

Intersecting Transnational English Modernisms in Interwar France

by

Dorothy Jane Dye

A Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Philosophy

Approved October 2016 by the
Graduate Supervisory Committee:

Deborah Clarke, Chair
Frédéric Canovas
Jack Mallot, Jr.

ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY

December 2016

ABSTRACT

This dissertation is a study of place and the ways that place plays a role in the stories we tell about ourselves and the ways we interact with the world. It is also the study of a moment in time and how a moment can impact what came before and all that follows. By taking on the subject of 1920s anglophone modernism in France I explore the way this particular time and place drew upon the past and impacted the future of literary culture. Post World War I France serves as a fluid social, political, and cultural space and the moment is one of plural modernisms. I argue that the interwar period was a transnational moment that laid the groundwork for the kind of global interactions that are both positively and negatively impacting the world today. I maintain that the critical work connected to the influence of 1920s France on Modernism deserves a more interstitial analysis than we have seen, one that expressly challenges the national frameworks that lead to a monolithic focus on the specific identity politics attached to race, gender, class and sexuality. I promote instead a consideration of the articulations between all of these factors by expanding, connecting and providing contingencies for the difference within the unity and the similarities that exist beyond it. I consider the way that the idea, history, social culture and geography of France work as sources of literary innovation and as spaces of literary fantasy for three diverse anglophone modernist writers: Jean Rhys, Claude McKay and William Faulkner. Their interaction with the place and the people make for a complex web of articulated difference that is the very core of transnational modernism. By considering their use of place in modernist fiction, I question the centrality of Paris as a modernist topos that too often replaces any broader understanding of France as a diverse cultural and topographical space, and I question the nation-centric logic of modernist criticism that fails to recognize the complex ways that language in general and the English language in particular function in this particular expatriate modernist moment.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank the members of my committee for their support and encouragement throughout this long process. Most particularly, thank you to my dissertation director, Deborah Clarke, for the incredible faith that you placed in me and for the kindness and grace with which you guided my scholarship. A special thanks to Ayanna Thompson a wonderful mentor and friend who helped me figure out how to do it all and who encouraged me endlessly.

To my family I want to thank you for always being so impressed with me even when I didn't feel particularly impressive. Mom and Robbie you are incredible anchors in my life and I am ever grateful for that. To my dearest friend and the love of my life, Jean-Patrick, thank you for all the bottles of wine, roast chickens and bags of peanut butter M&M's and for the meandering conversations and long hugs that you offered up to help push me through this process. And finally to my two incredible, funny and sweet loves, who have grown up with this dissertation, who helped ground me through the years of research and writing and who are stitched into every line, Alana, Zoé may you always find the kind of love and support for every endeavor you take on in your lives that I have had in this one. Alana and Zoé you are my sunshine and I love you to infinity and beyond.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER	Page
1 INTRODUCTION: FINDING FRANCE.....	1
An American Paris.....	1
Finding the Unity in Opposition: Transnational Modernism.....	3
Toward a Theory of Place.....	8
The Role of Language: Origins and Borders and Memory, oh my!.....	15
From the American Imaginary Towards a Transnational Modernism.....	21
Mapping the Divided City: A Case Study of Canonical Modernists.....	35
2 JEAN RHYS'S MAPPING OF IMPERIAL PSYCHOLOGY IN <i>QUARTET</i>	49
The Shape of the Modernist City.....	53
Writing the City: A Temporal Mapping.....	57
The Zones of Resistance in Imaginative Layering.....	69
The Role of Place and Imperialism.....	77
3 NOMADIC ORIGINS AND COLLECTIVE IDENTITY IN CLAUDE MCKAY'S <i>BANJO</i>	89
Mapping the Transnational City.....	95
Communal Constructions of Place.....	109
"Federated Speech" as Fragmented Universal.....	114
4 "LIKE RIPPLES ACROSS THE WATER": FAULKNER'S TRANSNATIONAL PALIMPSEST.....	124
Imaginative Layering as link between War, Race and Place.....	132
The Apocrypha of the Writer's France.....	137
"Ad Astra" and the Blurring of Boundaries.....	142
Echoes of Place in the Narrative Repetition of <i>A Fable</i>	149
5 Conclusion.....	162
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	167

Chapter 1 Introduction: Finding France

An American Paris

Shortly after the stock market crash of 1929, F. Scott Fitzgerald wrote the short story “Babylon Revisited.” It explores the dilemma of Charlie Wales, a man who must confront a past full of dissipation and dissolution in Paris in order to recover his daughter, Honoria, who has been in the custody of his sister-in-law since his wife’s tragic death. By recovering his daughter and establishing a stable domestic life, he hopes to move forward toward a future that can put to rest the memory of his past life in Paris and all the things sacrificed in its wake. The opening lines prepare the reader for the unexpected role the city itself will play in his efforts: “He was not really disappointed to find Paris was so empty. But the stillness in the Ritz bar was strange and portentous. It was not an American bar any more—he felt polite in it, and not as if he owned it. It had gone back into France” (675). When Charlie considers this strange change in his surroundings, he highlights the bizarre idea that a place in the center of the Frenchest of all French cities was at one point American. He at once observes and promotes the notion that something vitally American had happened on that otherwise foreign soil. He is not wrong. The story illuminates Charlie’s identity conflicts by connecting his past to his present, and uses the Parisian topography to map out his negotiation of both, demonstrating the role that place plays in the formation of identity and memory.

This dissertation is a study of place and the ways in which place in general, and France as a place in particular, play a role in the stories we tell about ourselves and the ways we interact with the world. It is also the study of a moment in time and how a moment can impact what came before and all that follows. By taking on the subject of 1920s anglophone¹ modernism in France I will explore the way this particular time

¹ In this dissertation I will use the terms Anglophone, Anglo and anglophone to different ends. Anglophone suggests the group of people and socially significant group that wielded (and still wields) a certain type of socio-economic power connected to the governments and cultures connected with their primary language. The shortened version, Anglo, removes the focus on

and place drew upon the past and impacted the future of popular and literary culture. Post World War I France serves as a fluid social, political, and cultural space and the moment is one of plural modernisms. Why is it, as “Babylon Revisited” beautifully illustrates, so easily portrayed as an American phenomenon? Is it quite simply because of the American identity of so many of its principle actors? The answer is no doubt yes: however, even those who can be safely stuffed into an American shaped box dealt with issues of identity that went beyond and between that of Americanness. By continuing to focus on what is American we perpetuate the myths of American exceptionalism, which are based on suppression of differences within the culture, emphasis of difference between cultures and, in the case of American studies, failure to acknowledge the transnationalism of Americanness.

I will argue here that the interwar period was a transnational moment that laid the groundwork for the kind of global interactions that are both positively and negatively impacting the world today. Consequently, I maintain that the critical work connected to the influence of 1920s France on Modernism deserves a more interstitial analysis than we have seen, one that expressly challenges the national frameworks that lead to a monolithic focus on the specific identity politics attached to race, gender, class and sexuality. I wish to promote instead a consideration of the articulations between all of these factors, demonstrating that we can and should study Americanness and Britishness and Anglophon-ness but that we cannot do so by drawing boundaries around those categories in our research, teaching practices and institutional organization. We must expand, connect and provide contingencies for the difference within the unity and the similarities that exist beyond it. I will engage in this effort by considering the way that the idea, history, social culture and geography of France work as sources of literary innovation and as spaces of literary

the linguistic and nationalist aspects of the term, and more fully emphasizes the socioeconomic factors that are byproducts of the national and linguistic. The more generic anglophone, however, refers to a person or group of people for whom English is a primary

fantasy for three diverse anglophone modernist writers: Jean Rhys, Claude McKay and William Faulkner. Their interaction with the place and the people make for a complex web of articulated difference that is the very core of transnational modernism. By considering their use of place in modernist fiction, I will question the centrality of Paris as a modernist topos that too often replaces any broader understanding of France as a diverse cultural and topographical space. I will also question the nation-centric logic of modernist criticism that fails to recognize the complex ways that language in general and the English language in particular function in this particular expatriate modernist moment.

Finding the unity in opposition: Transnational Modernism

My catapult for this study is World War I, a moment that confirmed fears about what modernity might bring, and how the uncertainty that had been sown in the latter half of the 19th century by changes in our relationship with time, space, God and social structures might propel the world into a whole new phase of modernity, with new fractures, disorientations and the desire for wholeness. The circulations and articulations that I explore revolve around the crossroads of 1920s France and they include the transnational economy, conditioned by war, and the transnational social and political movements that the same war catapulted into frenzied activity. This study explores what happens when these circulations come into contact with the movements of a kaleidoscope of writers grappling with the limitations of language and form for expressing the experiences of modernity, and struggling to transcend the constraints and expectations of social and political realities that further stilted their art.

