that the early, unpublished verse-drama "Clay" is evidence of a definitive "crisis of faith," arguing that later poems, such as *The Iron Door*, confirm his theism.

McAuliffe's third chapter relates Pratt's thesis studies in apocalypse, eschatology and cosmology to his poetry, under the categories of "Last Things" (sin, death, judgment, hell) and cosmic origin and purpose. Her next chapter confronts the spectre of Hardyesque determinism with which Pratt has often been associated, demonstrating in a full analysis of *The Titanic* that his causality is more complex and humanistic than Hardy's.

Finally, McAuliffe argues that Pratt's religious views found their positive focus and direction in "The Atoning Christ." After readings of *The Iron Door*, "The Highway," and "The Truant," she concentrates on *Brébeuf and His Brethren* to demonstrate Pratt's redemptive Christology. Her conclusion reprises her thesis and stresses both Pratt's "ironic vision" and his glimpse of ultimate transcendent reality. The volume ends with an index (which unfortunately does not cover the notes) and a bibliography (up to 1995).

The strengths of this clearly written study are the extensive references to Pratt's theological theses, the unpublished "Clay," and his own comments and correspondence about religion; the contextual references to Wesleyan and Catholic theology and biblical intertextuality; and the lengthy close readings of all the major poems. There are some organizational weaknesses as the divisions by theological themes invariably produce overlap, and the argument is not always convincing. Thus, although she refers to Pratt's "ironic vision" McAuliffe seems to assert his Christianity with more orthodoxy than is warranted by her evidence.

Disintegration, Loss and Survival

Modris Eksteins
Walking Since Daybreak: A Story of Eastern Europe, World War II, and the Heart of Our Century. Key Porter $32.95

Jürgen and Martha von Rosen, ed. E. Whittaker
A Baltic Odyssey: War and Survival. U of Calgary P $24.95

Reviewed by Lilita Rodman

Walking Since Daybreak, described on the jacket as "part history and part autobiography," is an unusual book that will probably take Canadian readers on an at times perplexing journey to quite unfamiliar terrain and offer them new perspectives on the twentieth century. Its author, a University of Toronto professor of history born in Latvia in 1943, defines himself as "a historian of Germany," but more than anything, this is a history of the people of Latvia, a country slightly larger than Nova Scotia and with a population of around 2.5 million, that reappeared on maps only recently after an absence since 1945.

But this is not a traditional history concerned with leadership, power and victory, or with causes, praise or blame. Rather, it shows how history is lived by ordinary people and provides a historical context for their lives. In this case, the people are the author, his parents and his sister. To introduce some important events and issues that his immediate family didn't experience, there is a great-grandmother who bore the child of a Baltic-German baron in the nineteenth century, a grandfather who experienced World War I and its aftermath as "a man with a cart," and an uncle who was among the tens of thousands of victims of the first Russian occupation in 1940-1941.

The outline of the author's early history, which is identical in its essential elements with the biography of almost every Latvian-Canadian now older than 57, is a story that has not been told elsewhere in English. He fled Latvia as the Russians were returning in 1944, survived the last months of World War II in Germany, endured a few years in DP camps in Germany after the war, arrived in Canada in the hold of the IRO refugee ship *Samaria* in 1949, and then headed west on a train, and gradually became a Canadian. Unlike other Latvian-Canadians, however, he won a scholarship to Upper Canada College and a Rhodes scholarship to Oxford, and became a historian.

And as a historian, he now provides the historical context for the personal stories. For example, when, as he says, "In late July of 1944 this history overtook us," his temple was grazed by a fragment of a Russian shell. Because he was only a baby at the time, he doesn't remember the wound, though he still bears the scar. But as a historian he can now describe with a retrospective omniscience the German and Russian military actions of which that wound was a part. Similarly, he can now report on the Canadian immigration policy that led to his family being admitted to Canada.

Throughout the book, the personal stories motivate and anchor the history, but it is the history that receives the surer voice. The personal, and particularly the autobiographical, sometimes leads to very stilted diction and an exasperating reticence, as when he describes his return visit to Latvia for the first time in 1993: "My fortnight's sojourn was a difficult one, fraught with emotion." The reader might want to know what the emotions were and exactly what elicited them.

For Eksteins,"The year 1945 stands at the centre of our century and our meaning," and the postmodern structure of the book, which appears at first to be simply fragmentary, reflects this thesis. Within most of the fragments the reader moves between

the personal histories and the external histories that the individuals are experiencing. But more importantly, the one hundred fragments—some with evocative titles such as "Scylla," "Horsemen of Apocalypse," or "Cheaper than Niggers"—are arranged into two main time lines between which the reader moves with each fragment. One series of fragments moves forward in time and follows the generations from 1834 into the author's immediate family; the other series follows his life backward from 1998, when he is writing the book. The two time lines, which at the beginning of the book differ by more than 150 years, meet at the end with the end of World War II; it is as though a single time line had been folded in half at May, 1945.

This book shows World War II, and in particular its end, from a perspective very unfamiliar to most readers. Instead of the Western front, the focus is on the Eastern front. Instead of viewing Germany from the air through the eyes of Allied bombers, we see the civilians on the ground trying to avoid the 315 tons of bombs that landed on them for each ton that landed on Britain; 600,000 civilians died and 780,000 were injured. And May 1945 is not a scene of victory parades, but rather a scene of silence, with 35 to 45 million homeless refugees scurrying to what they hoped would be safety. The Eksteins family were four of these, and my family were three more; we arrived in Danzig less than two weeks later in 1944, and we sailed to Canada in the hold of the same ship, but about two months later.

Although *Walking Since Daybreak* and *A Baltic Odyssey* could be said to begin and end in the same places—the Baltic and Canada—and cover some of the same time period, there most of the similarity between the two books ends. The second book has neither the historian's perspective, nor the scholarly resources of the first; rather, it brings together two German documents translated into English—the reminiscences of a remarkable woman who eventually emigrated to Canada and the prisoner-of-war diary of her husband. Also, the "Baltic" in the title is quite misleading because there is almost no real trace of the Baltic in this book. The von Rosens are not Balts, but rather Baltic Germans who were repatriated from Estonia in 1939 and spent most of the war on an estate in German-held Poland; their culture and language are German and they have family and friends living throughout Germany. The book documents the two very different, parallel odysseys of Martha and Jürgen, between Christmas 1944 and spring 1946, and their final reunion, and provides a very interesting personal view of the life of the refugee, of the life of a prisoner of the Allies, and of life in all the Allied zones in Germany in the first year after the war.

The first half of Martha's reminiscences documents her journey after she leaves the Polish estate and joins the tens of millions of refugees moving west ahead of the Russians. Although her account does capture the "nameless, homeless fear" that dominates the psyche of the refugee in flight and the sense of being pursued ("poor hunted refugees"), it is important to realize that her refugee experience is that of the very wealthy, very well connected and very privileged. Not only do the von Rosen group travel in style with their six horses, various conveyances, trunks of possessions, and friends with mansions along the way to stay in, but they have the luxury of worrying about a trunk filled with the family silver or a seal fur coat being ruined by spilled syrup; the typical refugees had only what they could carry and worried about surviving until the next day. Fortunately, Martha does include telling details from which we can extrapolate the experience of others, as when she mentions the thirty-five bundled,

unburied bodies outside a graveyard, many of them those of children who might have frozen or starved to death. In spite of Martha's best efforts, they are overtaken by the Russians, who rob them, and the second half of the reminiscences concerns roughly a year in what became the Russian zone of Germany. The main objective now becomes getting herself, her children and her parents to the American zone and also finally reuniting with her husband.

Jürgen's diary, covering August 1945 to March 1946, is typical of the genre of the prison diary and provides a very detailed documentation of how the British, Americans and French treated their prisoners of war. While the story of the extreme suffering in these POW camps is of course very well known in Europe, it will probably come as a surprise to most Canadian readers. The most exciting part is his amazingly vivid retrospective account of his escape from labour on a farm in France and his journey, sometimes only in stockinged feet across the border to Germany and then through post-war Germany eventually to meet the rest of his family.

Both halves of this book offer a clear sense of life in Germany in the first year after the war, with the occupation zone system, the control points that regulated the movement of people and goods, the rubble of the cities, the problems of communication and travel, and the desperate attempts of family members to find each other. The editor's afterword includes the earlier history of the von Rosen family, and an explanation of who the Baltic Germans were and how they were repatriated. I was surprised by the comment that the Estonians felt "released from their demeaning status as subordinates" when the Baltic Germans left; while they may have been glad to see them leave, few Balts in 1939 felt either demeaned or subordinate to the Baltic Germans.

Canadian Theatre: Halcyon Days

Fred Euringer

A Fly on the Curtain. Oberon. $38.95/$19.95

Reviewed by Bryan N.S. Gooch

Fred Euringer's *A Fly on the Curtain* is far more than a collection of autobiographical anecdotes derived from serious reflection and years of experience in acting, directing and teaching in the world of Canadian theatre: it is a sensitive, insightful, critical and often witty revelation of the burgeoning of dramatic production, especially in central Canada, focusing particularly on the heady 1950s and 1960s, and looking, for example, at the Crest Theatre, university productions, summer stock at Port Carling and early seasons of the Stratford Festival. These are the years, after all, of Robert Gill (at Hart House) and of Tyrone Guthrie and Michael Langham (at Stratford) and of other famous names—Christopher Plummer, Donald Sutherland, Douglas Seale, Kate Reid, Paul Scofield, Frances Hyland and others.

This chronologically arranged series of linked vignettes moves from the discovery of the magic of "CBC Stage" on radio to the University of Toronto (1951) and involvement in Gill's Hart House production of *Camino Real* and to parts in other plays. As the narratives continue on, one is treated to insightful glimpses of directors and actors at work, of the long hours of effort in rehearsal (or sometimes short hours when more were needed), of empty pockets, of part-time work and fatigue, and of the plays themselves: here is the first-hand view of someone for whom theatre was life beyond whatever university courses might require (and in those days the University of Toronto did not offer a drama programme). Descriptions of the whirling schedule of the Straw Hat Players (at Port Carling) come into the mix too, along with

reflections on directors experienced and inexperienced, stage cats and problems with scenery and a tantalizing blend of elements from the catastrophic to the hysterical. One watches Euringer gain experience through his winter and summer seasons, his Stratford audition (1957), his observations and work with Guthrie, Langham and others, his assumption of various roles (the plays were mainly British or American), and his unqualified respect for Esse W. Ljungh, the dean of CBC radio drama, whose rehearsals he attended (unpaid) for an entire year. Gradually an interest in directing is sparked and opportunities come, but slowly, as the travails of developing a theatrical career are tellingly revealed. Two years of frustration—except for Alois Nagler's lectures in theatre history—at Yale do not lead to a third; rather, what follows are several winter tours with The Canadian Players (through the American Northeast and central Canada) at the invitation of the remarkable Douglas Campbell, whose initiatives were crucial to so many of the actors and audiences of the day. Work in Toronto—directing Ionesco and Albee, for instance—and at Stratford fills in the gaps, and the glimpses of the 1961 Stratford season (including Jon Vickers and Scofield) are telling, as are his account of his season as artistic director at Port Carling, his comments on the volume of dramatic work produced by the CBC (now, alas, largely unknown though very much a part of this country's theatrical heritage), the tribulations of contests and drama festivals, and the fact that, in Euringer's view, we are missing—because the opportunities were more available to British or even American imports—a whole generation of experienced Canadian directors (an imbalance, one might observe, paralleled in Canadian universities in the 1960s and 70s for not altogether different reasons). Even Stratford did not set a noble example in this situation. Of the talented Canadians, many left for the U.S.—especially Hollywood—though some stayed, finding careers if not in theatre, then in film and television. Euringer, whose love for the stage is everywhere apparent in this lively book, accepted an offer from Queen's University where he could at least pursue his interests and give full rein to his talents in an appreciative atmosphere. Those with any interest in theatre take note: this is first-rate fare for a number of reasons—once started, it is difficult to set aside.

"Ouestward" Bound

Jill Frayne
Starting Out in the Afternoon: A Mid-Life Journey into Wild Land. Random House $32.95

Denis Combet, ed.
In Search of the Western Sea/À la Recherche de la Mer de l'Ouest: Selected Journals of La Vérendrye/Mémoires choisis de La Vérendrye. Great Plains/Éditions du Blé $45.00

Reviewed by I.S. MacLaren

Otherwise unalike, two Canadian travellers in the late twentieth and early eighteenth centuries share the trait of exceeding perceived limits, psychological or geographical, to seek new self-understandings or fortunes. Jill Frayne's first book, *Starting Out*, is an aptly titled primer on solo travel (in 1990) and its aftermath for a forty-five-year-old who leaves Ontario dissatisfied with life and heads as far west and then north as conveyances permit. Seasoned readers of travel writing will probably find that the experiences Frayne registers as epiphanies of self-discovery engage her more than them. Who needs to hear again that "in the long run it's probably easier, causes less wear and tear, to be with somebody" while *en route*? Did Beryl Smeeton not tell us as much long ago, and others much earlier? Although overcoming the fear of aloneness, like finding oneself, is a worthy goal for a traveller, too much dis-

tance on this prose highway separates Frayne's purposeful engagements with and disengagements from society. A starting out promises an ending up, after all.

As travelogue, however, *Starting Out* occasionally succeeds, for Frayne describes life beyond herself well. At Sitka, she exhibits flair in recounting the relations between Russian otter hunters and the Tlingit. She uses the occasion to ponder how being *in situ* alters historical interpretation. However, the account gives way to mundane personal notes that leave the reader regretful that she has moved on. Moreover (and one need look no further than her subtitle's use of "wild" to see as much), an Ontariocentric parochialism mars her perspective of other parts of the West, the West Coast and the near-North. Finally, the book is too expensive.

In Search of the Western Sea, a bilingual edition from Winnipeg of the La Vérendryes' writings, does not set their work in a well-steeped understanding of the genre of exploration writing, and it lacks some of the matter required of a scholarly publication, including a statement of its place in the existing literature, particularly the works of Lawrence Burpee, Bougainville/Thwaites, Antoine Champagne, G. Hubert Smith, and, most recently, the *Plains* volume of the *Handbook of North American Indians*. However, Combet's evident personal fascination with Pierre Gaultier de Varennes et de la Vérendrye (1685-1749) and his sons is contagious. And that is enough to justify this rehearsal of the penetration of the continental interior, a development in Canadian history that surely should have given Northrop Frye pause in his creation of the figure of explorers as so many Jonahs being swallowed into the Gulf of Saint Lawrence as by Leviathan.

European cartographers had theorized something like the Black, Caspian and Mediterranean seas in northern North America from the time of Cartier's arrival in 1534; apparently, Hudson Bay and the gulfs of Mexico and California, just such seas, either did not suffice or required a partner in the Northwest. By the 1730s, when hostilities between Sioux/Dakota and Cree/Assiniboines subsided briefly, and farther western exploration with the aid of Mandans and others was possible, the *Mer de l'Ouest* was as fabled a geographical feature as the Strait of Anian, and as elusive. Jesuit explorers Jolliet and Marquette had reached Illinois in 1673; La Salle named Louisiana in 1682; De Noyon had attained Rainy Lake in 1688; Véniard de Bourgmont, Antoine, and Mallet had all travelled west of the Mississippi (including the Missouri River) in the second decade of the eighteenth century without encountering the Cordillera, let alone salt water. Meanwhile, no report from the English, on Hudson Bay from 1670 onward, suggested farther western penetration. Yet, the idea of a western sea's proximity still enthralled the Orient-focused court of Louis XV until he lost New France to the British at the Fall of Québec in 1759 and, in 1763, resigned all North American claims except New Orleans, and St Pierre and Miquelon. Not until the end of the century, after George Vancouver by sea and Alexander Mackenzie by land had unwittingly reached the same point of the western continental coastline within forty-seven days of one another (5 June and 22 July 1793, respectively), did Europeans realize conclusively that the western sea and the Pacific Ocean were one and the same. But on 1 January 1743, brothers Louis-Joseph and François de La Vérendrye probably saw the Cordillera at the Big Horn Mountains by following the Missouri River with people they named *Gens de l'Arc*, although some argue that they travelled no farther west than the Black Hills of South Dakota and Wyoming.

Unlike the British explorers, the La Vérendryes *père et fils* published no book.

This edition of correspondence about New France's part in the western expansion of the fur trade confirms for a new generation of readers that La Vérendrye was too preoccupied with his ultimately unsuccessful effort at peace-making to make a profitable return on his and others' investments. His voice comes down to us through reports that betray little interest in Native groups apart from their identity as prospective trading partners. Combet has presented selected correspondence and reports, each with its own introduction and analysis, and the chronological arrangement is clear. He does not use endnotes or footnotes.

Resigning in disgust in 1744 out of lack of support for his cause, La Vérendrye made a brief return when Jean-Frédéric Phélypeaux, comte de Maurepas, his adversary in the king's court, was replaced. But his sudden death in December 1749 and a subsequent wholesale change in colonial administration by Governor Jacques-Pierre Taffanel de la Jonquière and l'Intendant François Bigot spelled the demise of this family of explorers, who were replaced by Jacques Legardeur de Saint-Pierre, who established Fort La Jonquière at the confluence of the North and South Saskatchewan Rivers in the early 1750s, and Louis de la Corne, who is credited with finally regulating French trade in the West, only for a short time and only by introducing brandy. Still, it is to the La Vérendryes that one must look to understand the abiding French-Canadian presence in the West. Combet's aim to lionize them has to be seen in this light if one is to regard his edition as a success.

Particularly intriguing in the selection of documents is the memoir composed by Jesuit priest Nicolas-Flavien Degonnor and La Vérendrye after their meeting at Michilimackinac in 1727. Missionary and fur trader allied in an epistolary effort to convince the then-governor of New France, Charles de La Boische de Beauharnois, to permit the establishment of three new western posts. They staked their appeal on the story of Pako, a Cree, as related to La Vérendrye *père*. Out of Lake of the Woods, presumably, flowed a river to the West: "The beauty of this river, he said, enticed my men and me to follow it. It is true that soon after we found so many rapids and waterfalls that we would have turned back if we hadn't come to the end of them after another day and half's [*sic*] journey. What encouraged them to continue their journey, he went on, was that they no longer saw any of the muskeg or coniferous forests of their own country." Convoluted as it is, the account must have confused Beauharnois. Had the priest and fur trader conspired to bamboozle the governor? A check of the transcription of the original on the facing page shows that the French is clearer, and suggests that translators Alan MacDonell and Constance Cartmill are themselves confused by this passage. However, that the two versions exist in the same book makes just such comparisons possible; moreover, they are necessary, for Degonnor betrays anxiety over the reliability of Pako's account about the existence of this river, one that in order to exist would have had to foreshorten the continent mightily, thereby making the Columbia River drain out of Lake of the Woods.

In Search of the Western Sea is visually enhanced—almost overly so, somewhat like an issue of *National Geographic*—but it exhibits a discordant combination of features—lurid, Disney-like coloured illustrations by René Lanthier (more appropriate for a school reader) that vie with colour reproductions of historical items, National Film Board cartoon stills, sidebar maps and background overlays; the too-faint reproduction of early maps; and a three-column format. The plethora of visual matter fragments the selected narratives and leaves one wondering if Combet feared losing his readers' interest. Meanwhile, the edition

lacks some essentials—an editorial statement indicating the criteria for the selection of documents; a statement of the provenance of all original documents selected; and a glossary of Native names that would explain, for example, that Monsoni was a French name for a then-distinct sub-group of Cree (it has survived in the name of Moosonee Ontario). Like Ramsay Cook's *Voyages of Jacques Cartier* (1993), *In Search of the Western Sea* leaves one wondering about its intended audience; perhaps it is the undergraduate classroom, although the price of the book suggests otherwise. This is a welcome edition but undependable for scholars.

Art's Artifice

Edward Galligan
The Truth of Uncertainty: Beyond Ideology in Science and Literature. U of Missouri P us$29.95

Victoria Dickenson
Drawn from Life: Science and Art in the Portrayal of the New World. U of Toronto P $27.95

Reviewed by Christoph Irmscher

Both Edward Galligan and Victoria Dickenson profess an interest in adding to recent debates about the intersections between the "two cultures," but their approaches differ considerably. Galligan is into words: recent research on the human brain, he says, affirms the importance of the kind of storytelling found in literary texts, something "analytically minded" critics like to shun. Dickenson prefers pictures: her book was written, she says, to emphasize what historians have ignored, namely the role played by visual material (maps, watercolors, engravings, woodcuts) in the formation of scientific knowledge about the New World.

Both books are lucidly written in jargon-free language obviously intended for a broad audience. If *Drawn from Life* presents itself as an encyclopedic, historically organized guide to images of North American flora and fauna, Galligan's book reads like a diatribe, a lament on American academe today. The author, a retired professor at Western Michigan University, has nothing good to say about the ways in which literature is now being read and taught in American classrooms, and he has a long list of people to blame, all of whom have shown themselves to be enemies of "literal" reading: post-structuralists, Marxists, feminists, environmentalists, even biographers.

According to Galligan, much of what is wrong with literary critics today has to do with their arrogant disdain for science. Corrupted by "European pundits"—those muddle-headed admirers of de Saussure, Hegel, Heidegger and Nietzsche—they have forsaken the pleasures of good, plain American "talk" for the sweeter seductions of ideology. Unable to "think clearly," academic ideologues—"owlish," "insufferably brilliant," "narcissist," "semi-learned" and "exhibitionistic"—spend their days reading Derrida and honing their "dishonest, self-serving, client-flattering preachings." By far the most useless of the lot are the French intellectuals who have attended the *École normale supérieure*: their mumbo-jumbo has been steadily spilling over into the writings of Galligan's academic colleagues.

Ironically, such ranting against the intellectuals has itself a distinguished French pedigree; one need only think of Julien Benda's polemic *Le Trahison des clercs* of 1929. However, given Benda's strong dedication to rationalism, Galligan would probably resent the comparison: he comes down strongly in favor of what he calls "uncertainty," a virtue that he identifies with the pleasures of storytelling in fiction. If French intellectuals are "more liable than most" to fall into the habit of abstract thinking, Americans are natural storytellers: they know a good curse word when they see it, and their manly "talk" doesn't take kindly to theoretical flights of fancy. They know,

too, that good novels aren't produced by brainy, "maybeish" nerds but by "tough-minded," grown-up, "sensible" people. If this smacks of American exceptionalism, it needs to be added, in all fairness, that several of Galligan's witnesses for the prosecution come from outside the United States: Josef Skvorecky (don't worry, says Galligan, if you cannot pronounce his last name; neither can he), Robertson Davies and Milan Kundera, whose plea for reading fiction literally, as opposed to analytically, is of particular importance to Galligan's argument.

Support for Galligan's views also comes from the recent discoveries of neurological science, which have shown us that our brains, far from being instruments to churn out predictable fantasies that mark and mask our repressions, are wild places, governed by "the unruly laws of quantum physics." Galligan offers an interesting summary of J. Allan Hobson's work on the dreams that occur during REM or "rapid-eye movement" sleep. They are not messages from our unconscious but narratives hastily cobbled together to make sense of the plethora of random signals generated by the non-rational part of our minds. Simple cause-and-effect reasoning cannot describe what is happening there: "Analytical dignity be damned."

Galligan's quick foray into neurology is followed by an anticlimactic pitch for Gross and Levitt's tendentious attack on humanists, *Higher Superstition*. There is much gratuitous muscle-flexing and homespun theorizing here as well as elsewhere in the book, parts of which read as if excerpted from handouts submitted to students in undergraduate literature classes by a particularly cranky professor: "If a work asks you to pretend to be a kind of person you either cannot stand to be or do not know how to be, you cannot do an adequate job of reading it." Such claims, taken seriously, would mean that Proust's *A la Recherche du temps perdu* ranks as one of the supreme achievements of Western literature only because readers can readily identify with a narrator who spends his days munching *madeleines* and reflecting on childhood traumas and the sexual inversions of his friends, or that Joyce's *Ulysses* can be understood best by someone who finds it easy to imagine himself in the shoes of a henpecked Dublin Jew with a taste for fried kidneys and pornographic literature.

Nonetheless, Galligan deserves to be commended for arguing so forcefully that critics should look "towards the sciences for help in dealing with the very wide range of concerns that any energetic reading of literature inevitably generates." Unfortunately, it turns out that he himself plans to use his newly acquired scientific knowledge about the brain's capacity for storytelling only to promote a fairly traditional humanist agenda. "Alone among human endeavors," art, while also giving pleasure, helps us make sense of the world. Writers, after all, tell the best stories. This is hardly news anymore. By the end of his book, Galligan has come to resemble his own favorite literary character, Don Quixote, fighting so many windmills shaped like giants.

In *Drawn from Life*, Victoria Dickenson is less sanguine about the power of storytelling. For her, the image is what precedes all the stories that we make up about the world. Her entertaining whirlwind history of pictorial representations of North American animals and plants reaches from "caricature to realistic interpretation," from the clumsy icons of strange animals, often hardly recognizable, included in early modern maps to the renderings of "nature observed" by the artists who accompanied John Franklin's first overland expedition, George Back and Robert Hood. Visual representation is faster than textual representation, noted Back, pointing out that the pencil was "a more powerful vehicle than the pen" for conveying, on the spot, what a

specimen is really like. But Dickenson, invoking Stephen Greenblatt, claims that she isn't really interested in "truth," only in recovering the purpose such images originally served in the specific context for which they were created. For her, they are artifacts, objects of material culture, not works of art.

Dickenson's book is crammed full with interesting facts, and she moves rapidly back and forth between artists and periods so that, contrary to her initial promise of "close readings," she spends too little time on individual illustrations. In addition, it turns out that very few of them have the Canadian content pledged at the outset of the book. Contrasts between European responses to the southern and the northern regions of the New World are hinted at but never really investigated, and neither is the fact that in the North itself there were vast differences between the woodlands praised in 1761 by explorer de Charlevoix and the regions closer to the arctic circle.

One illustration that effectively conveyed the potential otherness of Canadian landscapes to eighteenth-century European audiences briefly surfaces in Dickenson's account but she has little to say about it, other than that it couldn't possibly have been "true" to life: Samuel Hearne's elegant "A Winter View in the Athapuscow Lake," from his *Journey from Prince of Wales's Fort in Hudson's Bay* (1795). Here as elsewhere in *Drawn from Life*, criteria such as "accuracy" and "truth" suddenly creep back into Dickenson's argument, creating significant problems for her original thesis. Although Hearne was a "careful and meticulous observer," writes Dickenson, his odd view of the lake was, alas, the "single" image contained in the book—a puzzling observation, since her source, the 1796 Dublin edition of Hearne's book (as well as the London edition published a year earlier), contains no fewer than nine beautifully executed engravings: maps, sketches of Indian canoes, snowshoes, and the like, as well as one other panoramic scene, "A North West View of Prince of Wales's Fort in Hudson's Bay." Dickenson contends that Hearne's image of the Athapasca lake is "too symmetrical and disproportionate" to be a faithful representation of reality, but it in fact perfectly supports and authenticates Hearne's narrative at this point, his description of how different the lake looked to them after his party had crossed over to its southern side: "the scene was agreeably altered, from an entire jumble of rocks and hills, for such is all the land on the North side, to a fine level country." Nonetheless, this was also the landscape in which a Native woman encountered by Hearne, as he notes with barely concealed surprise, hadn't seen a human face in seven months. Dickenson's complaint about the lack of "truth" in Hearne's image misses the point: his view of the lake is a haunting evocation of a region marked by a pervasive sense of emptiness, where trees have taken the place of people and our ordinary, pathetically human sense of proportion no longer applies.

