

**Gendered Discourse and Subjectivity
in Travel Writing by Canadian Women**

by

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ABSTRACT
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**Gendered Discourse and Subjectivity in
Travel Writing by Canadian Women**

The subject of this dissertation – non-fictional travel writing by Canadian women – has been thrice marginalized by scholarly criticism. As an interdisciplinary genre that is difficult to categorize, travel writing was long excluded from literary analysis. In time, some renegade critics turned their attention to travel writing, pointing out the genre's value as an aesthetic, historical, cultural, and autobiographical document. However, since they tended to ignore its significance as a gendered document, they articulated a gender-blind tradition of the genre that either excluded women travel writers or glossed over the gender-related difference of their texts. In response, feminist critics began identifying a distinct tradition of women's travel writing. However, they usually limited their analysis to nineteenth-century texts, thereby excluding travel writing by Canadian women, which is largely a twentieth-century product. Thus, travel writing by Canadian women has been marginalized on the level of genre, gender, and nation. This dissertation works on and through these levels in an effort to achieve a comprehensive, contextualized analysis of Canadian women's travel writing.

Since travel and travel writing are thoroughly gender-inflected cultural practices, a substantial portion of the female travel writer's subjectivity is constructed by gendered discourse. In Canadian women's travel writing, woman-identified, feminine, and feminist discourses pervade the travel writers' inscriptions of their subjectivity.

Chapter One of this study explores one manifestation of this gendered subjectivity: the feminist ethnographic discourse in texts by Margaret MacLean, Agnes Deans Cameron, Karen Connelly, and Bronwyn Drainie. In Chapter Two, travel books by Bharati Mukherjee, Daphne Marlatt, Rona Murray, and Myrna Kostash are analysed as feminine matrocentric discourses, wherein each author retrieves maternal memories and messages as she returns to an ancestral homeland. The travel books examined in Chapter Three are composed by incorporated travelling wives: women who accompany their husbands on their work-related journeys. In texts by Ella Manning, Philomena Orford, P.K. Page, Margaret Laurence, and Carlotta Hacker, we find feminine discourses of domestic support or public assistance in a husband's career, as well as feminist discourses of resistance to this incorporation and discourses of self-fulfilling travel experiences beyond wifely incorporation.

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Introduction:

**Gendered Discourse and Subjectivity
in Travel Writing by Canadian Women**

The theory of women's travel writing articulated in this analysis evolves out of a personal register, that being my own experiences of travel, of writing travel, and of reading travel. When returning to Japan through the journal I wrote while residing and teaching there, I am fascinated by the subjectivity I find inscribed. Teresa de Lauretis defines subjectivity as "patterns by which experiential and emotional contents, feelings, images, and memories are organized to form one's self-image, one's sense of self and others, and of our possibilities of existence" (5). My subjectivity betrayed, among other things, my culturally-disoriented consciousness: "I feel as though I am hanging upside-down in suction-cupped shoes and wonder, if I remove my shoes to enter Japan, as is custom here, will I fall downwards into the sky?" This question presented itself several weeks after my arrival as the last train of the evening shunted me from central Tokyo to my new *apartu* in the suburb of Suginami Ku.

The most salient, compelling feature of my Japan journal, however, is the pervasiveness of a gendered subjectivity. By this I mean my experience travelling as a woman as well as my interest in the experiences of the women from my host culture and how notions of gender shape our lives. The term 'gender' as I use it here and throughout this study refers to the social, political, and cultural meanings grafted onto biological sex, an interpretation informed by feminist poststructuralist theorists such as Chris Weedon. In *Feminist Practice and Poststructuralist Theory*, Weedon views gender as a product of discourse: ways of thinking and being in the world that circulate through language, and that seek to govern the conscious and unconscious mind and emotional life of their subjects (Weedon 108). Subjectivity is conveyed through discourse, but it is also sculpted by discourse. The discourses of gender of which Weedon speaks have influenced women's subjectivity – their sense of themselves as women as well as their possibilities of existence as women – for centuries.¹

In my Japan journal, I wrote of my curiosity about Japanese women and the gendered contours of their lives, and my text incorporates the voices of female friends and students, like Yoko, a computer engineer, and Miss Takeuchi, a secretary, both of whom were young, working, single women like myself. Unlike myself, my friends anticipated the day when they would marry, quit their jobs, and become full-time homemakers, wives, and mothers, a normative cycle in a Japanese woman's life during the time of my sojourn. Moreover, my journal contains sketches of women I saw, yet who remained voiceless and unknown to me: the preoccupied housewives whirring by on bicycles on their way to market, the hunched-over elderly women in public baths scrubbing each other's backs, the ubiquitous milk-toothed poster-girls who adorned banks and telephone booths, and the child star of the porn flick "Little Lips," who splayed her gartered legs to my gaze in a subway poster. My gendered subjectivity also manifested itself in lengthy considerations of my reception in Japan as a young, *gaijin* (foreign) woman. In pants, comfortable shoes, and short hair, I was received as a stereotype of the liberated Western woman, which apparently connoted a yearning for promiscuous casual sex. To my initial astonishment, efforts at tolerant amusement, and ultimate distress, this sanctioned improper propositions and questions, myriad subway gropings, and even more invasive 'hands-on' experiences by Japanese men as well as by the *gaijin* men I met who revelled in the testosterone-charged atmosphere of Japan. Interestingly, these were frequently the same *gaijin* who objected to my gendered critiques of Japan. They self-righteously tossed out terms like cultural relativism and the politics of representation of cultural others – important concepts I myself was struggling with in a way my *gaijin* male counterparts could avoid.

With my Japan journal in mind, I began reading non-fictional, book-length, English-language travel accounts by other Canadian women to see if, to what degree, and in what ways the inscribed subjectivities were inflected by gender. In fanning out from my own experiences and writings to those of other women, I am directed by feminist cultural critic Elspeth Probyn. In *Sexing the Self: Gendered Positions in Cultural Studies*, Probyn reinstalls the critical methodology of personal experience in feminist studies, making the "very basic point" that the "experiential is part of the critical

enterprise itself,” that it is necessarily “imbricated within a critical stance,” and that the feminist critic is “directed by and to the experience of being gendered” (23). It is with Probyn in mind that I commence this study of Canadian women’s travel writing with a “discursive striptease” (12), with a description of my experience travelling and travel writing. However, I offer my story not as an authoritative account of the travel-writing woman, but as a segue into a broader analysis. My desire is to engage a methodology that “stretch[es] my experience beyond the merely personal, not as a way of transcendence but as a way of reaching her experiences, the experiences and selves of women” (Probyn 4).

Feminist critic Nancy Miller would identify my reading practice as a “gender-marked” approach to genre, signifying a “commitment to decipher what women have said (or more important, left unsaid) about the pattern of their lives” through various genres (56-57). In his editorial for *Granta*’s immensely popular 1984 issue on travel writing, Bill Buford defines the genre as “pre-eminently a narrative told in the first person. authenticated by lived experience” (7). Apparently, Buford also views the genre as pre-eminently scribed by men judging from his selection ratio of fifteen male authors to two female authors, one of whom – Jan Morris – was formerly James. In her introduction to the anthology *Without a Guide: Contemporary Women’s Travel Adventures*, Canadian writer Katherine Govier balks at Buford’s selection for *Granta*’s 1991 “best of” travel issue, where the ratio of male-to-female authors has increased to 21:2. She asks, “Is travel writing the last bastion of macho journalists?” (xiii). While I applaud Govier’s question and its provocative tone – Buford’s editorial decisions may indeed be a last-ditch effort to grab masculine literary territory – I frame my questions somewhat differently. I wonder if his criteria for inclusion and exclusion are determined (and limited) by a conception of travel writing based on masculine models of the genre. Does the gender blindness he exhibits in his selection process extend to his ability to read women’s travel texts? Since, as we shall see, women’s travel writing departs in significant ways from a universalized and normalized masculine tradition, does Buford know how to read and value the difference of women’s travel writing?

We find difference at the very beginning of women's participation in travel and its textualization. Buford defines the genre by its autobiographical components, as a first-person narrative authenticated by lived experience (7). Historically, however, women have been excluded from living that experience and, since the genre is predicated on the journey taken, from writing it. These exclusions were sustained by age-old ideologies of gender exemplified by the archetypal figures of wandering Odysseus and waiting Penelope. By the late nineteenth century, as discursive constraints on women's travel loosened, unprecedented numbers of white, Western, middle-to-upper class women travelled abroad, many of them alone or with female companions, for the first time in history (Frawley 21; Russell 23-24; Stevenson 2). Canadian women began sailing seas and meandering through unfamiliar cities, countries, and continents (Kröller 74). Continuing into the twentieth century, women's experiences of travel presented new ways of being in the world. As they literally moved across geographies, their subject positions – their notions of "Where I stand" (Fuss 29) – shifted figuratively. Some, for example, assumed the subject position of travel writer by using their travel experience as what Mary Suzanne Schriber depicts as a "passport to the hitherto predominantly masculine domain of the travel book" (*Telling Travels* xxi).

Women entered this domain with metaphorical passport in hand, which they stamped themselves with gender-specific marks reflecting their experiences of travel and writing as women. As I began reading book-length accounts of travel by Canadian women, the earliest of which were published in the last decade of the nineteenth century, I was taken by the prominence of gendered discourses that went into each author's representation of her subjectivity. So many of their discourses were 'woman-identified' in that they were about women encountered en route and about the writers themselves as women travelling through gendered spaces in a female body. Some of these gendered discourses were feminine in that they conformed to traditional, socially constructed definitions of womanhood. Others were feminist in that they incorporated a politics of change and resistance to the less palatable, more constricting features of femininity, and because they articulated a desire for self-fulfillment within the context of patriarchal cultural constraints.ⁱⁱ

One reason gendered discourses are so pronounced in representations of the travel writing woman's subjectivity – more so, I would argue, than other autobiographical genres – is because women's travel was construed as transgressive by ideologies of gender for so long. This limitation on women's travel has had ramifications for women writers of travel. It produced women travellers who were and, in some environments, still are made to feel extremely aware of the gendered implications of their sex. Moreover, as women cross cultures, they are often forced to negotiate different constructions of female status and propriety in their host culture, which also foments gendered self-reflexivity. Since the travel text is predicated and shaped by the travel experience, this gendered consciousness finds its way into their discourse. Such gendered consciousness is seldom expressed in men's travel writing. As Peter Middleton notes in *The Inward Gaze: Masculinity and Subjectivity in Modern Culture*, because many men do not know they even have a gender, perceiving themselves first and foremost as human, gendered self-reflexivity is minimal in their representations of subjectivity (11). Psychologically and physically unshackled by constraining ideological discourses of gender, men have viewed the privilege of travel as tacit, as a personal prerogative, as a possibility of their human existence. Thus, the fact of their gender and its cultural resonances are rarely underscored in their travel accounts.

The historical restrictions on women's travel have also had ramifications for readers of women's travel writing. Women-identified, feminine, and feminist discourses are novel in a genre where gendered discourses are traditionally, normatively masculine. Middleton writes, "Mostly men's culture is simply assumed to be universal culture, men's issues simply human issues" (51). In light of Buford's selections for *Granta*'s travel issues, I would add that 'mostly men's' travel writing has been simply assumed to be travel writing, which is an erroneous assumption indeed. Perusing Buford's selections, I found numerous male subjectivities conveyed through hyper-masculine discourses about death-defying travels through war-torn countries, coups, and extreme landscapes. As well, I found texts bereft of self-reflexive gendered subjectivity, which is also a masculine discourse of sorts in the thoroughly gender-inflected context of travel and its inscription. Middleton generally argues that men's subjectivity is gendered by discourses

of masculinity that go unnoticed, except by female feminist critics who are seasoned ‘inward gazers’ with respect to gender. As one of those seasoned gazers, I wonder if Buford noticed the prevailing masculine discourses when making his editorial selections, and if he unwittingly equated travel writing with masculine discourse. Women’s travel writing calls for a paradigm shift in how the genre is conceived. When women claimed their passports to the “hitherto predominantly masculine domain of the travel book” (Schriber *Telling Travels* xxi), the identifying pictures on the passports altered, as did the gender of that literary domain. This study is an exploration of some of those changes within the context of travel writing by Canadian women.

Before plunging into the primary texts, I would like to break down the somewhat unruly compound subject of my inquiry – Canadian women’s travel writing – into manageable parts. The subjects of travel, travel writing, women’s travel writing, and Canadian travel writing each requires individual scrutiny and clarification with respect to gender issues. When I reunite the parts at the end of this introduction, the subject of Canadian women’s travel writing – an original, unfamiliar, or even odd topic of literary study to some – will rest on firmer, more familiar bedrock.

The meaning of ‘travel’ is not as axiomatic as it may first appear. The term has functioned as a metaphorically-freighted, all-purpose signifier for any activity that entails movement through time and space: to read, to write, to live is to travel. The definition of travel in this study, however, is specific: travel is the movement of a body across geographical, cultural, political, and/or linguistic spaces. Given the Canadian context of this study, travel is performed by Canadian women within and beyond the boundaries of Canada. Although this definition casts a large net that potentially encompasses migrancy and settlement, exile and nomadism, these forms of travel are beyond the scope of this analysis. The parameters of travel that concern us here extend as far as the voluntary circuit or sojourn: travel structured by a voyage away from home, time abroad which may span days or years, and a return voyage.

This operative definition of travel is poised between two conceptual extremes: the perception of travel as a metaphor for life itself and the belief that travel is dead.

To define travel as such – as a circuitous movement across geographies – is to assert that it still, indeed, exists. This affirmation runs counter to some travel critics who, in keeping with the modernity's penchant for declaring things dead, have lamented the demise of travel. Several of these critics-in-mourning ground their belief in travel's passing on sexist as well as classist and imperialist premises and assumptions I wish to avoid. In *Abroad: British Literary Traveling Between the Wars*, for example, Paul Fussell makes a distinction between the grand bourgeois age of travel and the gauche proletarian moment of tourism that has usurped and ruined travel, making it "hardly possible anymore" (37). He has an axe to grind with Thomas Cook, the nineteenth-century father of modern tourism who "got the bright idea of shipping sight-seeing groups to the Continent" (38). His book is a tribute to the "young," "clever," and "literate" Englishmen who travelled between the wars, which he identifies as "the final age of travel" (vii).ⁱⁱⁱ In "The Man from Rangoon," British travel writer Peter Fleming also laments the demise of the great age of British travel, a passing he attributes to the "contraction of our Empire" (8). He misses the "cosmic version of the 'old boy net,'" when male imperialists took for granted the "far-flung but well-established contacts which linked these [British] islands with remote parts of our planet" (8-9). In a similar vein, Evelyn Waugh introduces a selected edition of his travels, *When the Going Was Good*, with a tribute to the bygone days when "we" could "feel the world wide open to us" (11). Travel, so his argument implies, just isn't what it was in the glory days of a masculine high imperialism, when the planet was Britain's oyster, before decolonization and independence movements made it more difficult to shuck the oyster and help oneself.

Other critics argue that 'real' travel is still possible, but that it is a moribund, rare bird close to extinction in this age of global tourism. Such critics busy themselves by constructing evaluative, hierarchical taxonomies that pit legitimate travel against its younger bastard brother – or what we might regard as its sister – tourism. Travel writer and critic Paul Theroux, for example, concocts a taxonomy of travel and the traveller that is macho verging on the masochistic. He identifies two sorts of travellers: the first sort who engage in "true travel" endure deprivation, discomfort, danger, homesickness, solitude, and panic in order to sample virginal "new scenes" (131,133). Theroux's other

traveller who engages in “mock-travel” displays a fondness for the accoutrements of tourism: airplanes, group tours, familiar food, and comfortable accommodations (131). According to Theroux, these mock-travellers are incapable of making interesting discoveries about themselves and their surroundings because such discoveries are engendered by “disgusting food and long nights” (135). Theroux, incidentally and not surprisingly, assures us that he is a ‘true’ traveller, that his is “the purest form of travel” (126).^w Margaret Laurence, in *The Prophet’s Camel Bell*, espouses a creed quite different from Theroux’s while caravaning in the Somali desert. Although she is participating in what he would classify as true travel, she chooses to sleep on an air mattress in the back of a Bedford truck rather than on a canvas cot in a tent, declaring, “I have never seen any reason for being more uncomfortable than necessary” (78). Moreover, Edith Wharton’s travel writings, *Italian Backgrounds* (1905) and *A Motor-Flight Through France* (1908), record a travel experience positively luxurious set against Theroux’s criteria, but her writings also inscribe a significant process of self-discovery that culminated in her expatriation from America to France.^x

When one regards some of these theories and taxonomies in light of the history of women’s travel, a history that gains astonishing momentum during the late nineteenth century, one might conclude that women were merely bit players who stumbled onto the stage during ‘real’ travel’s eleventh hour. One might even suspect that the proliferation of women’s travel had some etiological link to its demise or degradation in the twentieth century. Historically, circuitous voluntary travel was the privilege of the Western, white, middle-to-upper-class male, a rite/right of passage that reached its pinnacle with the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Grand Tour, when European travel was considered essential to a young gentleman’s education (Urry 4). As mentioned earlier, ideologies of gender ensured that women of all ages remained home-bound. On rare occasions, they were permitted to travel in the company of trusted chaperones: husbands, fathers, and brothers who, concerned for their charges’ safety and, above all, their honourable reputations, kept them under close surveillance (Morris “Women and the Journey” 25; Schriber *Telling Travels* xiv).

The increase in women's travel during the late Victorian period is partly attributable to imperialistic opportunism. By slipping through the holes of Fleming's "old boy net" cast by a terrible and terribly successful British Empire, a few tenacious women crossed oceans on their own and roamed continents in the company of native guides. They traversed subjugated landscapes where their authority and safety were somewhat ensured by their white skin, which obfuscated their gender in the eyes of the colonized (Birkett 116-119; Stevenson 4). Other reasons for the increase in women's travel at this time were contemporary challenges to gender ideology and advancements in travel and transportation technology, changes which dovetailed to serendipitous effect for the would-be Victorian woman traveller (Schröber *Telling Travels* xiv). Eva-Marie Kröller, in her historical analysis of Victorian-Canadian women travellers, attributes the escalation in women's travel to the evolution of the 'New Woman' who demanded suffrage, economic independence, careers outside the home, and the freedom to explore regions far beyond the garden gate (74). Concurrently, modernization in the technology of travel in the form of improved communications, accommodations, and modes of transportation, made it more affordable, comfortable, accessible, and safer to a greater number of people in general and women in particular.¹ In bringing a degree of safety and comfort to travel (for those who chose to travel this way), systems of tourism buttressed independent women's travel, a socio-historical phenomenon some travel critics appear to construe as the democratization and feminization of travel, ergo the degradation of travel. When you consider their diachronic reading of travel's demise in light of the history of women's travel, you find that 'real' travel dropped dead after women started doing it. Women, the subtext suggests, are deluded tourists, travel pretenders and murderers. 'real' travel party-poopers.

The movement of bodies across geographical, cultural, political, and linguistic spaces: this straightforward definition of travel by-passes the hierarchical, exclusionary oppositions between travel and tourism or 'real' and 'mock' travel. Jonathan Culler, in his essay "Semiotics of Tourism," views these binary oppositions as integral to the discourse of tourism itself. Culler's observations are useful because the concept of travel outside and beyond the discourse of tourism is left undefined, clearing the way for a non-

evaluative definition of travel. My ultimate intention is not to argue that tourism does not exist, or that it has not had some lamentable side effects, but to get outside the discourse of tourism to where travel may be said to live. In his curmudgeonly preface to *Triste Tropiques*, anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss claims the world has become a trashy monoculture that precludes “real” travel to “real” places (43-44). My impressions of globalization are more in alignment with anthropologist Mary Catherine Bateson, who observes the “superficial Americanization”(22) that covers many parts of the globe with a thin veneer, as well as the rich cultural diversity of expression, action, feeling, history, and emotion that still resides beneath this veneer. Scratch the surface, and you will find a place to travel. I have found it useful to submit Lévi-Strauss’s declarations and others of his ilk to Culler’s deconstruction of the travel/tourism debate. He convincingly argues that the signifiers “mock,” “true,” “authentic,” and “real,” when used in the context of this debate, are engendered by the discourse of tourism itself. By citing nineteenth-century anti-tourist rhetoric, Culler makes the point that discourses of ‘true’ travel evolved alongside those of tourism, so that travel and tourism are “not so much historical categories as the terms of an opposition integral to tourism” (130). With Culler’s argument in mind we can abandon the discourse of tourism and its hierarchical binary oppositions and proceed with the non-evaluative definition of travel operative in this study. I have no interest in distinguishing the ‘true’ traveller from the pretender. The Canadian women travellers I have come to know through their texts have physically traversed geographies, cultures, national borders, and languages: that is, they are travellers, travel writers.

Far from the critical beaten paths within the libraries of academe, travel writing has dwelled on darkened, sequestered shelves amongst other non-traditional literatures. I had to literally wipe away cobwebs from several of the primary texts analysed in this study. As I.S. MacLaren argues in his introduction to a special issue on travel literature in *Ariel: A Review of International English Literature*, “Because most curricula were fashioned by university departments of literature during the reign, or in the wake, of High Modernism’s academic disdain for all but a few genres, study of one [travel writing] that

gave birth to the English novel and some forms of poetry has languished" (5).^{vii} No doubt the genre's tendency to slip into, out of, and in-between conventional generic categories also has something to do with its marginalization as a legitimate field of study. One might say that travel writing, in its broadest conception, is the genre that isn't 'one.' It has a "dauntingly heterogeneous character" (Kowalewski 7) that assumes numerous literary forms, including letters, journals, diaries, memoirs, travelogues, fragments of autobiographies and biographies, journalistic reports, poetry, novels, and field notes. It may reside anywhere along the fact-fiction continuum, and the narrator may speak in the first or third person or, as in the case of the guidebook or itinerary, second person. Moreover, travel writing incorporates a myriad of informational discourses, such as the geographical, the aesthetic, the ethnographic, the historical, the archeological, the autobiographical, the imperialist, and the post-colonial. Despite this generic, bound(ry)less multitudinousness, and its appealing potential as postmodernist playmate, many critics, myself included, regard the non-fictional, first-person, "autobiographically determined" (Batten 32) narrative to be its core, its fundamental manifestation. The factual, first-person narrative, writes Percy Adams, is the "archetypal" form of the *récit de voyage* (*Travel Literature and the Evolution of the Novel* 164). When I mention travel writing throughout this study, it is to factual, first-person narratives that I refer.

As an autobiographical narrative, travel writing is a 'map' of the self travelling, a fitting cartographic metaphor from Helen Buss who, in *Mapping Our Selves: Canadian Women's Autobiography*, reads autobiographical texts as maps of an author's subjectivity. In the introduction to her text, Buss expresses her desire to "understand the complex subjectivities of women writing themselves into the literature and history of this place" (3). Her aim is similar to my own, although this study encompasses women who write themselves into this place by travelling it or by taking temporary leave of it.

Subjectivity revealed through autobiographical inscription in travel writing has increased through the passing of centuries. First-person travel writing may be roughly broken down into informational and autobiographical discourses, the former consisting of vertical description of sites seen, the latter of horizontal narratives of personal experience. Several critics contend that the informational component of travel writing has lost ground

to the autobiographical over time. In *The Witness and the Other World: Exotic European Travel Writing, 400-1600*, Mary B. Campbell depicts contemporary travel writing as an autobiographical document of personal experience that is “fully narrative, fully inhabited by its narrator” (6), but she explains that this was not always so. Campbell locates the protracted genesis of the modern travelling ‘I’ in texts written between the fifth and seventeenth centuries, and traces its evolution throughout this premodern era.

Interestingly, she identifies a woman travel writer, the Christian pilgrim Egeria, as the first practitioner of “a new autobiographical genre” (4), choosing her over Herodotus and Ctesias – men often accredited as the first exemplars of travel writing based on first-hand experience. She does so because these “traveling historians, geographers, and navigators of classical antiquity do not dwell in their books on journey or self, but only in the data accumulated during the journey” (25). In contrast, Egeria’s account of her pilgrimage to the Near East, the *Peregrinatio ad terram sanctam*, is a turning point in the travel book’s burgeoning “capitulation to egoism” (25) because it is grounded in the author’s journey experience. Campbell does point out, however, that Egeria is a self-effacing narrator whose ‘I’ is representative, didactic, transpersonal, and ultimately deployed to spiritual ends (26). Thus, Egeria “opened the door onto a new autobiographical genre,” but only a “crack” (30).

According to Campbell, the Renaissance hero and his narratives of personal adventure superceded the ‘transpersonal persona’ of Egeria. She sees the autobiographical component of the travel text approaching fruition in the fourteenth-century writings of Mandeville, whom she refers to as the “father” of modern travel writing.^{viii} In addition, she mentions the fifteenth-century journals, letters, and historical tracts of Christopher Columbus. Both Mandeville and Columbus represent themselves as central protagonists whose self-inscriptions intrude into the more conventional *descriptio* (168,191). However, at this point in the history of the genre, informational discourses were still of prime importance because Europe’s imperialistic drives in this age of exploration translated into a need for information about worlds yet to be mapped, ‘discovered,’ appropriated (Campbell 168).

Picking up where Campbell left off, Janet Giltrow, in her Ph.D. dissertation “North American Travel Writing,” identifies what she regards as the diminishing informational “pretext” in travel writing from the 1600s to the present. According to Giltrow, this once documentary form became increasingly autobiographical because so many sites had been seen by the end of the eighteenth century. She adds, “Only the unique perspicacity of the observer could justify yet another reiteration of a predictable route. It became important that *this* traveller went, and that *he* responded in a worthwhile way” (76). Furthermore, Giltrow argues that the twentieth-century boom in information technologies usurped the documentary function of travel writing as people began turning to other mediums for global information, a phenomenon she believes led to the genre’s “obsolescence” (14) and status as a “literary relic” (1). Giltrow’s dissertation was written in 1979, which explains her unfortunate verdicts: she condemns the genre just prior to its new wave of popularity in the 1980s, when a fresh crop of fine writers, anthologies, and scholarly analyses appeared.

Within the confines of her dissertation, however, Giltrow’s position is determined and, I believe, flawed by her rigid definition of travel writing as an objective, documentary art (1-2, 14). Unlike Campbell, who sees travel writing evolving into an engaging, highly subjective, autobiographical form, Giltrow views increasing self-reference and self-inscription as symptoms of the genre’s decadence, degeneracy, and demise. Why, one might ask of Giltrow’s analysis, is an interest in *this* traveller, what *she* saw and experienced, and how *she* recorded it, so insignificant? Furthermore, one might question whether the informational component of travel writing is as diminished as Giltrow suggests, since this argument rests on the assumption that the world stands still. While travel writing might not be the first reference people turn to for information about the changing world (as they once did to learn of a new and expanding world), I believe readers still take pleasure in and learn from its documentary component.

It is to another source of subjectivity in travel writing, one distinct from explicitly autobiographical gestures, which I now wish to turn to in an admittedly and necessarily round-a-bout way. As mentioned earlier, travel writing is a map of the self travelling. In addition, we typically find informational discourses that construct maps of the ‘other’:

other peoples, places, landscapes, and cultures encountered *en route*. Historically, this informational discourse was usually framed as facts gleaned through objective observation, and the reading audience preferred these facts to be odd or spectacular. Travellers from antiquity to the Renaissance returned from the map's margins with tales of one-footed Sciopods, Cyclops, Patagonian giants, and Dogheads, returned, that is, to the map's *oikumene* (inner circle or sanctum) which owed its very 'centredness' to the margins it created (Campbell 65). Part of the appeal of reading travel was to learn about 'wondrous strange' yet seldom wonderful others who inhabited the margins, and who confirmed readers' sense of themselves as the norm and the ideal. To this day, travel writers and readers savour stories of 'anomalies' that owe their not-so-normal status to their existence outside the travel writer's and reader's cultural, racial, or ethnic *oikumene*. As Fussell notes, travel writers and readers are still "staggered and delighted" by such details as the sale of little pots of excrement, a reference to native Mexicans who sell excrement for hide-tanning purposes (164). Readers have consumed these representations as facts rather than interpretations, even though these frequently disparaging facts reflected the author's racism, xenophobia, cultural chauvinism, or imperial agenda. The travel reading public, that is, has frequently consumed little pots of excrement.

However, the documentary discourses of travel writing are now widely perceived to be in the governance of the subjective and, as such, indirectly autobiographical. From this perspective, the binary distinction between travel writing's autobiographical discourse and informational, documentary discourse collapses. The subjectivity of cross-cultural representation is most rigorously and politically demonstrated by postcolonial theorists. Since its proliferation in the 1970s, postcolonial theory has interpreted travel writing as an agent of and accomplice to the crimes perpetuated by Euroimperialism. From Edward's Said's seminal *Orientalism* onwards, a host of post-colonial critics have viewed representations of others in travel writing as neither veridical nor objective, but as projections of the author's own fears and desires. Autobiographical subject positions, such as an author's gender, nationality, political affiliation, imperialist agenda, and

historical moment, are seen as determining factors in how others are perceived and represented.¹⁸

Travel writing, it is argued, is not an innocuous written record of inter-cultural contact but a producer of colonial and neocolonial discourses. The pistons of the genre which propel the ideological engine of imperialism and cultural hegemony are heuristic signifying practices – tropes and rhetorics – that produce the rest of the world for a Western, white readership. It is a world constructed as absence, anomaly, subordinate, inferior, lack: a world ripe for intervention and exploitation of various kinds.

The vexed issue of ethno-racial and cultural ‘othering’ in travel writing may make some critics wish for the genre’s obsolescence or question its future in the climate of postcolonial enlightenment. As Michael Kowalewski notes in his introduction to an essay collection on modern travel writing, “A postcolonial legacy of cultural ignorance or willful distortion has simply made it more difficult to indulge in the sort of breezy generalities (or even outright bigotry) that characterize much nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century travel narratives” (10). As a devoted reader and critic of the genre, he advocates consciousness-raising in the form of readers, writers, and critics who are “healthily aware of the problems encountered in interpretive ethnography” (10). *Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography* (1986), a landmark text in its field, addresses the crisis in ethnography brought about by postcolonial theory. The editor of the collection, James Clifford, argues for more self-reflexive ethnographic writing, assuming that an ethnographic lens as focused on the self as it is on the other will produce texts which yield to autobiography and dispel the illusion of objectivity (14). Drawing on Clifford’s ethnographic theory, David Spurr catalogues several counter-colonizing representational strategies he has observed in recent travel writing, one of which is autobiographical self-reflexivity (192). Contrary to Giltrow’s argument that autobiographical inscription led to the genre’s decadence and degeneracy, it is now seen as a potentially redeeming feature.

A deceptively simple opening passage from Canadian writer John Moss’s self-reflexive travel narrative, *Enduring Dreams: An Exploration of Arctic Landscape*,

delineates the subjectivity of the traveller's perception and, by extension, the travel writer's text:

Remember fresh snow melting in your mouth when you were a child? That was what clean tasted like; the word and the sensation, inseparable. Now in July of 1993 as I bend to scoop a drink from the Sanguqiak – a whole river of meltwater – memory is transformed into landscape. The reflection of my face is obscured by the sloping shadow of my hat, so that what I seem is an absence, although I can clearly see the boulders and gravel of the river bottom within my projected shape. (ix)

As Moss bends Narcissus-like to look into the Arctic river, he is seemingly defaced. This absence is illusory, however, because what he does see and make perceptible – the rocky river bottom – is framed by his own shadow, a shadow adumbrated by the river's mirroring surface waters. Metaphorically, his shadow and what it circumscribes and makes visible is his text. In the language of cartography, the shadow/text is a map of the point where the subject apprehends the object and, more importantly, the object is revealed through the subject; what is revealed is determined by the shape of his own body. The questions I pursue in this study ask what kind of shadow/text is cast by women's travelling bodies, and what is revealed.

Such questions are beginning to attract critical attention and response. Although the earliest more or less sophisticated critical analyses of travel writing were engaged in the spadework of rediscovering, reclaiming, and defending neglected travel texts, only those penned by men were extricated from the soil. Critical texts such as Percy G. Adams's *Travelers and Travel Liars: 1600-1800* (1962) and Charles L. Batten's *Pleasurable Instruction: Form and Convention in Eighteenth-Century Travel Literature* (1978) excluded women writers without comment. Paul Fussell, in *Abroad: British Literary Traveling Between the Wars* (1980), implicitly justifies the conspicuous absence

of women writers in his analysis by claiming his subject is the best travel writing the British have to offer, including Graham Greene, Evelyn Waugh, Robert Byron, and Norman Douglas. This criterion of excellence precludes women writers, such as the prolific, widely travelled, and popular Freya Stark, whose works are, according to Fussell, “not distinguished”(197). His opinion contradicts that of anthologist and travel writer Mary Morris, who writes, “Few can match Stark’s ability to seize upon the *mot juste*, her luminous descriptive style, or the breadth of her sensitivity, whether she is writing about archeological history, the personality of Robin (her donkey), or a baby in a leather cradle” (*Maiden Voyages* 189).

Some critics have offered apologies and excuses for excluding women writers from their analyses. Editor Philip Dodd touts *The Art of Travel: Essays on Travel Writing* (1982) as “the first collection of critical essays to be devoted to British travel writing. It attempts to give a sense of the wealth of such writing, to map some of its forms and conventions and, implicitly, to claim a place for travel writing in any revised definition of literature” (“Preface”). Women’s writing, however, has no place in this revised definition, although Dodd apologizes for this omission, explaining that the contributor who had offered the token essay on women’s travel writing had to withdraw at the last moment (“Preface”). As recently as 1997, Casey Blanton’s *Travel Writing: The Self and the World* excludes all but one female author in an attempt to define the genre through its “representative authors and texts” (vii). Dennis Porter, in his Freudian psychoanalytic reading of men’s travel writing, *Haunted Journeys: Desire and Transgression in European Travel Writing* (1991), provides a valid reason for excluding women writers:

My decision to focus exclusively on male writers was rather the consequence of the surprising discovery, surprising to me at least, that the father/son relationship was a central, though often submerged, *topos* of so many of the texts I am concerned with. To deal adequately with the complex motivations that drive women to travel or at least to write about it would, therefore, require a separate book that would

have to be theorized differently. My own work might be regarded as in part a contribution to ‘masculinist studies.’(16-17)

Porter's creditable intention is to avoid the reaffirmation “of a male-dominated canon”(16) and the construction of a universal travel writing subject gendered male. His study demonstrates how gender-marked reading does not presuppose that men lead gender-free lives and write neutered texts.

There was some early interest in women’s travels in which the travel text was seldom named but merely functioned as a biographical source.^x By the 1990s, however, feminist literary archeologists excavated the female travel writing subject and recovered her texts, publishing them, some for the first time, in their entirety or in anthologies. Virago and Beacon Press collaborated in publishing a series of classic women travel writers including Isabella Bird, Kate O’Brien, Isabelle Eberhardt, and Mary Kingsley. Moreover, there has been a proliferation of anthologies on contemporary travel writing by women.^{xi} One of the more recent developments demonstrating the growing interest in this subject is the “Women’s Travel Writing, 1830-1930” web site set up as part of the Women’s Studies Digitization Project Initiative at the University of Minnesota.^{xii}

Alongside textual recuperation came scholarly analysis, the majority of which has been concerned with pre-twentieth-century, British women’s travel writing. Mary Suzanne Schriber’s *Writing Home: American Women Abroad, 1830-1920* (1997) is distinctive in its focus on American women travel writers of the Victorian era. She views women’s travel writing as an agent of social change. Borrowing Jane Tompkin’s terminology, Schriber analyzes American nineteenth- and early twentieth-century women’s travel writing as gender-specific “cultural work” that attempted to “redefine the social order” (qtd. in Schriber 3; Tompkins xi). Women’s travel writing, according to Schriber, was an “agent of cultural work” because the texts “shape, influence, and complicate the culture’s talk about the ‘woman question’” (7-8). Within the context of British women’s travel writing, Maria Frawley’s *A Wider Range: Travel Writing in Victorian England* (1994) and Elizabeth Bohls’ *Women Travel Writers and the Language of Aesthetics, 1716-1818* (1995) also posit the genre as an agent of social change.

According to these theorists, the subterfuge of travel journalism enabled women to write in areas beyond their traditional spheres, such as sociology, art criticism, adventure, and aesthetic theory.

The earliest assessment of gender difference in British, Victorian women's travel writing belongs to Catherine Barnes Stevenson, whose book *Victorian Women Travel Writers in Africa* was published in 1982. Stevenson argues that women's plot narratives are more likely to resemble odysseys: unstructured, meandering travels and texts where experience is sought for its own sake, as opposed to masculine, goal-oriented travel narratives that resemble bee-line quest-romances (8-9). Shirley Foster, in *Nineteenth-Century Women Travellers and Their Writings* (1990), ascertains a distinct genre of women's travel writing by tracing recurrent textual strategies, what she refers to as "a criteria of literary femininity" (19), that protected authors from accusations of feminist, manly, or unfeminine behaviour. They mitigated the unconventionality of their travel acts by attributing and emphasizing a proper, respectable purpose to their travels (8), voiding their texts of any reference to sexuality, undercutting their heroics with self-mockery and self-effacement (19), and heaping their texts with apologies (22). While most of these scholarly texts mention British imperialism in passing, Sara Mills's *Discourses of Difference: An Analysis of Women's Travel Writing and Colonialism* (1991), Billie Melman's *Women's Orients: English Women and the Middle East, 1718-1918* (1992), and Alison Blunt's *Travel, Gender, and Imperialism: Mary Kingsley and West Africa* (1994) place imperialism and gender side by side to see how they discursively inform each other. Mills, for example, argues that late nineteenth-century and early twentieth-century women travel writers were "unable to adopt the imperialist voice" and "assert the 'truths' of British rule without qualification" because of discourses of femininity (3).

All of the above-mentioned groundbreaking scholarly texts on women's travel writing are of inestimable value to this study in that they provide a historical foundation. I integrate numerous insights offered by these scholars into the following chapters. However, the *difference* of Canadian women's travel writing from nineteenth-century, British, colonial travel writing results in alternative manifestations of gendered discourse

and subjectivity. In particular, since Canadian women's (book-length) travel writing is for the most part a twentieth-century phenomenon, the travellers and texts, especially from the second half of the century, are less constrained by a monolithic discourse of femininity. Moreover, I find difference in the other discourses that intersect and refract gendered discourse. Some of the earlier Canadian texts incorporate imperialist discourses because the authors position themselves as Canadian colonial extensions of the British Empire. However, we also find interesting intersections between gender and diasporic discourses in the later texts, where the place travelled is the author's ancestral home – a discourse that reflects Canada's changing ethno-racial demographic.

This study also departs from theoretical conceptions of the relationship between discourse, subjectivity, and writing that are presented in other texts on women's travel writing, specifically by Sara Mills in *Discourses of Difference*. In reviewing the state of scholarship on women's travel writing thus far, she complains that travel books have been read as "primarily 'realist,' that is, they are not analysed as textual artifacts, but rather as simple autobiographies" (4). According to Mills, textual subjectivity is not a faithful representation of the writer because the writer's self is not a coherent entity and because it is controlled by powerful discourses (37). (In Mills's examples, subjectivity is constrained and pressured by nineteenth-century discourses of colonialism and femininity.) Even if the self could be "grasped" by the subject, notes Mills, its transcription into a text would still be illusory because its representation would also be mediated by powerful discourses (37). In other words, the writer's subjectivity and the writer's subjectivity within the text are not under the control of the writer, but are determined by discourses. Mills's theories are heavily influenced by the post-structuralist theories of Michel Foucault, who, she writes, "rejects the posing of the subject as the locus and origin of meaning, and . . . wishes to develop a system which does not refer to the subject as an originary position, but rather as a result of discursive forces. The supposed 'death of the subject' or 'death of the author' is in fact rather the turning away from the subject as the prime focus of analysis, and as the primary explanatory motor" (17). She supports this Foucauldian "dispersion of the subject," adding, "Although it is

difficult to discuss texts which are ‘authored’ without reference to the subject who wrote them, it is a useful move in the direction away from autobiographical readings” (37).

I resist extreme post-structuralism’s homicidal urge to dismember the travel writing subject and its tendency to wrench the travel experience from the travel writer from the travel text; at the same time, I find the humanist position that Mills writes against, which seamlessly links the travel experience to the travel writer to the travel text, theoretically unsophisticated. My own methodology both integrates and resists post-structuralist theories of travel writing such as Mills’s. Discourse theory is useful, and I employ its terms, but my understanding of discourse and its relationship to subjectivity and textualization must be clarified. Post-structuralism’s totalizing theory of discourse as the pre-eminent means of constituting the subject and her knowledge about her self and the world (her subjectivity) has some disturbing side effects: Discourse, star of the show, steals all the limelight once enjoyed by humanism’s Experience, which has been considerably demoted as a way of knowing. As Shirley Neuman argues, “To posit an understanding of the subject as only the product of discourse rather than also as a product of historical and material circumstances is to deny the experiential, even the corporeal, sources of some of [the] subject’s self knowledge” (217). In effect, to swing the pendulum to the post-structuralist extreme, to say knowledge is *determined* by discourse, tends to obscure the role of experience in manipulating discourse.

It must be stressed, and hard core post-structuralists do not stress it enough, that experience is both mediated by and mediates discourse. No doubt discourses shape and constrain our subjectivity and need to be taken into consideration. Mills’s application of Foucault’s discourse theory to women’s travel writing is useful in articulating an alternate women’s tradition where the subject and her writings are constrained by discourses of femininity. However, with self-awareness, subjects may equally manipulate, accept, produce, and reject discourses. That is why, for example, the traditional, dominant discourses that defined travel as unsuitable for ‘ladies’ confined the majority of women to the hearth and home, and why women who began travelling despite that discourse began contesting it as well from the margins of their lives and writing. In *Orientalism*, Said, who also employs and departs from discourse theory, writes, “Foucault believes that in

general the individual text or author counts for very little; empirically, in the case of Orientalism (and perhaps nowhere else) I find this not to be so. Accordingly my analyses employ close textual readings whose goal is to reveal the dialectic between individual text or writer and the complex collective formation to which his work is a contribution” (23-24).

This dialectic, I believe, applies to all subjects in discourse – Said’s agenda is showing in his speculative limitation of it to Orientalism. Judging from several of her comments, it is evident that Mills is aware that the subject experiences discourse as negotiation (9), but a number of her subsequent, definitive comments elide this dialectic. For example, she states that it is the convergence and conflict of the discourses of femininity and colonialism that “determines the style and content of women’s travel writing” (18), thereby denying the subject a determining role. This occurs as well when Mills denies the writing subject the privilege of self-expression. Travel texts, she writes, “are not expressions of individual subjects in the context of an alien country, but are the sites of various discourses which play on the text” (38). I would argue that travel texts are both, given the subject’s active engagement in processing discourse. Paraphrasing Foucault, Mills writes, “we should try to break down this common sense notion that a subject writes simply to express her/himself” (37). I would argue that this is something of great importance that the writing subject is trying to do and is capable of doing.

In questioning the realist reading of women’s travel writing, Mills raises the issue of writing and referentiality, an issue that has plagued theorists of autobiography as well. Her argument implies that representations of subjectivity and experience are not transparent accounts of what exists outside of the text because textualization is mediated by powerful discourses. The Victorian woman traveller, for example, may omit the experience of sexual assault in her account because of various discourses of feminine propriety. Here, Mills’s points are well-taken. However, referentiality should not be denied texts just because transparency is impugned. To do so is to sunder the text from the writer, to disembody it. What I am arguing for is a degree of textual referentiality. Travel writing, as an autobiographical genre, is marked by its *gesture* towards the textualization of subjectivity, of the self-in-the-world: the name on the page and the name

of the author are the same. In a sense, for both reader and writer, the genre contractually assumes a referential role. Although the travel writing text is not transparent or purely mimetic, and its author necessarily excludes, includes, and selects with varying degrees of consciousness and according to discursive pressures, it does not follow that referentiality is a complete illusion and that the textual subjectivity has no correspondence with the self-in-the-world. Travel writing may not be transparently referential, but it aspires to and achieves a translucency, a meaningful correspondence, a grounding in verifiable fact. The Canadian women's travel writing explored in this study, then, incorporates the traveller's self-expression through discourse and reflects, albeit imperfectly, the traveller's experience travelling in the world.

The amount of critical attention garnered by Canadian travel writers of either gender is minimal. Forthcoming examples reveal literary histories, anthologies, bibliographies, and critical analyses of Canadian travel literature that have, until recently, displayed a marked emphasis on travel writing about Canada by non-Canadian authors. Up to a point, this is perfectly understandable considering travel narratives by non-Canadians hold an originary position in Canada's literary history. As W.J. Keith notes in *Canadian Literature in English*, "we detect the first clear signs of literary activity in English Canada in the work of travellers and explorers . . . appropriately because their efforts at surveying the terrain . . . were necessary first steps towards coming to terms, imaginatively as well as practically, with the country as a whole" (13). Seeking a Canadian literary lineage, scholars such as Germaine Warkentin, I. S. MacLaren, and T.D. MacLulich have produced essays on the writings of explorers such as David Thompson, Samuel Hearne, and Alexander Mackenzie.^{xiii} However, in her introduction to *Canadian Exploration Literature: An Anthology*, Warkentin reminds us that such accounts, being European-authored, are "essentially European texts" (Warkentin xi).

Settlers followed explorers lockstep, as did their narratives, and "hard upon the heels of the settlers came the tourist-travellers" (Keith 22). According to Keith, "As Canada began to take shape in the second half of the nineteenth century, travel literature became a dominant form of non-fiction, though no indisputable masterpiece of the genre

appeared" (22). It is travel literature from this period, literature defined as Canadian by virtue of its documentation of Canadian travels rather than by Canadian authorship, which dominates Canadian scholarship. Numerous entries on travel literature in Canadian literary histories attest to the increase and popularity of travel writing about Canada written by visitors, but they give short shrift to texts produced by Canadians who themselves have travelled within and without Canadian borders. Elizabeth Waterston, who wrote *The Travellers: Canada to 1900*, an annotated bibliography on nineteenth-century travellers to Canada, composed the entry on Canadian travel writing for the first volume of the *Literary History of Canada*. Under the title "Travel Books 1860-1920," Waterston offers a compendium of books by "travellers who had 'done' Canada and were prepared to tell the world what they had found" (362-363). She surmises that Canadians themselves formed the largest audience for these travel books, "showing early and always an anxiety to know how their country affected her visitors" (363). We read, in "Travel Books on Canada 1920-1960," Waterston's contribution to the second volume of the *Literary History of Canada*, that one third of the travel books written during this period were by Canadians. However, the entries Waterston includes are for the most part penned by British and American travellers to Canada. An essay heavily indebted to Waterston's research, Marni L. Stanley's "Travelers' Tales: Showing and Telling, Slamming and Questing," analyses travel books by nineteenth- and twentieth-century women touring Canada, most of whom were British. Apart from settlers Susanna Moodie and Catherine Parr Traill, the one Canadian woman travel writer Stanley mentions, Agnes Deans Cameron, is not identified by nationality.

Similar elisions occur in the first and second editions of *The Oxford Companion to Canadian Literature* (1983, 1997) and in the 1985 edition of *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, where entries on Canadian travel literature in English show a preoccupation with travel writing by visitors to Canada. Canadian-authored texts about Canada and abroad again receive short shrift. The entries were written by Waterston, who, in monopolizing the market on travel writing in Canadian literary reference texts, has provided some excellent research material but has also produced a distorted impression of Canadian-authored texts. George Galt, in his review of *The Canadian Encyclopedia*

(1985) for *Books in Canada*, underscores this blind spot when he comments on how “no mention is made here of those who, like Margaret Laurence and George Woodcock, have written literary travelogues about other countries, nor of those who, like Al Purdy and Earle Birney, have travelled widely and brought home poems” (13). Nor, might I add, is mention made of women such as Mina Hubbard, Susie Rijnhart, Agnes Deans Cameron, or Ella Wallace Manning – Canadian travel writers I discovered by reading Irish author Mary Russell’s history of women’s travel, *The Blessings of a Good Thick Skirt: Women Travellers and Their World*. This preoccupation in Canadian scholarship with visitor’s travel tales about Canada is further manifested in other books, essays, bibliographies, and anthologies.^{xiv} The weight of this scholarship has the effect of suggesting that Canadians are unadventuresome residents of literal and mental garrisons, and that the scholarship on Canadian writing itself is mired in some kind of colonial mentality. In his “Conclusion to a *Literary History of Canada*,” Northrop Frye argues that the Canadian sensibility is obsessed with the conundrum, “Where is here?” (220). Scholars of Canadian travel writing turn to foreign authors in order to gain insight into where here is yet pay scant attention to Canadian travel writers’ interpretations of here as well as there.

One might argue, as Janet Giltrow does in “North American Travel Writing,” that Canadians did not produce travel literature until the twentieth century, which would partly explain the tendency to overlook Canadian-authored texts. Giltrow makes an interesting distinction between the development of travel literature in Canada and the United States. Until the nineteenth century, she argues, Canadian travel literature and that of the United States shared “common literary ground” because both literatures were authored by Europeans (iii-iv). Travel writing in the United States, however, set a “new course” early in the nineteenth century when Washington Irving travelled to Europe and wrote his *Sketchbook* (1819), therein initiating a tradition Giltrow identifies as the American literary reconnaissance of the Old World. This reconnaissance “accompanied a growth and securing of national identity and even contributed to its realization by allowing American writers to test their native assumptions and sensibilities against foreign cultural systems” (14). Since, according to Giltrow, Canadians engaged in no

such literary reconnaissance, the Old World to New World Canadian travel narrative “left a strong residual influence not soon to be evaded” in Canadian letters (323).

Giltrow’s recognition of the United States’ literary reconnaissance explains the preponderance of books by and about American travellers and travel writers in Europe.^{xv} Her position on the history of Canadian travels and travel writing, however, is challenged by Eva-Marie Kröller’s *Canadian Travellers in Europe, 1851-1900*, the first and only book-length study of Canadian-authored, non-fictional travel writing.^{xvi} At the outset, Kröller makes the point that Canadians did travel to Europe in increasing numbers during the second half of the nineteenth century, excursions made feasible by improvements in transportation technology and organized travel. “Travel,” Kröller writes (and surely overstates), “once the privilege of the wealthy, was now accessible to all members of the Empire, making them citizens of the world” (31). By the 1890s, Canadian lawyers, clergy, journalists, young men on the grand tour, young women on their way to finishing school, artists, students, and diplomats could travel overseas on three different steamship lines serving Montreal and Quebec: The Beaver, the Dominion, and the Allan lines (31). The travel narratives, reports, and sketches that inevitably followed such transatlantic activity were, according to Kröller, quite popular in Victorian Canada (3). In her analysis of French and English Canadian travel writing, she was forced to be selective given the quantity of primary materials, choosing a “select group of individuals whose biographies seem especially representative and whose writing is both articulate and interesting” (25).^{xvii} Among the women chosen are journalists like Kathleen Coleman and Alice Jones, whose travel sketches are reviewed in a separate chapter on women writers. As my analysis of Canadian women’s travel writing is a genre-specific specialization of Helen Buss’s more general research on Canadian women’s autobiography, so is it a contribution to and extension of Kröller’s research on Canadian travel writing. However, in focusing on book-length travel writing by Canadian women – a phenomenon of the twentieth century – I pick up where Kröller left off, and in so doing exclude the nineteenth-century journalistic travel pieces by women.

As Kröller’s study reveals, the distinction between Canadian and American reconnaissance travel writing is not in the absence of it in Canada that Giltrow posits, but

rather lies in its intentions and content. In *Passionate Pilgrims: The American Traveler in Great Britain, 1800-1914*, Allison Lockwood characterizes American travel writing as a quasi-rebellious writing ‘back’ to the erstwhile parent nation and imperial centre. She writes, “Never a people to be outdone, and indeed angry over the thoroughly ‘unsatisfactory’ books written by Britons about the United States, Americans – both professional authors and, as befitted a democratic republic, amateurs of every ilk – responded in kind all through the nineteenth century . . . ” (11). French and English Canadian travel writers, on the other hand, tended to couch their pilgrimages to the Old world in the imagery of a sentimental reunion that “frequently attained religious intensity” (Kröller 97). According to Kröller, “The prospect of travelling to Britain or France was the promise of a homecoming for most nineteenth-century Canadians,” particularly the United Empire Loyalists who were “[c]ertain that their journeys would be the realization of ancestral memories carefully nurtured in conversation, letters, and mementos . . . ” (90). For many English Canadian travellers and travel writers, London symbolized the “maternal centre of a large colonial family” (109) which one visited and embraced with filial affection and “patriotic duty” (90). Kröller suspects that the elision of this colonial reconnaissance literature in Canadian literary histories is motivated by a “post-colonial desire to discredit as much as possible Canada’s cultural connections with Europe” (1). Looking from another angle, I suspect that this colonial mentality which sent Canadian travellers to the Old World in droves extends to a contemporary Canadian literary and historical scholarship myopically focused on non-Canadian travellers who spilt some ink on Canada. Whatever the rationale, Kröller shores up the gap in the second edition of *The Canadian Encyclopedia* (1988) in a new entry titled “Canadian Travellers Abroad,” which catalogues nineteenth-century Canadian travel writers. This entry still pays scant attention to twentieth-century texts, but that is hardly surprising given Kröller’s metier.

Criticism on twentieth-century travel writing by Canadian writers is meagre, consisting of little more than scattered reviews and isolated essays on individual authors and texts.^{viii} One essay that stands out in its comprehensive analysis of twentieth-century manifestations of the genre is William Butt’s “Canada’s Mental Travellers Abroad.”