Echoing Virginia Woolf's famous words, Henri Lefebvre outlines the way that the modern and all of its -isms and -ities impacted lived realities and conceptions of space early in the 20th century: "The fact is that around 1910 a certain space was

form of communication without commenting on that person's participation in the power dynamics of the Anglophone.

shattered. It was the space of common sense, of knowledge (savoir), of social practice, of political power [...] Euclidean and perspectivist space have disappeared as systems of reference, along with other former 'commonplaces' such as the town, history, paternity, the tonal system in music, traditional morality, and so forth" (24-25). With this shattering of space also came a duality that is at the root of all that is modern. Baudelaire explained it decades before Woolf and Lefebvre's paradigm shattering date, explaining how his depiction of the modern implied contradiction: "By modernity I mean the ephemeral, the fugitive, the contingent, the half of art whose other half is the eternal and the immutable" (13). In a similar way, James McFarlane later discusses the duality of the Modern that holds together both reflection and fantasy, the mirror image and the dream image. He gives an example by citing Virginia Woolf's *The Waves* (1931) in which one of the characters deals with the proximity of death with life and of joy with grief: "'such is the incomprehensible combination' Bernard said, 'such is the complexity of things, that as I descend the staircase I do not know which is sorrow, which joy'" (*The Waves*, 89). This duality, this contradiction that is so central to modern existence is also that sense that Yeats describes in the "The Second Coming" when he writes "Things fall apart; the center cannot hold." In this poem he highlights the fragmentation, a result of changing paradigms and the breaking down of systems, by invoking a center that implies a previously known or imagined unity—there is no fragmentation without unity. Similarly Marshall Berman writes that modernity "is a paradoxical unity, a unity of disunity: it pours us all into a maelstrom of perpetual disintegration and renewal, of struggle and contradiction, of ambiguity and anguish. To be modern is to be part of a universe in which, as Marx said, 'all that is solid melts into air' (Berman, 15). McFarlane invokes the nature of the system that is disintegrated in order to show how such disparate ideas reside in the concept of the modern. He writes that:

The very vocabulary of chaos - disintegration, fragmentation, dislocation- implies a breaking away or a breaking apart. But the defining thing in the Modernist mode is not so much that things fall apart but that they fall together [...]. The threat to (conventional) order comes not from the breakdown of a planetary system but from the repudiation of a filing system, where order derives as much from keeping separate as from holding together... (92)

The structure of language is intended to keep two concepts apart so that they can be understood and used to express distinct ideas, and so the defining characteristic of the Modern is that it forces the mind to work toward understanding the fusion of contradictions by entering into battle with the categorizing elements of language itself. Modernism provides tools that can mobilize the “sense of flux, the notion of continuum, the running together of things in ways often contrary to the dictates of simple common sense (though familiar enough in dream),” and it is these elements that seem capable of helping “in the understanding of certain bewildering and otherwise inexplicable phenomena of contemporary life” (McFarlane 80-81). In this study I will use transnationalism as a methodological approach that provides the tools to treat the duality inherent in modernity and to resist the constant recourse to a filing system that keeps things separate.

In *The Transnational Studies Reader* Sanjeev Khagram and Peggy Levitt attempt to lay down a framework of practices, questions and methods that make this interdisciplinary field an important and dynamic source for scholarship:

A transnational perspective does not assume away the importance of the global and local or the nation-state system form. It invites us to think about how these categories change when we don't assume that they are automatically linked to particular types of territory or space. It pushes us to confront how taken for granted categories, such as citizenship and identity, change when they are constituted across space. (4)

As is the case with the study of place itself, transnationalism reveals and explains articulations and puts into relief boundaries and borders without being limited by them. By bringing into focus the various levels of experience in the context of post-WWI France these frameworks provide a structure to challenge assumptions about what 1920s Paris means for literary, social and political development in the 20th and 21st centuries. They allow me to frame my discussion in a way that resists replacing one bounded representational space (the nation) with another (the empire, the globe, a language, a race, a gender, a sexuality) and instead emphasize the interactions, points of connection and problems that each embody.

The particular mode of transnationalism that I use is mindful of gender, class, and race, and it decenters the historical and geographical metropole in recovering female and minority modernists and in studying the role of gender and race in canonical work. Laura Winkiel writes that a transnational lens “asks readers to read dialogically, thinking about both metropolitan and colonial cultural elements that are held together in modernisms from the so-called periphery. Such an ethics of transnational encounter, Shu-mei Shih argues, demands that we hold ‘multiple and contradictory perspectives’ in view at once” (Winkiel 43). This focus on contradiction and multiplicity is a characteristic that modernism shares with transnational contexts. In fact, the transnational turn in Modernist studies, as outlined by Mao and Walkowitz in 2008, has opened up for serious consideration questions about the tendency to call Eurocentric texts modernist while affiliating experimental prose from the Global South and elsewhere as post modern hybridity and self reflexivity. Methods derived from this interrogation provide ways of challenging the center-periphery hierarchical assumptions imposed on texts, both canonical and non-canonical. I wish to engage in this practice at the heart of what we might call a geographical center: interwar France, and a literary/historical one: anglophone expatriate Modernism. These are centers that need no qualification in terms of their

literary importance, but if we apply a transnational lens to this center we can explore writers who have fluttered around the peripheries of it, and who are also linked to the geographical peripheries of the imperial binary; we can then put them into conversation with authors who have remained unchallenged at the centers. I operate under an assumption that I test in this study; that is, that any modernist writer undermines the hierarchical form of modernism while also reinforcing it. It is our job as critics to test and challenge canonical status and recover writers who have been unduly cast aside.

My blurring of boundaries exceeds what some may consider to be transnational because I align my view of the transnational with theories of intersectionality, first articulated by Kimberlé Crenshaw in 1991 to describe the way identity categories interact to contribute to systematic social inequality and oppression. As critics like Patricia Collins and bell hooks have used and expanded theories of intersectionality they have provided a way of thinking about the real-world implications of identity politics on individual subjects. I see transnational methodology as complementary to theories of intersectionality because both focus attention on encounters, layers and other types of interaction rather than creating or emphasizing new boundaries or insisting on totalities and universal concepts.

I see this study as following the vision of Paul Gilroy's study *The Black Atlantic*, a model of transnational methodology, in which he demonstrates the way that cultural horizons exceed national borders and are charted instead along the currents of a global economy that was established and propelled by slavery. He argues for a double consciousness born of the conflicting rapport between a desire to transcend constraints of national and ethnic identity, and the necessity of using these identities to formulate political alliances in order to overcome oppression from systematic structures within nation states and political cultures on both sides of the Atlantic. The primary advantage of a transnational theoretical framework is in its ability to deal

with issues of identity in ways that emphasize movement and displacement rather than static concepts like minority. Considering transnational identities helps usher in new conceptions of space such as that of diaspora space, which, as Avtar Brah argues, provides a location where displacement, borders and politics play out along many axes of power. The focus on movement and circulations found in the work of both Gilroy and Brah provides a “multi-axial performative conception of power” that “highlights the ways in which a group constituted as a ‘minority’ along one dimension of differentiation may be constructed as a ‘majority’ along another” (Brah 622). Highlighting the multiplicity of dimensions for the exercise of power is one of my primary aims and I do so by focusing on the way conceptions of space and place impact perception of identity. To do this I will consider the way that space and place are conceptualized within frameworks of power in much the way that Foucault discusses heterotopias as places that contain and connect with multiple spaces and times, manifesting differently in different places and times but connected in their status outside of known space. By constantly resisting the binary, by interrogating the contradictions and by examining the intersections of language and place we just might be able to pull those modernists of 1920s France into our modernity and learn what they have to tell us.

Toward a Theory of Place

Inherent in the local is the concept of place - a portion of land/town/cityscape seen from the inside, the resonance of a specific location that is known and familiar...Place is latitudinal and longitudinal within the map of a person’s life. It is temporal and spatial, personal and political. A layered location replete with human histories and memories, place has width as well as depth. It is about connections, what surrounds it, what formed it, what happened there, what will happen there. (Lippard, 7)

Before we can embark on any analysis of the ways that France operates as place and space in anglophone modernist literature we must first address the definitional difficulty of the place/space concept and outline a lexicon that will be of use in the analysis to follow. One way that geographers and philosophers have delineated the ideas of place and space is through metaphors of movement. Yi Fu Tuan, for example, links the idea of space to movement and place to pauses in that movement, arguing that “each pause in movement makes it possible for location to be transformed into place” (6). It is the pause, this stopping, that provides opportunity to connect the space to meaning and provides a sense of rootedness in those centers of potential security and care, generating an affective bond between people and places. Edward Relph, in a similar way, uses Martin Heidegger’s notion of *desien* (dwelling) to connect the idea of place with that of authenticity. He notes that since we cannot be conscious without being conscious of something—consciousness constructs a rapport between the self and the world—place is vital to determining experience: “The essence of place lies in the largely unselfconscious intentionality that defines places as profound centers of human existence” (43). For Relph, a place must have visibility (we can see it), a sense of community and a sense of the time that is involved in establishing attachment. In this way, place is the center for existential belonging, the idea that one can locate oneself inside or outside of a community based on fluid notions of authenticity attached to the place to which that community has attached itself. For Tuan and Relph, the idea of place is linked with rootedness, community and time spent in one location.