I found myself wondering, finally, why Dickenson is at such pains to deny these images their status as "art." Mark Catesby's interest in creating a beautiful book, not his lack of proper "training," led him to experiment with amazing decorative patterns, representing a flamingo against the background of a sprawling coral or a pygmy rattlesnake from South Carolina floating weightlessly on a page filled with plants from the Bahamas. The British garden enthusiast and collector Peter Collinson enjoyed William Bartram's drawings of plants and animals not only because they were so precise but also because he saw a "Delightfull natural freedom" running "through the whole." And John James Audubon's somewhat embarrassing desire to be known as the former pupil of the great French painter David underscores just

how much he thought of his life-sized plates as works of great art as well as proper ornithology. Consider, too, the explorer Meriwether Lewis longing for the "pencil" of painter Salvator Rosa when, on 13 June 1805, he beheld the Great Falls of the Missouri—obviously he wanted more than just an "accurate" image to show the folks back home.

"Art" is, of course, a notoriously elusive term, but perhaps we should not superimpose our modern understanding of what does or does not constitute art on periods that would have had trouble accepting such distinctions. Even if we treat the pictures included in Dickenson's book as nothing but acts of communication between the creator and the viewer of the image, they instantly become more than just a dry presentation of facts. The potential pitfalls of Dickenson's material history become evident in her reading of Thomas Davies's portrayal of Niagara Falls (ca. 1766). Dickenson praises the image as an "accurate" representation of a "specimen" (the falls), but she never mentions one of the watercolor's most salient details. Davies's picture features three bald eagles, two of which are gliding effortlessly, at dizzying heights, through the mist above the falls. Placed slightly off-centre, the closest of the birds seems headed right for the viewer, a compositional trick that virtually draws the viewer into the painting and at the same time pushes her firmly out of it—a reminder that this magnificent world is meant for eagles, not for humans.

Taken together, Galligan's and Dickenson's books, for all the insights they provide, demonstrate that in our interdisciplinary conversations today celebrations of the liberating power of art will prove as unsatisfying as the attempt to treat products of the human imagination as mere objects that need to be examined for the amount of "truth" they contain. Straddling, in Vladimir Nabokov's happy phrase, "the high ridge where the mountainside of 'scientific' knowledge joins the opposite of 'artistic' imagination" requires, above all, an excellent sense of balance.

Writing with Pictures

W.F. Garrett-Petts and Donald Lawrence
PhotoGraphic Encounters: The Edges and Edginess of Reading Prose Pictures and Visual Fictions.
U of Alberta P/Kamloops Art Gallery $34.95

Reviewed by Karen Mulhallen

In *Ars Poetica*, Horace coined the phrase *ut pictura poesis*, to describe the reciprocal relationship between painting and poetry. But the comparisons between the arts are millennia old, and of course are not confined merely to painting and poetry. In this very engaging book, Garrett-Petts and Lawrence develop analytic criteria, rooted in some fairly traditional procedures, and show their application to key works in Canadian postmodernism.

This book is the result of a six-year collaboration and some cross-disciplinary teaching between an English professor (Garrett-Petts) and an art historian (Lawrence), the sort of collaboration which is very promising given the range, variety and number of interdisciplinary experiments in current art practice. Not that such cross-boundary work is new, but the development of photography in the last hundred and fifty years and its use in frontier societies such as early Canada have allowed the distinction between amateur and professional, and writer and visual artist, to collapse to some degree.

This opening up of boundaries, argue the authors of this book, is a welcome and enriching democratization, tearing down the élitist hegemony of print, and validating the vernacular in production and reception. The overarching thesis of *PhotoGraphic Encounters* is that "literacy narratives" reflect and convey lived experi-

ence and emerge across the boundaries between high art and popular culture.

This is a tricky argument, since on the one hand it seems self-evident that continual exchange is the nature of creation, and on the other it is also a bit of a fence-sitter. Readers who were present at the "Crossing Frontiers" conference at the Banff Centre many years ago may recall Leslie Fiedler commenting to Robert Kroetsch that "those who sit on fences will get a sore Kroetsch." Interestingly, the "fence-sitting" work of Robert Kroetsch will provide central evidence and illustration for the argument of these authors.

PhotoGraphic Encounters is part theory, part application, with a bit of catalogue placed in the Appendix. The book was designed to accompany a show at the Kamloops Art Gallery (15 October to 26 November, 2000) featuring the work of thirteen artists, each of whom is discussed in the text. The close individual analyses of individual artists offer considerable insight and stimulation. Certainly this is a text to be re-encountered and to enter what the authors have designated as the "third space." This "third space" is neither literary nor visual but the product of the two, the zone where the narrative impulse destroys the stasis of high Modernism.

How does this ambitious collaborative project unfold? The first fifty or so pages are heavily theoretical, culled from Foucault to Homi Bhabha, Austin to Eagleton and Fish, with moments of W.J.T. Mitchell's *Picture Theory*, with a host of other theorists. Although arguments and illustrations are repeated, this is not inappropriate to an academic venture which is seeking to establish new methods and new subject areas. The book becomes more widely engaging as the theory is applied. The opening application is to Margaret Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale*, whose major theme, freedom of expression, is, of course, relevant to the argument of *PhotoGraphic Encounters*.

Readings of Bowering's *Caprice*, Marlatt's *Steveston*, Ondaatje's *The Collected Works of Billy the Kid* and Kroetsch's *Seed Catalogue* also open up new territories as they deal with the zone of photo-text. Authenticity and the vernacular moment, the rhetoric of overt falsification, pretexts and artists' books, horizontal as opposed to vertical readings, rhetoric versus poetics, crossfade and blurring boundaries are all explored in the main body of the text and in the running commentary provided in the book's wide margins, where images, quotations and comments bounce off, diverge from or cut across the eight traditionally organized chapters.

The discussions of visual artists explore a range of visual and verbal cross-fertilizations with core themes of theatricality, and the construction of identity: Hannah Maynard; William Notman; Carol Condé and Karl Beveridge; Joey Morgan and Liz Magor; Corinne Corey; Fred Douglas; Ernie Kroeger; Michael Snow; Brenda Pelkey; and Sharyn Yuen. Although the work of many of these artists may be familiar, the authors ask us to consider how we talk about this work. What is its connection to the academy? To the historical ready-made?

Given the fertility of late twentieth-century Canadian art-making, more is left out of the discussion than is included but what is included is important and interesting. And the depth of discussion of work by Kroeger, and Douglas, and Sharyn Yuen is valuable indeed.

The weakest part of the text is its comments on Carol Shields. Heterogeneity is not the invention of postmodernism. Shields's *The Stone Diaries* is no more various in narrative strategy than many of so-called "traditional," that is pre-postmodern, texts. A discussion of narrative strategies as a broad topic opens up a vast universe of text. But the virtues of *PhotoGraphic*

Encounters lie in the specifics of its postmodernist investigation and its looking back to the photographs of William Notman and Hannah Maynard as precursors of contemporary art practice.

Tracking the Chinese

Wang Gungwu
The Chinese Overseas. Harvard UP us$19.95

Ng Wing Chung
The Chinese in Vancouver 1945-80. U of British Columbia P n.p.

Yin Xiao-huang
Chinese American Literature Since the 1850s. U of Illinois P n.p.

Geremie R. Barmé
In the Red: On Contemporary Chinese Culture. Columbia UP n.p.

Jan Wong
Jan Wong's China. Doubleday $32.95

Reviewed by Maria Noëlle Ng

The Chinese are much in the news these days. Gao Xingjiang won the Nobel Prize for literature in 2000. Ang Lee's *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* has been one of the most popular foreign movies in the United States, and China is hosting the 2008 Olympics. But who are the billion and a half Chinese, not only in China, but also around the world? To some people, the answer might be self-evident. They look different from Caucasians, or they write in ideograms, or they eat different food. But these are characterizations based on superficial differences. The five books to be reviewed show that the category "Chinese" is diverse and changing, and that it contains built-in contradictions.

A good place to start is Wang Gungwu's *The Chinese Overseas.* Based on a series of lectures, the volume is handsomely edited and informative while remaining concise. Wang, noted sinologist and director of the East Asian Institute at the National University of Singapore, provides a sweeping historical survey of Chinese migration and trading movements from the Three Kingdom period (220-280) to the present day. The first chapter begins with what Wang calls an "earthbound" mind-set that "served as the fundamental precondition of agrarian power for all Chinese emperors." Though opportunities and technologies existed for expansion, and though there were sporadic ventures into Southeast Asia, Chinese trading and overseas settlement did not take place until the thirteenth and the fourteenth centuries.

From early Chinese trading patterns Wang turns to the Sojourner phenomenon. This category applies to the early generations of Chinese immigrants before the twentieth century who left China with the intention of returning one day. While the term "pioneering" conjures up the western frontier, intrepid settlers from Europe, cowboys and wagon trains, Wang's description of the early Chinese immigrants conjures an equally pioneering spirit: "Whether in an exodus in search of gold in California or Victoria in Australia, or as contract labor organized for work in industrial teams, there had never been such kinds of Chinese leaving China before. They had no connection with influential people in China or abroad . . . Never had so many traveled such long distances to places where there had not been earlier Chinese trading communities . . . And never before had the Chinese encountered fellow workers, equally disadvantaged and equally untutored, who considered themselves racially and culturally superior as well." This extended quotation gives an indication of Wang's rhetoric: it is little short of a eulogy.

The Sojourner community changed with historical and political events. While there were overseas Chinese who remained loyal to the idea of the Chinese nation, some began to take into account the conditions of being in a foreign, and often hostile envi-

ronment. Thus also began fractious developments within overseas Chinese communities. For instance, while the Chinese took pride in their ethnic heritage, with the rise of communism in China, many also felt the ideological stigma of siding with a communist regime. The Guomindang-run Taiwan became the other option for national affiliation. But with the acceptance of China by the international community in the 1970s, some overseas Chinese began to realign themselves accordingly. Whatever political regime overseas Chinese choose, Wang maintains that they "have always sought as much cultural autonomy as they could get wherever they have gone," a goal relatively easier before "modern nation-states demanded assimilation." But with the multicultural alternative, overseas Chinese can currently develop their ethnic communities with greater freedom.

It is well known that a major destination for overseas Chinese is Vancouver in British Columbia. In 1991, Kay Anderson wrote one of the first critical studies on Chinese Canadians, *Vancouver's Chinatown.* Although Anderson's book broke new ground in Chinese Canadian scholarship, it is also a critical, "Foucauldian gaze," as Ng Wing Chung calls it in *The Chinese in Vancouver 1945-80,* and Ng's book is a kind of the-Chinese-write-back project. Ng objects to "the absence of initiatives and conscious motivations" amongst the ethnic Chinese as represented by Anderson. What Ng attempts to achieve in his own historical study is "to hear a subaltern community speak" by turning to "the ethnic Chinese media and public organizational life."

Using statistics and materials written in Chinese, as well as general studies on Chinese immigration in Canada and around the world, Ng provides a well-rounded picture of the varied and complex cultural structures that constituted the Chinese community in Vancouver for the last century. One aspect he highlights is the cultural animosity between the *tusheng* (local-born Chinese) and the immigrants who came from Mainland China in the post-1947 period. The derisive attitude towards the *tusheng* is exemplified by the following quotation from the "first book-length study of the Chinese in Canada": "Local-born Chinese usually [mis]take things in Chinatown as representative of Chinese culture. They consider lion dance, traditional opera, and martial arts our cultural heirlooms . . . They think Chinese culture is despicable." While Chinese from a more "authentic" Chinese culture attacked the *tusheng* population, the latter went on to form their own cultural identity as part of Canada, and, in Vancouver, instituted or helped the founding of successful charity organizations and essential services such as hospitals and retirement homes.

These disputes imply that the ethnic Chinese in Canada are not one homogeneous group. And what happens on a mundane level is repeated in the field of scholarship. As Ng points out, the self-righteous condemnation of "the *tusheng's* identification with White stereotypes of the exotic 'Orient' is eminently in line with the critique of postcolonial scholarship." Another area where the varied experiences of Chinese immigrants merge with academic study is that of transnationalism. In his conclusion, Ng notes that "the most significant development since the 1980 has been the rise in transnational practices and consciousness among the ethnic Chinese." However, he warns that the language of transnationalism might also lead to "cultural essentialism and the concomitant erasure of the historical specificity and complexity of identity formation in different locales." He also claims that in Canada, "critical reflections on transnationalism similar to those undertaken by . . . Asian Americanists are relatively few." This reviewer would like to dispute that. There is increasing Canadian scholarship on

transnational practices and their impact on ethnic identity formation and politics. Overall, however, *The Chinese in Vancouver, 1945-80* is a valuable addition to the growing number of works on, not only Vancouver or Canadian Chinese, but Chinese around the world. Furthermore, Ng's meticulous scholarship provides insights from a combined Chinese and western perspective.

While Ng's work looks at a specific ethnic group within a defined period, Yin Xiaohuang's *Chinese American Literature since the 1850s* is a sweeping study. So sweeping is Yin's approach that Sui Sin Far, the first published Chinese Canadian writer, is analyzed in a complete chapter without any reference to her Canadian past. Apart from Sui Sin Far, who has been the subject of articles and books, Yin devotes further chapters to much discussed and debated works, such as Jade Snow Wong's *Fifth Chinese Daughter*, cited as published in 1950 (but actually 1945), as well as Maxine Hong Kingston's and Amy Tan's popular titles. For me, the interesting focus of the book is Yin's writing on Chinese-language literature.

Yin offers three points to help readers "understand the significance and characteristics of Chinese-language literature in America." These points are useful, but they are also problematic. He claims that writers who compose in Chinese have more freedom and can take "liberty" with "subject matters of great sensitivity." While Chinese American writers who use English "are silent on the problems in American society," Chinese-language writers "do not worry about responses from outsiders. Hence they are more outspoken."

First, it is doubtful that writers who use Chinese automatically enjoy more freedom. Cultural and linguistic restrictions do not stem only from the usage of English and from the mores of American society. The Chinese language itself constrains the articulation of certain ideas and actions. And while it might be true that some American Chinese literature glosses over social problems (and this is certainly not the case in Chinese Canadian writing), this general statement cannot possibly apply to a whole body of work.

Chinese American Literature since the 1850s is strong when it deals with the history of Chinese press and publications, as well as insightful in examining China-born writers such as Lin Yutang. Its treatment of well-known subjects such as the cultural and gender wars between Chinese American writers is a useful reminder of the conflict, but adds no new analysis. Essentially, the study is fairly conservative in its approach to literary analysis.

The three works reviewed thus far deal with the articulation and formation of Chinese immigrant culture in North America. In *Jan Wong's China*, a Canadian-born writer of Chinese descent dissects the culture of the ancestral homeland. *Jan Wong's China* is a follow-up to Wong's *Red China Blues* (1996), which entertained readers with Wong's experience of the Cultural Revolution. The last chapters of *Red China Blues* take a sombre look at the end of the great experiment and the Tiananmen massacre. *Jan Wong's China* continues where the earlier book ends, as Wong tells the reader: "I chronicled my Maoist misadventures in *Red China Blues*. That book was really about me. I wanted to write another book, about China . . . I wanted to write a bigger book, certainly based on my stories, but incorporating the wealth of my 12 years [sic] experience in China. And I wanted to report on the latest changes . . ."

The first chapter in the new book revisits some of the key figures involved in the rebellious 1990s. Ironically, though the chapter is called "Tiananmen," its locations are New York, where Wei Jingsheng stayed after being released from jail in China, and Niagara-on-the-Lake, where diasporic dis-

sidents met for a conference. Wong's report makes the dissidents sound like a group of bored students waiting for something to happen. And when it did—the arrest of a democracy activist—Wong accentuates the allure of the dissidents' condition by deciding that she "had to sneak back in myself for another round."

Wong's technique is juxtaposition. For example, in the chapter "Foreign Devils," Wong compares Chinese treatment of outsiders, especially blacks, with the Chinese treatment of their own people. This is a refreshing change from the politically correct view—without any specific historical analysis or reference that the Chinese have been unfairly subjugated by the white dominant culture. In Beijing, Wong's Chinese staff "blithely stated that all African men made passes at Chinese women," and recalcitrant workers were punished by being assigned to African families as servants. Racial relationships between the Chinese and Africans deteriorated so much that the first secretary of the Benin Embassy said, "Our students are ready to go home rather than be treated as dirty beasts."

While the reports are always interesting and told in lively prose, they also turn the reader into a voyeur. An example is the chapter on homosexuality. Wong describes her recruiting of gay informants with humour, but one cannot but feel depressed by the stories of these sexual dissidents who would have zero opportunity of enjoying social acceptance. No doubt it is a tenet in journalistic writing that one reports what one sees and hears, but the rhetoric can still betray admiration, contempt or disgust. When meeting a group of lesbians, Wong found herself being interrogated by, not surprisingly, suspicious women: "There were nine women present, including a banker, an engineer . . . I sat meekly on the couch in their meeting room while the three most aggressive hammered me with questions . . ." Is Wong being funny? Judging by her own writing, meekness is not a quality one would associate with Wong. If she is being ironical, is it at the expense of the lesbians?

Geremie R. Barmé's *In the Red* is the counterpart to *Jan Wong's China*, except that it is written from the perspective of an Australian sinologist who, like Jan Wong, was enamoured of Mao's China in the seventies. Since this reviewer grew up too close to the communist regime and witnessed its brutal oppression through the fates of family members, this foreign fascination for what seemed an obviously flawed political system continues to be a puzzle.

Again, like Wong, Barmé has now learned the error of his ways and has decided to become a trenchant critic of Deng Xiaoping's "'soft' technocratic socialism." Some of the same characters appear both in Wong's and Barmé's books, but his style is in stark contrast to Wong's. Though his chapters and sub-sections have pop-style titles—"To Screw Foreigners is Patriotic" and "Literary Lip Service"—the book is supported with a considerable academic apparatus. Each chapter is generously footnoted, one with as many as 182 detailed notes. The research is exhaustive, and at times, the book reads like a long classic Chinese novel with a cast of thousands, or an edition of Confucian teachings with annotations for each word. Could this echoing of the Chinese classical style be intentional?

The chapter on intellectual diaspora in North America is an important addition to the study of Chinese writing overseas. Barmé compares the diaspora culture constituted of older exiles (pre-1989) to "the newly arrived dissidents in the late 1990s, who were embroiled in petty feuds and struggles over both money and media attention." Instead of a picture of principled educated youths who continued to write and disseminate democratic ideals, Barmé shows us that "[m]any of the

activists and intellectuals simply found themselves lost in the West . . . many of them indulged in an orgy of what in party jargon would be called 'extreme individualism.'" And though these mainlanders received much of their support from Hong Kong and Taiwan, they "tended to look down" on these Chinese outposts. Intra-ethnic conflicts carry on as usual, except now they are moved into a larger geopolitical arena. More so than Wong, Barmé dissects Chinese modern culture and society with merciless cynicism; one is reminded, in his trenchant analysis, of a reformed rake's attitude towards sex. Perhaps he feels that through his cutting criticism, he is avenging the years he was a dupe of Chairman Mao's teaching.

Listening to the North

Norman Hallendy
Inuksuit: Silent Messengers of the Artic. Douglas & McIntyre $45.00

Nympha Byrne and Camille Fouillard, eds.
It's Like the Legend: Innu Women's Voices. gynergy books $19.95

Farley Mowat
Walking on the Land. Key Porter Books $29.95

Reviewed by Sherrill Grace

Judging by these three books, and by others crossing my desk, there is continued interest in the North. This is as it should be. Every day brings news of serious climate change in the Arctic, of tragedies befalling northerners (like the Innu children of Labrador), and of southern attitudes of ignorant dismissal and blame. I hope that books like these will be read and thereby help to inform southerners about a North they rely on and yet know so little about. I place my hope for increased awareness leading to informed action in books like these because, unlike much that has been written about the North in the past, these books are either by southern Canadians with extensive personal knowledge of the North or by northerners themselves.

The most eye-catching of these books is Hallendy's *Inuksuit*, which consists primarily of his stunning colour photographs, gathered over many years of research across the Arctic, of what southerners blithely call Inukshuks. As Hallendy argues, however, Inuksuit are multifarious, with many different Inuktitut names, meanings and purposes. That roughly human-shaped rock creation commonly called an Inukshuk is, in fact, an *innunguaq* (meaning "in the likeness of a human"); we see these objects for sale in airport gift shops, on the beach in Vancouver, and in a stylized form on the Nunavut flag. Real Inuksuit do not necessarily resemble the human figure because they "act in the capacity of a human" by encoding many forms of information vital to the physical and spiritual survival of those Inuit with the wisdom to read them; they can be as simple as two coloured rocks laid side by side or as complex as an extensive field of cairn-like and single boulders reaching up to the sky.

Although the photographs in *Inuksuit* are splendid and beautifully reproduced by the publisher, Hallendy's text is disappointing. He writes in the first person about his search for these rock creations and their meanings, about his friendship with the Inuit men who acted as his Elders and mentors, and about his struggle to comprehend what he is seeing, but his narrative is repetitive, often unclear and fragmented. No references are provided in the text to connect a descriptive or narrative passage with a particular image, and I sorely miss any indication that he consulted with the Inuit to confirm that his narrative has captured the meaning of this complex stone language. Nevertheless, I am grateful for what he does provide—a glimpse into the rich cultural life and imagination of the Inuit and an important corrective to south-

ern assumptions about those human-like shapes that have become clichés of Inuit life.

The Innu voices in *It's Like the Legend* speak from and for Nitassinan, the Innu word for "our homeland." In their introduction the editors provide an overview about who the Innu are and how they came to live in communities scattered across Quebec and in Labrador, but the main goal of the book is to let the women speak for themselves. The stories gathered here are from women living in two Labrador settlements—Utshimassits (known as Davis Inlet) and Sheshatshu in central Labrador on Lake Melville, and they cover a wide range of experience from traditional legends and stories of life lived on the land to Innu resistance against white interference and exploitation, especially over hydroelectric projects or missionary zeal, to personal reflections on family history and individual lives.

The women speak in the first person. Thus the stories have the feeling of autobiography, but autobiography is a complex hybrid genre and in its southern or Euro-Canadian formulation does not always account for the story-telling found amongst the Innu, Inuit and northern First Nations peoples. Scholars like Julie Cruikshank, Robin McGrath and Nancy Wachowich have discussed the differences between these texts and those more familiar to readers in the south. But if I were to identify two features from these many stories that strike me forcefully they would be, first, the authority with which these women speak because they use the first person and speak from deep personal experience and, second, the empowerment incorporated in the very fact of speaking out. These qualities of authority and empowerment are features common to almost all forms of autobiography and as such they help to bridge the gulf that exists between the Innu and the whites who know so little about them and have caused so much damage in Nitassinan. In short, because I recognize aspects of the genre I am better able to hear what I am being told: "We have the right to exist as a people."

Farley Mowat is no newcomer to the discourse of the North. Neither is he anything less than a master of the narrative imagination. The narratives he brings us in *Walking on the Land* may be written in the first person, like so much of Mowat's writing about the North, but they are only in part his story. First and foremost they are the stories of Inuit groups living in the central Arctic, between 1955 and 1958, in the communities of Baker Lake, Repulse Bay and Garry Lake.

The phrase "to walk on the land" means to commit suicide by going forth into the Arctic snow, storm or cold to die; Inuit do this when they recognize that their time has come and they choose this death with dignity. But these stories reveal that much of what happened to the Caribou Inuit during the 1950s was anything but dignified or respectful and most of the tragedy resulted from white interference followed by white neglect. Not all whites were guilty. A few like Doug Wilkinson and Judge Sissons made a positive difference, but many Inuit died from starvation due to a lack of game in the areas to which they were forced to relocate and from a basic undermining of their traditional way of life.

Mowat and others have already told the stories of Kikik, the woman charged with murder and negligence leading to the death of two of her children, and of the Garry Lake disaster brought on, in large part, by the wilfull interference of Catholic missionaries, but no one does so more powerfully than Mowat. Kikik was eventually acquitted by Judge Sissons, and a few survivors from the Garry Lake disaster were rescued, but these facts are not the point. What Mowat shows us is the staggering strength, courage, resilience and resourcefulness of

these people. He forces us to see what southern interference has done, first by adopting a paternalistic attitude, and then by attempting to hide the truth of what actually transpired.

When I place Mowat's account of the 1950s beside the pride and achivement of Nunavut I marvel and am humbled. Read his book. Read the others too. Read them and you will begin to understand that the voices of the North are telling important lessons about complex, proud cultures and about a history of cultural encounter that we must not repeat.

No Man's Land

Sidney L. Harring

White Man's Law: Native People in Ninteenth-Century Canadian Jurisprudence. U of Toronto P $45.00

Reviewed by Desirée Lundström

In his concluding remarks in *White Man's Law*, Sidney Harring observes that "law is not just rules and institutions but also a powerful cultural force," a remark that both reminds readers of the origin and context of law, and re-establishes the alliance between legal case history and social history-in-context that this text sets out to discuss. Harring also states that *White Man's Law* is as much "about people as it is about law," a rejoinder that readers should bear in mind when navigating through the cases, stand-offs, conflicts and challenges that mark these accounts of nineteenth-century Canadian jurisprudence.

Harring's analysis of the intersection of imperial law and Native law in nineteenth-century Canada gives an account of cultural assimilation in its most acute instance. The negotiation of dominion over land had, and continues to have, significance beyond the mere concept of possession. Ownership implies responsibility, authority, independence and control, all of which demand an understanding of the limits that are placed on the land by people and, consequently, on the people by the land. The land under dispute therefore comes to signify beyond its empirical identity. Land ownership rights stand in for an extended concept of independence and government, and rights in general. The establishment of control over land heralded conflict between the sovereignty of those who occupied it before the right of possession was written into law by the assignment of deed title and those who assumed authority to assign such ownership. The First Nations' possession of land prior to colonial settlement in Canada was a matter of historical habitation, not of legislated deed-bound ownership as with English common law—a conflict in type but not in principle. The resolution of this conflict, however, cannot be as easily typified. The right of the First Nations to occupy land within Canada was fraught by an antagonism between discrepant legal and social systems. The struggle for the right of land ownership, then, becomes a struggle for power by one system over another.

The role of law in the establishment and maintenance of colonial Canada brought into conflict the fundamental apprehensions of social order between the new government and the First Nations. It is all too easy to gloss over a phrase like the "role of law" without questioning its imperative, that which asserts an authority of voice and the power to authorize and enforce. Law is invested authority, but whose law and whose authority? The application of "British Justice" in the colonies brought with it concomitantly conflicting and naïve principles of imperialism, believing itself to be the benefactor of the colony in all ways, to the ignorance of any conceivable pre-existing social order. So, the rule of law is the rule of British law.

The move to governmentality that proceeded through colonialism raises, as

Harring argues, an interesting set of questions regarding the perception of Native people's rights and their dominion over the land that they occupied. Harring speculates on whether this was a case of the new Canadian government lacking the power to interfere with the established order on Native lands and in existing Native communities, or whether the *de facto* assignment of property rights to Native peoples was a means to ensure compliance with imperial rule, rather than to bring the systems into conflict with each other. But with an inadequate perception of the functioning of Native law and its relation to First Nations' culture and to colonial law, conflict was inevitable.