Canadian literature, he argues, was for many years the work of explorers, settlers, immigrants; over time, he adds, “as Canada in this way expanded like a heart with writer-blood from other nations, it has also been so to speak contracting like a heart, pumping its writers back out abroad” (289). Making no distinction between fact and fiction, poetry and prose. Butt considers travel narratives that come in a variety of shapes and forms.^{vix} Out of an array of diverse texts he regards as a “literary Babel”(290), Butt charts parallels and patterns in the writers’ psychological journey experiences. In doing so, he first installs and then complicates the assumption that an evolving genre of Canadian-authored travel literature marks Canadian literature’s rite of passage into a cosmopolitan, global, post-national age. He argues that Canadian travel writers who journey abroad often end up reflecting on Canada and themselves, so that the resultant texts are not post-national but very much concerned with national identity as a function of personal identity. Butt’s essay is significant to Canadian literary studies because he breaches an enormous, fertile, and frequently overlooked field. Granted, his essay is necessarily reductionist for this very reason, but it does adumbrate avenues for further, more refined critical analysis.

Despite the paucity of critical analyses of Canadian-authored travel writing, the scholarly endeavors that often precede and prime such analyses are increasing. In the 1990 edition of the *Literary History of Canada*, Shirley Neuman’s chapter on life-writing contains a sub-section on travel writing, albeit a brief and dismissive one.^{vxi} W.J.Keith, in his *Canadian Literature in English*, acknowledges how “much non-fiction prose in Canada, as elsewhere, is devoted to accounts of travel, both within the country and outside” (200). Another scholarly enterprise aimed at raising the profile of Canadian travel writing was the occasion of an exhibition organized by Carol Martin, titled “Canadian Nomads: Travel Writing in the 20th Century.” which was held at the National Library of Canada from April to October, 1991.^{vxi} Moreover, in April of that same year, the National Book Festival and the Kingston School of Writing presented readings, workshops, and lectures on travel writing in Canada (Smith C1). Moreover, anthologies of Canadian travel writing by Canadian men and women are beginning to appear. Kildare Dobbs, editor of *Away From Home: Canadian Writers in Exotic Places*, notes that his 1985 collection is a pioneering work, the first of its kind, because for “the

Canadian travel-writing of the past there is no body of scholarly criticism or notice, hardly an acknowledgment of its existence" (Preface).^{xxii} Although an anthology of travel writing by Canadian women has yet to take its place alongside works such as A.A. Kelly's *Wandering Women: Two Centuries of Travel Out of Ireland* or Suzanne Schriber's *Telling Tales: Selected Writings by Nineteenth-Century American Women Abroad*,^{xxiii} Canadian women writers are well-represented in Canadian writer Katherine Govier's *Without a Guide: Contemporary Women's Travel Adventures* and, to a far lesser degree, in *Maiden Voyages: Writings of Women Travellers*, edited by American travel writer Mary Morris.

Why have critics neglected Canadian travel writing? Questions of value and purpose assert themselves: is Canadian travel writing important or worthy enough for sustained and sophisticated critical analysis, and if so, why? All of the works studied in this analysis are non-canonical; included are the lesser-known works by 'major' Canadian writers, some popular works by 'minor' Canadian writers, and some fascinating forgotten texts by authors consigned by time to oblivion. Moreover, the literary merits of the individual texts vary considerably, as with all genres. While we find many narrative structures and strategies that engage the reader, sometimes forcing this reader to the edge of her seat, other narratives have a soporific effect that could prostrate an insomniac. In addition, the stylistic qualities range from the lustre of burnished poetic prose to the dull sheen of the most prosaic of prose. Although I have chosen texts that I believe are of theoretical interest and have literary merit, my emphasis is on interpretation rather than evaluation. In this I am following an older tradition in Canadian criticism espoused and practiced by critics E.K. Brown and Northrop Frye, both of whom viewed the primary function of Canadian literary criticism as interpretation and recognition, evaluation being accorded a secondary position.^{xxiv} This critical approach complements feminist literary analysis that challenges conventional critical value judgements for the same reason: to recognize and interpret works, in this case women's texts, that have been excluded from the literary canon.^{xxv} In focusing exclusively on non-canonical works, I am engaged in what Robert Lecker, in *Canadian Canon: Essays on Literary Value*, refers to (and advocates) as a destabilizing activity (4). This activity entails questioning and

broadening the conventional notions of what is important in literary studies. Canadian women's travel writings, I propose, are of interest to Canadian literary studies as literary, cultural, historical, and autobiographical documents.

The core of this study is a concentrated textual analysis of gendered discourses and subjectivity in travel writing by Canadian women. Rather than providing a comprehensive survey of primary texts, I have devoted significant space and attention to individual texts. Moreover, I have plaited strands of critical and theoretical commentary, historical context, and biographical detail into my close textual readings when doing so adds insight to the primary texts. In the first chapter, "Feminist Ethnographic Discourse," I explore feminist ethnographic discourses in Canadian women's travel writing from the first and last decades of the twentieth century as reflections of the authors' varying feminist subjectivities. Historically distinct discourses on gender, feminism, and intersecting discourses on race, ethnicity, culture, and nation, are assessed for their impact on these early and contemporary feminist ethnographies. The travel books considered in this comparative, chronological analysis include Margaret MacLean's *The Wise Traveller* (1905), Agnes Deans Cameron's *The New North: An Account of A Woman's 1908 Journey Through Canada to the Arctic* (1909), Karen Connelly's *Touch the Dragon: A Thai Journal* (1992), and Bronwyn Drainie's *My Jerusalem: Secular Adventures in the Holy City* (1994).

The following chapter, "Travelling Daughters and Maternal Messages," investigates women's subjectivities consumed with mothers and maternal figures in travel books that feature return journeys to authors' ancestral homelands. Through psycho-social objects-relations theory, I gender these maternal discourses feminine – a feminine counterpart to the masculine discursive father quests we are more likely to find in men's travel writing. In Canadian women's travel writing, the diasporic return narrative to mothers and motherlands is primarily a phenomenon of the second half of the twentieth century. As Kröller observes, the metaphor of the motherland-and-child reunion does appear in travel writings by Victorian Canadian colonials of both sexes who journeyed to England, the imperial centre (97). However, this reference to England as a motherland is

merely conventional, and is not accompanied by a discourse about the author's involvement with mothers and mother surrogates. The books I interpret incorporate 'mother-words' – words about mothers and words spoken by mothers – as authors make journeys to motherlands: in terms of direction, they travel 'mother-wards'. We find this matrocentric discourse in Bharati Mukherjee's contribution to *Days and Nights in Calcutta* (1977), Daphne Marlatt's *Ghost Works* (1993), Rona Murray's *Journey Back to Peshawar* (1993), and Myrna Kostash's *Bloodlines: A Journey Through Eastern Europe* (1993).

In the third and final chapter, "Travelling Wives' Tales," I look at travel books written by women who travel as wisely accompaniment and whose destinations are determined by their husbands' work. Subjectivity in these texts is constructed by feminine discourses of domesticity and participation in a husband's career. Alongside these feminine discourses are complex feminist ones. These travel writers also inscribe their desire to find an autonomous significance to their travels, one that speaks to their own sense of fulfillment and self-realization. The earlier authors who travelled in the 1930s and 1940s are more likely to find satisfaction within the domestic realm, whereas the later travel writers seek it beyond husband and home. Interestingly, we find more feminist discursive protest in the earlier texts because the authors must negotiate more rigid gender constraints. In contrast, feminist discourses in the later texts are contextual: discourses of self-fulfillment are feminist when embedded in a narrative framework of wisely accompaniment. Given the time lags between the authors' travels and the publication of their travel texts, my reading is roughly chronological. I first consider Philomena Orford's *Journey North* (1957), an account of the author's travels in the 1930s, followed by Ella Wallace Manning's *Igloo for the Night* (1943) and *A Summer on Hudson's Bay* (1949). The next books in line are P.K. Page's *Brazilian Journal* (1987) and Margaret Laurence's *The Prophet's Camel Bell* (1963), both of which document the authors' journeys in the 1950s. The final text analysed in "Travelling Wives' Tales" is Carlotta Hacker's intriguingly titled *Africa, Take One: Wherein the Author, on a Modern Film Safari, Uncovers a Continent in Transition and the Ghosts of Victorian Lady Explorers* (1974).

ⁱ This social constructionist position on gender contests theories that fix women in ahistorical definitions based on notions of corporeal essence and exposes essentialism's track record for imposing discursive constraints on women's subjectivity. My polarization of constructionism and essentialism reflects the either/or mentality that has dominated feminist debate for some time. In truth, I find the extremities of both positions troublesome. With constructionism, the body is like a bed at a party: lost under a pile of coats of many discursive colours. With essentialism, discourse is deceptively transparent, disappearing on the body like lotion so that all we see is skin. For this reason, the term 'sex/gender system' – coined by Gayle Rubin in the 1970s to signify the "set of arrangements by which a society transforms biological sexuality into products of human activity" (159) – strikes me as preferable to 'gender' because it semantically incorporates body *and* discourse. Nevertheless, like many feminist critics before me, I use the more convenient term 'gender' to signify a sex/gender system.

" In distinguishing between feminine and feminist discourses, I extrapolated and adapted for my purposes the feminine/feminist distinctions made by Toril Moi, in her essay, "Feminist, Female, Feminine," and by Elaine Showalter in her introduction to *A Literature of Their Own: British Women Novelists from Brontë to Lessing*.

" Fussell's classist distinctions continue as he defines the tourist's ultimate desire to "derive secret pleasure from posing momentarily as a member of a social class superior to one's own, to play the role of 'shopper' and spender whose life becomes significant and exciting only when exercising power by choosing what to buy" (42). Fussell also gleefully derides the "anti-tourist" as pathetic victims of middle-class "tourist angst" who go out of their way to distinguish themselves from tourists (48-49).

" Theroux, who repeatedly distinguishes himself from the tourist, is an exemplar of Fussell's "anti-tourist" tourist (see previous note).

^j See Mary Suzanne Schriber's "Edith Wharton and Travel Writing as Self-Discovery."

" Not surprisingly, as women's travel burgeoned, the woman traveller was inundated with double-voiced conduct books that celebrated their new-found freedoms only to bind them in laws of feminine etiquette. In one such text, Lilius Campbell Davidson's *Hints to Lady Travellers at Home and Abroad* (1889), the independent travelling woman is praised for embracing emancipation and blamed for not acting ladylike enough should some misfortune, particularly of the sexual kind, befall her during her peregrinations (see Foster 3; and Russell 18!).

" MacLaren's innuendo that travel writing gave birth to the English novel is a reference to Percy Adams's study, *Travel Literature and the Evolution of the Novel*, which identifies travel literature as the novel's paramount progenitor.

"^k Campbell's inclination to name literary fathers but deny Egeria matri-literary recognition is curious given her recognition of Egeria's *Peregrinatio* as "an experiential kind of travel literature virtually unknown before"(20).

" Some post-colonial critical texts on travel writing include Mary Louise Pratt's *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation*, Sara Mills's *Discourses of Difference: An Analysis of Women's Travel Writing and Colonialism*, Rana Kabbani's *Europe's Myths of Orient: Devise and Rule*, and David Spurr's *The Rhetoric of Empire: Colonial Discourse in Journalism, Travel Writing, and Imperial Administration*.

^l The earliest of these is Davenport Adams's 1882 study, *Celebrated Women Travellers of the Nineteenth Century*, followed decades later by Leslie Blanch's *The Wilder Shores of Love* (1954) and Dorothy Middleton's *Victorian Lady Travellers* (1965). The most recent studies of women travellers include Dea Birkett's *Spinsters Abroad* (1989) and Mary Russell's *The Blessing of a Good Thick Skirt: Women Travellers and Their World* (1994), as well as Jane Robinson's *Wayward Women: A Guide to Women Travellers* (1990).

" What follows is a list of anthologies of travel writings by early and contemporary women: John B. Alcock and Antonia Young's *Black Lambs and Grey Falcons: Women Travellers in the Balkans* (1991), Marion Tinling's *With Women's Eyes: Visitors to the New World, 1775-1918* (1993), Mary Morris's *Maiden Voyages: Writings of Women Travelers* (1993), Katherine Govier's *Without a Guide: Contemporary Women's Travel Adventures* (1994), A.A. Kelly's *Wandering Women: Two Centuries of Travel Out of Ireland* (1995), Suzanne Schriber's *Telling Tales: Selected Writings by Nineteenth-Century American Women Abroad* (1995), and Lucy Jane Bledsoe's *Lesbian Travels: A Literary Companion* (1998).

" The internet address is <http://www.lib.umn.edu/etrc/womtrav.htm>.

" For a bibliography of these essays, see the suggestions for further reading appended to Germaine Warkentin's *Canadian Exploration Literature: An Anthology*.

" See, for example, Robert G. Moyles and Douglas R. Owram's book *Imperial Dreams and Colonial Realities: British Views on Canada, 1880-1914*; James Doyle's book *North of America: Images of Canada in the Literature of the United States, 1775-1900*; Elizabeth Waterston's bibliography *The Travellers - Canada to 1900*; Lisa Nathalie LaFramboise's dissertation "Travellers in Skirts: Women and English-Language Travel Writing in Canada;" Gerald Craig's anthology *Early Travellers in the Canadas*; Les Harding's biographical history *The Journeys of Remarkable Women: Their Travels on the Canadian Frontier*; and Greg Gatenby's anthologies *The Wild is Always There: Canada Through the Eyes of Foreign Writers* and *The Very Richness of That Past: Canada Through the Eyes of Foreign Writers*.

" See, for example, Philip Rahv's *Discovery of Europe: The Story of American Experience in the Old World*, Rhea Dulles's *Americans Abroad: Two Centuries of European Travel*, Allison Lockwood's *Passionate Pilgrims: The American Traveler in Great Britain, 1800-1914*, and Terry Caesar's *Forgiving the Boundaries: Home as Abroad in American Travel Writing*.

" A collection of essays on the theme of the voyage in French and English Canadian fiction and non-fiction which were presented at a 1994 conference by the Association for Canadian Studies are bound together in *Voyages: Real and Imaginary, Personal and Collective*. However, the bulk of essays on Canadian travel writing in English within this collection attend to fictional texts. I should also mention Charles Taylor's *Six Journeys: A Canadian Pattern*, which was published in 1977. The subject of this text is not travel writing but rather the journeys of six Canadians who "felt compelled to escape their Canadian society, and to sharpen their identities in different forms of exile" (5). Taylor's "heroic" (2) six include Brigadier James Sutherland Brown, Bishop William White, James Houston, Herbert Norman, Emily Carr, and Scott Symons.

"" Kroller makes the interesting observation that French-Canadian scholarship, "operating possibly out of a spirit of greater cultural self-confidence," pays more attention to French-Canadian authored travel writing than English-Canadian scholarship does to Canadian travel writing in English (2).

"" Some of the essays I have come across include George Woodcock's "Many Solitudes: The Travel Writings of Margaret Laurence" and "The Wanderer: Notes on Earle Birney"; Fiona Sparrow's "Water and Shade," the chapter on Laurence's *The Prophet's Camel Bell* in Sparrow's *Into Africa with Margaret Laurence*; Denise Heaps's "P.K. Page's Brazilian Journal: Language Shock"; and the essay on Patrick Anderson's travel writing in *Here is Queer: Nationalisms, Sexualities, and the Literatures of Canada*. One might also turn to John Moss's genre-bending postmodern travel book, *Enduring Dreams: An Exploration of Arctic Landscape* for commentary on Canadian writers of the Arctic, such as Al Purdy, Aritha Van Herk, Farley Mowat, and Mina Hubbard.

" He analyses poems by Al Purdy, Earle Birney, and Eli Mandel; novels by Margaret Atwood, Jack Hodgins and Timothy Findley; short stories by Alice Munro and Mavis Gallant; non-fictional travel books by Margaret Laurence, Gwendolyn MacEwan, Clark Blaise and Bharati Mukherjee; plays by George Walker; and generic hybrids such as Michael Ondaatje's *Running in the Family* and John Glassco's *Memoirs of Montparnasse*.

" Mention is made of George Woodcock's *South Sea Journey*, Maureen Hyne's *Letters From China*, and Gwendolyn MacEwan's *Mermaids and Ikons: A Greek Summer*, among others.

^{xxi} Some of the writers featured were Kildare Dobbs, Norman Elder, Carlotta Hacker, P.K. Page, George Woodcock, Ronald Wright, Gordon Sinclair, Margaret Laurence, Roloff Beny, George Galt, Maureen Hynes, and Dean Harris.

^{xxii} Other anthologies on travel writing by Canadian men and women include *Writing Away: The PEN Canada Travel Anthology*, edited by Constance Rooke; *Canadian Travellers in Italy*, edited by Barry Callaghan; *Local Colour: Writers Discovering Canada*, edited by Carol Martin; *Chinada: Memoirs of a Group of Seven*, edited by Gary Geddes; and the 1984 spring-summer issue of *Descant*, later published as *Views From the North: An Anthology of Travel Writing*, edited by Karen Mulhallen.

^{xxiii} According to Stephen Smith's *Globe & Mail* review, "Crossing a Literary Boundary," of the 1991 National Book Festival in Kingston, journalist Merilyn Mohr was compiling an anthology of travel writing by Canadian women. This has yet to surface.

^{xxiv} For a more detailed discussion of this critical methodology and its colonial contexts, see "The Critical Horizon" in David Staines's *Beyond the Provinces: Literary Canada at Century's End*.

^{xxv} Catherine Belsey and Jane Moore, in their introduction to *The Feminist Reader: Essays in Gender and the Politics of Literary Criticism*, write, "A Feminist does not necessarily read in order to praise or to blame, to judge or to censor. More commonly she sets out to assess how the text invited its readers, as members of a specific culture, to understand what it means to be a woman or a man, and so encourages them to reaffirm or to challenge existing cultural norms" (1).

Chapter One:
Feminist Ethnographic Discourse

“What are the women like?” This is the question Victorian explorer and adventurer Sir Richard Burton identifies, in his travelogue *Personal Narrative of a Pilgrimage to Al-Madinah & Mecca* (1893), as “the first question of mankind to the wanderer.” In his estimation, “the women of the Hijazi Badawin are by no means comely. Although the Benu Amur boast of some pretty girls, yet they are far inferior to the high-bosomed beauties of Nijd” (85). The travelling, girl-watching aficionado is a subject of scholarly analysis in Dennis Porter’s *Haunted Journeys: Desire and Transgression in European Travel Writing*. Playing with Laurence Sterne’s burlesque travelogue *A Sentimental Journey Through France and Italy by Mr. Yorick* (1768) and the taxonomy of the Splenetic and Sentimental traveller therein, Porter adds the category of the “Perverse Traveler” (165).ⁱ Luminaries of this group include James Boswell, Denis Diderot, M. de Stendhal, and above all the exemplary Gustave Flaubert, whose scopophilic obsessions reach an epitome in his *Notes de Voyage en Orient* (1910) and its pornographic description of the celebrated courtesan Kuchak Hanem (Porter 178). Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, an eighteenth-century epistolary writer of travels, was also a feminist critic of men’s travel writing. In a letter admonishing her daughter to disregard notions of Italy gleaned from men’s travel books, she writes, “The Boys only remember where they met with the best Wine or the prettyest Women, and the Governors (I speak of the most learned amongst them) have only remark’d Situations and Distances, or at most Status and Edifices” (2: 494-5). Montagu omits mentioning how women travel writers, such as she, also comment on female appearance, fashion, and beauty or its absence. ‘What are the women like?’ is a question of great interest to travellers of the ‘woman-kind’ as well as to Burton’s mankind.

The discernible distinction, at least within a heterosexual paradigm, is that male travel writers wrap women in an erotic gaze, transforming them into objects of sexual desire, whereas women tend to exoticize them as objects of curiosity, strangeness, difference (Frawley).

Rather, it is Montagu’s contrast between what the “Boys” and the “Governors” choose to represent that is most intriguing because it underscores a disconcerting distinction in male-

authored travel writing: women encountered in travels are often represented either as contestants in a global ‘Miss Nubile’ pageant or not at all. British writer Alice Mabel Bacon, in the preface to her *Japanese Girls and Women* (1891), addresses the latter phenomenon:

While Japan as a whole has been closely studied, and while much and varied information has been gathered about the country and its people, one half of the population has been left entirely unnoticed, passed over with brief mention, or altogether misunderstood. It is of this neglected half that I have written, in the hope that the whole fabric of Japanese social life will be better comprehended when the women of the country, and so the homes that they make, are better known and understood. (v-vi)

Almost a century later, French writer, psychoanalyst, and theorist Julia Kristeva takes Bacon’s argument one step further in *About Chinese Women* (1977), arguing that there is “[n]o way at all to understand China if one is not sensitive to the women, to their condition, to their difference. Without that, there’s no point even in being interested in China . . .” (13). Although Kristeva’s insight, formulated during a journey through China, is based on her belief that the role of women in China has a particular quality unknown to Western monotheism and is China-specific, I believe her argument is applicable to all cultures. Believing the same, many women travel writers assume the subject position of amateur ethnographers and write travel books that document the details of women’s lives in the places they pass through or provisionally inhabit. Canadian women’s travel books which incorporate women-oriented, ethnographic travel writing include Margaret MacLean’s *The Wise Traveller* (1905), Agnes Deans Cameron’s *The New North: An Account of a Woman’s 1908 Journey Through Canada to the Arctic* (1909), Karen Connelly’s *Touch the Dragon: A Thai Journal* (1992), and Bronwyn Drainie’s *My Jerusalem: Secular Adventures in the Holy City* (1994).

Of course, women travel writers do not write women-centred ethnographic discourses for the sole purpose of rendering a more holistic portrait of a culture by filling in the gaps left by male-authored texts. In explaining the preponderance of this particular ethnographic discourse in women’s travel writing, several theorists have advanced the accessibility

argument, which maintains that women write of spaces they have access to. Shirley Foster, for example, notes how eighteenth- and nineteenth-century women travellers were permitted to enter women's spaces which male travellers could only fantasize about, such as the Middle Eastern harem, a hot spot of male Orientalist sexual speculation and desire (16). Lady Mary Wortley Montagu's foray into a woman's Turkish bath house, which she describes in her letters (1:312-315), is a famous, well-documented instance of such accessibility.¹¹ In addition, foreign domestic spheres were more available to women travellers. Harriet Martineau and Alice Mabel Bacon positively gloat about this advantage over their male travel-writing counterparts, little realizing, perhaps, that male interest in the harem as a locus of libidinous fixation did not extend to the home (Martineau 53-54; Bacon viii). Less mention is made of gendered accessibility's flip-side, wherein women travel writers focus on women's lives because they are denied access to male spheres, which, depending on cultures and historical periods, range from institutions of learning, religion, politics, and entertainment.¹²

While accessibility arguments are certainly valid, I am less interested in the superficial logistical motives and more interested in the personal motives behind the pervasiveness of women-centred ethnography in women's texts. I see women-centred ethnography, both its ubiquity and its content, as largely determined by the gendered subjectivity of the author. Travel writing is a metaphorical map of the self travelling as well as a map of travel writing's 'other' – peoples of a different geographical location, culture, race, ethnicity, or nation – that reflects the travel writer's subjectivity. In my introduction, I describe John Moss's emblematic description of subjective perception, whereby the shadow his body casts on the surface of an Arctic river makes visible a portion of the rocky-river bottom. I then ask what sort of shadow travelling women cast, and what is revealed within its contours. I have found through my readings that the shadow is often shaped like a woman looking into the lives of other women, and what is revealed within the shadow is what the looker perceives.

'Women's work' – conventionally housekeeping and child-rearing – as well as women's leisure pastimes, physical appearances, and fashions are topics of great interest for many women travel writers. Sometimes they idealize the object of their representations; other times they may be critical of ring around the collar or ringworm on the baby caused by poor hygiene. In the late-Victorian period, a whole series of travel books were marketed as

representing place ‘through a woman’s eye,’ a tag line often found somewhere in the book’s title (Schriber, *Telling Tales* xxvii). For example, American writer Lucy Culler ends her 1883 book *Europe Through a Woman’s Eye* explaining that she excluded the subjects of agriculture, commerce, and political affairs because she was looking “THROUGH A WOMAN’S EYE” (qtd. in Schriber, *Telling Tales* xxvii). Discourses such as these – which exclude traditionally masculine topics in favour of traditionally feminine ones, and which avoid deliberation upon the power and status of the women encountered or observed – reflect the feminine subjectivity of the travel writer. Other women travel writers are concerned with what feminist ethnographer Lila Abu-Lughod describes as “women’s conditions and with the political, economic, social, and cultural implications of systems of gender for them” (*Writing Women’s Worlds* 4). In such texts, a travelling woman’s eye takes in the gender politics within personal, domestic spaces and social, public realms. What results is a feminist ethnographic discourse that reflects her feminist subjectivity.

While one may find feminine ethnographies in Canadian women’s travel writing, the majority of texts resound with feminist discourses which view the oppression of women as a social ill that cuts through divisions of culture, race, ethnicity, and nation. The preponderance of the feminist ethnographic discourse in the texts I have chosen to analyze hardly surprises considering most of the authors are easily identified with or self-identify with what we now call feminism. The earlier writers explored in this chapter who lived and wrote before the advent of second-wave feminism in Canada were either directly affiliated with first-wave women’s movements, or lived unconventional, self-sufficient, autonomous lives, or both.^{iv}

The authors of *Canadian Women: A History* argue that most Canadian women involved in women’s equality and reform during the early half of this century were “reluctant to adopt the term ‘feminist,’ which at that time meant a quite extreme commitment to women’s issues” (190). This resistance to extremism goes some way in explaining some of the differences I detect in feminist ethnographic discourses from the early and the latter part of this century. The contemporary travel writers are more likely to imbue their feminist ethnographies with a serious tone and a palpable, sharp-edged anger, whereas the earlier writers approach their subjects with an ostensibly casual curiosity and more emotional detachment. These differences are likely attributable to a dominant discourse of femininity

that discouraged the expression of anger in the earlier writers, a suppression less familiar to contemporary writers for whom anger is a hallmark feminist sentiment *to be* expressed. I have come to see these variations in tone and mood as features that distinguish proto-feminist ethnography from contemporary feminist ethnography.

Factors that impede the travel writer's identification with her ethnographic subject might also account for the disparity between early and later ethnographic representations. The early twentieth-century writers, for example, took journeys of much shorter duration than the contemporary writers, and they were more constricted by language barriers, so that their contact with travel writing's female 'other' tended to be superficial. Moreover, the early writers, who lived and died before civil rights and decolonization movements of the second half of the twentieth century, sometimes display racist, xenophobic, and imperialistic turns of mind that seem to have placed a wedge between themselves and their ethnographic subject. Their discourses are still woman-identified in their apparent concern for the lives of other women, but this identification is attenuated, resulting in more ambivalent representations.

Before delving into textual analysis, I am compelled to tackle some significant theoretical arguments pertaining to the dissonance between feminist ideology and the act of ethnographic 'othering'. In *A Concise Glossary of Contemporary Literary Theory*, Jeremy Hawthorn defines othering as follows: "To characterize a person, group, or institution as 'other' is to place them outside the system of normality or convention to which one belongs oneself. Such processes of exclusion by categorization are thus central to certain ideological mechanisms" (141).⁹ As mentioned in my introduction, postcolonial critics view the ideological mechanism of travel writing's representations of the other as essentially colonizing or neo-colonizing rhetorical acts: the world beyond the travel writer's own is constructed as other, absence, anomaly, or inferior, which makes it vulnerable to intervention and exploitation. Some theorists of nineteenth- and early twentieth-century women's travel writing contend that their subjects inscribe colonized others differently from male travel writers because of their own identity as patriarchy's 'other,' second sex (Mills 97-99; Melman 7; Blake 347; Stevenson 11-12; Foster 24). According to this line of argument, women travel writers were more likely to upset (though not totally dismantle) an 'us-and-them' mentality because of their empathy with another 'other'; according to this equation, the other is both the

other and the same. By the same token, some of these same critics, and others included, relate the difficulty they had reading these texts, with their proto-feminist adventuresome heroines casually uttering the sort of racist or culturally chauvinistic slurs that make the late twentieth-century reader's toes curl (Mills 4; Bohls 11; Birkett xi).

I shared this latter sensation when reading some Canadian women's travel writing, particularly books from the first half of this century. As a feminist reader, my enthusiasm tended to wax and wane. My response is no doubt shaped by my familiarity with late twentieth-century feminist and postcolonial thought on the concept of writing the other. In "The Problem of Speaking for Others," Linda Alcoff mentions the "strong, albeit contested, current within feminism which holds that speaking for others is arrogant, vain, unethical, and politically illegitimate" (6).^{vi} According to the feminist prescriptive model, women should be sensitive to all forms of oppression and domination in addition to gender-based oppression. To ethno-racially, nationally and culturally 'other' people in language is to assume a position of discursive privilege, to usurp the voice of these others, and to fix them as objects in colonizing rhetorics of representation. For example, postcolonial theorist Chandra Talpade Mohanty, in "Under Western Eyes: Feminist Scholarship and Colonial Discourse," identifies the colonizing rhetoric of homogenization as pervasive in Western women's representations of third world women:

This average third world woman leads an essentially truncated life based on her feminine gender (read: sexually constrained) and being 'third world' (read: ignorant, poor, uneducated, tradition-bound, domestic, family-oriented, victimized, etc.). This, I suggest, is in contrast to the (implicit) self-representation of Western women as educated, modern, as having control over their own bodies and sexualities, and the freedom to make their own decisions. (261)

Interestingly, this passage by Mohanty points up several other colonizing gestures in language identified in David Spurr's *The Rhetoric of Empire: Colonial Discourse in Journalism, Travel Writing, and Imperial Administration*. For example, we find the rhetoric of classification.

which constructs a hierarchy of first and third worlds, as well as the corollary rhetoric of debasement, where an object represented supplies the “negative end” of a system of classification (61-91).

Essentially, all of the feminist ethnographic discourses explored in this chapter may be deemed ‘guilty’ of classifying and debasing rhetorics: they imply that the culture in question is behind the times regarding women’s human rights and provide evidence that some might argue debases the culture in question. I must stress that the feminist ethnography considered in this chapter is not only a catalogue of victims, as Mohanty’s passage suggests, but also an articulation of women’s strength, power, and resilience within the context of their oppressive cultures. Nevertheless, one does occasionally get the impression of the modern Western white woman taking pity on her less fortunate ‘sisters’ for living in a backwards society. To make matters increasingly complex, in the early texts, colonizing rhetorics in language are sometimes accompanied by literal pro-colonialist arguments that intersect the feminist ethnographic discourse in troubling ways. In *The New North*, for example, Agnes Deans Cameron’s feminist ethnography about the ‘sad lot’ of First Nations women of Northwestern Canada is also a discourse of debasement that plays into the pro-imperialist agenda of her book. Her text implies that colonial intervention would improve the living conditions for native women.

In *Discourses of Difference*, Sara Mills posits a challenging question for feminist theorists of women’s travel writing: “Are we going to be critical of some of the positions exemplified in the texts, for example, colonialist or racist statements, and will we be judging these works against some feminist standard?” (28). First of all, it would be anachronistic of me to hold the early twentieth-century texts up to contemporary feminist standards of writing race, ethnicity, culture, and nation: shooting clay pigeons is a facile and unproductive critical methodology. Moreover, in addition to colonialist, racist, or xenophobic statements in the early texts, we also find conflicting anti-racist and anti-colonialist discourses as well as appeals to cultural relativity. I have come to see ethnographic representation in the early twentieth-century texts as contradictory, as confusing, and as challenging to one’s perception as a lithograph by M.C. Escher. Since my interest is not in vilifying authors but in clarifying meaning, my tendency is to dispense with harsh judgement of the various explicit or implied

positions on race, ethnicity, culture, and nation that I am able to decode. In what I see as a more productive move, I assess how assumptions about the other revealed through othering – whether they are oppressive, liberal, or inconsistent – might affect the production of feminist ethnographic discourses. This procedure allows me to speculate on how some of the differences between the early and later feminist ethnographies may be attributable to distinct notions of race, ethnicity, culture, and nation.

The contemporary travel writers, as products of a feminism enlightened and infused by concepts of racial equality, postcolonial theory, tolerance and respect for other cultures, and even xenophilia, display more awareness and sensitivity in their ethnographic representations. One would be hard pressed to find incidences of blatant racism or neo-imperialist intent in their texts. Moreover, self-reflexivity, polyphony, and dialogism – strategies James Clifford, in his introduction to *Writing Culture*, identifies as part of an emerging, new, postmodern ethnography (13-15) – figure prominently in the late twentieth-century texts. As mentioned in my introduction, self-reflexivity – a “counter-discourse” to colonizing, oppressive rhetorics of representation (Spurr 189) – positions an ethnographic text within the realm of subjective knowledge, thereby offsetting the illusion of objectivity in representations of the ethnographic other. Moreover, self-reflexivity potentially undermines ethnographic authority, especially when it entails the ethnographer’s consideration of his or her perceptual limitations. Polyphonic texts, which incorporate the voices of native informants, and dialogic texts, which incorporate dialogue between ethnographers and their informants, are effective techniques for sabotaging “monophonic authority” (Clifford 15), thereby opening the ethnographic field to the possibility of multiple meanings and interpretations.^{vii} Polyphony and dialogism find their way into travel texts through several avenues, including transcribed speech, direct quotation, and the summation of another text.

Ruth Behar, in her introduction to *Women Writing Culture*, insists that these supposedly ‘new’ strategies have in fact been used by female ethnographers throughout the twentieth century because of their difficulty in claiming ethnographic authority and their ambivalence about doing so (4).^{viii} Traces of this ‘new’ ethnographic method likewise appear in early twentieth-century Canadian women’s travel writing, indicating some nascent awareness of the delicacy, open-mindedness, and self-consciousness required when

representing others from different ethno-racial, cultural, and national backgrounds. These methods, however, are much more common in the contemporary travel writing texts. One reason for this difference between the early and later texts is that the contemporary travel writers spend more time getting to know their ethnographic subjects personally and individually, in some cases learning another language to achieve this end – factors certainly conducive to polyphony and dialogism. This willingness and desire to get to know the other in such depth and detail is also likely an expression of their more contemporary notions of racial, cultural, and national difference, which affects their feminist ethnographic product. The contemporary writers are able to better identify with their ethnographic subjects because the perceived demarcations dividing self and other are much more fluid. What results is a no-nonsense, sometimes emotionally saturated feminist ethnographic discourse.

To best demonstrate the similarities and differences in feminist ethnographic discourse in Canadian women's travel writing throughout the twentieth century, I have arranged the following analyses of primary texts in chronological order. The earliest text, *The Wise Traveller*, is a narrative of Margaret MacLean's month-long journey to China in 1905. It was originally published by the Methodist Publishing Company in Tokyo in 1906 under the title *Chinese Ladies at Home*. Years after MacLean's death in 1931, editors Beverley Stapells and Pam Young found the poorly bound book among her notes and scrapbooks, and reissued it as *The Wise Traveller* (1990), altering the title because they found the original "somewhat misleading" (Stapells 7). Although I applaud this retrieval of a Canadian woman's 'lost' text, I have reservations about this titular judgement call because it erases the gender reference in a book that is primarily about Chinese 'ladies.' If the original title is in any way misleading, it is to the contemporary reader for whom the term 'ladies' carries a feminine cachet, when in fact the text is primarily a feminist ethnographic discourse about Chinese women's power, its presence and absence, and the potential for progressive change. The class connotation of the phrase 'ladies at home' is fitting because MacLean, as a middle class woman from turn-of-the-century Canada (Stapells 7), displays more interest in the upper echelons of the Manchu Dynasty rather than in the multitudes of the penurious oppressed who would soon enough contribute to the dynastic system's demise.¹⁸ This concentration on 'ladies at home' is also

attributable to MacLean's access to those homes. Although no missionary herself, she stayed with missionary friends who were welcome in the homes of society's upper crust, and who extended this privilege to MacLean. She does, however, also venture into Shanghai's city streets and into the countryside, where she writes what she witnesses of women in the lower classes.

Throughout *The Wise Traveller*, MacLean underscores the power Chinese women *do* possess in her efforts to debunk the myth of what she refers to as "the down-trodden women of the East." For example, while passing the Wang-poo River out of Shanghai, she sees some widows' monuments that Chinese artisans designed and constructed with great skill. "These are built," she writes, "as the name indicates, to commemorate some noted woman. (I had always read of the down-trodden women of the East, but life among them revealed that they have great power in their world and are destined to still greater, for they have the necessary brain)" (46-7). As her text continues, "the down-trodden women of the East" becomes a refrain of sorts. While attending a Chinese-Christian wedding, she is informed that the fashion-conscious bride forced her groom to rent a house next to her family dwelling in the city because this groom's home was in the unfashionable country. Traditionally, a Chinese bride is married in the groom's family home, signifying her severance from her own girlhood home and her new position as a subordinate member of the groom's family. Thus, MacLean sees the bride's power of choice as symbolic of Chinese women's power in general: "[Y]et, we read of the down-trodden women of the East," she comments (51). When travelling by canal to Soochow, MacLean witnesses another instance of Chinese women's power as she boards a family operated *sampan* (a Chinese boat) commanded by the mother. She describes this mother and other "women mariners" of her ilk as "remarkable beings":

A compound of man at the wheel and woman at the hearth. When not rowing or directing affairs outside they are within, cooking, washing or dressing the baby. Their clothing is scant, their feet bare and their sleek black hair is always ornamented as best they can afford . . .

The whole family lives in the boat. The hooded tunnel in the centre is, by day, a place for strangers, and by night, a house for the nautical

family. We chose our sampan because the family was few and our belongings were many, but the sampans where the family was larger presented strange sights. Here would be a woman standing at the tiller with a baby strapped to her back; there, a woman rowing with graceful movement as she rocked to and fro, making her sampan dart in and out with wonderful accuracy through the miscellany of craft, and everywhere children leaning out of the windows and over the edge in perilous positions. (60-61)

A contemporary reader might see these women as over-worked if not down-trodden, and wonder what their husbands are doing. In contrast, MacLean writes, "Having heard that the women of China were down-trodden and finding it not true in regard to all of the better class, I thought surely it applied to the lower classes; but here, on this little boat, the woman was the chief mariner and her word was law" (60). When MacLean visits a Chinese Christian school, she encounters a teacher who challenges the myth MacLean herself is beginning to generate that the women of the East are not "down-trodden". The teacher, describing how an imported geography textbook defines China as a "half civilized race." concurs with this assessment, stating, "Yes, that is true. Our women are not educated, and as they are about half of the population, so we are half-civilized" (49). Her clever analysis transforms the Western-centric criterion for civilization into a gender-centric one. While MacLean finds this an "intelligent observation," she does not focus on the uneducated female masses, but on those few who succeeded from a Western-centric perspective: "Six girls had just gone, in November, 1905, to the United States to enter upon university training, and one to study medicine in St. Louis" (49). She does not say it, but one can hear its echo: 'Yet we read of the down-trodden women of the East.'

MacLean does occasionally write a more feminine ethnographic discourse, as when she describes the luncheon parties she attends at the homes of wealthy ladies, the décor of their homes, or women and girls' fashions. Sometimes what begins as a feminine discourse starts assuming a feminist bent, as in her description of the fashionable woman's wedding. She eagerly follows the bride upstairs to watch her put on an elaborate hat for the wedding

feast: an exciting cross-cultural fashion moment. While watching the hat-changing ceremony, she decides she is glad she will never be a Chinese bride. The event quickly turns into a scene of torture, as the bride's hair is shaped into seven points, over which is placed a thick ring of false hair, followed by an enormous hat, an ensemble that must be pinned to the poor woman's head. Throughout this ordeal, MacLean notes, the bride must refrain from showing any sign of discomfort, lest her reputation be marred and she be branded a "shrew" by neighbours (54).

Her representation of Chinese women's fashions is decidedly feminist when she takes up the issue of foot-binding. She drops her challenge to the myth of the down-trodden Eastern woman when describing women who barely are able to 'trod' at all because of this ancient custom. Since it was women of the upper classes who had bound feet – affectionately known as golden lilies – MacLean has ample opportunity to observe the consequences of the procedure while visiting Chinese ladies at home. These ladies were essentially immured in their homes because custom also forbade them to be seen in the streets, a restriction reinforced by the crippling effects of foot-binding. She asks one of her hostesses for a pair of souvenir slippers, and upon returning to her residence, inspects them and ponders what she describes as "this hateful custom" (83). She then asks her readers to visualize the contortions of a bound foot by performing a demonstration:

Place the thumb on the table, then curl the fingers underneath and you have some idea what the position of the bound foot is – the big toe taking the place of the thumb, and the little toes the fingers – the part of the foot corresponding to the palm of the hand is a very tender place and very susceptible to decay, or gangrene, and must be kept very clean. The foot is humped so that only the big toe and the heel really go into the shoe. This hump is much admired and is called "the Golden Hook." (83)

She denounces this "barbarous custom" that inflicts "life-long suffering on millions, no matter how gradually and carefully it is performed" (83), bracing her denunciation with more graphic

details: "The crowding of all the toes under the foot, save the big toe, the arching of the foot, the gradual snapping of the instep, all cause a life of misery from about the age of seven. This is when the binding is carefully done: what if it be carelessly done? In that case, the feet often rot, blood poisoning sets in, and death becomes a happy release" (84).

On one occasion, MacLean meets an elderly Chinese woman who, two years earlier, at the age of seventy, went through the painful process of unbinding her feet. Within her text, MacLean has this woman speak of the discomfort for herself. MacLean visits this elderly woman accompanied by a Chinese-speaking missionary friend, who remonstrates when the woman walks to her room and back to produce a picture of the emperor for MacLean. Through the missionary's translation, MacLean comprehends the elderly woman's rejoinder: "Now I do not mind going many times to my room from here; but before I unbound my feet to walk from my room to here (*here* was the main reception-hall of the house) was Hell" (84). While MacLean reports on the foot-binding reform movements organizing throughout China and visits the female Chinese president of the Anti-Foot-Binding Society in Soochow, she surmises that the custom's obsolescence will come about gradually. And she warns her readers: "Do not believe anything you hear about it not paining them" (84). Commenting on the red silk slippers patterned with embroidered butterflies that she received as a gift, she writes, "The butterfly – an emblem of freedom – what a farce" (88).

Beverley Stapells, in her introduction to *The Wise Traveller*, provides some biographical details that give us insight into the feminist subjectivity behind these ethnographic representations of Chinese women. MacLean was born in Ontario of Scottish descent in 1871, and, like Chinese women of her era, received little formal education, unlike her six brothers, several of whom attended the University of Toronto (10). As a woman who was denied formal education yet thirsted for knowledge, she became an autodidact who had the good fortune to be able to pass her days in libraries. In 1904, her father was appointed by the Laurier government to be Canada's commercial agent to Japan. Since her mother was dead and her father was seventy and almost deaf, she accompanied her father (11). At the age of thirty-three, then, she set out on a tremendous adventure in the guise of the dutiful daughter. The following year, she spent four weeks travelling through China on her own. Stapells recognizes the courage and unconventionality of this undertaking: "In Ontario, after

all, for a woman to journey by herself, even for 30 kilometres, was then considered daring” (12). The brazenness of her act becomes more astonishing when we consider the China she visited was rampant with anti-foreign feeling, of which she was fully aware. This anti-foreign sentiment was the fallout from unwelcome Western imperialist intervention. Throughout the nineteenth century, Western powers, particularly the British, tried to pry China open for commerce and Christian missions. During MacLean’s 1905 visit, the Chinese were agitating about the ramifications of the Boxer Rebellion of the late 1890s, a popular uprising in protest of European aggression and intervention (“China” 322-326).*

Returning from China, MacLean spent two more years in Japan with her father, and in 1908, accompanied him to his new posting in China, where he died in 1909. She returned to Ottawa with her father’s remains but did not herself ‘remain’: over the next six years she made two journeys around the world. According to Stapells, “Distant relatives recall the times in their childhood when their ‘wiry’ and ‘talkative’ Cousin ‘Till’ came to visit, with stories of ‘bandits in Spain’ and bearing gifts from the Orient” (15). Unfortunately, it seems these oral travel tales were either never committed to print or, if they were, are lost to posterity. By 1915, MacLean settled in Toronto and entered into her Museum period. During her frequent visits to the Royal Ontario Museum, she observed people shuffling by the exhibits with little interest or understanding. With innovation and drive, she created the position of lecturer for herself and applied to the Museum Board, which swiftly turned her down, claiming there was no such position available. As her editors note, “They must have been surprised at the audacity of anyone considering such an undertaking without even a high-school training, let alone a woman” (15). Undaunted, she began lecturing without their approval or funding with such success that she was eventually hired as an Official Guide (17). ‘The Museum Lady,’ as she came to be called, retired in 1923 in poor health, and died in 1931 at the age of 60. In a short preface to *The Wise Traveller*, ROM Director T. Cuyler Young, Jr., pays tribute to Margaret MacLean: “In a world of male-dominated academics, this tiny red-headed woman with a limited formal education had begun the job of making the museum accessible to the public” (7).

MacLean was never affiliated with any organized women’s movements of her time, such as the Canadian Woman’s Suffrage Association. However, with an adventuresome

spirit, an active intellect, and, I suspect, a small private income, she lived the life she chose. It was an autonomous, independent life free from confining, socially prescribed gender roles. As Stapells observes,

It is important to remember when reading Margaret MacLean's story that it was written some 85 years ago. At that time Canadian women were for the most part homebound. Laundry was boiled in a copper boiler, cooking was done on a big coal-and-wood stove, there were no dishwashers, no vacuum cleaners. Families were large. It's true that the struggle for women's rights had begun, but those dedicated women who carried the feminist banner, who organized and persevered, were in the minority. And there were devout and courageous women who served in overseas mission fields, but they were relatively few in number. Most women gave their time to their families, their social life centred in the church and local missionary societies. (9)

It is this self-determination and courage that signifies MacLean's feminist subjectivity, an impression corroborated in her travel book, where expressions of feminist indignation about being treated like a member of the fragile and generally incompetent sex rupture her text. She was caught in downtown Shanghai during the riot of December 18, 1905, when a large group of Chinese protesters began stoning the German Consulate.^{x1} She observes how the mood on the streets turned instantly: "It seemed incredible that the people on Nanking Road, who only some fifteen minutes before appeared to be out for a holiday with no unkind look or word for me, were now ready to kill every foreigner on whom they could lay their hands" (106). She describes how it was a "foreign man" (meaning non-Chinese) who "accosted" her on the street, barking "You ought not to be here. Go home." She is irked by his command, which insults her for having the gall to be in the same place he is. He also insults her intelligence by telling her something she already knows – "That was no news to me," she writes. "I knew it only too well" (106). She deals with his aggression by playing the damsel in distress, a performative act she describes with the bite of sarcasm:

"Then I must get to the other end of Nanking Road." I said.

"You cannot," he glowered. A lifetime of experience of brothers has taught me that such a tone of voice is useless to resist.

"What shall I do?" I asked meekly in the humblest tone imaginable. as if I were a clinging creature ever dependent on the lords of creation.

He took me to the Central Hotel and left me with orders to stay until the soldiers were summoned. Not having him nor anyone else to cling to. I became my natural self and acted. (106-7)

She acts by calling some missionary friends to see if they could send a carriage but the phone lines are jammed. At this point she admits her fear but bashes on regardless, stepping outside the hotel and hailing a Chinese man pulling a *jinrikisha* (rickshaw), who takes her through the angry mob to the British Consulate. She enters the consulate with news of the brewing riot, but is met with incredulous stares that again ignite her feminist ire: "[T]hey looked at me in a way that plainly said. 'You are a silly creature; how like a woman!' This made me angry and I thereupon frankly confessed to being frightened and to coming there for protection" (107).

A man from the consulate offers to escort her to her friends at a missionary school, claiming he is certain she is making a fuss about nothing while grabbing a sizeable weapon of a walking stick on the way out. They start down a quiet side street, which annoys her, she explains, because "I feared I must seem a 'silly creature; how like a woman!'" (108). As they turn a corner and confront the mob head on, she is elated in spite of herself because she has such a "horror of being thought silly" (108). When they manage to nab single occupancy rickshaws and some protesters grab his, he tells MacLean to fear not. Justifiably frightened, she rejoins. "I am not frightened when you are with me," thereby carrying off a performance of another sort, which entails appearing more intrepid than she actually feels (108). Eventually, she makes her way to the residence of a missionary school, a safe haven until the rioting subsides several days later. This incident reveals the feisty feminist subjectivity through which her ethnographic discourse is filtered.

I would like to now consider some curious, more ambivalent moments in MacLean's feminist ethnographic discourse. While MacLean proclaims the power and denounces the oppression of Chinese women, she turns around and makes comments that startle and baffle the contemporary feminist reader. For example, after rendering the horrors of the bound foot, she is able to see its beauty: "I am, of course, no advocate of foot-binding, but I confess that the tiny red shoes, exquisitely embroidered, peeping from under the short skirts of a Chinese lady, look very dainty and attractive. I can quite understand the men admiring the small foot when they do not have to suffer for it" (84). Granted, this may be a sign of her subjection to the feminine beauty myth that extols tiny female feet, but other examples buttress another interpretation, such as her description of a *Shang-Tang*, an edifice where parents dispose of their unwanted female infants:

As a rule, babies here are thrown away only because of the superstition that in some way, she will bring bad luck. I say "she" for of course it is never necessary to throw away a boy. In the front of the building there is a big drawer in which the baby is deposited. After the baby has been put in and the drawer shut, a bell is rung to inform those inside of its presence. The baby is retrieved, raised from infancy and then sold as a slave. All well-to-do Chinese families have slaves. I would have liked to have opened this drawer to see what it was like inside, but I was in the company of others on the Grand Canal. (69-70)

What I find startling in this passage is its tonal neutrality. Possibly, MacLean is being deliberately ironic here, deflating her medium (of expression) to inflate her message. What weighs against this interpretation, however, is the usual energetic vigour and bite of her satire, as well as her refusal to mince words in her explicit denouncement of foot-binding as a hateful and barbarous custom. In another ambivalent moment which occurs while visiting a Mohammedan Chinese home, she is able to see the virtue of Chinese ladies' forced confinement within their homes. "When I saw this beautiful home," she writes, "and recalled the streets through which we had come, I no longer felt sorry that the Chinese ladies were kept

in their homes and could not go on the streets. Home was by far the best place if there be courtyards, and sunshine, and fountains" (78). This comment is followed by an argument that the streets of Shanghai would be less degenerate if ladies could walk on them, but her reasoning is not related to their freedom of movement but to the civilizing, moralizing effects of their presence (78).

These moments of ambivalence make more sense when they are placed in the context of her general ethnographic representations of the Chinese. In many ways, MacLean's early twentieth-century text is relatively progressive in its approach to writing ethno-racial, national, and cultural others. In an anti-racist, anti-xenophobic, anti-colonialist gesture, she denounces foreigners who know nothing of China, who care only to financially exploit the Chinese, and who speak of the Chinese "as though they were the scum of the earth" (32). Moreover, moments of self-reflexivity subtly undermine her ethnographic authority and signal her slight dis-ease with the act of othering the Chinese. After she describes her perception of the "swarming" lower classes during her first day in Shanghai, self-reflexivity sets in: "'Swarm' is not usually the word when referring to people; but China is not an ordinary country and the Chinese swarm; no other word so fitly describes the condition" (24). Although she justifies her use of this dehumanizing word and continues to use it throughout her text, she does reveal a nascent awareness of the degrading connotations of such linguistic racial othering. While dialogism is absent in MacLean's text, partly, no doubt, because of language barriers, polyphony does make a few brief cameo appearances, which gives her ethnographic informants some dignity of voice. Moreover, when describing certain Chinese habits or customs that are questionable from the perspective of her own culture, such as the rumoured eating of rats (which she is unable to confirm) or the binding of feet, MacLean makes appeals to cultural relativity, tolerance, and understanding. Seeking counterparts in her own culture, she suggests that eating rats is no worse than consuming fetid Stilton or Limburger cheese, and argues that foot binding finds its Western parallel in the use of tightly bound, whalebone corsets (30, 86). When one considers the attitudes towards the Chinese in Canada during the early nineteen hundreds, one may better interpret MacLean's use of these discursive strategies as a sign of her progressive thinking about race and culture. In *The Chinese in Canada*, Jin Tan and Patricia Roy note that Chinese immigrants into Canada were

the least popular and the most harshly treated of immigrant groups (3). One year prior to MacLean's 1905 journey to China, the Canadian government raised the Chinese head tax – the payment required per person to enter the country – to a staggering five hundred dollars, which essentially halted Chinese immigration for some time (8). This was a popular move to European Canadians, who generally regarded the Chinese as an immoral, inferior, opium-addicted race of job-snatchers.

Going against the grain of MacLean's enlightened discourses about the Chinese are her representations that betray an us-and-them, culturally chauvinistic subjectivity. She has no imperial agenda, and near the end of her text she discusses China's need for a strong Chinese leader, a prescient if unwitting nod towards Mao Zedong (111).^{vi} At the same time, she applauds the ramifications of Western forced intervention in China. On first sight of cosmopolitan Nanking Road in Shanghai, she is relieved to see how "Westernized" and thus "delightful" it is as a place of residence (23). The Chinese strongly resisted foreign settlement throughout the nineteenth century and were forced to open their ports, including Shanghai, to foreign residency as part of the "unequal treaty system" that followed the Opium Wars of the 1840s and 1850s ("China" 322-323). This kind of historical knowledge puts MacLean's initial reaction to Nanking Road in pro-imperialist relief.