On the other hand, David Seamon, following Merleau-Ponty, sees bodily movement rather than rootedness as a key component of place. He focuses on habitual movements within places, a “body-ballet” that, when combined with many time-space routines in one location, creates a “place-ball” which generates a strong sense of place: “The mobilities of bodies combine in space and time to produce

existential insiders - a feeling of belonging within the rhythm of life in a place" (Cresswell 34). In this way the movement across space is a performance of authenticity that is connected with time. Thus one experiences a very different sense of place in certain quarters of Paris on Sundays or in Geneva on a city holiday, when the habitual movements of the city are disrupted by temporary pedestrian zones and holiday (in)activity; the sense of place is off and one experiences a strange sense of being out-of-place in spite of one's familiarity with the place. While in Relph's model, becoming an insider requires attachment and rootedness, for Seamon one is able to access this sense of belonging by participating in daily performances of place. I will use this contrast to explore the way that origins and a sense of belonging are manifest in the modernist text through the alternating use of movement and stasis.

In his study, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, de Certeau brings this idea of movement and dwelling together in his treatment of place. He depicts place as a two dimensional visual grid, a theoretical space on which we write out meaning with movement. Place, as an organizational principle, provides elements that are to be put into relation with one another in their own particular location; place is "an instantaneous configuration of positions" that imply stability, while space exists with consideration of direction, velocities and time "space is composed of intersections of mobile elements" (de Certeau 117). His focus is on structures rather than on communities and his interest is in the power dynamic between those structures and "ordinary practitioners of the city." In "Walking in the City" he explores the way that individual walkers operate in a field of everyday "tactical" practices that challenge the official rules of "the city", a place designed and produced by urban planners and other authorities and regulated with enforced "strategies". Using terms from Merleau-Ponty he explains that "These practices of space refer to a specific form of *operations* (ways of operating), to "another spatiality" (an anthropological, poetic and mythic experience of space), and to an *opaque and blind* mobility characteristic of the

bustling city. A *migrational*, or metaphorical, city thus slips into the clear text of the planned and readable city” (93). There are many possibilities within the topographical space and the everyday practitioner of urban space writes out those possibilities with his movement, uncovering possibilities that are non-visual and unknowable from a distance. This blind and migrational experience is contrasted with the visual, static and theoretical interactions with place that are possible from a distance. While he illustrates this with a view from a skyscraper, from the heights of a modern city, I will extend his arguments to also include landscapes and maps as theoretical and visual interactions with place that contrast with bodily experiences of place, such as walking : “When one goes up there, he leaves behind the mass that carries off and mixes up in itself any identity of authors or spectators...His elevation transfigures him into a voyeur. It puts him at a distance. It transforms the bewitching world by which one was “possessed” into a text that lies before one’s eyes” (92). The dialectic of the blind practitioner of space against a distanced voyeur of place is interesting because it provides both language and methodology for exploring the way a writer conceives, perceives and represents place in her fiction and I will use this framework to analyze mapping and movement in the work of all three of my authors.

It is perhaps in Henri Lefebvre's *Production of Space*, however, that we have the most clearly delineated framework for considering how space might impact a transnational literary and social analysis. His work deals more globally with space rather than focusing on the city per se, eventually coming to the conclusion that it is not the city itself that is the vital element but rather the production of space as seen in the intersections that characterize modern life, that is to say, intersections between the local, global, urban and rural. This model is instrumental in my analysis in decentering not only Paris as center of modernist France but also the concept of the urban, demonstrating that there is no urban crisis without rural origin and without the potential to return or to escape to non-urban spaces. Lefebvre’s use of the term

social space resembles humanist geographers' conceptions of place as *space+meaning* and this is the concept that permits me to consider the shifts between topographical and topological representations in the texts. Like de Certeau, and Foucault, Lefebvre emphasizes the power structures that frame and dominate spatial practices, making transgression and subversion inevitable and providing the grounds for the modernist experimentation that I will explore in this dissertation.²

Lefebvre writes that space is not a passive receptacle but has an active, operational, and instrumental role in the world; it is both a way of knowing/understanding the world and it is a thing-in-the-world. Although the links between the physical realities of the world and abstract concepts that are the basis of our knowledge of it are not always clear, we *do* know they exist. We also know that the concepts themselves—energy, space and time—can be neither conflated nor separated: “Space considered in isolation is an empty abstraction; likewise energy and time. Although in one sense this ‘substance’ is hard to conceive of, most of all at the cosmic level, it is also true to say that evidence of its existence stares us in the face: our senses and our thoughts apprehend nothing else” (12). In his quest to amend centuries of philosophical inquiry into space and the fragmentary nature of these inquiries, which he finds generally fetishize mental spaces into infinitesimal fragments, he calls for a unitary theory of space that incorporates all three fields of space: the physical (conceived), the mental (perceived) and the social (practiced/lived), and that provides for the interaction and interdependence of these fields. To do this he advances the proposition that social space is a social product and though we may track ways in which it is distinguishable from mental and physical space, it cannot be separated or isolated from them; all three must interact (24).

Social space contains social relations of reproduction (the organization of the family,

² Although they set up the terms differently—like Tuan, Relph and Seamon—Lefebvre and de Certeau still connect space to movement (i.e. the practice of space through walking, engaging) and the stasis with place, although here it is frame-like, visual and uninhabited, in stark contrast to the idea of dwelling in Relph's model.

sexes, ages) and relations of production (division of labor and hierarchies of control), and both sets of relations are bound up in one another in symbolic representations that may be overt and coded or covert and repressed: “Thus space may be said to embrace a multitude of intersections, each with its assigned [symbolic] location” (33). Lefebvre maps these intersections by laying out the triad of social space: spatial practice, representations of space and representational spaces, providing a framework I will exploit as I connect the idea of intersectionalities to transnationalism.

The first element of the triad, spatial practice, like de Certeau’s practiced space, includes the movements and rituals that permit social formation and locate the modes of production and reproduction. Spatial practices guarantee competence and performance of social mores but, as de Certeau argues, also include the non-sanctioned and subversive actions that ultimately challenge power structures. The second, representations of space, include the signs, codes and knowledge that permit a literacy of social spaces (38). These representations are based on what Lefebvre calls abstract space, which, like de Certeau’s theoretical place, functions “objectally” and implies distance, and some form of visibility. Abstract space, however, includes sets “of things/signs and their formal relationships: glass and stone, concrete and steel, angles and curves, full and empty. Formal and quantitative, it erases distinctions” (49) and it “works in a highly complex way. It has something of a dialogue about it, in that it implies a tacit agreement, a non-aggression pact, a contract, as it were, of non-violence. It imposes reciprocity and a communality of use” (56). However, while de Certeau’s theoretical space is located on a two-dimensional field and relegated to the physical/visual, Lefebvre’s representations of space provide a clear space for linguistic representations, more clearly linking it to the symbolic and therefore to knowledge and ideology. In this study I will use this connection to explore the intersections between imagination and social reality and the way that

modernists, by engaging with the limitations and potential of language and art, (sometimes) inadvertently embark on social and political projects the impact of which are readable only after the fact.

Representational spaces, the third element of social space, are closely aligned with de Certeau's practiced space. They embody complex symbolic systems and make up

...space as directly lived through its associated images and symbols and hence the space of 'inhabitants' and 'users', but also of some artists and [...]writers[...]who describe and aspire to do no more than describe. This is the dominated—and hence passively experienced—space which the imagination seeks to change and appropriate. It overlays physical space, making symbolic use of its objects. (39)

Representational spaces are therefore lived spaces that include at once the structures of power—as reified by spatial practices and symbolically manifest in representations of space—and the actions that submit to and resist that power. They are also the material that writers and artists seek to “change and appropriate” through imaginative transformation. In this way, representational spaces resemble Foucault's heterotopias because they create an imaginary order and reason that highlights their inexistence elsewhere. It is the imaginative transformation of space that I will examine in increasing degrees as I analyze the work of the writers I have chosen for this study. Although set up as a triad of social space, Lefebvre's three elements also embody physical and mental spaces and their interaction with social ones. In this way, his quest for a unitary theory of spaces provides tools for subjective, objective, global, local, universal and fragmented analyses of space that focus on connections, intersections and layers rather than on binaries and oppositions. I will exploit these analytic tools to make my own connections between texts that tell alternative stories about the place of France in anglophone modernist literature.