The dispute over the Six Nations' Grand River Lands in Ontario brought into conflict more than just existing Native law and colonial law in early Canada. The dispute was initiated by conflicting sovereignty claims where the Six Nations claimed the title to the land they settled and the right to govern and sell it. This claim was countered by the crown which sold some of the same land independently, claiming ownership and jurisdiction over the land and its title. In the fight for proof of ownership and right, the Six Nations argued for their status as "allies" of the crown, a special status that entitled groups or individuals to a particular standing in the consideration of property rights (a claim that dated back to the 1780s). The obstacle to the successful arguing of this status rested solely on the fact that the Six Nations were Native Indian. Here, the sale of deeds to their land by the Six Nations was, arguably, a non-existent right, or at the very least, a matter of vehement contention. Much of the discrepancy occurred because of the unsure locus of land claim rights. In a similar, and landmark, case—*The Attorney General of Ontario v. St. Catherine's Milling*—this discordance was also raised because, according to the British North America Act that created Canada, Indian lands fell under the jurisdiction of the crown, while other lands were under provincial jurisdiction. The many subsequent challenges brought against the property and sovereign rights of the Six Nations illustrated, as Harring argues, the embarrassing inadequacy of English common law in regulating the Canadian frontier.

These cases were the beginning of a host of challenges to property and implied status rights of First Nations within Canada in the eighteenth, nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and form invaluable counterpoints to contemporary considerations of First Nations' legal standing. Countless instances of jurisdictional conflict are related in *White Man's Law* in which tribal councils have sought to apply justice (not by force of *imperial* law) to cases brought before them, though their censure of offenders was not acknowledged or respected by colonial law. Harring relates, in these numerous accounts, an acute conflict between the sovereignty of existing law and social order and the indiscriminate implementation of law and order notwithstanding its extant counterparts.

White Man's Law effectively localizes Canadian legal history. It addresses conflicts with a keen awareness of specific context. This text is provocative and impressive in that it does not attempt to homogenize or essentialize the place of First Nations in the various legal contests that it addresses. By this account, instances of First Nations' legal conflicts with colonial law are not merely anecdotal to the corpus of cases that constitute the history of law in Canada. Often depicted as anomalies and as isolated instances of challenges to the laws of Canada (or to Canada itself), cases involving First Nations become an integral part of the discourse and writing of Canadian law and Canadian history.

The rootedness of the accounts in *White Man's Law* of particular cases in their emer-

gent social contexts, their histories and other non-judicial parameters, to an extent overwhelms the case material presented, so the narrative of First Nations' legal history is a dialogue of historical and social contexts as much as it is an account of case history.

Perhaps the most interesting narrative that weaves its way through *White Man's Law* is the narrative of the appointed judges in the cases it examines. The perspective of the crown is narrated in many ways, both through official decisions and in other pronouncements made by judges as mouthpieces of the crown. In particular, the inconsistency of many applications of crown law to First Nations people is remarked upon by Harring. The inconsistency of, for example, Justice John Beverley Robinson's formative opinions on Native rights cast the Canadian legal system in a questionable light. The bench's apparent awareness of the need for either integration of First Nations law into Canadian law or, at the very least, an acceptance and consideration of First Nations law in the implementing of a more inclusive Canadian legal system was constantly at odds with the reality of the operation of the "rule of law."

At a time when the rights of First Nations communities are, more than ever, the subject of investigation and legal contest, with precedent-setting judicial decisions shaping the future of aboriginal land claims in Canada, one might question why the project undertaken by Professor Harring concluded its textual foray without addressing some of the more contemporary cases. He certainly alludes to their relevance at the outset. However, such a broad undertaking would likely dilute the historical contexts. My keenness for a text that incorporates more contemporary cases is merely a reflection of enthusiasm for the project undertaken in *White Man's Law*, rather than an observation of deficiency.

Between Women

Elizabeth Hay

A Student of Weather. McClelland & Stewart $32.99

Reviewed by Sherrill Grace

If you enjoyed Elizabeth Hay's earlier work as I did, then this new novel will both reassure and surprise you. It will reassure because here again is that precision, clarity and sheer beauty of language that make the writing in *Crossing the Snow Line* or *The Only Snow in Havana* such a pleasure to read. It will surprise, perhaps, because the story in this novel is so harsh and its main character so unlikeable.

A Student of Weather is Norma Joyce's story of growing up in the care of a beautiful older sister whom she hates and does all she can to hurt. Norma Joyce spends her life loving a man more ruthless than herself in order to spite her sister, and I am tempted to say that his rejection of her is exactly what she deserves. But finally, this novel is not about *this* specific unrequited love so much as it is about a woman's inability to love the sister who loves her and about her inability to express much affection for other people in her life.

While I do not find the plot involving Norma Joyce's obsession with a self-centred man convincing, I did find her obsession with her sister chillingly so. It is in this plot line that Hay probes levels of myth and human psychology and asks her readers to think carefully about jealousy, rivalry and desire between women. As Norma Joyce sees it, the men in their lives are the spaces they seek to control, the battlefield on which they struggle to win. And Norma Joyce does win. She outlives them all and finds satisfaction in this success.

So what am I to make of this woman and this story? *A Student of Weather* is many things that I cannot explore in a brief review, but I find Norma Joyce to be a

study in something very close to evil in a film by Ingmar Bergman, a world where atonement, forgiveness and transcendence are almost irrelevant. Norma Joyce does not say she is sorry; she does not seem wracked with guilt; she does not acknowledge the role she has played in damaging others and her self. She does not change. At the most she admits to a memory of her dead sister's tenderness that "has touched a toothache of affection, and the pain stuns her."

Love as pain is not a new theme, but with her artistic capacity to touch that nerve of awareness in her readers, Hay reminds us that life is not simple, that fictions do not end happily, and that the bonds between women are more important, more psychologically complex than we realize. If it is true that an ugly sister will always haunt a beautiful one, tarnishing everything she does with the bitterness of envy, then it is equally true that the beautiful sister will haunt the ugly one, and in *that* haunting there is hope.

Recherches collectives

Annette Hayward and Dominique Garand, eds.
États du polémique. Nota bene $24.00

Christiane Kègle, ed.
Littérature et effets d'inconscient. Nota bene $19.00

Reviewed by Robert Alvin Miller

Deux ouvrages collectifs visant la lecture de textes français et québécois selon une optique particulière dans chaque cas: analyse du discours pour *États du polémique* et psychanalyse pour *Littérature et effets d'inconscient.* Cependant, les deux livres présentent des différences considérables quant à leur forme, nous rappelant que l'ouvrage collectif n'est pas seulement un travail d'édition mais aussi le foyer de problèmes de structuration, dont la forme est déterminée autant par le caractère de l'approche visée que par la vision intellectuelle des participants.

Fruit d'un séminaire de littérature et psychanalyse, *Littérature et effets d'inconscient* préconise, dans le discours littéraire, "une structure de répétition identifiable sur le plan de la manifestation." Il en résulte que chacune des études, portant sur un ouvrage littéraire particulier, comporte sa propre introduction théorique, de sorte que des notions lacaniennes/freudiennes telles l'Autre, l'objet (a), le stade du miroir et la distinction entre imaginaire, réel et symbolique, sont expliquées plusieurs fois en fonction de différents contextes discursifs et historiques.

Ainsi, la Chose (*das Ding*) est présentée par Sandra Gonthier dans le cadre de sa lecture d'*Armance* de Stendhal comme ce que le sujet (devenu tel en entrant dans l'ordre symbolique par l'acquisition du langage) "doit (re)conquérir" pour (re)trouver la jouissance parfaite de l'unité avec la Mère. Le récit de Stendhal sera interprété, en fonction de cette notion, comme une quête impossible et ambivalente de l'amour de l'Autre, quête qui, dans sa négativité fondamentale, mènera au suicide du sujet. Steven Morin, à partir d'une définition semblable de la Chose, souligne davantage (au sujet de *Hiroshima, mon amour* de Marguerite Duras) l'élaboration d'une écriture de sublimation visant à reproduire, au sein de l'ordre symbolique, comme une sorte de deuil, la trace du manque de l'Autre dont cette écriture procède. Toutes les études du recueil expliquent des aspects conceptuels qui aideront le lecteur, et surtout le lecteur non-initié, à mieux comprendre les enjeux de l'approche psychanalytique vis-à-vis du discours littéraire. Valérie St-Martin, par exemple, explique le rapport entre le narcissisme et la pulsion de mort; Mylène Tremblay étudie le problème de l'identification imaginaire du sujet avec l'Autre; et Valérie Lauriault offre une inter-

prétation du narcissisme qui souligne la construction de la figure de l'autre comme étayage de l'ordre romanesque (symbolique). La récurrence de notions techniques d'un essai à l'autre, et dans des contextes littéraires fort variés, rend *Littérature et effets d'inconscient* plus accessible tout en enrichissant le champ des applications interprétatives de la psychanalyse lacanienne.

L'unité des études contenues dans *États de polémique* est plus difficile à déterminer. Moins centrés sur une approche théorique commune, mais se rattachant de manière générale à l'analyse du discours, et se penchant sur l'aspect polémique de textes divers, toutes les études apportent des réflexions sur des cas historiques particuliers ainsi qu'un certain nombre de précisions terminologiques ou théoriques. Aussi retrouvons-nous par exemple l'interpellation de l'allocutaire par une voix autorielle autoritaire et manipulatrice dans le discours pamphlétaire de Céline (voir J. Bénard); et un ensemble de procédés apparentés à la rhétorique de l'argumentation, relevés dans un corpus de discours ultramontain (anti-libéral) tenu au Québec dans la deuxième moitié du XIX^{e} siècle (voir P. Rajotte). Dans sa lecture d'un échange polémique apparaissant dans la presse québécoise durant les années 1980, J. Demers pose la question de savoir dans quelle mesure le polémique devrait être compris comme un phénomène de réception.

Hayward et Garand (voir leur "Présentation") considèrent certains discours comme le "symptôme" d'une disposition qui constitue pour eux *le* polémique. Ils se proposent de bâtir une "passerelle entre ce qui s'est fait depuis les années 1970" et l'avenir en revenant sur les aspects rhétorique, pragmatique et idéologique du polémique. Mais ils espèrent également pouvoir mieux expliquer *la* polémique, événement interdiscursif qui s'installerait dans la relation entre deux pratiques discursives qui s'opposent sur le mode déjà désigné comme relevant *du* polémique.

Dans son essai méthodologique, Garand remet en question la notion selon laquelle il faut "trouver le dénominateur commun parmi l'ensemble de textes jugés polémiques." Trouvant les caractéristiques communes telles que *violence*, *agressivité* et *combativité* trop connotatives et difficiles à préciser, et l'intentionnalité polémique dans l'énonciation difficile à définir, il a recours à la notion sémiotique d'intensionnalité: le polémique serait un champ de traits sémantiques, de procédures pragmatiques et de formes de modalisation qui permettent à des tensions entre deux interlocuteurs de s'exprimer sous forme de conflit dialogique.

Pour schématiser ce conflit, Garand propose un modèle narratologique: "un récit constitutif qui met en scène plusieurs actants, récit qui prend place sur la scène de l'interlocution." Le passage du polémique comme acte de parole au récit constitutif s'effectue dès lors que l'Énonciateur est conçu du point de vue "de son identité, de sa formation sémantique et de sa compétence discursive" comme le Sujet, actant qui "conçoit sa place dans la communauté et entre en relation avec autrui, mais *tel que cela se traduit dans l'acte de discours.*" L'Objet du discours devient le redressement d'un Tort et le récit conçoit une Cible (qui peut ou non inclure l'Énonciataire), un Bénéficiaire (du redressement éventuel) et un Anti-Sujet, souvent un dédoublement de la Cible, Ennemi plus fondamental que celle-ci et qui mettrait en question jusqu'à l'existence du Sujet. La possibilité d'un tel récit dépend non seulement d'une Référence sous-jacente (à la fois Autorité et utopie) au discours du Sujet mais aussi d'une Référence commune partagée par le Sujet et l'Anti-Sujet.

Garand explique la différence entre le polémique comme forme discursive et la

polémique comme confrontation de deux discours s'opposant l'un à l'autre. Il essaie de recenser les suites possibles de cette confrontation et insiste surtout sur son aspect "contractuel": l'Autre "apparaît comme une condition de l'existence du sujet qui le fomente." Le coefficient de violence ne serait pas, selon lui, dans "l'acte illocutoire" du polémique mais "dans son effet perlocutoire," c'est-à-dire dans les actes implicites que l'énonciataire du discours polémique serait invité à commettre. Idée intéressante, séduisante et urgente pour conclure ce recueil: la "violence" du discours polémique serait-elle plus qu'un effet rhétorique, serait-elle un moyen d'engendrer une violence d'autant plus réelle qu'elle est indirecte et implicite?

Exile and Return

Roger Hyman
Aught from Naught: A.M. Klein's The Second Scroll. English Literary Studies n.p.

Sidra DeKoven Ezrahi
Booking Passage: Exile and Homecoming in the Modern Jewish Imagination. U of California P $45.00

Reviewed by Norman Ravvin

I read Roger Hyman's *Aught from Naught: A.M. Klein's* The Second Scroll as I was in the midst of teaching Klein's novel in an undergraduate class entitled "The Impact of the Holocaust on Religious Thought." If Hyman's claim is correct that the novel "is almost never taught below the graduate level in Canadian universities," I must be one of the lone madmen serving up Klein's heady mix of modernism, old world nostalgia, Zionism and Holocaust response. As usual, the novel proved a hard sell, as the students grappled with its broken-seeming form and the muscular Miltonic prose so beloved of critics and allergenic to students.

Hyman is surely right that Klein's lone novel has "never been accorded a full length study," though a scholarly edition has recently appeared from the University of Toronto Press, as part of its series of editions of Klein's work. *Aught from Naught* is a thoroughgoing study of the entire novel—including its odd "glosses," as Klein called the compendium of poetry, drama, and prayer that stands as commentary on his five central chapters. Hyman offers a close reading, generally reliable and thoughtful, of Klein's structural twists and turns, as well as of his far-ranging references to things Hebraic. He is capable as well at grappling with the mixture of hope and despair in Klein's response to the death camps, and careful as he teases out the deeply suggestive but abstruse set pieces in *The Second Scroll,* which deal with such difficult subject matter as the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel and the Kabbalistic mythology of creation.

Still, somehow, the novel's overall impact evades *Aught from Naught;* by this I mean simply that *The Second Scroll* continues to prove a text impossible to sum up, or contain in any teachable or categorizable fashion. I wonder (as I often do upon reading knowledgeable critics on Klein) if the uninitiated in such subjects as Kabbalah or postwar Zionism, will feel enlightened after reading Hyman's study, or if they will simply feel that whatever was difficult in the novel has become more complex (to the point of exasperation). Even the University of Toronto's annotated edition leaves the reader with similar questions: can footnotes on stray references to Kabbalistic treatises and the wonder-working rabbis of Poland produce much more than a shadowy suggestion of Klein's deeply allusive method?

Roger Hyman points to Klein's accomplishment in *The Second Scroll* and the difficulty it presents the average reader by quoting an early review: "no other Jewish writer in English has attempted to give

symbolic—against episodic—form to so much Jewish experience." S.Y. Agnon and I.B. Singer—Nobel winners who wrote many novels—do come to mind, but the claim is worth considering. Hyman's ability to work his way through Klein's treatment of this welter of "Jewish experience" is impressive. Still, readers will decide for themselves if some larger, clearer, more concrete context within which to read Klein's novel continues to elude them.

Hyman's book lacks an effort to link *The Second Scroll* to Canadian writing (aside from an interesting introductory discussion setting Klein against his contemporaries). And Klein criticism does not quite come into view in *Aught for Naught.* Though Hyman responds to readings by Miriam Waddington, Phyllis Gotlieb, Michael Greenstein, M.W. Steinberg and Zailig Pollock, none of these critics is central to Hyman's argument, whether as positive or negative examples. And with all the energy spent explaining the specific references that relate to Klein's deep Jewish learning, I'm not convinced that the underlying issue of Jewish orthodoxy, as a postwar cultural phenomenon, is in sharp enough focus in *Aught for Naught.* Though Hyman's study provides useful readings of *The Second Scroll,* the novel must remain, at least for now, open to interpretation.

Motifs of exile and homecoming recur in A.M. Klein's work, and it is around these motifs that Sidra DeKoven Ezrahi would have us view what might be called a modern Jewish canon. Her *Booking Passage: Exile and Homecoming in the Modern Jewish Imagination* joins a growing list of recent publications that view the output of twentieth-century Jewish writers in a canonical vein. Similar studies include Ruth Wisse's *The Modern Jewish Canon,* which attempts to draw a line of continuity between Yiddish, American and Israeli literature; and Robert Alter's *Canon and Creativity: Modern Writing and the Authority of Scripture,* which makes use of Hebrew scripture to inform interpretations of Kafka and Haim Nahman Bialik, among others.

In Wisse's case, her motivations are somewhat clear: she warns repeatedly against what she calls "deracination," the falling off of a distinct Jewish identity bound to God and Zion. Sidra DeKoven Ezrahi's volume takes on a number of the same authors as does Wisse—including S.Y. Agnon, Sholem Aleichem, I.B. Singer, and Philip Roth. And though Ezrahi's argument is less programmatic than Wisse's, it too leads its reader toward a conclusion—perhaps too confident and monolithic—concerning contemporary Jewish identity as it is reflected in the literary imagination.

In her introduction, Ezrahi explains that she is interested in "exploring the Jewish poetics of exile," but her manner of doing this is rendered somewhat off-putting by a critical style that is initially opaque and over-elaborate. Further into her introduction we do get a more readable, but still arguable outline of the author's underlying views: "The simultaneous effacement of homelands in Europe and creation of a central Homeland in Palestine forms the primary metanarrative of modern Jewish culture. . . ." This is surely true in many contemporary political and communal contexts, and it holds true for much of Israel's literature. But such a "metanarrative" is far too restrictive a rubric against which to organize a modern Jewish canon. Even the books Ezrahi chooses to examine in *Booking Passage*—in particular the Yiddish texts of Singer, Sholem Aleichem and S.Y. Abramovitsh—do not conform to this rubric. Though her essays on these writers are informative, the work under discussion cannot be made to follow such limited thematics of exile and return.

It is in her essay on Philip Roth that Ezrahi plays her full hand with regard to the possibilities of contemporary Jewish identity. In discussing Roth's tour de force

1993 novel *Operation Shylock: A Confession*, her Israel-centred mode of reading leads her to the rather prejudicial conclusion that Roth's dedication to things Eastern European betrays a "culture of nostalgia" that

> informs [his] editorial activities as initiator of the Penguin series Writers from the Other Europe and his fictional attempts to "retrieve" a lost writer who resembles Bruno Schulz or to reimagine the life of Franz Kafka or Anne Frank in America.

Roth's reimagining of Anne Frank in *The Ghost Writer* is a clear-headed, historically careful challenge to the sentimentalization of Anne Frank's legacy. His fascination with Bruno Schulz as a literary father follows from his interest in the author's death in a Polish ghetto, as well as from his admiration for Schulz's extravagantly original (though some say Kafkaesque) style. And Roth's introduction through the Penguin series of such living writers as Milan Kundera and Danilo Kis (though Kis has since died) has nothing to do with nostalgia. Rather, it suggests a commitment to reveal other forms of European and Jewish identity expressed in non-canonical literature.

Though canon-making necessarily excludes, and reshapes those it includes to fit certain rules and expectations, *Booking Passage* is a particularly limiting example of such efforts. It lacks the Falstaffian claims of Bloom's *The Western Canon*, in which the author's basic suppositions, and even his prejudices, are made baldly clear. As with Ruth Wisse's book, Ezrahi's modern Jewish canon is guided by too narrow a view of what is modern and of what is Jewish.

Worlds in Conflict

Marie Jakober
The Black Chalice. Edge $35.95

Guy Gavriel Kay
Tigana. Penguin $17.99

Dennis Jones
The Stone and the Maiden: The House of Pandragore. HarperCollins $29.95

Edo van Belkom, ed.
Aurora Awards. Quarry n.p.

Reviewed by Christine Mains

Whether labelled as science fiction or fantasy, works of speculative fiction often deal with worlds in conflict, as characters and events placed in settings flavoured by a half-remembered past or an imagined future allow the reader to see the conflicts manifest in our own present.

Marie Jakober's *The Black Chalice* is a well-researched historical fantasy set in Europe shortly after the time of the First Crusade. The story is narrated for the most part by Paul von Arduin, formerly a squire to Karelian, count of Lys, then briefly a knight himself before becoming a monk. Compelled by the pope to recount what he knows of a civil war fought thirty years previously, then ensorcelled by Karelian's pagan lover, the sorceress Raven, to speak of events as they actually unfolded rather than the self-deceptive and self-serving accounts he has previously provided, Paul reluctantly narrates a tale of conflict between the passionate, earthy pagan world championed by Karelian and his mistress, and the cold Christian world of self-denial and domination, personified in Karelian's master, Duke Gottfried, who believes himself to be the legitimate descendant of Jesus Christ himself. The encounter between the pagan and the Christian worlds, and an examination of the atrocities that have been inflicted in the name of religion, is a familiar theme oft-explored in fantasy, most notably in Marion Zimmer Bradley's *Mists*

of Avalon; in fact, the reader familiar with Bradley's work will hear many echoes in Jakober's. Many of the same concerns are explored: the power of spiritual belief to shape worldviews and value systems; the atrocities of war and domestic violence committed in Christ's name; the restrictions placed on women in order to ensure the purity of the bloodline; the Church's attempt to suppress homoerotic desires and human sexuality; and the recounting of events by an unreliable narrator. However, where Bradley's work acknowledges the difficulties of taking sides in a conflict, and paints both characters and events in shades of gray, Jakober follows the more conventional and ultimately less satisfactory tradition of aligning the reader's sympathies along dichotomies of black and white, good and evil. The sorceress Raven and her knight are only to be praised, while the narrator Paul and the characters representing the patriarchal Christian society are clearly to be condemned.

Guy Gavriel Kay's later work, *A Song for Arbonne*, which has also been reissued in a similar trade papeback format, has more in common with Jakober's work than does *Tigana*, originally published in 1990. Where *The Black Chalice* and *A Song for Arbonne* share a concern for worlds in religious and gender conflict, *Tigana* tells of the individual struggle against oppression of body and soul in an alternate world re-envisioning or evoking the city-states of Renaissance Italy. A small group of adventurers, whose common bond is their childhood memories of a homeland now forgotten by the rest of the world, fight against two warring sorcerers who struggle for control over their country. In the hands of a lesser author, this conflict could so easily be depicted simplistically as right against wrong, but Kay is always careful to work against such a formula. While the band of protagonists hate Brand, the enemy who works to obliterate even the memory of the people whom he blames for the death of his son, he is also seen more sympathetically through the eyes of the woman who has come to love him despite her original desire for revenge. There is more magic in this volume than in some of Kay's other works, although it is closer in spirit and form to the historical fantasy with which he has been mostly concerned than to the earlier Tolkienesque *Fionavar Tapestry*.

In his first work of epic fantasy, Dennis Jones tells the story of a great civilization besieged by barbarian hordes who are aided by sorcery. *The Stone and the Maiden* is the first book in a projected trilogy, but can be read on its own, as the tale of Mandine, heiress to the throne, and her lover Key, a soldier, concludes in a satisfactory manner, leaving no real loose ends to be tied or cliffs to be rescued from. The usual ingredients of epic fantasy are present—war between good forces and evil, a beautiful princess and handsome hero, gods and demons, plots and counterplots—but the focus tends towards the smaller, individual quests of the two key protagonists as they learn more about their spiritual heritage and their destiny together.

Other Canadian authors tell their stories of worlds in conflict in different forms of speculative fiction. *Aurora Awards*, edited by Edo van Belkom and subtitled *An Anthology of Prize-Winning Science Fiction and Fantasy*, is a collection of the Aurora Award winners in the best short-form work category in English for the ten years prior to publication. As with any anthology, at least those not commissioned around a particular theme, this book contains a wide variety of stories. Many are about worlds in conflict, exemplified sometimes by colonists attempting to adjust their worldviews to suit new worlds. Candas Jane Dorsey's "Sleeping in a Box" explores the different attitudes assumed by lunar colonists, while Michael Skeet's "Breaking Ball" contemplates similar issues in a story

set on Mars. Peter Watts, in "A Niche," examines the changes required to adapt the human body to an underwater world, and the conflicts between those who can adapt and those who can't.

Other stories use the familiar motif of First Contact, as in Sally McBride's "The Fragrance of Orchids," which, in exploring the differences between human and alien, raises the question of nature or nurture. The motif is developed to a more abstract extent in Robert Charles Wilson's "The Perseids." Here, the processes of evolution produce a new form of life, the gnososphere, the domain of art, culture and language. And gothic horror vampires collide with prehistoric cavemen in Robert J. Sawyer's "Peking Man."

Worlds in conflict can be temporal as well. In James Alan Gardner's "Three Hearings on the Existence of Snakes in the Bloodstream," events familiar, at least to students of history, are reexamined in the light of an alteration in the premises of history. Eileen Kernaghan's "Carpe Diem" features three women awaiting the results of tests that will determine whether or not their body parts will be given to more deserving, health-conscious individuals, certainly an issue of possible future interest given present concerns with healthcare costs.

Other tales include Gardner's "Muffin Explains Teleology to the World at Large," narrated by the older brother of six-year-old Muffin, apparently destined to be the creator of the new world that will replace the present world; Karl Schroeder and David Nickle's "The Toy Mill" which reveals the truth about the workshop at the North Pole; and a second story by Sawyer, "Just Like Old Times," in which a murderer is punished by being transferred into the body of a dinosaur about to die.

These three novels and ten short stories clearly demonstrate the skills of Canadian authors in using the forms and materials of speculative fiction to explore worlds in conflict, surely a theme of particular interest to readers living in a united yet fragmented nation.

A Range of Experience

Pat Jasper
Background Music. Coach House $11.95

Méira Cook
Toward a Catalogue of Falling. Brick Books $12.95

Reviewed by Kathleen O'Donnell

These two recent publications by Pat Jasper and Méira Cook produce quite different effects. *Background Music* consists of poems that often reflect the methods and structures of prose narrative. In Méira Cook's volume, prose poems introduced among the lyrics still have the techniques, occasional abstruseness, and allusiveness of poetry. Cook's pieces require the reader's intellectual and sensuous cooperation to achieve their impact, while Jasper's calls on his/her sympathy and understanding.

The subjects of *Background Music* range over many personal experiences; the theme of abuse and incest gains momentum in the second and third sections of the book. Epigraphs selected for the opening of the volume and for each of its sections emphasize, with increasing darkness, the undiminished effects on life of early, unforgotten wrongs. The perennial questions of reasons for afflictions and punishments are probed in "The Same Old Story" by students who finally learn "to turn fear into acceptance." Acceptance may be appreciated through the motif of music in "Water Music," "Concerto for the Left Hand," and "Missa Solemnis/Hofburg Chapel, Vienna." In this poem, the boy soprano's "high clear voice/and the white lilies" were "the only/thing pure and wholly alive." Even this poem has a sad undertone when the soprano voice "stirs up memo-

ries/of lost innocence."