On a second glance of Nanking Road, she sees the architecture of indigenous Chinese life huddled between cracks in the huge Western facades, and the rhetoric of debasement is set in motion. The sum of several observations informs us that China is a coarse, foul smelling, unsanitary, germ-riddled, epidemic-courting country. She is compelled to mention the cleanliness of the Shansi Bankers' Guild House because "a clean place is so rare that it is worthy of comment" (42). In colonizing discourse, dirt is a sign of unquestionable backwardness as well as of the necessity of colonial intervention, which carries the promise of soap suds and pot pourri. Even the Chinese ladies at home are subject to debasement; they lack refinement because they are given to that "loud talking in coarse tones" that "grates on the ear" (98). MacLean lauds the number of Western-influenced reforms underway in China because they will transform Chinese culture into something less like 'them' and more like 'us'. "Even in the four weeks that I was in China," she writes, "I heard of so many purely Chinese reforms, suggested of course by Western civilization, that it is easily seen that

China's awakening has come" (89). In this passage, MacLean's cultural relativity has vanished into a smug certainty about the incontestable superiority of Western culture; one wonders what happened to her earlier effort to create analogues, as that between Eastern foot binding and Western whalebone stays.

Numerous other examples of colonizing and culturally chauvinistic discourses could be culled from MacLean's text, as well as numerous discourses that 'counter' them. To say that MacLean's representation of the Chinese other is confused and contradictory – a strange brew of progressive thought and narrow-mindedness – is an accurate assessment. I suspect that this ambivalence about the Chinese in general seeps into her feminist ethnography and accounts for some of the more ambivalent portions of that discourse. This ambivalence suggests that a vast chasm exists between the ethnographer and her subject. Something is impeding her consistent identification with these women on the basis of shared gender oppression, the force that appears to drive her feminist observations. The brevity of her journey and the language barriers may have something to do with this ambivalence, but I suspect cultural and racial barriers between her self and the Chinese are also at work.

In 1908, three years after MacLean's journey to China, Agnes Deans Cameron and her niece Jessie Cameron Brown traversed the river and lake systems of northwestern Canada – Lake Athabasca, the Grand Rapids, the Slave River, Great Slave Lake, the Mackenzie River, and the Peace River Crossing to Lesser Slave Lake – on scows, tugs, and steamships. Their six month journey, recorded in Cameron's 1909 travel book, *The New North: An Account of a Woman's 1908 Journey Through Canada to the Arctic*, was punctuated by landings at Fort McMurray, Fort Chipewyan, Smith's Landing, Fort Resolution, Fort Simpson, Fort Good Hope in the Arctic Circle, and Fort MacPherson. During her brief sojourn in Winnipeg prior to her expedition, Cameron visited the Winnipeg Hospital, where she met Alvin Carlton, a seasoned northern trapper who broke through thin ice while crossing the Lake of the Woods. This freezing fall left him paralyzed, dying, and silenced by what the medical wisdom of the day diagnosed as damaged vocal cords. Like many stroke victims (which he probably was), Carlton could only utter unintelligible sounds. "sad mouthings" a nurse was able to translate with considerable effort (9). In *The New North*, Cameron confides to Carlton, "I wish I could

take your knowledge and your eyes with me into the North, there is so much I will miss because of my lack of knowledge." Through the nurse's interpretation, he responds, "You must take your own mind, your own eyes; you must see for yourself" (11). Cameron agrees with this sage advice. Through the filters of her feminist subjectivity, Cameron's eyes and mind perceive things that the trapper might have missed.

The biographical details of Cameron's life, provided by David R. Richeson, who edited and wrote the introduction for the revised, 1986, edition of *The New North*, reveals a woman in the vanguard of first-wave feminist thought and action. Richeson describes her as a "strong-willed" daughter born to adventurous parents in Victoria, British Columbia, in 1863 (vii). In 1880, she began a successful career in teaching, ultimately becoming the first woman high school teacher and, later, the first woman principal in Canada's westernmost province. During her teaching career she coached basketball and football, bicycled, contributed regular journalistic pieces on various topics to magazines and newspapers, vocally supported the women's suffrage movement and education reform, and served as vice president of the Canadian Women's Press Club for British Columbia and Alberta. "As a principal," Richeson notes, "she was known for iron discipline, twice taken to court for beating unruly students" (viii). This disturbing information is offset somewhat by an incident that brought her teaching career to a sudden halt. In 1906, Cameron's license to teach was suspended for three years because of her administration of the 1905 Departmental Examinations in Art. As Richeson describes it, "She was charged with permitting her students to use a straight edge to draw what was suppose to be a free-hand straight line. To no avail she argued that such examinations unduly penalized academically promising students" (viii). Let go because of her leniency, Cameron made her way to Chicago, where she worked as a journalist and plotted a journey north that would be the raw materials for a travel book.

Sections of *The New North* where Cameron narrates personal adventure and experience are marked with the fingerprints of her feminist subjectivity. One such fingerprint occurs in idiom rather than incident when Cameron describes her necessary dealings with the Hudson's Bay Company in planning her journey: "No man or woman can travel with any degree of comfort throughout Northwest America except under the aegis of the Old Company" (5). How rare it is to find gender-neutral language in a travel text, or any texts for

that matter, from this period. Cameron's use of it is not of course indicative of an anachronistic familiarity with the feminist debates of the 1970s and 1980s, but it does indicate her insistence on gender inclusion on the level of language. Fingerprints also show up in her description of the Women's Canadian Club meeting she attends in Winnipeg shortly before her departure for Athabasca Landing. "I have never seen," she writes, "a more splendid aggregation of women . . . tall, strong, alert, and full of initiative" (11-12). Her description of these women contrasts sharply with the comments made about Cameron's younger niece, Jesse Cameron Brown, by a priest they encounter at Fond du Lac. Pointing to Brown, Father Beilher says, "They are not angell [angels] at that age," an insult he immediately qualifies by stating, "I am not a woman-hater, and I am not a *woman chercher*" (94). For Cameron, this priest, with his old-fashioned anti-feminist notions, seems a "new kind of animal" (94-95) – newly emerged, perhaps, from under a rock. She realizes that she must appear a "new" sort of woman to him, and they inspect each other with "great curiosity" (95). Another incident that occurs at Fort McMurray, where Indians have assembled to receive their annual treaty payments, has Cameron's feminist fingerprints all over it. As Cameron watches the proceedings, she observes a Cree widow presenting her four children in order to receive her five-dollar stipend per child. The officials refuse to compensate the fourth child on the grounds that she is unclaimed by any father and therefore illegitimate. As Cameron explains, "With no [father's] name, it cannot draw treaty" (250). Responding to the injustice of the situation, and to the "anxious look in the mother's eye," Cameron decides "to father the child, as its own (un)lawful father will not" (250). Her gender-bending, feminist intervention into a system that penalizes single mothers is successful: "My offer to give my name to the girlie, after due deliberation of Church and State, is accepted. Under the name of Agnes Deans Cameron the Cree kiddie is received into the Mother Church and finds her place on the list of treaty-receiving Indians – No. 53 in the McMurray Band. May she follow pleasant trails!" (250-251).

From a contemporary feminist perspective, this incident has disturbing undercurrents because it permits Cameron to play the goddess in the machine on account of her race. Her feminist resistance is to a system that excludes an 'illegitimate' Indian child but not to the treaty system itself, which has de-territorialized native people and placed them in a position of

forced dependency. I would like to temporarily shift my inquiry to Cameron's position on this imperialistic system, a position that is reinforced and refracted through her ethnographic representations of First Nations people, including her feminist ethnography. As Cameron sets out from Athabasca Landing, she declares, "Oh, I'm glad I'm alive and white!" – a favourite expression of hers "in the latitudes below when the world smiled" (43). She "stops" at the word "white," however, realizing that "North of Athabasca Landing white gives place to a tint more tawny" (43). This self-reflexive moment enables the reader to identify Cameron's racial subjectivity and position it in relation to her travel writing other. It tells us how closely and proudly Cameron identified with her whiteness, for her a sign of privilege and superiority, but it also intimates her awareness that white is different from tawny by mere degrees, shades, tints. Moreover, it signals her sudden apprehension of the North as a non-white place that she must enter respectfully and with the uneasy humility of one who is other to it. This notion surprises considering part of her agenda in writing her travel book was to encourage a deluge of white immigration from the United States and Europe to flood the under-utilized lands of the First Nations people with commerce, agriculture, industry, and settlement. Although she sometimes waxes melancholic over the destructive treads of modernization, she also waxes imperialistic over "the silence of this land so pregnant with possibilities, a land, though it echo now the quiet foot of the Cree, is so unmistakably a White Man's country . . ." (259).

Cameron's confusion over the land's rightful 'colour' pervades her rhetorical representations of First Nations people as noble savages more civilized than white people and as savages improved by white civilization.^{viii} Her representations of native peoples as the noble savage are, according to Spurr's terminology, a colonizing discourse of idealization (125-240): a discourse ostensibly antithetical to debasement that nevertheless debases, much like what is regarded as the backhanded compliment in common parlance. However, Cameron's idealization of First Nations people does function on one level of her text as an anti-colonizing discourse. "Talk of civilizing these half-breeds of the North!" she writes, "They have the gift of repose which we know nothing of, which we may hope to attain after we have lived through automobiles and air-ships and when many incarnations will have allayed the fever of that unrest which we so blatantly dub 'progress'" (151). The Cree, she argues, could teach the Christian obsessed with the "surface niceties of civilization" a thing or

two about real courage, honesty, and compassion (155). Moreover, she observes, "The Eskimo is generous, and his word is worth its full face value. What we have done for the Eskimo is a minus quantity; what he has done for us is to point a splendid moral of integrity, manliness, and intrepid courage" (173). Observing the effects of white culture on native life, such as higher death rates due to sub-standard diets and the influx of disease, Cameron concludes that the indigenous peoples of the North have nothing to be thankful for and are better off without white intervention (98, 212). At times, she wonders if she, too, is better off without white civilization. For Cameron, her civilization becomes a slippery signifier and a place she is not certain she wants to return to. Near the end of her travels, she sighs upon realizing she is "another one hundred miles nearer to civilization – the 'civilization' of Chicago! A strong desire possesses us to about-face and back to the woods again" (278).

These anti-colonialist leanings form a subtext that is in tension with *The New North's* dominant narrative about the virtues of imperial intervention and colonization. "Surely in bringing the workless man of the Old World to the manless work of the New, the Canadian Government and transportation companies are doing a bit of God's work" (16) she argues in a book intended to advertise and expedite the process. When she is not venerating the noble savage, Cameron sees this geographical region as populated by savage, racial others who are essentially not-men. She welcomes the civilizing missions that are doing a bit of God's work by taking native children from their families and making good, civilized Christians out of them. The children, who are "caught" between the ages of four and fourteen, are raised by nuns, the "good step-mothers of savages" (78-79). The nuns at Fort Resolution, she observes, "are trying to make reputable citizens of the young scions of the Dog-Rib and the Yellow Knife nations and are succeeding admirably as far as surface indications go" (125). She welcomes the missionaries, along with their mission of what we now regard as cultural genocide, because they have hastened the advancement of colonial industry and white civilization (143).^{iv} While Cameron does recognize the potential side effects of this process – a literal genocide – she shows only a modicum of concern about it. For example, when explaining why she provides a lengthy, admirable portrait of the Inuit, she writes, "Because he is so very worth while. Because through the years the world has conspired to libel him. Because within a decade or two he will be utterly off the map. And because it is so very much

pleasanter to write appreciations than epitaphs" (202). She shows no remorse over what, in the late 1900s, we recognize as her erroneous prophecy, because she sees this genocide as a necessary evil in manifesting Northern Canada's progressive destiny. In describing the Northwest as the "Last West, the last unoccupied frontier under a white man's sky" (3), she uses the rhetoric of negation, a discourse typical in imperial administration where the other is represented as absence, nothingness, or death (Spurr 92-108). She is able to regard the land as unoccupied because she perceives the native other as non-people, as white-people-in-the-making, or as soon dead. Despite her sentiments about the nobility of the savage, the questionable civility and humanity of her civilization, and her urge to run back into the woods, her final chapter reiterates her imperial agenda. After the book's publication, she takes to the road with the financial assistance of the Canadian Government's immigration department to deliver lantern-slide lectures throughout Canada, the U.S., and Great Britain (Richeson xi).

Within this convoluted, contradictory, perplexing framework of ethnographic representations, we find a feminist ethnographic discourse on native women's power and status. Like MacLean, Cameron represents the strength and resilience of her ethnographic subject. She describes, for example, two Indian women who travelled one hundred and forty-eight miles across a frozen Great Slave Lake by dog-sled in five days; "We didn't make such good time," one of them confesses in a rare polyphonic moment, "as we had a man with us" (244). However, Cameron often renders the female native other with an emotional detachment similar to MacLean's and for similar reasons: encounters of brief duration, the conservative impact of feminine ideology on early feminist expression, and racial and cultural boundaries that hinder identification and preclude intimacy. Even more so than MacLean's text, there is a frequent levity and jaunty quality to Cameron's feminist ethnographic prose, which tends to trivialize the subject of discourse, underscore the chasm between Cameron and her ethnographic subject, and attenuate the discourse's political impact. Granted, this blithe, jaunty tone pervades the entire text and otherwise contributes to its charm. An example of her undeniable wit and humour is evident when she describes the forty-ninth parallel as the border where "the eagle perches and makes amorous eyes at the beaver" (3). No doubt, this humour

and charm is meant to entice potential immigrants into reading her book and colonizing northern Canada.

What we find then, in *The New North*, is the bizarre outcome of two opposing discourses colliding: her serious feminist observations of native women and her jingoistic advertisement for imperialism. Take, for example, her description of the Chipewyan wives of the Fond du Lac as “the New Red Woman”:

We see in her the essential head of the household. No fur is sold to the trader, no yard or pound of goods bought, without her expressed consent. Indeed, the traders refuse to make a bargain of any kind with a Chipewyan man without the active approbation of the wife. When a Chipewyan family moves camp, it is Mrs. Chipewyan who directs the line of march. How did she happen to break away from the bonds that limit and restrain most Red brides? This is the question that has troubled ethnologists since the North was first invaded by the scientific.

(102-103)

In spoof speculation, Cameron’s suggests this difference in the Chipewyan woman is attributable to her contiguity to a certain species of bird:

Along the shores of Fond du Lac we descry a long-legged wader, the phalarope. This is the militant suffragette of all bird-dom. Madame Phalarope lays her own eggs (this depository act could scarcely be done by proxy), but in this culminates and terminates all her responsibilities connubial and maternal, – “this, no more.” Father Phalarope builds the house, the one hen-pecked husband of all feathered families who does. He alone incubates the eggs, and when the little Phalaropes are ushered into the vale, it is Papa who tucks their bibs under their chins and teaches them to peep their morning grace and to eat nicely. Mamma, meanwhile, contrary to all laws of the game, wears the brilliant plumage. When

evening shadows fall where rolls the Athabasca, she struts long-leggedly with other female phalaropes, and together they discuss the upward struggles toward freedom of their unfeathered prototypes. (102-103)

The fingerprints of Cameron's feminist subjectivity are visible throughout this ethnographic representation, with its play on the 'New Woman' designation, its reference to suffragettes, and its marked interest in the gendered division of labour among this specific indigenous tribe. At the same time, her play is problematic. The implied anthropomorphism of birds into Chipewyan women carries with it an ornithomorphism of Chipewyan women into a specific species of bird: it is both comedic in intent and dehumanizing in effect. It also neutralizes the feminist discourse, candy-coating it for the potential colonialist who has little interest in such matters. This fascinating passage indicates to me Cameron's divided loyalties: as a woman and a feminist, she identifies with these native women and displays an interest in their status, which she feels compelled to describe; as a proud white imperialist, she turns the representation into a comic aside.

There are feminist ethnographic passages in Cameron's text which are unsullied by this light touch, such as her interpretation of the Indian women of the North who are not Chipewyan:

Fated always to play a secondary part in the family drama, it is hard to see what a pleasure life holds for her. The birth of a girl baby is not attended with joy or thankfulness. From the beginning the little one is pushed into the background. The boy babies, even the dogs, have the choicer bed at night, and to them are given the best pieces of the meat. The little girl is made to feel that she has come into a world that has no welcome for her and her whole life seems to be an apology. You read it in the face of every Indian girl or woman you meet, from the shrinking pathetic little figure in the camp to the bent old crone, whose upturned face with its sadly acceptive look gives you the flicker of a smile. (241)

Her feminist interest in and apparent concern for Indian women, rendered here with all due seriousness if with excessive sentimentality, may seem odd in the context of a book that casually foresees their demise as a race, nation, and culture. It would seem that her feminist subjectivity is getting the better of her imperialist agenda. At the same time, whether Cameron is aware of it or not, this homogenizing representation, which is undoubtedly distorted on account of its sweeping generalization and her questionable authority, is a colonizing discourse of debasement. It indirectly invites the supposed edifying and enlightening influence of imperial intervention she promotes elsewhere in her text.

Cameron compares the Indian and the Inuit cultures at great length, and the Inuit fare much more favourably from a colonizer's perspective. "Indians beg and boast, the Eskimo does neither," Cameron claims. Her comparison continues: "An Indian is always trying to impress you with his importance; he thinks about his dignity all day and dreams of it at night. The Mackenzie River Eskimo is a man who commands your respect the moment you look at him, and yet he is withal the frankest of mortals, affable, joyous, fairly effervescing with good humour" (165). On several occasions, she refers to Inuit men and women as child-like in their innocence and contentment (202, 203, 223), intended praise that is a commonplace colonizing rhetoric of classification where a race is rendered as less than fully evolved. Interestingly, one of the reasons the Indians are criticized is for their absence of compliance; earlier in her text, Cameron rates the Metis above Indians because they have "bridged over the animosity and awkwardness with which the Red race elsewhere has approached the White" (50). People of the "Red race", she complains, scorn to tell you their names and sometimes dodge her camera, whereas the "Eskimo" are photography-friendly (202). It is plausible that the Inuit are more welcoming to the interlopers because, living further north, they have yet to experience the level of damage done to the Indians. Whatever the case, the subtext of her ethnographic representation of the Inuit is that they are prime imperialist fodder, which may not be Cameron's conscious intention but which is nevertheless there, given the text's dominant pro-colonizing narrative.

In her comparative ethnography of the Indian and the Inuit, Cameron represents Inuit women as generally less gender oppressed than Indian women. Juxtaposed to the impression

she conveys of lazy Indian men who hunt and Indian women who do all the other work required in etching out a subsistence is a description of the equitable division of labour among a particular Inuit tribe:

The head of the Kogmollyc household is the blood-and-flesh-winner, the navigator of the kyak, the driver of dogs. It is he who builds the houses on the march, and when occasion requires he does not consider it *infra dig.* to get the breakfast or mind the baby. The wife dresses the skins, prepares the food, makes all the clothing, and the lord of the igloo demands from her the same perfect work that he turns out himself. (203)

This passage, in its tacit acceptance of the husband as the head of the household, suggests that Cameron's feminist standard has become slightly more lax in her interpretation of Inuit women's lives. This might be a consequence of her admiration of the Inuit in general, her perception of them as non-threatening children of the North, and her animosity towards Indians. She outlines the procedure whereby an Inuit husband tests a pair of waterproof boots made by his wife by blowing into them: "If there is one little pin-hole and the air oozes out, he throws the boots back to her, and she may take up the pedal gauntlet in one or two ways. Either she must meekly start to make a new pair of boots without murmuring a word, or leave it open to him to take to his bosom another conjugal bootmaker" (203). This ethnographic discourse delineates a gendered power dynamic, but it falls short by failing to analyze the Inuit woman's pseudo choice of passive responses. If Cameron were to witness this in an Indian household, she would probably view it as evidence of the sad lot of Indian women. Instead, Cameron settles for the Inuit husband's contentment with "blowing up the boots and not the wife" (203), suggesting the Inuit wife should be grateful she is not subjected to blows.

This word play with blowing up boots and wives demonstrates how the levity in tone we saw in Cameron's ethnography of Indian women persists in her description of the status of Inuit women within their culture. In light of her perception of the child-like Inuit, her representations have infantilizing as well as trivializing connotations. Cameron shows a

feminist interest in Inuit women's status and contentment within their polygamist culture, but her description of wife number two, with its trite tone and belittling diction, reduces both wives in figurative age:

How does the young wife fit in? No suffragette need break a lance for her, demanding a ballot, dower-rights, and the rest of it. She is happy and busy. All day long she sings and laughs as she prepares the family fish and feast of fat things, she pays deference to her co-wife, romps with the children, and expands like an anemone under the ardent smile of her lord. When the grave question was under discussion regarding the exchange of her pendant bead-and-shell ear-rings for a pair we had brought from the shops of the white men, the two spouses discussed the matter in all its phases earnestly together, as chummy as two school-girls.

(168)

The feminist standard shifts here from one of equality and power, the criterion she used in her assessment of the Chipewyan women, to one of happiness. This shift in criterion gives the impression of a doubly infantilized Inuit woman who is child-like on account of her race and child-like in relation to her husband's authority. We tend to care more for children's happiness than their equality, rights, and power. This standard of happiness is implicated in her arguably progressive discourse of cultural relativism regarding the polygamist system. We should not condemn these women who "prefer a vulgar-fraction of a man," she argues in that familiar trivializing tone, because "no seductive 'Want Columns' in the daily press here offer a niche whereby unappropriated spinsters may become self-supporting wage-earners as chaste type-writers, school-teachers, Marcel-wavers or manicurists" (170). Inuit women, she observes, need men to hunt in this geographical region of extreme temperatures:

"Economically, then, a woman must herself hunt or have a man or part of a man to hunt for her. Ethically, it works out beautifully, for each partner to the hymeneal bargain is fat and full of content, happiness fairly oozing out of every oily pore" (170).

Her feminist subjectivity, however, seems a little uneasy with this idyllic image of a system that she herself would probably be unhappy with. Thus, she searches for evidence of women's actual power of choice within this system, and finds some: "I wouldn't like to picture our cousin the Eskimo woman as being always content with a circulating decimal of a husband instead of a whole unit, nor would such presentment be just. The shield, like most shields, has a reverse. Last winter, at the Mackenzie Delta, one Eskimo bride of seventeen took her fourth consecutive husband" (170). In a manner consistent with her merrily-debasing ethnographic prose, she describes this woman's wedding festivities, which took place in a small igloo packed with Inuit, as the coming together of the "odours of Edom and offerings divine" (170).

In shifting from early twentieth century texts such as MacLean's and Cameron's to Karen Connelly's 1992 travel book, Governor General Award winning *Touch the Dragon: A Thai Journal*, we find a feminist ethnographic discourse bereft of ambivalence and levity. When discussing women's place in Thai society, Connelly's prose is galvanized by a barely suppressed and sometimes fully expressed anger and outrage at the gender relations she observes and experiences in Thailand. Several factors account for this disparity in emotional reaction and volatility. First of all, she is not only a product of a more radical, second-wave feminism, but she is young as well; at the age of seventeen, she is a feminist idealist who displays a youthful zeal and ardour unalloyed by world weariness or necessary compromises. Another important factor in the disparity between Connelly's work and the earlier texts involves her relationship with her travel writing other. In 1986, Connelly flew to Thailand as part of a Rotary Exchange Program. During her year-long sojourn in Denchai, a small farming and merchant community in northern Thailand, she lived with two Thai families, attended a Thai school, and learned to speak Thai. In ethnographic terms, she was a participant-observer, unlike her travelling predecessors explored in this chapter who participated little. The passion she puts into her ethnographic feminist discourse was no doubt stoked by her experience of the patriarchal, oppressive components of this culture first hand, which enabled her to better identify with Thai women. This attempt at total integration attests to Connelly's desire to break down the barriers of race, culture, and nation in a way the earlier

writers could not do because of their brief contact, and likely would not do had they time because of the prejudices of their day. It is hard to imagine MacLean or Cameron wishing a racial metamorphosis upon themselves in the way Connelly does at the end of her book. She wonders, "Is there some kind of operation to take the high glass-bird bridge out of my nose? Should I just eat more sticky rice? Is there a pigment to properly darken my skin? I would do it without question, without a moment's hesitation. This is my country, or would have been if I could have chosen" (126-7). This is, no doubt, a whimsical thought whose truth resides in the moment, but it does tell us something about Connelly's notion of racial difference: that it is skin deep.

Before exploring her feminist ethnography, an initial examination of her experience as a participant-observer is useful because it provides some insight into the feminist subjectivity behind the ethnographic discourse and because her delineation of these experiences occasionally slips seamlessly into an ethnography on women's status in Thailand.

Disembarking from her plane, Connelly is greeted by a group of men from the Thai Rotary Club, a patriarchal contingent of guardians she comes to regard as her "Thai fathers" (4). One of these men, Prasert Jeenanukulong, kindly welcomes her into his home, where she resides for the first six months. After asking her to call him Paw Prasert and telling her she is like a daughter to him, he assumes the authority of this role by letting her know some of the codes of Thai female behaviour she is expected to comply with. This is the first of numerous edicts passed down to her by her Thai fathers. "Being like one of 'their' children," she comes to realize, "means I have almost two dozen Thai fathers. A sobering thought" (27). Paw Prasert tells her she must not wear shorts and tee-shirts because it is "not nice," and then tries to mollify Connelly by letting her know she is allowed to wear a bikini for the *Roy Grantog* festival (7), when she "must be beautiful to appease the water gods" (51). After this unsettling compromise, she retires to her small bedroom where a "stark naked Thai girl with an erotic smile stares down from a picture on the wall" (6). This is Connelly's first initiation into the rigid binary gender roles of Thai patriarchal culture, where men expect women be chaste in some contexts and erotic in others. Her first reaction is to cry alone in her room. She takes part in the *Roy Grantong* festival, parade, and beauty pageant, which entails subjecting herself to a lengthy dress and make-up application procedure, climbing into a fuschia, lily-

shaped float while “calf-roped in Thai finery” (51), and teetering on high heels in the beauty pageant (51). She draws the line at the bikini contest, however, finding some dignity in this small act of resistance despite the gaggle of old men who tell her how much they would love to see her in a skimpy swimsuit (51-52). She observes how the Thais “see nothing exploitative about it – every girl dreams of being in beauty contests – and everyone looks forward to the prizes, crowds, and excitement” (52). It is evident that she has a problem with beauty contests, so she sits on a crate behind the stage while “the girls had their bodies judged, even their fingernails and feet” (52).

Connelly begins to feel frustrated by the double standard she is forced into and the freedom she has lost. “My guardians forbid me to be alone with Thai men, almost fall over if they see me wearing a pair of walking shorts, yet their houses are adorned with pictures of naked beauty queens and their weekends in Bangkok are full of frolicking in massage parlours” (92-93). Paw Prasert even takes her to a hostess bar in Bangkok, where a number of beautiful women with numbers pinned to their gowns sit in glass cages waiting for their number to be called by an adoring patron. During the slow dances, her male companions dance with their hostess of choice while Connelly holds up the wall sucking watermelon and pineapple (93). When she thinks too much about this double standard, she confesses, “I get furious and want nothing more than to leave” (93). The situation becomes more strained when she learns to speak Thai but is admonished by Paw Prasert that it is not proper for women to “talk too much about certain things” (80). As a woman, her opinions are not welcome, but as a woman from the liberated West, her observations are threatening and even more unwelcome – only to the men, that is. (As we shall see, Thai women have much interest in what Connelly has to say, and have much to say themselves). Through the colonizing rhetoric of classification, she portrays Thailand as an unprogressive, sexist, tradition-bound culture; at one point, she confesses, “Sometimes I feel I’m living backwards in Thailand, regressing. What enabled me to come here – a sense of independence and strength – is discouraged in the women of a closely knit traditional society. Fearlessness is not something purposely bred into Thai girls. Nor is the urge to criticize or argue” (80).

Nor, Paw Prasert tells her, are women permitted to travel alone (80). Connelly rallies for permission to travel solo to Bangkok from her Thai fathers at the Rotary Club, and

eventually gets it. Nevertheless, upon her return, she is called to a special assembly held by her Thai fathers who heartily accuse her of not having *greng jai* (propriety) like most *salangs* (foreigners) (138). Feeling an odd combination of guilt and indignation, Connelly visits her friend and confidante, Meh Dang, to vent her hostilities. "Kalen, you had to expect it," Meh Dang says: "You know women don't travel here, go away with suitcases for three weeks, it's not done." To Connelly's rejoinder that she had permission, Meh Dang gives her a "wry grin." and says, "But what does that have to do with anything. Their permission doesn't change a custom" (138).

Connelly's feeling of indignation towards her Thai fathers is self-explanatory. What requires some clarification is her feeling of guilt, which evolves out of her awareness that she is a visitor to this country and must be respectful of its customs. This awareness is further revealed in self-reflexive moments when she counsels herself to refrain from cultural criticism. In one journal entry, she writes, "I must attempt the impossible: respect everything, judge nothing, keep my self-righteousness to myself. I will never own any of this country, but it already owns part of me" (54). Later, she adds, "I learn that Thais are conformists, wear uniforms on Friday, have women pattering about with trays of tea, revere customs which I question. I cannot judge that, or want more than there is here" (81). She even questions her perceptual limitations: "At times I distrust my own vision: am I seeing through the layers, do I have a wide scope of things, do I know what illusions the mist and the mountains contrive?" (63).

Despite her intention to censor herself, Connelly's Thai voice ruptures into discussions and protests about women's rights in Thailand, a discourse fueled by her own intimate experience of oppression and exploitation. She not only speaks but is spoken to. Her discussions with Thai men usually assume the form of debate, such as the one we find in the following dialogic passage between Connelly and a lawyer named Surapong:

"But this is why I live in Thailand, Kalen. It is too hot, I know, and the government is corrupt, but at least here the men still control the women!" The doctors laugh but Surapong's face barely changes. His eyes remain half closed, not in sleepiness but in cunning. He is great in

an argument.

"Pood lehn, Kalen, I joke with you. In the constitution of Thailand, men and women are equal."

I snort. "What's written down and what's lived are two different things."

"Yes, that is true." He takes a long pull on his drink and smacks his lips thoughtfully. "There is a good Thai proverb that says man is the front part of the elephant, woman the back part, the part that follows. You see, though, that the animal would not exist at all if one part were missing."

Surapong has perfected the Thai tendency of finding the pleasant and well wrought in any crooked edge. Perhaps his sense of fairness is warped because he is a lawyer. (91)

She hears the elephant metaphor again in a train station in Denchai, while conversing with a German man she meets there who is married to a Thai woman. "Thai men are terrible for having women on the side," the German tells her: "It's a great country for a man, but let me tell you, it's hell for a woman" (155). The Thai cops in the bar who have overhead the discussion begin chuckling:

They repeat the Thai proverb about the hind legs of an elephant. "I love my wife, but she will always do the washing. Men weren't made for that sort of work," one of them says. He takes out a horseshoe-shaped pipe and snorts some grey powder up his nose, then coughs and shivers. "It's simpler if the wife just has babies and helps her husband. Everyone in North America gets divorced." He shoots me a triumphant glance. (155)

This defensive retort is quite different from the responses she hears from Thai women, who share their plaintive stories with her: "They are everywhere: I live with them, they teach

me at Nareerat, they sell me pineapples, they chat with me in the back of songtows, describing their abusive husbands, their husbands who disappear for days and days on business trips" (180). By incorporating their words into her text, Connelly provides an intimate, many-voiced feminist ethnographic discourse. One such exchange occurs between Connelly and Meh Somjit, whose home Connelly lives in for the second half of her journey, along with Meh's bad-tempered husband, Paw Sutape, and their three children. By observing the power relations within this family, Connelly concludes, "In the house, Paw Sutape reigns supreme; when he has his tantrums, Meh Somjit cowers swollen-eyed and exhausted the next morning. In Thailand, it's a fact: women are weaker than men. The law may no longer exist, but in ways, women are still owned here" (93). This monophonic discourse gives way to Meh's quiet voice and voiceless signs. Connelly returns from school one day to find Meh furiously chopping vegetables behind the house and muttering diatribes about the shortcomings of small-town life: "How the people gossip in Denchai! It is so tiring. In Krung Thep [her home town], you can do as you please, no one cares if you wear black, if your skirt is a little above the knee, if you like to dance" (141). Meh loves to dance. Connelly informs us, but Paw Sutape forbids it, claiming it is for children and "bad women" (141). Meh suddenly goes quiet when she hears Paw Sutape's footsteps coming towards the kitchen, and shifts to a more innocuous discussion about the weather until his footsteps recede. Meh's fear of her oppressive husband has been exposed, so she tries to make excuses for him, telling Connelly that he cannot help the way he is, that he is from an old family, that at least she is his only wife (142). Connelly thinks to herself that Meh married an "ogre", a "troll", but does not speak her mind knowing that her "life is set down for her, a full plate. She has to finish it" (142). She recalls the ethnographic information passed on to her by Ajahn Champa, a Thai female friend who said, "In Thailand, a woman rarely leaves her husband unless he is beating the children. That is about the only acceptable excuse there is" (142).

Meh pushes aside the vegetables and begins washing clothes by hand, an arduous process Connelly sees as "inescapable if you are a woman in Thailand, and more dangerous than you think. You lose so many hours of your life scrubbing cotton against a washboard. It's a necessary custom to wear fresh clothes every day – my friends are disgusted if I wear anything two days in a row – so women must wash daily" (74). In Connelly's textured

representation of this wash scene, Meh's suppressed angry voice finds expression in hushed protests and in the scraping sound of the scrub brush against the wash board: "'Mai-yu-tay-tum,' she whispers. *Sshhkk sshhkk sshhkk* against the washboard. 'It's unjust.' *Sshhkk sshhkk*. She shifts the fabric. White foam billows out of the basin. *Sshhkk sshhkk sshhkk*. She scrubs harder, undoubtedly scraping fibres out of the cloth" (142). Meh then calls her daughter Kwan, as though she wants her daughter to witness the drudgery of women's work, to hear the feminist protest of the powerless and the silenced: "Meh only glances up at the ten-year-old, whispers, 'Fung dee-dee, Kwan. Listen well,' then turns again to the scrubbing. For a few seconds, we hear nothing but *sshhkk sshhkk sshhkk*, ribbons of water slapping the pavement. Meh exhaling little pants on the downward strokes. Her hair pulls loose and falls in her eyes" (142). When Meh finally stops her frenetic scrubbing, she looks up and says, "Kalen, you are so lucky. You are so free. This is such a small place. Just the shop and the children and nothing outside. You can do whatever you want. You don't know what you have" (142-143). When she is about to continue, she is stifled once again by the sound of Paw Sutape's approach. As Connelly sees it, "He has a nose for insurrection and worries when Meh spends too much time with me: I am white, barbaric, not to be trusted. I don't know my place. Now he calls her into the shop. Kwan and I sit alone in the courtyard, counting the bats" (143).

After listening to myriad stories of gender oppression, Connelly writes letters home "in self-righteous rages" (181). It seems as though she begins to perceive the harmful potential and futility of raging in Thailand, where "history is not a subject" but a "force that holds you still" (180). In her interactions with confiding Thai women, she stops pontificating about "being strong and taking control of one's life" (181) and instead offers them what they need at that moment: a sympathetic ear. As Connelly sees it, "Many Thai women who feel trapped know what is wrong; they even have the ability to free themselves. But most of them do not have the raw courage and necessary selfishness to break with convention" (180). While she may be correct in her realization that Thai women do not need her to educate them on what is wrong, her rather ungenerous assumption that all these women could "[v]ery easily" (180) extricate themselves by coughing up some courage and selfishness signifies the cultural barriers that divide Connelly from her ethnographic subject despite her participatory

experience. She can identify with their anger, but not with their fear because she has a plane ticket out and because she comes from the iconoclastic West where custom holds little sway. She sometimes displays little understanding of the forcefulness of custom in a traditional society, nor of the ramifications of breaking with custom.

Like the other travel writers considered in this chapter, Connally's feminist ethnographic discourse is not only a catalogue of victims and oppression. She also offers portraits of women who have not entirely broken with patriarchal custom but who have carved out a tolerable niche for themselves within their tradition-bound society through a little luck, small acts of resistance, and self-determination. One of these women is Beed. In defiance of the conventions of female propriety, modesty, and deference, Beed wears Western shorts, talks in a loud voice, changes oil and pumps gas, and beats her male opponents on the tennis courts with her wicked backhand. Part of Beed's good fortune is to be married to a man with progressive notions who is not threatened by things like the close friendship that develops between his wife and Connally. Beed's home is a place where Connally feels comfortable "raving" about the inequality of women in Thailand, although polemics often give way to pleasant conversation and laughter in Beed's sunny company (95).

Another loud voice in a country of soft-spoken women is Meh Dang's, and it's a voice Connally comes to know well. Meh Dang is a part time nurse who otherwise operates a small restaurant. This is where Connally's conversation with the lawyer Surapong about women's liberation in Asia takes place. As Surapong identifies Thai women's role as the proverbial elephant's nether region, Meh Deng rattles the cutlery and almost breaks a few plates. When he argues, "Thailand has come a long way. Thai men used to own their wives as soon as the two married. Now everything is different. Thailand is a modern nation." Meh Dang bangs a dish down on the table in frustration. "Yes," she responds. "very modern. Women pull logs up hills. People cannot read. A great country. No prostitutes" (92). Evidently uncomfortable with this outburst, Surapong changes the subject. Later, Connally and Meh Dang discuss Thai men and their whores: "'Why can't women do that?' she [Meh] asks out loud when we are alone in the kitchen, talking about men. 'If a woman takes a man who is not her husband, people spit her name in the street.' She shakes her head wearily" (93). Connally surmises that part of Meh Dang's indignation stems from fear that her own husband, who is often away on

business trips, has a paramour of his own. It is evident, however, that Meh Dang loves her husband deeply, and this love is a measure of her strength and, paradoxically, of her resistance to convention. "I've seen Meh Dang do two things," writes Connelly, "which I've not seen any other Thai women do. I've seen her cry for her husband and, on greeting him, kiss him in public. Most Thais aren't so immodest – kissing in public! – but Meh Dang scoffs at modesty and says that refraining from touching someone you love is not a show of strength but a demonstration of weakness" (68).

Another headstrong Thai woman Connelly meets is the mother of her friend, Boh. She is portrayed as a woman who eluded fate through resistance, a lucky marriage, and self-determination:

Boh's mother is a pretty woman who saw beyond her own mother's life. She didn't want to live by planting and harvesting tobacco and rice. Somehow – she refuses to explain how – she made the son of a Chinese merchant fall in love with her, a mere peasant's daughter. They married without the approval of his parents, causing a great scandal at the time. Now a plump merchant's wife, Boh's mother still laughs at her good luck. "Look at my hands," she says sometimes, holding them up to the light so the gold rings and burgundy nails glitter. "My mother's hands were not like this." (63-64)

The person who makes the greatest impression on Connelly, however, is Ajahn Champa, a woman in her late forties who studied on scholarship in Australia and Britain, taught for thirty years, and heads the English Department at the school Connelly attends. Like the Thai fathers, part of Ajahn Champa's job is to induct Connelly into the world of Thai female propriety, so on their first meeting at school she warns her that going bra-less is "the eighth deadly sin" (9). However, she does so sympathetically, and admits, "It is not easy to live in Thailand. It is an old, old place and you come from such a young country. Try to be patient with it, Karen." (9). Ajahn Champa becomes a confidante and a friend as well as a knowledgeable feminist ethnographic informant for Connelly. For example, she is the one

who informs Connelly that Thai women rarely leave their husbands unless their children are being beaten (142). Moreover, she relates Thai legends about men's sovereignty over women, such as one about a Thai king whose pregnant wife drowned in a *klong* (an inner-city waterway) because the guards who might have saved her were ordered by their King to never set eyes on her, let alone touch her. After relating this legend, Ajahn Champa "sighs," "clicks her tongue," and says, "Oh Thailand" (93-94). Ajahn Champa tells Connelly she never married because her husband was "never born"; Connelly suspects Champa remained single because she could never be the hind part of an elephant (94).

Bronwyn Drainie's feminist ethnography in *My Jerusalem: Secular Adventures in the Holy City* (1994) is similar to Connelly's in that it has none of the ambivalence or casualness we find in the early texts – a result, no doubt, of her subject position as a second-wave feminist comfortable in her feminism. This comfort is tangible in her introduction to this text, where she confesses her apprehensive feelings about leaving her work to follow the man she loves, but claims, "I was determined not to let feminist misgivings spoil a great adventure" (3). In mid-1991, she quit her work in Canadian broadcasting and print journalism so that she and her two sons could accompany her husband, Patrick, who had just received the posting of Middle Eastern foreign correspondent for the *Globe & Mail*. "Whatever life in the Middle East held in store for us," she writes, "I promised myself I would never blame Patrick for dragging me after him. It would prove to be a hard promise to keep" (3). Part of the reason the promise became difficult to keep was because Drainie's feminist misgivings travelled with her, and were transferred onto the society she entered.

Drainie's text opens with self-reflexive, paranoid imaginings of the book's reception: "'Get her!' I can hear my readers saying, especially the ones who disagree with any of my observations in this book. 'She spends two years in the place and then has the presumption to write about *her* Jerusalem, as if she had lived there all her life'" (ix). Apparently sensitive to the controversy over writing ethnographic others and uncertain about her authority to do so, she admits her naysayers are, on one level, right: "Jerusalem places such a heavy weight of history and tragedy and human folly on the shoulders of its inhabitants that only those who have breathed its restless air from birth are truly qualified to reflect on its troubled existence

to the rest of the world" (ix). At the same time, she mentions the plethora of writers who have "pronounced on the place" after spending much less time there than she (ix). After reading copious books on Jerusalem, none of which captured the reality of her life there, she concludes that "there seemed, amazingly, to be room for yet another book on the shelf of Jerusalem travel memoirs" (xii). To Drainie, the city is a "prism with thousands of facets, and one's approach to it – including one's ethnicity, age, education and religious beliefs – entirely determines its effect on one's mind and heart" (xi). Why she omits gender as a determining factor in this passage baffles me considering it is Drainie's feminist subjectivity that is refracted through Jerusalem's prism. In her travel book, her mind and heart are affected by gender relations in Palestinian and Israeli culture, particularly women's status within the Islamic Fundamentalist and Jewish Orthodox faiths.

Unlike Connelly's text, Drainie's feminist ethnographic discourse is not laden with high emotion: the anger and outrage are tangible but expertly controlled. There are several apparent reasons for this. First of all, compared to Connelly's complete immersion in Thai life, Drainie is an occasional participant-observer more engaged in witnessing gender-related oppression and discrimination than experiencing it first hand. Moreover, when she is intermittently subjected to it, she has the support network of family (although one wonders just how supportive her husband was, considering she left him there two years in to the sojourn). Nevertheless, her feminist resentment is clearly primed on a number of participant occasions. We see it, for example, when a guard at the Dome of the Rock refuses her entrance because the top button of her blouse is undone (51). Or when she visits a synagogue with Jewish Orthodox friends on Shabbat and is separated from her husband and sons and escorted into the women's section, which she describes as "an insult, a completely bare adjunct to the main action going on beyond a plywood screen running the full length of the room" (217). As she grocery shops at a *haredi* (Jewish Orthodox) supermarket, her presence sends men in black fedoras "shrinking into the shelves of canned peas" in order to place as much distance between her body and theirs. This, however, occurs a year into the sojourn, when she claims to have gotten over the "outrage" and "insult" she felt the first time a *haredi* rabbi refused to shake her hand: "Now I just found the *haredim* curious" (202). This ability to detach accounts for the muted emotionalism of Drainie's text compared with Connelly's moments of

overwrought fury, a distinction likely related to Drainie's experience as a seasoned professional journalist. Moreover, Connelly's text sometimes trembles with rage because her travel book has the immediacy of a personal journal. In her travel memoir, Drainie recollects the tumultuous past from a more tranquil present.

A factor that might account for the seriousness with which Drainie approaches and renders her ethnographic subject is her identity as half-Jew on her mother's side. Although she is non-practicing, this religious affiliation fudges the barrier between herself and her female Israeli other, possibly fostering increased identification with their gender oppression. But then again, Drainie appears equally concerned about the rights of Palestinian women, so I suspect her feminist concern for women's human rights supercedes any racial and cultural bias or barrier. In *My Jerusalem*, Drainie represents Palestinian women as "doubly oppressed" by both traditional social structures that make them wholly subordinate to their fathers, brothers and husbands and by Israeli military might used against the Palestinian people (179). In traditional families, Drainie reports, young Palestinian women are still murdered by their Islamic fundamentalist fathers or brothers if they lose their virginity through their own volition or through rape (188). With the distinct blend of indictment and bridled anger typical of Drainie's feminist ethnography, she describes this practice as a "social code of unbearable harshness, and all hinging on a few centimetres of female flesh" (188-189). In more progressive Palestinian families, she reports, it is still a standard practice to call daughters "daughters" and call sons "children" (122). Moreover, she discusses how Palestinian women are required to wear the *higab*, a wimple that encircles the face from forehead to chin, covering all traces of hair (208). During the time of her visit, protest made an appearance in the corridors of a Christian-funded children's hospital because the nurses there, most of whom were female Palestinian Arabs, were required to wear a standard, wimple-less uniform. The nurses themselves, Drainie wryly notes, seemed to have little say as male Islamic Fundamentalists stormed the hospital grounds spray-painting threats on walls (208).

Turbulent Arab-Israeli relations, including the Israeli occupation of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip as well as Palestinian resistance to Israeli aggression, combined to exacerbate the oppressive constructs already shaping women's lives. The Arab-Israeli war of 1948, which

followed on the heels of the United Nation's partition of Palestine and the creation of Israel, and the subsequent Arab-Israeli war of 1967 created a Palestinian refugee class. Following the first war, many Palestinians who had not fled to neighbouring Arab nations and who were dispossessed by the new nation of Israel relocated in the West Bank, which was annexed by Jordan in 1949, and the Gaza Strip, which was administered by Egypt. The outcome of the 1967 war, however, was the Israeli occupation and increased Jewish settlement into these territories as well as the increased exploitation of Palestinian workers and resources within. The Hamas' and the Palestinian Liberation Organization's resistance to the occupation resulted in severe Israeli retaliation and casualties on both sides (Ciment 26-60).^{xx} Of the Palestinian experience, Drainie reports, "When the men of the family were killed or imprisoned or deported, and their families rendered homeless, the rhetoric of the PLO and Hamas would glorify the mothers and wives and children as 'martyrs' along with their menfolk. But these were empty political slogans. In practice, women living in Palestinian society without the protection and support of men are generally ignored and despised" (126).

Drainie ponders the double oppression of Palestinian women while sitting in a courtyard of rubble in Sinjil, a Palestinian settlement on the West Bank, among numerous homeless women with families whose houses were razed by Israelis. She is unable to converse with these women because of language barriers but doubts their willingness to share their personal stories with a nosy stranger such as herself even if they could communicate (127). Seeking a native, authentic voice, she recalls an autobiography she read the week before at the Women's Research Centre in East Jerusalem about a Palestinian woman named Miriam. In a polyphonic gesture, she narrates Miriam's story. *My Jerusalem* is full of ethnographic generalizations gleaned from Drainie's observations and research interwoven with the names and voices of numerous native informants such as Miriam. Miriam's story gives a personal, human face to Drainie's generalizations:

A woman named Miriam described how she had been married when she was fifteen: her husband had immediately been involved in an anti-Israeli Defence Force action and had been sentenced to twenty-five years in jail. Now that he had been released, she was forty-two years

old and wanted children; she wanted to live a normal life after being treated, for twenty-five years, like an outcast by her society because of her manless state. She described visiting her husband in jail once a month: his brothers used to go sometimes but they didn't want a woman tagging along so they refused to take her with them. She never had enough money for a *service* [cab], so she walked four hours alone to the jail . . . Now, to add to her misery, her newly returned husband would not sleep with her and try to conceive a son. She had heard rumours that Arab prisoners in Israeli jails were routinely sterilized at the beginning of their sentences. She surmised that this had been done to her husband and he was too ashamed to admit it to her. (127)

Of course, there are two victims in this story: husband and wife. Drainie claims that she failed to unearth any evidence to support this rumour of forced sterilization, but concedes that "its sexual focus was absolutely consistent with the entire Palestinian symbolism of the Arab-Israeli relationship: the raping of the land, the destruction of the nation's honour, the emasculation of its men, the threat to its women's virtue" (127). The distinction between Miriam and her husband's experience of Israeli retaliation, however, is that Miriam was shunned by her own society in her husband's absence. He was visited by friends and family and received back into the social fold as a hero, a martyr.

Drainie takes as much care in balancing her feminist ethnographic representations of Palestinian's women's oppression with their acts of resistance and self-preservation as she does in balancing the monophony and polyphony of her discourse. She displays an interest, for example, in Palestinian women's embroidery work not so much for its aesthetic qualities as for its role in helping these women "cope with their frankly miserable lives" (179). She made one visit to the Mennonite Centre in East Jerusalem, which had been selling this exquisite handiwork internationally, followed by a trip to a women's sewing co-op in the West Bank town of Surif, near Hebron. Entering the co-op, Drainie sees "a dozen women in headscarves and long shapeless dresses sorting embroidered tea-towels, aprons and cushion covers, accompanied by much rapid-fire chat and bursts of laughter" (179). Co-operatives

such as this one provide Palestinian women with a place to socialize outside of their homes. However, Zena, the head of the centre, informs Drainie that the majority of women do their embroidery at home in the evening after all their other chores are completed. Drainie questions whether this additional work truly improves their lives for the better. Zena assures her that the co-op is the most successful business in town despite its modest earnings, and that it puts money in the women's pockets (180). Unfortunately, Drainie does not question whose pockets the money stays in.

Overall, Drainie represents the sewing co-ops as a "liberating experience" for single women and women with a smattering of education, who often turned out to be one and the same. She includes the voice of one of these women, Souad, who had the "scary" yet "thrilling" experiences which often accompany liberating strides when she took a bus to Jerusalem for the first time in her life in order to do some work for the co-op. "The other passengers," she narrates "all male workers, stared at me strangely. I was shy and couldn't raise my face, thinking what was going through their minds. It was a forty-minute bus trip, but to me it felt like two hours" (180).

Drainie, like Connelly, offers several ethnographic portraits of women like Souad, who both submit to and quietly challenge patriarchal custom. One of the lengthier portraits is of Sama, a young Palestinian woman whom Drainie befriends while exploring the sewing co-op at Qalandiya Refugee Camp, on the outskirts of East Jerusalem. Sama and her Aunt Khadija, the centre's director, give Drainie a tour of the centre and the refugee camp. During this tour, Drainie learns that Sama was educated at Bir Zeit University, a "notoriously radical" university on the West Bank (186). Drainie takes to Sama because of her "easy self-confidence," a personality trait she links to Sama's having grown up in a house without an "overbearing Arab father" (186). Her mother died when she was young and her father remarried and moved away, leaving her and her sister in care of her aunt. She saw her father from time to time. Drainie explains, "But essentially she and her sister had grown up in an all-female household, and she did not suffer from the giggly shyness and blandness that most Palestinian women display to the outside world" (187). Upon meeting Sama's engaged sister, Sahar, Drainie asks about Sahar's bride price, and Sahar shows her a small gold coin hanging from her necklace. Displaying her feminist progressive and protective convictions, Sama

interjects, “The coin is a bow to tradition but really this is going to be a marriage between equals. Nobody buys anybody in this family” (188). At the same time, Sama is a twenty-nine-year-old virgin; “even though there was no heavy-handed male in the picture guarding her hymen,” comments Drainie, “she had clearly internalized the Arab obsession with female honour” (188). Perhaps she feared that if she did have sex, some man might take it upon himself to deliver the same mortal repercussion that several girls in her camp experienced each year at the hands of male relatives (188).

Drainie documents strategies for liberation, resistance, and self-determination among Palestinian women in areas such as birth control. The “battle for demographics” waged on both sides of the Green Line (the borders of pre-1967 Israel) incorporates propagandistic schemes to manipulate and appropriate women’s reproductive functions (191). Drainie notes, “The Palestinian rhetoric proclaimed it flat out: women were ‘factories of men’ and any woman who could produce eight, ten, twelve sons for the great Palestinian cause was loudly praised” (191). In a dialogic exchange, Drainie asks Islah, a respected Palestinian feminist she meets, about any possible recent advancements in attitude towards birth control. Laughing nervously, Islah responds,

It’s very dangerous for us to speak publicly about birth control in this society, because of the enormous political pressure on women to have more children. The only thing we can do is talk about family spacing, driving home a message based on the health of the mother and baby, which is something even men can’t complain about. At least that means that by the end of her baby-growing career she might end up with only nine or ten pregnancies instead of fourteen. (192)

Through her own readings, Drainie uncovers information about a form of passive resistance that Islah may not have wanted to divulge. From reading a West Bank survey, she discovers that Palestinian women breast feed for as long as they can possibly get away with it in the belief that lactation is a natural prophylactic (192).