The Role of Language: Origins and Borders and Memory, oh my!

De Certeau explains how the enunciative function of walking within the urban system corresponds to a speech act within a linguistic system, embedding meaning into the topography through movement, as language does through morphemic engagement. “The walker transforms each spatial signifier into something else” he writes:

...whether by making choices among the signifiers of the spatial “language” or by displacing them through the use he makes of them. He condemns certain places to inertia or disappearance and composes with others spatial “turns of phrase” that are “rare,” “accidental” or illegitimate. But that already leads into a rhetoric of walking. (98-99)

Walking includes turns and detours that might be compared to “turns of phrase” or “stylistic figures” and the idea of mapping a text provides a method for visualizing these traits in physical ways. He suggests that just as the street is a place and the act of walking is a space produced by interacting with that street, so a text is also a place and the act of reading is a space produced by interaction with that text. He adds that “style and use both have to do with a “way of operating” (of speaking, walking, etc.), but style involves a peculiar processing of the symbolic, while use refers to elements of a code. They intersect to form a style of use, a way of being and a way of operating” (100). In a similar manner, Cresswell explains structures of place by using an analogy to language. He writes:

A language such as English clearly provides a structure of vocabulary and grammar. Stray too far from these rules and we cease to make sense. Having said that no use of language is entirely the product of rules. People use language in different ways. Sometimes these uses do not comply with rules. If this happens enough the structure, language itself begins to change. Without the structure, the individual use of language would have no meaning - in this

sense structure enables. Without people practicing the language the structure would be no structure at all - it would be a dead language. (35)

Indeed, place also provides at any given moment a geographically specific set of structures (and expectations) but no one can absolutely predict what any one person or group of people will do within that space. In this way, we can see how both language and place can be instruments of control or resistance and this revelation helps to uncover not only the way that transnational identities operated in 1920s expatriate France, but also the way that their intersections influenced and continue to impact modernist literature.

In the case of place, it is the movement across the space that enacts this instrumental role, but the use of language as an instrument of power is also tightly wrapped up in that process; the naming³ of places and marking of borders intertwines language and place in a topographical grammar—any space is abstract and infinite until we name it. Names are ideas; they give meaning, which transforms space into place. De Certeau writes that names:

...detach themselves from the places they were supposed to define and serve as imaginary meeting-points on itineraries which, as metaphors, they determine for reasons that are foreign to their original value but may be recognized or not by passers-by; a strange toponymy that is detached from actual places and flied high over the city like a foggy geography of “meanings” held in suspension, directing the physical deambulations below... (de Certeau 104)

These names may be read or not and readable or not to the practitioners, but regardless of their legibility, they contribute to the palimpsest of meaning and history

³ Names are ideas; they give meaning which transform space into place - but they may be read or not, readable or not to the practitioners - the walkers of the city. Names “detach themselves from the places they were supposed to define and serve as imaginary meeting-points on itineraries which, as metaphors, they determine for reasons that are foreign to their original value but may be recognized or not by passers-by; a strange toponymy that is detached from

with which one engages in any interaction with place. The importance of naming, or at times, the artistic un-naming of places and spaces is a critical feature in modernist literature and this element takes on greater significance in a transnational framework where boundaries are blurred and places become layered, interchangeable or cross-referenced. Names also provide rationale for the borders that shape (however contingently) the spaces themselves and they are ubiquitous in all space systems, be they mental, physical or social:

From the distinction that separates a subject from its exteriority to the distinctions that localize objects, from the home (constituted on the basis of the wall) the journey (constituted on the basis of a geographical “elsewhere” or a cosmological “beyond”), from the functioning of the urban network to that of the rural landscape, there is no spatiality that is not organized by the determination of frontiers. (de Certeau 123)

Just as the naming of space provides meaning, thereby transforming it into place, so borders, which inevitably follow that naming, also determine spatial systems, providing structures of identity and foundations for narrative within space. In the blurring and transgression of these boundaries that we will observe in the following texts, we see the way that transnational modernism reveals the machinations of spatial systems and challenges both their preeminence and the fixed nature we attribute to them.

The connection that both de Certeau and Cresswell make between the structure of space and that of language is particularly interesting for this study because of the way that both elements, place and language, are tied up together in modernist writing, and the manner in which each plays a central role in the formation and expression of identity. The parallel operations in the structures of language and space mean that in literary criticism, especially in the domain of textual analysis, intersections between

actual places and flied high over the city like a foggy geography of “meanings” held in suspension, directing the physical deambulations below...” (de Certeau 104).

the two can be fruitful in understanding the way each concept operates individually in the text. Such a theoretical framework can also help us to explore the interaction between national and regional place concepts and the official and non-official languages used to construct and articulate those “imagined communities,” thereby influencing the construction of identity and the balance of power-relations between individuals and societal constructs. In William Faulkner’s use of France as a place concept, for example, we will consider the ways that he combines and layers U.S. Southern and French spaces in order to challenge received notions of both by blurring lines between physical, imagined and social aspects of space through poetic use of language.

De Certeau shows how the parallel structures of space and language can also extend into a narrative understanding of place that creates what he calls “spatial stories.” He notes the way that stories “traverse and organize places; they select and link them together; they make sentences and itineraries out of them. They are spatial trajectories [...] stories, whether everyday or literary, serve us as means of mass transportation, as metaphorai. Every story is a travel story— a spatial practice” (115). De Certeau uses spatial practices to make a connection between memory and identity through ordinary experience. He writes that “The memorable is that which can be dreamed about a place. In this place that is a palimpsest, subjectivity is already linked to the absence that structures it as existence and makes it “be there,” *Dasein*” (109). He continues that it is the repetition of the initial experience of identification, that is to say, the separation from the mother’s body, that plays out in spatial practices: “It is through that experience [of birth] that the possibility of space and of a localization (a “not everything”) of the subject is inaugurated” (109). The symbolic and imaginative construction of space is constantly reaching back to our origins, and our desire to discover new places is founded on the desire to reconstruct that initial experience of separation and construction of space that permitted the realization of

identity, that relation between our consciousness and the outside world. As Relph argues, this relation must have a place, it cannot occur without that primordial element. Consciousness inhabits places, making place-as-idea a universal phenomenon in human existence. In this dissertation, I argue that place concepts are universal, in that they are imbedded with functions that are critical to human survival and fulfillment. They are vital to identity formation in much the way we think of life events shaping who we are:

Place is the raw material for the creative production of identity rather than an a priori label of identity. Place provides the conditions of possibility for creative social practice. Place in this sense becomes an event rather than a secure ontological thing rooted in notions of the authentic. Place as an event is marked by openness and change rather than boundedness and permanence. (Cresswell 39)

In this model of place-as-event we see both particular and universal functions at work. Place is not only Lefebvre's 'space of meaning' for a person or group, complete with material and or visual form, but it is also a concept that performs universal functions while shape shifting according to social context and individual experience. Bachelard's image of the home as a privileged kind of place that frames the way people think, is a prime example that uses psychoanalysis to connect the structure that the idea of 'home' takes in our minds to the physical properties of an actual home, demonstrating the ways that our minds use, manipulate and recreate spaces and how the aggregate lived and visualized spaces of 'home' then shape that concept.

This phenomenological approach to place provides a framework for imagining transnational spaces that respond to various cultural contexts without privileging a Eurocentric patriarchal one. Although Bachelard's analysis of the home-concept is problematic, because the shape his model house takes, with its attics and cellars, is extremely Eurocentric, the place-concept of home does not forcibly have to take such

a shape but rather communicates ideas about what a home can and should be to any human being regardless of cultural background. In this model, the focus is on the relational quality of consciousness as creator of links between the self and the world. These concepts take various material and visual forms corresponding to the individual and his cultural contexts, but the concepts themselves are universal. The difference within the universal is the place where the art of the narrative (and by extension of all artistic endeavors) resides.

De Certeau also connects the idea of place-as-symbolic-image with the movement of travel. Quoting Levi-Strauss, he makes the case for travel as inherently motivated by the quest for identity and as a productive source for reformulations of originary tales: “What does travel ultimately produce if it is not, by a sort of reversal, “an exploration of the deserted places of my memory,” the return to a nearby exoticism by way of a detour through distant places, and the “discovery” of relics and legends...” (107). In this sense, place becomes a receptacle for stories, for memories and for the pieces that construct human identity, while the movement between and within places becomes the story itself, the memory relived and retold.