Adopting the poet-daughter's necessarily limited perspective, the poems of the second section increasingly refer to the mother who was present in "Post Partum," "Birth Rites," and "My Mother at Sixty" of the first section. "Making sense of landscape," the central poem of the second section of the book, describes the mother's reaction to the abuse of her daughter: "My mother is out of the room." The things that her mother ignores receive blatant expression in "He Loves Me/He Loves Me Not," a monologue describing the younger daughter's experience of her father's perversion.

"Revising the Past" in the third section describes the younger sister: "She made us scrape away/the first layer of paint to find/the darker landscape underneath." In this "darker landscape" unfortunately exists the fear of generational repetition: "My son/is my father all over again." Time brings healing and comfort but never obliteration. The concepts of forgiveness and redemption are not introduced. The students in "The Same old Story" doubted that their instructor believed in resurrection and salvation.

Background Music does not suggest that the abuse of the father is overcome. It offers a complaint not only about the father but also about the non-intervention of the mother. The mother was "hovering in the background, like the music/on the radio as I did my homework." She had her "eye cocked/for the closed door, the stirrings in the night, as she sprinkled/the ironing." Jasper has portrayed the daughter's view of the mother who could have intervened but did not prevent the crime.

Instead of the dramatic quality (characters and actions) of Jasper's book, Cook's *Toward a Catalogue of Falling* has sections of lyrics, prose poems and epigrams loosely associated with the dominant image of falling. The main image is developed in lyrics about Icarus, water falls, a fall from grace, falling in love, accidental falls, the fall of Pompeii, falling asleep, and a rain fall. The range of topics allows the author to wander around and reproduce the image of falling until it becomes a statement of gravity, or a view of the human condition.

Some of the references to the act of falling give rise to most ingenious poetic comments. "Diptych I" contains the lines

> Poor Icarus who suffered
> from *hubris* and *oedipus*
> in equal measure, now
> there is a fall for you.
> Imagine wanting to please
> daddy and snub god
> at the same time.

"Toward a Catalogue of Falling" alludes to the eruption of Vesuvius and the fall of Pompeii:

> Who ran fastest on that day who
> stayed behind to help the old?
> Pliny the younger tells how day
> fell backwards into night. Another fall.

Throughout the book there is an underlying lament for the suffering through all space and all time. For instance, "The Fallen Helen Here" talks about bystanders' response to suffering.

> A woman falls
> in the street you reach to help
> she flinches mistrust rheuming
> her eyes and her stockings also
> are torn, we do not touch the fallen
> here.

To help the fallen would require a physical descent or fall by the helper. Caution is in order against the fall that will not help, or that may harm. In faraway country, "Beggers gather, *english/guide very good very little money* do not/fall for it." A salutary answer to human suffering lies in the word, in language and poetry.

> Words branched and antlered
> fall to furrow two by two, it was
> the catalogue that arked them in the

end

Against the grind of Ararat. No loss
of creatures fossilled in print not
gone if one slant letter arched in sky
remains.

Cook does not ignore the reality of crime masked as play. "Fairytales From the Old Country" contains this crime: "once upon a time a fond uncle stooped to greet his favourite niece hallo my darling he swung her into the air by the neck hallo my darling until she died."

Masked with or alleviated by the forms of fairytale, narrative, epigram, or prose poem, the horror of human suffering underlies the experiences of these poems. The author's main theme is stated in the Hebrew epigraph of the book. It may be translated as "if I am not for myself who will be for me? If I am only for myself what am I?"

The Production of Space

Bernhard Klein
Maps and the Writing of Space in Early Modern England and Ireland. Palgrave n.p.

Paul C. Adams, Steven Hoelscher, Karen Till, eds.
Textures of Place: Exploring Humanist Geographies. U Minnesota P n.p.

Reviewed by David Nally

For a long time now, geographers and scholars of space have pointed out that maps are never merely mimetic or even metonymic productions of space, but are always something more—what W. J. Smyth calls "documents of conquest." Cartography is one part of a geographic discourse that facilitates the definition and delineation of frontiers and boundaries (both cultural and political) that are so crucial to the acquisition and rule of foreign territory.

Maps and the Writing of Space in Early Modern England and Ireland is the published version of Bernhard Klein's doctoral thesis. Nine chapters comprise the material of three sections: "measurements," "cartographies," and "narratives" respectively. Klein's conceptualization of space is much more Lefebvrian than it is Foucauldian; it strives to ground the history of cartography in what he calls "material practices," by laying stress on affiliations beyond the purely textual. Put differently, "turning land into paper" requires a whole host of spatial practices including encoding global space in a unified representational pattern based on geometric projection (measurements); transforming spatial complexities into different pictorial codes (cartographies); and the mediation of space by embodied subjects moving through the landscape (narratives).

Klein is aware that until now the history of Irish cartography has almost singlehandedly been carried out by John H. Andrews. Despite such a looming antecedent, Klein's arguments are original and provocative. Underpinning his methodology is a contemporary appreciation of the "semi-colonial" status of Ireland under British administration—a term pioneered by Derek Attridge and Marjorie Howes's remarkable study, *Semicolonial Joyce.* This sense of the "semi-colonial" is important, for it allows Klein to advance a dialogical account that, for example, locates the beginnings of disciplinary technologies of surveillance, so vaunted by post-colonial theorists, not in the colony of Ireland but in the practice of "surveying" the English manor. Similarly, Klein highlights the act of narrating a sense of "Britishness," which in retrospect seems most startling for assuming that political exigencies could override enduring distinctions not only between England and Ireland but also between England and "Britain." Of course, the implicit assumption here is that the first colony of Britain was England, an idea reminiscent of

George Bernard Shaw's tongue-in-cheek call for "Home Rule for England."

In any case, this dialogical imperative is both the strength and weakness of Klein's study. Klein painstakingly demonstrates the parallel functions of the map, theatrical stage, and travelogue in providing discursive images and narratives of Ireland. But how, one wonders, do such stagings and mappings interact with the territories they define? How does Ireland produce *itself* for, and in relation to, the travellers, playwrights, and cartographers discussed? Where are what Mary Louise Pratt terms the "regimes of human agency and historical interaction" that saturate situations of structured, continuous contact? In other words, Klein fails to take the implications of his dialogical methodology to its limit. Leaving aside such theoretical misgivings, Klein's crisp style and engaged criticism are the hallmarks of fine scholarship and his book is essential reading for those interested in the history of early modern England and Ireland as well as the history of cartography in general.

Textures of Place: Exploring Humanist Geographies is a *festschrift* in honour of the extraordinary contribution of Yi-Fu Tuan to the sub-discipline of human geography. Tuan has lived what J. Nicholas Entrikin has called a "peripatetic existence": the son of a Chinese diplomat, Tuan was born in China; he was educated in China, Australia, England, and the United States; and he has been employed as a professor at several North American universities. Formerly trained as a physical geographer, Tuan quickly realized the importance of studying the relations between the earth and its human inhabitants. In a time when the language of geography was dominated by mathematics, its programme by spatial science, and its philosophy by logical positivism, Tuan's eloquent prose and insatiable curiosity convinced many of his colleagues of the importance of critically studying what he called the "life-world."

Any effort to demonstrate the richness of Tuan's contribution to human geography is bound to be difficult. The editors of this volume elected a four-part structure: "landscapes of dominance and affection"; "segmented worlds and selves"; "moralities and imagination"; and "cosmos versus hearth." There are, in total, twenty-seven articles, plus an introduction by the editors and separate introductions for each section. Obviously, such breadth and diversity yield a variety of approaches and opinions, many of which have little or nothing in common with traditional humanist approaches to geography. In fact, the editors note: "many of the younger scholars in this volume, the editors included, consider themselves cultural and/or historical geographers." But they fail to probe this trend or pose explicit questions regarding the relevance of "humanistic geography."

Drawing from post-modernism and post-structuralism, feminist geographers in particular have been instrumental in demonstrating that the subject of humanism is largely a fiction which suppresses the multiple ways in which the human subject is constructed. Gillian Rose, among others, has argued that such erasures privilege a white, masculine, bourgeois, and heterosexual subject as the norm, leaving it impossible for many to conceive of a truly human geography. Yet, the growth and consolidation of "anti-humanism" within geography are strikingly absent from this volume (except, perhaps in an indirect way, Entrikin's essay, "Geographer as Humanist"), as if the geographer's eyes were averted from what Jean-Paul Sartre memorably called "the strip tease of humanism." This omission is unfortunate, since for better or worse these debates cannot be conceived within geography without the imposing presence of Yi-Fu Tuan.

Crossing Borderlines

Wolfgang Klooss, ed.
Across the Lines: Intertextuality and Transcultural Communication in the New Literatures in English. Rodopi US$25.00

Monika Fludernik, ed.
Hybridity and Postcolonialism: Twentieth-Century Indian Literature. Stauffenburg n.p.

Reviewed by Dieter Riemenschneider

These two substantial collections of critical essays edited by German scholars and based on papers read at conferences on the New Literatures in English held in Trier (1995) and Konstanz (1996) illustrate the importance of postcolonial studies at German universities and the theoretical orientation that German scholars now share with their colleagues elsewhere in the world. Indeed, for as much as the critical discourse has moved away from Commonwealth literature studies so has German scholarship moved beyond its (successful) introduction of English-language literary texts to German students. These first attempts (dating back to the early 1970s) subsequently led to the formation of a group of academics who from 1997 met annually before founding the Association for the Study of the New Literatures in English (ASNEL) in 1989. *Across the Lines* is the third volume of the series of ASNEL Papers (with vols. 7 and 8 now in print), while *Hybridity and Postcolonialism* compiles papers read at one of the Konstanz conference panels and additional contributions invited by its editor. It is the first publication on "Postcolonial Literatures," one of the research projects on "Identities and Alterities" pursued at the University of Freiburg. The net cast in *Across the Lines* is wider than in Fludernik's book as it virtually pulls in the whole catch of the New Literatures in English while *Hybridity and Postcolonialism* is confined to texts by Indian authors. Essays on Africa and Australia/New Zealand and the Pacific Region dominate the former with a special focus on diaspora writing, although the total absence of studies on the substantial body of Indian diasporic literature is astounding considering that "transcultural communication" is one of the two topics of the book. This may be because German university courses privilege either the study of African writing or of the former settler-colonies—including Canada (which is dealt with in a separate volume of the Trier conference papers).

Other topics include women's writing, the relationship of literary texts and the media and dominant and minority culture. Of central importance are two theoretical essays. Frank Schulze-Engler's highly critical reflections on the bearing of intertextuality on cross-cultural criticism, with special reference to the binary fallacy of two "intertextuality models" (Prießnitz, 1990; Brydon/Tiffin, 1993), emphasize the necessary historicization of text, language and time/space. His critique of the ways in which "textuality" is foregrounded in studies of "intertextuality" is noted by several contributors, but it would perhaps be unfair to expect immediate and sustained responses. Mark Stein's excellent discussion of the dual-coding parody in Dambudzo Marechera's work ends on the note that "*his texts* [my emphasis] concurrently claim *and* reject both, their European and their African heritage." Janet Wilson's comparison of the reinvention of myth of Aotearoa in Keri Hulme's *The Bone People* and Janet Frame's *The Carpathians* offers an incisive analysis of the two writers' break with the New Zealand narrative tradition, yet her concluding sentence that such a reading "open[s] up territory for a broad *historico*-critical interpretation of the decolonizing fictions of the Eighties and Nineties [my emphasis]" also stops short of Schulze-

Engler's reservation as outlined above. Altogether, the crossing of borderlines is scrutinized more often in its textual strategic version than as an encompassing transcultural manoeuvre: Gundula Wilke looks at Thomas King "writing back" to the Bible; Detlev Gohrbandt relates Doris Lessing's and Bessie Head's stories to fable traditions; and Borislava Sasic discovers elements of Somali and Greek theatre in Nuruddin Farah's *Sardines*. Yet it should be admitted that none of these (and other) papers totally neglects aspects of the historical and cultural dimension of their intertextual approach.

By comparison, the process of transcultural communication in its wider sense moves to the centre when "cross-cultural criticism is anchored in a sustained interest in the various modernities that have evolved in various parts of the world," as Schulze-Engler puts it. To mention a few examples: Cecile Sandten points out interhistorical dimensions in Sujata Bhatt's poetry while Josef Pesch argues that the depiction of unresolved cultural clashes in Michael Oondatje's novels links them to many co-existing cultures. Martina Ghosh-Schellhorn asks why Jean Rhys does not allow Antoinette to escape death in her "writing-back" novel *Wide Sargasso Sea* and finds an answer in the author's "collusion with the Creole self-image as presented to her by colonial ideology."

Berndt Schulte adds a second strand to *Across the Lines*, arguing that intertextuality and transcultural communication should be brought together by anchoring postcolonial studies in an historically grounded media theory, thus replacing intertextuality with intermediality. Mediaspace would supersede the prioritizing of the written text, thereby foreclosing the danger of re-marginalizing postcolonial studies. Interestingly, a few papers in the present volume follow Schulte's cue. Augustine Okereke suggests bringing together videotaped performances and written texts to better understand "oral literary performances," while Pamela Z. Dube looks at the cultural, social and political impact on thematic and poetic characteristics of present-day South African performance poetry. In the same vein Susan Arndt explores the presence of oral elements, especially "mothers' stories" in Igbo women writing, and Gerhard Fischer's presentation of Mudrooroo's "aboriginalization" of a play by the German playwright Heiner Müller foregrounds the performance aspect of theatre.

Hybridity and Postcolonialism may be read as partly a version of "writing back" to Homi Bhabha since Fludernik's own extended essay not only explicates Bhabha's concept of hybridity but also contributes to the shape of the collection. One of her main reservations relates to the intimate connection which Bhabha proposes for hybridity and diasporic writing which she counters with the argument that "hybridity [... is] a much more variegated concept than it is usually given credence for." With few exceptions, other contributors who generally combine theoretical reflection and textual criticism also echo the Indian critic in their wrestling with hybridity, postcolonialism and/or gender/feminism. While some of them use a comparative approach, others analyze a single work, and on the whole Indian writers living abroad are paid more attention than those who live at home. Walter Göbel's use of "chaos" as a metaphor and a structuring principle brings together colonial and postcolonial writing in his attempt to map the representation of India as an imaginary community, while Martina Ghosh-Schellhorn focuses on Indian women's "transitional identity" from a gender perspective and includes Indo-English émigré and "home" writers as well as women writing in Indian languages. These interventions are augmented by Gerhard

Stilz who argues that G.V. Desani's *All About H. Hatterr* is a diasporic text whose hybridity has less to do with the heterogeneity of its cultural dilemma than "with its vital and healing notion of an integral whole," while Samir Goyal looks at Amitav Ghosh's *In an Antique Land* as a self-reflexive hybrid artefact.

Reconsidering Lilith

Joy Kogawa and Lilian Broca
A Song of Lilith. Polestar $21.95
Reviewed by Ian Rae

A Song of Lilith is a collaborative project by the artist Lilian Broca and poet-novelist Joy Kogawa. Broca's paintings and Kogawa's long poem hinge upon the fascinating premise that there are two contradictory creation narratives in Genesis: an initial one in which God creates man and woman from clay as equals, and a later one in which God takes a rib out of Adam to create Eve. In an article that forms the basis of Broca's research, Aviva Cantor argues that this discrepancy gives credence to the Judaic tradition that Adam had a rebellious first wife, Lilith, who was replaced by Eve. When Adam refused to acknowledge Lilith's equal status, the frustrated wife "used her wisdom, uttered God's secret name, grew wings and flew away from Adam and the Garden of Eden. At Adam's urging, God dispatched three angels to negotiate her return. When these angels made threats against Lilith's descendants, she countered by vowing to prey eternally upon newborn human babies." Following Cantor, Broca and Kogawa question the villainization of Lilith as a baby-killer and recuperate her story by fashioning her as an archetype of independent femininity. Broca goes so far as to make Lilith "a symbol for the human condition," but her painterly ambitions pale in comparison to Kogawa's literary aims.

On the cover of *Lilith*, Daphne Marlatt hails Kogawa's first book-length long poem as a "feminist *Paradise Lost*," which establishes the first of a series of allusions to canonical male writers. Kogawa does not share Milton's scorn for rhyme nor his affection for blank verse, but she does embrace his magniloquent tone. In fact, Kogawa surpasses her grandiose predecessor in passages where Lilith moves alliteratively "Onward as windy woman / Winged and wily wonder" or emerges from a forest of abstract nouns in the guise of "the Singer who is the Song / The Holy One who does no wrong." Taking aim at Milton, Kogawa rewrites the creation narratives in Genesis, redefines the Word in John, and generally revises the long lineage of Christian texts by men. For example, when juxtaposed with Broca's nudes (whose atmospheric settings have been "manipulated in certain ways" to give them "an ancient appearance"), Kogawa's poems recall Blake's plates. The question, then, is whether Kogawa's long poem is "taken out of man" or whether it distinguishes itself from the male design and asserts its own uniqueness.

Kogawa explicitly identifies her project as a challenge to patriarchal form:

> My sisters, the task is therefore ours
> To make a stronger design
> To knit each tale of grief . . .
> And to birth the new age
> Under the banner
> Of our true and original name
> For we are women

Gradually, Kogawa transforms *Lilith* into a musing on mother tongue, although Broca insists in her preface that "Lilith is not a Mother Goddess." Kogawa describes her creative process as a "birthing," yet claims that "the poem arrived in [her] sleep, virtually complete, on the wings of a month of midnights." This immaculate conception bears little resemblance to the syntactic experiments by Marlatt, Dionne Brand

and Nicole Brossard on the same subject, and the reader is forced to ask if Kogawa's inverted scenario (Lilith good, Adam bad) does in fact supply "a stronger design."

Beyond Domestica

Karen Lavut
Simple Things: The Story of a Friendship. Mercury $19.95

Mary Pratt
A Personal Calligraphy. Goose Lane $35.00

Reviewed by Verna Reid

These recent entries in the field of Canadian autobiography both take as their subject the life and art of a Canadian female painter. *Simple Things* presents recollections of Lavut's friendship with Christiane Pflug together with the depiction of the aftermath of Pflug's suicide in 1972. *A Personal Calligraphy* consists of selected journal entries from 1964 to 1999 together with the texts of several of Pratt's public addresses. The book jacket describes this combination as "essays and reflections on life and art." Certainly memory plays an important part in both books, Lavut reliving the tragedy that happened twenty-five years earlier, and Pratt surveying her life from the vantage point of her sixty-fifth year. In both cases, the situation of Pflug and Pratt as wives and mothers is given major emphasis, and the reader gets a clear picture of the effort involved in pursuing a painting career within the confines of marriage, motherhood and unremitting domestic responsibility. As artists, both deal with the limitations of their situation by taking as their subject matter their immediate domestic environment, Pflug painting interiors and the view from her windows and Pratt producing the luminous still-lifes of foodstuff and domestic minutiae for which she is best known. The painting of both artists is characterized by a sense of enclosure which is especially pronounced in the work of Pflug, and this sense carries over into these accounts of their lives. Pratt's good sense allows her to accept what she cannot change. Pflug had a more fragile ego and was not able evidently either to change her situation or to accept it.

Both books oblige one to engage with episodic, elliptical and spiralling methods of narration which leave gaps that compel conjecture. In other words, neither Lavut nor Pratt follows the linear birth-to-death form of narration that is characteristic of traditional autobiography. As writers, they illustrate a tendency identified by Shirley Neuman in her essay on life-writing in The *Literary History of Canada.* Here Neuman identifies the most effective contemporary life writing as that which goes against genre tradition by employing "a dialectic between genres." By crossing boundaries, Lavut and Pratt present unstable and complex writing subjects. For example, by combining biography and autobiography, Lavut as biographer deliberately informs on herself, giving the reader intimate autobiographical access. In so doing she facilitates one's judgement of her reading of Pflug. In her turn, Pratt combines journal entries, memoir and public utterance to reveal multiple subjectivities: the young and old Pratt, the private and public Pratt, Pratt as daughter and Pratt as mother. Pratt also informs on herself but in a different way; that is, by including in chronological order numerous studio photographs of her work of the 1990s, an order that also provides the dating on most of the journal entries. Besides bearing witness to her consummate skill as a painter, the visuals become another form of autobiography.

Reproductions of Christiane Pflug's work are not included in the Lavut volume, perhaps because the biographical portions of *Simple Things* concentrate on Christiane,

the woman, not Pflug, the artist. Lavut does comment on the underlying sense of menace in the work but dismisses post-suicide Pflug criticism, which connected her painting to her life. Lavut and Pflug were friends from 1969 to 1972. Lavut's account gives a clear sense of central residential Toronto in the 1970s as it appeared to this group of young European immigrants. It is a mildly bohemian group at the fringe of the drug culture whose members, aside from Christiane and Michael, are engaged in fluctuating sexual arrangements. All of them have known several countries of domicile. Christiane, for example, was uprooted as a child in Germany, sent to a foster home away from wartime Berlin, and she lived subsequently in Germany, France, Tunisia and England before coming to Canada. Perhaps a sense of homelessness played a part in her fatal decision.

Pflug's suicide dominates the book and involves the reader in this kind of speculation. Karen Lavut mourns Christiane as a friend rather than as an artist cut off in her prime. In her writing Lavut focuses closely on the pre- and post-suicide events through a series of vignettes, using reconstructed conversations, letters from Christiane, Lavut's post-suicide dreams, a list of "what if's" that might have changed the course of events and a list of "Don't bother now's" addressed to Michael the husband, such as "don't bother exhibiting her paintings" and "don't bother wishing you'd been different." The colloquial voice of the writing and formal shifts give an immediacy to the text and serve to emphasize the anguish, guilt and blame that suicide leaves in its wake.

Mary Pratt and Christiane Pflug were born within a year and a half of each other. As members of the same generation, they share a feminine commitment to domesticity and a traditional view of marriage. Pratt won a "room of [her] own," but Pflug did not. Pratt includes a painting of her studio, complete with caramate, the large slide viewer that is part of her painting method. Viewing this painting, I feel that I have gained access to the heart of her artistic identity.

Pratt's journal/memoir entries afford glimpses both of her life as child, as wife and mother and as an elderly person in questionable health, living alone, albeit with the assistance of a secretary/companion. The later journals show Pratt filling the role of grandmother and family hostess in holiday celebrations, and coping with the death of her mother, whose life she tenderly summons up. The city of Fredericton as she knew it as a child is also affectionately conjured up as a safe, idyllic and stratified society. I liked the section telling of her joyous sojourn in a condo high above False Creek in Vancouver.

What is most characteristic, however, of both Pratt, the writer, and Pratt, the painter, is the sensitivity of her response to her material environment. C.S.Lewis speaks of being "surprised by joy," and this describes Pratt's response to the beauty of the physical world. Her description of her Easter baking, for example, is a hymn to the senses; its visual twin can be found in the portrait of the carefully decorated chocolate birthday cake, a tribute both to the joys of the senses and to the enactment of domestic femininity.

Not all is joy in Pratt's present world. In the most intimate part of her writing she mourns the passing of physical intimacy, while admitting to a desire for love. Illness and loneliness have taken their toll. Her marriage to Christopher exists in a state perhaps symbolized in the painting entitled *Lupins in Christopher's Burned Studio.* The lupins can be read metaphorically as a tribute to a past edifice now in the process of being replaced or rebuilt. As many older women do, Pratt lives a solitary life, and she is in uncertain health. But she enjoys

the respect of the community and she participates fully in the cultural life of the Maritimes.

Being Raven

Lee Maracle
Sojourners and Sundogs: First Nations Fiction.
Press Gang $23.95

Reviewed by Jo-Ann Thom

Sojourners and Sundogs: First Nations Fiction (1999) is a combined edition of two of Lee Maracle's earlier published works. The first is *Sundogs: A Novel* (1992), which tells the story of a Native family profoundly affected by the Oka crisis. The second is *Sojourner's Truth and Other Stories* (1990), a stunning collection of short stories whose range includes lifewriting, history, myth and works of the imagination.

Maracle's inclusion of a subtitle that identifies this book as *First Nations Fiction* is significant. Over the years, many readers, especially non-Native ones, have found her work problematic because not all of her stories are overtly identifiable as "Native." Maracle would find this amusing and would ask them who defines Native literature. Although *Sundogs* and some of the stories from *Sojourners*, such as "Bertha," "Yin Chin," and "Maggie," are clearly about Native people, others such as "Worm," "Eunice," and "Too Much to Explain" are not. Other Native writers, especially those of Maracle's generation, have complained that publishers would not publish their work because it was either "too Native" or "not Native enough." Clearly there are readers who have a predetermined idea about what Native literature is and how much "Native-ness" is acceptable. Maracle rejects definitions because she is cognizant of the mainstream public's desire to define her and then limit her with those same definitions. With characteristic mischievousness, Maracle anticipates readers' uncertainty and addresses it by attaching the subtitle. Nevertheless, readers will find no shortage of uncertainty when they enter the world of *Sojourners and Sundogs.*

Sojourners and Sundogs forces readers to examine their attitudes about race, gender and class. This is neither easy nor comfortable, and the stories that compel it are "raw" according to Joy Harjo in her forward to the collection. In her preface, Maracle warns us that Raven directs this book and invites us to be Raven. However, Maracle's Raven is not the trickster whom anthropologists have defined and theorized; this Raven is female, and her function is to prompt/provoke transformation both in the text and in the readers.

One of Maracle's most memorable works is "Uptown Indians, White Folks and Polka Partners," a story about the complex lives of Native people living on the streets of Vancouver's poverty-ridden Eastside. This story is particularly raw but is one of Maracle's best. In it, she provides us with a glimpse into the lives of people whom readers would likely avoid if they saw them on the street. Maracle does more than describe their world from the exterior. With great authenticity, she also allows us into the inner life of her narrator, Sis, thereby giving voice to someone normally voiceless in our society. Maracle explodes stereotypes by revealing that Sis is insightful in her grasp of the complex nature of relations between Natives and whites. Sis tells us that

> white people cannot deal with the beauty in some of us and the crass ugliness in others. They can't know why we are silent about serious truth and so noisy about nonsense. Difference among us, and our silence, frightens them. They run around the world collecting us like artifacts. If they manage to find some Native who has escaped all the crap and behaves like their ancestors, they expect the rest of us to be the same.

It is this kind of analysis and her willingness to put it into words that distinguishes Maracle's writing but keeps some readers at bay.

Some readers might argue that Maracle's writing is too confrontational for comfort. Comfort, however, is not her point. Readers willing to allow themselves to be Raven will find that transformation through narrative can move them from discomfort to enlightenment.

Water Logs

Nancy Pagh

At Home Afloat: Women on the Waters of the Pacific Northwest. U of Calgary P and U of Idaho P n.p.

Reviewed by Lorna Hutchison

"Ships have been female in English since at least 1375," Julian Barnes tells us in *The New Yorker*, but at least one shipping newspaper—*Lloyd's List*—has officially made changes to its own 268-year-old tradition: henceforth it will refer to all vessels as "it" rather than "she." Nancy Pagh has also altered the course of nautical traditionalism—albeit in the literary and academic spheres—with her book, *At Home Afloat: Women on the Waters of the Pacific Northwest.* Pagh's exhaustive research produces a fascinating study of women's written accounts of boat travel between 1861 and 1990.

"Home" is a crucial, captivating term for Pagh, and the theme around which she structures her analysis of women's travel writing on the water. Logbooks, diaries, and other cruising literature, however, allow Pagh to address notions of home and space in ways less accessible from shore. "Within academic discussions about the contemporary concept of home," she writes, "home is fundamentally defined as 'not away.'" A pleasure craft, of course, "is simultaneously home and away." *At Home Afloat* is original not only for its focus, as the author points out, on "gender and tourism along the Northwest Coast," but also for its representation of the voices of women at sea. Literature on seamanship and the marine industry has been largely, until recently, the domain of male writers.