Drainie's feminist ethnographic discourse in *My Jerusalem* includes a sustained comparison of the rights enjoyed by Palestinian and Israeli women. She recalls the Zionist propagandistic films and posters from her youth of women toting guns, maneuvering tanks, and ploughing fields alongside men, images which gave the world the idea that Israel was "a pioneer in women's liberation" (13, 190). Of contemporary Israel, she observes, "The lives of Israeli women seemed, on the surface, to be so different from those of their Palestinian counterparts: all of them had the liberating social experience of entering the army after high school, and huge numbers of them worked outside the home" (190). Drainie, however, finds these surface appearances deceiving, and argues that nothing could be "further from the truth" than the fact of women's liberation in Israel (190). First of all, she points to the similarities between Arab and Jewish Fundamentalist positions on such matters as propitious female dress. She describes the many posters admonishing sartorial correctness to Jewish Orthodox girls and women in the *haredi* neighbourhood of Mea Shearim. A typical poster reads, "She who wears shameless clothes, woeful are the days of her youth. Her sins are more numerous than the strands of her hair. Covered arms, covered legs, neck and heart covered – THIS IS MODEST DRESS!" (207). Drainie is amazed by how much both Moslems and *haredim* concern themselves specifically with women's head coverings (208). The Islamic threats about Palestinian nurses without wimples find their parallel in a poster in Mea Shearim warning married Jewish women that it is "ABSOLUTELY PROHIBITED" to be seen in public without a *sheitel* (a stiff black wig of blatant artifice) lest they be mistaken for free women or prostitutes (207). Moreover, Drainie explains how Jewish and Palestinian women alike are told to justify their existences by giving birth to young male soldiers, potential cannon fodder in the militaristic 'human arms' race between Palestine and Israel (192).

From Drainie's perspective, the Zionist movement favoured men from its very inception: "Once the Zionists decided to adopt ancient Hebrew as the language of their new Jewish state, for example, the immigrant males had an immediate advantage over the females because they had studied at least basic Hebrew in their European religious schools, whereas the girls had not" (191). The typical pattern of mid-century socialist, left-wing politics, where males espoused theories of gender equality while females did all the grunt work in the offices, kitchens, bedrooms, and nurseries, flourished on kibbutzim – rural collective Jewish

communities – as well (190). Drainie concedes that women fought alongside men in “the desperate days of 1948” with the Israeli Defense Force (IDF), but adds that they were reduced to non-combat support staff thereafter, where they remain to this day (191). This support staff status within the IDF limits their career paths. When Drainie lunches with Alice Shalvi, head of one of the largest feminist groups of the country, Shalvi discusses the jarring positions on war and work that feminist Jewish women are required to take:

I am absolutely dedicated to the cause of peace, as I believe most feminists are, and you can't imagine how ridiculous it feels for me to have to argue publicly for a combat role for women in the IDF. But without that, they will never attain anything approaching equality in this country. The entire structure of your later life in Israel is based on what you did during your army service, it's by far the most important thing on your CV. (191)

Alongside the voices in her polyphonic text, Drainie provides fascinating depictions of quieter forms of protest among groups of Jewish women. For example, she describes her first sighting of the Women in Black protesting Israeli occupation and violence during the Intifada.^{vi} One Friday morning, as she arranges a bouquet at a flower stall, Drainie notices twenty-four women dressed entirely in black standing on a traffic island with placards in their hands. She asks Shimon, the flower vendor, who they are and what their placards say. For Shimon, their sex and class blot out their message:

“Those?” he said, casting a disdainful glance over his shoulders as he hauled a new bucket of gladioli into place. “They’re princesses – princesses playing at politics.” This was intriguing but not illuminating. I asked for more information. “They call themselves the Women in Black,” explained Shimon, “and they’re out here every Friday at one o’clock for an hour. The sign says, ‘Stop the occupation.’ They’ve been coming for a long time, maybe since the beginning of the intifada. What do they

know? A bunch of rich women who leave their kids with the babysitter so they can come out on the streets and demonstrate." (102)

These women between the ages of thirty and forty-five stand serenely still as reams of drivers pass by shaking their fists and honking abusive horns.

Another image of quiet protest occurs at the Western Wall on Shabbat, where Drainie finds herself treated to a spectacle she describes as "one part sincerity and three parts hokum" (197). The hokum, she notes, comes from the large men's section, where Jewish orthodox men "appeared to be checking out and criticizing each other's method of praying and chanting as much as talking to God" (197). They would bob fiercely in front of the wall and then link up into a "loud and incongruous conga line that snaked around the plaza, prayer-books fluttering, ringlets swirling" (197). Drainie finds the sincerity emanates from the much narrower women's section: "There were no prayer shawls, no dancing and no singing on the women's side. All the ostentation and all the communal fun was the exclusive province of the men, while the women were required to keep their worship quiet, seemly and individual. In fact, nobody and nothing in Jewish religious practice required the women to be there at all, so it was only true devotion that brought them there" (197-198). Drainie reports that feminist groups had tried to rush the men's section of the Wall but were attacked by flying chairs hurled by the *haredim*. Others had tried to hold their own morning prayer services on the women's side, but were attacked, beaten, spat upon, and even tear gassed. One day, however, Drainie witnesses a quiet form of prayer and protest on the women's side, which she renders in moving detail:

On a typical Friday evening . . . as I leaned on the stone barricade that separated the watchers from the worshippers, the only sign of female protest was a group of twelve young women with dark manes flowing down their backs who had formed themselves into a circle, arms linked across each other's shoulders, and were gently swaying to the right and then to the left, quietly murmuring a prayer in unison. Older women in headscarves stared at them with heavy suspicion, but their protest was

so subtle that no one was prepared to confront them. Hundreds of graceful swallows swooped over the floodlit face of the Wall, darting in and out and sometimes disappearing completely into the thin fissures between the massive ancient stones. The cacophony from the men's side grew muted inside my head as I strained to catch the delicate chanting of the women's circle. Their swaying was hypnotic and powerful and utterly female, and it suddenly became clear why the men of the Middle East have devoted centuries of custom and law to keeping women on the edges and under control: they are afraid of them. (198)

The books explored in this chapter offer a mere sampling of feminist ethnographic text manifest in travel writing by Canadian women. For further research into this area, my recommended reading list includes E. Cora Hind's *Seeing for Myself* (1937) and *My Travels and Findings* (1939), Emily Carr's *Klee Wyck* (1941), Margaret Laurence's *The Prophet's Camel Bell* (1963), Maureen Hynes's *Letters From China* (1981), Rona Murray's *Journey Back to Peshawar* (1993), and Karen Connelly's second travel book, *One Room in a Castle: Letters From Spain, France, and Greece* (1995). Several of these texts are analysed in subsequent chapters but with emphasis on a different gendered discourse. In making selections for this chapter, I have chosen texts in which the feminist ethnographic discourse figures most prominently and which best illustrate the differences in travel writing's feminist ethnography from the first half and latter half of the twentieth century. We have seen, for example, more ambivalence in the ethnographies by early twentieth-century writers and a leavening of the oppressive monophonic voice in contemporary feminist ethnographic discourses.

That said, contemporary travel writers still write ethnographic discourses. This alone makes them liable to attack from radical feminist circles. Thus, in concluding this chapter, I wish to return to the vexed issue of the ethics of ethnography (and, by extension, of travel writing) and the feminist debate over ethno-racial, cultural, and national othering. As Linda Alcoff notes, some sections of the U.S. feminist movement advocate a retreat "from all

practices of speaking for," asserting that "one can only know one's own narrow individual experience and one's 'own truth' and can never make claims beyond this" (17). This proposal, which assumes we live in a solipsistic world where solidarity, connection, and identification with others are unattainable, clashes with other feminist principles and raises a number of complex questions. In Alcoff's words, "We might ask, If I don't speak for those less privileged than myself, am I abandoning my political responsibility to speak out against oppression, a responsibility incurred by the very fact of my privilege? If I should not speak for others, should I restrict myself to following their lead uncritically? Is my greatest contribution to *move over and get out of the way?*" (8).

According to Caren Kaplan, when it comes to transnational feminist practices, whether one's greatest contribution is to vamoose depends on one's approach to a "politics of location." The term "politics of location," Kaplan points out, was coined by Adrienne Rich in *Blood, Bread and Poetry* (1986), a collection of essays that deconstruct the hegemonic, homogenizing "we" used in white, U.S., mainstream feminism because this collective pronoun tended to marginalize non-white and lesbian women. Kaplan sees Rich proposing a politics of location in which white, American feminists explore the meaning of whiteness, recognize the privileged location from which they speak, and assume difference between themselves and other American women as much as similarity (140). Shifting to a transnational feminist politics of location, Kaplan argues that women concerned with global feminism must "investigate the grounds of their strong desire for rapport and intimacy with the 'other'" and avoid the construction of "similarity through equalizations when material histories indicate otherwise" (139). Kaplan ideally foresees a politics of location that fosters coalition and affiliation among women of the world, but affiliation paradoxically based on respect for difference as much as on recognition of similarity.

Looking at the travel writing books analysed in this chapter with a politics of location in mind, I see how the strategy of polyphony allows other women to speak from their own, different 'locations,' and how dialogism could foster a textual affiliation of sorts. I also see how self-reflexivity helps to locate the writer in relation to her ethnographic other. However, I also see the shortcomings of these strategies. For example, despite dialogism and polyphony, the travel writer still orchestrates the different voices in her text and arranges them

for publication because she is in the privileged ‘location’ to do so. I also question whether the self-reflexivity in these texts goes deep enough. For example, I see little self-reflection about the ramifications of a feminist ethnographic writing practice on the subjects of the discourse. I am thinking specifically of Karen Connelly here. If she had been more aware of the politics of her privileged, safe location compared to the location of Thai women, she might have changed names and protected the identities of some of the lives she wrote. A politics of location should take into account the politics of reception within different locations. If Connelly’s book made its way back to Denchai, I fear Meh Somjit’s eyes may have swelled even more after a night with Paw Sutape. I do believe there is a place for feminist ethnographic discourse in women’s travel writing, but the writer must be astutely aware of the critical theoretical issues in feminist ethnography and of the politics of her own and the other woman’s locations.

¹ Sterne’s *A Sentimental Journey* makes satiric jabs at Tobias Smollett and his travel book, *Travels Through France and Italy* (1766). Smollett is portrayed as the exemplary Splenetic Traveller ‘Smelfungus’, who “set out with spleen and jaundice,” and whose travel book “‘twas nothing but the account of his miserable feelings” (Sterne 116). Yorick, the narrator of Sterne’s book, identifies himself as the Sentimental Traveller, a type fashioned after the ideals and excesses of the eighteenth-century benevolent, virtuous gentleman of sentiment (82). Sterne’s taxonomy of travellers includes several other types, such as the Idle, Inquisitive, Lying, Proud, and Vain Travellers (81). It would have been interesting indeed had he provided a sketch of the ‘Lady’ Traveller.

² Elizabeth Bohls, for example, in *Women Travel Writers and the Language of Aesthetics, 1716-1818*, argues that Montagu attempts to “de-eroticize” and “de-exoticize” these bathing Turkish women by turning them into works of art, that is, by aestheticizing them (28).

³ Canadian writer Gwendolyn MacEwan’s travel book, *Mermaids and Ikons: A Greek Summer* (1978) exposes the ironic potential of gendered accessibility and inaccessibility. The text is framed by a “knitting party” in Athens, a feminine space where the author, unable to knit, sits among her knitting female hosts like a female impostor who promotes her access to this circle by feigning to knit, or, as she puts it, by “non-knitting” (13). MacEwan also describes a space that is inaccessible to her because of her gender, the Holy Altar in a small, old church. Only a wooden partition, the curtained *ikonostasis*, separates her from the Altar, and, like a good daughter of Eve, she finds the temptation too great: “*God can get me if He wants. I thought, I’m going in anyway*” (67). Within, she finds little more than a small altar covered by a cotton cloth, and a wooden Christ carved from a Coca-Cola crate. Stepping out of the altar, her eyes teary from the bathos of the scene, she knocks over a lamp of hot holy oil that drips down her head, searing her scalp. Rather than interpreting this incident as the act of a vengeful God, MacEwan construes it as an anointment (68).

^{iv} As the authors of *Canadian Women: A History* note, the women's movement in twentieth-century Canada "worked its way through something like the trough between two waves" (424). They argue that first wave feminism of the first two decades of this century is epitomized by the figure of Nellie McClung, who protested on behalf of women's suffrage (224). Women's professional organizations evolved at this time as well, such as the Canadian Women's Press Club. Second-wave feminism in Canada occurred during the 1960s and especially the 1970s, when new women's groups organized with "new labels and even new ideologies" (414).

^v It needs to be said that some form of othering is an inevitable outcome of constructing meaning and is not an *a priori* oppressive act. The linguistic theories of Ferdinand de Saussure demonstrate how, at an abstract, elemental linguistic level, each individual sign has meaning because of its difference from other signs. Terry Eagleton, in his elucidation of Saussurean semiotics, explains, "'Cat' has meaning not 'in itself', but because it is not 'cap' or 'cad' or 'bat'" (97). Where we get into trouble is with more complex language structures such as ethnographic discourses that incorporate value judgements or biases about difference.

^{vi} Feminist anthropologists committed to the construction of feminist ethnographies but influenced by feminist and postcolonial theories of othering have questioned the legitimacy of their professional activities. In fact, ethnographers Judith Stacey and Lila Abu-Lughod both published papers titled "Can There Be a Feminist Ethnography?" In these essays, both writers concur with Marilyn Strathern's earlier paper, "An Awkward Relationship: The Case of Feminism and Anthropology," which posits feminism and ethnography as clumsy and possibly incompatible bedfellows.

^{vii} The terms polyphonic and dialogic derive from Russian theorist Mikhail Bakhtin's writings on the novel. Bakhtin argues that Dostoevsky's novels are polyphonic – meaning 'many voiced' – because the voices of the characters have as much authority as the narrator's voice. In contrast to the monologic novel dominated by an imposing narrator, the voice of the polyphonic narrator becomes one of many voices in the text and is in this way diologized (see "Bakhtin on the Novel" in Simon Dentith's *Bakhtinian Thought: An Introductory Reader*).

^{viii} In many ways, Ruth Behar and Deborah A. Gordon's *Women Writing Culture* is a feminist rejoinder to James Clifford's *Writing Culture*, where Clifford excludes feminism from his analysis and argues that feminist anthropologists have neither produced unconventional forms of writing nor theoretical reflections on problematic textuality (21). This indictment has Behar seeing red and writing a blue streak. She refers to Clifford's exclusion of feminist ethnography in *Writing Culture* as "an act of sanctioned ignorance," adding, "No two pages in the history of anthropological writing have ever created as much anguish among feminist readers as did James Clifford's uneasy statements justifying the absence of women anthropologists from the project of *Writing Culture*" (4). Women anthropologists, Behar notes, have been writing experimental, 'new' ethnography throughout the twentieth century, and most of the essays in *Women Writing Culture*, such as analyses of Zora Neale Hurston, Ruth Landes, and Margaret Mead, support Behar's view.

^{ix} The Manchu Dynasty, which reigned from 1644-1912, was the last of its kind in a dynastic system that evolved in 2200 BC. While the Chinese resented and resisted Western imperialism and intervention in the nineteenth century, their association with the West inspired reform and stirred discontent and rebellion. In 1911, China's last emperor was deposed, and on January 1, 1912, Sun Yat-sen was elected provisional president of the Chinese republic ("China" 321-326).

^x The upshot of the Boxer Rebellion was actually a backfire. In the Boxer Protocol of 1901, the foreign powers increased their intervention, influence, and control, as well as the number of foreign troops in Chinese ports ("China" 322-326).

^{xii} German occupation of the Shandong Peninsula in 1897 greatly contributed to the anti-foreign feeling that ignited the Chinese Boxer Rebellion in the late 1890s ("China" 324-325).

^{xiii} Numerous Chinese leaders came and went following the Republican Revolution of 1912, but none had the impact of Mao Zedong, who became party chairman of the Chinese Communists for the new People's Republic of China in 1949 ("China" 329).

^{xiv} The myth of the noble savage first appeared in Christopher Columbus's fifteenth-century chronicles (Cro 1). Voyagers who came after him proclaimed the "natural goodness" of the natives of America and the South Seas. These traveller's tales of gentle, benevolent 'primitives' influenced writers and philosophers from the fifteenth century onwards (Cro 131). Jean-Jacques Rousseau's famous eighteenth-century philosophies on the virtue of man in the state of nature are derived from the noble savage myth.

^{xxv} Cameron's approval of the civilizing mission is most apparent in her lengthy, disturbing description of the Christmas activities at the Hay River Mission. Soap, in this passage, becomes a symbolic force that will clean away a culture:

Red girls and boys of every tribe in the North are housed in this Mission, learning how to play the white man's game – jolly and clean little bodies they are. It looks like Christmas time. Parcels are being done up, there is much whispering and running to and fro, and the sparkling of black eyes. Would you like to know what *The Teaser*, *The Twin*, *Johnny Little Hunter*, and *Mary Blue Quill* are sending out to their parents? For the most part the missives consist of cakes of pink scented soap tightly wrapped round with cotton cloth, on which the teachers are writing in ink the syllabic characters that stand for each father's and mother's name. The soap has been bought with the children's pennies earned by quill-work and wood carving done in the long winter nights. The parcels will be passed from one trapper's jerkin to another, and when, months afterwards, they reach their destination in far teepee or lodge of the deerskin, *Mrs. Woman-of-the-Bright-Foam* and *Mr. Kee-noo-shay-o*, or *The Fish*, will know their boys and girls "still remember". (131)

The painful irony of this passage, where the children's memory of their origins is signified by bars of soap – a symbol of their culture's erasure – is lost on Cameron.

^{xxvi} The inception of the Palestinian Liberation Organization occurred at the first Arab Summit in Cairo in 1964. Following the 1967 Arab defeat, the organization merged with the more militant group known as Fatah, headed by Yasir Arafat and stocked with Palestinians of the diaspora. The Hamas is a Palestinian military organization that evolved during the 1987-1992 Intifada, a public uprising of civilian Palestinians within the Occupied Territories (Ciment 40-42, 54).

^{xxvii} The 1987-1992 Intifada, which literally means 'shaking off' in Arabic, was a civilian uprising within the Occupied Territories. It featured mass protests, stone-throwing youths, boycotts on Israeli goods, and strikes. The Israelis retaliated with rubber bullets, clubs, and shoot-to-kill curfews (Ciment 51-57).

Chapter Two:
Travelling Daughters and Maternal Messages

In her introduction to *Other Solitudes: Canadian Multicultural Fictions*, Linda Hutcheon describes Canada as a multi-racial, pluri-ethnic country where “most of us can quite easily trace our origins or perhaps even our arrival from somewhere else” (4-5). Drawing on personal experience and on the observations of other writers, Hutcheon pinpoints “doubleness” – the sense of living in and between two worlds – as “the essence of the immigrant experience” (9). Janice Kulyk Keefer, in her contribution to a collection titled *Writing Ethnicity*, also recognizes this binary ethnic subjectivity. Canadian literary ethnicity is “Janus-faced,” she contends, because of the diverse texts that render a return to or a fore-grounding of the country of origin (93). In her essay, Keefer discloses the awareness she had of herself, a second-generation Ukrainian-Canadian, as a “split subject with multiple selves, always crossing borders between languages, cultures, histories. Even my tongue was fissured,” she adds, “since I could never decide what my native speech was supposed to be” (86). Growing up, Keefer sought unified subjectivity by repudiating her Ukrainian ethnicity, which entailed marrying outside the Ukrainian community, studying English literature in England, and even acquiring an English accent. One component of her ethnic identity that she could not and would not expunge, however, was the matrilineal narrative of her ancestral home chronicled by her mother, grandmother, and aunt (88).

In mid-life, Keefer was finally compelled to open the accumulated “psychic baggage” (89) of her ethnic identity and examine its contents. This examination entailed a return to the Ukraine, which she frames in her essay as a return to the site of the repressed (89). She made her return through fiction and fact. Her 1996 novel, *The Green Library*, tells the story of Eva, who journeys to the Ukraine after discovering her half-Ukrainian heritage. Keefer documents her own journey in a travel sketch titled “Kiev, November 1993,” which appeared in *Writing Away: The PEN Canadian Travel Anthology*. This journey, a paradoxical ‘first return’ to the land of her ancestors, also forms the coda to her recently published matrocentric biography, *Honey and Ashes: A*

Story of Family (1998).

Like Keefer, numerous Canadian women writers have literally and textually returned to sites of the repressed, forgotten, or abandoned in order to sort through psychic baggage. And like Keefer, they have written travel texts laced with family romance where both matrilineages and patrilineages are inscribed, but where the discourse's emotional cathexis is largely matrocentric. Denise Chong's *The Concubine's Children* (1994), for example, is a family memoir buoyed by the memories Chong's mother has of her own mother – the concubine of the book's title. The end of Chong's book documents the journey she made with her mother to their ancestral Chinese village. Structurally, Keefer's and Chong's books are identical in that the narrative of the return journey caps a bulk of family memoir. In the books I have chosen to analyse for this chapter, the psychic journey back in time and the literal journey to a place of origin are parallel journeys that are interwoven at the narrative level. Bharati Mukherjee's contribution to *Days and Nights in Calcutta* (1977), Daphne Marlatt's *Ghost Works* (1993), Rona Murray's *Journey Back to Peshawar* (1993), and Myrna Kostash's *Bloodlines: A Journey into Eastern Europe* (1993) are travel books in that the return journey is central, although autobiographical family memoir provides an essential context. For this reason, my reading of these texts integrates each author's autobiographical writings of her early life with her autobiographical travel writing about a journey recently taken. By crocheting past life and present journey, Mukherjee, Marlatt, Murray, and Kostash map their subjectivities in the latitudes and longitudes of the estranged daughter with a legacy of maternal memories, stories, and voices to sort through. They are, in Kostash's words, daughters of the "New World" (81) who, as culturally, ethnically, nationally, and emotionally conflicted subjects, return to old worlds seeking self, mother, home.

In an essay titled "Home and Identity" from *Travellers' Tales: Narratives of Home and Displacement*, Madan Sarup questions how one constructs 'home': "Is it wherever your family is, where you have been brought up? The children of many migrants are not sure where they belong. Where is home? Is it where your parents are buried? Is home the place from where you have been displaced, or where you are now? Is home where your mother lives?" (94). Issues of dislocation and questions of belonging

resound in the travel books under consideration in this chapter. Each writer, as a hyphenated Canadian, struggles with her estrangement from and attachment to a place of origin. As well, each writer corroborates Sarup's intimation that identity seeks its 'home' or 'origin' at the interstices of family and place. "We are born into relationships." Sarup later asserts, "that are always based in *place*. This form of primary and 'placeable' bonding is of quite fundamental human and natural importance" (97). Indeed, in the travel writings of Mukherjee, Marlatt, Murray, and Kostash, sites of destination are webbed with family ties, where either bonding or bondage, either belonging or estrangement, are potential outcomes. Moreover, in these texts, the ties that do most of the binding are maternal.

In understanding the matrocentricity of the travelling daughter's discourse, I am informed by an occlusion of the work of two theorists, Bella Brodzki and her writings on women's autobiography and the psychosocial object-relations theory of Nancy Chodorow. In "Mothers, Displacement, and Language in the Autobiographies of Nathalie Sarraute and Christa Wolf," Bella Brodzki proposes that the adult daughter's autobiographical project is engendered by a maternal "pretext": a need to "enter into discourse" with her first primary love object, her mother (246-247). Here, Brodzki assumes her readers are familiar with object-relations theory so does not expand the concept of the first primary love object. My understanding of this concept is derived from the object-relations theory of feminist sociologist Nancy Chodorow, outlined in her classic *The Reproduction of Mothering: Psychoanalysis and the Sociology of Gender*. Chodorow posits a new-born infant who "experiences itself as merged or continuous with the world generally, and with its mother or caretakers in particular" (61). The infant experiences a symbiotic, primary identification (a sense of oneness) with its mother because it cannot differentiate between "subject/self and object/other" at this early stage (61). Over time, as the maternal presence is interrupted by periods of absence, the infant's subjectivity vacillates between separation from and attachment to its mother. This experience of being separate, determined as it is by a *relational* experience with an object other than itself, marks the beginnings of the child's ego development: its experience of a self (67).

According to Chodorow, mothers are conventionally the first primary love objects of both boys and girls because of (almost) universal gender systems that identify women as primary caregivers (3, 98). Knowing this, we may return to Brodzki and ask why the adult son's autobiographical project is not also engendered by a maternal pretext. Chodorow offers some plausible answers. She sees this early object-relationship of attachment to the mother as normatively ending earlier, more abruptly, and more completely for male children compared to female children. It is an argument she substantiates by reformulating Sigmund Freud's oedipal theory of the development of gendered subjectivity through the lens of her brand of feminist object-relations theory.ⁱ As Chodorow notes, "The oedipal period is a nodal time of the creation of psychic reality in a child and of important internalizations of objects in relation to the ego" (166). To Freud, the development of gendered subjectivity and heterosexual genitality are the prime objectives of the Oedipus complex. Citing research that demonstrates the establishment of gender identity for both sexes by the age of three (when the oedipal crisis commences), Chodorow contends that the significance of the oedipal phase lies instead in "the constitution of different forms of 'relational potential' in people of different genders" (166). Because mothers are likely to have experienced sons as gendered others, sons are "more likely to have been pushed out of the preoedipal relationship, and to have had to curtail their primary love and sense of empathetic tie with their mother" (166). This results in a change of object from mother to father, which in its one-sidedness limits relational potential. For girls, the preoedipal stage of primary identification and attachment/separation does not come to a sudden halt, nor is there a clean break. Because of shared gender, "[p]atterns of fusion, projection, narcissistic extension, and denial of separateness" are more likely to occur in mother-daughter relationships (98) and may in fact remain to a greater or lesser degree throughout a woman's life (108-109). During the oedipal stage, the girl child broadens her scope of object relations and includes her father as a primary object, but she does not entirely give up her preoedipal attachment to her mother (167).ⁱⁱ

Chodorow does not detail the ramifications of language acquisition on the mother-daughter bond. Brodzki's text is instructive in this regard. She points out that the

mother, as the infant's "first significant Other," engenders subjectivity (what Chodorow calls ego) through language (246). The legacy of maternal speech, authority, and affection that shapes the daughter's developing subjectivity becomes, over time, obfuscated by other modes of discourse (246, 251). An extrapolation from object-relations theory would attribute these other modes of discourse to the objects entering the daughter's expanding relational world. The mother's discourse, as Chodorow's argument implies, does not disappear but becomes encrusted with others. "In response (however deferred)," writes Brodzki, "the daughter's text, variously, seeks to reject, reconstruct, and reclaim – to locate and recontextualize – the mother's message" (246).ⁱⁱⁱ

In Brodzki's discussion of women's autobiography, the desire to enter into discourse with the mother results in a journey down the corridors of memory. In autobiographical travel writing that features the daughter's return to a site of origin, the literal journey not only triggers memories of maternal discourses but aids in their retrieval by jostling memory. Brodzki does not take up the issue of travel writing as an autobiographical form. However, one of the two texts she analyses, Christa Wolf's *Patterns of Childhood*, does recount the author's return to the German hometown she had not visited for twenty-six years, along with the memories of her mother this journey initiates. The travel writings of the authors I consider expand and complicate Brodzki's theory through their constructions of maternity. In some cases, it is accurate to speak of primary object-relationships that include paternal and maternal grandmothers and surrogate mothers as well as, or instead of, biological mothers. This expansion is in keeping with Chodorow's contention that maternal positionality in the mother-daughter attachment is not the exclusive realm of biological mothers but has been culturally determined as the realm of women (3, 74). Thus, my reference to a 'maternal message' rather than Brodzki's 'mother's message' is not a case of careless slippage but of logical inference.

What we find when reading travel books written from the subject position of the daughter is a matrocentric discourse quite similar to the one described by Brodzki. Daughters crossing motherlands, often following the topography of maternal narratives, seek maternal tongues, maternal voices, and maternal messages, which they reconstruct

either to reclaim or reject. I interpret the matrocentricity in the daughter's travel text as a feminine discourse rather than as an essentially female discourse because of the convincing cultural determinants Chodorow offers for the intensity and longevity of the daughter's attachment to the maternal. This matrocentric discourse is a feminine counterpart to the masculine discourse of patrocentricity in men's travel writing. Object-relations theory, which posits an infant boy's short period of primary identification with the mother-object and early identification with the father, explains why Dennis Porter finds the father-son relationship "a central, though often submerged, *topos*" in men's travel writing (16-17). Had he looked at men's travel writing that incorporates a return journey to an ancestral home, he might have found the *topos* seldom submerged. Salman Rushdie, for example, in the brief travel sketch that preludes his essay "Imaginary Homelands," describes looking up his "father's name" in the phonebook and going to his "father's house" as the first things he did upon revisiting Bombay, his "lost city" (9). Closer to home, the return journey in Michael Ondaatje's *Running in the Family* and brother Christopher Ondaatje's *The Man-Eater of Punai: A Journey of Discovery to the Jungles of Old Ceylon* are patrocentric quests.

The maternal messages the daughters reclaim are sometimes feminist discourses situated within the daughter's feminine discourse of matrocentricity. In other cases, the mother's discourse is an oppressive patriarchal discourse that the daughter subjects to feminist critique. Some messages have national, ethnic, and cultural implications. For example, the maternal message may be a mother tongue seemingly lost during the displacements of immigration. By retrieving such maternal messages, issues of belonging and estrangement that plague daughters as a condition of their migrant status may be resolved. All of the texts ache with nostalgia, with homesickness, with a conflation of maternal and national longing and loss. Mukherjee, Marlatt, Murray, and Kostash disclose a genealogy of displacement and attempt to situate themselves within that genealogy. For some, the malady of nostalgia is alleviated through a journey back, where maternal lands and messages are recuperated. For others, the journey reveals the illusory underpinnings of nostalgia as a yearning for what no longer is.

Days and Nights in Calcutta (1977) is a collaborative piece by Bharati Mukherjee and her husband, writer Clark Blaise, recounting their year in India in 1973-1974. It is possible to analyse Mukherjee's contribution separately because the book comes in two parts written in creative isolation, neither author knowing what the other was writing. Mukherjee lived in India until the age of twenty-one, when she went to Iowa to attend a writer's workshop, met and married Blaise in Iowa, continued her studies, and eventually moved to Montreal to teach at McGill University in Quebec. Her journey to India occurred at a pivotal moment in the evolution of her national and ethnic identity. Prior to the journey, she straddled two worlds – the outer, official world of the Canadian landed immigrant and the inner, nostalgic world of an Indian expatriate in exile. Feeling an acute sense of doubleness of the sort identified by Hutcheon, and lamenting the loss of her Indian culture and homeland, Mukherjee returned to India to reaffirm her Indian identity. What the journey ultimately affirmed, however, was her alienation from her original homeland; so changed was she by the West, she returned to Canada with every intention of becoming a citizen and making it home. Discouraged by the racism and multicultural policies she witnessed and endured in Canada, Mukherjee later immigrated to the United States (in 1980), where she has since lived and worked. Although Mukherjee is now a citizen of the United States, my decision to include "Part Two" of *Days and Nights in Calcutta* is easily justified in this analysis of Canadian women's travel writing by the travel text's Canadian content and the erstwhile Canadian identity of the author. In her introduction to *Darkness* (1985), a collection of short stories, she claims she did not become a resident of the New World until her penultimate immigration to the United States (2). Moreover, in a 1990 interview with the *Iowa Review*, she speaks as an American who firmly declares, "the old world is dead for me" (quoted in Alam 9). Nevertheless, the imminent death of her Old World in India rattles the text of *Days and Nights in Calcutta*, which she wrote in Canada.

Mukherjee's contribution to *Days and Nights in Calcutta*, which forms "Part Two" of the text, opens with a plaintive account of her life in Montreal leading up to her passage back to India. As a Bengali Brahmin racial minority with a British-English education living and working in Canada, she describes the lonely spaces between cultures

in which she dwelt. The closest thing to friendship occurred with women she merely claimed to know, seldom identified with, and regarded with confessed envy and what appears to be the sort of cloaked contempt that arises when cultures and histories collide (175). Moreover, she writes of feeling isolated, displaced, and even terrified by the landscape of Canada, by "the vastness of this underpopulated country," and by its "unspoiled nature" which she could not bring herself to explore on skis or snowshoes (169). More iniquitous than snow, however, was the marginalization she felt on account of her skin colour and ethnicity, which had the paradoxical effect of making her both visible and invisible. Her visibility as a woman of colour placed her on the receiving end of racial slurs and various other subtle and not-so-subtle manifestations of discrimination. On the other hand, as a writer she remained invisible because of the Indian subject matter and settings of her fiction, which was ignored by the "nascent, aggressively nationalistic" Canadian literati (169). "In order to be recognized as an India-born Canadian writer," she writes, "I would have to convert myself into a token figure, write abusively about local racism and make Brown Power fashionable. But I find I cannot yet write about Montreal. It does not engage my passions. It is caught up in a passion all its own, it renders the Asian immigrant whose mother tongue is neither French nor English more or less irrelevant" (169).^{iv} A year in India, she implies, would be a welcome respite from the literal and metaphorically chilling effects of Canada.

Mukherjee also identifies more immediate, violent catalysts leading to her decision to travel: within the span of three months, her husband broke his hand, fire consumed their house in Westmount, and Mukherjee's head cracked the windshield of their Volvo in a three-vehicle crash. It is Clark who first suggested the year in India, much to Mukherjee's surprise, considering he had displayed minimal interest in learning Bengali or in her stories of an Indian childhood (168). Feeling tired, irritable, and unsettled by the string of minor tragedies, Mukherjee agreed to travel out of a longing to return to a place where she "knew the rules" and could better control her destiny (169). In her travel book, she also claims for herself a more active role in going to India, speculating that the chain of events that led to this decision was somehow linked to the repression of her Indian self. This would suggest that Clark, in proposing the journey,

was more or less a pawn mysteriously guided by her own rupturing desires. "To be a Hindu is to believe in magic" (170), she explains. In preparing for the journey, this belief, long repressed in analytical North America, reasserts itself: "The trip seemed to have detonated an energy which I had spent years restraining and disguising. Perhaps the broken hand, the fire, and the collision were the result of this unleashed mental energy" (170). A plate of a temple relief from Deoghar, Bihar, which Mukherjee came across in a book on Indian art, becomes for her an emblem of Hindu metaphysics, a way of seeing the world that she was losing sight of as an inhabitant of the New World. She becomes entranced by the inclusive detail of this vertical representation of Vishnu asleep on a multiheaded serpent, with lesser gods above him seated on lotuses and winged bulls, his wife, Lakshmi, at his feet massaging his calves, and an assemblage of human figures below him. She writes:

For me, it was a reminder that I had almost lost the Hindu instinct for miraculous transformation of the literal. Not only was Vishnu the chief god, but the serpent supporting Vishnu was also the god Vishnu, given a magical, illusory transformation. My years abroad had made me conscious of ineradicable barriers, of beginnings and endings, of lines and definitions. And now, the preparation for the visit to India was setting off an explosion of unrelated images. Reptile, lotus, flying bull, gods, and heroes: All functioned simultaneously as emblem and as real. (171)

Her mind, she observes, had "isolated itself from real snakes and real gods" (172). Thus, a return to India is framed as a return to the site of the repressed, where "the snakes and gods remain, waiting to be disturbed during incautious sabbaticals" (172).

During her return to India, Mukherjee contacts girlhood friends, women of her generation and class who remained daughters of India. Their lives are yardsticks she uses to measure her degree of identification with or estrangement from India, mostly the latter. Contemplating her alienation from the friends of her youth and India in general, she

traces its complex origins to a number of sources but focuses primarily on parental influence and decisions about her education. She explains how she attended the Writers' Workshop in Iowa through the machinations of her father, who is relatively absent from *Days and Nights in Calcutta* aside from her acknowledgement of his pragmatic role in bringing about her passage out of India. Rather, in this matrocentric text where Mukherjee's charismatic mother figures prominently, the maternal influence is foregrounded. Mukherjee recollects mother-words she overheard as a child, which form the maternal message of the daughter's text. The feminist gist of the message is that her mother, Bina, did not want her daughters becoming self-abnegating, dependent wives: the traditional destiny of India's daughters. For this reason, Bina sent her young daughters to an Anglicized Bengali school, the first step in an ongoing process of Anglicization and Westernization that would make India alien and uninhabitable for Mukherjee in the end. Mukherjee expresses gratitude for her mother's act, which was deemed rebellious by members of the extended family (229). At the same time she identifies the wedge it ultimately placed between her self and India, between her self and her motherland where her mother lives.^v

Mukherjee's *Days and Nights in Calcutta* graphs a dual journey across geography and back in time. She reflects on her years as a daughter of India, and on the seeds of Anglicization and Westernization planted during those formative years that thrived in her upper class, colonial world. Although she grew up in India, she was already a partial daughter of the New World whose developmental trajectory ushered her out of India and into Canada. She writes of the fragility of her Indian identity in Canada, and of her fear about losing her *desh* – her home and country – there, especially in light of her "decades-long" use of English as a first language in her writing, studying, and teaching. "Language," she notes, "transforms our ways of apprehending the world" (170). However, in reading her reminiscences of childhood, it is evident that the threat to her ownership of her *desh* began in India. She divides her life into three consecutive incarnations:

Till the age of eight I lived in the typical joint family, indistinguishable

from my twenty cousins, indistinguishable, in fact, from an eternity of Bengali Brahmin girls. From eight until twenty-one we lived as a single family, enjoying for a time wealth and confidence. And since twenty-one I have lived in the West. Each phase required a repudiation of all the previous avatars; an almost total rebirth. (179)

Despite Mukherjee's claims, what was spawned and never "repudiated" in the first incarnation, and increasingly nurtured in the second and third, was her knowledge of English and of things Western. What was "repudiated" and later repressed were components of her Indian identity.

She spent her first eight years in a crowded flat in Ballygunge, Calcutta, surrounded by her extended family and sharing a small room with her mother, father, and sisters (180). These crowds did not suit her temperament and sent her scurrying to secret spots behind furniture, curtains, and beds. She also developed chronic headaches and later induced vomiting in order to secure the privacy afforded the sick or to lie "guiltlessly passive in a crowded room, temporarily freed from habitual watchfulness" (222-223). Mukherjee wonders, "Were the headaches the earliest sign that I would escape abroad and marry a foreigner?" (223). This question suggests that mysterious forces similar to the ones that propelled her extended return visit to India were working on her in the opposite direction in her childhood, and that she had always been a cultural outsider buffeted by forces at cross purposes.

During this first incarnation, she began her English studies at the Anglicized Bengali school, where her mother enrolled her daughters as part of a plot to save them from the fate of Hindu wives. Mukherjee learned the traditional Hindu ideals of wifely conduct at a young age, through hearing tales about Sita and Savitri, paragons of wifehood in ancient Hindu literature. According to legend, Sita managed to retain her chastity when she was abducted by a demon, but upon rescue, her princely husband banished her nevertheless because she had lived under another man's roof. In response, Sita threw herself into a burning funeral pyre. In a similar, self-effacing gesture, Savitri, warned before marriage that her intended would soon die, married regardless and

followed her husband into death. Mukherjee explains how, as a child growing up in Ballygunge, these exemplars of wifely devotion, chastity, self-abnegation and sacrifice resonated in her young mind: "They were the creatures of my dreams. They were the stuff of exciting theatre" (233).

In addition, the young Mukherjee culled information about the contemporary status of women in her society as she overheard adults tell stories that evoked Sita and Savitri but were bereft of any romantic sheen. She heard of an aunt who was incessantly humiliated by her in-laws for bringing an inadequate dowry, and of women committing suicide by setting themselves on fire, tying themselves to railroad tracks, or hurling themselves into wells. On one memorable occasion, when hearing a woman scream at a friend's house, she was told, "Oh that's just the people next door. They're always beating up the new bride. I'm afraid one of these days she is going to kill herself or go back to her father" (227). According to Mukherjee, "*That, to the culture into which I was born, was the potential tragedy. To be a woman, I had learned early enough, was to be a powerless victim whose only escape was through self-inflicted wounds*" (227-8).

Occasionally, when Mukherjee was caught eavesdropping on adults exchanging horror stories of wife abuse, she would hear one of her aunts whisper, "Not in front of the children, please" (227). However, her mother, whose feminist maternal message concerns her daughter's liberation, had another strategy. Rather than censorship, Bina believed in painful disclosure, in being cruel to be kind. Mukherjee recollects her mother's impassioned, defiant response to other people's efforts at hiding brutal realities from her daughters: "I had heard her shout between sobs (I cannot remember the precise cause of the fight nor the identity of the chief adversary), 'Just wait until the girls are a little older. I'm going to tell them everything, I'm going to make them suffer'" (228). Moreover, Bina's two-pronged approach included a thorough education for her daughters, a path to empowerment supported by Mukherjee's maternal grandmother as well. When in India, Mukherjee quietly hands her grandmother a hundred-rupee note, which she portrays as "my token gesture of appreciation (made years too late) for the courageous encouragement she had given my mother, my sisters, and myself when most women of her generation and background were hostile to women's education" (226). The education

Bina had in mind was a thoroughly English one, which, as a colonized subject, she must have viewed as a stepping stone that would take her daughters away from the tradition-forged manacles binding Indian women. Ambitious for her daughter, she secretly filled out applications for them to attend an Anglicized Bengali school and also tutored them herself in English etiquette:

She had tied white taffeta ribbons in our hair and taught us to recite, "How do you do?" in answer to someone else's "How do you do?" and "I'm very well, thank you," to the question "How are you?" She had supervised our English reading and spelling and unwittingly engendered in me fantasies about my British counterparts, who according to my schoolbooks went with their parents for picnics in the country and to the zoo to see elephants and tigers and whose mothers baked them chocolate cakes and whose fathers drove motorcars . . . My mother had loved us enough to risk the wrath of elderly relatives, and through the perversities of love, I had squeezed more selfish pleasure out of life than she could ever have dreamed, but I had also lost belief in the self-sufficiency of Calcutta and made a foreign continent my background for proving self-worth. (229)

Clearly, Mukherjee's gratitude towards her mother and her representations of the maternal message as one of liberation in the form of a foreign language are tinged with ambivalence. She sees herself as the successful product of her mother's ambitions, but knows her autonomy and independence came with a price tag: alienation from her ethno-cultural and national origins.

The incarnations that followed her early years of communal living in Ballygunge augmented this alienation. When she was eight, her family spent three years in England and Switzerland on account of her father's business, a move which, from the vantage point of hindsight, she interprets as a mixed blessing:

That period abroad is the only time I have felt perfectly bilingual. It was a time of forgetting Bengali and acquiring English until I reached an absolute equilibrium. But that gradual erosion of the vernacular also contained an erosion of ideas I had taken for granted. It was the first time I was forced to see myself not reflected in the people around me, and to see myself as the curiosity that I must have seemed to the majority – a skinny brown child, stiff in school uniform and scarred knees, who could not do cartwheels. (182)

The family, once back in India, was too altered to find comfort in the cramped quarters of joint-family life, a living arrangement they need not return to because of their father's increased wealth. They rented a flat in fashionable Chowringhee and later moved into an immense Victorian house within the walled compound of their father's pharmaceuticals factory. Here, she and her sisters led a happy, privileged existence walking their golden spaniel under arches of bougainvillea, dreaming of their future. Westernized husbands, and memorizing Shakespeare, all the while segregated from the Indian masses beyond the gate (183-185). Mukherjee was transferred from the Anglicized Bengali school to Loreto House, a renowned girls' school run by foreign nuns, where Indian history, culture, art, and religion were excluded from the curriculum and where her bilingual equilibrium gave way to English hegemony (171). At the missionary school, the Hindu gods, goddesses, and heroes who animated the stories her grandmother recited to her in her youth "yielded" to MacBeth and Othello, Lord Peter Whimsey, and Hercule Poirot (171). "In sacrificing a language," writes Mukherjee, "we sacrifice our roots" (182); within a few years she found herself uprooted in Canada, living in, working in, writing in, and teaching English: this, her third and most recent incarnation at the time of her journey back.

Knowing that her Indian identity underwent increasing, protracted erasure in Canada, Mukherjee returned to India seeking traces of, and a possible re-connection with, her lost Indian self. The question of belonging is her travel writing subtext. She writes, "I

had no clear idea what I wanted from Calcutta the night I arrived after an absence of fourteen years. Perhaps I merely wanted a place where I could completely relax" (198). Her account of an incident that occurred on the plane ride over, however, intimates a more complex motive, and a more specific need. Scanning the other passengers, she wondered if a young West Bengal cabinet minister could tell she had been out of Calcutta for years. A man sitting beside her, who introduced himself as a senior executive in an Indian tobacco firm, answered her unarticulated question:

In response to my calling the air hostess who had just served us snacks and to my telling her that there was a hair in the sweetmeat she had served me, he had turned in his seat and laughed. "Madame, I can tell you must be a resident alien in Canada. Here we've learned not to let little things like that upset us." How he could gauge my foreignness so precisely I was hesitant to ask.

Bengalis, especially those from Calcutta, are arrogant about their subnational identity. They do not seek connection with a larger world, except on equal terms. It pained me, therefore, to discover even before I had landed in the city that my connections with North America were so obvious. (199)

Bearing the cultural markers of her North American inhabitancy like the mark of Cain, and mourning the near-demise of her Indian heritage, she immediately sought a niche among the people and city of her past. Soon after leaving her children with her mother in Chembur and moving into the Ramakrishna Mission's Scholar's Guest House in Calcutta, she contacted girlhood friends from Loreto House, daughters of India from Mukherjee's generation and class. To her delight, she found herself engaged in the "daily texture" of their charmed lives: "Everyday I met with one or more of these old and new friends, drove in their chauffeured cars (gleaming little Ambassadors fitted with fans or air conditioning, and vintage Austins and Rovers), accompanied them to their clubs, sat on their lawns or terraces illuminated with pale blue bulbs, shared hors d'oeuvres with

their guests . . ." (199). For the most part, however, Mukherjee registers the disparities between herself and her old friends. "I love these women; I was one of them" (217), she writes, implying she is no longer of them. Mukherjee's representation of her friends is complex and ambiguous. They are depicted as traditional, self-abnegating Hindu wives who demonstrate their virtue by serving their husbands, children, homes, and communities. They also appear as well-coifed and manicured women of a certain class who lounge on lawns drinking lemonade while discussing servants and dinner parties. Mukherjee's closest friend from Loreto House, Anjali, is a case in point. When Anjali learns that Mukherjee washes her own dishes, cooks her own food, does her own laundry, and cleans her own home, she laments her old friend's fallen circumstances (200). At the same time, Mukherjee describes Anjali – whose servants did the laundry – as the ideal, self-abnegating, unselfish Indian wife, Bengali style, because her husband and his career, their children, and charitable works are the centre of her world (211-212). Despite this ambiguity of representation, she begins to compare herself to her friends unfavourably, suggesting that her personal ambition led to a selfishness of spirit that was alien to these Sita-like women. She writes:

Over the months as I tagged along with them and followed the daily structure of their lives, I felt an accumulating embarrassment about the self-absorption of my own life in Montreal. I worked with no charities, had no connection with neighbours, or with ethnic and professional groups. Depressions and joys were limited to promotion and tenure, acceptance or rejection of manuscripts . . . In contrast, my friends in Calcutta were hard-working, and modest about their achievements. If they had social status in town, they seemed to be saying, it was because their parents had chosen their husbands prudently. A decent and successful husband was the reward for an adolescence of obedience and self-discipline. They had learned to work out their identities initially in terms of their fathers and afterwards in terms of their husbands and their communities, and most of them did

not bear the scars of personal ambition. In Calcutta, being the wife of a socially and professionally prominent man was a full-time career. Being a woman physician or lawyer was not, for them, a preferred alternative. (203-4)

Musings of this sort contribute to our sense of Mukherjee's ambivalence towards her mother's message of independence and feminist self-determination. At other times, however, Mukherjee conveys an aversion to the vicarious existences these women led. She does so with subtlety, through reportage without commentary, letting anecdote speak for itself. For example, she describes her luncheon meeting with a woman she knew from Loreto House, then a young ambitious girl who carried off all the scholarly prizes and talked of going to law school. Mukherjee writes, "I cornered her as she was retreating to the terrace with a plate of egg rolls and chili sauce. She did not offer any excuses or apologies for not having become a barrister. She told me about her son and the entrance examination he had taken to get into St. Xavier's school. The examination had not been easy, but thank goodness the boy was clever like his father" (216). Before parting, the woman, who remains unnamed, whispers discontent: "It doesn't pay to be too intelligent in our group . . . All the smart girls went away and some married Europeans to stay away. I don't think that's any solution, do you?" (216). Mukherjee leaves this question unanswered, at least in her text, but the reader knows it worked, however imperfectly, for her. In Mukherjee's more general discussion of what she sees as the rampant and disturbing sexism and oppression Indian women endured, she mentions how her friends from Loreto House talk of past students who went "weird" – meaning they started protesting about women's rights to own property, work, study, vote, divorce, and remarry (236).

In the midst of Mukherjee's ambivalent interpretations of her friends' lives and ethos, one thing is certain: her difference, her estrangement, from them. She describes how her North American exposure made her a unique, somewhat rogue thread in the tapestry of her extended family and Calcuttan society as well as among her old school chums. Her relatives welcomed her as an "honorary male" by entreating her to eat at the

dining table with her uncles rather than on the floor with her aunts and female cousins (225). “And I was also,” she writes, “an intimidating alien, a raspy-voiced woman who was not content to be simply a schoolteacher or charity organizer (which were appropriate enough women’s work), but who argued with male relatives about tax breaks and inflation and who was not prepared to accord automatic homage to [family guru] Sri Baba” (225). She adds, “I was a career person, which meant that I had the right to independent thought without incurring censure, while the middle-class Bengali woman was locked into a woman’s world of gossip and speculation” (225). Her clan exoticizes her not only because of her identity as a career woman but because of her marriage to a foreigner as well. When relatives display her to friends, one incredulous woman shouts, “My, she married a foreigner? She doesn’t look like a foreigner!” (219). Another family friend confides that she does not hold Mukherjee’s “eccentric marriage” against her, although she would not allow her daughter to marry outside state and caste (189). Her marriage also impugned her status as a Bengali Brahmin and her ability to participate in rituals, a reality brought home to Mukherjee during a wedding she attended. Mukherjee was asked to hold a brass plate for the wedding’s morning rituals, a request that she turned down but that pleased her nevertheless because it showed inclusion despite her loss of “full-Brahmin” status. However, during the wedding, a guest warned her not to touch any religious vessels lest she taint them (270, 277).

Mukherjee also describes how she was ‘othered’ on the Calcuttan sidewalks because of her “bizarre” looks and fashion accessories: “Loiterers,” she writes, “the endless rows of unemployed youths who lean against fences or cluster around outdoor teastalls, made a point of commenting on my huge tinted gold-rimmed spectacles. ‘Look at that, look at that, she must be from p’horen [a foreigner]!’ as if I had no prior history of going abroad” (219). Moreover, in another incident surrounding the wedding, Mukherjee was made to feel an outsider because of the supposed physiological metamorphosis she underwent in the New World. Before the ceremony, when Mukherjee visited an old bed-ridden woman and started massaging her shoulders, she was told that her hands were too warm – symptomatic of bile – and that she should eat raw turmeric every morning. Later, the elderly woman called Mukherjee back in to the room and recanted: “Don’t eat

turmeric. You've been away so long, who knows perhaps your stomach can't tolerate raw turmeric anymore. Don't take any risks. Canada has a nice climate. Go back there as soon as you can. Otherwise your body will rot like ours" (275). Mukherjee ultimately took the old woman's advice.

In the epilogue to the original 1977 edition of *Days and Nights in Calcutta*, Mukherjee confesses that the year in India forced her to view herself "more as an immigrant than an exile". The India of her imagination that she carried as a "talisman against icy Canada" had not survived her "accidental testings" and could no longer be evoked at whim for "easy consolation" (296-299). The journey did not act as a salve for her nostalgia but rather encouraged her to let the talisman go. From now on her returns to India would be in the subject position of the tourist (297). Mukherjee's sentiments and experiences anticipate those articulated by Salman Rushdie in his essay, "Imaginary Homelands". He suggests that Indian writers like himself – exiles, emigrants, or expatriates – "are haunted by some sense of loss, some urge to reclaim, to look back, even at the risk of being mutated into pillars of salt" (10). The backward glance, he adds, must be made with the knowledge that "our physical alienation from India almost inevitably means that we will not be capable of reclaiming precisely the thing that we lost; that we will, in short, create fictions, not actual cities or villages, but invisible ones, imaginary homelands, Indias of the mind" (10).

Mukherjee as well as the other travel writing daughters discussed in this chapter are, in Rushdie's words, "haunted by some sense of loss, some urge to reclaim, to look back" (10). For travel-writing daughters, the site of the return is often a *locus suspectus*, an uncanny, haunted place in the Freudian sense. In his essay "The Uncanny," Freud identifies the uncanny as frightening, strange, or bizarre experiences that arise out of something "which is familiar and old-established in the mind and which has become alienated from it through the process of repression" (17:241). Thus, daughters returning to sites of origin to sort through repressed psychic baggage are bound to have some uncanny sensations or experiences. Mukherjee, in fact, sees a ghost in India, although she is as much the ghost as the haunted. In the original epilogue we find a curious ghost story. During a stay in Chembur with her parents, a nocturnal phantom made several

appearances in Mukherjee's bedroom: "It stood at the head of my bed and breathed warm, sweet shafts of air on my face and pillow. The sound of its breathing was soft, scratchy, like lizards speeding across the cement floor. It did not speak to me; it simply stood in one spot, discomfiting me" (294). Recalling a childhood trick for warding off evil spirits, she repeated the word Vishnu and tossed in a few Hail Marys the nuns of Loreto House taught her (294). When the apparition withdrew following this culturally composite chant, Mukherjee ran to her parent's bedroom to share her sighting with her mother, who casually asked her daughter if she knew the ghost's identity. Mukherjee suspected it was the ghost of an uncle who had died of gastric ulcers years before: "Oh him?" Bina laughed, "That's all right then. You don't have to worry. He was such a quiet, mild person, I'm sure he won't give you any trouble. Even as a ghost" (294). For the reader who just completed a travel book where Mukherjee revisits old haunts, sees figments of her child-self, and becomes increasingly aware of the demise of facets of her Indian identity, the ghost in the epilogue is also an apt symbol for the author herself. This reading is reinforced by Freud's concept of the uncanny. In Freudian terms, Mukherjee's ghost sighting is both *unheimlich* (German for the 'unhomely,' unfamiliar, frightening) and *heimlich* ('homely,' 'familiar,' 'known'): *unheimlich* in the sense that it is a supernatural visitation, and *heimlich* in that the visitor is a symbol of her long lost, repressed Indian self.