The way that people navigate place, both physical and conceptual, has a connection to the way they construct their identity and the way they place themselves within social structures. Lefebvre writes that “From the point of view of these subjects [actors in space], the behaviour of their space is at once vital and mortal: within it they develop, give expression to themselves, and encounter prohibitions; then they perish and that same space contains their graves” (34). It is this intersection of place, as constructed and performed through dwelling and through movement, and associated with (hi)stories, that most concern us here. The places themselves, at any given moment in time, hold collections of stories that remain separate and yet connect, in subterranean ways, the lives of those who negotiate those spaces: “Places are fragmentary and inward-turning histories, pasts that others

are not allowed to read, accumulated times that can be unfolded but like stories held in reserve, remaining in an enigmatic state..." (de Certeau 108). Memory retraces origins through the lens of time, connecting pasts and presents, foreseeing futures that will recount the stories, that will construct histories all tied together through the structures of language and place.

Both geographical models of place-making—dwelling and performative movement—connect space with time in order to produce meaning. Time is required to establish links but time is also a factor in establishing the events and other associations that will construct the idea of place. "Social spaces interpenetrate one another and/or superimpose themselves upon one another. They are not things, which have mutually limiting boundaries" (Lefebvre 86-7). Borders are inherent to place, both social and symbolic, providing the structure for the idea of inside/outside, center/periphery and yet, as Lefebvre argues, they are not mutually limiting. We write and rewrite the spaces we inhabit, layering meaning, and either reinforcing the structures that shape them or resisting them through our movements and interactions by crossing, blurring, breaking and reorienting borders. Place is full of narrative, many stories from many people layered upon one another and making or missing connections. In this way place is both primordial—it contains and shapes human experience—and it is constructed, for memory and event continually transform and shape the place.

From the American imaginary towards a transnational modernism

Until recently the American expatriate experience had largely overshadowed the diverse interactions of 1920s Paris. This, I argue, is a result of the nationalist mythologies that supported the cult of celebrity that many writers and artists of the period perpetuated in their work. Is it possible to overstate the almost obsessive quality of the American imagination with regard to France, especially with regard to the idea of being an expatriate, of living in France? Enter the words France,

American, and Expatriate into any search engine and the number of results and lists of books, movies and articles on the topic are astounding. The American obsession with her republican sister has extended over the last two centuries and is arguably rooted in Franco-American exchanges that date back to the Revolutionary War and before. The most myth-generating period, however, is most certainly that of the period following the First World War, a period that piled together the lingering paradigm-shifting symbolism of The Great War with the subversive music and literature of the Jazz Age and Modernism, not to mention a monetary exchange that permitted the affluent to live like royalty, the middle-class to live comfortably and the lower-class to get by in an environment that permitted foreigners, especially of the English-speaking variety, freedoms unimaginable in their home countries. It also offered an unparalleled literary and artistic breeding ground where the most innovative thinkers of the period gathered, supported one another and provided plenty of dynamic material for the exploration of the modern condition through art. Gertrude Stein once explained that “Paris was where the twentieth century was,” and indeed, the community, connections and life experience that such concentrated creative activity offered seemed impossible anywhere else on the planet (Stein, *Paris, France* 11-12).

The fact that so much of this information has become common knowledge is in no small part because of the literary talent and influence of the period’s most celebrated participants. Not only did many of the novels from the period draw on the life and experiences of the expatriates, but in the years following the Roaring Twenties, a number of writers published memoirs that immortalized the artistic and social lives of those involved. Malcolm Cowley’s *Exile’s Return* (1934) remains a touchstone for critics because it was one of the earliest models of this genre, although Gertrude Stein’s *The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas* (1933) has had perhaps the most wide-ranging influence on other writers. As Craig Monk writes in his survey of

autobiographical fiction from the period: "Virtually every expatriate auto-biography after [Stein's], every remembrance that dealt with the interwar period and the flowering of high modernism among Americans abroad, would have to come to terms with [her] story" (64). Indeed, just as she reined over literary gatherings at her rue de Fleurus studio, so her work shaped the work that followed, including Hemingway's *A Moveable Feast*, (1964) which endures today as the most popular and ubiquitous of these memoirs. Other examples include Robert McAlmon's *Being Geniuses Together: An Autobiography* (1938), Samuel Putnam's *Paris Was Our Mistress: Memoirs of a Lost and Found Generation* (1947), Sylvia Beach's *Shakespeare and Company* (1956), Janet Flanner's *Paris Was Yesterday*, a collection of her weekly columns from the 20s and 30s, when she was Paris correspondent for *The New Yorker*, and Kay Boyle's revision in 1968 of Robert McAlmon's autobiography, in which she intersperses her own recollections with his, contradicting "the antagonism at the heart of McAlmon's remembrances" and raising "serious questions about textual authority and autobiographical voice" (Monk 18). This mise-en-question of textual authority was an important step in the history of the American expatriate genre, but so powerful has been the influence of those originary mythologies that there remains much work to be done to uncover the silenced voices and stories of the period.

As "Babylon Revisited" so artfully demonstrates, Paris had become the stage for a flagrant show of monetary force by a colony of Americans transplanted, in part because of the moral and legal constraints at work in the United States, but perhaps more tellingly because of the power of the dollar and the moral superiority that became a part of American identity in light of U.S. influence on the outcome of the war. The money was critical. It was power, and it "made things happen" (Kennedy 320). As Gerald Kennedy notes, this type of culture was propagated within an order where "Paris figured as the symbolic reward for Yankee cleverness, an artificial paradise that, according to a new mythology of American exceptionalism, yielded its

pleasures to the moneyed expatriate” (320). That Fitzgerald participated in and portrayed this mythology is evident and that his portrayal has helped to guide the view of interwar expatriate modernism in France is perhaps to be expected. However, accepting the resulting simplifications and monolithic portrayals it has inevitably produced has done a great disservice to literary criticism. Furthermore, given the clearcut power dynamic propagated by money and perceived moral superiority, any study of this time and place, and of the modernisms that it produced must lead inevitably to connections and intersections with “postcolonial,” class, gender, and race-based frameworks that interrogate power structures and influences.

The France of the American imaginary was not wholly formed, however, from published works by American expatriates. French literature had long influenced American readers and as the century turned into its second decade, there were so many Americans sending word home that a word of mouth experience also contributed to an imaginary conglomerate with far-reaching effects. The poet Wallace Stevens, for example, never stepped onto French shores, and yet spent his life visiting vicariously and poetically through the experiences and words of others and through the power of his own imaginative journeys. In a letter to Paule Vidai he wrote: “I am one of the many people around the world who live from time to time in a Paris that has never existed and that is composed of the things that other people, primarily Parisians themselves, have said about Paris. That particular Paris communicates an interest in life that may be wholly fiction, but if so, it is precious fiction” (773). A proprietary vision of France, here represented by the city of Paris, formed in imaginations, and ratified by those who took up residence, wielding their monetary influence, became entrenched in the popular imagination through transatlantic literary and epistolary correspondence. That sense of ownership remained long after the monetary foundation on which it had flourished had collapsed, nourished by a unifying American expatriate mythology.

One problem is that this national mythology fails to acknowledge internal divisions, such as the various goals and perspectives of the many American expatriates that flocked to France in the years following the war. There were, for example, social expatriates who sought liberties not attributed them because of race or gender, there were the many business expatriates for whom being in France was essentially a financial maneuver, and there were those who had nothing at all to do in France except to live cheaply, who had enough money that they were able to live extravagantly without the need to work or others who could live modestly on a very small income. That last group included many literary and other artistic expatriates like Hemingway and Fitzgerald who sought out the active and innovative literary circles, as well as a connection to the history of great innovative and revolutionary literature that France had provided for centuries.⁴ In the national mythology, American expatriates usually stand in for the literary set—the “Lost Generation” as Gertrude Stein insisted, to Hemingway’s great annoyance—and in this way the complicated transnational nature of English-speaking communities is often overlooked, blinding us to the way issues of identity, even of specifically American identities, were complicated by British, Caribbean, Southern (U.S.), French, Irish, Black, Female, Lesbian, Gay and many other categories of identity.

Another problem with the expatriate mythology is in the assumption that the social liberties of the period applied to everyone.⁵ Many Americans enjoyed freedoms that most of those native to France or other nations did not. The complicated political environment following the Dreyfus affair and continuing through the First World War divided literary salons and created backlash against various groups of people,

⁴ See, for example, Malcolm Cowley’s *Exile’s Return* pages 102-3.