Perspective is everything in *At Home Afloat*, from the accounts of women writers who could not see the landscape for the fog; whose strong sense of Victorian morality resulted in disapproving descriptions of Native women; whose discomfort on and with the sea rendered them powerless to claim it in words; to the mates and mothers for whom the depths of the galley kept above-deck decision-making out of reach, out of sight. The author is herself an experienced marine tourist and boater who effectively brings personal memories of recreational boating to bear on feminist scholarship. Pagh's approach is inter-disciplinary and crosses geographical boundaries in its examination of women writing on water from and in both Canada and the United States.

The sections that devote more space to a single marine boater's experience gave me a feeling of satisfaction sometimes verging on relief. Because the book covers such a large range and number of women writers and academic theories, its information is, at times, difficult to retain, despite Pagh's strong chapter summaries and meticulous cross-referencing. Pagh's analyses of Eliza Scidmore, an American who, with a fair amount of gumption and no less attitude, travelled on a steamship along the Alaskan coast several times during the 1880s, or of Muriel Wylie Blanchet, a widower whose 1961 book recounts her sea voyages with her five children throughout the 1920s and 1930s ("the only female captain," Pagh writes, "I have discovered in cruising narratives"), give the book strength. I often yearned to know more, however, about the

remarkable experiences of the other travellers.

Pagh's women writers provide accounts and striking details about Northwest coast travel—whether on pleasure crafts or work boats—that would otherwise not have existed. I especially enjoyed a section in chapter four, "Getting Our Dresses Wet," in which Pagh initiates a discussion on girls as opposed to women in the marine environment. *At Home Afloat* is a lively, intelligent analysis of, if you will forgive the pun, heretofore uncharted waters.

Challenge of the Ocean

Kevin Patterson

The Water in Between: A Journey at Sea. Random House Canada $32.95

Reviewed by Bryan N.S. Gooch

Achievement necessarily involves escapes, challenges, boundary-crossings: the mapping of spaces artistic, scientific and also always personal. Not all voyages of discovery will have earth-shaking results, but some of the most interesting are individual quests, which provide new insights for the seeker and, if the progress is documented in book or film or other media, also for a larger audience. *The Water in Between* shares with its readers in a lucid and compelling way just such an individual odyssey: the narrator's abandonment of both a humdrum routine as a Canadian army medical officer and a faltering romance for the hazards of sailing the open Pacific in a 37-foot ferro-cement ketch, risky enough even for experienced salts. As in most instances of physical decampment, the notion of the voyage is propelled by circumstances to be left behind and by some idea, however uncertain or even inaccurate, of the advantages of regions to be explored. In Patterson's case, the pull comes in large part from the accounts of explorations and travel literature that came to his hands in his attempts to find diversion from military tedium—books such as Bernard Moitessier's *The Long Way,* Wilfrid Thesiger's *Desert, Marsh, and Mountain,* Eric Newby's *A Short Walk in the Hindu Kush,* and Bruce Chatwin's *In Patagonia* and *Songlines.* Patterson's destination is Tahiti.

The narrative, like the journey itself, gets underway swiftly, in the company of newly met, experienced sailing companion Don Long, with details of the purchase, equipping, and provisioning of *Sea Mouse,* departure, finally, from Victoria, and the fading of land and the last traces of half-frozen pecan pie (not recommended fare when coping with swells in the western part of the Strait of Juan de Fuca) in the boat's wake. As the miles slip by, Patterson offers clear description of the voyage, and works in flashbacks to his army days, his time in Manitoba, his trips to Paris (also escapes of a kind) to visit Catherine, and comments on his reading of works by Moitessier and others. A hopelessly torn genoa forces a diversion to Waikiki for repairs and provisions, with insightful remarks on people, bars, a laundromat and a messy sail-loft. A meeting with one Roger, caretaker of Palmyra, the northern atoll in the Line Islands, redirects the journey south to Palmyra itself and, after a stay, onto Penrhyn atoll and finally to Tahiti. Along the way are sensitive glimpses of more characters met, more literature contemplated, the perils of open-ocean sailing, and the typical idealization of such locations as Tahiti with its legendary figures, among them Paul Gauguin and Robert Louis Stevenson.

The sea journey is broken by a return to Winnipeg in the winter, reflections on time in Rankin Inlet with its Oblate priest Louis Fournier and a dying local doctor, and the decision to return to the Pacific, this time with three friends to meet the boat and Don at Raratonga in French Polynesia. The

account of Raratonga itself is masterly, a compelling, somewhat romantic mixture of description, local history and striking characters. The way back to Hawaii, via Penrhyn, sees Patterson sailing the boat with a marked tension between the desire to return home and a yearning to sail farther west. The companions from Winnipeg leave Patterson in Hawaii, and the voyage to a landfall at Bamfield on Vancouver Island is accomplished single-handed in the growing seas of approaching winter, a remarkable exploit of courage and endurance.

Rich in its discussion of the interplay between the inner world of the narrator and the outer world of people, places, and events, the book offers a voyage of mind and soul as the story engages easily the past and present in a search for an untroubled haven and for a comprehension of self.

Imagining Postcolonialism

David Punter
Postcolonial Imaginings: Fictions of a New World Order. Edinburgh $41.95

Sangeeta Ray
En-Gendering India: Woman and Nation in Colonial and Postcolonial Narratives. Duke $26.95

Anne McClintock
Double Crossings: Madness, Sexuality and Imperialism. Ronsdale Press np

Reviewed by Laura Moss

David Punter's *Postcolonial Imaginings* put me into what I call a conditional mode of reading (*if* I finish this chapter, *then* I can have lunch, go for a walk, take out the garbage . . .). The book begins: "The process of mutual postcolonial abjection is, I suppose, one that confronts us every day in the ambiguous form of a series of uncanny returns." This statement, through its obscure jargon, illustrates Punter's obtuse desire to link postcolonialism, psychoanalysis and the gothic. Throughout the book he examines hallucinations, hauntings, dreams, mourning, melancholy, trauma, loss, shame, rage, hatred, chaos and ruin. That these elements exist in postcolonial poetry and fiction seems to be his central point.

Punter notes that this book is the second in a series of three on modern and contemporary fiction. The first was on writing and the unconscious and the final one will be on postmodernism. He is a scholar of eighteenth-century gothic fiction with a new interest in several facets of contemporary literature. The result is sometimes interesting, but often frustrating because he reinvents the postcolonial wheel at every turn. Although his critical credentials are excellent and his selection of texts is impressively wide-ranging, it is disappointingly predictable. One chapter, for example, discusses what he labels to be the "violent geographics" in Atwood's *Surfacing* (the only Canadian text other than Gibson's *Neuromancer* discussed in detail), Gurnah's *Paradise*, Naipaul's *A House for Mr. Biswas*, Ondaatje's *Running in the Family* (with Ondaatje identified as a Sri Lankan novelist), and Harris's *Palace of the Peacock*. It is unusual at this juncture in discussions of postcolonial literature and theory to move smoothly over such vastly different geographies, histories and times in such a straightforward thematic fashion. For Punter, however, we are all globally living in "the postcolonial," a phenomenon that he posits not to be restricted to the ex- or neo-colonies. It is a state of being or becoming in the twenty-first-century "new world order" of his subtitle.

However, and somewhat contradictorily, Punter argues that "the postcolonial" "can in the end be considered only under the heading of alibi." He argues that the postcolonial novel (he uses Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* as an example) is simply a "replacement for a text that has been lost

[by colonization] . . . a text in which real detailed experiences could somehow have been written down, and of which the existing text is merely a shadow, an inexact and confusing reminder of a haunting." In one giant swoop, Punter not only denies the fictionality of postcolonial fiction, he criticizes it for not being better documentation of "real" experiences. As he suggests that one of the founding texts of African literature is only a confusing shadow of what it could have been, he also implies that there are no texts of significant value in the postcolonial canon. *Postcolonial Imaginings* is an ambitious work that performs informative close readings but misses the mark in its amorphous theorizing across time and space.

Turning from Punter's book to Sangeeta Ray's *En-Gendering Postcolonialism* I felt myself slowly rejuvenated. Ray analyzes the intersections of the discourses of gender and nation formation. To do this she looks at what she labels as three historically linked discourses—British colonialism, Indian nationalism, and postcolonialism—by concentrating on the figure of the "native" woman as an upper-class Hindu woman who becomes the crucial site through which Indian nationalism consolidates its identification with Hinduism. By juxtaposing Bankimchandra Chatterjee's novels *Anandamath* (1882) and *Devi Chaudhurani* (1884) (both originally written in Bengali), with Harriet Martineau's *British Rule in India* (1857), Meadow Taylor's *Seeta* (1872), and Flora Annie Steel's *On the Face of the Waters* (1872), Ray illustrates that while Bankim attempted to redress the stereotype of the weak and effeminate Bengali by creating a masculine Hindu rationalist ideal, the Victorian English women articulated a recasting of the characterization of India as Hindu and feminine by embodying it in the Indian woman.

Perhaps the most rewarding section concerns the impact of nationalism and the "apocalyptic" partition of India and Pakistan in 1947. Bapsi Sidhwa's *Cracking India* (1991) and Anita Desai's *Clear Light of Day* (1980) are presented as critiques of the nationalist agenda by showing the compromised position of women when the idea of "woman" is appropriated as a metonym of "nation." Although Sidhwa's depiction of Ayah is contrary to Ray's claim about upper-class Hindu women, Ray's discussion of the conjunction of the literal and metaphoric cracking of Ayah as her clothing is pulled apart by Ice-Candy Man and his crowd, consolidates Ray's argument about the gendering of the nation. Perhaps the least consistent sections of the book are the ones in which Ray situates herself in America (the framing chapters). It is oddly dissonant to come to a section dedicated to reading the semiotics of a Northwest Airlines advertisement after the very thorough detailed contextualization of literature and theory in India.

Anne McClintock's 2000 Garnett Sedgewick Memorial lecture, *Double Crossings: Madness, Sexuality, and Imperialism*, focuses almost exclusively on the configuration of the colonial subject from the English perspective. This lecture is a paragon of balance. Through the story of Bessie Head, McClintock introduces the "fundamental" relationships in the nineteenth century between madness, sexuality and race. Surprisingly, however, she does not refer to *A Question of Power*, Head's important novel on the topic of race, sexuality and madness. Indeed, McClintock's literary illustrations of the relationship between these three elements lack some originality in choice, if not in discussion. In a long description of Bertha Mason from *Jane Eyre* (a figure almost as well-discussed as Caliban), for example, McClintock shows how Bertha's madness is figured as a difference of race. The key question arises when she asks: "If madness was a condition

of exile [as in the ship of fools], and madness [was] a foreign country, what of madness in a foreign country?"

Part of the answer to this question is suggested through an analysis of the notion of "anachronistic space" where certain spaces or people (Irish slums, brothels, working-class kitchens, mental asylums, and the colonies in general) that are contiguous with modernity, are figured as temporally out of place, or as existing in an earlier, primitive, prehistoric time. The result is that the imperialist myths of universalism and normality could be maintained, even while configuring some people and spaces as existing in a permanently anterior time bereft of language and/ or history. The mad figure, particularly the colonial figure made mad through the intersection of her sexuality and race, is located in this anachronistic space. McClintock neatly draws together a discussion of women, domesticity and mental illness as she represents mental illness as a threshold category and the asylum as a threshold institution for the bodies which the colonial regime could not contain.

This lecture is a wide-ranging and impressive attempt to touch on the intersections of madness, sexuality and imperialism. However, I am still left wondering just how effective it is that both McClintock and Ray turn to the mid-nineteenth century to comment on the late twentieth century. They both establish a framework in the Victorian era to read what they establish as postcolonial responses to that era. Yet the implication that contemporary writers respond to earlier assumptions is based on notions of progress and development, which seems odd given McClintock's famous warning against the pitfalls of progress.

Leaves of Presence

Al Purdy and Sam Solecki, eds.
Beyond Remembering: The Collected Poems of Al Purdy. Harbour $44.95

Reviewed by Neil Querengesser

Ameliasburg. Frobisher Bay. Vancouver. Head-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump. Grosse Isle. Pangnirtung. L'Anse aux Meadows. Batoche. Prince Edward County. Quinte Bay. Winnipeg. Crow's Nest. Namu. Victoria. Red Deer River. Ottawa. Bay of Fundy. 100 Mile House.

Roblin Lake.

There are few places in this country not connected with this giant of a poet, a man whose death on April 21, 2000 removed from our midst a presence we shall not soon find again. For over half a century, Al Purdy recorded his thoughts and experiences in Canada and abroad, leaving us a rich legacy of poems—poems as delicate as arctic rhododendrons, poems as tough as *Salix cordifolia*, poems as resonant with mystery and meaning as fossils in the Alberta Badlands. The best three hundred and thirty-one of these have been collected and edited by Al Purdy and Sam Solecki in *Beyond Remembering*, the last book of Purdy's verse to be completed in his lifetime.

Beyond Remembering includes poems from over four decades. Although Purdy began writing poetry in the 1930s, the book begins with a few selections from his fourth published work, appropriately entitled *The Crafte So Long to Lerne* (1959), followed by his best work from each of the following decades and concluding with eight new poems composed at the tail end of the twentieth century. Generous selections are taken from such well-known titles as *Poems for All the Annettes, The Cariboo Horses, North of Summer, Wild Grape Wine, Sex and Death, Sundance at Dusk, The Stone Bird, Piling Blood, The Woman on the Shore,*

Naked with Summer in Your Mouth, and *To Paris Never Again*, and many poems from his lesser-known works are featured here as well.

Throughout every page of this collection, one can hear Al Purdy's distinctive voice. Anyone who has never had the pleasure of hearing Purdy read from his own work would do well to listen to a few of his recordings before diving into these poems. For once that voice is in your head, it stays there forever, ready and willing at a moment's notice to give life to the silent words on the page. Very few of Purdy's poems are not written from the perspective of the first-person speaker who inhabits his poems with the familiar confidence of a master builder in a dwelling of his own construction.

Al Purdy has penned some excellent short lyrics, among them the famous "Wilderness Gothic," "Trees at the Arctic Circle," and "Lament for the Dorsets." These and many other fine shorter poems are included in the present volume. However, I find myself constantly returning to his longer narratives and meditations. The most powerful poems for me are those lyrics of the middle distance, poems such as *On the Bearpaw Sea, In Search of Owen Roblin*, and the more recent and highly personal "Pneumonia." In works like these Purdy's thoughts move with assurance at a leisurely but steady pace, always leading the reader to an insight that awaits us like an old, half-forgotten friend. The following lines from "Pneumonia" speak of a desire for connection through the perilous bridges of memory:

> I don't want to leave earth
> at least not until I look once more
> into their eyes and reach beyond
> indifference
> into their hearts and minds and
> impossible souls
> till I have remembered them beyond
> forgetting

Purdy often casts his gaze into the past for illumination of the present, and his poems are often informed by the findings of sciences that reach into our collective past: archaeology, geology, paleontology. Not only in Canada, but in many places around the world, Purdy exhibits this fascination with the past; he is drawn to such locations as the Galapagos Islands, Troy and Machu Picchu. By looking back, he shows us what we have missed, then turns around and gently nudges us toward an awareness of how relevant his findings are to the present.

In that light, the collection's concluding poem, "Her Gates both East and West," is a moving meditative look backward at his life's accomplishment and his place in the twentieth century by a poet only months from his death:

> The millennium really makes little difference
> except as a kind of unsubtle reminder of
> the puzzle that is yourself and always changing
> the country that you wandered like a stranger
> but stranger no longer
> yourself become undeniable to yourself
> wearing the lakes and rivers towns and cities
> a country that no man can comprehend

While he may not completely comprehend that country, his life's work does illuminate some fairly large areas. To read *Beyond Remembering* from cover to cover is to become aware of just how much of ourselves and this country Al Purdy has made comprehensible—and lasting.

Terres à découvrir

Pierre-Esprit Radisson
Les aventures extraordinaires d'un coureur des bois: le récit de voyage au pays des Indiens d'Amérique. Nota Bene n.p.

Nicole V. Champeau
Mémoire des villages engloutis. Vermillon n.p.

Reviewed by Lucie Hotte

Lorsque nous parcourons les nombreuses autoroutes qui sillonnent notre pays, nous pensons peu aux nombreux explorateurs qui se sont aventurés, dans de fragiles canots d'écorce, sur les nombreuses rivières et lacs, parfois tumultueux, qui s'y trouvent, qui ont dû "portager" pour éviter les rapides et les chutes et passer de nombreux jours et nuits à se méfier des attaques soudaines des gens dont ils envahissaient le territoire, mettant ainsi en péril leur vie afin de découvrir de nouveaux territoires et de nouvelles occasions de faire du commerce. Les récits de voyage de Pierre-Esprit Radisson nous permettent de mieux saisir la témérité de leur entreprise. Radisson raconte dans un style vivant six voyages qu'il fit seul ou avec son beau-frère Médard Chouart Des Groseilliers, entre 1652 et 1684. Les descriptions détaillées des paysages qu'il découvre, des conditions de vie des coureurs des bois, des Amérindiens de l'époque et des aventures qu'il vit de même que son talent incontestable de conteur font de ses textes des récits envoûtants. Le premier récit raconte l'année et demie que Radisson a passée chez les Iroquois après que ceux-ci l'aient fait prisonnier alors qu'il n'avait que treize ou quatorze ans. Le deuxième porte sur le voyage qu'il a fait, quelques années plus tard, en compagnie de pères jésuites et de quelques Français à Onondaga, la première mission française en Iroquoisie. Les troisième et quatrième voyages sont ceux qu'il fit en compagnie de son beau-frère Des Groseilliers à l'ouest du lac Huron. Les deux derniers récits relatent des voyages ultérieurs à la Baie d'Hudson alors que Radisson et Des Groseilliers travaillent d'abord pour le compte de la France puis pour celui de l'Angleterre afin d'établir des postes de traite dans le Nord. On y découvre un homme sensible à la nature pour qui les individus, quelle que soit leur culture, importent plus que l'appartenance à une collectivité. Radisson y apparaît également comme un fin diplomate et un commerçant futé qui pourrait facilement servir d'illustration pour les lois du marketing moderne.

L'édition que nous propose Nota Bene comporte une nouvelle traduction des quatre premiers voyages, dont il n'existe qu'un manuscrit en anglais, et une modernisation des textes français des deux derniers voyages. Dans son avant-propos, la traductrice, Berthe Fouchier-Axelsen, présente de façon claire et précise l'état des manuscrits, les diverses éditions antérieures et le travail qu'elle a effectué sur le texte. Elle signale également les controverses qu'ils suscitent : "sont-ils écrits de la main de Radisson, ont-ils été dictés, sont-ils la traduction de textes écrits en français . . . ?" Questions qui préoccupent toujours les historiens. Toutefois, la préface de Denys Delâge laisse le lecteur non-spécialiste quelque peu sur sa faim, au point où il sent le besoin de consulter d'autres sources afin d'en connaître plus au sujet du célèbre aventurier. Si Radisson se plaît à dater toutes ses aventures et à les situer dans le temps les unes par rapport aux autres, Delâge ne signale pas les dates à laquelle les manuscrits furent écrits. Il ne nous fournit pas non plus d'indications sur la vie de Radisson : s'est-il marié? Quand est-il mort? Pourquoi et pour qui a-t-il rédigé ses aventures? En fait, l'introduction de Delâge porte essentiellement sur les rapports entre Radisson et les Amérindiens, d'une part, et Radisson et les Français et Anglais, d'autre part. Ces considérations sont certes importantes, mais elles auraient pu et dû être contextualisées.

Si Radisson devait descendre son grand fleuve Canada (le Saint-Laurent) aujourd'hui, il serait fort surpris de voir qu'il n'a plus ni à faire un détour par la rivière Outaouais, ni à faire de longs portages pour se rendre aux Grands Lacs. En effet, la construction de la Voie Maritime du Saint-Laurent rend désormais le passage possible. Cependant, afin de permettre aux grands bateaux de circuler librement sur le Saint-Laurent, il a fallu inonder environ 28,000 arpents de terres entre Cornwall et le lac Ontario. Sept villages ont été, par le fait même, engloutis, plus de 6,500 personnes relocalisées. C'est ainsi que furent également effacées les traces du passage des Français dans la région et les vestiges des premières installations loyalistes. Dans *Mémoire des villages engloutis*, Nicole V. Champeau cherche à perpétuer la mémoire des rapides et des villages submergés. Écrit dans un style éminemment poétique qui confère au texte un ton nostalgique, *Mémoire des villages engloutis* trace l'histoire de cette région. Après une brève introduction, Nicole V. Champeau explique de façon claire et précise la navigation sur cette section du fleuve Saint-Laurent à travers le temps. Elle décrit les différents types de bateaux qui y ont circulé, les aménagements apportés au paysage au cours des ans afin de rendre la navigation plus aisée: construction de canaux, d'écluses, de villages même pour permettre aux voyageurs de s'arrêter en chemin. Si ces informations techniques sont parfois quelque peu abstraites et arides, ce n'est certes pas le cas lorsque l'auteure s'intéresse aux villages désormais disparus et à leurs habitants. Il s'agit alors d'un véritable témoignage où pointe son désir très vif de préserver la mémoire de cette région. C'est effectivement lorsqu'elle parle des gens et des lieux que l'on sent toute l'émotion dernière cette prose poétique. Ces pages, qui retracent brièvement l'histoire de chacun des villages engloutis de sa fondation à la date fatidique de sa destruction programmée, sont un hommage touchant aux personnes qui y ont vécu et surtout à celles qui ont tout laissé derrière elles pour céder la place au "progrès." Le livre se termine sur une description de l'inondation du 1er juillet 1958 et du paysage qui tient désormais la place de celui des rapides. L'évocation, en fin de livre, de nombreux mythes et de dieux marins rend bien compte de la portée incommensurable de l'action de l'homme sur l'environnement.

Travels through Time

Norman Ravvin
Hidden Canda: An Intimate Travelogue. Red Deer Press $18.95

Wayne Grady
The Bone Museum: Travels in the Lost Worlds of Dinosaurs and Birds. Penguin $32.99

Reviewed by Aritha van Herk

Recent travel books signal that this genre is changing, and no longer is an encounter with the unfamiliar sufficient subject matter. Now, travel books must offer philosophical investigations as well as geographical explorations. An interesting derivation of such expectations is the memoir/travelogue, in which travel enables an examination of the personal: fraught connections and horrifying revelations are unzipped with relish for the voyeuristic reader and presented side by side with contemplative moments in cathedral chancels. The range of these books is broad, and the discerning reader will find very thin gruel side by side with heartier fare, barely concealed confessionals next to more intellectually challenging feasts. Fortunately, both Wayne Grady's *The Bone Museum* and Norman Ravvin's *Hidden Canada* offer substantial gustation.

What is also intriguing is the extent to which the contemporary explorer of new worlds engages his or her subject through

other texts. In Ravvin's case, these are primarily the works of literary and political writers like Malcolm Lowry, Norman Levine, Leonard Cohen and George Ryga; Grady is accompanied by the natural histories of Darwin, Hudson, Huxley and others, although he also refers to Jorge Luis Borges and Robert Kroetsch. *The Bone Museum* is dedicated to Matt Cohen, a writer not given sufficient credit for the extent to which he travelled through time in his writings.

Ravvin's *Hidden Canada* is a horizontal journey, moving from Vancouver east to Newfoundland, and while his stops between are idiosyncratic, there is a distinct sense of a "cross-Canada checkup." In contrast, Grady's *The Bone Museum* is a vertical journey, moving down through unimaginable eons, searching for its subject in a world contracted rather than enlarged by time and space. Grady moves from Patagonia to China to Africa and then to the Badlands of Alberta with as much ease as if they were all one country, the country of fossilized bones, lost species and extinct life forms.

Hidden Canada is a magpie collection. The chapters seem episodic, almost careless, although Ravvin declares that his goal is "to make the past of a site present to the reader." He begins by visiting sites associated with Kateri Tekakwitha, the Mohawk woman who is being considered by the Vatican for sainthood. While her remains are in Quebec, at Kahnawake, there is a far more elaborate shrine close to Auriesville, in New York State, once (before borders) the very heart of Mohawk territory. The Mohawk and the Jesuit communities are at odds about the meaning of Kateri Tekakwitha, now a "paradigmatic captive" who continues to be relevant more as political tool than as spiritual exception. Ravvin moves from that complex friction between church and original peoples to the west coast and a different version of sainthood—that of the less-than-sober writer, Malcolm Lowry, and his hideaway at Dollarton on Vancouver's North Shore. By talking to people who knew Lowry and the shore life of this beautiful area, Ravvin arrives at a conclusion about how the Malcolm Lowry Walk demonstrates the Canadian tendency to destroy thoughtlessly first and then try to commemorate later: "In boom times, heritage deemed too recent a vintage to be of value is demolished. Then, in hindsight, in soberer times, we look back at what we've done and try to make amends."

Ravvin is good at unearthing what has vanished. In "Border Crossings in Hidden Canada" he explores and documents one virtually erased aspect of Canada's past, the communities begun by black American slaves who managed to escape to Canada via the Underground Railway. Only in Canada are relics of the underground railway visible: by necessity, in the United States, it was invisible. And in "The Ghosts of Hirsch" he searches out the abandoned farming communities of Jewish settlers in Saskatchewan, long-vanished, remembered by only a few.

Ravvin is at his best when he works within a personal history. In "Mapping the Boom and Bust: A Guide to Perfect Calgary Time," Ravvin connects Calgary's history to his own father's cycle of prosperity and loss: "In a city where only the sturdiest, the most august structures are granted an unbothered old age, he was knocked down the way so many buildings and landmarks have been in the haste to put up something new." And in "Buying Leo Dinner and Other Missed Bohemian Opportunities of a Vancouver Afternoon," Ravvin rereads his student adventures in the early 1980s, before Vancouver suffered the awful facelift of Expo 86.

All in all, *Hidden Canada* is a thoroughly Canadian book, undirected, wandering, oddly disingenuous and without a huge

investment in coherence. In contrast, Wayne Grady's *The Bone Museum* has a very specific focus: the connection between birds and dinosaurs. While Grady does not insist that dinosaurs are the ancestors of birds (a question much debated by paleontologists), he examines their possible links with skill and patience.

He is a superlative raconteur, and people and dinosaurs alike come to life through his descriptions, whether they be the famous paleontologist Phil Currie, with his office full of bones millions of years old, using his Christmas turkey carcass as a model for flying dinosaurs, or the dinosaurs themselves, with "skulls the size of cows [and] teeth as big as railway spikes." Affectionately, Grady describes dinosaurs as "the world's most wanted villains," giving them as much vigour as any well-rounded character in a compelling novel.

This is no simple travelogue that sets out to cash in on the popularity of those Steven Spielberg-enhanced monsters. The charm of *The Bone Museum* resides as much in the details that surround Grady's search for dinosaurs as in those mythical fossils themselves. He is as compelling talking about the tango and its origins or about the naming of Che Guevara as he is describing birds and their ancestry. In the hands of a writer this eloquent and articulate, history comes to astonishing life. The very bones of the past begin to speak.