Although Mukherjee reiterates her feelings of estrangement and alienation, these are not the only qualities that define her experience of travel in India. As her repressed Indian identity begins to unfurl and reveal itself, she experiences moments of attachment to her ancestral homeland and culture that are linked to her identification with her mother. Mukherjee repeatedly inscribes herself as her mother's daughter, with her mother's looks, constitution, and beliefs. Chodorow's object-relations theory goes some way in explaining this matrocentric discourse. As mentioned at the outset of this chapter, primary identification and symbiosis between mothers and daughters seldom end suddenly and often remain to some degree throughout the daughter's lifetime (108-109). Signe Hammer's book *Daughters and Mothers: Mothers and Daughters reinforces* Chodorow's argument: "At some level mothers and daughters tend to remain

emotionally bound up with each other in what might be called a semisymbiotic relationship, in which neither ever quite sees herself or the other as a separate person” (165; quoted in Chodorow 109). Encountering her mother in her motherland, Mukherjee gains insight into the places where their identities overlap and merge and begins having a semisymbiotic sense of herself as an extension of her mother. For example, Mukherjee identifies with her mother’s discomfort with joint-family life: “Perhaps some of my mother’s frustration seeped down to me. People say that I look very much like her. Certainly I am, like her, a collector of resentments and insults. and am stubbornly unforgiving . . . I am sure that from her I learned only to feel relief when we could close the door of our bedroom and shut out the forty odd relatives” (180). Elsewhere, describing a day at the races, she writes, “It is from my mother that I have acquired a middle-class Bengali’s distrust of gambling” (261). She also inscribes Bina as a literary foremother, referring to her as a “powerful storyteller” (173) and as the person “from whom I learned very early the persuasiveness of oral literature” (176). Mukherjee admits that she relished being her father’s favourite daughter in her youth, a pride of place common to young girls who imitate their fathers and become successful women in liberal patriarchal cultures. However, at the time of travelling and of writing her travel, it is the matrilineage she sought. By aligning her identity with her mother’s in this way, Mukherjee metonymically reinscribes herself as a daughter of India, but one who no longer belongs there, an ambiguity which reflects an enduring split subjectivity.

This mother-daughter alignment is also established through Mukherjee’s sighting and writing of the ghost because it indicates the revival of the long dormant Hindu sensibilities she once shared with her mother. She interprets this ghost, which she insists did not come to her in a dream (293), as a “symptom of the frailty of my own reason” (294): a fortunate frailty, that is. Until its appearance, she approached India through the lens of her husband’s camera, a symbol of her estrangement from India and of her New World connections. “Then the ghost had come,” she writes, “and shown me that there were forces present which could not be photographed at all” (294-295). Her depiction of the ghost corresponds with the concept of the “marvelous” defined by Tzvetan Todorov, where supernatural occurrences are not subject to rational explanation and where new

laws of nature and being must be entertained (41-42).¹¹ In keeping with the genre of the marvelous, she does not dispute the reality of this ghost. The debate about whether ghosts truly exist is one she dismisses as “dull and meaningless” because for her, the point of interest is how “in India different perceptions of reality converge without embarrassing anyone” (297). Mukherjee’s encounter with the ghost several months into her sojourn, and her acceptance of its ontological status, indicates the degree to which her perception of reality shifted and converged with her mother’s by that time. When Mukherjee first arrived in India following her string of minor tragedies, including the fire that devoured her house, she visited her mother, who described how she became cognizant of her daughter’s suffering through mental telepathy:

She [Bina] told us that she had premonitions. Did I remember that she was given to premonitions? So, my mother continued, she had premonitions of danger and had worried herself sick over our well-being. And a week prior to receiving news of our fire, there had been a fire in Chembur, a colossal fire at the nearby Esso refinery. Plans had been made to evacuate everyone from the general neighborhood, including my parents and other residents of Calico Colony. And my mother had stood at the open windows of her bedroom overlooking the crazy distant flames, and she panicked. Not because she had been afraid for herself, for at fifty-odd years she had long been preparing to die, but because she felt we were in danger, that we in Montreal were vastly unhappy. And in a week a letter had explained the mystery. She had sensed our danger through mental telepathy. Though we had been oceans apart, she had shared our misery. (176)

Alluding to the plate of a temple relief from Deoghar – of Vishnu, lesser deities, serpents, and humanity entwined and interconnected – Mukherjee adds, “For her the incident was indivisible from the general functioning of the universe; mental telepathy was possible in

a world that fused serpent and God without self-destructing" (177). As I noted earlier, Mukherjee's return to India was partially prompted by a desire to rekindle her Hindu "instinct" for "magic" and "miraculous transformations of the literal," a quality suppressed to near extinction in the ratiocinative, analytical New World as she saw it (170-171). At this early juncture in her journey, however, Mukherjee was discomfited by her mother's talk: "On that first night in Chembur," she writes, "I did not dispute my mother's claim of mental telepathy. I heard it as a call from a portion of my brain that I thought had long ago been stilled. But because talk of miracles, magic, and telepathy made me uncomfortable, I tried to deflect the mood," which she did by prattling about material items: burnt sheets, waterlogged suitcases, and incinerated photographs (177-178). In other words, Mukherjee's return to India commenced with a disconcerting uncanny moment, a combination of the unfamiliar and repressed familiar, the *unheimlich* and the *heimlich*, which she glosses over. Several months into her journey, however, the ghost appeared and she does not dismiss its reality, which signifies her departure from empirical and material "certainties" as well as a re-connection with her mother, her mother's Hindu belief systems, and, by extension, her motherland.

Daphne Marlatt's travel book, *Ghost Works* (1993), is a compilation of three previously published short travel pieces, including *Zocalo* (1977), "In the Month of Hungry Ghosts" from an 1979 issue of *The Capilano Review*, and *How Hug a Stone* (1983). All of the subsequent documentation regarding these three separately published works refer to the composite text, *Ghost Works*. My analysis of Marlatt's travel trilogy begins with "In the Month of Hungry Ghosts" – which appears under the shortened title "Month of Hungry Ghosts" in *Ghost Works* – because it inscribes her first return to a country of origin. Before immigrating to Vancouver, Marlatt lived the first eight years of her life in Penang, Malaysia, the eldest of three daughters to British colonial parents. "Month of Hungry Ghosts" is a conglomerate of poems, letter excerpts, and poetic prose journal entries that tell the story of her return journey to Penang in 1976, twenty-five years after her departure. As an adamant anticolonialist, Marlatt finds "no authentic ground" for Europeans in Penang (92). She portrays the colonials who remained after

Independence in 1957 with equal parts contempt and pity, as lost souls who import culture as they desperately cling to colonial attitudes of superiority and privilege (92-108). Penang is where her father always felt at home (93). Marlatt, on the other hand, after spending most of her life “trying to live somewhere” (108), finds no quick nostalgia fix in Penang. “Everything,” she confesses, “tells me this is not where i belong” (100). In a poem titled “this is not,” we read, “this is not my world, i can’t live here – lighthouse, on the far / strands i dreamt, i dealt myself a hand – this is where we were, / berthed in an alien place, light turning all around – for a while, / we were housed in it, walked *out* to it, mother, father, sisters” (117). British colonials she encounters who knew her as a child try to implicate her with the colonial era, but she insists, “It ain’t *my* era” (92). While Marlatt is able to disassociate herself from the politics of imperialism, she cannot extricate herself from her past, from the formative years of her youth passed in Penang, from the placeable bonding that occurred there.

Marlatt savours various sweet memories that surface during her journey. One such recollection is released when Marlatt wakes in her childhood home:

Want to get this down: this morning such a beautiful awakening to curtains of rain falling around the house off the open verandah outside our room (which *is* the room we used to sleep in, the ‘nursery’ – Pam [her sister] recalls running around the verandah, it’s familiar to me too) & that wet noise dense with a thicket of birdsong, jubilant, joyous, in the wet, & the falling rain transformed into falling notes, falling & ascending, crossing the rain in darts of melody – wooden shuttle of the Thai silk weaver – running across & through the warp of the rain. (84)

Moreover, Marlatt fondly recalls two maternal native servants, gentle Eng Kim, who bathed her child’s body, and merry Amah, who cleaned her childhood home (111). By way of contrast, she recalls her biological mother, Edrys, whose dreaded words were law: “What the Mem [mem sahib] says goes” (111).

Memories of Edrys and her words haunt her daughter’s travel writing. Like

Mukherjee, Marlatt represents place as an uncanny *locus suspectus*, haunted geography where spectres of the known and repressed come forth. In her "Preface" to *Ghost Works*, Marlatt installs the uncanny framework for this composite text: "Each time, I travelled in the company of different others but always, it turned out, in the company of my mother who had died in 1975, a few months before that first journey" (vii). Indeed, as Marlatt traverses motherlands, repressed memories of her dead mother are dislodged from the darkness of her psyche like turgid corpses dragged from ravines after a flood. "Month of Hungry Ghosts," Marlatt points out, documents a journey to Penang that "coincided with the Chinese festival month of Hungry Ghosts when the ghosts of the inadequately remembered dead return to haunt the world of the living" ("Preface" vii). For Marlatt, adequate remembrance of her mother equals anguish. When her plane lands in Penang, bringing pain to her ears and tears to her eyes, she asks: "the cost of re-entry? into the past?" (52).

In part, the journey stirs up grief because it occurs on the first anniversary of her mother's death, and she is travelling with her sister and father in her mother's stead. A journey she made to Mexico a year earlier, shortly after her mother's death, is rendered in "Zocalo," the first text in her travel trilogy. In "Zocalo," Marlatt's daytime explorations of Mayan ruins, which involve descents into cavernous dark holes, alternate with night-time descents into macabre nightmares about visiting her mother in the underworld. The memories she has of Edrys in "Month of Hungry Ghosts" elicit terror of a different sort. She recalls a particular scene from her childhood when she slinked out of the garden surrounding the family home and climbed a terrace in order to pluck an orchid, all in defiance of her mother's order to stay put (115). Reaching out for the flower, a snake shot across her child's hand, and she called attention to her offence by (presumably) screaming her terror. "WHY DON'T YOU LISTEN?" – her mother's response – forms the maternal message in this daughter's travel text, harsh words of anger writ large (115). The adult Marlatt rejects this message as complicit with a patriarchal script that would make women fearfully submissive and curb rebellious adventure. It is a script her mother yielded to and perpetuated to her own detriment.

"[G]ive me your word," she recalls her mother asking, a maternal message that

holds out a “promise of the body i would grow into, if i listened, if i learned to stop breaking it, my word given to you, learned to keep to the house i was meant to inherit . . .” (115). Witnessing her mother’s life, Marlatt rejects this promised legacy. In “Month of Hungry Ghosts,” Edrys is associated with flowers dying, dead, and cut. As the daughter lifts the latch of her mother’s old trunk, she smells the “sweet (Chanel) smell of temple flowers gone brown,” which brings images to mind of her mother “wetting the stems of cut zinnias against their death” (114) and “rapt in a bleeding fragrance of flowers’ heaped cut stalks jagged toward her” (112). Marlatt perceives her mother’s “house of flowers”(112) as a madhouse where her mother runs about broken and hysterical. In a poem titled “mem sahib,” she intimates that her mother’s role as conventional colonial wife and mother, with little to do, proprieties to observe, and appearances to keep, contributed to her mental breakdown (88):

mah mee, ordered
 chicken for dinner
 eased
 deaths & small
 wounds, cure-all
 any sepsis, except
 her own
 still played, gaily
 mummy, mah jong, didn’t
 know what to ‘do’
 . . .
 & lost, finally, found off-center, *mata*, her unruly self
 unloved, locked up in a picture, trembling under a mask

*mata hari, sun
sun through all her rooms she
closed the curtains on (88)*

Refusing the maternal legacy of ennui, depression, and ultimate death in this dark house of funereal flowers, the adult daughter declares, “i broke my word, i broke new & muddy ground, i did, at last i went out, shutting the lid, closing the door of your house as i went” (115). Marlatt portrays herself as the victor in a mother-daughter war of words: “yours [her mother’s words] could not command mine, my disorderly desire, having given my word & yet sneaking out of the house” (114). The final lines of the text, however, suggest that Marlatt left the door askew as she metaphorically left her mother’s house, or that the door jammed on the maternal message: “You knew the dark, conspiracy, how they keep power in their hands, unnamed (you forgot, we give ourselves up to), you taught me fear but not how to fight. you, mispelled, gave yourself to the dark of some other light, leaving me here with the words, with fear, love, & a need to keep speaking” (128).

Marlatt keeps speaking in “How Hug a Stone,” the travel piece that follows “Month of Hungry Ghosts” in *Ghost Works*. It is a collection of poems and poetic prose chronicling Marlatt’s return journey to England with her son, Kit, in 1981. She was last in England as a child when her family stopped over *en route* to Canada, her New World. England is rendered as the “nearest thing” Marlatt has to a “hereditary home” (139), where she visits her mother’s side of the family, spends time with her maternal grandmother, and assembles versions of her mother’s history as though she is taping together pieces of a torn photograph. In this other motherland, she once again struggles with the mother-daughter bond, where either bondage or release is the potential outcome. Moreover, Marlatt’s feminist critique of the patriarchal script that mangled her mother’s life continues. In conversing with her maternal grandmother, Marlatt comes to see how Edrys inherited this script from her own mother. Edrys spent her youth in the tropics of Malacca surrounded by the comforts, advantages, and leisure of wealth. Marlatt’s

grandmother describes the dress her daughter wore to her “first public function” at a Residency in Malacca: a pale coffee-coloured organdy number with enormous puff sleeves and a matching straw hat (143). “[S]he looked a *dream*,” her grandmother muses (143). Marlatt interprets this story as evidence of her mother’s submissiveness, which she then compares to her own rebellious resistance: “*her* [Marlatt’s grandmother’s] dream, the one my mother inherited, *her* dress, my mother lending her body to it. as i refused, on a new continent suffocated in changing rooms thick with resentment: you don’t understand, *everybody* wears jeans here & i *want* a job. refusing the dream its continuity in what i thought was no man’s land (not Rupert’s, not the King’s), just the trees” (143). Her grandmother’s next story uncovers Edrys’s early adulthood desires for independence, actuation, and individuation. In the absence that is death, Edrys’s words come to us second-hand:

We went to Penang and she [Edrys] said, “Mother, I’m so *tired* of this life, of just wasting my time going out dancing every night, getting engaged to play tennis, somebody ringing up and wanting to take me out to golf. It seems so futile. I want to learn dress designing and dressmaking. I’ve seen advertisements and I’ve written off to England. I won’t be coming back with you when we go on leave.” This was when we were in the hotel in Penang sitting on the grounds facing the sea just where her wedding photograph was taken a few months later. Isn’t it extraordinary? (144)

Marlatt appears to find this story of career plans seemingly annulled by a wedding disconcerting rather than extraordinary, as it bespeaks of personal fear and familial coercion rather than romantic love.

After visiting her grandmother, Marlatt calls on her mother’s schoolmate, Jean, who gives a very different version of Edrys’s character. She mentions Edrys’s “anti” nature: “the resister, antagonist, the one who never ‘fitted in.’ how she ‘seemed to enjoy setting people against her’” (175). No deferential shrinking violet, young Edrys had a

taste for rebellion, a penchant for over-dramatization, a passion for literature, a hatred for the headmistress who in turn hated Edrys's subversive imagination (175-176). This vibrant Edrys became "She who had her wings clipped growing up: wondering even as a mother was she 'doing the right thing'? hiding her doubts to wrestle with the angel of father, teacher, doctor, dentist, priest. furious and raging at the false front of society, tearing out the placid assumptions of family . . . & then lapsing, controlled, into silence" (176).

As Marlatt travels through her motherland, she begins to experience a maternal semisymbiosis similar to Mukherjee's in India. However, this sensation of overlapping identity is petrifying for Marlatt because she suffers "matrophobia," a condition defined by Adrienne Rich as a fear of becoming one's mother in a patriarchal society (235). In *Of Woman Born*, Rich argues, "Thousands of daughters see their mothers as having taught a compromise and self-hatred they are struggling to win free of, the one through whom the restrictions and degradations of female existence were perforce transmitted" (235). When some daughters begin seeing themselves as their mother's doppelgänger, they perform "radical surgery" in a "desperate attempt to know where mother ends and daughter begins" (Rich 236).

The personalities of Marlatt and Edrys overlap when Marlatt reflects on their common fears as mothers and on fear in general. In "How Hug a Stone," an overlapping effect is achieved by Marlatt's fluid movements from the present to the past, as she slips from the subject position of mother to daughter. In the poem "by train to Reading," for example, Marlatt's son, Kit, gets a cinderbit in his eye when he sticks his head out the train window, but it is Marlatt's eye that receives the "scalding rubdown" from her mother's handkerchief (132). Their identities pivot on the line "didn't i tell you?"(132) – Marlatt's maternal message of worry and recrimination echoes her own mother's reproaches. Through her journey, Marlatt recognizes the maternal legacy of fear and confronts it: "i think of the shape of her [mother's] life, her brooding silence. how i felt i was struggling often with her sense of fatality, either about herself or about us, her children. the struggle with her fear which i suspected of being so strong it could actually shape what happened to me. coming to meet it, i see what i've been struggling with here"

(185). Leaving England and returning to Canada represents Marlatt's effort to surgically sever her mother's identity from her own. Throughout "How Hug a Stone," Edrys is associated with bird imagery. At the end of Marlatt's journey, as she sits in Trafalgar Square, she is prepared to leave behind the dying "panickt flapping" pigeon with wire wrapped around its feet, an image of her mother and potentially herself (186). In the final lines, she is poised for flight: "then lift, this quick wing flap, heart at breast strike up a wild beating, blood for the climb, glide, rest on air current, free we want to be where live things are" (187). Thus, Marlatt abandons her hereditary home as she releases herself from her mother's bondage. England, she finds, is inhabited by the dead, and she does not want to become one of its ghosts.^{vii}

In *Journey Back to Peshawar*, Canadian poet Rona Murray writes from the subject position of a self-declared "daughter of the Raj" (193).^{viii} Murray was born in London, England, in 1924 while her colonial parents were on leave from India, where she subsequently spent the first eight years of her life. Her identification as a daughter of the Raj reflects this early Anglo-Indian upbringing. She is also a daughter of the New World, having emigrated from India to Canada at the age of eight, so that her subjectivity is thrice split. As an Anglo-Indian-Canadian, she lives in a liminal space, never knowing quite where she "belongs" (125), a disorientation similar to Marlatt, another child of British imperialism who spends her life "trying to live somewhere" (*Ghost Works* 108). Other children of the Raj scattered across Canada, the United States, and England, "the remnants of a dead empire" (21) with whom Murray has conversed, have expressed a similar sense of rootlessness and diasporic dislocation (15). She notes that the aging children of this expiring demographic were "dragged" away from India in their youth – away from "colours and sounds and smells that haunted them throughout their lives" (15) – because of the British exodus that accompanied India's decolonization. Across the distances of time and space, her sensory encounters with Canadian flora forever trigger memory, desire, and an imaginary return to the India of her youth:

Always, during hot summers, the acrid smells of a tall, multifoliate,

white weed (tansy? cow parsley?) evokes an instantaneous sense in me of somewhere else, of heat and insects and drowsy timelessness. I stop walking or pull up the horse if riding and pause, trying to remember details, to remember any small thing I can. And there's another plant, a shrub, also multifoliate, with tiny dark blue, purple and reddish petals that I know has a strong scent. To reach it, I walk unashamed through park flower beds, packing down earth and bending back branches. But it has no smell in this North American country. Cheated. I try to recreate the heavy, distinctive fragrance. Bees toil through the florets. Concentrating, I rediscover a cloud of perfume and am lost in a garden planted around a long white bungalow. (57)

In this passage, Murray captures in memory's net a vision of her childhood home, a bungalow in the northern Indian village of Dehra Dun. Darting, nebulous recollections of the sort evoked in this passage, of "the language, the physical brilliance, the smells, sounds, and textures of childhood" (14), propel this estranged daughter back to India. Her mandate is to arrest what she refers to as "fugitive" images and memories (15, 105).

In 1987, fifty-five years after leaving India, she returns for the first time with another daughter of the Raj, a woman by the name of Jenny Colbourne. "Neither of us knew exactly what we were looking for," Murray admits, "but we did know we had to explore submerged memories – perfumes, landscapes, people – and examine the roots out of which our lives have grown" (105). Uncertain of that which she seeks, but aware she is on some sort of quest, she ends up making two return journeys, both in the company of her husband Walter. Her first journey begins in Calcutta, where she arranges to meet Jenny, and ends in New Delhi. Eighteen months later, she returns to New Delhi with her husband, and makes her way to Peshawar, where her quest culminates in an abrupt yet satisfying conclusion.

In contrast to Marlatt, Murray seeks affirmation that she belongs to India and is somehow 'of' it. She tries to convince her readers of this, a difficult and I would say courageous feat in our postcolonial age. In justifying her claim to India as a homeland,

she sees the need to make an historical case for British imperialism in India. Noting how in the 1920s, the population ratio in India was 319,000,000 Indians to 200,000 British, she argues, “with such a wide discrepancy in numbers, the British couldn’t have ruled India if the majority of Indians hadn’t wanted them there. The two peoples to a great extent understood each other” (79).^{ix} I must stress that Murray never argues against India’s Independence. Rather, she contests the outright denigration and derision of British accomplishment in India. “flawed though it was” (163). She explains how she was a little “prig” in the years leading up to her journey because of her uncompromising “anti-colonialism and self-righteousness” (267). The challenges she confronts in negotiating her own way through India’s vastness and complexity lead her to appreciate the achievements of her predecessors. “My ancestors,” she writes, “were among the many who had managed to live in and administer this country for three hundred years. I’d assumed it had been an easy sit with multiple servants and lordly status. I’d been brainwashed by current attitudes” (267).

She does assume an ‘easy sit’ for herself during a crowded, eight-hour-long bus ride to Ardwar, where a vestige of her sense of entitlement impulsively rears its imperialist head. All her “democratic, anti-colonial principles” fly out the windows of the cramped bus when she and her husband share a seat for three among themselves, in part because of Walter’s wide girth. She asks, “wasn’t it possible I’d be recognized as a daughter of the Raj and be permitted to travel with a modicum of comfort?” (193). No doubt, her question is somewhat self-ironizing, a reading consistent with representations elsewhere in her text of shamelessly privileged, charmed colonial living on the backs of Indians. Thus, there is some ambivalence in Murray’s rendition of British colonialism in India, a degree of hedging between its pros and cons. When a woman and her daughter get on the bus, several people point out the extra seat hoarded by Murray and Walter. “Of course,” she concludes, “neither bulk nor past counted” (193).

What she is certain about is that her own past in India, and that of her family, does personally count for something. For a span of over a hundred years, four generations of both sides of her family, the Murrays and the Gregorys, lived in India. Most of them were born there and some died there. Her mother’s brother, the last to leave, was

"forced" out after Independence. "All," she insists, "were affected by it" (14). *Journey Back to Peshawar* opens with an example of this cross-cultural pollination, where we read of her mother's father, Charles Gregory, who in 1925 was cremated on a burning *ghat* in Dehra Dun. His bearer performed the last rites, which entailed hitting the corpse on the head as it raised itself from the funeral pyre (as burning corpses do), in order to break the skull and release the spirit. Charles adopted the metaphysical beliefs of the country and became a Spiritualist, as did most of Murray's aunts (13). In opening with this anecdote, Murray demonstrates how she and her family were somehow 'of' India. It is a country that would have been Murray's birthplace had her parents, especially her Spiritualist grandfather, not believed it was inauspicious for Murray, as the first child of the third generation on both sides, to be born there (36).

Jenny Colbourne, one of Murray's travel companions and fellow progeny of the Raj, explains how it is "the India part that's important" because of "all those first impressions that are with you for life" (125). She seems, however, slightly self-conscious about the sentimentality of her return journey, and perhaps about whether it will appear brazen or misguided to Indians. Upon meeting a Brahman priest during her travels, Jenny remarks, "You must be rather surprised at this middle-aged matron coming back" (198). His reply is compassionate, kindly, understanding: "Not at all. Necessary it is for your development. Mother India, she is calling you back. You have been nurtured further by having eaten her food, drunk her water, breathed her air, learned important things in your life – you belong here. You are welcomed home" (198). Murray concurs with Jenny and the priest that her residency in India from 1924 to 1932, where she passed her formative early years, marked her indelibly. She, like Jenny, seeks affirmation from Indians that her sense of belonging is credible. While in Dehra Dun, she encounters an Indian historian writing on Mussoorie, a hill station where her mother was raised. He tells her: "It is true you belong here, like the others who are returning in search of their past roots. But you and they will be the last. Your children, they will not be interested. They will be different" (197).

His answer is intriguing in the way it implies her belonging is of an historical moment with an expiration date on it, which is set at the end of her life: her memory's

finale. This is satisfactory to Murray and all she truly seeks. She has no desire to live in India in the present, and apparently seeks acknowledgement that she belongs 'to' rather than 'in' India. The belonging she does find efficaciously eases nostalgic pangs and yearnings. It is ultimately more personal than political, more sentimental than pragmatic, in that it arises from a psychological, emotional need to validate India as a place of origin, a homeland. In finding the verity of belonging, Murray offers an interesting contrast to Marlatt, whose strident anti-colonialism almost kills all sentimental attachment to the land of her youth, although vestiges of it remain. Moreover, Mukherjee, in her recognition of an Indian homeland of the mind that has more to do with imagination than fact, offers a thought-provoking contrast to Murray's discovery. It is much easier for Murray to be sentimental about her first homeland because she has no intention of actually making it home once again. Mukherjee, on the other hand, who at moments yearns to return to India for good, cannot afford the luxury of sentiment. She summons the question of real, actual, day-to-day belonging rather than the metaphorical, abstract concept of belonging espoused by Murray, and finds she does not.

Murray portrays 'parents of the Raj' as absentee figures who made themselves at home in India but who were seldom 'at home' for their children. She recalls socially engaged parents who were so preoccupied with dinner parties, sporting events, and myriad other activities that they left the nurturing of their offspring to Indian ayahs and English nannies. These mums and dads of Empire, she speculates, "lost the instinct for parenthood" over the generations (18). As a result, their children were "a separate entity from themselves, at least as foreign to them as the people who did bond with these white babies: the ayahs and bearers and grooms (*syces*) and sweepers" (18). Murray's own surrogate mothers – her Indian ayahs and an English nanny – filled the void left by parental absence. It is Murray's representations of her relationships with these surrogate mother figures that make *Journey Back to Peshawar* matrocentric and transform India into a motherland as well as a homeland. They are situated at the emotional core of her text and, in the case of her nanny, at the centre of her quest.

Murray interpolates the stories of other parent-deprived children of the Raj alongside her own. Daughters of the Raj, like Murray's contemporary Gillian Hodge,

tended to bond with their female ayahs. Of Hodge, Murray writes, "She remembered being always with a tiny, very black ayah, who wore her sari pulled over her face and gave her an enchanted childhood. Together, they climbed the turret in her ayah's family house, where they would stand in the warm night air above the city chanting *pujas* to the Moon Momma" (21). Hodge's ayah "was always there and grounded her life in security" (21). In contrast, the only memory Hodge has of her biological parents, who displayed no affection and did not invite her to dine with them until she was sixteen, was being taken down after her bath to join them for afternoon tea. "She didn't miss their love," writes Murray, "but being dragged away from her ayah to be sent to England to boarding school when she was six years old, was a calamity. Isolated and disciplined, like so many other children, she was desperately unhappy" (22). As we shall see, Murray also endured the trauma of severance from a surrogate mother, place, and culture she had bonded with, a threefold loss that engendered and compounded her migrant's sense of rootlessness as an adult in the New World.

Lionel Brandon, a lifelong friend Murray first met in her childhood pram and one of the deceased to whom her travel book is dedicated, offers insight into a boy's experience of growing up in colonial India. He bonded with his father's bearer, Bhuvan Singh, a man he regarded as "a personal father, the one who showed him how to undo his buttons and to pee, the one who was always there as a guardian against snakes, wild cats, nightmares" (20). Object-relations theory explains why he turned to a paternal figure for guidance in the absence of his biological father. His own father was "a distant person, generally in [military] uniform: a man who ordered the governess to pin a map of the world on the nursery wall, strode in, and said, 'The red is the British Empire and it's for you to look after it and protect it'" (20). Noting how many children of the Raj are artists, Murray wonders whether their impetus to create stems from the loss of these potent first attachments to a people and a place, whether they are attempting to fill in a void spawned by early childhood loss of love and land (30).

Journey Back to Peshawar is divided into two sections, "India Then" and "India Now". "India Then," which forms the first quarter of the book, narrates the author's youth, a story imbricated with biographical portraits of the adults who governed her

world. It is a triangular structure of power and love, influence and absence, possession and loss, composed of her parents, ayahs, and an abusive English nanny. The “India Now” section documents her present-day travels through India, although certain destinations transport Murray into inner geographies of memory, so that the past of “India Then” bleeds into the text of “India Now.” In “India Then,” Murray tells the story of her parent’s courtship and marriage in order to illustrate the cradle of naiveté and ignorance in which she was conceived. Her mother, Enid Gregory, met her father, Robin Murray, at the Dehra Dun Club. Enid, who was performing that evening, recited a poem about a dog with cropped ears, and Robin found this seventeen-year-old “perfectly sweet” (33). As Murray notes, Robin, who was thirty-three at the time, held romantic appeal as a decorated officer from the First World War who had just achieved the rank of captain. Enid entered the marriage astonishingly ignorant in matters of sex, procreation, and motherhood, as did many women of her age, culture, and class (35). On the eve of her wedding, she still believed that babies popped out of her belly button (34). Robin’s father had given him a list of Indian prostitutes without venereal disease, informed him that women were incapable of sexual pleasure, but assured him sex was a wife’s conjugal obligation (35). Robin was, thus, scarcely more prepared than Enid. The wedding night, Murray concludes, was “obviously far from successful” (34). Nevertheless, nature filled in the blanks and Murray was born ten months later.

As mentioned earlier, Murray was born in England while her parents were on leave from India. When Enid took her infant daughter out of the nursing home in England three weeks after giving birth, she dropped the child off at home and went directly to the Ayah’s Home to hire Murray’s first surrogate mother, Pranciena Hami. This act mildly bewilders Murray, given that Enid’s household was full of women: Murray’s paternal grandmother, who had born six children; a paternal aunt, who was a mother of two; and an unmarried maternal aunt (16). In her travel book, Murray includes a photo of herself in the arms of Hami, who took complete care of her charge for the three months prior to the family’s return to India. She appears, as Murray describes her, “large, dark, and gentle” (17). Recreating the scene of Hami’s first encounter with “her” baby (14), Murray writes, “Prancing [as she was known to the family] had come back with my

mother and taken one look at the unsavoury object with which she was presented. She cried out in dismay, picked up the baby, and patted its back until it successfully burped up whatever formula it had been given" (17). Murray assumes it must have been formula because women in her family never nursed infants: "To do so appears to have been considered highly obscene" (17).

Hami's maternal efficacy is juxtaposed against Enid's ineptitude. Murray portrays her nineteen-year-old mother as a young girl with a doll. Gazing at an early photograph of her mother and herself in England, Murray writes. "A marvellous new object, I was placed like a doll in the crib of white ruffles with an embroidered awning over its head. In the photograph, obviously taken after Prancing's arrival because the baby is not screaming, my mother is holding its hand and looks, with her bobbed hair, about sixteen" (16). Knowing that Hami was left behind in England, Murray imagines her mother weeping during the three-week-long sail to India. Recounting the past, Enid told Murray how she feared she would drop her and "break her totally" during the voyage, thereby completing the damage already done by Robin who had dropped his daughter while showing her off to a friend (18). Murray conjectures her mother's fear of breakage occurred because the closest she ever came to a real baby was to realistic German dolls, popular at the time, with bisque china heads (18-19). Enid admitted to Murray that she actually did bang her skull against the metal of a top bunk while trying to change a diaper and was certain she had killed her (19). Robin was of little help during the sea voyage, which he passed on the deck playing chess. In fact, Murray learns from a letter he wrote to his wife and child that he was absent from her very beginning, having gone to Scotland to play golf during her birth and staying there afterwards rather than returning to a house full of women and a screaming infant (17-18).

Murray reports that many children of the Raj feel indifferent towards their parents whose absenteeism they resent to this day. She, on the other hand, does not share these feelings, even though her parents were seldom available to her. When Murray shifts from secondary sources such as letters, photographs, and family anecdote to her own earliest memories of Enid and Robin, she portrays a mother and father cut from a somewhat different cloth from other colonial parents. Rare moments of intimacy and affection

between parent and child are recalled. Murray recollects her past from two narrative perspectives: her adult-self, who writes memory in past tense; and her child-self, whose syntax and diction is juvenile and whose voice speaks from within memory in either the present or recent-past tense. Travel-writing daughters, as I mentioned, do inscribe fathers. and Murray's inscription of her now deceased father is a lovely tribute. The adult-self remembers isolated, precious paternal moments, such as the night of the monsoon at the Dehra Dun Club, when her father took her hand and led her outside to the verandah to watch the night sky: "It was quiet and mysterious being out there with him while everybody else was inside talking and laughing in the rooms with lights" (64). From her father, Murray gleaned some pleasurable, sensual knowledge of the world around her as he let her have sips of beer or led her to a whitish flower and encouraged her to inhale its warm, intoxicating perfume (64). She also recalls being surprised that her father even noticed delicate flowers, this man who usually wore his austere military uniform of "khaki shorts and puttees or a khaki coat and trousers and boots and sometimes a thick brown belt around his waist and over his shoulder" (71).

Murray's biological mother is depicted as more distant than her father. "My mother calls us 'pig-dogs' when she loves us" (69), boasts Murray's child-self, who seems to relish this dubious term of endearment proffered by a mother who spends most of her time at home at her desk writing letters. Murray used to spend her summers on a house-boat called *The Lotus Eater*, circling Dal Lake with her mother and aunts. She fondly recalls swimming with her mother in water magically alive with blue kingfishers and swooping dragonflies. In one incident at the lake, however, the daughter's attempt to connect with her mother is gently thwarted: "Once," writes Murray, "I went into the living room part of the boat and found her there and she was crying. I started to cry, to be with her, and she stopped me, saying, 'Don't do that or the others will hear us.' She laughed and wiped my face" (73).¹

The underside to Murray's few anecdotes of parental intimacy is that they stand out precisely because they are so infrequent, as her child-self explains:

Our beds have been brought out onto the verandah because it's hot . . .

We sleep under mosquito netting which is now tied back. Being outside at night and having our parents sleep where we do, is like being released on a holiday, a difference, because the room I share with my sister, Dawn, is at the back of the house, and is small, and because we don't often see our parents in an intimate way. (57)

Like other parents of the Raj, Enid and Robin were caught up in their own busy lives, a whirlwind of sporting events, formal dinner parties, and other social engagements, while their children remained behind the scenes with their Indian caretakers. Murray's adult-self recalls the only dinner party she remembers seeing, one hosted by her parents. That night, she and her younger sister Dawn were in their bedroom, well-segregated from the guests:

My frail sister, Dawn, who was two years younger than I, was supposed to have some kind of medicine every night, but that night it had been forgotten. I lay in bed, feeling desperately shy and also nervous about going in to the Party – I suppose my ayah had gone for the night – but at the same time thinking she might die, and if she did, it would be my fault. Finally I crawled out from the netting and went to the dining room door and told my mother. After a stunned silence, everyone laughed, and my mother, who was wearing an exquisite sequin dress, came into the nursery and produced the medicine. Dawn remembers the dress and today says this is the only time she recalls seeing our mother in India. (25)

"My earliest memory," writes Murray, "is of standing up in a metal bathtub while being washed by comforting brown hands. Of course, these were not Prancing's hands but the memory is indicative of how English children bonded with people who were not their parents" (18). These hands were likely those of Gangadi, who became Murray's second ayah as soon as the family returned to India after Murray's birth. Several years

before her first literal return to India in 1987, Murray makes a psychological journey back through hypnotism, where she reaches into the miasmic garden of her Indian past and gathers emotionally freighted, intense image clusters:

The first [image] is of a very small child – myself – standing in front of her ayah who is seated in a rattan armchair. They are outside in a garden with rather long grass and shrubby trees. The ayah puts her arms around the child who lays her head in a large, comfortable lap. The woman's breasts seem very big above the child's head and her face below its sari seems enormous: a round, dark face with gold earrings in the ears and a gold ring through the nose. It's a warm, not hot day, with insects making buzzing noises. No one else is close by. The child's sense is one of being content and secure in a love which demands nothing. It doesn't matter what she does: she can't do anything that is either "good" or "bad," right or wrong. The ayah, who must have been Gangadi, sent to meet my parents at Bombay, sings to her as she half sleeps in this protective cocoon. (37)

It is clear that Murray sees herself in a state of primary identification with this surrogate mother, her cocoon. While still under hypnotic spell, this edenic maternal image stimulates Murray's voracious "hunger" to rediscover the language through which she and Gangadi communicated. "The craving for the words," she explains, "my first, was so intense that I wanted to cry out, to burst into tears, aware that they were locked, apparently irretrievably, at the brink of my mind" (37).

As her first language, Gangadi's Hindustani engendered Murray's earliest subjectivity. It was "the language of the first sights, sounds, and smells; it was the language of the feel of a white sari, of the uncluttered taste of sweetness. The lost child words of a lost paradise" (37). As one of Murray's first significant others, Gangadi and her tender words are the maternal "pretext" for this daughter's autobiographical project. The daughter's text, Brodzki argues, seeks to reclaim and reconstruct the mother's

message (246). With effort, Murray succeeds in reclaiming the surrogate mother's message from the recesses of her mind: "Very slowly, in bits and pieces, the lullaby returned: *Acha baba, acha baba / bebe baba, bene baba / nalli-nalla / nalli-nalla-nalla*. I could hear her voice singing it. Then a few spoken phrases emerged, very few" (37). Gangadi's lullaby is soothing in its medium but sombre in its message of a lost mother tongue. However, through hypnosis and through her travels across India, Murray's Hindustani is increasingly released from her subconscious, where it had been repressed for many years. It is a reuniting that fortifies Murray's sense of belonging to this motherland.

When Murray was three years old, her parents returned to England to hire a nanny for their daughters, a woman Murray later learns went by the name of M.E. Merton but whom she knew in her youth as Nana. As the surrogate mother of the second intense image delivered to Murray through hypnotic ether, Nana presents an interesting cultural contrast to Gangadi in terms of the distinction between Indian and British approaches to child care. The first blissful image of comfort, security, and abandon gives way to an image of a distressed child bound by prohibitions and racked with fear:

The image is not set in Dehra Dun, but in what I remember as a room in a strange house or hotel in Gulmarg, a mountain resort in Kashmir, or in Peshawar on the North-West Frontier. The child is on a small bed beside her sister's bed and it is under mosquito netting. She's uncomfortably conscious of how she lies down, trying to do it correctly so she won't get into trouble. She's not allowed to sleep on her left side because her heart is on that side; she's not allowed a pillow because if she has one she will get round shouldered; she's not permitted to sleep with her arm beneath her body because she will get pins and needles in it. Most of all, she must not suck her thumb because if she does so the Scissor Man will come in and cut it off. The Scissor Man has scissors the size of garden shears . . .

The child is sucking her thumb, and somebody (no doubt Nana)

who cannot be seen comes into the dark room very quietly. The child whips the thumb out of her mouth and clutches it with her fingers, hiding both her fists under the bedclothes, terrified. The enormous scissors are under the netting. They seem to be disembodied as they hunt in the darkness over her head, looking for what they want. (38)

Gone are Gangadi's large, soft breasts: in their place are sharp, metallic shears that threaten to dismember the sucked thumb, a nipple substitute. Gone as well are Gangadi's tender lullabies, which have been supplanted by Nana's message of an avenging, swift-footed Scissor Man. As Brodzki notes, some daughters' autobiographical texts "reject" the message (246), which is the case in Murray's inscription of her dreaded surrogate mother, Nana. In a twisted parody of an archetypally maternal moment, Murray and her little sister joined Nana in bed on occasional Sunday mornings, where, flanked on each side by eager young ears, Nana passed on a xenophobic message. It was a story about a "very spoilt little girl – spoilt by ayahs – whom she'd made into a reasonable human being within a week" (44). Nana, "ferocious in undoing the 'damage' caused by the ayahs" (43), felt that her charges' knowledge of Hindustani was damage in need of undoing, so she implemented a regime of censorship, surveillance, and humiliation. According to Murray, "If my sister, Dawn, and I spoke our first language, Hindustani . . . or if I spoke it to the servants, Nana would mock, screwing up her face, gabbling, and poking her hands at me like a monkey. With unremitting visual and aural censorship, she attempted to take the language away from me, substituting her own. She needed to know everything I did or said" (38-39). She, thus, tries to erase Murray's earliest maternal message.

Although Nana attempted to extract all traces of Gangadi's language from Murray's mouth and mind in order to fill the void with English, she was only successful in suppressing the language, forcing it into a psychic hibernation of some fifty years. However, Nana had more success in deleting Gangadi's maternal message of comfort, acceptance, and security by engaging the young Murray in abusive, sadomasochistic scenarios. Murray, as the eldest daughter, was the primary target for Nana's abusive acts,

which verged on the criminal. In Murray's state of youthful vulnerability and powerlessness, she became enamored of her abuser and anxious to prove how she was no longer tainted by ayahs. "I wanted to please Nana quite apart from any punishment I might receive if I didn't" (44), Murray confesses. One of her fugitive memories of Nana takes place in England when the family was on leave: "I was running in a private garden or a park . . . when I fell down and scraped my knees. I ran back to Nana, crying and expecting sympathy; she told me I was being a baby and that as punishment I was to run and fall on them again. I did, making sure the wound was intensified. I even seem to remember satisfaction in doing so" (43). Another example of Murray's need to gratify Nana's warped desires takes place at a hotel in Gulmarg, during a children's luncheon overseen by nannies, where the children were fussing over their spinach and protesting against this gastronomic insult. Nana proudly announced that "her child loved spinach," knowing well that it made Murray retch. Murray complied, stuffing the green mush into her mouth, smiling outwardly, repulsed inwardly (45). As Murray notes, "mortification of the senses" (45) was part of Nana's process for 'unspoiling' children. Her strategies for achieving this end form a lengthy catalogue of child-rearing horrors. Nana curled Murray's hair in rags tight enough to transform grooming into torture: vigorously jabbed buttonhooks, used to button up boots, through button holes and into the tender parts of her foot; dressed her in her little sister's vomit-drenched clothes; force-fed her detested food as well as the vomit she spewed into the bowl after eating the detested food; and made her wipe herself after urinating with the same cloth, over and over again until it became stiff, unsanitary, and fetid (45-46).

Nana died two years into her employment and was buried in a British graveyard in Peshawar. Murray recalls the relief she felt upon hearing the news that her witch was dead. She doesn't recall smiling, although her mother, the messenger of this tiding, informed her that she did (47). From Murray's perspective, the emotional legacy of her Nana years includes "feelings of unlocalized guilt, a sense of the unpredictable, a discomfort in expressing emotions, and an occasional deep-seated loneliness" (41). Calculating that Nana, who came to India in 1927 at the age of seventy, was born in about 1857 and trained in 1877, Murray concludes that she is one of the few people alive today

who experienced a Victorian childhood firsthand, an experience which left an “indelible” impression (40). However, Murray’s tone shifts from the acrimony of the wounded child to the adult struggling to see Nana as human and see her whole, including the class and gender system that made and oppressed her. She explains how “that dragon of my childhood who inspired nightmares and inhibitions, who to me exemplifies the questionable way in which many British children were raised, was an old woman stringently and even heroically doing her duty as she saw it, one who should, in fact, have reached the age where she was being looked after herself” (47).¹⁰ Murray extends forgiveness to her parents for hiring Nana, explaining their behaviour as the unquestioned acquiescence to a tradition of child-rearing among their class and circumstances, which entailed hiring someone else to do it. Both Enid and Robin, it turns out, were likewise raised by proxy, and were psychologically tormented and even subjected to beatings by their nannies and governesses (38-40, 231). This makes them victims and accomplices in a cycle of abuse, but Murray stresses the former and evades the latter. At this late age, Murray is also hesitant to judge Nana as evil incarnate, and her humanizing and contextualizing gesture is, perhaps, one of forgiveness. However, the fear that Nana inspired still lurks in Murray’s psyche at the time of her journey to India, seemingly an unconscious prime motivator for her return. Still haunted by Nana, Murray wants to make sure she remains ten feet under Indian soil.

One of *Journey Back to Peshawar*’s intertexts is *Days and Nights in Calcutta*. Murray’s husband, Walter, read the book before their travels and, after dwelling on the authors’ depiction of murder and mayhem in Calcutta, woke from nightmares and tormented sleep regularly previous to the journey (107). Unlike *Days and Nights in Calcutta*, where Blaise’s travel text is placed back to back with Mukherjee’s text, Walter is only represented through Murray’s inscriptions. He appears a dedicated travelling companion and she leans on his shoulder more than once during this elderly couple’s arduous passage through India. However, there are limits to his patience and Murray sometimes wonders if he is tempted to simply abandon her and return to Canada (241). After a series of misadventures, Walter warns, “we’re leaving this fucking country,” threatening to take her with him (179). Walter’s frustration takes a sardonic turn during

one road trip, when Murray cannot find a private place to urinate because she is surrounded by a throng of curious, gawking children. When she complains to Walter, he responds, “But you like children” (268). In another frustrating incident, when Walter is forced to sleep on the floor of their tiny room in Puri among curious creeping bugs, he reminds Murray several times that this is her journey, not his (169).

In this assessment he is absolutely correct. In Murray’s travels and text, Walter occupies the subject position of the (mostly) supportive husband to the estranged daughter, and their itinerary is determined by her genealogy. They visit Madras, where Murray’s paternal grandmother was born and where her paternal grandfather practiced medicine, and Puri, where her maternal grandfather laid the last five miles of railroad. She claims she occasionally lost interest in her ancestors during part of her travels because India itself began to captivate her (156). Nevertheless, she always returns to the personal map and characterizes her journey as a homecoming. In Jim Corbett National Park, she reconnects with the flora and fauna of her youth: “For the first time in India I saw the deodars my father loved, the ponderosa pine, cedar, berberis . . . Brilliant kingfishers illuminated child memories . . . We passed dried-up river beds: home” (190). In Dehra Dun, she visits the Dehra Dun Club, once a colonial retreat but now an Indian sanctuary of leisure. She also visits the bungalow where she first lived, now abandoned but fairly well preserved. Walking through this architecture of her past, Murray’s sense of the passage of time warps and dissolves. At the Dehra Dun Club, she visits the ballroom: “I knew exactly where I wanted to go: to the back room. Sure enough, the cloakroom, where my mother had left me during a fancy dress party for which I’d been dressed as a paperboy, was there and unchanged. Standing in it, I thought I could smell the coats in which I buried my face” (210). In the bungalow, she runs from room to room, “peopling” it with her “imagination” (206). In Mussoorie, Murray visits Rushbrooke, now a hotel but once the house her maternal grandfather built and her mother grew up in. While leaning over a balustrade and taking in a panoramic view of the garden, Murray is able to “visualize” her grandmother, Louise, her mother and aunts as young girls, their dreaded nanny, Carrie Sharp, and their celebrated garden parties (237).

This affecting moment is followed by the bathetic, as Murray makes the error of

smoking some potent hash proffered by one of the hotel clerks, becomes nauseated and confused, and retires to her grandparent's old master bedroom: "It was a huge, silken bed in a large room with very high ceilings: the room my grandparents, circumspect pillars of society, had slept in; the room where Louise Gregory had crocheted tablecloths in front of the fire, its hearth still there, and where Charles had stared for hours at her portrait after her death; the room in which my mother and her sister Gwen had been born" (241). Murray is unable to appreciate the significance of this moment, nor does she even have the strength to look around, so busy is she "vomiting in the luxurious attached bathroom" (241).

Once recovered, Murray travels to Dal Lake, where she revisits *The Lotus Eater*, the houseboat on which she spent her summers with her mother. As she sits on the deck with her legs dangling in the water, schools of little fish nibble at her skin, descendants, she imagines, of the fish she caught and threw back into the water as a child (262). Murray also visits the old bridge spanning the Indus River at Attock, which her great-grandfather, Micah Gregory, built in 1880 – undoubtedly a marker of British achievement for Murray. Walking down the bridge, she feels she is walking back in time, and while gazing over the edge at the whirlpool below, she has "a calm, restful sense of having come home" (283).

Eventually, she makes her way to Peshawar – no longer the domain of India but of Pakistan since the 1947 partition. After two return journeys, this is where her "personal quest" (105), fueled by vague desires for "resolution" and "some kind of individual reconciliation" (278), comes to an unexpected and abrupt end. Here, Murray realizes she will never *need* to return to India again (290). "Peshawar," she writes, "would be the end of a journey into the past. I still didn't know what I was looking for, but had nowhere else to search. The long tunnel back into a dimly remembered childhood had come to its end. Only the briefest fragments, recalled under hypnotism, went further into the darkness" (278). We read of her visit to a neglected graveyard: "I knew with absolute and unexpected certainty that my search was over. I knew, even before I recognized that this must be where Nana had been buried. Here, so remote from my later life, the pain of childhood was finally confronted and quietly laid to rest: the pain engendered less by an

individual than by a tradition" (289-290). It is as though her unconscious has led her to this point. She looks for Nana's grave until darkness descends, and, in poignant anti-climax, gives up the search. At this moment in her life journey, her image of Nana as the monster of her youth has been mitigated by her understanding of the monstrous tradition to which Nana was bound. Nevertheless, the close encounter in the graveyard is necessary. She has walked upon the earth that buries Nana: the 'bad mommy' who initiated Murray's estrangement from the language and love of 'Mother India' represented by Gangadi.

"Take a second-generation Ukrainian-Canadian, a feminist, a writer, an alumna of the 1960s, and put her on a train in Belgrade heading north. What exactly is her business?" (2). This is the question Myrna Kostash asks in the "Introduction" to *Bloodlines: A Journey into Eastern Europe*, an account of a series of journeys into Slavic Central and Eastern Europe made between 1982 and 1991. In explaining her initial three-fold plan, she describes an impetus to travel dominated by the political shades of a personal-political penumbra. She intended to sport three "traveller's hats". The first, that of the politically engaged writer forged in the furnace of 1960s North American activism, would be worn when interviewing other writers who were "bred by the events of the 1960s, [and] who were writing from within the opposition in their respective societies" (1). She was rather vague about the features of the second traveller's hat but knew it was in some "unformulated way" about "ethnicity" (1-2). Her third traveller's hat, that of the "New Left socialist," signified her desire to see how "'actually existing socialism' looked" (2). The fourth traveller's hat is one Kostash does not mention explicitly in her catalogue but one she seldom doffed. It belongs to the estranged daughter who registers intensely personal reactions to her political observations as well as nostalgic yearnings to connect with her grandmothers and her ancestral motherland, Ukraine.

Before embarking on her travels, Kostash assumed a political, generational, and ethnic solidarity with Eastern Europe as well as Ukraine. However, the experience of her travels, described as "very turbulent and very upsetting," scattered her tidy hats and underscored the "illusory, or at least ambiguous" status of this treasured solidarity (2).

"Each time I travelled," she confesses, "I was turned inside out again in what was proving to be the most difficult work of my life as a writer" (2). In one moment of disconnection, she describes herself as "a daughter of the New World, whose story begins with kin who gratefully tore away from the ancient village and moved halfway around the world without looking back" (81). Motivated by an increasingly distressing sense of estrangement, she is forced to formulate the shape and dimensions of the vague traveller's hat of ethnicity, put it on, and look inwards as well as backwards. Initial journalistic interests give way to intensely personal, fundamental questions about her own national identity, specifically her split Canadian-Ukrainian subjectivity and her historical nexus to Ukraine. In Poland in 1988, a friend asked if she would return to a "free" Ukraine.¹¹ Kostash writes, "It has never occurred to me that I am a Ukrainian in exile, doomed to fret about the goings on 'back home' from the temporary margins of North America. I explain that I am Ukrainian-Canadian and that the hyphen is essential – the juncture of sources" (152). Although she is certain of her dyadic ethnic identity, she is less certain about what it *means* to be a hyphenated subject, an uncertainty outlined in her "Introduction":

How does the 'old country' live on in the citizen of the new?
 How may I understand these people [Ukrainians] and their extraordinary history – my blood relations, as it were, from who I was separated by the accident of being born into the new family line in Canada? How do they imagine the place I come from? Can I trust what I see of theirs? What is the source of my feelings – feelings I didn't even know I had – about their history, their landscape, their languages, their sites of collective memory? What is their claim on me? Mine on them? In other words, what has this part of the world got to do with me? (2)

"This book," Kostash informs, "is by way of answer" (2). Denying that *Bloodlines* is about revolutions, she claims, "This is a book about memory. About the territories that

exist in the imagination of a Canadian writer, in that of her interlocutors, and in the space between them" (1). As a matrocentric text, the foremost interlocutors are her *babas* (grandmothers), whose lives, lands, history, and language she reclaims through travel, study, and writing in an effort to explore the "space between" them and to possibly bridge the divide as well. That is, she writes from the subject position of the daughter of the New World seeking a version of herself as the granddaughter of the Old World along maternal bloodlines.