⁵ The complicated political environment that erupted just before the turn of the century in the wake of the Dreyfus affair demonstrated the contradictory nature of the social and political landscape and highlighted the warring factions that struggled over a unified national image of reasoned enlightenment and a revolutionary and experimental nihilism as well as every position in between. This struggle had been raging for centuries, always with new innovations replacing those of the past that had assimilated into that unified national past.

touching even the most exclusive literary salons, which before had been havens for the aesthetic over the political. Any sober examination of these political and social machinations reveals the society to be much less open than is often claimed—homosexuality, though not criminally punishable for men, was indeed punishable for women and certainly prompted various degrees of social punishment. Shari Benstock notes that “the rigid structure of French life demanded varying degrees of sexual discretion according to social class” both with regard to sexual promiscuity and homosexuality. Men generally enjoyed relative freedom with regard to sexual behavior because of the patriarchal foundations on which those mores were based. Some upperclass women were protected either by their status or by their ability to gather and travel by private means, while middle and lower-class women were more vulnerable to legal and social censure. Similarly, many Black Americans, who were experiencing new-found freedoms, were eventually shocked to discover the insidious forms of racism directed at blacks who came from French colonies.

Furthermore, such a mythology does not allow us to interrogate the diverse views and experiences of those involved in the moment. Jean Rhys, for example, one of the authors I will consider in depth, did not hold American citizenship; but she did come from islands in the Caribbean that complicated her British identity in numerous ways. Can her involvement in "the moment" help in the interrogation of Americanness? Can we interrogate Americanness without resorting at some point to its originary and contemporary connections with British identities? Can Jean Rhys help us understand Hemingway and Fitzgerald and Stein better? To what extent was there an interrogation of identity based on linguistic relations between anglophones, between francophones and anglophones and between speakers of the many other languages that could be heard on the streets of 1920s Paris? For example, Rhys was highly critical of what she saw as the expatriate artist's failure to integrate with the French:

The “Paris” all these people write about, Henry Miller, even Hemingway etc was not “Paris” at all — it was “America in Paris” or “England in Paris”. The real Paris had nothing to do with that lot. — As soon as the tourists came the Montparnos packed up and left. ... These so called artists with dollars and pound sterlings at the back of them all the time! As immoral as they dare ... and when they return to their own countries it’s always on the back of Paris they put everything they have done. Considering no Parisians will have anything to do with them ... And if I saw something of the other Paris—it’s only left me with a great longing which I’ll never satisfy again. (The Letters of Jean Rhys, 280)

If we take her comments to heart we might be inspired to examine this ‘failure to integrate’ and we might discover how the idea holds up and how it does not.⁶ I will begin this study by examining how Fitzgerald and Hemingway did and did not integrate into French society and the influence such interactions had on their work and lives as well as their perception of place and its role in identity.⁷ I will also

⁶ Many other examples exist to demonstrate the diversity of experience and views just using the authors I deal with here:

McKay is associated with American expatriates because he lived there for a time, because he returned there to die and because of his importance in the Harlem Renaissance, but by unquestioningly labeling Rhys as “British” expat and McKay as “American” expat we fail to see their similarities as Caribbean writers and as people who lived long portions of their lives in France, integrating in many ways into French society, thereby setting them apart from expats like Fitzgerald and Hemingway and even more from Faulkner, who was more of a tourist with expatriate feelings, reminiscent of those expressed by Wallace Stevens. Faulkner, however, it might be said, integrated into French society in ways that none of the other authors did — for the French youth Faulkner “is a God” Jean-Paul Sartre declared in assessing the importance of *The Sound and the Fury* on French literary culture.

⁷ Another example might come from Kay Boyle whose complex identity position she discusses in *Being Geniuses Together*. She identifies with a national literary project and yet her own identity positions seem to also exclude her and provide an interesting critique on the more well-known stories. She writes “It was in the late twenties that I went to live and work in Paris, and I was then still a French citizen (through my marriage). These two facts would seem to disqualify me as a member of the lost generation or as an expatriate. But I was there, in whatever guise...” (11) She then suggests that part of what was happening in expatriate Paris was the dismissal of an inherited language and its restrictions: “The revolt that *Being Geniuses Together* bears witness to was against all literary pretentiousness, against weary, dreary rhetoric, against all the outworn literary and academic conventions. “Down with Henry James! Down with Edith Wharton! Down with the sterility of ‘The Wasteland!’” the self-exiled revolutionaries cried out. They (and I among them) had Walt Whitman to turn to, but the most highly respected American authors of the past century were given no quarter. There was

consider the ways that the emphasis on Paris influences the reading of their work and obscures the importance and character of France as a whole in their treatment of place. This exploration will prepare my exploration of Jean Rhys, Claude McKay and William Faulkner by laying out the current critical landscape and popular image of 1920s expatriate France and turning it on its head.

The literary criticism that has focused on uniquely national experiences of modernism, whether British, American or other, tends to focus on the way the expatriate experience helped the writers articulate their national identity; this study challenges that view by exploring the way that transnational identities are forged in such a context. I dismiss the simple classifications that we often thrust upon anglophone expatriate writers—who are generally considered either American or British even though their backgrounds may be too complex to fit in such confined boxes—and emphasize instead the ways that their work and their lives challenge national identity constructions.

When critics and biographers have moved beyond national narratives of the American or Brit in Paris, it has usually been in the interest of another identity politic, thus we have Shari Benstock's important study of influential *Women of the Left Bank*, which, though not limited to a national scope, focuses only on white women. In contrast, French critic Michel Fabre, in *From Harlem to Paris*, explores the presence and influence of black writers, male and female, who spent time in Paris. Although these works have contributed a great deal to expanding the understanding of the period there is still a gap left because these studies highlight formerly marginalized groups of writers but do not put them into conversation with the writers of the (white, primarily male) Modernist canon. One recent interesting

no grandly experimental, furiously disrespectful school of writing in America, and we were going to create it. [...] There was death and hunger and disease among the expatriates in Paris, some dying of their hunger for recognition; and there were others who were to sell their talent to the dealers in slavery of the publishing world. The lives of the very few who survived have now become barely recognizable in the distortion of time and memory, and constitute the fragile substance of myth." (336)

trend that begins to address this issue has been a number of books that focus on influential relationships of the period such as Laure Murat's *Passage de L'Odéon*, which explores the important contributions of Sylvia Beach and Adrienne Monnier as "personnages intermédiares" who were critical in creating connections, overseeing transitions, and facilitating communication with their two bookshops shaping a true "passage" in all the senses that word entails. Another project that emphasizes these intermediary roles is *Négritude Women* by Tracy Sharpley-Whiting, which explores the role of the Nardal sisters, Jane and Paulette, and their Clamart Salon in Paris, in bringing together African-American writers involved in the Harlem Renaissance and the young intellectuals and writers who would launch the Négritude movement in the 1930s. These studies provide the foundation for the kind of work I do in this study, considering the way that connections and relationships influenced literary production in the period. While both Sharpley-Whiting and Murat explore relationships that took place in France, my study considers the way a certain regard for France or rapport with its cultural history and political realities connected writers who may or may not have been in actual contact with one another.

Kay Boyle suggests in *Being Geniuses Together* that part of what was happening in 1920s Paris was the throwing off of chains left by an inherited language. She posits a scene in which a revolt came up against Henry James, Edith Wharton and "the sterility of 'The Wasteland.'" To many, France provided the neutral, freeing space to stage such a revolt, but this particular vision is constrained within a narrow American perspective that sets up a community based on shared national experience and an imagined idea of America as a homeland that needs to be liberated. She suggests that Walt Whitman stood as a lone example of the kind of fierce expression that they were seeking, but she contends that his example was unsupported by American academic and publishing institutions (336). Her observations are useful to this study because they demonstrate the way that modernism in its linguistic manifestations was in

conflict with the national projects that eventually coopted it and she highlights the need for transnational interaction in modernist experimentation.

Charlie's observation, about his "American bar" going back into France, underlines a phenomenon in literary criticism and in the shaping of the Modernist canon in which literary modernism, and the experimentation that it required, developed around notions of nationalism. Indeed, critics from American and British departments, the two dominating bastions of anglophone literature, continue to define the American and British elements in the movements and literary styles that they study, too often dwelling on an imaginary unity without acknowledging the element of fantasy in it. Nationalist projects have been extracted from the heart of expatriate memoirs and fiction, and these projects often overshadow more subtle connections and contradictions between individuals and communities. The story of writers leaving America in acts of rebellion against the constraints of prohibition culture, in order to discover from a distance the essence of Americanness in their art, connects well with the nationalist discourse that prevailed as World War II became a reality, and in the second half of the century, as nations reeled from the repercussions of victory and defeat and the measures taken to achieve it. Similar arguments can be made for the British expatriate model. They are neat and satisfying narratives that continue to maintain a strong foothold despite decades of effort to complicate them. Separating Modernism into national camps fails to capture the richness of interaction and identity and does not do justice to the role space plays in the work of the writers who gathered together to create a place for modernism in France.

In this study, I provide a synthesis of the time and place seen collectively through a diverse, transnational group of writers who, in connection with one another, are able to help us understand the import of that time and place on the development of anglophone conceptions of Modernism and the significance of the interwar period for a broader understanding of the development of literary culture over the 20th century.