The Bone Museum details the physical discomforts and satisfactions of a dig, the actual exhumation of dinosaur bones requiring hours and hours of pain and patience, humans kneeling over the graves of primordial time. Despite the difficulty of working in rain and wind, the determination of the scientists to get to the bare bones, excavating the skeletons of dinosaurs by removing rock a flake at a time with a dental pick and a one-inch paintbrush, is truly as thrilling as an adventure story. Taphonomy, "the science of what happens to a body after death," becomes an evocative metaphor. Grady critiques the latest trends in museum curatorial practice, in which the emphasis has shifted from science to entertainment, with museums expected to perform a Disneyesque function, "edutainment." The result is that science is required to justify its own ends, and thus suffers from diminishing public support.

The intense yet almost shy pleasure that Grady takes in his own discoveries is the most delicious aspect of *The Bone Museum*. In one of the many breathtaking scenes in the book, he comes close to embodying the questionable command that humans have over evolution: "I have walked through the woods near our cabin in winter and been swarmed by a small flock of chickadees fluttering around my face, pausing for seconds on branches inches from my eyes, silently assessing this unaccustomed life form moving among them. I stood still, and within minutes chickadees alighted on my shoulders and peered into my ears. I held out my hand and chickadees gripped my fingers. My heart hardly dared beat. I did not receive the impression that I was being mistaken for a tree, that my fingers were being taken for twigs. I was being reconnoitred, sampled, assayed and, inevitably, found wanting." What a moment, what a brilliant reversal of expectation.

Since Ulysses, every journey demands a hero and a destination. Is contemporary travelling an attempt to thwart time? Does the circuitous nature of travel mirror our discontent, our human lust for a new story that can teach us how to read the old story of where we were? We travel to subvert encoded destinations, we travel to meet death and its seductions. We travel to connect one bone and the next.

Both *Hidden Canada* and *The Bone Museum* effect a journey beyond the pre-

sent. They take travel writing toward a new dimension, and argue for the possibility of a genre that transcends both limitation and destination.

Words and Value

Denis Saint-Jaques, ed.
Que vaut la littérature? Nota Bene n.p.

Danielle Forget
Figures de pensée, figures de discours. Nota Bene n.p.

Reviewed by Nicole Mirante

Among the latest publications in the collection "Les Cahiers du Creliq," *Que vaut la litterature?* and *Figures de pensée, figures de discours* would appear, at first glance, to set out in quite different directions. While Denis Saint-Jaques is determined to investigate the question of what constitutes "literary value," Danielle Forget's technical study on "figures of thought" is somewhat removed from the issue of "value." Yet, in a certain sense, the two books almost complement each other.

Que vaut la littérature? is a collection of eighteen essays which strive to affirm the importance of literature in societies heavily influenced by mass media. All twenty-two contributors to the collection write from North America and Europe, and primarily from universities in Quebec and in France. The opening essay by Denis Saint-Jaques sets the objectives and defines the areas of interest of the collective research: in a time when the influence of mass media is felt in all areas of society, it is necessary to investigate what structures and mechanisms establish the value of literary texts. The research must be conducted in all three areas that most affect Western societies in the canonization of literary value: educational programmes, literary criticism, and the media themselves. As a consequence, the collection is divided into three sections, each covering one of these areas.

The section on education includes essays by Alain Viala, Max Roy, Marie-Odile André, Marie-Andrée Beaudet, Clément Moisan and Sabine Loucif. The principal preoccupation of this section is the concept of literary canon and the educational bodies and regulations that help institute and maintain a recognized set of masterpieces. By concentrating on the educational structures of France and Quebec, the authors explore how the inclusion of a book in school programmes represents the highest degree of literary merit accorded to a writer, and how the educational structures manage their self-invested power with rigidity and within narrow scopes.

The second section considers literary criticism and the evaluation of literature by recognized experts in the field. In their detailed accounts, Richard Gringras, Pierre Popovic, Benoît Denis, Jacques Dubois, François Dumont and Richard Saint-Gelais examine the reactions of critical circles to innovative literary works, and show how these works have changed the concept of literature within their national environments. On a different note, the last essay of the section, by Robert Lecker, examines how the awards granted by the Canada Council for the Arts have managed to shape Canadian literature with some undesirable results.

The third section is devoted to the relationship between literature and the media, where the word "media" is given quite a broad meaning. Jean-Yves Mollier contributes an excellent essay on the commercial success of schoolbooks in early twentieth-century France; Hans-Jürgen Lüsebrink's essay is a fascinating account of the history of almanacs in Quebec; Diana Cooper-Richet and Paul Aron, in two separate essays, explore the works and the environment of French authors who worked in coal mines and identified with the milieu of miners. The last three essays in the section, by Claude Martin, Chantal Savoie,

Julia Bettinotti and Marie-José des Rivières, explore the thorny relationship of commercial success to literary legitimation.

Que vaut la littérature? is an eclectic collection of well-researched and engaging essays; however, the book does have some shortcomings. The most glaring limitation is specifically in the area of the media, and the most contemporary communication technologies like the internet are not considered. An up-to-date reader would expect such media to be given a place of prominence. A second problem is that no solid concept of the essence of literary value is offered in the essays: rather, they examine the difficulty in affirming the value of innovative works of literature in society. Because of this approach, the essays sometimes feel like a litany of complaints rather than an affirmation of value.

It is specifically in relation to this last point that Danielle Forget's research comes to the rescue. *Figures de pensée, figures de discours* is an innovative attempt to apply pragmatics to rhetoric. Forget examines principally the so-called "figures of thought," a group of figures mostly ignored by rhetorical-linguistic studies. Figures of thought have largely been neglected because it is impossible to describe them with a fixed, constant linguistic structure or mechanism. Forget proposes to overcome the constraint of cataloguing the figures by linguistic parameters, by concentrating instead on their pragmatic function. She finds that the figures can be examined in a whole new fashion if we are to research primarily the kind of reaction that they attempt to provoke in the reader. One of her strategies is to make use of several metaphors for the linguistic exchange between two interlocutors: the metaphor of combat and that of negotiation, for example, in which a speaker/writer tries to secure an advantage for him/herself at the expense of the listener/reader, using more or less aggressive means. Forget shows how these figures constitute a set of weapons to force meaning in one specific direction, leaving the least possible room for divergence. Other metaphors also come into play in defining the functions of the figures: that of language as a voyage, for example, or that of language as an inside/outside relationship. Forget carefully analyzes each figure by exposing its pragmatic force, its compulsion of meaning towards one sole conclusion. At the same time, she uses the metaphors mentioned above to identify the process of exchange, conflict or other interaction that is being purposefully created by the speaker/writer towards the listener/reader. Each analysis is generously documented with examples to assist her reader in clearly identifying the pragmatic forces at play.

Figures de pensée, figures de discours is a lucid, rigorous analysis of the art of literary language. Although fairly technical, the manual is easily understandable even for the reader with no knowledge of rhetorical theory or terminology. Forget succeeds in showing the vitality and the intricacy of literary texts.

The Differences of Things

Isabella Santaolalla, ed.
"New" Exoticisms: Changing Patterns in the Construction of Otherness. Rodopi, n.p.

Catherine Robson
Men in Wonderland: The Lost Girlhood of the Victorian Gentleman. Princeton n.p.

Reviewed by Stephen Guy-Bray

"New" Exoticisms is a volume of conference proceedings. Santaolalla has collected eighteen papers and published them. Most of the papers appear neither to have been revised nor expanded and the book as a whole looks quite hastily thrown together (there are some illustrations). This is the bad news, and the impression the book gives of hasty preparation is increased when

the book is read straight through as a reviewer would have to. The good news is that most of the essays are very strong indeed. My only objection to the fact that the essays were not expanded is that I often found when I got to the end of an essay that I wanted to learn more about its subject.

The book is divided into three parts. The first, which contains general discussions of exoticism, I found uniformly good. The essays that interested me most were Katerina Olijnyk Longley's discussion of a scandal in which a woman achieved great literary success in Australia by pretending to be Ukrainian (who knew?) and Else R.P. Vieira's meditations on her native Brazil and on poetry by blacks in contemporary England. Also in this section, Ron Shapiro has an analysis of the sloppy thinking that afflicts a great deal of postcolonial theory. This essay will not win Shapiro many friends, but it repays reading.

The second section deals mainly with film. Martin Roberts's analysis of *Baraka* as a coffee-table film was highly diverting, and this was a case in which the writer gave himself enough space to make his arguments. Graham Huggan's comparison of multiculturalism in Canada and Australia will be of particular interest to readers of this journal. Although this essay was much too short, Huggan did a very good job of pointing out the many deficiencies of *The Adventures of Priscilla, Queen of the Desert*; unfortunately, he appears to think quite highly of Atom Egoyan's wretched *Exotica*. Chris Perriam's account of Jarman's *The Garden* is a model of how to use a film's social and political context to analyze it. In his essay, the usually trustworthy Richard Dyer relies heavily on crude stereotypes and has too much going on for such a short discussion. In her own essay, the editor of the volume points out that Spike Lee's *Jungle Fever* uses crude stereotypes of Italians in order to make its anti-racist points. Although all these essays on film neglect formal considerations, they are stimulating analyses.

The third section was the weakest (although I may just think this because the writers dealt, for the most part, with weak texts), but here as well there were some very good things. In particular, I found Beatriz Penas Ibáñez and José Angel García Landa's discussion of *The Moor's Last Sigh* interesting, although there was too much plot summary. One of the strengths of this article was that the authors looked at the work from a Spanish perspective—from the land in which the sigh was sighed, that is. This perspective is typical of the book's internationalism: the contributors are Spanish, English, Australian, Fijian and American. *"New" Exoticisms* contains many articles that will be useful to those interested in postcolonial theory, but one of its merits is to remind us of how narrowly multiculturalism and exoticism are usually conceived in North America.

Catherine Robson's *Men in Wonderland: The Lost Girlhood of the Victorian Gentleman* is a consistently perceptive and well-written study of the Victorian preoccupation with girlhood. The cover of the book—a meticulously executed and highly schlocky painting of a group of English girls teetering on the brink of puberty—affords a particularly good and amusing example of this preoccupation. Her stated thesis is that the Victorians tended to think of childhood as girlhood. Robson tends to lose sight of this thesis, but she provides many interesting discussions along the way.

Robson begins *Men in Wonderland* with a consideration of Wordsworth's poetry—in particular, the great ode—and De Quincey's memoirs in order to make the point that the (relatively newly invented) figure of the child was of great concern from the beginning of the nineteenth century. Robson has an extended discussion of Little Nell, whose existence may well be

Dickens's biggest literary mistake, although the competition is pretty stiff. I thought that Little Nell was perhaps too obvious a choice. Although Robson's analysis is perceptive, I would have liked to see her have a go at Little Dorrit or that appalling Esther Summerson.

Robson devotes a chapter to Ruskin's writing, especially his autobiographical works, and to Lewis Carroll (of course). Both these chapters are especially good. Robson is an excellent close reader and she is able to discuss these texts without either exaggerating or minimizing the entirely understandable queasiness they have inspired in our own time. With Ruskin, for instance, Robson stresses his valuable contributions to nineteenth-century thought about art and his superb style and lets his extremely odd ruminations about girls speak for themselves.

From our point of view, it is difficult to believe that these texts did not inspire panic in all who read them, but Robson is very good at recreating the Victorian context in which these texts would have appeared less bizarre. Much of her book is concerned with this context, and especially with discussions of child labour and child prostitution. Of particular interest to contemporary readers is Robson's last chapter, the subtitle of which is "Legislating Innocence in the 1880s." The chapter begins with a brief discussion of *Doctor Jekyll and Mr Hyde* and has much to say about the need—as strong now as it was then—for children of both sexes to be innocent. *Men in Wonderland* is both a perceptive literary analysis and an interesting contribution to cultural studies. I recommend it highly.

Assumptions and Admissions

Diane Schoemperlen
Forms of Devotion. HarperCollins $25.00
Reviewed by Claire Wilkshire

Assume that there is a book. Assume that the book, a collection of short stories, is called Book A, or better yet, *Forms of Devotion*, that it is by a writer living in City X, which might or might not be Kingston, that it won the Governor General's Award for fiction in 1998. Be aware that the writer—John, or Mary, or perhaps Diane Schoemperlen—won a Governor General's and a Trillium nomination for *The Man of My Dreams*, one of her books of short fiction, and received considerable attention for her 1994 novel, *In the Language of Love.* Recognize that Schoemperlen has become a major figure in the Canadian literary scene. Admit that writing such as this can grow tiresome. Concede that overuse of the imperative fosters a hectoring tone unlikely to engage the reader.

A handsome book, *Forms of Devotion* includes numerous illustrations, which the jacket describes as "wood engravings and line drawings from the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries" and which function in a constitutive rather than a complementary fashion. The final story, for example, "Rules of Thumb: An Alphabet of Imperatives for the Modern Age," takes as its starting point an illustrated alphabet: each boxed and decorated letter opens a section of the story, the sections ranging in length from a short paragraph to a couple of pages. Each letter initiates a series of exhortations about how to behave in the modern world. This witty exploration of snobbery is sharp, amusing, and carefully observed, one of the collection's strongest pieces. (Another is "Innocent Objects," in which a catalogue of a woman's possessions provides a set of

footnotes to a story about invasion and isolation.)

Most of the stories operate in this way: they premise themselves on a device (often a series of illustrations, of body parts, for example, or household objects) and proceed through variations-on-a-theme, incorporating lists, trivia and descriptions, and constructing fictions with them. Unfortunately, the device tends to lose its novelty, and its appeal, long before the story ends, degenerating into gimmickry without substance. The illustrations in "Five Small Rooms (A Murder Mystery)" depict walls and windows enclosing disproportionately large objects—a pear which reaches from floor to ceiling, two very large clocks. An excessive amount of space is consumed with discussions of what colour these rooms are painted; there is an unfortunate fondness for cliché and well-worn allusion, and by about Room Three ("Small Room with Cats"), the reader is left feeling that two might have been sufficient.

Forms of Devotion fails not because it experiments with form but because it does so in a superficial and repetitive manner. Many kinds of writing follow certain standard patterns, patterns that remain for the most part unquestioned and unchallenged. Take the book review, for instance: open with a paragraph about the text, and perhaps the writer, and perhaps his or her other books; proceed to one which makes a few general remarks about the collection; examine a couple of stories in more detail, pointing out here and there features which are characteristic of the book as a whole; conclude by making a statement about overall merits and/or failings. But this pattern or form is not the point of the review. A good review will say something else as well. A really good review leaves the reader thinking not just about itself, or the book it takes as its subject, but something else altogether; it demonstrates a fervour about language or Canadian poetry; it manifests some kind of devotion. *Forms of Devotion* is all form, not enough devotion.

Maybe the problem lies with this reviewer, rather than with the book; maybe it's just an old-fashioned hankering for a "real" story. Schoemperlen articulates a *modus operandi* in the ironic opening paragraph of "How to Write a Serious Novel about Love":

> Begin with a man and a woman. Many famous novels begin with this familiar combination. Although it may at first strike you as rather trite, in fact, once you get going, you will find that it presents a vast array of possibilities.

If the purpose of stories such as these is an avoidance of the trite, then the fill-in-the-blanks quality of much of the collection does little to further it, as the fourth paragraph of the story suggests:

> John has brown hair and brown eyes. John has blond hair and blue eyes. John has black hair and green eyes. John has no hair and no eyes. Pick one.

Or consider the first paragraph of "How Deep Is the River?":

> Train A and Train B are traveling toward the same bridge from opposite directions. The bridge spans a wide deep river in which three young women drowned two years ago in the spring. Train A is 77 miles west of the bridge, traveling due east at a speed of 86 miles per hour. Train B is 62 miles east of the bridge, traveling due west at a speed of 74 miles per hour. Which train will reach the bridge first?

The answer is "Who cares?" Unfortunately, one could respond to much of the book in this fashion, which is a shame, because Schoemperlen is obviously a talented writer. The language is thoughtful and controlled; the stories are carefully paced and structured; the social satire is acute and at times quite funny. What is lacking in these fictions? Why do they fail to engage? Why

does X's story feel like a five-course meal and Y's a bag of Ruffles? Devotion is a good word to describe what's missing here; passion is another. One of the stories is called "The Spacious Chambers of her Heart": in this book, the chambers are well-appointed but uninhabited.

Critiques et narrations

Antoine Sirois
Lecture mythocritique du roman québécois. Tryptique n.p.

Japp Lintvelt
Aspects de la narration. Nota bene. L'Harmattan $24.95

Richard Saint-Gelais
L'Empire du pseudo. Nota bene n.p.

Reviewed by Jean Levasseur

À plus d'un égard, les deux premiers ouvrages, ceux de Sirois et Lintvelt, se recoupent et offrent chacun un éclairage différent et intéressant sur des œuvres et des auteurs importants de la littérature de la francophonie, le premier par l'intermédiaire des théories de la mythocritique, le second par la mise en application des diverses techniques proposées par la narratologie.

L'essai d'Antoine Sirois s'inscrit ainsi dans la suite de son ouvrage de 1992, *Mythes et symboles dans la littérature québécoise* (Montréal, Tryptique). Par le biais des théories de Mircea Eliade, de Gérard Genette, de Pierre Brunel et de John White, l'auteur propose encore une fois une relecture de grands romans québécois de la seconde moitié du XXe siècle, issus de l'imaginaire d'Anne Hébert, à qui il consacre trois chapitres, de Jacques Ferron (deux chapitres), de Gabrielle Roy, de Jacques Poulin et d'Yves Thériault. Intéressé particulièrement par la *fonction* du mythe dans ces récits, il observe à la fois l'utilisation de l'hypertexte mythologique et l'originalité avec laquelle ces auteurs investissent ces mythes et archétypes. Les regards vers le passé (la femme de Loth et Orphée), les initiations, symboles de passages vers la puberté qu'il découvre, à l'instar d'Eliade, comme étant majoritairement sexuels, ainsi que les multiples métamorphoses (animales, végétales et minérales) retiennent surtout son attention dans une dizaine de romans de la regrettée Anne Hébert. Jacques Ferron est avant tout analysé de façon très sommaire, sous la lunette des mythes gréco-latins, puis bibliques (quête du Graal). C'est cependant le mythe littéraire de Faust, que l'on retrouve sous des formes diverses dans *La Nuit, Les Confitures de coings, La Charette, Le Saint-Élias* et *La Chaise du maréchal ferrant*, qui dominent ici la réflexion de l'auteur. Plutôt que d'être obsédés par de grands problèmes existentiels, les héros de Ferron se voudraient toutefois plus populaires et terre à terre que leur célèbre muse. De Faust, nous passons avec Jacques Poulin à la quête, à la descente aux enfers et au mythe de l'androgyne, tous des éléments clés de l'auteur du *Cœur de la baleine bleue* et de *Volkswagen blues*. Sirois souligne ici le caractère non-interventionniste du narrateur, qui ne fait qu'ébaucher les cheminements de ses personnages, et suggère, dans le cas de l'androgynie poulinienne, qu'elle serait symbolique d'une certaine nostalgie des espaces restreints. Mais c'est sans doute le dernier chapitre de son essai qui démontre l'éclairage à notre avis le plus novateur. À travers certains romans de Gabrielle Roy (*La Montagne secrète* et *La Rivière sans repos*) et Yves Thériault (*Agaguk* et *Tayaout, fils d'Agaguk*), Sirois réexamine, bien que de façon trop rapide pour un lecteur intéressé, la nature de la mythologie inuit et du mythe du Grand Nord ou, pour reprendre la récente expression, de la nordicité.

À l'instar de Sirois, la réflexion de Japp Lintvelt présente dans *Aspects de la narra-*

tion se veut une continuation de celle entreprise précédemment, ici en 1981 dans *Essai de typologie narrative. Le "point de vue". Théorie et analyse* (Paris, José Corti). Passionné par les interrelations qui s'élaborent subtilement entre et avec le narrateur et l'acteur de l'anecdote romanesque, il se propose maintenant d'approfondir ses théories dans une série d'analyses des fictions de Maupassant, Julien Green, Anne Hébert et Jacques Poulin. Refusant les limites traditionnelles de la narratologie, Lintvelt y embrasse également les approches thématiques, idéologiques et identitaires, le tout dans le but déclaré de comprendre les jeux du fond narré et de la forme narrative. Plus traditionnellement narratologique, son étude des 301 récits de Maupassant passe d'abord par une classification de ses écrits, puis par la reconnaissance de quelques dénominateurs communs, dont la polyphonie idéologique et l'analogie entre l'animal et l'être humain, dernier élément qui rejoint certains commentaires de Sirois sur certains textes d'Anne Hébert. Cette dernière occupe d'ailleurs une place de premier plan dans la troisième partie de l'ouvrage de Lintvelt où, après une analyse de l'oppressante et omniprésente religion, il examine la multiplicité identitaire des trois héroïnes de *Kamouraska*, multiplicité identitaire que Sirois avait étudiée à la lumière du "regard en arrière." Son approche lui permet d'affirmer l'existence d'une tension issue d'une opposition binaire entre le conformisme et la transgression des codes sociaux. Les deux auteurs se rejoignent toutefois en esprit lorsqu'il est question de la dualité identitaire chez Poulin, que Lintvelt associe cependant non seulement à une question de féminin et de masculin, mais également à toute la notion d'appartenance culturelle, à la fois personnelle et québécoise. Malgré une écriture en apparence intimiste et refermée sur elle-même, certains éléments de l'écriture poulinienne représenteraient ainsi une communauté plus vaste; qui plus est, l'ensemble de son œuvre contribuerait à un idéal humain supérieur, en abolissant "des barrières entre les sexes et les cultures [et] en dépassant les oppositions binaires par leur fusion harmonieuse" (242). Objet principal de sa seconde partie, Julien Green et *Moïra* retiennent l'attention de l'auteur en raison d'une rhétorique particulière du discours inaugural et des topoï de la lumière et du novice.

Richard Saint-Gelais nous invite, quant à lui, à un tout autre voyage. Ce n'est ainsi pas autant par l'intérieur que par une mise en perspective extérieure que *L'empire du pseudo* se propose de repenser le rôle et la position de la science-fiction dans la littérature contemporaine, et dans le contemporain lui-même. Cet essai n'est pas, l'auteur le souligne clairement en introduction, un ouvrage *sur* la science-fiction; son hypothèse première vise plutôt à "une compréhension du phénomène générique [qui] passe par l'abandon d'une conception essentialiste qui aboutirait à une hypothèse des genres, en y voyant une matrice ou un ensemble de propriétés plutôt qu'un domaine de pratiques" (13). Avec comme prémisse, que certains remettront sans doute en question, que le savoir "assuré" est aujourd'hui suspect et que la littérature traditionnelle "ne veut plus rien transmettre" (11), il examine les particularités singulières de la crise de représentation de la science-fiction, laquelle serait beaucoup plus apte à nous faire comprendre le présent que l'on veut bien le croire. La réflexion de Richard Saint-Gelais passe par trois grandes étapes; l'examen de quelques motifs récurrents, tels que l'anticipation, l'uchronie, la vitesse et la dynamique des énigmes, lui permet d'abord de mettre de l'avant certaines formules discursives essentielles à la compréhension du processus intellectuel introduit dans la seconde partie. Défi de taille, l'auteur propose en effet une analyse théorique et pratique sur

la réception potentielle des textes de science-fiction par le biais d'une lecture type. La troisième partie s'intéresse, quant à elle, à la notion de "modernité," la science-fiction représentant selon lui la "face cachée" de cette modernité puisque ce genre a depuis longtemps tourné le dos à la réalité empirique (248). Réflexions et démonstrations font dans cet ouvrage fi tant des époques que des langues. Jules Verne côtoie ainsi indistinctement Élisabeth Vonarbug et Ursula Le Guin, pendant qu'Isaac Asimov partage son univers avec William Gibson, Charles Renouvier et les frères Strougatski. Refus clair d'une distinction par genres, langues ou époques, mais également refus de l'apologétisme; son livre est aussi engagé qu'il est ouvert aux interprétations et opinions discordantes.

Worthy of Serious Study

Neil Sutherland
Growing Up: Childhood in English Canada from the Great War to the Age of Television. U of Toronto P $21.95

Neil Sutherland
Children in English Canadian Society: Framing the Twentieth Century Consensus. Wilfred Laurier U P n.p.

Raymond Jones and Jon Stott
Canadian Children's Books: A Critical Guide to Authors and Illustrators. Oxford U P $42.37

Reviewed by Judy Brown

Be seen and not heard: that is how adults once upon a time admonished children to play quietly and to maintain the lowest of profiles in their homes and classrooms. That old admonition has had its lasting effects not just on children but on the history of childhood and of children's literature in the academy. "The history of the subject is invisible: it was for a long time rejected as a subject of serious study, along with childhood": so critic Peter Hunt has written in his recently published guide to children's literature. Three works by scholars and researchers–two social histories of Canadian childhood and one reference guide to the writers and illustrators of Canadian children's books–seek to make the invisible visible and to offer the lives of Canadian children and the stories of Canadian childhood as subjects of serious—and stimulating—study.

That children are not often heard and seldom seen in the pages of adult-constructed and adult-centred history informs two absorbing works by Neil Sutherland, professor emeritus of UBC's Department of Educational Studies. *Growing Up: Childhood in English Canada from the Great War to the Age of Television* blends the voices and the childhood memories of two hundred anonymous Canadians (from Vancouver and the Bulkley Valley in British Columbia, and from Toronto and Halifax in the East), interviewed as part of the Canadian Childhood History Project, with published recollections of childhood from an array of public figures–among them Maureen Forrester, Oscar Peterson, Rudy Wiebe, Gabrielle Roy and Roy Daniells.

A seasoned researcher and writer, Sutherland is at his self-critical best in describing the limitations of his methodologies and of the narrative he has woven around the brief excerpts taken from those interviewed for the project. He acknowledges immediately the problem of building narratives out of the memories of adults recalling their experiences of home, school, family and friends decades after the fact. He explains (before readers have a chance to observe) that his study under-represents First Nations and immigrant children from outside the economic and political "mainstream," and suggests that fuller studies of their childhoods will be left to future projects and future funding. He accepts the challenges to the social historian of working with the scripts of oral history rather than with those inanimate,

docile documents of the library and the archive.

Looking back on themselves and their world in the era before Television and Technology, Sutherland's subjects produce "overlapping scripts" of their common childhood experiences. Children—urban and rural, middle and working class—recall similar moments of family and school life. Their memories of work on the farm, in the city streets and in the home point out to readers born in later times just how much early twentieth-century childhood in Canada was a time for work at an early age–a time when children's labour was important if not vital to the national economy. While one might expect that adults looking back on childhood might make too rosy a picture of a time that was anything but, Sutherland's work leads him to observe that "while clearly the era was certainly not a 'dark age' of childhood, neither was it the golden age of popular mythology, an era in which children basked in a perpetual sunshine of family love."

For readers who came of age during the years between the First World War and the age of television and for those born later and interested in seeing something of the child's Canada of the past, this book is a valuable and, until others enter the field, a unique resource. Readers will be reminded or will learn for the first time how children routinely worked full-time as scroungers, delivery boys and minders of other children. They will read of the vital role of grandmothers, the central place of radio, the importance of the weekly ritual of attending Saturday movie matinees. They will hear of the stern discipline to which children were subjected: the administration of phenobarbital to an "unruly" foster child, the administration of the strap to all the students of a grade-one class on their first day of school "to get [them] started on the right foot."