One of Kostash's first rude awakenings to her estrangement from the people of Eastern Europe occurs during a visit to Prague in 1984, while visiting a synagogue with her friend, Jiri, a recent convert to Judaism. The dining hall where they lunch is crawling with American tourists whom Kostash suspects Jiri resents. This incident triggers a defensiveness that she conveys through italicized inner monologue: "*The relatives. We all have relatives, don't we? The ones who got away, Jiri, and saved the bloodlines – people in America who remember their grandmothers' maiden names, who were paying attention in their cribs when the names of the grandfathers' villages were shouted out from the letters that had arrived between the wars. Thank God for that, Jiri, and do not resent our luck*" [emphasis added] (16). This is the first of several italicized interpolations that delineate either Kostash's visceral, internal reactions to external stimuli or her repressed memories of an ethnic childhood. The chasm between her "our" and its implied 'your' widens despite Kostash's effort to bridge it when, upon returning to Jiri's flat, she confides, "There was a time . . . when I considered myself to be a citizen of Prague, in the spring of 1968" (17). Seeking political parallels between herself and this citizen of Prague, she adds, "You took on Stalinism, we took on Yankee terror" (19). Jiri informs her that her feelings of alliance were illusory – an act of imagination – and points out the illogicality of her position. By protesting American military efforts to staunch the spread of communism in Vietnam, Kostash, from Jiri's perspective, seems more in solidarity with the totalitarian, imperialistic regime that invaded his country. Regarding the North American anti-war protest, Jiri asks, "If you'll pardon me, what exactly did you have to protest about?" (19). This question gives her much to think about:

He does not wish to offend, merely to understand . . . We in the West had said we wanted to be “in solidarity” with the Czech students in the spring of 1968, the summer of 1968, and one understood that, yes, hippies singing Beatles’ songs together on Charles Bridge was a fine thing, even a necessary thing . . . But what then was this “solidarity” with the Communists of Vietnam, these socialist hordes in black pyjamas slithering through the jungles to deal a mortal blow to the one force on earth that could roll back the Russian Empire from central Europe, the American army. In 1968, the students of Prague were absorbed by a carnival of the deadly serious—beer bottles in hand, firecrackers sizzling at the monuments, a banner reading, “The only good Communist is a dead Communist!” Just who was it we in the West were friends of? (19)

However, she resists disillusionment and continues to defend her political solidarity:

We were the *New Left*, I rejoin, reconstituting society around notions of radical democracy. We were hostile to Marxism-Leninism: we didn’t support *that* kind of socialism. “We got a lot of our ideas from you, about socialism with a human face.”

“You want socialism? Look around.”

“No,” I reply, “Not *that* kind of socialism.”

“We call this the real one.” (19)

At this impasse, she decides it is impossible to discuss the merits of socialism in a country that is “already polluted” by its own history of it (19). However, Jiri has placed a wedge between himself and Kostash that undermines her facile assumptions of generational and political solidarity. Eventually, she will see herself more clearly through

Jiri's eyes; "Later," she writes, "I will imagine a line of black, bobbing ciphers on the western horizon. I squint. They are doing a little dance and seem to be waving their arms in my direction. Later I will be told that this was the revolution in my country" (20).

Kostash is likewise surprised by the distance she feels from Marketa, a frequently interrogated member of the Prague underground. "I mention the women's movement in the West," Kostash writes, "its ideas concerning the patriarchal family and the struggle for equality in the workplace. But I have misjudged this young woman of the Prague resistance, too glibly assumed her agreement" (39). The normally serene Marketa hastily rebuffs Kostash's particular strain of feminist musing, stating, "I've never understood women in the West, why you would choose a dull and stuffy office job doing stupid work all day when you could be at home with your children!" (39). Again, Kostash lingers over food for thought that tastes of irony:

Marketa is prepared to sacrifice her family's standard of living to stay at home with her children. This is, in fact, a point of principle, a strike for pietistic, Christian values and a blow against the inhuman mobilization of women's labour by the Communists. By refusing to provide mothers with what they need – cheap and healthy food, decent living space, affordable appliances – the state has forced women into the work force, covering up this compulsion with resounding slogans and a flower from the boss for every employee on International Women's Day.

Marketa is not fooled. She has not been in the streets agitating for her rights. She hasn't had to: her "rights" are delivered by the Party. (39)

Coming from a system where women are forced to work out of economic necessity, and envying the assumed affluence and freedom of North American mothers who have the option to stay home, Marketa echoes Jiri's question: just what does Kostash and her ilk have to protest about? Although Marketa never directly engages Kostash's issue about

women's equality *in* the workplace, her response does problematize Kostash's assumed solidarity in the realm of gender politics.

The political and generational solidarity Kostash assumes with the peoples of Eastern Europe is also shattered by her own Ukrainian nationalism. For example, she claims she first went to Poland to honour the strikers of Gdansk, but finds herself alienated by the event:

Polish poets and workers may have felt continuous with each other on the spectrum of resistance, but to me the strikers were strange – their Masses in the littered shipyards, their flags unfurled over their committees, their evocation of a primal motherland that had been kidnapped by its enemies and to which the redemptive acts of their solidarity would return them. I can lay flowers at their shrines but I cannot join them, even in spirit. My motherland is elsewhere. (120)

Interestingly, Kostash does not clarify which motherland she is referring to, Canada or Ukraine, and perhaps is being intentionally ambiguous here. Elsewhere in her text, it is clearly the Ukrainian part of her hyphenated identity that disrupts her romantic sentiments of ethnic similitude and solidarity among Eastern Europeans in general. She recalls how, before and during her journeys through Yugoslavia in the 1980s, she subscribed to the ethnic unity of that federation. She felt that the cultural differences between the six republics – Serbia, Croatia, Slovenia, Montenegro, Macedonia, and Bosnia-Herzegovina – had been superceded by a common Slavic ethnicity, and believed that she, as a Ukrainian, was a part of it. Her vision of a unified Slavic identity was shattered in the 1990s by the popular referenda that divided the federation and by the series of wars that followed and reinforced this division. However, even before these events, she was disabused of her notions regarding ethnic and cultural commonalities among Slavs. While in Slovenia in 1987, she writes:

We are so far "west" that I feel marooned, cast among Slavs who

are not Slavs. I grope for the shared familiar – certain sounds, certain words – but every other thing is empty of memento. There isn't a single reference I could evoke – the name of an important Ukrainian town, the name of a seventeenth-century Cossack hero, a poetic verse, the smell of the church, the wail of a sub-Carpathian love song – that would resonate among the Slovenes. This sudden and unexpected impossibility of solidarity leaves me rather confused, as though I were standing, holding the address to the house of relatives who had decamped, leaving the place to Bavarian vacationers. (73)

Her most jarring estrangement occurs during her first visit to Ukraine in 1984, where the Canadian side of her hyphenated identity makes her feel 'marooned' among her relatives in her ancestral homeland. The chapter on Ukraine opens with Kostash sitting in a hotel room in Chernivtsi, angst-ridden as she awaits the arrival of her relatives whom she hopes will not show up. At this point of no return, she dwells on the distance between them, anticipating an excruciating awkward social encounter. "How are we going to communicate?" she asks herself: "My relatives and I have nothing in common – least of all language – except that my grandmother and their grandfather were sister and brother. Baba got away. End of shared history. That was two generations ago. Even my own mother hasn't made the trip" (162-163). It appears that her relatives, however, know before she does that bloodlines transcend the truncation of shared histories:

I step out the front doors. Pavlina, yelling out my name, falls upon my neck. For a few months twenty years ago we exchanged letters. Ten years my junior, she is my second cousin. We wrote in Russian. The correspondence dribbled out, but news would still come from the family. Now Pavlina introduces me to her mother, sister, husband, brother and sister-in-law, all of whom have been standing back now rush at me, pressing carnations into my hands and kissing me noisily on the cheek. I am overcome by their excitement, their tears, their fingers

running in rough caresses over my arms and shoulders. They are familiar from their photographs, but I am thinking, who are these people? (163)

Several sub-chapters later, Kostash picks up this narrative under the heading "Family Reunion." After this initial, demonstrative greeting, Kostash's relatives take her to a park with picnic tables: "We sit down. We stare" (184). As Kostash awkwardly struggles to communicate with these 'strangers,' she finds herself "tongue-tied": "I can feel the electricity" she writes, "discharging uselessly across synapses in my brain in that place where I once spoke Russian and babyish Ukrainian. I manage a kind of pidgin or proto-Slavic speech, and they all bob their heads in vigorous encouragement . . ." (184). Several days later her relatives drive her to her grandmother's natal village, Dzhuriv, an illegal journey in Soviet-occupied Ukraine because the village is located in an oblast closed to foreigners. Kostash, assuming a role of foreign tourist, takes in Dzhuriv through the lens of her camera:

Dzhuriv, birthplace of my mother's mother, is tidy and colourful. I walk around it and take pictures. An abandoned blue cottage, overwhelmed by its ancient thatched roof and sinking somnolently into a yard gone wild with grasses and yellow daisies. Click. The field behind Katrusia's [Kostash's aunt's] house – the celebrated, fecund private plot of Soviet agriculture – scrupulously clean of weeds and bordered by fruit trees. Click. A neighbour, stout, baggy-bosomed and kerchiefed, knee-deep in red and yellow tulips. Click. The church where Baba used to go, still in good shape, white-walled and tin-roofed with a single squat, hexagonal dome. Click . . . Click . . . Click. (185)

The camera functions as lens, shield, and barrier, and each click has a numbing effect on both Kostash and the reader. Only when she is on the other side of the lens, during a

traditional Ukrainian homecoming ritual performed in her honour, does appropriate emotion surface:

Katusia and I stand in front of her freshly painted white door. She is holding aloft a shiny braided bread and a saltcellar poised on a long, embroidered cloth falling from her hands: the traditional gifts of greeting. I am unprepared for a ritual I have seen enacted only on stage, at Ukrainian-Canadian concerts. But here, in Dzhuriv, in Baba's village, this offering to the guest of bread and salt, ancient and habitual benedictions from the earth, is being repeated in real life, by real Ukrainians, and handed over to *me*, granddaughter of the beloved young woman who left and never came back. I take the bread and hold it a little gingerly and look into the camera with a rather weepy look, as though the significance of the moment were just sinking in: "Paraska Kosovan left and never came back. In her place, you have come. Welcome. Welcome back." (186)

It is difficult to tell to what degree the "significance of the moment" actually does sink in during this first visit to Ukraine. What she does grasp, however, is the degree to which her ignorance of Ukrainian history and language breed distance and alienation: "I leave Dzhuriv as I arrived: ignorant of the foretime of this land and speechless" (187).

As a second-generation Ukrainian-Canadian who at one point marks her "beginnings" in Ohrid, Macedonia, the village where her grandparents "heaved themselves over to the New World" (88), Kostash's peregrinations through Eastern Europe stir a mixture of ethnic memory and desire. The memories that surface remind her not only of the Ukrainian ingredients of her upbringing but also of those parts of her Ukrainian ethnicity – its language, history, and culture – which have been lost, repressed, abandoned, or never fully understood. Some evocations of the past activate pleasingly nostalgic pangs of recognition, such as the nurturing maternal memory Kostash recalls while lunching with Jiri at the synagogue in Prague. She is served by women who

remind her of “the regiment of women in my childhood (my mother brisk, thin, in a homemade apron) who conveyed platters of ham and bowls of perogies slathered with sour cream from the ovens . . .” (17). The chicken soup is the most effective conductor to the past:

I ache with the familiarity of this soup, ladled out into a flat-bottomed basin, the pattern of the china washed by the clear, yellowish, fatty broth, thin egg noodles afloat like a water plant. It’s my baba’s chicken soup. I sat in her kitchen, under the slanted roof, and slurped the greasy broth from a large, silver-plated soup spoon too big to put entire in my mouth. This *was* the taste of chicken noodle soup: chicken fat, salt and a pinch of silver plate. (17)

Other evocations of the past reveal a child happily going through motions associated with the Old World that do not entirely signify in her new one, so that she grows up with a vague and confused ethnic identity. Like Murray’s text, these moments are revealed in the voice of Kostash’s child-self. During her journey to Kiev in 1984, Kostash visits the gravesite of Taras Shevchenko, the nineteenth-century Ukrainian poet laureate affectionately known to his people as ‘the Old Man’ who was cruelly persecuted for his Ukrainian nationalism by the Russians.^{xiii} At this moment in her text, a childhood memory of Shevchenko is rendered in the present tense, italicized voice of Kostash’s youth:

Taras is a young man. He doesn’t have whiskers yet. He holds a candle up in front of the mirror and paints his self-portrait. I find it in a book of his paintings in my parents’ library. He has the round moonlike face of the Ukrainian peasant and brownish circles around his deepset eyes that I associate with the torments of the poetic soul. I know he’s the Poet, although I have never read his poems. (172)

During her journey to Lviv, Ukraine, in 1988, while gazing out of her hotel window at a monument to the Polish poet Adam Mickiewicz, Kostash deliberates upon the Ukrainian desire to memorialize Shevchenko through a similar gesture. Again, her text is ruptured by the voice of her child-self growing up in Canada:

He wears an astrakhan cap and long whiskers. He has bushy eyebrows, but he does not glower. He's stout. He's been dead for more than a hundred years. He's a saint. He likes children; I'm convinced of this. Once a year, in March, the whole family gets dressed up in our good outfits to go to the church basement to honour him on the anniversary of his birth. I have never not known his name: Taras Shevchenko. I have always known he was a poet. The poet. Others don't count. For him I'm dressed up in a starched cotton dress and polished white shoes. There's his picture. It is ubiquitous. It is an icon. Alongside the family portraits . . . he watches over us.

Children step forward on the stage and recite his poems in a dogged singsong. It is difficult to tell whether they understand what they are saying, but it doesn't matter. Everyone adores them. Everyone smiles and claps. I'm on the stage too, in the children's choir, thrilled by the lights, the paper streamers crisscrossing the ceiling, the rapt faces of my parents as I croon the words that will not die. My understanding is not required, only my bearing witness even at a tender age to this collective rite of recollection. (231)

This passage reveals how, as a daughter of the New World, Kostash's Ukrainian acculturation consists of half measures – she need not read the Old Man's poems or understand the meaning of the ceremony in his honour. While these half measures are better than no measures, they do lead to a partial knowledge that, in Kostash's case, eventually aspires towards completion.

Moreover, the partial knowledge Kostash does glean of the Old World assumes qualities of the unreal and fabular in her child's mind. In another flashback, which occurs during her journey to the steppes of Odessa in 1988, Kostash recalls a ubiquitous print from her childhood, this time of the Cossacks who once inhabited the region she traverses:

I am ten, and I have seen the "funny picture" everywhere for as long as I can remember: fat-bellied, bald-pated men in animal skins enjoying a good joke. I know these funny men are Cossacks and that they are somehow related to us Ukrainian Canadians. But I can't place them, either in my grandmother's village or on a northern Alberta Homestead. They live in some never-never land, east of the sunrise, without children, without women (who cooks? how do they wash their clothes?) in an exotic summer camp that is both dangerous (all those swords) and entertaining (the belly laughs). They wear costumes – peaked caps, bearskin capes and pantaloons – and gesture theatrically: the sich [military fort] is a stage and I sit in the dark, looking on. (224)

The print, which Kostash earlier identifies as Illia Repin's *The Zaporozhians*, represents a fraternity of Cossacks scoffing at an Ottoman sultan's request for tribute (223-224). The Cossacks, men who escaped serfdom, landlords, and other forms of thralldom by living on the outskirts of the Ukraine, were guerrilla warriors who defended oppressed Ukrainian peasants from Tartars, Turks, and Poles until they were snuffed out by the Russians in the late eighteen century (223-229). What is of primary interest to us here is how the Cossacks – “ur-Ukrainians” (226) who occupy a central place in the Ukrainian nationalist history of resistance – lived in a “never-never land” in the Ukrainian-Canadian child's mind.

As Kostash explains in the previous excerpt, in childhood she could not “place” the Cossacks in her grandmother's village (224). Nor, as a child visiting her paternal

grandparents' Alberta homestead, could she place her grandparents in their Ukrainian village. The child-voice confesses:

It has never occurred to me that the farm has not always been here. or that someone had to come along from some other place to build it. And so, to be told that my grand-parents had emigrated from Ukraine to Royal Park, that they had broken sod and harnessed themselves to the plough . . . is like the recitation of a well-loved tale: it is marvellous, but it happened in some other, primordial time, having come to its satisfying conclusion well before my arrival. (238)

This passage, which is set amongst a description of Kostash's 1988 journey to her paternal grandparent's ancestral village, Tulovia, Galicia, reveals how the young Kostash regarded her familial past as the stuff of fiction. She cut herself off from this fanciful, 'ancient' history, disregarding that which was not 'shared' (i.e. Canadian). "The only story that mattered in my childhood," writes Kostash, "was the story of the arrival of my Ukrainian grandparents in Canada: everything that preceded it was a folktale, and everything that happened in Galicia was hearsay" (121).

Throughout *Bloodlines*, places in Eastern Europe function as sites of the repressed that trigger Kostash's elliptical ethnic memories from childhood that remain muted and spotty in the present. For example, when she travels to Poland for the first time in 1984, "hearsay" (121) about the Polish invasion of her paternal grandmother's village, Galicia, works its way to the surface of her psyche, but is ultimately forced down by another, conscious agenda. Wearing her New Left traveller's hat, she confidently claims, "My baba's story is not the one I will be tracking when I finally visit Poland for the first time in 1984. I will go in search of the stories that make Poland Polish, beginning with the one that galvanized *my* generation, the birth and convulsions of solidarity in the shipyards of the Baltic coast . . ." (112). As we already saw, once in Poland she finds it difficult to sustain this solidarity because her "motherland is elsewhere" (120). As an outsider, then, she portrays the Polish people as victims of history who have ardently and courageously

resisted their conquerors. However, submerged memory does threaten to rupture this ideal, one-sided image:

Somewhere in the back of my mind there is a memory of another kind of Pole, the one my baba called "Pan." In a drawer I had come across a bundle of old documents in a foreign language that my father explained to me was Polish. They were a school report and a baptismal certificate. I wondered briefly why they were in Polish. Baba being a Ukrainian, but when it was explained to me that her village had "belonged" to Poland I was satisfied and had no more questions. I learned, too, that "pan" meant landlord and that it was the Polish pan who held sway in her village. Since the English word "landlord" is benign enough I thought no more about that either. But I had absorbed important information: in the old country, Poles and Ukrainians were neighbours. (111-112)

Her baba's story of lost territory remains, for the most part, lost on Kostash during this first visit to Poland. Part of the reason is because of the half measures and partial knowledge, fragments of narrative from her childhood that have yet to be dragged to the surface and fleshed out. Regarding her baba's stories of tyrannical Polish landlords and rapists, Kostash writes, "I remember only fragments, anecdotes, lacking context, unassimilable into what was my 1950s girl-child's mind. Where did they come from? Where could I see one? Why should I hate them?" (143). Denying her bloodlines, she asserts "If, in the fall of 1930, armed units of the Polish Army and the police terrorized some eight hundred Ukrainian villages in Polish-held Galicia and called it Pacificacija – demolishing community halls and reading rooms, putting books and newspapers to the torch, confiscating property and arresting more than two thousand 'nationalist' trouble-makers – this happened to somebody else" (121).

During her journey to Przmysl, Poland, which is rendered in *Bloodlines* under the apt subtitle "What the Tourist Doesn't Know Won't Hurt Her," Kostash does not pay

“close attention” to the vestiges of Ukrainian culture in this previously Ukrainian village (120). This oversight is a measure of her estrangement from her grandmother, her lands, and her message. “Much later,” she writes, “I will learn that this town was an important railway centre fought over by Ukrainian and Polish armies as they struggled for control of the Ukrainian lands while the Austro-Hungarian empire was noisily collapsing in World War I. The Poles won, of course” (120). Along with knowledge comes nationalist indignation:

Later I will see I have missed the point of everything: that this town in the middle of “nowhere,” once known as Peremyshl in Ukrainian, had been a scintillating hub of politics and culture in the Austro-Hungarian Empire . . . the westernmost city on Ukrainian-speaking territory. Now it has become Polish. It has suffered and declined; its people have been violently dispersed, its language and faith made relentlessly private. But I have not yet absorbed this. In 1984, I am not in Galicia, I am in Poland. They speak Polish in Przemysl and this is as it should be. (122)

In *Bloodlines*, Kostash also recalls her deliberate youthful efforts to suppress and deny knowledge of Soviet brutality visited upon the Ukrainians. Again slipping into the present tense of her childhood past, Kostash writes, “*I am in the basement rec room, reading a book from my parent’s library. It is thick and heavy, like a bible, printed in the typeface of a church bulletin and with a number of foggy black-and-white photographs. Although it is in English, there is something queer about it. It is called The Black Deeds of the Kremlin: A White Book*” (187). The book documents the human-made famine that blighted the Ukraine in the 1930s, a consequence of Stalin’s economic plan to exploit the peasantry, expropriate their lands, and appropriate their grain reserves. Kostash doesn’t recall anyone in her immediate family discussing the famine, which her relatives in western Ukraine, then under Polish occupation, fortunately eluded. She does, however, recall reading a “hysterical book in the basement” that told ghastly tales of people eating

their boots and pickling their children, peasants sifting through horse manure in search of the coveted undigested seed or blade of grass, and wagons piled high with frozen corpses (188). Her child voice interrupts: “*It is revolting. I slam the book shut. I don’t believe a word. I have already read Anne Frank’s diary. I have seen my first photographs of the Holocaust, have ardently watched war movies, and I believe. But for seven million Ukrainians dead of starvation, I have no belief*” (188). Another source of information about Soviet imperialism came from anti-Communist displaced persons of Eastern Europe who immigrated to Kostash’s Canadian community in the 1950s. To Kostash at that time, these people appeared “unhinged” by their dispossession, meeting as they did in church basements and community halls to vehemently denounce “the Russians, the Soviets, the Communists, the Reds. The Enemy. The Other Ones” (188). To this young daughter of the New World, these freedom fighters appeared hysterically ‘other,’ so she slammed the book shut on them and their dead for many years (188).

In a poignant aside, Kostash confesses, “This is hard, this remembering. This isn’t just about Ukrainians dying of hunger. This is about me. trying to get rid of them” (188). She continued to turn her back on them into the 1960s, the decade of her political coming of age:

Nineteen sixty. The Cold War. Us and Them. Choose.

Right here, right now. Choose the Ukrainians. “They” have done this: the wolves of the Kremlin have visited upon your kin a terrible violence. “They,” bent on world conquest, have done this in the name of the future and have delivered into its maw the shrivelled bodies of Ukrainian peasants who dared to refuse it. So choose. What are Cuban sugar cane cutters and South African schoolchildren to you? Choose your own. Choose the Ukrainians.

I could not. Behold the second generation born in Canada. Lost to the language, lost to the stories, lost even to the territory known as the diaspora. (We *had* a home; it was right here, under our feet.) Lost to the sense of tragedy. It was not just that we could not hate the enemy:

we could not feel the terror or pity of its victims. In that chamber of the heart where Ukrainians love their people's struggle to live was a great carelessness. The consequences were predictable. Truth-telling was left precisely in the mouths of those who didn't mind being labelled Cold War hysterics: the North American ultra-right, the ethnic fanatics in the church basement and, eventually, students in Eastern and Central Europe, with whom we of the 1960s imagined ourselves in deepest and reciprocal solidarity. (189)

However, in Edmonton in 1977, Kostash interviewed the mathematician Leonid Pliushch, a Ukrainian dissident recently released from a Soviet psychiatric prison following an international campaign on his behalf. "Unexpectedly moved" by his Gulag story, she asks him, "How is it that, although we come from opposite ends of the world and we do not speak each other's language and I cannot begin to imagine your experience, still I feel close to you?" He responds, "Because, in the end, we come from the same village" (190). This was a pivotal moment for Kostash: "So there it finally was: the Ukrainians and I: kin. This time I did not deny it" (190). Kostash then returns to the famine text, which she forces herself to read in preparation for her European voyages of self-discovery:

When I finally reread *The Black Deeds of the Kremlin*, thirty years after I first came across it, the book has the heft I remember and the same murky photographs, although not so many as I thought there were. The pages do not look at all like those from a church bulletin, although there is a textbookish air to the typeface. I had not remembered the name of the publishers, but here they are on the title page: Ukrainian Association of Victims of Russian Communist Terror. This no longer sets my teeth on edge. I find it admirably straightforward and unsentimental. That is who they were – victims – and terrorists were responsible. I read their stories now with an open heart, and I believe them. (193)

Kostash finally makes the decision she was incapable of in the 1960s: "I read of the little boy, swaying unsteadily on his rickety hands and knees, who crawled into the village cemetery to find something to eat. When his rescuers find him, he is feebly grinding blades of luxuriant grass between his rotting teeth. I choose him" (193).

For Kostash, choosing him entails journeys to Ukraine, which, in turn, inspires her to augment the smattering of Ukrainian she picked up in her youth. As noted earlier, she returns from Dzhuriv, her maternal baba's birthplace, feeling "ignorant of the foretime of this land and speechless" (187). When she returns to Canada, she decides her "muteness" will seem an "affliction" she no longer wishes to bear (187). However, she is not entirely ignorant about Soviet-Ukrainian history because she had revisited the famine texts beforehand. It is this knowledge of Soviet oppression and cultural imperialism that stimulates her righteous indignation regarding the suppression of the Ukrainian language. During her first return, she is frustrated not only by the language barrier between her relatives and herself but also by the ubiquity of the official Russian language that the Ukrainians are obligated to speak in their public dealings. She rages against the Russian that floods Ukrainian radio waves and television sets. At one point she pulls the television cord from its socket with a "savage yank" when a Russian-language children's cartoon vibrates in her skull "in sonorous clarity, choleric, harsh, and disciplinary" (176). Turning to the radio for succour, she hears a Ukrainian baritone sing a Pushkin poem set to music in Pushkin's native tongue (176). While visiting Taras Shevchenko's grave during this first return journey, she wishes, for the first time in her life, that she had learned to read his poems in their original Ukrainian (172). Moreover, she recalls how Russian superceded Ukrainian in her own life:

From 1963 to 1968, I studied the Russian language and its literature as my major subject at the university. As I had earlier come to love the language of John Keats and Arthur Rimbaud, I began to love the language of Alexander Pushkin. I learned whole poems by heart . . . I rolled the words around in my mouth like

fruity lozenges, sucking out their hard sibilants, their throaty linguals, as though wooing the poet myself with my flickering tongue. "I loved you, and love, perhaps, still flares in my soul."

The Russian language had been presented to me, studying at Canadian and American universities in the sixties, as a world language: millions of people in an important country – "Russia" – spoke it. To those of us studying in literature faculties it signified the language of a world literature; major, canonical, essential. Every literate person in the world knew the country's writers. As my thesis topic I chose, unsurprisingly, Dostoevsky. (174)

Thus, Kostash decided to learn to speak Ukrainian between her 1984 and 1988 return journeys because she had been "found wanting before the ancestors" and had "much to make up for" (194). The ancestors she sought to appease above all were female. For Kostash, the Ukrainian language is a maternal legacy, a maternal message of cultural, ethnic, and national origin. She describes a "quintessential 'ethnic' pastime": a mother "reading in the mother tongue" to her children who have gathered around her. "For this is how I learned to read *Marusia*," explains Kostash, "curled up against my mother's shoulder, my sister at her other shoulder, while the book lay open before us and we read out loud, along with her, chanting the text like a trio of cantors in church" (194). Moreover, she recalls the pleasure she took in learning the "whorls and slanted strokes" of the Cyrillic alphabet, delighting in "the swirl of my name written in Ukrainian in the front of the reader in my mother's hand" (195). Even before this textual inauguration, the sound of the language pervaded her infant world – particularly through the tender, nurturing voice of her paternal baba – so that her earliest utterances were in Ukrainian, a language she identifies as "synchronous with my sensory life" (195). For this reason, re-learning Ukrainian is interpreted as a resurrection of her baba, a reconnection with her, as well as a reinstatement of her own place in the bloodline:

To learn this language is also to keep a kind of faith with my

grandmother, the gentle, pink-cheeked, round-headed old woman who could speak no English but who never, not once, reproached me for my speechlessness before her. Now it is I who reproach myself for having taken up this learning too late. Baba was the last person in a long line of generations who spoke only Ukrainian [Kostash's mother spoke English and Ukrainian]; I broke the chain, speaking it not at all. Now I pick it up, wanting to hammer back my link, so that baba might live again in my broken, stammering syllables. (196)

Attending Saturday School in Edmonton, the eldest of a class of teenagers, Kostash starts out speaking "baby talk" (195). Eventually, after diligent effort, she graduates to reading the poems of Taras Shevchenko in their native language. In learning the language and reading the texts, she walks across a burnt bridge, reconstructing and fortifying its foundations along the way. She is ready to once again return to the Ukraine, this time "endowed with the power of speech" (196). The experience, in its defiance of the Russian master discourse, and in her ability to communicate with her relatives, is liberating, exhilarating:

I revel in the sounds I am making, even though I often retreat to my hotel room, my tongue swollen with exhaustion, my brain depleted of all vocabulary. The Russian I once knew is filed in some deep archive of my brain; the Ukrainian I am speaking has risen up and inscribed itself on my tongue as though I once knew how to speak it and had only now to remember. And so I go to the provinces, to the village, meet my relatives, open my mouth and speak. (196)

Another way Kostash chooses 'him' – the starving peasant boy of the famine texts who becomes her symbol of Ukrainian oppression (193) – is by reclaiming her grandmother's lands and culture from the erasure perpetrated by occupying nations. We

have seen how it was not her paternal grandmother's story she was "tracking" during her 1984 visit to Poland, but those that "make Poland Polish" (112). This situation is reversed during her 1987 return, when she revives the maternal message of Polish oppression. She sees Poland through her baba's eyes, so that "the Poles become the 'other' and I am wrenched away from the Poles of my imagination – the freedom fighters – and towards the Poles of my baba's stories – landlords and rapists" (143). Her baba's lands, the Galician territories, are occupied by the Soviets rather than the Polish at the time of Kostash's visit (the Polish have experienced their share of invasions as well). Thus, she reclaims other Ukrainian villages that the Polish invaded and either made their own or annihilated. Her travel text becomes the site of reclamation, where she documents the history of Polish imperialism and re-inscribes that which has been erased, such as Kryve na Sianom, a place that exists only in memory: "So I name it here, on this page, and bring it back from the void: Kryve na Sianom. The curved place on the San" (142). While visiting Ustrzyki Dolne, Poland, she is greeted by Anastasia, the secretary of the Ukrainian cultural club in her village, who tells her, "You may wander all over God's green earth but when you come here you have come onto your own lands" (135). Kostash agrees, and re-appropriates these lands:

These are not just hills. These are "our" hills. "We" populated them. "We" danced and sang and married. "We" walked up and down the bushy slopes and called for "our" cows and sheep. Generations of "us" were buried alongside the timbered walls of "our" church. "We," meaning of this place, coming from here. Not a single Pole lived here. Meaning: all the Poles you see here now, these farmers and government men, are interlopers and infiltrators. They are from another place, from beyond . . . They don't even speak "our" language. *They* live in Ustrzyki Dolne. *We* live in Ustriki Dolishni. Because that's what it was called. We were the first ones. We gave it a name. (142)

Through this strident nationalistic testimony, Kostash not only keeps faith with her baba

by passing on her message, but also insinuates herself into the personal pronoun of the Ukrainian dispossessed, and in so doing relinquishes her subject position as the estranged daughter. The question of belonging, so prominent in travel books that incorporate the nostalgic return journey, is settled for Kostash in *Bloodlines*: Ukraine is hers and she is Ukraine's. She arrives at a sense of belonging quite similar in its sentimentality to Rona Murray's in *Journey Back To Peshawar*, in that both discover they do belong to a homeland they have no intention of living in. In rendering her encounter with a modest memorial to Shevchenko while in a graveyard in Tulova, Galicia, her paternal baba's village that passed from Polish to Soviet hands, Kostash writes, "Peace, Old Man. I've been to the village. It lives, and it is ours" (233).^{xi}

The travel books examined in this chapter are composed by Canadian women seeking maternal messages in ancestral homelands in an effort to resolve subjectivities that are conflicted emotionally, ethnically, nationally, culturally, or all of the above. As we have seen, the results of their quests and the details of their related journeys are quite divergent. Bharati Mukherjee recovers her mother's message of women's liberation and feminist self-determination, which she views as a significant contributing factor to her alienation from her motherland. Although she discovers she does not belong in India, she also paradoxically rediscovers the Indian components of her identity that she inherited from her mother. Daphne Marlatt travels to postcolonial Malaysia knowing she does not belong there, although her stay in the country activates memories of a childhood where belonging was an assumption and not a question. Alongside memories of her visceral attachment to Malaysia's landscape and people, Marlatt recovers a maternal message about female subordination, which she subjects to feminist critique. This critique extends into her account of her journey to England, another place of personal origin where Marlatt knows she does not belong. In contrast, Rona Murray and Myrna Kostash discover a sense of belonging through their travels to ancestral homelands. This sense of belonging is fortified through their recuperation of maternal messages in the form of mother tongues. All of these discoveries and recoveries, however divergent, are intricately related to the gendered discourse of feminine matrocentricity that is inscribed in each

author's travel account.

' Freud's oedipal theory of psychosexual development can be roughly encapsulated as follows: boys turn away from a libidinal, primary attachment to their mothers, who appear to them as castrated subjects, out of a fear of castration at the hands of their fathers. They then identify with their fathers and achieve masculinity. Girls, who see themselves as castrated already, reject their mothers who can offer no penis, and turn to fathers who can. Girls experience penis envy until they marry and have a child – a penis substitute – at which point they achieve femininity. Chodorow does not reject Freud's model outright but rather critiques and reformulates it. Of her several critiques, the one most germane to this analysis is her questioning of the assumption that "children learn about gender differences through learning about genital differences," which presupposes a biological determinism (146). She clarifies how culture mediates and largely determines both the acquisition of a gendered subjectivity in a child (150) and how the child relates to other gendered objects (166-167). For a more complete description of oedipal complexes and their resolutions, see Freud's essays, "Some Psychical Consequences of the Anatomical Distinction Between the Sexes," "Female Sexuality," "Femininity," and "The Dissolution of the Oedipus Complex" in *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*.

" The ultimate point of Chodorow's argument, which is of tangential concern to us here, is that women's role as mothers and as nurturing primary caregivers is reproduced because the particular characteristics of the mother-daughter bond create daughters with tremendous relational potential and fluid ego boundaries: ideal mother material. Daughters then become mothers who identify with their daughters and nudge their male children into the father's world, thereby continuing the cycle.

" In theorizing a retrieval of the mother's message, Brodzki is careful to distinguish her work from what she calls "womb criticism" (247):

At this point in my discussion the reader might suspect that this narrative-strategy-be-come-intro/respective-journey has delivered her back to the familiar (if forgotten) intrauterine space called the womb, to that interior place where all conversations are fulfilling and speech is always adequate to the task it is called upon to perform. In this ontogenetic version of the creation story, speech is not necessary at all, because everything that passes between the symbiotic couple is osmotically communicated and understood: the matrix is there where there is no representation because there is no lack. (246)

Womb critics such as French feminist theorists Hélène Cixous and Luce Irigaray hypothesize a metaphorical return to prediscursive maternal origins, including the prenatal womb and the postnatal mother-child symbiosis, for the purpose of (re)discovering an essential feminine language, an *écriture féminine*. In *The Newly Born Woman*, for example, we find Hélène Cixous's signature poetic critical prose declaring "[w]ithin each woman the first, nameless love is singing" (93). Woman's voice, she argues, carries a primal echo of the mother's song, mother being the child's first "nameless" love. This love has no name because it exists at the preverbal stage anterior to entrance into the symbolic realm of linguistic signification, which Cixous associates with the paternal order. As a strategy for subverting language predicated on paternal, phallic primacy and maternal absence, Cixous urges women to recuperate that nameless voice, which entails a vaguely conceived return to the mother and the symbiotic connection to her body: "Voice: milk that could go on forever. Found again. The lost mother/bitter-lost. Eternity: is voice mixed with milk" (93). Similarly, Irigaray's *Corps-à-corps avec la mère* implores women to seek the (non)language of the mother's womb, the "dark continent of the dark continent" (qtd in Brodzki from an unpublished translation 247). Brodzki does not concern herself with a return to the maternal presymbolic realm, which can only be recovered through myth and metaphor because it exists before the word. Rather,

what she has in mind is a recuperation of that which can be to some degree recuperated through memory: mothers' discourses, mothers' messages, mothers' words that circulate in the historical symbolic realm of signification.

¹⁹ The parameters of the Canadian literary establishment have broadened, albeit gradually, since Mukherjee's valid condemnation of it in *Days and Nights in Calcutta* and in other works she produced in the 1970s. Signs of change are evidenced by the reception of works by writers such as Rohinton Mistry and Nino Ricci, who have set fictions outside of Canada, by the higher public profile of hyphenated Canadian writers, many of whom are of non-Anglo origin, and by the publication of anthologies such as *Other Solitudes: Canadian Multicultural Fictions* (1990), edited by Linda Hutcheon and Marion Richmond, and *Making a Difference: Canadian Multicultural Fictions* (1996), edited by Smaro Kambourelis.

²⁰ The matrocentricity in *Days and Nights in Calcutta* is all the more compelling when read "intratextually" with Mukherjee's first novel, *The Tiger's Daughter* (1972), a prophetic fictional journey back which preceded her literal journey back. Tara Banerjee Cartwright, Mukherjee's fictional alter ego, returns to Calcutta after years of study in North America and marriage to a North American (Sharma 5). In this novel, Tara identifies with her authoritative father, known as the Bengal Tiger, the respected patriarch who orchestrates his daughter's education; in contrast, Tara's mother, emotionally distant from her daughter, is a frivolous woman who warns her daughter not to overstudy lest she ruin her looks and her chances to marry well. The representation of Mukherjee's mother in *Days and Nights in Calcutta*, an explicitly autobiographical text that might be subtitled, "The Mother's Daughter," offers a startling contrast to Mukherjee's semi-fictional creation.

²¹ In *The Fantastic: A Structural Approach to a Literary Genre*, Todorov contrasts the genre of the "marvelous" with the "uncanny," where rational explanations for supernatural phenomenon are given and laws of reality remain intact (40).

²² While "How Hug a Stone," originally published in 1983, is the last of Marlatt's matrocentric travel texts, the maternal hauntings continue in her novelistic autobiographical fiction, especially *Ana Historic* (1988), which reads like a continuation and resolution of her early travel writings.

²³ The 'Raj' refers to the period of British imperial rule in India, which spanned three centuries and ended with India's Independence in 1947.

²⁴ While postcolonial polemics are not central to my analysis in this chapter, I do wish to point out the distorting reductionism in Murray's use of population ratio to justify British imperialism in India. She argues that India must have wanted British rule because the British minority would have been expelled by the Indian majority otherwise. Of the British minority, Murray adds, "This modest figure included an administration of army and police numbering 67,000 as well as the Indian Civil Service – highly regarded by historians as being incorruptible – consisting of under a thousand men" (79). Indeed, the British, although a minority, installed themselves as the militaristic and civilian ruling class in India. The Indian majority, fragmented as it was by internal political and religious strife as well as by language differences, could not simply show the interlopers the door.

²⁵ Murray later learns that her mother was crying over an officer with whom she was romantically involved for several years, and for this reason wept silently and secretly for fear of being discovered (261).

Moreover, she might have excluded her daughter from participating in her illicit misery out of a sense of propriety and concern for her child. However, to the innocent and unknowing child, Murray implies, such an exclusion was distancing and alienating.

²⁶ Included in *Journey Back to Peshawar* is a touching letter, dated 1929, from M.E. Merton to Murray's mother. In the ungrammatical prose of the education-deprived, the letter presents a very different Nana, one who professes a heartfelt mother's love for Enid, her hope that Dawn and Murray will "grow up to be lively Women and do you credit for your training and cair," and her belief that "[i]f they turn out like their Mother. They will be a very great prize to the men that is lucky enough to get them" (48).

²⁷ This question was asked while Ukraine was still under the Soviet communist regime. Because of the rapid changes that have occurred in Eastern Europe over the past decade, parts of *Bloodlines*, particularly the political commentary, are outdated. When asked about the text's datedness in a 1994 interview with Mark Abley for *The Canadian Forum*, Kostash responds, "I want to say something about the datedness issue. It's one of the reasons I haven't been able to get a New York publisher so far. Of course the book is

dated: it's historical. And any book that would attempt to bring it up-to-date would be out-of-date next week. I see it now as an *aide-memoire*. And I hope people will continue to read it for that reason: to be reminded of a certain political moment . . ." (9). The text's political datedness is immaterial to my analysis because I am interested in a certain personal moment in the history of the author's life.

" Taras Shevchenko (1814-1861) is celebrated by Ukrainian communities around the world as the revolutionary prophet-poet of Ukraine. His poem "Testament" is revered as a statement of Ukrainian nationalism and resistance to oppression. He was born into serfdom but attended the Academy of Fine Arts after purchasing his freedom with the assistance of patrons. Nine years later, he was arrested for his membership in a secret society that denounced serfdom and for slandering the czars Peter and Catherine. Four years after serving his ten-year prison sentence, during which time he was forbidden to write or sketch, he died a broken man in Russia (Zaitsev).

" Surprisingly, in a 1994 interview with Mark Abley, Kostash once again betrays a desire to abandon Ukraine. "I never want to see Ukraine again . . . If I never see it again, it's too soon" (10), she confesses. When a bewildered Abley notes that *Bloodlines* leaves one with a very different impression, she elucidates: "Something snapped in me on my '91 trip. I could hardly keep notes, let alone think about writing it up. It was about three months after the declaration of independence, and if there had been any sort of euphoric reaction, it had already evaporated" (10). She then conveys her disturbing reaction to the wasteland that was Ukraine:

It was almost as if I reverted back to my earlier emotional reaction, of wanting to distance myself: "I didn't belong to these people, they weren't my responsibility, they made me sick, they were so slovenly, they were losers."

That old Ukrainian-Canadian disdain of Ukrainianess came welling up in me again. I had been able to deflect that self-disgust onto the Communist Party. That was gone; and I was face to face with this country where there's no hot water, and there's not enough to eat, and every obstacle is put in your way. I never want to see the place again, I really don't. (10)

She explains how her whole involvement with the Ukrainian question, beginning with *All of Baba's Children* and concluding with *Bloodlines*, was a way of letting her baba know that she takes her Ukrainian heritage and the plight of its people seriously. At the same time, she insists, "I'm of the New World. And I'm really interested in what we're doing here. But the Ukrainian doesn't disappear in that" (15). That is, she remains a quintessentially Canadian hyphenated subject.

Chapter Three:

Travelling Wives' Tales

Traditionally, wives of diplomats, colonial officers, missionaries, scientists, explorers, and the like have found themselves literally transported by the exigencies of their husbands' professions. Once abroad, they have been expected to perform wifely duties both public and private: public duties have often involved accompanying husbands to official functions, entertaining colleagues, socializing with a network of other wives, and various other mind-numbing activities that buttress their husbands' positions. In the private sphere, wives have been expected to provide their husbands with blissful domestic enclaves, emotional and sexual companionship, and fulfilling family lives. Women who have occupied these subject positions are travelling versions of what sociologist Hilary Callan classifies as the "incorporated wife" whose identity is "an intimate function of her husband's occupational identity and culture" (9). The travel writings of Ella Wallace Manning, Philomena Orford, Margaret Laurence, P.K. Page, and Carlotta Hacker bear markers of wifely incorporation in that the authors' subjectivities as travellers are intimately entwined with their husbands' lives and careers. Since the original impetus to travel is not theirs, they travel and write from the subject position of wifely accompaniment. As such, their travel writings tell their husbands' stories of private ambition and public achievement. These authors, however, are much more than dedicated wifely biographers: they articulate their own travel experience in narratives of personal challenge, sacrifice, growth, adventure, and achievement. The threads of their husbands' narratives are sometimes interwoven, sometimes back-cloth to their own autobiographical dramas which map the subjectivities of women seeking, constructing, and defining the meaning, purpose, and significance of their travels.

The 'other' in "Feminist Ethnographic Discourse," the first chapter of this study, is composed of the female inhabitants the travel writer observes or encounters during her journey, whereas in the second chapter, "Travelling Daughters and Maternal Messages," the 'other' is the travel writer's mother or maternal figures. In this chapter, the 'other' is the travel writer's husband. By inscribing marital others in their travel texts, incorporated

wives delineate their “identity by way of alterity” (41), a feature of women’s autobiographical writing identified in Mary G. Mason’s seminal essay, “The Other Voice: Autobiographies of Women Writers.” In her analysis of women’s autobiographical writing from the fourteenth century to the present, Mason maintains that the “disclosure of female self is linked to the identification of some ‘other’” (210), be it God, community, children, or a husband. It is Margaret Cavendish, whose seventeenth-century autobiography, *True Relation of My Birth, Breeding and Life*, brims with “strong uxorial self-identification” (224), whom Mason identifies as the “real archetype” of the female “double-focus writer” (226). According to Mason, this relational model of self-definition through others contrasts with the prevailing individualist, egoistic pattern in men’s autobiography, where “characters and events are little more than aspects of the author’s evolving consciousness” (210).

The contrast between the feminine relational discourse and the masculine individualist discourse is apparent in women’s and men’s travel writing as well. An exemplary illustration of these different discourses would conceivably come from two travel texts recording the journeys of two travellers who travelled together, one female, the other male. Such is the case with Graham Greene’s *Journey Without Maps* (1936) and his cousin Barbara Greene’s *Land Benighted* (1938), both accounts of their harrowing trek through Liberia in 1935. As Paul Theroux points out in “Graham Greene’s Traveling Companion,” “The reader looks in vain for a portrait of Barbara Greene in [Graham’s] book. She is named once, and mentioned (‘My cousin . . .’) eleven times in three hundred pages. She is not important to his narrative; she hardly exists” (289). The reason for this elision, Theroux explains with baffling logic, is because Greene did not want to write a trivial personal diary but instead record “self-discovery” (289). Barbara, on the other hand, is the “reliable witness” to Graham’s “miseries and splendors” (291). She is a double focus writer inscribing her own experiences in tandem with those of her cousin, who was a struggling writer/journalist and not the great English novelist at the time (292). Theroux’s reading of these texts is almost as fascinating as the texts themselves in that he does not clearly articulate the sexual-textual politics of these differences. Moreover, he encodes the dynamics of their travel relationship as

matrimonial, and naturalizes the wife-role as marginal witness to the husband's central achievement. "They are like a man and wife in the best of marriages" Theroux utters in a breathy, romantic tone that ruffles my feminist feathers (294).

Eva-Marie Kröller, in her commentary on nineteenth-century Canadian travel writing by husbands and wives, observes how few travelling Canadian wives did any of the writing. According to Kröller, "In most Victorian-Canadian travelogues, women lead a shadowy existence; their husbands planned the itineraries and formulated the impressions" (61). She notes how "the reader of John Ashworth's diary only gradually realizes the presence of a wife as the details of her gynecological disorders occur among equally pithy observations on the rams and sheep he intended to buy for his household" (61). According to my research, wives are doing much of the writing by the twentieth century, but their husbands are integral protagonists. They produce feminine discourses in that they define themselves and their travels through spousal relationship. However, the textual space accorded to each husband's story varies considerably from text to text, as does the writer's involvement in his story as an incorporated wife. There are degrees, we shall see, of wifely incorporation. In "Colonial Wives: Villains or Victims," Beverley Gartrell constructs a bipartite taxonomy of what Callan and Ardener identify as the incorporated wife. Gartrell distinguishes the "participant" – wives who "chose to sublimate their own interests and identify themselves with their husbands' work" – from the "domestic" – wives who "confined their interests to the more usual 'feminine' spheres of home-making and child-rearing without developing strong interests in their husbands' work" (179). As Gartrell implies, the domestic sphere is the more traditional feminine sphere, but tailoring one's own interests to a husband's sphere is an equally feminine act. Although all of the writers explored in this chapter engage these feminine discourses of domesticity and public participation in their husbands' careers, the identities of some are firmly rooted in either the domestic or participant subject position.

Gartrell's taxonomy is useful to my analysis, but it falls short in capturing the wider spectrum of experience I have come across in my readings of travel writing by incorporated wives. Several of the writers whose husbands' career paths usher them abroad are compelled to find the significance to their travels – a reason for being there –

apart from fulfillment through spousal support and the achievement of home-making abroad. They limit their incorporation as wives through various creative endeavours that are separate from husband and home and that evolve out of the confrontation between their individual selves and their unfamiliar environment. They map out desires of their own in discourses about autonomous spheres of self-fulfillment and self-realization. While these individualist discursive leanings might suggest the presence of a masculine gendered discourse, the context in which we find such discourses marks them as feminist: feminist because they are embedded in a contextual framework of wifely incorporation. It is feminism of a sort defined by Betty Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique* (1963), a foundational text for second wave Western feminism that set an agenda for (white, middle class) women to aspire beyond the historical role of factotum for husband and child.

A diachronic reading of the travel books analyzed in this chapter is complicated by several factors, such as the temporal gaps between the author's travel experience, the writing of the experience, and the publication of the writing. In several cases, the final published product is a travel book based on journals written decades earlier, which had been reworked immediately before publication or at some indeterminable time during the intervening years. It is possible, however, to make some distinction between 'earlier works,' which narrate travel experiences from the 1930s and 1940s in travel books published in the 1940s and 1950s, and 'later works,' which begin with travels in the 1950s and publications in the 1960s. In the earlier works, feminine discourses of domesticity and participation in one's husband's career predominate. These discourses are inflected by a "strong uxorial self-identification," to borrow Mason's phrase (34). It is in the later texts that we are more likely to find similar feminine discourses combined with a feminist discursive inlay of self-fulfillment apart from husband and home. A paradox, however, complicates the reading of a straightforward historical shift from feminine to feminine-feminist discursivity. The earlier texts occasionally articulate an angry discontent and complaint seldom heard in the later texts, giving off sounds of women struggling with their status as totally incorporated travelling wives and with their desire for a more autonomous identity. I hear these sounds as discourses of feminist

resistance, which precede the quieter, antiphonal sound of autonomous self-fulfillment in the later texts.

The first earlier work I wish to explore, *Journey North* (1957), chronicles Philomena Orford's 1936-1940 residency on Baffin Island with her husband and her three daughters. In the opening pages, Orford recounts her naïve reaction to her husband's news about his acceptance of a post as medical officer for the small settlement of Panuk. During the early thirties, they survived the economic depression in (what was then) the rural community of Markham, Ontario, by living off farm produce bartered by impoverished locals for doctor's services rendered. Thus, both she and her husband, Tom, were enthusiastic about the prospect of living rent-free with a year's supply of food, two servants, and monthly checks deposited directly into a bank account. In her text, after Tom reads her the job offer received by mail that morning, she dreamily envisions herself in a lovely outfit made entirely of white fox, thus fashionably colour coordinated with the Arctic landscape of her imagination. The romance is short lived, however. "On paper," writes Orford, "Baffin Island had been the Promised Land. In the flesh, it was something very different" (9). Her first disillusioning impressions of Baffin Island gleaned from the *Nanook*, the ship on which she had just spent six stormy weeks navigating temperamental waters and dodging icebergs, register a fear-inspiring landscape both predatory and sublime. In an effort to break down into manageable parts a panorama she finds "bleak and sort of terrible," she focuses her gaze on the mountains, a strategy which further disorients. In her topsy-turvy mind's eye, the towering mountains rise thousands of feet, "splashing" against the sky like waves about to crash down on her (7). Fearing the tidal mountains, she forces her vision downwards, into the sea, where the mountains' reflections become "the real things . . . The others are only a visual trick of light on surface" (7). The "real things," however, described as "black and monstrous, lying still and in wait." are no less threatening (7). As the ship scuds closer to land, she glimpses the settlement of Panuk – "the most desolate sight I had ever seen in my life" (8) – which propels her back into her cabin amidships. Here, her mind vacillates

between the desire to never see Baffin Island again and the knowledge that it is too late to turn back.

This wonderfully dramatic depiction of the northern Canadian landscape suggests Orford's familiarity with the English literary tradition of the aesthetic sublime, where nature is portrayed as infinite and dark, solitary and terrible. She had, after all, nurtured a strong passion for English literature during her convent school days in Scotland before immigrating to Canada at the age of eighteen (Robinson 15). Representations of the Canadian North throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries often employ literary conventions of the darkly sublime. In *Strange Things: The Malevolent North in Canadian Literature*, Margaret Atwood explains how "popular lore, and popular literature, established early that the North was uncanny, awe-inspiring in an almost religious way, hostile to white men, but alluring; that it would lead you on and do you in; that it would drive you crazy, and, finally, would claim you for its own" (19). This clichéd image, Atwood adds, was altered when women began entering and writing the North (88). 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. None of these women marched off into the woods alone, whereas – as we will see – those of the second wave did" (95-96). In other words, Atwood's first-wavers are incorporated wives, a feminine subject position not to be confused with first-wave feminism. Men of the North, argues Atwood, were most frequently seen outdoors pitting their desires against a resistant, often feminized landscape, whereas women of the first wave remained inside their homes with their family (97). Alluding to a line from Alice Munro's *The Lives of Girls and Women*, Atwood portrays these first-wave women 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). In Atwood's estimation, female first-wavers appeared on the northern textual landscape from the nineteenth century until the mid-twentieth century, when second wave women started heading up

north either to be alone or to get away from men (101). (These second-wave women of the northern woods were no doubt swayed by the currents of second-wave feminism).