Specifically, I explore the “Paris Moment,” as Donald Pizer terms it, in a way that resists categorization based on narrow constructions of identity. In *The Black Atlantic* Paul Gilroy asks the question: “What would it mean to read [Richard] Wright intertextually with Genet, Beauvoir, Sartre, and the other Parisians with whom he was in dialogue?” In my project, I hope to answer a similar kind of question with regard to those writers who found themselves in France and in dialogue with one another in the interwar period. In this way I can consider the contradictions and connections between the impact of Africa and the colonial Other on European Modernism and the reality of being a black writer in France during and after the war. I can consider the interactions between the avant-garde and international political movements in the lives and works of modernist writers: the changing of ideas through art and the changing of art through politics.

By focusing on the context of the inter-war political and cultural climate, development of progressive international social movements and artistic reaction to the upheaval of World War I, I argue that the imaginary and physical space of France played a unique and vital role in the development of a truly transnational and pluralist modernism, the richness of which we are just now starting to understand. I also contribute to the growing critical project to question, blur and deconstruct identity boundaries by reconsidering what “matters” in literary history. By connecting writers who had previously been separated by identity politics at work in the criticism of any particular time period, I aim to better understand the period and its relevance for us today. I take the imaginative and actual space of France as my common ground for exploring these authors and their connection with Modernism and the interwar period.

I move from the particular to the universal. From breaking down the received notions about place in canonical texts, to understanding the interior life of one woman through the mapping of the city. From urban race-driven communities to the

whole of civilization in the imaginary. From the concrete ideas of a lived topographical existence to the ways that place works symbolically and imaginatively. Here I interrogate the centrality of the urban especially as it pertains to France and I question the centrality of Paris to an image of France. No doubt the city is an important element in Modernism; it is a center of publication, provides a concentration of modern features and technologies such as the crowd, high speed transportation, and the concentration of man-made features. But should such a concentration lead to centrality? What is specific to Paris and what are the features that belong to France as a whole? What can be attributed to the geography and what belongs to the domain of culture? What can we learn if we place those mythical centers of modernity and of empire as the periphery. In this study the urban, the nation, Paris, and the expatriate identity are all de-centered so that I can pose the question: what happens when we do away with the representation of centrality as a standard, as the thing with which to measure. Are there elements in the formation of place, the idea of home, travel and movement and their impact on the formation of identity that are universal without being dismissive of elements of difference? If we take a different perspective, if we decenter the center, can we find connections and networks that work without reinscribing the power structures that uphold racial, sexual and economic categories used for oppressive ends?

When we examine this fascinating period in this equally fascinating space—that is to say, the perpetually clichéd 1920's Paris—part of what continues to resonate today is the timelessness of the sentiments. The young guard against the old guard. The struggle between institutions and the individual. A feeling of the indispensability of community set against the desire to find a unique voice. The struggle of the local with the global (even with its evolving scope). The importance of this place and time is most certainly symbolic at its core and the comparison of this place with Ancient Greece, as a stand-in for the beauty of humanity and the possibility of the power of

art, culture and human instinct, is valid, though incomplete unless we continue to break down preconceptions and examine new angles. Each figure, whether canonical or peripheral, occupies in the same moments both central and marginal spaces and it is the interaction and the intersections of these spaces that are fascinating and informative for our modern criticism. As a starting place, I will consider the way that 1920s France became established as a specifically American modernist place and how two of its primary producers, Earnest Hemingway and F Scott Fitzgerald, frustrate that image in their own work. Although I focus on the American aspects of the nationalization of modernism here, it will become apparent in my analyses that British influences are also present and relevant and might be examined in another context using work by writers such as Virginia Woolf and James Joyce, two writers who would also contribute to the complexification of national modernist models through and in spite of their national affiliations.⁸ This will provide a foundation for the discussions of transnational modernism in which I will imbed my analysis of Jean Rhys, Claude McKay and William Faulkner.

In the second chapter, I will explore the early work of Jean Rhys to question the centrality of the urban to a modernist portrayal of identity. In her novel *Quartet*, I analyze the way that the city is erased through the spatial practices of the text, how it blends into the interiority of the character in the novel and becomes a canvas on which she explores the complex impact of imperial power structures that impact a person's ability to act and react to the manipulative forces around them. De Certeau's theoretical city becomes the textual space on which interiority is written, however Rhys's work does this by following the protagonist in the pedestrian practice of place. I expand on the notion of the flâneur by questioning the limitations of gender in order to demonstrate the way that Rhys's textual practice of place sets up a critique of

⁸ I am thinking here particularly of Virginia Woolf's declaration in *Three Guineas*: "As a woman, I have no country. As a woman, I want no country. As a woman, my country is the whole world," and of the historically vexed often raced-based relationship between British identity and Irish identity that is on display in Joyce's work.

imperial logic and its supporting gender inequality through an internalization of the external and through a projection of the interior onto the exterior. I also use Rhys's unique and complex intermingling of language and race in order to explore the articulations and intersections of identity that are often left untapped in other modernist studies.

In the third chapter, I use Claude McKay's work, not to decenter the urban itself, but to decenter Paris as the symbolic stand-in for France. Here I open up a discussion that too often remains fixed in Paris, completely disregarding the complexity of the nation beyond that one center. McKay uses the city of Marseilles to paint the picture of a truly international metropolis that challenges the racial limitations of the image of the modernist expat. He uses textual spatial practices to highlight the complexity of institutional oppression and the role of race in regulating populations, but he also uses the narrative structure to demonstrate the evolution of those forces in the interwar period and the shifting power dynamics that impacted the lives of the many displaced people who found themselves in that city. His work shows the ways that symbolic spaces and representations of place were and are used to control populations by controlling the interconnections between these topological systems and their financial and colonial vestiges.

Finally, in Chapter 4, using Faulkner's World War I fiction, I show how France as a place concept becomes an imaginary space on which Faulkner works out the complexity of his American and Southern identities. I make a case for connecting his imagined Yoknapatawpha country to his portrayal of France by suggesting that they layer in a palimpsest-like fashion onto one another, informing us through the interconnectedness of Faulkner's regional and international identities and challenging received notions about the role his Southern identity influences his national and transnational ones. Throughout the study I explore the way that intersections of identity, the portrayal of identity through language and the

connections found between identity and place through movement and stasis permit a fuller view, a transnational one, of the period and of modernist literature in general. In the case study that follows here, I will use the work and lives of Fitzgerald and Hemingway to highlight the ways that a transnational analysis can more fully capture the modernist project and challenge many accepted scripts about what anglophone modernism in France was and did.

Mapping the Divided City: A Case Study of Canonical Modernists

Fitzgerald and Hemingway, in their fictional and autobiographical work, contributed to a mapping of expatriate American and artistic archetypes onto the Paris cityscape that divided activity into Right and Left Bank life. Although, as Shari Benstock outlines, the distinction between expatriate and French communities on either side of the Seine both preceded and outlived them, they did use that division in ways that bring the contradictions of modernity into sharp relief and demonstrate complicated use of France as place in their fiction (34-36). F. Scott Fitzgerald lived on the Right Bank, rode in the backseat of taxis, and showed no interest in the French language or its literature. He spent his time at the Ritz bar, the jazz nightclubs of Montmartre, and enjoyed the gaudy spectacle of the city. Paris was a place to amuse himself, a locale of dissipation fueled by money and alcohol in the company of an almost exclusively English speaking and affluent crowd. Earnest Hemingway, on the other hand, when he moved to Paris with his first wife, Hadley Richardson, dove into local life, lived right away in the poorer sections of the Left Bank, learned spoken French, appreciated the working-class atmosphere of his neighborhood, and often walked the winding streets, observing, confronting and interacting not only with the expatriate and literary scene but with the local culture. Their spatial practices within the city demonstrate various degrees of submission and subversion to the hegemonic forces of expatriate American culture and the host French culture.

In their fiction, Fitzgerald and Hemingway each write a topography of Paris that mirrors their own interaction with the city and imitates the dichotomy of their identification with the American expatriate crowd. For their characters, the city is divided between the Right Bank of rich Americans and the Left Bank of bohemian and aesthetic or provincial authenticity: “In the ideal world of Fitzgerald's fiction one stayed in a grand hotel like the George V, lunched in the Bois de Boulogne, collected mail and cashed checks at the Morgan Bank in the place Vendôme, shopped in the rue de Rivoli and the rue de Castiglione, conveniently located near the Ritz bar. His characters seldom cross the Seine and then only with a sense of adventure” (Kennedy and Bryer 11). However, for Hemingway, Paris was a place to work; it was “the town best organized for a writer to write in that there is.” (*A Moveable Feast* 182). His characters operated on both sides of the river, but his writers and artists tended to gravitate toward the Left Bank, frequenting the bars of the Latin Quarter and the cafés of the Boulevard du Montparnasse, and generally crossing the river only for work-related reasons. The fictional division and characterization of the Left and Right banks as represented by both Hemingway and Fitzgerald correspond to their lived spatial practices in the city. This correspondence provides an interesting opportunity to consider the way that textual spatial linguistic practices in modernist writing connects to the lived experience and inspiration drawn from real-life spatial practices and pointing toward an analysis that integrates close reading with cultural studies in interesting ways.