Each chapter of *Growing Up* makes its contributions to a history of Canadian children in the family, in the early child welfare system, in school, at play, at work. Most engaging are the chapters on formal schooling and the culture of childhood. Respondents' memories of school life–with its flashcards, tests, and drills for air raids and fires–lead Sutherland to conclude that classroom practice in Canada was often at odds with theories of progressive education first advanced in the 1930s. And lest the reader begin to wonder whether historians of childhood are not just well-meaning adults constructing childhood for children, Sutherland's chapter on the culture of childhood is there to assert that school, whatever adults thought it was, became in these years "the most important theatre for the enactment of [children's] culture."

Growing Up represents Sutherland's research at the end of a long and distinguished career. It also features the experienced researcher's frank discussion of the limitations of knowledge. Read after and against *Growing Up*, Sutherland's 1976 work, *Children in English Canadian Society: Framing the Twentieth Century Consensus*, re-issued in 2000 in the *Studies in Childhood and Family in Canada* series, is a study in the historiography of Canadian childhood. The twenty years separating the two works make them very different kinds of scholarship. While *Growing Up* is history constructed from the memories of those who lived through it, the earlier work is a methodical and illuminating study not so much of children themselves but of the adult reformers of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries who worked to write the laws, lobby the politicians and design the institutions regulating the lives of Canada's children. The consensus they produced was an adult determination about what children and childhood should be in the early years of the nation. The earlier work builds its narrative from public documents, government reports, and

newspaper accounts of that earlier reform movement in Canada that had little to do with western alienation and everything to do with the social gospel, temperance campaigns, curriculum reform, and a powerful sense that adults could and should be engineering Canada's social institutions on behalf of children. The book, as Cynthia Comacchio writes in her foreword to the 2000 edition, "effectively lay[s] the groundwork" for current studies and certainly deserves to be offered to the "new generation of readers" she refers to in her short essay. This new generation of Television Age, namely technology-fed readers will find in the book discussions of Montreal's Pure Milk League, accounts of compulsory courses and final examinations in the science of temperance, and frequent references to Canada's kindergarten movement. They will learn of the important role school nurses played in enabling well children to stay in school or seriously ill children to stay away. Sutherland's book shows as well the damage done by reformers intent on segregating "slow" children, treating immigrant children as threats to the Anglo-Canadian race, and linking intelligence testing to the eugenics movement. Most interesting to readers who have witnessed or experienced the educational debates of the late twentieth century are the chapters examining disputes over curricular reform (courses in manual training, nature study, physical education) and over bilingual schooling and best methods for teaching English to the young immigrants from Eastern Europe in the first decades of the twentieth century.

Making Canada's authors and illustrators of children's books the subjects of serious study is the project of the University of Alberta's Raymond Jones and Jon Stott in *Canadian Children's Books: A Critical Guide to Authors and Illustrators.* The *Guide* is written in answer to one of the author's English Department colleagues who assumed that Canada's literature for children stopped with the animal stories of Roberts and Seton and the Avonlea novels of L.M. Montgomery. It is written for those adults in libraries, classrooms and homes who influence the choices and purchases of Canada's young readers. Although the authors do not say so, it should be added to the shelves of those who teach and study Canada's children's literature in the academy. The over one hundred authors and illustrators featured in this book are a prolific and versatile lot. After an engaging and witty introductory essay on the important events in the evolution of children's literature in Canada, the *Guide* presents profiles biographical and bibliographical of authors and illustrators past and present, established and new. Each entry includes a brief biography, a list of works and reviews, and an additional list of discussions published in such journals as *Canadian Children's Literature* and *Children's Literature Association Quarterly.* The critical essays the authors have written provide readers new to the study of the literature not just an overview or a summary of plot, but short sharp critiques of themes and styles. Appendices include information about annual awards and prizes for writers and illustrators and suggestions for further reading.

Three books cannot change the world, of course. Children are still marginalized, parenthesized and footnoted into the shadows of adult-centred discourse, to be sure, but childhood, children and the books produced for children should enjoy well-deserved attention in this trio of books.

Exploring Canadians

Frank Tierney
The Journeys of Charles Sangster: A Biographical and Critical Investigation. Tecumseh P n.p.

Rosemary Neering
Wild West Women: Travellers, Adventurers and Rebels. Whitecap $18.95

Reviewed by Erika Behrisch

These books are both the work of experienced specialists: Tierney was editor for the Tecumseh editions of Sangster's four volumes of poetry (1976-1984); Neering has published extensively on British Columbian history, and has spent much time in various archives following the trails of the women whose stories comprise this book. The subjects deserve our attention: Charles Sangster was a prolific and popular pre-Confederation poet who remains underrepresented in the Canadian canon, while the women's stories in Neering's text have been heretofore "rigorously ignored in pioneer histories." Despite their authors' undoubtedly extensive knowledge, however, both works offer surprisingly clipped and speedy tours of their respective subjects. Their overviews may not satisfy a specialist's taste for detail.

Tierney's role as a Sangsterian guide in *Journeys* is clear: "this book on [Sangster's] themes and styles and their evolution may serve . . . as a record of his three major journeys—his journeys in his poetry, his revising journey, and his spiritual journey." This implies a three-fold critical movement: as Tierney takes his readers through Sangster's poetic landscape, we reasonably expect our attention to be called to variations in poetic tone and temper, complemented by details of Sangster's biography and revisions. However, as Tierney admits in each chapter, Sangster's relationship to God, his sympathy for humanity, his belief in love, and his pride in being a poet "did not change throughout his career." Discussions on Sangster's various "journeys" (spiritual, biographical) are virtually absent.

More than a "Biographical and Critical Investigation" (the book's subtitle), *Journeys* is rather a whirlwind tour of Sangster's entire canon, with brief glances at his shorter verse, and only slightly more substantial looks at his longer poems, such as "The St. Lawrence and the Saguenay," "Hesperus," and "Bertram and Lorenzo." Rather than focusing his critical eye on a few poems or dominant themes, Tierney calls attention to all salient features of Sangster's world without exploring their details. Most discussions are concluded with statements on a poem's "successful" use of form or its "pleasing" tone, and analysis rarely delves deeper. Furthermore, the order of Sangster's texts dominates the structure of Tierney's discussion, rather than a more natural order arising from the ideas Tierney chooses to discuss. Tierney does highlight a number of important recurring themes in Sangster's poetry, and his attention to Sangster's use of poetic forms is interesting, but the threads of each are difficult to follow. Chapters follow the divisions of Sangster's publications, and consequently break up many of the poetic continuities that might have been more apparent if the "evolution" of themes were indeed the presiding organizing factor of Tierney's approach.

Most interesting in Tierney's text are the twelve appendices, which comprise transcriptions of Sangster's correspondence to W. D. Lighthall (Sangster's literary executor), "Documents on Sangster's Life, Personality, and Character" (some written by Sangster himself), private family correspondence and other documents of Sangster's life. These documents, given minimal gloss and relegated to the appendix, offer a fascinating biographical picture of Sangster, and suggest new directions we might take in our own journey into the

world of the "Father of Canadian Poetry."

Neering's text, organized similarly to Tierney's, is easier to follow, most likely because of the nature of her chronicle. Framed as a historical overview of women whose lives "rarely show up in the history books," Neering covers impressive amounts of narrative territory in each chapter, her attention mainly on giving credit to women's unique experiences in the West, rather than on providing a detailed look at only a few women's lives.

Much to her credit, Neering doesn't concentrate on the more prominent women in BC history—Emily Carr, Capi Blanchet or Phyllis Munday to name a few, though these women do receive mention—but instead focuses on the lesser known and more unusual women, such as Chiwid, the Tsilhqot'in woman who lived a nomadic life in the Chilcotin valley in the mid-twentieth century, and Evelyn Penrose, British Columbia's "first official water diviner" who worked during the Depression. Neering's comprehensiveness, however, also has shortcomings: each chapter is an overview of several women with similar experience. While it is certainly laudable to get more women's names onto the Canadian historical page, the individual histories—and the individuality of these women's experiences—tend to get lost in the cumulative catalogue Neering provides.

Both books point out the directions motivated readers might take if they wish to travel further down the relevant roads. Many of Neering's historical subjects left behind published writing of their own; Neering whets our appetites to read more. Likewise Tierney points readers to places in Sangster's oeuvre they may wish to explore.

No Respect

Rinaldo Walcott, ed.

Rude: Contemporary Black Canadian Cultural Criticism. Insomniac P. $19.99.

Reviewed by George Elliott Clarke

Is it rude to ask scholars of Black Canadiana to interrogate their preconceptions? Anyone who thinks so should laud *Rude: Contemporary Black Canadian Cultural Criticism*, edited by York University Humanities Professor Rinaldo Walcott, for this essay-decade is impolite, only in the refusal of some of its collaborators to elaborate their terms and verify their "facts" (and spellings).

Incompetent theorizing wounds the first paragraph of the first page of Walcott's introduction. He feels that "Clement Virgo's film *Rude* (1995) opened up the space for thinking differently about Canada as a . . . Black space," and that, "despite certain kinds of limitations in how it imagined blackness in Canada, the opening signalled . . . a take on Canada that has required a fresh look at Blackness here." Despite his redundant worrying of "black" and "space," Walcott does not deign to define how Virgo's film generated altered conceptions of African Canada. Worse, Walcott's manipulation of the term "limitations" hints that he himself possesses a better understanding of "Blackness" than does Virgo. Such grammar veers toward a racist essentialism.

Questionable also is Walcott's commentary on the life and works of nineteenth-century African-Canadian abolitionist journalist, editor, and writer Mary Ann Shadd Cary. His "one conclusion" that "we need Mary Ann Shadd Cary, now more than ever" is stated thrice more—as if iteration nullifies argument. When Walcott does venture a reason for Shadd Cary's relevance as a primary black (Canadian) woman intellectual, he cites her "self-

assured Black Canadian presence," which is fine, but it contradicts the idea that she sits "in-between" Canada and the US. As well, Walcott's sanctification of Shadd Cary allows one to ask about all those other "fugitives" who chose to remain in colonial British North America. Were they not also "self-assured"? Walcott muses hesitantly on Shadd Cary's 1852 publication, *A Plea for Emigration; or Notes of Canada West*, but misses her *Condition of Colored People* (1849), published in Wilmington, Delaware. Yet, both works espouse a black nationalism that flouts the notion that Shadd Cary "spoke and acted from political conviction, desire and commitment—not from nationalistic yearning or desire."

Richard Almonte's essay acknowledges that nineteenth-century proto-Canadian writers employ race discourse to determine the lineaments of whiteness and the "correct" ordering of the British and French colonies. (See also George Elliott Clarke, 1994, 1997.) Yep: white BNA authors see blackness as a symbol of (potential) treason. Almonte's examples are weak, however. Discussing Thomas Chandler Haliburton, he eyes the supposedly disruptive "slapstick" of the dunking of a slave woman into a swill-tub. But Haliburton's sketch, "Cumberland Oysters produce melancholy forbodings" (1836), is a more germane, apocalyptic vision of black revolt. Almonte also fails to read Haliburton's "The White Nigger" (1836) attentively. Its target is *not* US slavery, but the then-extant Nova Scotia custom of selling poor whites into servitude at annual auctions.

Joy Mannette turns in an engaging memoir *cum* history of the intersections of Acadian, black and African identities in Nova Scotia. Yet, it is veined by errors. Sylvia Hamilton did not coin the label "the Black Loyalists" in 1983; that honour belongs to James Walker, whose history, *The Black Loyalists*, appeared in 1976. "Eighteen twenty-one" did not bring "Black Refugees" to Nova Scotia: no, it was the War of 1812. William—not "Thomas"—Hall won the Victoria Cross. *Et cetera.*

Gamal Abdel Shehid tries to link "Black Hockey in Canada" with Dionne Brand, who has said zilch about the sport. Her work is cited here as a fetish, not as an integral aspect of Shehid's would-be history.

David Sealy's article on "Canadianizing Blackness" is a beautiful contribution to philosophical conceptions of the field. Yet, he uses "tenements" when he means "tenets." More problematic is his claim that "one can legitimately say that there were very few Black Canadian political organizations prior to the 1960s and 1970s migrations of Black people from the Caribbean." The statement obscures the history of abolitionist, literacy, women's, religious, and social associations, all of which exercised political agency—in all sizeable, formative black communities in Canada.

Awad El Karim M. Ibrahim's analysis of the black social constructions adopted by "Black Franco-Ontarians" originally from continental Africa demonstrates that African-American culture represents a "model" blackness for African-Canadian minorities. (See also George Elliott Clarke, 1996, 1998.) However, his reading should have also sounded the ways in which francophone African-Canadian writers—such as Dany Laferrière and Gérard Étienne—imagine Canada, the US and blackness.

Renuka Sookanan's piece, "The Politics of Essentialism," is so ethereal that it never articulates *how* Toronto's "Black community" failed to use the 1993 controversy over the staging of the "racist" American musical *Show Boat* at a suburban arts centre, to produce "a strategic reconfiguration of what it means to 'be together' . . . ." A first-rate theorist, Sookanan needs to learn to fully ground her arguments.

Tess Chakkalakal's contribution to *Rude* treats the 1997 murder of the young Indian-Canadian woman, Reena Virk, in Victoria,

British Columbia, by a white teen gang (most of them also women), and the resultant media representations of race, gender, and youth crime. This essay establishes, profoundly, that Virk's death was "a Canadian lynching." Yet, Chakkalakal omits other Canuck lynchings, such as one reported in Susanna Moodie's *Roughing It in the Bush* (1852) and the torture-murder of a Somali youth by members of the Canadian Airborne Regiment in 1993.

The volume's terminal essays, by Leslie Sanders and Peter Hudson respectively, allege that André Alexis's spurning of a "black" persona in his novel, *Childhood* (1998), is dishonest and racially regressive. In her take on Alexis, Sanders overlooks his first allegiance, that is, Trudeauesque liberalism, which exalts "pan-Canadian" identifications over "pan-African" ones. (See George Elliott Clarke, 1999.) Oddly, she identifies Stan Douglas and Clement Virgo as artists who are "heterogeneous in terms of their attachment to Canada." Yet, an "attachment to Canada" (whatever that means) marks most African-Canadian literature and art—along with, usually, a critique of the nation's faults. For his part, Hudson acknowledges Alexis's liberalism, but he frustrates his own reading by ridiculing any effort to "take seriously . . . almost any of Alexis's journalistic prose." If true, why discuss the fiction? Both genres express Alexis's fundamental values.

Rude is rudimentary, proffering both incomplete and inaccurate judgments. Five of its contributors are practicing professors, yet many essays advance unexamined generalizations or unsubstantiated theses. Ultimately, *Rude* spawns a truly *rude* question: Does its editor think that African Canadian culture deserves careful study, or just slap-dash "talking points"?

Memoirs of Trauma and Travel

Janice Williamson
Crybaby! NeWest $17.95

Lesley Krueger
Foreign Correspondences: A Traveler's Tales. Key Porter $29.95

Reviewed by Wendy Roy

Family secrets can shape lives for good or ill, as two very different memoirs by Lesley Krueger and Janice Williamson attest. Krueger's narrative is a meditation on travel and on the way families influence the urge to travel and to return home, while Williamson's narrative explores memories of childhood sexual abuse and its devastating effects. Both authors courageously break decades of silence, although the family secrets they reveal vary widely in nature and effect.

In *Crybaby!* Williamson writes about her powerful and disturbing memories of abuse at the hands of her father. Her exploration is initially tentative, since the only person who can confirm or deny the abuse—her father—committed suicide twenty-five years earlier. Through fragments of memory and discussions with friends and family, Williamson stacks up the evidence on one side, while keeping open the possibility for error or denial on the other. Her book is not only, or not primarily, about sexual abuse, but instead about its influence on a woman's sense of self and ability to write about that self. Much of the book's impact comes from the juxtaposition of Williamson's own words with family photographs. *Can photographs lie?* the memoir asks. The answer, of course, is yes, since the smiling face of the little girl with her hair cut straight across her forehead—standing in the open door of a car, sitting on a swing, leaning against her father's knee—belies the pain of

Williamson's narrative. "The photograph is a visual sign of the unsayable," she writes, then shows the reader the back of each photograph, on which her father has written comments such as "Push me some more, Daddy" that serve to put words into her mouth and thus to silence her.

The difficulty of speaking about sexual abuse is graphically represented in Williamson's memoir through the use, and avoidance, of the first-person pronoun. While Williamson's narrator sometimes calls herself "I," at other times she invokes distance by writing of herself as "she/I," "she," or "the girl," or, even more disconcertingly, by using "I" as a third-person pronoun: "The first time I makes love, her body splits apart." As a further manifestation of the difficulty of representing such experience, Williamson writes her entire memoir in fragments, telling her story through what she calls "[g]aps and fissures." The book's ten distinct sections are made up of quotations from other writers, snippets of Williamson's own prose and poetry, and comments from friends and family members. This fragmentary approach is frustrating, since the lack of a straightforward narrative makes Williamson's story difficult to follow. It is also effective, since it illustrates the fragmentary nature of memory and of women's life stories, and leaves necessary space for doubt and confusion.

Williamson's memoir begins with the definition of the word "crybaby," an opening that paradoxically makes it impossible for the reader to dismiss her as one who cries for no good reason. Ambiguity remains a large part of her narrative, however, as she poses questions such as "*Does she lie?*" when she describes a memory of a man touching a child's genitals, and comments that "Whether my father molested me will not be established." While Williamson reports corroborating evidence from friends and family members who were sexually assaulted by her father, she also discusses false memory syndrome and the similarities between her own writing and the "spectacular exhibitionism" of talk shows.

I first heard part of Williamson's narrative at The Body Conference at the University of Saskatchewan in 1997. Her honest and brutal exploration of family secrets was compelling and discomfiting then, and is compelling and discomfiting now. Readers and listeners are disturbed by her revelations, and feel uncomfortably like voyeurs into another's life. Williamson's many references to women's writings about the self and to Sigmund Freud's and others' interpretations of sexual abuse, however, help to contextualize her experience. Readers are never allowed to view her story as only that of one unfortunate family, but instead are forced to acknowledge the resonances for other women's lives in Williamson's pain, confusion and recovery.

The family secrets revealed in Lesley Krueger's *Foreign Correspondences* are far enough in the past that the author can explore their influence on her life in a more straightforward manner. Krueger's book, subtitled *A Traveler's Tales*, is in many respects a travel narrative. The author interrupts her descriptions of travel, however, to examine how her family has influenced her attitude toward travel and to explore what she learns about herself and her family through travel.

A discussion of travel as *travail* is central to Krueger's narrative. She describes the unwilling travels of her father and uncle during the Second World War, and of her two grandmothers, both of whom came to Canada as reluctant emigrants but who then used emigration to rewrite their past lives. Krueger's discovery that one grandmother was sent to Canada to hide a rape and resulting pregnancy, and that the other used emigration to revise her family origins, helps her to understand her grand-

parents, her parents and ultimately herself. She concludes that travel forces her, like her grandmothers, to learn what it means to be foreign.

Her interwoven narrative of travels to India, Thailand, Sweden, Mexico, Panama, Brazil, Japan, and Labrador is presented in a fragmented and non-chronological style. Travel leads Krueger to think about family, and she repeatedly digresses from descriptions of residence in other places to personal and family history. Connections between her travel experiences and her personal reflections are often tenuous, however, and the movement between the two types of narrative is often jarring, especially since the travel sections jump backward and forward in time, and the family reflections tease the reader with bits of information that are developed only later in the book. The margins of *Foreign Correspondences* are intriguingly but frustratingly sprinkled with unidentified and uncredited postage-stamp-sized photographs of what are, presumably, Krueger's family and travels. Identification of these photographs, and their enlargement and incorporation into the text, would have helped to complement and complicate Krueger's memoir. Despite these structural problems, however, Krueger does get much right about the way that families shape our lives, and is an astute observer of the sexual, cultural, and class differences that are part of the travel experience. For example, Krueger describes tourism as "traveling in class," since tourists live temporarily above their social levels. She also explores the differences between travel and tourism, concluding that most travellers are tourists because they "can leave any time they really want to."

I found the section on Krueger's three-year stay in Brazil most compelling, in part because I kept comparing it to the *Brazilian Journal* of P.K. Page, who is a minor character in Krueger's book. Another fascinating section relates to Krueger's return home to Toronto, where she traces the ownership of the land on which her house is situated back to First Nations groups who lived there centuries earlier and then back even further to the beginnings of geological time.

Both Krueger and Williamson went against their mothers' advice in revealing their families' secrets. In telling secrets, including about her father's war experiences and first unacknowledged marriage, Krueger represents the family as a place of silence and contradiction where one has to keep one's wits about one to discover what is going on. Williamson represents family as a place of darker secrets, but a place where discovery and revelation ultimately lead to healing.

On the Nature of Legacies

Ken Wiwa
In the Shadow of a Saint: A Son's Journey to Understanding His Father's Legacy. Vintage Canada $21.95

Lamin Sanneh
Abolitionists Abroad: American Blacks and the Making of Modern West Africa. Harvard UP n.p.

Virginia Whatley Smith
Richard Wright's Travel Writings: New Reflections. UP Mississippi n.p.

Reviewed by Taiwo Adetunji Osinubi

Legacies are often difficult to assess and assessments are open to contention. The three books under review here are concerned with legacies of various kinds but all have the themes of travel, migration and colonial encounters in common. In 1995 the trial and execution of the Nigerian environmental activist Ken Saro-Wiwa shocked the world. In his memoir, *In the Shadow of a Saint: A Son's Journey to*

Understand His Father's Legacy, Ken Wiwa assesses and attempts to comprehend his father's legacy. Much of that legacy lies in Nigeria. Consequently, events and socio-political conditions in Nigeria eclipse the narrative of a father-son relationship.

Ken Wiwa writes with a sure hand and frank unadorned language, but better treatises of Nigeria's ills abound. The author, who grew up mostly in British schools, demonstrates amply his distance and estrangement from Nigeria. He explains wrongly, for example, the acronym NEPA (Nigerian Electrical Power Authority) as Nigerian Electrical Ports Authority. Upon arrival at the airport in Nigeria he complains about the heat and humidity. And when he flies out of Lagos, he suddenly talks about leaving Africa and not just Lagos. It is a serious error for a book that professes to be concerned with the specificities of a marginalized ethnic minority to collapse the signifier of Nigeria into the blurry symbolism of Africa.

The merit of Wiwa's book lies in finding graphic moments in which the axes of ethnic politics, long-standing colonial relationships and newer patterns of transnational political and economic interests collide. One such moment lies in the paradox of Ken Saro-Wiwa's desire to have his children educated in Britain—Saro-Wiwa manages to get one son into Eton college—and then expressing frustration with a son who does not want to return to a country he doesn't know. However, the father's investments do pay off because the son is later in place in London to become a spokesperson and public face for his father's fight against a multinational oil concern. Other moments occur during the last hours of Ken Saro-Wiwa's life as the author races from one "world leader" to the other to have them plead for his father's life. Wiwa reveals in those last hours how, with the media and powers of telecommunications, the world seemingly contracts as the incarcerated Ken Saro-Wiwa "moves" from the margin to the centre. But it is precisely at such a moment of contraction that the author realizes how minute his father is in the grand scheme of things. With his martyrdom, Ken Saro-Wiwa has undoubtedly left his country a troubled legacy. I doubt, though, that his son is the right person to assess that bequest.

Lamin Sanneh's *Abolitionists Abroad: American Blacks and the Making of Modern West Africa* is an inquiry into the legacy of nineteenth-century antislavery movements to three West African nations; Liberia, Sierra Leone and Nigeria. The thrust of Sanneh's argument is twofold. He argues that in nineteenth-century America Christianity represented a counterpractice to slavery and that as such it constituted what the author labels "antistructure." Building upon this hypothesis he suggests that black abolitionists from the US employed tenets of "antistructure" to lay the foundation for radical concepts of society in nineteenth-century West Africa where "antistructure" manifests itself as an opposition to local social hierarchies and apparatuses of governance based on a network of chiefs and kings compromised by their part in the slave trade.

Sanneh's chapters on the involvement of various antislavery parties in the foundation of Sierra Leone and Liberia will certainly interest scholars of the African-American and African antislavery effort. Sanneh pays attention to British efforts to quell the slave trade after its abolition in 1807 as well as to the fate of Africans who were rescued from slave ships and resettled in Sierra Leone. Unfortunately, the author overemphasizes the efforts of African-Americans who, as the book reveals, only wield influence in the metropolitan centres of Sierra Leone and Liberia. Sadder still, Sanneh does not put the British and the Africans on the centre stage where they

belong. Not only were the British instrumental in making modern West Africa but the advance of British imperialism and, later, colonialism stopped the particular kind of radical overhaul of West Africa that Sanneh's abolitionists might have accomplished. The title, *Abolitionists Abroad*, places the author away from the West Africa he writes about and puts him in America. In effect, the book is long on the lives of Americans who set sail to Africa but cannot explain the Africans they became.

Richard Wright's Travel Writings: New Reflections is a troubled but welcome addition to growing scholarship on Richard Wright's travel writings. In her introduction, Smith highlights Wright's importance as an anti-colonial activist, who progresses from one concerned with the fight for racial and economic equity and justice within the national confines of America to international thinker concerned with global forces of racial, economic and colonial oppression.

The authors of these essays might all be writing about Wright's travels but not all of them live up to the promise of the introduction. Nor do the authors demonstrate the same degree of familiarity with the critical discourse on travel writing. Some essays do not make their points strongly because they are excerpts from books, and they need to be read as part of those books. Other essays read like manuscripts that are too long to be published in journals. The former is the case with the contributions of S. Shankar and Jack B. Moore. Shankar's essay is noteworthy because it attends to some of Wright's conflicting anti-colonial concerns and his connections to a colonial tradition of travel writing. Moore's essay is rather a curiosity because, excerpted from a book about the city in African-American literature, it segregates the Ghanaian cities Wright visits from the extended framework of his travel. Nwargunsu Chiwengo's essay on *Black Power* mobilizes the terminologies of postcolonial criticism to indict Wright's representation of Ghana and Ghanaians.

The three essays on Wright's travels in Spain are devoted to intertextual contexts of Wright's narrative. Two essays by Virginia Whatley Smith and Yoshinobu Hakutami about Wright's lesser-known account of his travel to the Bandung Conference in Indonesia in 1954 address Wright's anti-colonial engagements. Smith's second essay in the collection, on Wright's plans for intended travels to French West Africa, requires some editing but contains illuminating moments about the composition of Wright's travel accounts. Smith's study of the author's notes, especially, highlights the ways in which practical exigencies, such as profitability, shape Wright's published documents. But perhaps the greater bequest of this collection lies not in the essays but in the set of Richard Wright's photographs that it makes available. These photos do not appear in recent reissues of Wright's travel books. They are, however, important because they show Wright in postures he otherwise does not write himself into.

A Space Odyssey

Isabella Maria Zoppi, ed.

Routes of the Roots: Geography and Literature in the English-Speaking Countries. Bulzoni ed. n.p.