Orford is an Atwoodian *echt* first-waver. Granted, her sublime opener has all the foreboding of a Robert Service poem. However, Orford girds up her loins, disembarks from the ship, enters her new living quarters, begins a domestic adventure that entails the renovations of her linoleum cave, and is seldom seen outdoors again. Feminine discourses of domesticity are in abundance in her text, telling us something about the dominant constructions of gender in Canada during the 1930s, the decade of her travels, and 1950s, the decade of the publication of her travels. Both were reactionary decades in Canadian women's history in that women were encouraged to forfeit their positions in the paid workforce to men during the depression and following World War II (Prentice *et. al.* 264, 349-350). Separate sphere ideology of the nineteenth century constructed women's 'natural' roles as wife and mother and located their 'natural' habitat in the home (Prentice *et. al.* 156). Throughout the first half of the twentieth century, this ideology was rehashed according to national need. During wars, women were encouraged to work; during the Depression and periods of stability, they need not apply. Orford, whose sensibilities as a wife and mother took shape in the 1930s and stayed with her into the 1950s, was herself a vocal proponent of separate sphere ideology, as we shall see.

Orford's feminine discourses of domesticity may seem paradoxical in a genre conventionally associated with leave-taking rather than home-making, but they are in fact part of a tradition of women's travel writing often ignored by feminist critics who privilege the solitary, less conventional woman traveller. In her thoughtful study, *Victorian Women Travel Writers in Africa*, Catherine Barnes Stevenson summarizes a number of domestic travel books written by British colonial wives that chronicle a distinctly homespun heroism. From perusing Stevenson's summaries, one gains insight into the challenges these women confronted, the coping mechanisms used, and the gamut of emotional responses their journey experiences evoked. One also gets an impression of the various representational modes and strategies these travelling incorporated wives used in their transcriptions of life to text. Some women minimized the significance of their experiences and, by extension, their texts. Stevenson notes how Elizabeth Melville, in

the modest preface to her travel book, *A Residence at Sierra Leone* (1849), claims she is chronicling the “trivial matter” of daily domestic life (qtd. in Stevenson 16). Trivial matters encompass, in Stevenson’s words, the “exhausting attempt to manage a household under insupportable domestic conditions,” including a hurricane that destroys Melleville’s house and buries the family in rubble, a fever which ravages Melleville and her family, and an anxious depression which plagues Melleville throughout her sojourn (!6-17). Other women’s travel texts, such as Louisa Hutchinson’s *In Tents in the Transvaal* (1877), represent the experience of making a home away from home as domestic comedy. In contrast, Harriet Ward’s *Five Years in Kaffirland* (1848) and Lady M.A. Barker’s aptly titled *A Year’s Housekeeping in South Africa* (1877) are litanies of domestic woe and catalogues of sacrifices made and hardships endured.¹

In like manner, Orford maximizes her domestic trials in *Journey North* and makes it clear that her hardships were anything but trivial matters, but she does so with a heavy-handed comic touch. Her domestic comedy slices, dices, and pares her victims down to size. In “Domestic Comic Writers,” Zita Z. Dresner defines “domestic or housewife humor” as a body of humorous writing featuring a harried, overburdened, plaintive housewife. It was popular during the 1930s but came to its fruition in post-World War II America when women were cajoled, coerced, and advised by ‘experts’ to leave the workplace and return to their homes for the good of the American family (93, 99). One of the texts Dresner analyzes is Betty MacDonald’s *The Egg and I* (1945), the story of MacDonald’s experience as wifely accompaniment when her husband decides to take up chicken farming in a remote area of Washington’s Olympic Mountains. In the first chapter of *The Egg and I*, MacDonald summarizes her mother’s philosophy for a happy marriage: wives must simply adopt an “I’ll-go-where-you-go-do-what-you-do-be-what-you-are-and-I’ll-be-happy” mentality towards their husbands (11). Guided by this wisdom, MacDonald marries Bob and moves from urban Seattle to a chicken ranch. On first sighting her new home from the outside, she describes it as “the little old deserted farm that people point at from car windows, saying, ‘Look at that picturesque old place!’ then quickly drive by toward something not quite so picturesque, but warmer and nearer to civilization” (45). This sardonic tone continues as she conveys her first impressions of

the interior of this dilapidated cabin, particularly of a “very large, very surly and slightly rusty range” that over time becomes her allegorized arch-enemy, Stove (47).

The reason I am describing MacDonald’s popular book in such detail is because of its striking similarity to Orford’s *Journey North*, which suggests that Orford either read MacDonald or that she was tuned into this housewife comic zeitgeist of the middling twentieth century, of which MacDonald was a looming figure.ⁱⁱ In reworking her travel diaries for the 1950s publication date, Orford may have been so inspired. In a later book, *Anybody Can Do Anything* (1950), MacDonald 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). Drawing from her experience on the chicken ranch during the early 1930s, she would give “a bad sport’s account of life in the wilderness” (252). Orford gives a bad sport’s account of life in the North in the late 1930s, and she does so with a battering ram identical to MacDonald’s: trenchant sarcasm. Orford’s initial representation of the medical residence, a small white building with the green roof, is redolent of MacDonald’s first impressions of her new home. On first inspection, Orford is horrified by the stove, a huge coal range that dwarfs the kitchen table and chairs and that resembles something left behind by a “prehistoric monster” as a “last gesture of defiance before moving out with the Ice Age” (16). As she glances at the bedroom, her aesthetic tastes are offended by brass headboards “generously ornamented with frenzied brass curlicues” (17), which she christens as “the brassmonger’s delirium” (17). She is relieved when her daughter, Zanne, jumps from bed to bed and lands on a “monstrous-looking” china pitcher and basin ornamenting a lop-sided wash stand, because this “china relic from another era” crashes to the floor. As Zanne looks to her mother in expectation of punishment, Orford smiles at her daughter “fondly” (18). She then proceeds to the family/dining room, described as the “third chamber of horrors” (18).

Orford is occasionally the butt of her own comic gaze. She describes, for example, the curious looks the returning Inuit hunters give her when she asks for *tingee* (female genitalia) rather than *tinga* (seal meat) for the evening’s dinner (92). As a double

focus writer, however, she often turns her gimlet comic eye onto her husband, Tom. In representing her husband, the comic cushions of her criticism give way to an increasingly savage sarcasm that betrays the smoldering resentment she feels towards him for leading her to “this desert of ice” (introductory poem). This spousal inscription diverges from those by other wives in this chapter, who write representations that range from fawning reverence to affectionate mockery. All the other travel-writing wives explored in this chapter dedicate their books to their husbands, an act that transforms their texts into a sort of gift. It is hardly surprising that Orford, by far the most resentful of all the travelling wives and the most blatantly critical of her husband, does not, because her text is less gift and more slap in the face.

While Orford does mention the long hours Tom spends at the hospital, conveys his tireless commitment to reducing Inuit mortality rates, and occasionally expresses pride in his accomplishments, her encomiums to a working hero husband are rare. Rather, she often derides her husband as an incompetent fool and she a fool for marrying him. Orford’s sardonic inscriptions of Tom begin in the first chapter, which documents day one of her journey north. When she learns to her astonishment and horror that there are no grocery stores on Baffin Island and that the family bread will have to be baked, Tom offers his services; “Except who would eat it when he was finished” she muses (21). As she and Tom sort through the food supplies, Tom finds the precious butter “as if he was Freud discovering people” (27).

The animosity she feels towards Tom reaches a dangerous pitch during a family camping trip several months into their residency, as do her insults and sarcasm. Of the first night, she writes, “It could have been lovely and quiet and mysterious in the tent . . . with the heater glowing and a plain oil lamp flickering, if it hadn’t been for Tom” who “went charging around like a general preparing for a long siege” (145). “I hoped the trip wasn’t going to keep on being one long Father’s Day,” she thinks when her daughters do everything their general-father tells them, such as sleeping in the nude to prevent their bodies from sweating profusely under fur blankets, and wrapping a blanket around their heads to keep body heat in. Her excessive prudishness prevents her from taking Tom’s knowledgeable advice to sleep nude. She refuses to do so out of an expressed concern for

the children and a general resistance to doing anything Tom says. Her portrayal of him at bedtime is less than 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 following morning, Tom is in ill humour, which he conveys by clashing pans, kicking boxes, burning his fingers while getting breakfast ready, and behaving, in Orford’s orientalist terminology, “like a demented Oriental crazed from too much saki” (147). Tom tells his wife he could think of things he’d rather do than spend the night with the “wet wash.” referring to the nightgown she insisted on wearing to bed that was drenched with sweat by morning. She in turn informs him he is at liberty to spend the night from that point on with whomever he pleases (147). She spends the day alone in the tent immersed in a self-pitying melancholia enhanced by (misquoted) 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)

As MacDonald does in her text, Orford fantasizes about better days and better husband material. Tom returns mid-day and, while wolfing down his food, asks her if she wants lunch. She turns away from him and dreamily returns to Shakespeare, “that other with the lovely voice,” who becomes for her a romantic symbol of all that Tom is not. Quoting from Shakespeare’s *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). Given Orford’s resentment, one wonders, when she expresses an urge to stab Tom with a nail or a desire to kill him, whether she is speaking in earnest.

In response to feminist critics who have castigated even the most vicious housewife humour for its conservative agenda of complacency through comedy, Zita Z. Dresner convincingly argues that it is a form of feminist resistance which not only vents anger but manipulates it to “covertly . . . inspire rebelliousness” (96). Orford’s humourous, sharp jabs at house and husband do indeed form a covert feminist protest that inspires change. If we look alongside the sarcastic quips, we find a female subjectivity that is fearfully displaced, disoriented and grappling for agency and a reason for being in Panuk. Her journey north as accompanying wife triggers a drastic crisis of self-definition and purpose. This becomes apparent as early as her second day of residency, when she is frustrated in her efforts to seek occupation either in the domestic realm or as a more direct participant in her husband’s work. She wakes to find her children have been dressed and fed and the house tidied by her Inuit servant, Nukinga. In *Victorian Women Travel Writers in Africa*, Catherine Barnes Stevenson identifies a version of the “white man’s burden” that she coins “the housewife’s burden,” signified by numerous complaints about the native servants (17). In an interesting reversal of this conventional lament, Orford complains about the efficiency of her Inuit servants, Nukinga and Killeva, who usurp her domestic work, making her feel expendable: “I sat down,” she thinks that first morning, “I might as well be comfortable. I might as well not be there at all, for that matter” (34). “I felt like a disembodied spirit,” she confesses as she watches Nukinga measure her daughters for the skin parka and boots to be made by Killeva’s mother. “My usefulness seemed to be decreasing by leaps and bounds” (37) she adds when Nukinga takes a mat out of her hands to shake outside, makes the beds, and helps her unpack.

Orford expresses a longing to assist in her husband’s work, to participate at the hospital. She goes for a stroll and peeks into a window of the small hospital, drawn by the buzz of activity inside: “I longed to be a part of it all,” she confesses, “be one of a lot of people, but Tom had never liked me trespassing on his preserves, so I stayed put” (38). Tom, unconcerned about his wife’s potential alienation, wishes to keep her immured in the private, domestic sphere. She returns home and occupies herself by preparing a grand dinner for him, which he misses. When he finally returns home from the hospital and attributes his tardiness to a heavy workload exacerbated by “ship sickness,” an upper

respiratory infection that prostrated and in some cases killed the Inuit, Orford is sympathetic and longs to help.ⁱⁱⁱ Tom dismisses her entreaties:

“Can I help, Tom?”

“No, no,” he frowned and shook his head. “we’ve got a bunch of the older women on the job – a lot of them midwives. That age group seem to escape. One of the nurses is riding herd on them and the other one is holding the fort in the Hospital. They’re a terrific team – thank God.”

“Maybe I could make some soup or something,” I tried again.

“It would be fatal at this stage to feed them anything but the food they’re accustomed to,” Tom explained. “We’ve got boilers of seal stew, fish heads and of course tea, going in the trader’s out-kitchen. Everyone’s pitching in that can walk.”

Everyone but me, I thought.

When Tom had gone [back to the hospital] and I’d got Penny and Zanne packed off to bed, I sat around thinking about things.

All I wanted was to be of some consequence. There seemed to be no vacancies. (46)

The insomnia Tom suffers in bed that evening breeds feelings of wifely inadequacy in Orford. She feels he needs someone “who spoke his own language and who could share his responsibility and ease the burden of its weight” (55). By scratching his back until he falls into a soporific slumber, she retrieves some sense of adequacy.

In journeying north, Orford is denied her usual avenues to self-fufillment, and her dark comedy is a feminist discourse of rebellion and resistance to this situation. She turns this situation around by reasserting her dominion over the domestic, a realm she lords over with the same protectiveness Tom applies to his hospital work. In a way, her feminist discourse of anger and resistance resolves itself in a discourse of imperious, autonomous domesticity. First she oversees the construction of her “Home Beautiful”

(59), which becomes a personal palace and fortress. The domestic discourse of home preparation, decoration, and adaptation according to individual taste is ubiquitous in travel writing by incorporated wives; in Orford's case, the activity described is one of major renovations. She enlists Etonah, Nukinga's husband, to build an extra room onto the modest medical residence, and is impressed by his carpentry and craftsmanship which far surpasses her husband's: "Tom couldn't even drive a nail straight" (62). Galvanized by the success of this venture, she contracts the building of a proper staircase into the attic, cupboards, and a vanity table for herself. Nukinga dyes sheets with tea for curtains and Etonah paints the whole. (Orford does not seem to begrudge the assistance of her Inuit servants here). Following the "remodeling spree," she enjoys the role of mistress of her "Home Beautiful" by making "a tour of inspection" whenever she feels a bit restless (67).

What Orford does begrudge is the intrusion of Tom's work into her domestic realm. For Orford, the subject position of the domestic becomes all inclusive in *Journey North*, partially because it is foisted on her by Tom, so she chooses to embrace it and make it hers in a reactionary grab at agency, autonomy, and territory. After the second day, when Tom rejects her proffered assistance, she no longer asks to be a participant in his work and reinforces his lines of demarcation. She displays minimal interest and little patience with Tom's hospital dramas and work-related preoccupations and dislikes it when he brings them home or when they intrude on her work schedule. When the *Nanook* makes its annual visit after their first year in Panuk, Tom convinces the Inuit community to send forth the cadaver of an Inuit woman for a full post-mortem despite the Inuit cultural taboo against the bodily desecration of the deceased. This is part of his scheme to diminish high Inuit mortality rates. Tom, overjoyed and astonished at his coup, repeats "Can you imagine that?" until Orford, in her own words, "finally had to shut him up" (121). She writes, "With painting to trim, lists to make out, letters to write, his report to be typed, bread and baking to be done and the children getting themselves covered with white paint from the outside of the house, the body of a dead woman, packed in sea-ice, seemed to me the one thing we could have done without" (121). This apparent callousness on Orford's part is likely generated by her resentment towards Tom for

encroaching on her domestic space, both in his requests for her adulation of his work-related success and his requests for her time: note that one of her tasks is the writing of *his* report. Tom, it appears, likes his wife to participate in his work on his terms, at his convenience, and at home.

Another way that Orford asserts her dominion over the domestic is by taking charge of child-rearing and by child-bearing. After her initial hesitations and fears inspired by cultural and ethno-racial unfamiliarity, ignorance, and difference, Orford welcomes her native servants' assistance in child-rearing so long as she does not feel her maternal authority is being threatened.^{iv} Orford sometimes envies Nukinga and Killeva her daughters' affections and wonders if Penny and Zanne wish they were Inuit children (73). However, Nukinga and Killeva, as subalterns, never intentionally or at least outwardly challenge her authority beyond staring at her as if she "newly sprung horns" on one occasion when she spansks Zanne for some small misdemeanor (71), an act anathema to the Inuit. When Tom, however, directly challenges her authority and her approach to child-rearing, he is expelled from a jurisdiction she identifies as her own. As Christmas approaches, Orford tells her eldest daughter, six-year-old Penny, that there is no Santa Claus, an act she anticipates will upset Tom but that complies with her readings on child psychology. Subscribing to separate sphere ideology that defines child-rearing as women's work, she writes, "His ideas about bringing up children weren't my ideas. But bringing them up wasn't his job" (74). According to Orford's readings, "A great deal of harm can be done to the child-parent relationship if the child makes this discovery by itself and the parents carry on the myth. Creates a doubt of parents in a child's mind" (75). When Tom does object, she informs him that he is a fine doctor but no child psychologist; "Correct" Tom responds, "I am only that nonentity known as a child's father" (75). Orford then furthers her authority in the domestic domain by becoming pregnant with her third child, Catherine, in her first year of residency. "Now that he [Tom] knew that I was an expectant mother, I could assume my role as a woman completely in command" (86), she writes as she orders him to remove a painting of a bowl of fresh fruit from the kitchen wall and replace it with something less tormenting to her deprived appetite. In this gambit of maternity, however, she fails to anticipate the

time she will spend in labour in the hospital, a site firmly established as Tom's jurisdiction. During these ten days, she is frustrated by Tom's impersonal "doctor-patient" act, which triggers her sarcastic jabs and which only resolves itself when she is again ensconced in her domestic domain.

Once Orford finds her niche, she finds it hard to leave the Arctic. After the Orfords' four-year term in Panuk, she welcomes the incoming doctor and his wife by giving them a tour of her domain – the medical residence – but she remains possessive: "a dozen knives twisted inside me as she [the new doctor's wife] touched and appraised the things which had been mine" (189). As the ship recedes from Baffin Island, Tom holds a handkerchief out to his wife so she may dry the tears streaming down her face unawares (191). Although this departure does not mark the end to Orford's experience as a travelling incorporated wife, it marks the end of her textualization of that experience. According to an obituary announcing Orford's 1996 death, which appeared in the February 1997 issue of *Saturday Night*, Tom'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 (Robinson 15). *Journey North*, however, is her only travel book.¹

Ella Wallace Manning is another incorporated wife who accompanied her husband, Thomas Manning, to the Canadian north in the 1930s. Manning, a Nova Scotian and graduate of Dalhousie University, was living and working in Montreal in 1938 when she received a most unconventional and, for her, irresistible marriage proposal via telegraph from the leader of the British Canadian-Arctic Expedition:

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, she had met Thomas, a recent graduate from Oxford who, in embarking on a career in Arctic exploration, had just returned from his first Arctic expedition. Upon reading the telegram, Manning's initial incredulity was quickly followed by a fear that the *Nascopie*, the Hudson's Bay Company ship en route to Cape Dorset, would sail without her. Not a moment was wasted in hesitation. Within a month she was a newlywed navigating 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 by day, dining on bannock and pemmican, and sleeping in tents and igloos by night. She recorded her two-year Arctic odyssey in an eloquent travel book, *Igloo for the Night*, which was first published in England in 1943 and later in a 1946 Canadian edition. This book was followed by *A Summer on Hudson 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.

Ella Manning's historical precursors include the wives of Victorian explorers. The celebrated public accomplishments of Victorian explorer Sir Samuel Baker owed much to the private endeavors of his wife, Florence Baker (1841-1916), who accompanied him on all his explorations of the Nile tributaries and in his expedition to Gondorko to report on the slave trade. As Jane Robinson notes in *Wayward Women: A Guide to Women Travellers*, Florence Baker coped not only with "the usual desperate fevers, lack of food, and constant danger of wild animals (or men), but with the added complications of camp mutinies, tribal wars, and treacherous local politics too, all against a background of the accumulating fatigue of years' marching in an enervating climate" (4). A century later in a radically different landscape, Ella Manning endured hardships of a different sort, but her presence equally supported and advanced her husband's professional ends. However, unlike Baker, who accompanied her husband in tranquil acquiescence, Manning set out with the same fervent enthusiasm as Sir Richard Burton's wife, Isabel Burton (1831-1896). In *A Summer on Hudson's Bay*, Manning acknowledges her historical kinship with Isabel Burton. In writing, "I joined the ranks of those who, to quote a fellow-traveller, 'pay, pack, and follow'" (8), she echoes the infamous dictum Sir Richard Burton delivered to his wife when his consulship in Damascus was recalled and his

peregrinations resumed.^{vi} Leslie Blanch, in *The Wilder Shores of Love*, argues that Isabel Burton satiated her own potent thirst for adventure by marrying Victorian England's pre-eminent explorer-scholar, a virtual "passport to travel" (11). According to Blanch, "What the Victorian woman could not achieve herself she sometimes achieved by proxy, by loving" (11).^{vii} Although it is clear that Manning regarded her husband as infinitely more than a "passport to travel," he was, in part, that. It is unlikely that Manning, as a Canadian woman in the late 1930s, would have found the encouragement and the professional and financial support needed for solo Arctic travel, nor would she likely even entertain the notion, so far would it seem from the narrow realm of female possibility. In *Igloo for the Night*, her elation with her imminent marriage appears tantamount to and inextricably bound with the prospect of Arctic adventure. Aboard the *Nascopie* en route to Cape Dorset, she is dismayed to find the waters show "not a ripple of interest in the most important event of my life" (15), but whether this 'event' is her marriage, her journey, or a combination of the two, is indeterminate.

Manning's reverential representation of her husband makes her a literary as well as a historical heir to Florence Baker and Isabel Burton. In *Morning Star: Florence Baker's Diary of the Expeditions to Put Down the Slave Trade on the Nile, 1870-1873* (1973), Baker's descriptions of her husband lather with praise. So do Burton's in *The Inner Life of Syria, Palestine, and the Holy Land: From My Private Journal*, a text introduced with the following aphorism, translated from Arabic: "The woman who has her husband with her . . . can turn the moon with her finger . . . The woman without her husband is like a bird with one wing" (Title Page). Like these earlier travel writers, Manning inscribes her husband's prowess and skill in *Igloo for the Night*. She prefaces her text with an introduction by a Major Tweedsmuir, who writes, "Tom Manning is an old friend from Oxford days. He has a reputation for being one of the 'hardest travellers' alive. A reputation which he gained in 1932, when he crossed Lapland in winter by reindeer sledge, with one companion" (Introduction). In her own writing, Manning places her husband in a glorious lineage of Arctic explorers, including Frobisher, Davis, Hudson, Bylot, Baffin, Munk, Middleton, and Parry, "all of whom added to the knowledge of the Arctic while continuing to search for the long-sought north-west

passage" (31). Many of these explorers, she notes, had 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.

Manning's portrait of her husband provides a sharp contrast to the comic, fork-tongued utterances Orford makes about her marital other. Instead of the butt of a joke, Thomas is offered as the hero to be admired. What disturbs from a feminist perspective is the way Manning underrates her own accomplishments as she underscores her husband's abilities. In "Selves in Hiding," Patricia Meyer Spacks examines the twentieth-century autobiographies of five women of unquestionable accomplishment, and finds that "to a striking degree they fail to emphasize their *own* importance, through a genre which implies self-assertion and self-display" (114). She adds, "They use autobiography, paradoxically, partly as a mode of self-denial" (132). Similarly, Manning uses travel writing partly as a mode of self-denial. By assuming the *nom de plume* "Mrs. Tom Manning," which appears on the cover of both her books, Manning is, of course, adopting the formal nomenclature frequently applied to married women before feminists of the second wave blessedly protested such extreme erasure of a woman's name. The gesture of assuming her husband's surname *and* given name is also emblematic of Manning's hidden self (hidden in the sense of being insignificant rather than invisible). In the double focus of her lens, she sometimes appears the tag-along who holds her husband back and occasionally threatens the completion of his work. What we have here, I believe, is the dark underbelly of the feminine relational discourse. Mason and subsequent critics of women's autobiographical texts have celebrated women's tendency to inscribe the self in a network of intersubjective relationships. They fail to point out, however, that taken to an extreme, this relational quality can lead to self-effacement if the self gets lost in the network.

The Mannings trek with a risky light load compared to other contemporary expeditions in that they do without planes, tractors, ships, wireless radios, and, after the initial few months, Inuit guides. Moreover, the landscape they traverse is unknown not only to them but to the Inuit guide who first accompanies them. Their base camp at Taverner's Bay is about three hundreds miles from the nearest Hudson's Bay Company

post, meaning the supplies they take must last over a year. Even though both she and her husband endure subsistence living conditions and basic supply shortages, she attributes the success of their venture to Thomas. "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 continues to stack her praise of Thomas, applauding his sense of direction: "The idea that Thomas might not be able to find the way never entered my head and, even after he mentioned it, I wasn't impressed. He always had found any way we had wanted to go, and I quite expected he would do so this time" (144); and his infallible judgement: "With Thomas, to think is to act. Sometimes I believe he doesn't think at all, but simply reacts; the reaction is unhesitating, and swift, and right. Without his unfailing good judgment backed by experience, I am convinced we should never have accomplished so much or come so far" (181).

Manning not only understates her role in the expedition's success but praises her husband's fortitude at the expense of her own. Throughout the journey, she chastises herself for her periodic grievances, frustrations, and occasional depressions. She represents herself as the more plaintive of the two:

Whereas I sometimes grumbled about the cold and hard work and unvaried rationing, in all the thousands of miles we travelled, whether by dog team or by boat. I have never heard Thomas complain once of the inconveniences of our way of travelling. Once in a while he would say mildly, 'I'm a little tired to-night.' Sometimes, when the dogs were being stubborn or stupid, Thomas' language would be rather more colourful than was usual, but I have never heard him blast the cold, the weather or the million and one little things that can make life miserable. (78-79)

In matters of resiliency, Thomas also compares favourably:

Thomas trudged on steadily and unfalteringly, encouraging the dogs. He seemed to have reserve that was almost inexhaustible. It was often more

than I could do to keep up with the team, and I solemnly swore that unless some extraordinary circumstances necessitated it, I would never undertake such a trip again. Yards stretched into miles. When I finally reached the tent and bed, I didn't care whether I ever got up again. Thomas was out walking the next day. (98)

After two years in the Arctic, Manning looks forward to the luxuries of home, such as clean white sheets, warm feet, permanent shelter, and a varied diet. "Thomas," she writes, "had been in the Arctic since the spring of 1936; I had been in only a little more than two years; but it was he, far more than I, who could still face the daily discomforts without rancour" (211). On their homeward journey, her hopes are raised and dashed by ice blockages that retard their progress to the annual ship 'Out'. By this point, she finds the prospect of another year in the north unbearable and describes the final laps of their travels as having a "nightmarish quality" (230). Thomas, however, is relentless: "Thomas didn't mind so much as I. There were so many things he wanted to do next – new places to go to, new information to be gathered, 'so much to do and so little time in which to do it', as he so frequently reminded me" (189). On the final day, Manning wonders if she will be able to keep up much longer and fears becoming a liability: "When I ran, my legs felt like leaden weights, and my clothing as heavy as a coat of mail. I could only run a short distance before I was obliged to fall panting on the komatik" (231). After reaching their destination in Churchill, Manning eats a full meal, smokes a cigarette, and exhales "a long sigh of satisfaction" (231). Her satisfaction and relief are mitigated by Thomas, who claims, "I could go back in the morning after we've had a good sleep . . . I feel quite rested" (231).

Manning is less given to self-deprecation in her feminine domestic discourse. Like other travelling incorporated wives, she documents the myriad domestic challenges specific to her new environment, such as cooking bannock with an oil lamp, preparing caribou and seal skins, manufacturing skin clothing, and decorating the interior of igloos and tents. Near the commencement of their journey, Thomas "tactfully" nudges her into the domestic supportive role he expects her to fulfill by encouraging her to learn Inuit

culinary arts such as making bannock (33). Near the end of their Arctic trek, when the novelty of making bannock and sleeping and house-keeping in tents and igloos has worn off, Manning and her husband discover an abandoned, run-down Royal North-west Mounted Police barracks. She describes these barracks as “my very first house since my marriage” and insists that she “wasn’t to be cheated out of the pleasure of putting it in order” (220). The domestic details are rendered in euphoric tones: “I brushed it [the barracks] out with an old hair-brush; we found bed springs, and put them on four empty petrol kegs. Such luxury! Actually a bed with springs! There was a small table with a cover of linoleum upon which we could eat our meals, and a larger one for cooking utensils” (219). Once the Mannings are comfortably ensconced in their make-shift castle, they are visited by two white trappers, Lazzard and Carlson, who claim they are taking over the place by the permission of the police (221). Sensing trouble, Thomas is ready to strike a deal with these two motley characters, but he first checks with his wife since she will carry the brunt of the burden: “‘Would you mind,’ Thomas went on, ‘would you mind doing a little extra cooking? They have coal, you know, and it would be a help for us.’ ‘I can’t say I particularly like turning cook for Lazzard,’ I answered, ‘but I suppose we must make the best of a bad job’” (221).

Manning does much more, however, than make Thomas his bannock and feed strays. A prominent discourse in her travel writing is that of the participant wife who identifies with her husband’s occupation. Paradoxically, this conventionally feminine subject position of wifely participant enables Manning to cross the gendered labour divide because of the nature of Thomas’s work. Although she is often in the igloo while her husband goes hunting, she is by no means confined there and is frequently outdoors assisting him. For example, in Thomas’s absence, she supervises the archeological digs in Nuwata (36). As well, she accompanies him on several arduous hunting expeditions and assists in the construction of igloos, which involves the strenuous work of shoveling snow and cutting ice blocks. As a participant, Manning metamorphoses into a hardy Arctic explorer, which includes a pragmatic and symbolic change of clothing, appearance, and sobriquet. Within a few weeks she sheds her tweed skirt and jacket, her brown shiny oxfords, and her freshly permanent-waved hair for a man’s shirt, breeches

and pullover, sealskin boots, a parka hooded with dog fur, and cropped hair. Thomas, who affectionately calls his wife “Jack” throughout the text, suggests the new, sensible hairstyle and chops her locks with much delight. Although these transformations carry connotations of Manning ‘going native’ and Manning ‘going manly,’ it is the latter phenomenon I wish to address first. In *Vested Interests: Cross-dressing and Cultural Anxiety*, Marjorie Garber explains that infants of both sexes historically wore dresses until boys reached a certain age, when they underwent a rite of passage called “breeching,” which was a sartorial sign “of maleness and incipient adulthood” (1). Although Manning’s new attire would appear unisex to most Western readers of the late twentieth century, it would seem something akin to breeching in the 1930s. Cross-dressing, Garber notes, is a “sign of the constructedness of gender categories” (9). It also subverts those categories: Manning’s breeching, along with her new hair-do and name, are breaches, if you will, of gendered sartorial convention.

In Manning’s case, the act of cross-dressing involves a cross-cultural sartorial transformation as well. There is a tradition of cross-cultural breeching in the history of women’s travel and travel writing.^{viii} From the eighteenth century to the present, women such as Hester Stanhope, Isabel Burton, Isabelle Eberhardt, and Sarah Hobson dressed in the male garments indigenous to the culture they visited. The impetus behind ‘going native’ was often a desire to merge with the other culture, while the motive behind ‘going male’ was a desire for more freedom of movement and increased access to the other culture.” Garber observes that cross-dressing is often represented as a fun and functional carnivalization of sartorial gender norms that take place in a liminal space over a limited period of time (70). The same could certainly be said for cross-dressing in women’s travel writing: the North, in Manning’s case, is a liminal space where she may neglect convention and find amusement and comfort in her functional clothes. Garber goes on to critique the “classic progress narrative,” wherein “the cross-dresser is expected to resume life as he or she was, having, presumably, recognized the touch of ‘femininity’ or ‘masculinity’ in her or his otherwise ‘male’ or ‘female’ self” (70-71). Such narratives, she argues, gloss over the disruptive, gender-blurring ramifications of transvestitism (70). Her point is well taken, but I want to apply it to the progress narrative. Manning’s

journey North is not merely an occasion for her to recognize the masculinity in her female self: it is an opportunity for her to fulfill her desires by transcending the limitations imposed on her sex and entering a traditionally masculine realm of activity. Moreover, as we shall see in my analysis of Manning's second travel book, Manning does not resume life as usual after her spate of cross-dressing in the North. Her desires are quite different from those of Philomena Orford, who dreams of wearing a feminine white fox ensemble in the North. Garber mentions the "feminist reminder that 'wearing the pants' is, or has been, one way of achieving equality and visibility in a man's world" (71). The breeching in *Igloo for the Night* is a sign of one woman's efforts to achieve equality.

This feminist impulse to achieve equality is evident in Manning's defiant resistance to the doubters – the legion of men who, before her departure, voice their disapproval of a plan they find foolhardy because of her sex. In her resistance we find a feminist discourse that not only reveals the sexist attitudes of Manning's day but also indirectly underscores the danger, unconventionality, and subversiveness of her journey. Although some of her detractors merit a blast of invective, she chooses to disregard and dismiss them with as few words as possible. Major Tweedsmuir, in his introduction, writes, "Mrs. Manning achieved a very great feat, although she makes it all sound so simple" (Introduction). Her feat is all the greater when one considers the many forces undermining her confidence. This Major is, in fact, one of the first doubters we come across. He found the idea of a woman accompanying one of the "hardiest travellers alive" to be "monstrously absurd," and that Manning should even be allowed to try seemed "criminal" to him (Introduction). "For the most part," Manning writes, "my friends and acquaintances shook their heads gravely, and pondered to themselves – I'm sure they did – the improbability of my ultimate survival among the terrifying perils and hardships of an unknown land, although for the most part they were kind and tactful enough to keep whatever they thought to themselves" (13). One gentleman, however, passes an entire dinner speculating on Manning's psychological vulnerability to the Arctic and her potential for break-down:

"Have you ever heard of Arctic hysteria?" he enquired. "People [read: women] sometimes go mad in that country. I took a woman in last year," he went on. "She was just the type one would think suitable: placid, stolid, and not too intelligent. She was back the next year. What will happen to a person like you I do not know. At any rate, you can't say I haven't warned you." Finally, as I refused to argue, he wisely gave up . . . Nevertheless, I am sure he secretly promised himself the pleasure of some day meeting me and saying, "I told you so." (13)

Manning is impressively steadfast in her decision to travel, and the doubters serve to strengthen her resolve. She finds the Hudson's Bay Company officials unanimous in their disapproval of her plans on "general principles" (12) which are in fact very specific, sexually-discriminating ones. They feel it is "madness" for a woman to live away from the posts and travel with a man as intrepid as Thomas (12). In an effort to foil her plans, they give her the run around as she attempts to book a passage on the *Nascopie*, and try various methods of dissuasion and intimidation, even fabricating the excuse that Thomas had not been heard of for a long time and that they didn't know of his whereabouts (12). One particularly objectionable Hudson's Bay official provokes her ire when he pointedly asks, "Do you really think you can travel with him as he does?". She looks at him "just a bit down my nose" and answers "'Yes.' firmly" (12). When she picks up her ticket two weeks before sailing, this same rude official hurls more chauvinistic insults her way: "...What will you do for fresh supplies of face powder, nail polish and cosmetics generally?" "No one is going to know whether I powder my nose or not, and as for nail polish, I think its lack will be no great hardship" (13). One wishes this official had the opportunity to see Manning transformed into the Arctic explorer Jack, with cropped hair and breeches. On her first night aboard her husband's small craft, the *Polecat*, as she contemplates the soiled deerskins that will be her bedding for some time to come, this official's voice returns, as does her defiance of it:

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)

By inscribing the doubters, Manning gives us an idea of the contemporary constructions of gender she had to negotiate in making, interpreting, and writing her journey. It also provides some insight into why we are most likely to find Manning's 'self in hiding' in her discourse of wifely participation rather than in her domestic discourse. She was conflicted, it appears, between her feminist desire for fulfillment in a conventionally masculine sphere and expectations of feminine propriety. Thus, we find a feminist discourse of resistance alongside the more conventionally feminine discourse of the excessively modest, self-doubting, wifely helpmeet who extols her husband's accomplishments. I must point out, however, that Manning does not entirely sabotage her own heroics or undermine her non-domestic contributions to the expedition. That is, her feminist discourse does not vanish in her feminine discourse of participation in her husband's work but rather becomes an undercurrent that occasionally, albeit subtly, ruptures the surface. While Manning does not make advertisements for herself, what is increasingly apparent in the reading of her text is that she is one of Thomas's most important resources and that her participation is instrumental in the expedition's success. At the very least, her unpaid labour significantly increases its feasibility. Manning makes it clear that Thomas respects her opinion on such matters as navigation, logistics, and planning by frequently quoting his consultations with her (64, 105, 161, 163, 188). In *Igloo for the Night*, a travel book full of textual standing ovations to her husband, Manning occasionally applauds her own accomplishments. We see this in her description of sighting the entrance to Nassauya Point, wherein spousal admiration entwined with self-doubt gives way to self-affirmation:

I pointed out the place 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 anyway."

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)

In another scene, when Thomas rushes off to collect bird specimens, leaving Manning on her own to build shelter, she delineates her resourcefulness as well as one of Thomas's rare moments of doubt in his wife's abilities:

As soon as Thomas left, I set to work. The tent fitted over my improvised frame perfectly, and the whole was made secure by putting guy ropes to the bow and stern of the canoe, and nailing the tent flap to the sides . . . When Thomas visited me the next day, he expressed doubts as to its security in a gale, but when, a few hours later, a high wind did spring up from the south-east, the canoe stood firm, and I soon went calmly to sleep. (175)

At the end of her text, she writes an encomium to Inuit dogs, claiming they are "the unsung heroes who make possible many of the exploits of famous explorers" (232). Although Manning never explicitly makes the same claim for herself, nor does she identify herself as a famous explorer, she occasionally sings her own praises, however faintly.

In her next travel book, *A Summer on Hudson Bay*, Manning explains how, in the intervening years following her Baffin Island journey, she began getting bored at home in Ottawa "whenever something interesting was about to happen" (9). Thomas spent most

of the war years in the navy, which regularly loaned him out to various departments engaged in Arctic works, meaning he was, as Manning puts it, seldom "divorced from his primary interests" (8). By contrast, Manning, back at home in Ottawa after her transformation into the hardy Arctic explorer, Jack, seems divorced from her primary interests, which have essentially become the same as Thomas's. When he returns from the North after spending the summer of 1944 in the employ of the Geodetic Service of Canada and the Royal Canadian Air Force, she mentions her wish to join him the following year. She knows that fixing ground control points for air photographic surveys, which entailed being transported by Canso aircraft and having access to a wireless radio and generous supplies of food, would be a lark compared to her trial by ice on the west coast of Baffin. Thomas makes the necessary arrangements, and in the summers of 1945 and 1946, Ella Manning works in Hudson's Bay as the first woman field worker for the Geodetic Service of Canada.

In *A Summer on Hudson Bay*, Manning, for the most part, eschews the feminine domestic discourse. This absence is foreshadowed in her reaction to the radio broadcast she hears during her first flight in the Canso: "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). Rather, she describes the technical details of her work for the Geodetic Service. In some respects, *A Summer on Hudson Bay* is a transitional text in my rough classification of earlier and later works because her husband's work becomes her own. The feminine discourse of wifely participation gives way to the feminist discourse of an autonomous woman working in an unconventional setting. Moreover, Manning no longer apotheosizes Thomas and his accomplishments at her own expense. In fact, the plaintive tones she reserved for herself in *Igloo for the Night* creep into her representations of her husband. She intimates subtle ways that Thomas oppresses her desire. Take, for example, her narration of an incident that occurs on Mansel Island, where she expresses resentment towards Thomas for telling her what to do:

Late in the afternoon when Thomas returned from a walk, he said
he had just seen a ship passing, and the men (and I) raced up to the

ridge behind the tent to watch. Thomas grumbled because, as he said, I'd seen ships before and there was a lot of work to be done to set up in readiness for the observation. But he's already had a good look, and I like ships and was filled with curiosity to see what these were, even though I knew they must be grain ships en route to Britain from Port Churchill. (118)

Despite Thomas's grumblings, she manages to satisfy her curiosity and complete her share of the work. In a later chapter that describes their flight over Southampton Island, she ponders how her own desire to reach specific sites is thwarted and superceded by Thomas's:

I'd always wanted to visit Southampton Island, but had seen little chance of doing so. I've always wanted to go to Norway, and on one occasion when I was talking about it, Thomas said, "But I've already *been* to Norway." Since he has travelled on Southampton Island much more extensively than in Norway, indeed, knows much of the island intimately, I've never had much hope of being able to get there. Thomas had already spent four winters on the island; he had mapped the entire coast and made many traverses, besides collecting specimens of birds, mammals, rocks, plants, and excavating the ruins of the old houses. In short, Thomas had already '*been*' to Southampton Island. (149)

In her customarily understated way, she conveys a subtle annoyance that her travel destinations – her destinies, as it were – are determined by Thomas.

Throughout both of Manning's travel books, it is clear that Thomas is seldom a doubting one: he has boundless faith in his wife's competency and does all he can to provide her with opportunities to test herself in non-conventional work for women. Despite Manning's occasional expressions of annoyance, she recognizes his support. In

A Summer on Hudson Bay, for example, she accredits her chance to travel with the Geodetic Service of Canada to her husband's interventions and good name:

Prior to my application, the Geodetic Service had never employed a woman to do field work, and the Geodetic Service is old and well-established. That they should consider me, a woman, favourably as an applicant, and thereby break a long-standing tradition, I think was very enterprising of them. Perhaps it was merely the shock and they gave their consent before the numbness had disappeared; or perhaps their opinion of Thomas was high enough, and rightly so, to lead them to believe he could take care of me and do his work at the same time. No doubt they believed that if I didn't come up to the general standard of assistants it would be Thomas' hard luck and he would have to deal with it himself. (10)

Manning's portrayal of Thomas remains respectful and laudatory overall – she mentions, for example, his Inuit name, *Kopanak*, "the Snowbird," which is given to him by the Inuit, as well as her understanding that such an honourary name "is fame" in the Arctic (144). Nevertheless, her gratitude towards Thomas occasionally wears thin.

For the most part, however, her feminist critique targets the real culprits: systemic gender restrictions and individual chauvinists who threaten the fulfillment of her yearnings for work and adventure in the North. The list of doubters in her first travel book continues into her second. She erroneously assumes that the Royal Canadian Air Force, the main organizer of the project, will pose no obstacle once her direct employer, the Geodetic Service, signs her on. When Thomas hints to the Commanding Officer that he intends to take his wife with him, the response is astonishment followed by incredulous laughter. She decides to lay low with the hope that the R.C.A.F. will not turn her away once she arrives at The Pas in Manitoba, the first take-off point (10). While she is not sent back, all but one of the pilots are unwilling to transport her survey group because, she suspects, of her sex. She represents such displays of male chauvinism with a

tolerance and understanding. For example, when Manning and her husband are not invited to stay in the base camp with the other all-male groups but flown directly north because of her sex, she claims she is pleased with the arrangements: "We could get a start on the summer's work and the men could get used to the idea of having me about at a safe distance" (14). However, her tolerance of this kind of chauvinistic special treatment is somewhat belied by her many acts of mentioning it.

Satisfied with her performance in the summer of 1945, Manning believes she has established a precedent and anticipates little opposition from the R.C.A.F. to her return the following year. Nevertheless, because ex-R.C.A.F personnel and ex-servicemen returning from the war are given preference, she identifies herself as "E.W.Manning. No overseas service" in her application to conceal her sex and non-participation in the armed forces (38). She begins her second year in base camp "walking the narrow path of being in the camp but not of it too obviously. Our tent was by the water's edge, under a bank out of sight of the main assembly, so that the men were free to carry on their activities without any embarrassment of female presence" (48). Her tolerant pose, however, dissipates at times. She has little patience for the Air Force foreman in the northern town of Churchill who refuses her entrance to the barracks and shelter for the night:

"Ladies can't stay here," he said firmly and with a certain amount of hostility. "We had no word that any ladies were on this plane – only the air crew and the Geodetic Service party."

"But I *am* of the Geodetic Service party," I protested.

"Well, you can't stay here. Women aren't allowed. You'll have to go into town to the hotel."

So Thomas remarked quietly that we happened to know that the one tiny hotel in the village was full – the last room had been taken by a passenger whom we brought down with us. As I pointed out, I was Thomas' wife and therefore not a camp follower who was being carried about as a mascot.

The fact that my relationship with Thomas was a legal and

respectable one together with the murmured word of someone else who joined the group, seemed to calm the irate foreman, and although still disapproving on principle, he relented sufficiently to say that although we certainly couldn't be accommodated in *that* place, he would take us to another building where, he grudgingly admitted, we could spend the night. (63-64)

Here, Manning is placed in the humiliating position of justifying her presence as a legitimate field worker rather than a company prostitute and is only permitted shelter as Thomas's wife. It is a transitional and revealing moment in her text in that her tone shifts from passive resentment to aggressive resistance. Significantly, she *first* identifies herself as a member of the Geodetic Service party and *secondly* as her husband's wife; that is, she first represents herself as an autonomous worker in her own right rather than as an incorporated participant wife.

Although P.K. Page's *Brazilian Journal* was published in 1987, it is next in line in my roughly chronological reading because it is, according to her Foreword, a "period piece" based on letters to her family and extracts from her travel journal written in the late fifties. Page resided in Brazil from 1957 to 1959 in the subject position of diplomat's wife, her husband, Arthur Irwin, being Canada's ambassador to Brazil during these years. With respect to gendered discourse, Page's travel book is indeed a period piece. Her discourses of domesticity and participation in her husband's career conform to the dominant feminine ideology of the era. As in travel books by other incorporated wives, the early pages of *Brazilian Journal* provide copious details about domestic arrangements that underscore the challenges inherent in nesting in a foreign place. In striking contrast with Orford's northern shack and Manning's igloos, Page's residence was a beautiful, hot pink *palacete* with white trim, a large confection filled with marble of varying hues, glittering chandeliers, Chippendale mirrors, art, glass plate doors, jacaranda wood, silk and brocade (6). The fifty-seven-room house was a privilege to live in but it came with its own domestic challenges of a privileged sort. Page's domestic discourse renders the

difficulties of managing a mansion, which entailed the taking of inventories, arranging repairs, and the hiring and firing of servants across several language barriers.

Moreover, like Manning, Page was a participant wife in her husband's career, but her duties differed from Manning's like night from day. Page found herself "playing" the ultra-feminine "role" of ambassador's wife, which necessitated the purchase of jewels, pearls, and fitted formal gowns (173), a sartorial transformation quite distinct from Manning's animal skins and cropped hair. Other duties as an ambassador's wife, or rather as *embaixatizes* (ambassadresses) according to Brazilian terminology (31), entailed the entertainment of foreign dignitaries at the *palacete* as well as official visits to other wives from the diplomatic ranks. Moreover, as Janet Giltrow notes in "Foreign Exchange: Taking Brazil at Face Value," a foreign notable like Page must see and acknowledge and be seen and acknowledged, which results in a relentless sightseeing regime. Page, Giltrow observes, "is driven, flown, walked, shown, met, greeted, taken about, syntactically passive" (69-70). Giltrow selects the following quote from *Brazilian Journal* to convey Page's passivity in body and voice:

I was whisked off in a car – with the governor's wife, a librarian, a teacher of mathematics, and one other – to be shown Porto Alegre. It was hot. I was placed in the back seat in the centre. I was not asked if I wanted a bathroom – which I did – or if I could see – which I couldn't. Once in the car the governor's wife made up for her long silence at lunch and talked non-stop – that formless, subjectless kind of conversation about cousins and who married whom and who had babies and whose house that is and what they paid for it. It was as if she had been dammed a very long time and now all the words rushed out, dragging me down with them, drowning me. (95-96)

Despite the inevitable tedium of officialdom disclosed through this quote, Page also seems to have derived great pleasure from circulating in the rarefied atmosphere of the Brazilian political, cultural, and business elite. Amid the occasional groan she reveals her

gratitude for the privilege of performing the role of ambassador's wife. She also pokes fun at her performance using the classic comic formula of juxtaposing an image of the ideal ambassador's wife against her manifestation as the real one. Moreover, by referring to the wife of the Greek ambassador as "Mrs. Greece" (32), Page, by implication, becomes Mrs. Canada, honorifics that subtly mock these feminine performances.

As this jab at feminine performativity suggests, not all of the gendered discourses we find in the period piece of *Brazilian Journal* are of a piece with the 1950s period, but then again, neither was Page. She is best known not as Mrs. Canada but as one of Canada's foremost poets whose oeuvre spans the second half of this century. In a 1987 interview with Eleanor Wachtel, we learn that she discovered her poetic calling during her adolescence in the 1930s, when she began writing poetry with great 'urgency' even though such behaviour was then considered "weird" (43,51). In her twenties, when the majority of Canadian women her age were preparing trousseaux and packing away personal ambition, Page displayed uncommon artistic daring, confidence, and drive by moving to Montreal to write. She eventually became one of the few women associated with *Preview*, a literary magazine piloted by Patrick Anderson in the 1940s. In the interview with Wachtel, she explains how her father originally provided the funding for her to live and write in Montreal, but that she eventually found a clerical job, seeing financial self-sufficiency as the only route to "independence in thought" (46). Inspired by her stint in an office, Page wrote a poetic feminist critique of perfunctory, subordinate, conventional women's work called "Typists," which conjures a horrific monochrome image of the pink-collar ghetto: "They, without message" imprint the messages of others like automatons while "[d]eep in their hands, like pianists, / all longing gropes and moves, is trapped / behind the tensile gloves of skin" (24). She married Arthur in 1950 and by the time she accompanied him to Brazil had published two books of poetry, *As Ten as Twenty* (1946) and the Governor-General Award winning *The Metal and the Flower* (1954). Living in the foreign language of Brazil brought on a poetic writing block in Page that threatened her identity as a writer and her need to create. In her essay, "Questions and Images," she recalls how "[t]he thing I had feared most had happened at last" in Brazil (188). In the interview with Wachtel, Page admits she was very upset by

this event, but that she started drawing almost immediately so “that wound, you might call it, was greatly staunched by a drawing pen” (55).

This biographical sketch of Page’s life demonstrates that she is not a representative Canadian woman of the thirties, forties, and fifties. By virtue of having a personal and professional life, and by striving for independence and autonomy in means, thought, and message, Page’s early life approximates the blueprint of women’s fulfillment sketched by second wave feminists in the sixties and seventies. As the authors of *Canadian Women: A History* note, these decades witnessed a resurgence of feminist activity in Canada and all over the world as women strove for autonomy and recognition in the social sphere (414). American feminist activist Betty Friedan, in her influential text *The Feminine Mystique* (1963), articulated a “new life plan for women” based on the assumption that women can only fulfill their human potential and achieve wholeness by establishing an identity separate from husband and home through creative, preferably paid work of their own. She valorized the vocation or career that exacted life long commitment. Some women, Page’s early life story tells us, were already doing this with varying degrees of success and sacrifice,¹ although few of these women saw themselves as feminists, a political identification many women have struggled with throughout the twentieth century and unto this day. Page was never a card-toting feminist, and her *Brazilian Journal* does not contain feminist rhetoric of the Friedan sort. Nevertheless, at the heart of her journal, we find Page recording her efforts to regain her wholeness – staunch the gaping wound, as she puts it – by becoming a visual artist who draws what she cannot put into poetic language. This is a feminist discourse because of its broader contextual frame: the story of a woman whose subject position as incorporated travelling wife precipitates a threat to her own, autonomous vocation, her calling, her wholeness. It is a portrait of the mid-century female artist as incorporated travelling wife.

In contrast to Orford and Manning’s representations of their spousal others, Page’s inscription of her husband is minimal. Giltrow, in fact, in her essay on *Brazilian Journal*, finds Arthur Irwin conspicuously absent, a point I do not entirely agree with for reasons I will explain in time. Giltrow interprets Arthur’s absence as symptomatic of the travel writing genre’s “massive ellipsis” of the personal, the relational, an ellipsis Page

has “worked” to its “strongest claim” (72). “In the travel book, all the motives and energies that shape critical personal relationships – even the relationship which impelled the journey itself – are out of sight, out of bounds,” writes Giltrow:

The travel writer becomes a free radical, combining with opportune social moments, then disengaging to roam further. On the road, the travel writer gathers portable experiences – literate souvenirs of settings and people – and when the mementos are published we find much more information about [in the context of Page’s text] a governor’s wife (never to be heard from again) or the family of a former beauty queen than we do about the traveller’s own husband or history or health. (72)

This profile certainly conveys the picaresque, episodic quality we often find in the genre but it overlooks the autobiographical, personal, relational components of the genre that rescue it from insipid superficiality. Moreover, Giltrow does not take gender distinctions into consideration in her generic generalization: as we have seen, Graham Greene’s masculinist travel discourse elides his travel companion, but Barbara Greene’s feminine relational discourse does not, nor do Manning’s, Orford’s, and Page’s. We do indeed see Arthur Irwin performing his diplomatic duties from the behind-the-scene perspective of his wife. She represents his successes, struggles, and embarrassments through her affectionate, bemused double lens. We see less of him, it is true, than we do of Orford and Manning’s husbands, and Page contracts his name to “A.” in the text’s dedication and throughout the journal. This is because there is less uxorial self-identification in Page’s book: Arthur’s story intermittently punctuates Page’s own.