Reviewed by Barbara Korte

Within its 781 pages, this volume offers forty-nine essays by international authors (almost half of them, however, based in Italy). It is concerned with eight geographical areas of the postcolonial world, the main attention being divided between Africa, Australia, Canada and the West Indies. Zoppi admits that she had problems organizing her bulky book, which is not surprising since at the beginning of the

project, "no question was set. Rather the request was made for a mere examination of the role of geography within the new literatures" in English. Zoppi at least makes a brave attempt to systematize the papers she called for. Eight sections are meant to follow "the signs, the prints of the geographies of the mind": Section I, concerned with "re-centring literature," assembles essays on the status and representation of the new English literatures and their relation to European notions and standards; section II deals with the mental "mapping" of otherness, with special attention to Indian and Canadian literature; section III focuses on the construction of personal and national identities, for example, in texts by Paule Marshall, Ayi Kwei Armah, H.H. Richardson and V.S. Naipaul; section IV investigates the interrelationships of space with memory and history, for example, in aboriginal women's writing, Derek Walcott's *Omeros* or André Brink's *On the Contrary*; section V presents writings that seem to fit under the heading of "diaspora," for example, by Bharati Mukherjee, Caryl Phillips and Nurrudin Farah; the interest in section VI lies in "maps of captivity" and "frontiers of mindscapes," with a focus on writing from (South) Africa; under the heading "mythical landscapes," section VII links essays concerned with the power of language to "shape the land," and the final section has a closely related theme: "language as a tool" for creating a "sense of place," for example, in texts by David Malouf and Seamus Heaney (whose inclusion in a postcolonial context we are meant to accept without further problematizing). The boundaries of some sections are relatively clear-cut, but the contours of others are vague so that the assignment of some essays to their respective groups seems arbitrary.

Overall, Zoppi's rather lax editing results in contributions of different genre (the short sketch is placed next to the more scholarly analysis) and different quality. With few exceptions (such as John Douthwaite's application of the theory of anomie to Chinua Achebe, or Stewart Crehan's investigation of J.M. Coetzee's "white writing"), the essays are not informed by theory. Their readings, often devoted to writers and works in the new postcolonial canon, offer few surprises. This is exemplified in the contributions on Canada: Barry Callaghan provides an impressionistic sketch of how Toronto, in the course of its development, lost touch with its lakeside and thus turned its back on "grace"; there is hope, however, that the city's present, multiethnic population which thinks "in curves" rather than "the right angle" will reclaim the lake. In Susanna Moodie's *Roughing It in the Bush*, Giuliana Gardellini traces "a gender-informed mental attitude towards the geography of Canada"; the feminine perception of space is found to be "more circumscribed in width but much deeper and personalised as far as contents and analysis are concerned." This sounds rather familiar and is less informed by theories of either spatial perception or gender than Simona Bertacco's reading, based on feminist geography, of the paradoxical and labyrinthine sense of place in Daphne Marlatt's *How Hug a Stone*. Carla Comellini on geography and history in Michael Ondaatje's *The English Patient* is most original where she comments on the special significance of Italy in this novel. Maria Rosa Giordani demonstrates how Rohinton Mistry's *Such a Long Journey* experiments with language "in order to perceive the loss of and the link with his ancestral connections together with the way he has reacted to a multicultural society such as Canada," and Ornella Cerutti, on an equally well-trodden route, traces the contrasts between an inhospitable

Canadian landscape and the remembered "splendid, motherlike, Caribbean nature" in Austin Clarke's short stories.

This book did not emerge from an interest in the topical theorizing of space perception and cognition. Rather, it was inspired by an enthusiasm for literature and a (utopian) belief that literature can make people understand each other across frontiers. It is this enthusiasm that most strongly marks the editor's own, often effusive, introductory texts: "On the threshold of a new millennium, we are present at the birth of a different way of conceiving our sense of self and community, a distinct, expanding progressive sense of belonging to a community, of sharing a collective imaginary." Fortunately, postcolonial studies in general, and studies in Canadian or any other literature under discussion in this book, have progressed further and more systematically in the study of space/s than Zoppi's compilation suggests.

On Daryl Hine's *Polish Subtitles: Impressions From a Journey*

Crapes and Bratworst

Iain Higgins

"I recognized one of my few words of Polish above a small kiosk . . . : it was *Piwa*, and means beer"(66). It means "beers" actually, but let's start with the index, and ask why Daryl Hine's book would even have one. I'm afraid I cannot think of an answer. This is after all merely a slim memoir (less than 150 pages long, or about half the length of Morley Callaghan's *That Summer in Paris* [1963]), worked up by an emerging twenty-four-year-old Canadian writer to commemorate a thirty-day stay in Poland, mostly in Warsaw, where he had arrived from Paris (the scene of a three-year sojourn under the auspices of a Canada Foundation-Rockefeller fellowship). Not only that, but the author was not much interested in going to Poland in the first place, except "to escape from Paris and an entanglement there which [he] thought intolerable" (7) and once in Poland not much interested in getting to know the places and people he encountered (he even confesses to having used the travel "notes" of his fellow adventurer, the artist Virgil Burnett, in "writing up" the book [8])—despite his claim to "put places and things first; the people second; the great questions, like Religion in a Socialist State and Art and Censorship, last, where they belong" (8). Hine's diffident, even

Cabbages and Chrysanthemums

Kevin McNeilly

Polish Subtitles is Daryl Hine's diffident and witty memoir of the few weeks he spent in Poland in the autumn of 1960, mostly in Warsaw, on a "job" to correct and "polish" —the bad pun is Hine's own—the subtitles for "a terrible film epic" called *Krzyzacy*, "Knights of the Teutonic Order" (17). The book quickly becomes less travelogue (or "impressions from a journey," its subtitle misleadingly suggesting a kind of aesthete's Baedeker) than a record of cultural misprisions and exclusions, a set of bemused, ironic reflections on the breakdown of translation, of poetry, and of history in postwar central Europe. Attending an official reception where his hosts (who include the poet-diplomat Peter Dale Scott) intend to introduce him to some of the emergent generation of Polish poets, Hine describes a mix of nationalist pride and farcical illiteracy that characterizes his encounters with Polish culture throughout the book, as he chats with another party-guest about one of the supposedly famous writers he is to meet:

> I asked her what his poetry was like.
> "I don't know, I never read any." (93)

Polishing, for Hine, comes to mean cultivating a mode of crisp estrangement. His journey from Paris to Warsaw appears at first to reverse the trajectories of exile and

somewhat priggish remark here is perhaps understandable when we recall that he was fresh out of McGill, where he had studied classics and philosophy—maybe he had had enough of "the great questions," or maybe they just irritated the young man whose travel reflections reveal him to be a conservative aesthete. Just because I write in the shadow of the Cold War, Hine seems to suggest, doesn't mean that it has to darken my pages. Yet *Polish Subtitles* is very much a Cold War book, particularly in the way that it regards Poland as not merely foreign, but altogether *outré*—so much so that he sees no need to get even the simplest things (like *piwo*, or beer) right. Which brings me back to the mysterious index.

Its first entry is *"Alexander Newsky,"* Sergei Eisenstein's film better known in English as *Alexander Nevsky*. Amongst other things, this entry recalls Hine's reason for going to Poland—to "polish" the "English subtitles for a terrible film epic," *Krzyzacy*, or *The Teutonic Knights* (17). Yet Hine is not at all interested in film or the movie business, and despite having seen several well-known Polish films (Andrzej Wajda's *Ashes and Diamonds*, for example, or *Kanal*), he spends a mere two pages on the subject (36-37), a missed opportunity certainly. Far better is Hine's extended account of his troubles with Cecylia, the translator whose subtitles it is his task to smooth, since it gives readers a fair glimpse into an ordinary, difficult, and yet privileged life in the official Polish artistic bureaucracy in 1960. Sympathetic though he tries to be to Cecylia, however, Hine does not much like her—indeed, he never even bothers to record her last name, "though as Polish names went [he] found it not at all difficult" (57)—and his portrait of her contains unfortunate shadings of the faint misogyny that discolours the

diaspora that have characterized Polish national culture since the mid-nineteenth century, epitomized in figures such as Chopin and Mickiewicz: his trip is initially framed as a return from abroad. But Hine remains *étranger*, foreign, and never manages to connect with the people or even the landscapes of the Poland he describes. After a hundred and fifty-odd pages he closes his text inconclusively, depicting himself asleep on the Paris Express as he re-crosses the Bohemian frontier (152).

His is not, as he openly admits, an experience but an "inexperience" of Poland (87); he stays a stranger, seeing, "as one does see in any foreign city, more of my own countrymen than of the foreigners around us" (86). Polish writers, he is told, need conversely to translate and be translated, to be "possessed of a wide culture, and at least one language beside [their] own," if they are to be recognized, to have a profile, in any cosmopolitan context (22). Hine repeatedly notes a mania for "Western" culture among Poles, from American jazz to British theatre, but he never returns the favour, and doesn't really bother (although to be fair he hardly has the time) to acquire a clear sense of any Polish writing at all. (He consistently misspells certain Polish words and names, such as that of novelist Henryk Siekiewicz, for example, flubs that may be merely poor editing on the part of his publishers, but that also suggest his inattentiveness; when he is given her address in Warsaw, his Polish "collaboratrix" and fellow subtitler Cecylia insists on writing down her name: "You'll never remember it," she tells him, "it is so strange" [57]. The point, as even Hine recognizes, is that he could remember if he tried—"as Polish names went I found it not at all difficult." Still, and tellingly, he never cares to record the actual name.) When he attends a performance of *Makbet*, the Polish version of Shakespeare's tragedy,

Crapes and Bratworst *continued*

entire memoir (see for instance his account of a "sculptress" and her work [96-97]). Which brings me back to *Alexander Newsky*.

Spelled thus, the Soviet film reveals Hine's touristic indifference to orthography, especially of Polish, which at first glance looks formidable but is in fact entirely rational, particularly compared to English spelling. The Polish "w" in Nevsky, as the Russian is normally transliterated from the Greek-based Cyrillic alphabet, represents the "v" sound in the Latin-based Polish alphabet (the "w" sound is represented by "l" with a bar through it—one of several Polish diacritics that even my cutting-edge word-processing program simply balks at, revealing its Anglophone insularity), except that the Polish title would be *Alexandr Newski*. But what post-hoc professorial pedantry on my part, you say, or what prescient postmodern hybridity on Hine's, and you may be right, except that the title is typical of Hine's carelessness with respect to words, things, and facts Polish (the man translates from Latin, after all, a language no more difficult than Polish). Several times, for instance, he misspells the very title of the film he is working on (*Kzryzacy* for *Krzyzacy*). Here's a typical instance: after *Alexander Newsky* the next Polish-language entry in the index is "Crakowskie Przedmiescie," properly "Krakowskie Przedmiescie" (minus the diacritic over the "s"), which is also listed in the index as "Krakowskie Przedmiesce," but treated as a different place, as if by analogy Montreal and Montréal were thought to be separate localities. And then there's the pride of Polish poetry, Adam Mickiewicz, who appears in the index as "Mickiewicze, Adan." Hine remarks about Mickiewicz's masterpiece *Pan Tadeusz* that Virgil "turns out *surprisingly* to have read [it] in translation" (99, emphasis added),

Cabbages and Chrysanthemums *continued*

he describes only detachment and boredom: "I understood nothing, except '*Jutro i jutro i jutro*,' and had difficulty keeping my attention on the stage" (124). As a translator who has almost no knowledge of the language from which he is translating (a predicament that has never really stopped poets from doing it—think of Robert Lowell's *Imitations*), Hine essentially glosses and subtitles his own cultural dislocation; he translates himself as displaced person, dwelling on his distraction by "the subtle wrongness" of his interactions with Polish. Cecylia, he recounts, "had an instinct equivalent to genius for whatever is the opposite of the *mot juste*" (44), and won't even permit Hine to fix her errors, claiming that her literal renderings and groaners make perfect sense to her. Hine's encounters with "native" speakers are not encounters at all, but moments of mistrust and mutual retreat, akin to the simultaneous misdirections of the subtitles he recomposes.

Ordering at a restaurant, for example, he and his cohorts are greeted with incredulity: "Like natives everywhere, [the waitress] could not convince herself that we were not pretending and really neither spoke nor understood her native tongue" (67). Or, as he sits in a park, his oddity scares off a few friendly children: "They questioned each other and me in Polish. I nodded, for a while, mutely affable; when at last I spoke to them in English they took fright and scattered in flight" (51). His imposture of mute affability becomes a kind of cultural survival instinct, when at a Writers' Union function he finds himself interrogated: "What was I doing in Warsaw? Is it true I meant to write a book? How interesting, the first book by a Canadian about Poland (et cetera, et cetera)" (109). His interlocutor effuses, ripe with the clichés of a dilettantish tourism: "He hoped I would make an effort to acquaint myself with the real

before dismissing its author this way: "I saw another portrait of Mickiewicz [spelled right this time!], plainly the greatest of Polish poets, in which he looked like a country clergyman. Perhaps he was" (99). The exasperated Polish immigrant who irritatedly annotated the Vancouver Public Library copy of *Polish Subtitles* that I happened to read was moved to justifiable outrage here: "IN STUPID HINE HEAD" runs the comment. Enough already.

All right—but one last example from the index: "ponchka," the phonetically-spelled genitive singular for jelly doughnut (if he had asked Cecylia how to spell it, she would have written *paczek*, with a hook under the "a" indicating the "on" sound, but that would have been too easy). The simplest way to suggest how careless Hine is here and throughout—given too that his Polish host was the then diplomat, now poet Peter Dale Scott, one of the first English translators of Zbigniew Herbert—is to imagine the travel memoir of someone just back from France or Germany reporting on a local dish called *crapes* or *bratworst*, or exasperated by the local cult of the poet Yugo or Goorthuh. The point then is not to pillory Hine (his month with Cecylia was obviously punishment enough for him), but to reiterate just how much *Polish Subtitles* reflects its Cold War origins. The Berlin Wall may have still been a year away from its instauration when Hine visited Poland, but the cultural wall it came to symbolize was already complete and Hine writes from behind it. He proceeds—to switch metaphorical horses in midstream—much as Columbus did on first entering the Americas, oblivious or indifferent to his ignorance, but unlike Columbus with the good fortune to be surrounded by bilingual natives.

Poland" (110). That reality, however, is precisely the culture to which Hine can never gain access, and won't pretend to. *Polish Subtitles* is a study in exclusion. Hine insists, from the outset, on his "total unpreparedness" (8), and his guide-book, tellingly, is a French *Guide Bleu*, out-of-date and out-of-print (25). (Strangely, this is the precise predicament in which Hine's own book now finds itself.)

The Poland that Hine does encounter is pervasively unreal and staged; Warsaw, he notes, is under "reconstruction"—a key term here, a name for the species of non-return that Hine's Paris to Warsaw arc scribes out—which involves the pervasive imitation and reproduction of historical architecture, and culture generally, that was shattered and destroyed by the War (31). Everywhere, the past has been mediated and remade through its literary and artistic representations, the few fragile records that survived destruction; he describes the "old" section of Warsaw as a fabrication: "Even under the lowering sky the rebuilt medieval houses of this quarter looked bright, too bright and new, without the architectural accretions of later ages that a real Gothic town would show. They were reconstructed from the evidence of old engravings, after the War" (55). The "general aspect of decay" (16) he senses in the city is offset by the contrivance of a national character, a ruse he undermines as bathetic aestheticism: "Like the pen and ink washes of Victor Hugo [the architectural 'excrescences' of Warsaw] had the charm of what we call bad taste" (12). The city is a vast historical *trompe l'oeil* for Hine, awkwardly importing its national character from abroad.

Such substitutions of the foreign for the authentic are not, he suggests, merely after-effects of the Occupation, but characterize Polish culture itself; he describes a painting, for instance, by "a Polish imitator of

Crapes and Bratworst *continued*

Still, this is not to damn the whole book for the sake of "mere" details or hanker after authenticity (even if a little accuracy would go a long way). It is rather to point up the book's typicality as a travel memoir: as so often with this kind of work, it tells us far more about the author and his culture than about the ostensible subjects of his attention. Often diffident, occasionally priggish, *Polish Subtitles* is also intermittently charming, witty, and insightful, at its best like the charming, whimsical line-drawings by Virgil Burnett that accompany the text. Recounting his befuddling experience of a Polish performance of *Makbet*, Hine complains that "throughout we had the disheartening thump of paper swords on paper shields" (124)—a thump we hear throughout his performance as well. But it is disheartening only to those who expect the stage (or the travel book) to be the thing itself, clanging with captured iron, and not a complex and necessarily selective representation conjured up by a sort of Prospero.

Perusing Hine's paper thumping is a pleasant enough way to pass the time, and can be recommended to anyone without a more urgent task to hand. Still, if you are looking for insight as well, I would recommend another little-known travel memoir that appeared in Warsaw in 1962, Zbigniew Herbert's *Barbarian in the Garden*, a clear-eyed lover's view of the artistic glories of France and Italy from Lascaux to Piero della Francesca that is afraid neither of "the great questions" nor of the sheer goofiness of a traveller's tales: "I came to Siena from Naples—with my liking for pizza. . . . I eat two portions and order a third. The owner of the trattoria is really moved. She says that I am *gentile*. Later she asks about my nationality; and learning that I am Polish, she exclaims *Bravo!* with sincere enthusiasm. She calls her sleepy

Cabbages and Chrysanthemums *continued*

Delacroix, depicting scenes from Polish history," asserting nineteenth-century Polish Gallicism as a figure of this inherent foreignness (120). They are, he puns, "Poles Apart" (86), missing literary tradition, missing even history, and wholly dependent on outside sources for their identity. At the same time, Hine refuses from his first page to pretend to rediscover an "authentic" Poland, and revels in the inauthenticity he has discovered instead; the reconstruction he traces clearly misses what was, at the time, a vibrant Polish literary and cultural scene (in which writers from Zbigniew Herbert to Wislawa Szymborska were active), and instead dwells on his own ignorance and detachment, mixing irony and honesty—a juxtaposition with which he delineates the Polish "character," but which really encapsulates his own voice here (37)—to create what he calls an indefinite "neutral music" (71), a dissolute poetry that offers occasional Eliotesque moments of striking lyricism, in the jumbling of "chrysanthemums and cabbages" for example (13), but for the most merely withdraws. Hine records three of his own poems as well, but they are somewhat precious contrivances (such as a version of Thomas Malory) that I don't really find all that engaging. What matters to me, however, is that such poems dwell on their own disengagement, their elaborate failure to bridge the gap between the lived and the written—or rather their inability to reach life through art, which in Hine emerges as a counter-realism, life imitating art, reconstruction; a visit to the palace of Wilanow "confirmed," he writes, "like *déjà-vu*, a poem finished long before I heard of Wilanow, or thought of going to Poland. Again it seemed as if it were life that slavishly imitated art" (148). He recites "The Proscription," a catalogue of portraits on the walls of an imaginary dissolute palace:

Crapes and Bratworst *continued*

husband and overweight daughter to witness our historic meeting. The whole family declares that all Poles are *'molto gentili e intelligenti'*. Perhaps I shall be asked to demonstrate a Polish national dance and to sing an aria by Moniuszko. Unexpectedly, the owner inquires if there are divorces in Poland. I lie that there are none, and a wave of praise covers my head." Not only lies and comedy, then, but Herbert spelled *pizza* and *trattoria* right.

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Cabbages and Chrysanthemums *continued*

> There they stand aloof and would be out of reach
> Smiling and accomplished in whatever exercise
> Accomplishes nothing. Yet time will tender each
> A long-deserved proscription and see their paradise
> Derelict, and break their laws, disproving all
> their lies . . . .

The repetition recalls Eliot, again, while the modified Alexandrines echo the arch formalism of James Merrill, but the high-toned moralism is Hine's own, and falls flat on my ear. This flatness, however, evinces his detachment, the neutral music that indulges an epigone's preference for ruin: "many of Poland's private monuments have been publicly restored; but it is in those that have not been replaced, in occasional dereliction and absence, that I admired her grandeur. What she has lost is immense, and perhaps well lost" (35). That loss belongs, properly, not so much to the Poland from which Hine withholds himself as to his own sensibility: a late impressionism that remains lost in a translation that never quite takes place.

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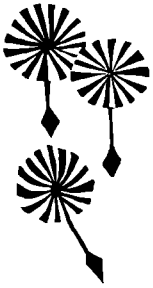
Hine, Daryl. *Polish Subtitles: Impressions from a Journey.* Toronto: Abelard-Schuman, 1962.



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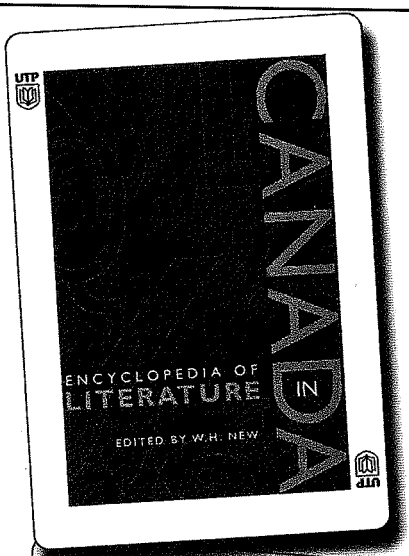

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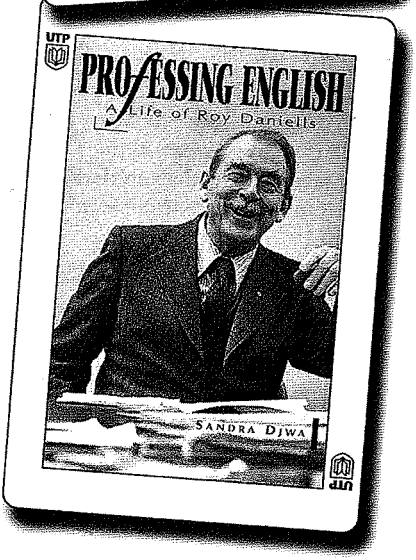

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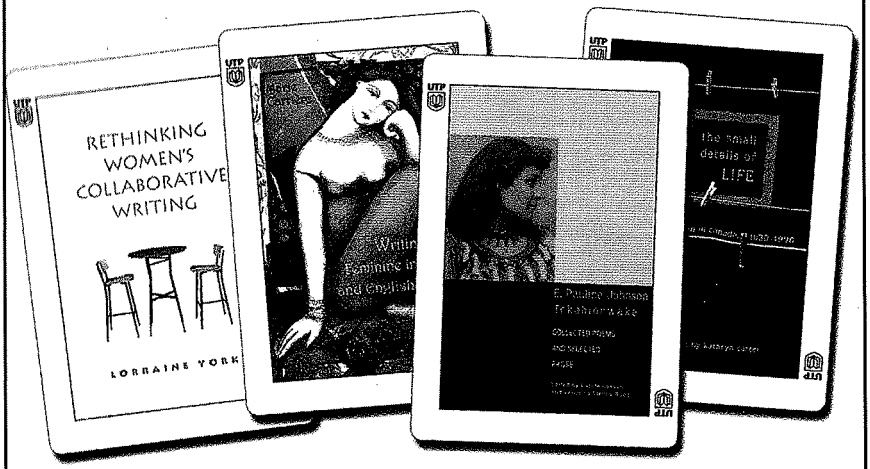

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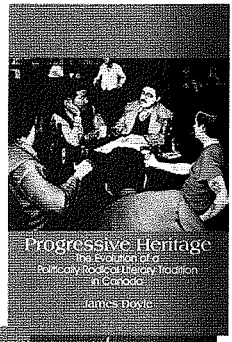

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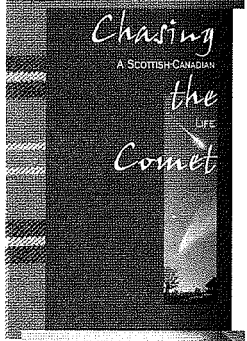

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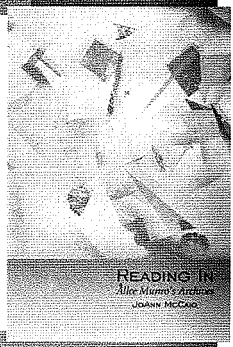

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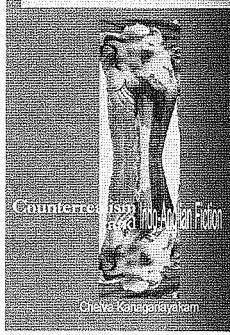

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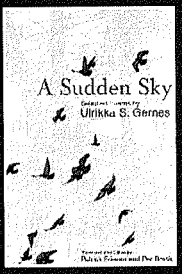

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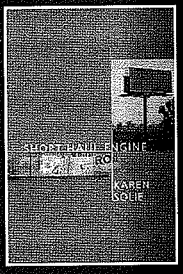

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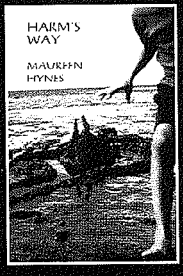

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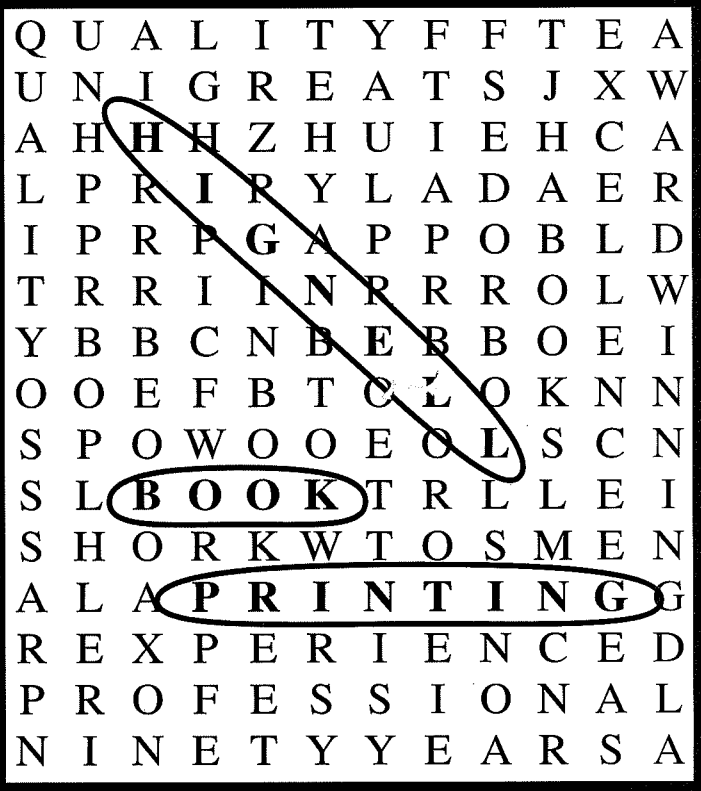

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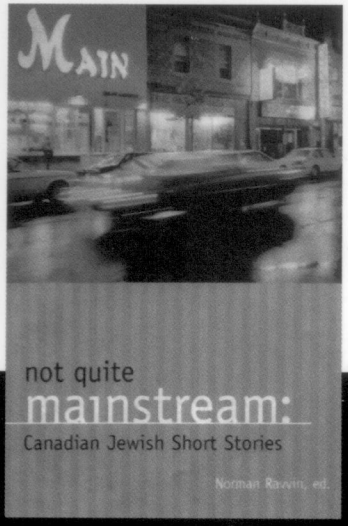

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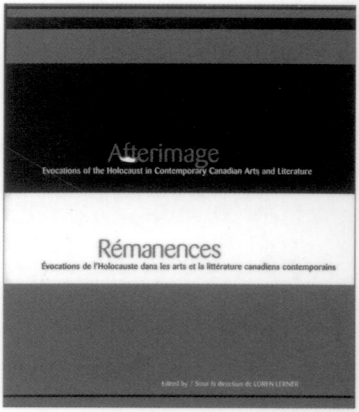

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