Page, as Giltrow notes, may be a wife whose “travel plans are dictated by her husband’s social destiny” (71), but I find her travel book is primarily about her own destiny as an artist and her aesthetic encounter with Brazil. I disagree with Giltrow’s comment, quoted above, that we learn more about the governor’s wife than we do about the author. Giltrow contends that not only Arthur but “Page herself cannot be seen” in

the *Brazilian Journal*, buttressing her position with the argument that Page becomes ill and requires surgery without telling her readers what ails her. “What is wrong with her?” asks Giltrow (72). While Page does remain mute on some personal, private matters, presumably deciding they are none of our business, she is quite openly confessional and emotional about her poetic writing block and the discovery of her skills as a visual artist. She records her relationship with Brazil as an exhilarating love story between artist and country, albeit a love frustrated by the barriers of culture and language.¹⁴ One half year into her sojourn, Page confesses, “I grow to love Brazil more each day,” but wonders, “How do I write my love song?” (72). She experiences a form of culture shock termed “language shock” by psychologist Adrian Fernham in *Culture Shock: Psychological Reactions to Unfamiliar Environments* (49). This form of disorientation occurs when one bumps against the limits of one’s language, cultural referents, and comprehension. It leads Page to compare herself to “amoebas” (92, 108) and to refer to Brazil as “surrealist” (9, 47, 96), creating the composite image of an amoeba negotiating its way through a distorted landscape.

As a writer, she experiences a peculiar type of language shock that extends beyond quotidian communication, a poetic writer’s block that is recorded in her journal with palpable angst. Page is like the displaced person in postcolonial theory who experiences a “crisis in self-image” and the erosion of a “valid and active sense of self” (Ashcroft *et. al.* 9-10). This situation is most obviously remedied by Page through Portuguese lessons, but also by learning an arguably less culturally specific language: visual arts. According to C.S. Peirce’s taxonomy of signs, visual art is *iconic* in that it somehow resembles the object it stands for. Literature, on the other hand, is *symbolic* because it represents its object through an arbitrary, culturally determined set of signs (Peirce 2.247). For Page, this distinction meant that if she could not name this flower or wax poetical on the significance of that ceremony, she found she could still draw them. And she drew, according to “Questions and Images,” as if her life depended on it (213). Contrary to Giltrow’s contention that Page cannot be seen in *Brazilian Journal*, I believe we see her in the interrelated discourses of the incorporated travelling wife and the struggling female artist.

The biographical details surrounding Margaret Laurence's travel book, *The Prophet's Camel Bell* (1963), offer a variation on the interrelated discourses of the incorporated travelling wife and the struggling female artist at mid-century. We get a glimpse at the apprenticeship period of the woman who would become one of Canada's most loved and acclaimed novelists. *The Prophet's Camel Bell*, dedicated to husband Jack Laurence "who shares these memories," has a convoluted evolution. Although an account of her two-year sojourn in what was then the British Protectorate of Somaliland from 1950 to 1952, *The Prophet's Camel Bell* was not actually written until the early 1960s, when she was again living in Canada. Laurence did, however, draw heavily from the 1950s travel diaries that were destroyed subsequent to the final text's 1963 publication. This writing situation borders two 'independence' movements: Somalia's Independence from British Imperialism, which was achieved on July 1, 1960, and Laurence's decision to uncouple herself from the marriage and reinvent herself as an independent woman writer and single mother of two children. Her biographer, James King, notes that *The Prophet's Camel Bell* was written at a time when the Laurences' marriage was disintegrating (78). Thus the text is not only a memory of "a shared adventure and an extended honeymoon, a time in which their [the Laurences'] marriage flourished" (King 98), but also a *memorial* of a rather adventurous slice of their life together. In the spirit of the feminine relational discourse, she tells Jack's story; in the spirit of memorial, she does so with admiration, respect, and discretion.

The adventure begins when Jack, living in London with Laurence, finds an employment ad placed by the H.M. Colonial Service of the Protectorate of Somaliland soliciting a civil engineer to oversee the construction of thirty man-made rain-water retainers in the Haud, the desert region contiguous with the Ethiopian border. These retainers, *ballehs* in Somali, were expected to save Somali lives during the long, parched season of drought. Laurence writes,

Jack applied for the job and got it. It was no sudden whim on his part.
As an engineer, he had felt a certain lack in any job he had in Canada or

in England. We lived in an increasingly organized world, a world in which the most essential roads and bridges had already been built. He felt a need to work for once on a job that plainly needed doing – not a paved road to replace a gravel one, but a road where none had been before, a job whose value could not be questioned, a job in which the results of an individual's work could be clearly perceived, as they rarely could in Europe or America. (11)

Laurence documents the tremendous challenges that confront Jack as he begins the project. He struggles, for example, to convince skeptical Somali chieftains and distrusting wise elders that the *Ingrere* (English) are not going to poison the *ballehs* or appropriate the land and dispossess the Somalis to build European towns. The approval of the *balleh* scheme by the Somali people is of great importance to Jack so he spends much time deflecting suspicion and rumour despite his increasing frustration and time constraints. Moreover, Laurence describes how Jack manages to transport two huge tractors and a bulldozer into the desert, train unskilled Somali labourers to operate and maintain the expensive, temperamental machinery, and preserve equilibrium in a volatile work camp. The Laurences' leave Somalia after the construction of only two *ballehs*, but all is set in place for the project's completion, including the hiring of the first Somali engineering graduate from an English University as Jack's replacement. Just before departing, they inspect one of the *ballehs* following the rains: "It looked enormous now, like a brown lake in the middle of the desert. Jack examined it minutely, and nodded, speaking almost brusquely in order not to show how pleased he was" (258). As Fiona Sparrow writes in *Into Africa With Margaret Laurence*, "Jack Laurence is the hero of the book, and the slow but finally successful achievement of his goal is the thread that links the separate and distinct chapters. As a hero he labours mightily and against great odds, but slowly the first *balleh* is built, and he moves on to the next site" (40). The very title of the text extends a nod to Jack's achievement in its reference to the camel bell presented to him by an appreciative and approving Somali chief (159). Laurence also mentions Jack's adopted Somali name chosen by his workers. *odei-gi rer-ki*, the old man of the tribe,

another sign of his acceptance (135). The Somalis honour their heroes through narrative; thus, as Sparrow observes, “By using her narrative talent to tell her husband’s story, Margaret Laurence pays him, the Somalis would consider, the best possible tribute” (40).

Similar to the writings of Manning and Orford, Laurence’s spousal other figures prominently in her travel book, but not to the point of eclipsing the self. Jack’s narrative provides the structural framework of *The Prophet’s Camel Bell*, as Sparrow suggests, but the substance of the text is imbued with Laurence’s personal experiences and observations. However, a significant component of Laurence’s self is in hiding in her travel book: the struggling female writer. Laurence’s literary bent and fondness for writing revealed themselves during her 1930s childhood and adolescence in Neepawa, Manitoba. According to Laurence’s memoir, *Dance on Earth*, the author experienced an epiphany at the age of fourteen, when she recognized her vocation as a writer: “What I realized that day was that I had a life commitment and could do no other” (75). During the latter half of the forties, she earned a degree in English literature from United College in Manitoba and published poems, short stories, and journalism in student magazines and city newspapers. Her apprenticeship as a writer continued in Somaliland in the fifties, where she had several “literary irons in the fire” (King 94-95). These included her diaries, a short story set in Somaliland titled “Uncertain Flowering,” and a first novel that was eventually scrapped. “Somlailand,” writes King, “unleashed Margaret Laurence the fiction writer . . .” (95). This portrait of the artist, however, is absent from her otherwise autobiographical Somaliland travel book.

I can only speculate on this elision that contrasts so strikingly with Page’s travel book, where the portrait of the struggling artist forms the emotional crux. Throughout the fifties, Laurence’s literary endeavours and ambitions became touchy subjects between husband and wife. After Somaliland, the Laurences lived in Accra, West Africa, for several years, where Laurence became “more certain of her vocation as a writer – and less reliant on her role as wife” (King 119). By the time she reworked her Somaliland diaries in the early 1960s, she had published her first novel, *This Side Jordan* (1960). She had also started *The Stone Angel* (1964), the novel that jump started her career and essentially ended her marriage. According to *Dance on Earth*, while working on *The Prophet’s*

Camel Bell, Laurence made the “traumatic and anguished decision” that she could not go to Pakistan with Jack as incorporated wife, largely because it interfered with the progress of her writing (157). She decided instead to go to London, England, to complete *The Stone Angel*.^{vii} Thus, Laurence’s discourse of the struggling female writer is intimately entangled with the discourse of her marriage’s demise, which is perhaps why she excludes the former discourse from a travel book that honours Jack and their years together. One may also wonder why a discourse of feminist resistance is absent from the travel book, considering she reworked it in the early sixties, when she was increasingly conscious of the women’s liberation movement and dissatisfied with her marriage and the plight of women generally (King 156). Again, I would suggest that *The Prophet’s Camel Bell* is memorial, almost elegiac in intent. It hearkens back to a more innocent time in the Laurence’s relationship, before their incompatibility was fully realized by either of them. Laurence’s feminist analyses come later, in fiction such as *The Fire Dwellers* (1969), a novel James King sees as reflecting the “ground-breaking work” of Betty Friedan (250-251).

A prominent gendered discourse we do find in *The Prophet’s Camel Bell* is that of the domestic and participant incorporated wife. Interestingly enough, the manuscript was initially rejected by publisher Blanche Knopf precisely because of this feminine discourse. A reader report by Patrick Gregory opines, “At best, she provides us with an accurate picture of an average Canadian housewife’s view of an exotic land. But this is hardly worthy of serious attention” (qtd. in King 187). Not only was Laurence’s travel text almost ‘left behind’ in 1963; Laurence herself almost missed the boat when her husband was set to depart in the 1950s. After Jack signed the contract with the Colonial Office, he was informed that accommodations for married couples were unavailable, “but perhaps Mr. Laurence’s wife would be able to join him in six or seven months” (11). Laurence writes, “This arrangement did not suit us at all, so Jack explained carefully that his wife, being a hardy Canadian girl, was quite accustomed to life in a tent. In fact, I had never camped out in my life, but fortunately the Colonial Office was convinced by the striking description Jack gave of me as an accomplished woodsman, a kind of female Daniel Boone, and I was permitted to go” (11). Like Thomas Manning, Jack had to

haggle with the authorities to get approval for his wife's passage because of her sex.

Unlike Ella Manning, however, Laurence intimates that she is daunted and not quite up to the task. Fortunately, the Colonial Office finds a modest house in Sheikh, a small town outside of Hargasia. Her description of this residence in a chapter titled "House in the Clouds" is initially redolent of Philomena Orford's in its plaintive, slightly sarcastic tone:

Our house had sandbags on top of it so the roof would not be blown away during the *karif* wind. These imparted a look of patchiness to it, like a child's house fashioned of coloured blocks and daubed with plasticine. The floors were gritty concrete, inadequately covered by our one thin cotton carpet, purchased in Aden, patterned with Oriental flowers in blue and magenta and labelled *Made in Amsterdam*. The stone fireplace, wonderful in appearance, did not draw. Our house was lighted with paraffin pressure lamps that puffed and spluttered, and our scanty water ration was kept in galvanized buckets. (36-37)

However, she ultimately embraces this rudimentary dwelling in the same spirit that Ella Manning treasures her first house, the abandoned Royal North-west Mounted Police barracks. "To my eyes," writes Laurence, "this house was perfect, for it was the first we had ever had. Always before we had lived in apartments or bed-sittingrooms" (37). She describes her frenzied acts of home decoration: "I rushed around, re-arranging the plain furniture, hanging our few pictures, swiftly sewing curtains from cheap flimsy cotton, making cushions for the chairs and embroidering them with giant snails in olive and yellow wool because this was the only design I could draw and the thick mending strands made the shape appear quickly" (37). She refuses, however, to engage in domestic talk with the other European incorporated wives, whom she disparages as 'the memsahibs.' It is a cultural moniker she recoils from when her servant, Mohamed, so addresses her soon after her arrival:

I could not face the prospect of being called 'Memsahib,' a word

which seemed to have connotations of white man's burden, paternalism, everything I did not believe in. Furthermore, I was not sure I would be able to cope with servants. We had a series of "hired girls" when I was a child in a prairie town, but they could not have been called servants – they would have been mortally offended at the term. Mohamed's deference embarrassed me. I need not have worried, however, for he was not humble in that detestable way, nor was any Somali I ever met. But I had no way of knowing that at the time. (23)

In describing her domestic life with the servants, she writes more about their need to cope with this perplexing memsahib who upsets order by her well-intended but misunderstood liberal ways than of her own difficulty in accepting this perk of colonial life. While Laurence does not engage in domestic conversation with memsahibs who take this perk for granted, and eschews the Hargesia Club and tea parties where such memsahibs congregate, she does interpolate their discourses of domesticity. Their laments about the hired native help are what Stevenson has identified as the "housewife's burden," in women's African travel writing (17). Laurence places the lament in italics to distance herself from it and to give the effect of a collective, monolithic voice: "*I'm certain Ali's got away with more than five pounds of butter this month – what on earth can one do? If I sack him, the next one will be exactly the same. We've had the new 'boy' a week now and he's impossible – doesn't know a carving knife from a teaspoon*" (162). Contrary to the chattering memsahibs, Laurence prefers to talk with and listen to the Somalis rather than talk about them with a community of disgruntled wives.^{viii}

In a misguided effort to participate in her husband's work, she invites three Somali elders into her house one day while Jack is in Burao. The purpose of their visit is to discuss the *balleh* project and express their reservations. Laurence writes,

I undertook to explain Jack's work to them, feeling that although I knew little of the technical aspects, they knew even less. Summoning all possible graciousness, I invited them in and asked

Mohamed to bring tea. The three old men sat on the edges of their chairs, their hands clasped around the knobbed canes they carried. Mohamed clattered in with the tea tray and stayed to act as interpreter. He seemed ill at ease, and fidgeted from one foot to another, avoiding both the elder's eyes and mine, focusing his gaze on a ceiling beam. (40)

She notes that the old men were "exceedingly polite," quietly nodding their heads at her explanations, justifications, and vindications of the project, but that the sole response made by one elder, was that "never in his entire long life had he known such a fine memsaib" (40). "*I handled that pretty well, I think; yes, I'm sure I did,*" Laurence muses over a cup of tea once the elders have left, until an agitated Mohamed rushes in:

"Memsahib – never do so like that, never no more."

"What?" I was startled, uncomprehending.

He sighed deeply, wiped his sweating forehead, and told me in consternation that a woman alone in the house must never invite men in, not even if they happen to be about eighty years old. To do so was a terrible breach of etiquette. Further, the elders could certainly not discuss any serious matter with a woman. (40-41)

Thus Laurence's ability to directly participate in her husband's work is severely hampered by the rigid, exclusionary gender codes of her host culture. She writes, "The elders' flattery, I saw now with painful clarity, was pure tact, directed at what they felt must be my feeling of awful shame at having thoughtlessly committed such a series of errors" (41). The next time the elders come calling, Jack is at home and Laurence remains in the background, mute and feeling as though she is in figurative *purdah* (the veil) (41).^{iv}

Passivity is not a position she remains in for long, however. Like Ella Manning, Laurence crosses a gendered labour divide as participant wife. While camping with Jack

and the labourers in the Haud, a fiercely dissenting delegation of Somalis from a nearby encampment approach one morning while Jack is away, and Laurence again takes it upon herself to plead the case of the *ballehs*. This time, the Somali men engage in debate. With cool aplomb, she volleys responses to their many heated queries. Her efforts bear only bitter fruit and the Somalis remain implacable. With her smattering of Somali, she translates their parting words as, “What does she know of it, the fool? She is insane, like all English. They are *shaitans*, devils . . .” (70). She attributes the failed exchange to the Somalis’ deep distrust of and resentment towards the English, attitudes that she finds perfectly justifiable, as well as to her own limited knowledge of the Somali language and country. While she does not seek solace from her unsuccessful efforts by reassuming *purdah*, neither does she take such an active role in her husband’s work again.

According to *The Prophet’s Camel Bell*, Laurence’s active participation in her husband’s work comes to a halt because she finds an undertaking of her own. The journey to Somaliland is made, we have seen, because Jack “felt a need to work for once on a job that plainly needed doing” (11) and she accompanies him as incorporated wife. Once there, Laurence confronts her own need to find significance in her travels apart from spousal support and home-making. From extratextual readings, we know that she began writing diaries, short stories, and a novel – endeavours that were omitted from her travel book. What makes the cut is her work as a translator of Somali poetry and folktales. King describes her translation work as a “parallel way of making a contribution to this strange land. Jack’s work was one of enlightened assistance, whereas Peggy’s was a fundamentally different one in which she searched for a way to make Somali culture accessible to the English” (90). Perhaps she felt comfortable including a description of her autonomous work as translator in this memorial to her disintegrating marriage because it was sufficiently distinct from her identity as a writer. Whatever the case may be, Laurence writes from the subject position of a translator of Somali literature, a position that extends beyond her domestic and participant discourses and evolves out of the confrontation between her self, her love of literature, and her new and unfamiliar surroundings. Although, like Page’s text, it is bereft of feminist rhetorics of resistance or

self-realization, the story of the incorporated wife as translator is a contextually feminist discourse of a woman's independent self-fulfillment

As Laurence's knowledge of the Somali language increases, she is introduced to the tradition of Somali oral literature, a rich and resonant literature well suited to poetry because so many of the Somali words are "of the portmanteau variety, containing a wealth of connotations" (45). "One evening," she writes, "an idea came to me. Could some of the Somali poems be put into English?" (46). She has found her Somali vocation but knows she cannot do it alone, so she bounces her idea off her friend Gus, a Polish poet and researcher of the Somali language and its phonetics, and his assistant, Musa, a well-known poet in the Somali language. Gus is keen; Musa, protective of his literature and wary of English translation, hesitates but finally relents. By the time she departs for Jack's labour camp in the Haud, she takes along a sheaf of notes to work on, several *gabei* (long narrative poems) and one dozen *belwo* (short lyric poems). In the camp, she adds a number of Somali folk tales gleaned from Hersi, one of Jack's labourers. In the desert, she translates the literature of a desert people while sitting in a brushwood hut made of twined acacia that the Somali labourers constructed for her, which she describes as "the most agreeable place for work which I have ever had" (138). Towards the end of the Somali sojourn, Laurence is forced to leave the desert camp and re-settle in the bungalow near Hargeisa due to a difficult pregnancy, where she completes her Somali translations. She leaves the completed manuscript in the hands of the top Administrative Officer of Somalia, a man who remains unnamed in her text but whom James King identifies as Philip Shirley, through whose efforts *A Tree for Poverty* was published for the Protectorate at Nairobi in 1954 (94). "Several years later," Laurence writes, "when we were in West Africa, I received one day a parcel and a letter. 'It took us a while,' the Administrator's note said, 'but we have managed it at last.'" (248). Laurence's *A Tree for Poverty*, a translation of thirty poems and thirty-six tales, was the first collection of Somali oral literature to appear in English.

The final text in my analysis of travel books by incorporated wives also comes out of Africa. In the early 1970s, the Visual Education Centre of Toronto contacted

documentary film-maker Hector J. Lemieux, a.k.a. ‘Red,’ about the possibility of making a series of films about Africa for the Britannica Educational Corporation. The literary manifestation of the ensuing journey to Ethiopia, Tanzania, Botswana, Liberia, and the Ivory Coast is written by his wife, Carlotta Hacker. At the opening of this unusual and entertaining travel book, *Africa. Take One: Wherein the Author, on a Modern Film Safari, Uncovers a Continent in Transition and the Ghosts of Victorian Lady Explorers* (1974), Hacker outlines her subject position as participant incorporated wife:

Visual Education Centre would produce the films and Red would write, direct, and shoot them. And I would be taken on as a member of the crew – not because either VEC or Britannia considered me indispensable (I had very little experience of the film business), but because Red had recently married me and didn’t intend to be separated from me for the best part of a year, and because *he* was indispensable. Red not only knew Africa (he had worked in Ghana for three years) but he had been making documentary films all his life, and most of his life he had been with the National Film Board. There was very little he didn’t know about film making. I still had a great deal to learn (5-6)

Hacker’s travelling situation is similar to Ella Manning’s forty years earlier. Both writers open their feminine discourse of wisely incorporation with a portrait of their husbands as capable, experienced workers in their fields and of themselves as novices who participate in their husband’s work through acts of nepotism. There the similarities end, however. Hacker makes more light-hearted fun of her struggles as novice because she does not regard her husband’s field as a testing ground for her worth. Rather than deprecating herself, she represents her participation as a comedy of errors. For example, she turns her experience of learning to “shoot sound” into slapstick. In the 1970s, before the days of video cameras, a cumbersome piece of recording equipment called the Nagra was required alongside a camera to synchronize sound and image. A wedding in

Botswana offers Hacker her first harried experience with the Nagra. After days of waiting for the chronically delayed event, it suddenly begins without warning:

And there ran Red, camera to his eye. I made a dash for the tape recorder, slung it over my shoulder. This nob . . . that nob . . . tighten the tape . . . earphones on. Panic! Why couldn't I hear anything? I hadn't turned up the sound . . . Now, all I had to do was attach it to the camera. With sync sound, the Nagra had to be connected to the camera by a cable – a long umbilical cord, which too often proved to be a trip wire when I was working the machine. Fortunately the procession was moving with sedate slowness and so was Red. There! Neither of us flat on our faces and neither of us playing Laocoön with snaking cables. I could relax and follow the service. (160)

She becomes quite adroit at chasing Red about with the Nagra as he bolts from one impromptu scene to another. However, disaster and chaos seem imminent with each new shoot as husband and wife perform their circus act like chimpanzees with film equipment. Indeed, in this comedy of errors, Red is on the list of *dramatis personae*. For example, his ability to communicate in foreign languages is mocked when he thanks an Italian *Commendatore* for his assistance in Ethiopia by saying, “*Merci beaucoup mon amigo*” (24).

By the time they reach Liberia, Hacker's job titles have multiplied:

If the sequence required lighting, Red would start off by acting as gaffer, while I either helped with the lights (gaffer's assistant) or took notes about the various implements which were to be used in the sequence (script girl). Then Red would become director and rehearse the cast while I shot some stills and turned on the Nagra to get the sound level. During the sequence itself we were director-cameraman and soundgirl. This was the most energetic part since Red normally ‘handheld’ so that he could be

mobile – and since the soundgirl was connected to the camera, she had to be mobile too. The sequence over, it was Red's turn to shoot stills, while I picked up some wild sound and filled in the shot lists. Then came the tedious business of unplugging the lights, putting everything away and clearing up the mess – though cast and audience very often helped us here. But none of them could help with the final tasks: the hour or more in our hotel room at the end of the day when Red became assistant cameraman, changing the film and cleaning the equipment, and I became continuity girl and typed up the shot lists and notes. (219)

Clearly, Hacker is a fully participating wife, a contingent labour force of one. The gendered specificity of her work-related titles, which is likely more glaring to a reader in the 1990s than the 1970s, suggests she is a shape shifter who crosses back and forth over gendered labour divides. She is *film wife*, *soundman*, and *continuity girl*, the middle designation an absurdity and the latter a diminutive which underscores her auxiliary, supportive function. Hacker, however, is delivered of domestic duties. Unlike travel books by other incorporated wives, her text does not include a domestic discourse because the couple roams through Africa in modern nomadic fashion, staying in hotels and eating in restaurants.

Hacker's text is laced with subtle satiric complaint about her working conditions and her husband, but without the lethal, mock-murderous tenor of Philomena Orford who, unlike Hacker, experiences her journey as an existential challenge to her identity and agency. A taste of Hacker's comic, casual complaint occurs in her description of filming in Gorgora, Ethiopia. She helps Red carry his equipment to a small cove that gives an excellent view of a lake as well as a rank smell she notices as they set up: "Looking down, I realized that we had set up camera in Gorgora's public lavatory. But this wasn't the moment for complaints. I held my breath and tried to be a dedicated film wife, while Red took a very long long-shot. And while he took another. And another" (29). On occasion, Hacker's complaints about her husband take a more serious, earnest turn. For example, she disapproves of her husband's temper and aggressive, heavy-handed ways.

On one of their first days filming in a small Ethiopian town, a drunken major wagging a pistol approaches, telling them to leave and attempting to confiscate the film. Red whips out a ministerial permit to film anywhere in the country and hands it to the major. Hacker wishes to leave the town pronto but Red refuses: "Red was in no mood to compromise; in any case, it is almost a reflex for him to fight back when attacked. So I stood my ground, trying to look as fearless as he, while the major slowly and skeptically read our ministerial letter" (29). When the major ignores the letter, Red "launched into a pompous speech about how we had every right to be here and how, as guests in the country, we were shocked to encounter such incivility" (30). The major relents, but Hacker's distress lingers: "I felt sad that we were fighting before we had even started the filming, and that Red, with all his ideals of friendliness and brotherhood, had been delivering haughty and aggressive speeches" (30). By their final shoot, Hacker is about ready to retire. She cannot get the Nagra to work, telling Red, "There seems to be a slight snag here, causing a spot of bother," when what she really wants to say is "I can't make this bloody thing work" (248-9). It turns out that the piece of equipment needs new batteries, a condition she is in empathy with: "I didn't feel I could carry on much longer. Like the Nagra, my batteries had run down" (249).

Film wife, soundman, and continuity girl are not the only subject positions Hacker inhabits and writes from during her safari. She is also a biographer interested in a gallery of women she refers to as the Victorian Lady Explorers – women travel writers who traversed the African continent before her. In describing her readings of books by and about these women as she travels the continent, Hacker produces a contextually feminist discourse. This autonomous research project speaks of interests and fulfillment beyond the role of husband's helpmeet, and conveys her own personal, creative response to her journey. Perhaps it was this project of Hacker's own that kept her somewhat balanced from the beginning of her journey, saving her from Orford's desperate fury and Manning's inferiority complex. Her engagement with the Victorian Lady Explorers is also a woman-identified discourse that reflects the author's interest in women's history. Hacker's other publications include *The Indomitable Lady Doctors* (1974), a history of Canadian women in medicine which was commissioned by the Federation of Medical

Women in Canada, and *Bravery* (1989), a popular educational text for junior-level history that features the heroic acts of Canadian women as well as men. Moreover, in 1979, she published a biography on E. Cora Hind (1861-1941), who made her name as the first female agricultural and commercial editor of the *Manitoba Free Press*, as one of the founding members of the Women's Press Club (1905), as an outspoken suffragette, and as a travel writer.⁴⁴

Hacker's *The Indomitable Lady Doctors* was published in the same year as her travel book, which could carry some reference to indomitable 'lady' explorers in its subtitle. In the first pages of her text, we find Hacker waiting, and waiting, as dedicated film wives often do, in a hotel room in Addis, Ababa, Ethiopia, while Red is calling on ministers and struggling with customs and airport officials to get his film equipment into the country. At this point she feels she does not "have a role to play" (6), so she engages in what she perceives as the guilty pleasure of reading other people's African travels. Right after justifying her reading as research for Red's films, she acknowledges that the research is actually complete and that she would find it difficult to put her books away even if Red suddenly needed her assistance. She expresses her particular interest in travel books written by women whose paths she was going to cross, and is reading Meg Gehrt's *A Camera Actress in the Wilds of Togoland* (1915) when Red returns to the hotel room, somewhat invasively: "He sat down heavily on the bed and the Togo book fell off it. A cloud of dust and a flea rose from the carpet" (5-6). Later, in Botswana, when Hacker and Red wait for their tardy cast to show up, Red quips, "It's *your* Togo film actress all over again . . . Her cast was always late, wasn't it?" [emphasis added] (149). As Red implies, these pioneering women travel writers are 'hers': they figure prominently in her African experience and travel book, but have no place in Red's films.

Hacker structures her travel book by country and by the Victorian women travellers who preceded her. In so doing, she imparts historical perspectives both of Africa and of the tradition of women's travel and travel writing on that continent. This link between present and past is registered in the chapter titles, which juxtapose the name of the country/region visited by the Victorian women travellers with the contemporary designation of place extant during Hacker's travels. Thus, in the chapter titled

“Abyssinia–Ethiopia,” Helen Pease’s *Abyssinia*, represented in a 1902 issue of *Travel and Sport in Africa*, contrasts with Hacker’s Ethiopia. In “Tanganyika–Tanzania,” the East Africa of Zélie Colevile’s *Round the Black Man’s Garden* (1893), Charlotte Cameron’s *A Woman’s Winter in Africa* (1913), and May French Sheldon’s *Sultan to Sultan: Adventures Among the Masai and Other Tribes of East Africa* (1892) is set alongside Hacker’s Tanzania. The Bechuanaland of Elizabeth Lees Price’s letters, collected in *The Journals of Elizabeth Lees Price Written in Bechuanaland, Southern Africa 1854-1883* (1956) and the Botswana of Hacker’s text rub elbows in “Bechuanaland–Botswana”. In the final chapter, “The Coast–West Africa (Liberia and the Ivory Coast),” Mary Kingsley’s *Travels in West Africa* (1897) is incorporated in Hacker’s representation of Liberia, Ghana, and the city of Abidjan on the Ivory Coast. In this way, Hacker uses her group of ‘lady’ explorers as guides to the past, and their texts function as touchstones that enable Hacker to uncover “a Continent in Transition,” as the subtitle of her travel book proclaims.

Hacker’s travelling ‘ladies,’ however, function as more than guides: they are companions in her travels and prominent subjects in her text. As she reads their texts, she becomes “deeply involved in their adventures: marching boldly across East Africa with May French Sheldon, determined to find the Masai warrior tribe; wandering unobtrusively through West Africa with Mary Kingsley; or screaming with Elizabeth Lees Price when she found a scorpion in her sleeve” (6). In summarizing her readings about these women and enveloping segments of their writing within her prose, sometimes seamlessly, Hacker creates a resonant intertextuality in *Africa. Take One*. Heather Henderson, in “The Travel Writer and Text: ‘My Giant Goes with Me Wherever I Go,’” mentions the “curious interplay between literary experience and lived experience” often present in travel writing (230). She identifies two types of travel writers, those who are “looking to inscribe themselves upon a blank page” and others who “reread an already written landscape” so that “the written word interposes between self and sight”(230). In her analysis of several male-authored travel books, in which the intertexts are other male-authored travel books, Henderson does not take considerations of gender into her account.

Hacker's text provides a distinct example of gendered intersubjectivity and intertextuality in women's travel writing. The full title of her book, *Africa, Take One: Wherein the Author, on a Modern Film Safari, Uncovers a Continent in Transition and the Ghosts of Victorian Lady Explorers*, with its lengthy subtitle, is a parody of the rambling titles given to Victorian travel books. The women travellers she "uncovers" in her relational text do mediate between self and sight, but they also become a significant subject in their own right. These "ghosts" are not merely textual guides of the sort described by Henderson; they are "excellent companions" as well (Hacker 7). The experiences of these ghostly companions converge and merge with Hacker's own, sometimes as seamlessly as does their prose, creating a fascinating *déjà vu* effect. This is especially the case with Meg Gehrtz who Hacker describes as "important" to her because, as film maker and actress, Gehrtz was "pioneering what we were doing" (27). Referring to Gehrtz's starring role in a 1913 film about the deification of a white woman by a tribe on the coast of Togo, appropriately titled *The White Goddess*, Hacker writes, "The white goddess accompanied us like a white ghost all the way round Africa" (8). Hacker never plays white goddess and is sometimes critical of Gehrtz's textual representation and treatment of Africans; however, when Gehrtz writes of the trials of filming in Africa, Hacker claims that she "could have been speaking for us, word for word" (246). In fact, the first line of Hacker's travel book, "*There seems to be no end to trouble when filming cinema plays in equatorial Africa*" (3), is Gehrtz verbatim.

In this meshing of experience, subjectivity, and text, Hacker often looks to her precursors for inspiration. She devotes pages to May French Sheldon, a flamboyant gun-slinging figure whom the Africans referred to as Bébé Bwana (Lady Boss.) Sheldon trekked inland through British territory that is now Kenya, circumnavigated Lake Chala, and returned through German territory which is now Tanzania. She was accompanied by one hundred and thirty-eight porters, who toted her in a palanquin when she wasn't leading the troops. Hacker writes, "She would never have thrown away her bra and joined the Women's lib. Yet there was a strong streak of the suffragette in her. One of the reasons she decided to lead a safari through East Africa was to prove that a woman could do so just as well as a man" (71). Sheldon did it just as well as male explorers, but

some of the strategies she used to gain authority in Africa, such as sporting a bejewelled court dress and big-haired blonde wig when greeting chiefs, demonstrate the gendered difference of her exploits.^{xvi}

Hacker incorporates a section of Sheldon's text where she awakens one night to find a python wrapped around the roof of her palanquin. Some porters brandishing knives set upon the creature just as she began to shimmy out of the palanquin. "*I am not ashamed to confess,*" writes Sheldon. "*it was the supreme fear of my life, and almost paralyzed me. I came very near collapsing and relinquishing myself to the nervous shock; but there was no time for such an indulgence of weakness*" (qtd. in Hacker 84). Sheldon's bravado inspires Hacker when she experiences her own fear-inspiring predicament. As she and her husband drive inland through Tanzania, they shut their windows against a sudden bombardment of tsetse flies, which gain entry into the van nevertheless. Hacker shrieks as the miasma of insects cloak her arms, face, and hair. Frantically swatting flies with her *Teach Yourself Swahili* book, she accidentally hits her husband on the head (87). As the van makes its way up a hill and the bug-clogged engine gives out, Hacker grows despondent:

What now? I gazed in despair at the flies buzzing angrily at the windows and realized that I was feeling weak enough for tears and very tired (could sleeping sickness be showing its symptoms already?). But, as Bébé Bwana would have said, this was no time for an indulgence of weakness – and certainly not for imaginary weakness. There was no alternative: we would have to get out and push. (88)

Echoing Bébé Bwana, she tells her self to "[f]ace it like a Briton à l'outrance" as she steps out of the van, but then wonders if it is "Briton-like" to wave her arms hysterically yelling 'shoo' (88).

At times, Hacker feels as though she is letting down her brazen textual/spectral companions. In Botswana, an elderly, wizened bushwoman offers her a fat roasted grub

for her eating pleasure, which Hacker simply cannot bring herself to ingest: “I was aware that I was letting down the lady travellers: Bébé Bwana would have gobbled it up, partly out of curiosity and partly to show that she didn’t despise the giver. Plucky Nellie Pease would probably have eaten it too” (162). Earlier in her text, Hacker describes Pease’s attendance at a banquet in imperial Abyssinia, where raw beef was being served freshly cut from the cow (18). Hacker reserves most of her admiration for Mary Kingsley and her travel book, *Travels in West Africa* (1897). Kingsley, Hacker notes, ate native food. travelled with a small group of African porters, carried a gun for self-protection that she never flourished (as Sheldon did), and expressed much respect for the African people she encountered (195-197). “Even more appealing,” writes Hacker, “was the fact that she spent much of her time laughing at her own antics, rather than at the easy mark – the so-called simplicity of the tribesmen” (198). At times, Hacker engages in the same sort of light-hearted self-mockery that Kingsley is known and adored for by her readers. Hacker admires Kingsley for another reason germane to this chapter. Unlike Hacker, who travelled with her husband, and the white traders Kingsley encountered who lived in Africa with many African wives, Kingsley “didn’t even have one husband with her” (195).

While Hacker admires Kingsley’s independence in travelling without a husband, it is accurate to say that all of the travelling wives explored in this chapter achieve a certain independence in their travels. In their travel books, we do find female subjectivities constructed by the feminine discourse of wifely incorporation, where the authors inscribe their husband’s work and their relationship to their husbands as domestic or participant support staff. We also find female subjectivities seeking an independent meaning and significance to their travels. The earliest traveller, Philomena Orford, uses housewife humour as a feminist discourse of resistance to a situation that makes her redundant in the Canadian Arctic. She finds her independent power and place by cordoning off the domestic sphere and making it despotically hers. In Ella Manning’s first Arctic travel book, she enjoys her role as a participant wife because it provides adventurous opportunities that would otherwise be denied her. By her second travel

book, she achieves independence as an Arctic explorer in her own right. In both texts, we find feminist discourses of resistance to those forces that threaten the fulfillment of her desires for adventure and meaningful work. P.K. Page, Margaret Laurence, and Carlotta Hacker find independent fulfillment through creative responses to their journey experiences: Page becomes a visual artist who captures the vibrancy of Brazil, Laurence becomes the anthologist of Somali literature, and Hacker becomes a researcher and biographer of Victorian women travellers to Africa. In *The Inner Life of Syria, Palestine, and the Holy Land* (1875), Isabel Burton, when asked what she did when she paid, packed, and followed her famous husband, writes, "I did the best thing I think a woman can do. I interested myself in all his pursuits, and he allowed me to be his companion, his private secretary, and his aide-de-camp" (36). Times have changed.

¹ One is reminded here of the contrast between two well-known Canadian settlement narratives of the nineteenth century, Susanna Moodie's *Roughing it in the Bush* (1852) and Catherine Parr Traill's *The Backwoods of Canada* (1836). Although these women are sisters by birth (née Strickland), write from the subject position of settler's wife, and produce discourses of domesticity, their texts are like night and day. Whereas Moodie maximizes her sufferings in dramatic representations that convey her bitterness, regret, despair, and fear, Parr Traill practices what she preaches to other would-be settlers' wives by committing herself to cheerfulness and by minimizing complaint.

² Orford may have even seen the film. In response to the book's huge success, Universal Studios turned *The Egg and I* into a 1947 film starring Fred MacMurray and Claudette Colbert and featuring Marjorie Main and Percy Kilbride as the stereotyped mountain folk, Ma and Pa Kettle (McCarthy 82). The book had other echoes in popular culture, such as the 1960s sitcom, *Green Acres*: "You are my wife," sings the husband in the opening song; "Goodbye city life!" the wife responds.

³ The tragic irony, whereby a ship carrying food, medical supplies, and medical assistance to the people of Baffin Island also carries fatal disease, is not entirely lost on Tom nor Orford. The following year, when the *Nanook* drops off its yearly cargo, Tom and Orford's newborn daughter, Catherine, becomes ill along with the Inuit. Orford and Tom discuss this phenomenon: "'I suppose the ship has to come,' I said to Tom one night, 'but it's terrible, just the same.' 'They got along fine without it before our lot moved in,' he said. 'I'd never thought about that. I don't suppose the Eskimo ever thought about it either. The White Man's Burden, indeed!'" (132).

⁴ When Orford and her daughters first disembark from the ship, a group of Inuit women crowd around and fawn over Penny and Zanne, who "stood woodenly, mystified as dark hands stroked their hair and pointing fingers drew attention to the blue of their eyes" (15). Orford's first reaction is horror as Nukinga, "this gross woman with the dark-skinned, perspiring face," encircles her daughters and rubs their noses with her own (20). When Orford sees how her daughters respond to this gesture of affection with expressions of

happiness and contentment, she is grateful and her fears of this ‘other’ race subside. From this point on, she only fears the Inuit will spoil her daughters through excessive kindness.

^v The same obituary mentions that Orford wrote short stories and poetry, publishing her fiction in *The Fiddlehead* (Robinson 15). Unfortunately, I have been unable to locate these after a careful search.

^w Burton’s exact message to his wife was, “I am superseded. Pay, pack, and follow” (qtd. in Blanch 82).

^x Isabel Burton’s strategy for overcoming the limiting social constructions of gender through marriage is evident in a letter to her mother, where she writes, “I wish I were a man. If I were, I would be Richard Burton; but, being only a woman, I would be Richard Burton’s wife” (qtd. in Blanch 9, 43).

^y There is also a strong counter tradition to cross-cultural breeching. In “Under Cover: The Paradox of Victorian Women’s Costume,” Birgitta Maria Ingemanson argues that many Victorian and Edwardian women engaged in adventurous travel – climbing mountains and traipsing through jungles – dressed in the feminine accoutrements of their fashion era: long skirts, corsets, high collars, hats, hairpins. Such clothing constructed “a façade of propriety behind which [they] were free to pursue the ulterior purpose of their travels: active participation in life” (5-6). Moreover, in *Spinsters Abroad: Victorian Lady Explorers*, Dea Birkett points out another paradox: Victorian women, she argues, wore Western feminine dress in colonized lands because it furnished them with the same privilege and power over the colonized as white men (116, 124).

^z Some of these women masqueraded as men, such as Sarah Hobson, who travelled through Iran in the early 1970s disguised as a boy, narrating her exploits in *Through Persia in Disguise* (1973). Others did not try to pass as male but just preferred wearing men’s clothes, such as Isabelle Burton, well known in Damascus as the Consul’s wife who happened to wear Turkish trousers.

^{aa} Many of them could no doubt have informed Friedan that she vastly underestimated the burdens of housekeeping and child-rearing, thereby replacing the feminine mystique – the problem with no name – with a problem named overwork and chronic exhaustion.

^{ab} The following points regarding Page’s artistic encounter with Brazil are expanded in my essay, “P.K. Page’s *Brazilian Journal*: Language Shock.”

^{ac} “Strange reason for breaking up a marriage: a novel” Laurence writes in her memoirs; “I had to go with the old lady [Hagar, the central protagonist of *The Stone Angel*] . I really did, but at the same time I felt terrible about hurting him [Jack]” (158). According to James King, Laurence also had to go with George Lamming, the West Indian writer who was residing in London in 1962, the year of the Laurences’ separation. Laurence had several brief affairs with Lamming while he lived in Canada on a Canada Council fellowship, and hoped to rekindle the liaison in London. hopes that were dashed when she learned of Lamming’s involvement with another woman (168-170; 191). I believe it would be erroneous to conclude that Laurence left Jack for Lamming. From reading both Laurence’s memoirs and King’s biography, it is clear that Laurence struggled with her role as writer and wife long before Lamming came along, and that this conflict was the primary impetus in her decision to separate. The Lamming episode may have been the immediate catalyst in her decision to move from Vancouver, where she had been living for several years, to London.

^{ad} Editing her travel diaries ten years after the event, Laurence recognizes that her representation of the memsahibs lacks compassion, so we get shifting perspectives on them. Alongside her postcolonial critique, she admits a sympathetic, gendered critique of their subject position as colonial wives: “I did not appreciate then the really desperate boredom of some of these women, the sense of life being lived pointlessly and in a vacuum. Nor did I perceive the need many of them felt to create a small replica of England here in the desert and the enormous effort they put into a task that must inevitably fail” (32).

^{ae} ‘Purdah’ is a word of Persian origin signifying a veil or curtain. In Muslim societies, such as the one Laurence encounters in Africa, purdah refers to the veils women cover their faces and bodies with, but it also refers to a gendered system of spatial and psychological segregation intended to isolate women from men and worldly concerns.

^{af} In my closing remarks to Chapter One, I mention the feminist ethnographic discourses prominent in Hind’s two travel books, *Seeing for Myself* (1937) and *My Travels and Findings* (1939).

^{ag} Sheldon is a contentious figure in the history and criticism of women’s travel writing. As Sara Mills notes, a number of feminist critics have celebrated characters like Sheldon as subversive individuals who

eluded Victorian gender conventions, and have ignored them as agents of imperialism (3). Writing before the mainstreaming of postcolonial theory, Hacker is one of the celebrants, although her praise is qualified. She admits that Sheldon was a “despot” with her African porters, but a “very benevolent one” compared to male explorers (76).

Chapter Four:

Conclusion

In the introduction to this study on English-language travel writing by Canadian women, I claim that one seldom finds gendered self-consciousness – an awareness of one's self as a gendered being moving though the world – in male-authored travel writing. There are, of course, exceptions to this general observation. Furthermore, in this age of gender studies, I anticipate (and hope) that this tendency to exceptions will evolve into a more commonplace trend in future texts. One notable exception is *Over Forty in Broken Hill: Unusual Encounters in the Australian Outback* (1992), a travel book by Canadian novelist Jack Hodgins. In this text, we find self-reflexive moments where Hodgins ponders the extent to which his journey across the rugged Australian interior with Aussie novelist Roger McDonald is informed by the conventions of masculine adventure. He renders this discourse of gendered self-consciousness with some sheepishness and plenty of humorous, self-mocking irony.

At a dinner party prior to setting out, Hodgins meets an Australian woman he merely identifies as “the famous novelist on my left,” who begins inquiring into his itinerary as she bounces her baby daughter on her lap. When Hodgins confesses his excitement about “exploring a brand new world of plains and Outback towns and ‘the bush.’” the novelist pulls an “envious face,” commenting, “This is the sort of thing that – all my life! – has made me wish I was a boy!” (8). Hodgins asks himself, “Was this to be a boys’ adventure then?” (8). When McDonald commences their journey waving, grinning, and honking the horn of his old sedan “like an exuberant teenager,” Hodgins decides, “The envious novelist with her baby on her lap had been right, of course. Two grown-up boys were setting off on an adventure” (13). During his journey, as he achieves a panoramic view of the serrated sand dunes of Lake Mungo Park, he reiterates: “It was all an adult playground after all, so that middle-aged middle-class men playing at being boys could feel what explorers must have felt, looking out upon the far side of hard-won vantage points” (70).

The exchange between Hodgins and the unnamed female novelist lends itself to two interpretations regarding gender roles that are germane to this study of Canadian

women's travel writing. Both times Hodgins mentions the novelist, he comments on her envy for his seemingly male privilege of movement into adventurous spheres and on the baby she carries like a paper-weight holding her in place. This representation has a faintly essentialist drift that is reinforced by the novelist's expressed desire to have been born a boy: it appears to imply that biological sex is destination in matters of travel. On its most basic level, this study exposes the absurdity of this sort of essentialism that naturalizes the travelling, 'home-free' male and the home-bound female, an essentialism that held sway for centuries. Women like Agnes Deans Cameron and her niece set out on challenging adventures much like Hodgins and McDonald's voyage. Moreover, we have seen how some women have different sorts of journey adventures that do not involve pitting oneself against an extreme landscape, and how some women venture forth with children in tow, like Philomena Orford and Bronwyn Drainie.

An alternative reading of the interchange between Hodgins and the female novelist concerns the influence of gendered discourse on the development of an acculturated subjectivity. According to a non-essentialist interpretation of the novelist's comments, she resents her life-long exclusion from the discourse of adventure on account of her gender because it has had an impact on her subjectivity, on what she perceives to be the possibilities of her existence. Not surprisingly, it is a woman who draws Hodgins's attention to the gendered underpinnings of his journey. As mentioned in the introduction to this study, men's subjectivity is gendered by discourses that often go unnoticed, except by women, who are more likely to 'gaze inwardly' at the constructions of gender that construct and constrain them (Middleton 1-14). Once the novelist draws Hodgins's attention to the gendered connotations of his journey, his text becomes self-consciously gendered throughout. As a man "over forty in Broken Hill" (title), he explores what he views as his somewhat puerile, foolish attraction to the conventions of the "boys' adventure". Women travel writers seldom require the tip-off Hodgins receives to recognize the constructions of gender informing their travels and texts.

I imagine that if the female novelist had decided to trust her infant to the care of another, set out on her own four-week Australian safari, and write a book of travels, we would find a subjectivity composed of gendered discourses quite different from those we find in Hodgins's text. Because travel and travel writing are, as I have argued,

thoroughly gender-inflected acts, gendered subjectivity and discourse are particularly prominent in travel books by both men and women. However, Hodgins and the novelist would negotiate different gendered discourses in their travels, in the writing of their travel texts, and in their constructions of their subjectivity as travellers. For example, rather than feeling slightly shamefaced about indulging in a "boys'" adventure, the novelist might have underscored the feminist subversion of her travels and of herself as traveller. Or perhaps she would inscribe a subjectivity informed by traditionally feminine discourses of worry over a child left behind or guilt about being a negligent, temporarily absent mother. These kinds of gendered subjectivities and discourses of difference in women's travel writing are what has been examined throughout this study.

In seeking the gendered specificity of the genre within the context of Canadian women's travel writing, I have isolated three discursive patterns that recur: the feminist ethnography, the feminine maternal quest, and the wives' travel tale of feminine adjunction and feminist autonomy. Chapter One, "Feminist Ethnographic Discourse," explores both the discourse of feminist ethnography as well as the feminist subjectivity behind these discourses in several travel books from the first and last decades of the twentieth century. In this comparative analysis, an ambivalence is occasionally discernible in the earlier feminist ethnographies compared to what we find in the later texts, which is attributed to a number of factors, including the effects of race, nation, culture, and ethnicity on representations of the 'other' woman. Chapter Two, "Travelling Daughters and Maternal Messages," examines the feminine matrocentric discourse in travel books written by Canadian women who journey to a land of ancestral origin. In travelling and writing their journey, these women recuperate lost maternal messages relevant to their national, racial, ethnic, or gendered subjectivities, which they accept or reject. Chapter Three, "Travelling Wives' Tales," analyzes travel books written by women who journey to places determined by their husband's professions. In these feminine discourses of wifely incorporation, the authors represent themselves as domestic support, as participants in their husbands' careers, or as both domestic and participant. They also express feminist resistance to these subordinate roles, or find an autonomous significance to their journey experiences, or both.

For the sake of clarity and close readings, I focus on one discursive pattern in each text, when in fact there is much more cross-over than this organizational structure is able to demonstrate. Several of the travel books analysed could easily have fit into another chapter. In Rona Murray's and Bharati Mukherjee's texts, for example, we find a probing feminist ethnographic discourse alongside the matrocentric discourse. Alongside Bronwyn Drainie's feminist ethnographic discourse, we find the subjectivity of a wife whose journey is determined by her husband's professional desires. Conversely, Margaret Laurence's travelling wife's tale is punctuated by a feminist ethnographic discourse. I chose to explore one discursive pattern in each text because my aims required some balancing. I wanted to convey the 'genderedness' of Canadian women's travel writing, but I also wanted to present as many texts as possible in some detail since most of them have received scant critical attention, if any.

While the three discursive patterns explored in consecutive chapters are prominent in the texts discussed, they by no means form an exhaustive list. For example, another fascinating area of inquiry, one that was broached tangentially in this study, is the gendered subjectivity we find in women's discourses of exploration and adventure. From early texts such as Dr. Susie Carson Rijnhart's *With the Tibetans in Tent and Temple* (1901) and Mrs. Leonidas (Mena) Hubbard's *A Woman's Way Through Unknown Labrador* (1908) to Victoria Jason's recent *Kabloona in the Yellow Kayak: One Woman's Journey Through the Northwest Passage* (1995), we find Canadian women traversing extreme landscapes. These spaces are inhabited by dangerous animals, but the one most threatening to these travellers' bodies and souls is not the lion, tiger, or bear but the human male. Moreover, in recent travel books like Joyce Meyer's *Ricordi: Remembrances of Italy* (1982), Karen Connelly's *One Room in a Castle: Letters From Spain, France and Greece* (1995), and Gabrielle Bauer's *Tokyo, My Everest: A Canadian Woman in Japan* (1995), we find women's stories of sexual adventure and exploration, where male inhabitants of the traveller's host culture are transformed into sights for seeing and sleeping with. Clearly, an analysis of gendered discourse in Canadian women's travel narratives of adventure and exploration would contribute another chapter or two to this study. However, I was forced to make a selection due to space limitations. I chose to include the discursive patterns we are least likely to find in male-authored

travel writing, where discourses of adventure and exploration are so conventional and ubiquitous. This decision is based on my desire to convey both the difference of women's travel writing as well as the potential richness, complexity, variety, and depth of the genre itself.

The emerging critical interest in the genre of travel writing – a relatively new field of literary study – is no doubt attributable to the proliferation of postcolonial, multicultural, autobiographical, and cultural studies in recent years. The earliest critical analyses of the genre tended to exclude women travel writers, which is why a separate examination of women's texts became so necessary. The first critics who began articulating the difference of women's travel writing confined their interests to mostly nineteenth-century, mostly British authors, which is why a study of Canadian, twentieth-century texts became so necessary. Thus, this project is in some respects one of filling in gaps, but (I like to think) in a way that both broadens and alters our overall impressions and understanding of the genre. The Canadian context, for example, provides matrocentric, diasporic narratives of return to a homeland – a gendered discourse one is unlikely to find in nineteenth-century travel writing by British women. Moreover, this study fills in the gaps left by analyses of Canadian women's autobiography, which tended to exclude the travel account despite its considerable autobiographical content.

In filling in gaps and striving to see a genre fully and whole, I have, I admit, inevitably created my own gaps. Although I have made brief references to men's travel writing for the purposes of comparison, I see the need for a more thorough analysis of gendered subjectivity and discourse in travel writing by Canadian men. Travel books by authors such as George Woodcock, Ronald Wright, Clark Blaise, Tim Ward, Norman Elder, John Moss, Patrick Anderson, Michael Ondaatje, Christopher Ondaatje, and Jack Hodgins, come to mind, as does the poetry of Earl Birney and Al Purdy. The travel writing by these authors is all fairly contemporary, but some research would likely lead to the discovery of a few older gems. Once this work has been done, a more integrated comparison between travel writing by Canadian men and women would be the next step.

As I mention in the opening pages to this study, my interest in Canadian women's travel writing commenced with my own Japan diary, which I used as a jumping off point. I was curious about the role gender played in the lives of other Canadian women with

respect to the interconnected experiences of travel and writing travel. Quoting Elspeth Probyn, I expressed my desire to engage a centrifugal critical methodology, one that extended my experience “beyond the merely personal” as a way of “reaching” the experiences of other women (Probyn 4). In so doing, I hope to have made a scholarly contribution to several disciplines, including women’s studies, Canadian literary and historical studies, cultural studies, and genre studies. This project, however, has had some centripetal rewards: although I wanted to extend my experience beyond the “merely personal,” I received satisfaction on a personal level in that I may now place my own travel jottings within the framework of a tradition.

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