Toward the end of their lives, each writer returned to Paris in a short story that attended to the divided geography of the city in ways that challenged the larger-than-life celebrity that they (especially Hemingway) had garnered in the years after their homecoming. Fitzgerald's fictional Paris, the one he represents in “*Babylon Revisited*,” was made up of beautiful and idealized views from the backseat of a moving vehicle:

Outside, the fire-red, gas-blue, ghost-green signs shone smokily through the tranquil rain. It was late afternoon and the streets were in movement; the bistros gleamed. At the corner of the Boulevard des Capucines he took a taxi. The Place de la Concorde moved by in pink majesty; they crossed the logical Seine, and Charlie felt the sudden provincial quality of the Left Bank.

("Babylon Revisited," 676)

Hemingway's fictional Paris, as represented in "The Snows of Kilimanjaro" however, was hard-lived and pedestrian:

...you could not dictate the Place Contrescarpe where the flower sellers dyed their flowers in the street and the dye ran over the paving where the autobus started and the old men and the women, always drunk on wine and bad marc... the smell of dirty sweat and poverty and drunkenness at the Café des Amateurs and the whores at the Bal Musette they lived above....He knew his neighbors in that quarter then because they all were poor. ("Snows of Kilimanjaro" 837)

When Fitzgerald and Hemingway return, in their fiction, to this "Paris Moment" on which I am focusing, their narratives revisit specific places and specific moments in 1920s Paris, exploring the way that time and place have shaped their lives and interrogating articulations of responsibility between society and the individual. Consideration of these works here will allow me to set up the importance and the potential in transnational readings of modernist texts and will reveal the way that a transnational framework can serve in bringing out connections and aspects of modernism that have not been fully explored.

In the case of Fitzgerald's work, by focusing too exclusively on the dominant features and broad categories evident there, many have failed to expose the complex and contradictory divisions in his portrayal of France, and by extension, its role in

expatriate modernism. His work demonstrates limited evidence of modernist narrative experimentation, but the impact of his subject material—the absolute modernity of his characters and their ever downward-spiraling condition—has secured for him a place in the modernist canon: “Fitzgerald understood fiction as social mimesis and typically portrayed the breakdown of his jaded exiles as reflective of the broader historical and cultural shifts that marked the era of high modernism-- the loss of certainty, the fading of traditional morality, and the rise of cultural relativism and skepticism.” (Kennedy and Bryer 319).⁹ Fitzgerald’s fiction depicts Paris as a “theater of dreams, a scene of fantasy and excess, which becomes a terrifying site of violent change” and moral downfall, but is equally a symbolic landscape of desire in which he houses the image of a past divided between dissipation (what Charlie finally realizes is the making of nothing out of something) and spiritual and literary productivity (Kennedy and Bryer 219).

⁹ Fitzgerald has come to mean a great deal to me in terms of thinking about liminality and borders. I partly explain this by relating an experience I had watching Baz Luhrman’s adaptation of *The Great Gatsby* in a theater in Geneva, Switzerland a couple of years ago. The context could hardly have been more appropriate for that encounter with what is, in my opinion, a truly great film and a masterful adaptation. I can only explain this with a loose series of associations that connect Fitzgerald’s life and work, especially *The Great Gatsby*, with the liminal, border crossing/blurring, identity-juggling, in-betweenness that is now my life and has been my research interest since I looked down on red Parisian rooftops for the first time from that plane in 1996, a naive bright-eyed highschool junior. The association goes something like this: Fitzgerald, ex-pat in France, composing his great novel while living in France and romping about the country side with the likes of Hemingway (a car-ride they took from Lyon to Paris, recounted by Hemingway in *A Moveable Feast* is particularly vivid) and a smattering of other writers and artists from around the globe, literary modernism really digging down deep in the soil of interwar France, a literary moment in history that I believe is transnational from its inception, for it can be nothing else (try as we—the collective ivory tower—may to carve it up using national rhetoric and classification and anthologizing). To me literary modernism cries out for in-betweenness, for destabilizing juxtapositions of symbols and signs and words, for any *décalage* (gap/lag/displacement/shift) that might require us to stop and question our received knowledge and values. The expectations of my American-movie-going-self were frustrated in subtle ways: the “multi-plex” hidden away in the midst of old buildings, a train station and tramway stops, two tickets bought at the equivalent of 40 US dollars, the question on my popcorn order “salted or sweet,” the general sizes of all foods for sale, the multilingual hushed pre-movie conversations and advertisements in the darkened room — but then the movie started and the film itself visually bridged temporal gaps as it sucked me into its own magnificent world (ah oui, *Gatsby* le magnifique, *c’est ça!*). The film itself, in its soundtrack, in its iconography inhabited multiple spaces and times. It translated the world of Mr. Gatsby into my current symbolic languages while also presenting me with versions of that world that I hold dear. I was transported. *Le décalage était sublime*. As the lights came up, I stepped over that gap into a space that is a veritable threshold in too many

In "Babylon Revisited" the movement between the two spaces of the divided city highlight the uncertainty of Charlie's recovery, his relationship with his past and his acceptance of responsibility for the tragic results. In his analysis of Babylon, Kennedy shows how Fitzgerald deals with two opposing themes: "luxury and wickedness" versus "quiet and decent home life" (Kennedy and Bryer 182). He explores these themes through a specific topography that symbolically outlines the three questions that suggest uncertainty in his situation. First, is the extent of Charlie's recovery -- in spite of his evident self-discipline in drinking exactly one drink every day, the narrative opens and closes in the Ritz bar, and he absentmindedly scribbles his address for Duncan Schaeffer in that bar - an action that will lead to failure in his mission to establish domesticity, and which Kennedy argues is a subconscious self-sabotage that demonstrates the uncertainty of his commitment to leaving his past (and the Right Bank) behind.

The second question deals with his relationship to that recent past: does he see his time in Paris as "those crazy years" ("Babylon Revisited" 629) or as a lost period of freedom? He takes a hotel in and repeatedly wanders to and around the Right Bank, the location of that feverish past and the topography symbolically linked with it. The Left Bank—in an interesting departure from other popular expatriate perceptions of it—is linked with religious guilt and repression as well as with the American "values of hearth and home, family and faith" (Kennedy and Bryer 323), values he is making such a concerted effort to project. His discomfort, however, is evident in his sudden escape to the Right Bank each time he leaves the Peters's home. His lunch with his daughter Honoria is also revealing; rather than take her to a nearby restaurant on the Left Bank, he takes her across the river where they run into two friends from his former life. This action, like the thoughtless scribbling of his sister-in-law's address at the Ritz Bar, lays a path for his past to follow him across the

ways to name. We crossed the tramway tracks and sat in a little pub on the square, continuing, in Fitzgerald's honor to inhabit the multiple-ness of everything around us.

Seine and sabotage his negotiations. The back and forth movements between the Peters home and the Right Bank provide a topographical pattern that Kennedy argues reveal the ambiguity of his resolve¹⁰: "Thus despite the moral outrage and shame evoked by Right Bank scenes that recall a scandalous past, Charlie seems compelled to return to those settings in which his life once seemed enchanted" (Kennedy and Bryer 323). Later Charlie is interrupted in his negotiations for his daughter by two tipsy shadows from that enchanted past and when one of them suggests that "all this shishi, cagy business 'bout your address got to stop" ("Babylon Revisited" 631) he is talking about the pivotal problem of place that drives the story, the "question of where and how Charlie will situate himself within the city's symbolic landscape"(Kennedy and Bryer 323).

The third question is whether Charlie has truly repented for his past and accepted responsibility for his losses? The biblical allusion in the title to the wicked city where God sends the Israelites to atone for their disobedience, along with the not-so-subtle appearance of the Café of Heaven and Hell in ambulations on the Right Bank, highlight the penitent nature of his journey. He claims at the end that he has "lost everything [he] wanted in the boom" by "selling short," alluding to the loss of his wife and of his daughter by losing sight of the value of those aspects against the rush of reckless abandon, but the earlier claim that "the snow of twenty-nine wasn't real snow" (633) offers an ambiguous counter-point to this claim of personal responsibility. Does he blame himself or does he pass responsibility on to the follies of the 20s, to the inescapable influence of the environment? In so much of the most

¹⁰ "The significance of this pattern lies in the contrast between the Right Bank, with its multiple associations of past hilarity, and the so-called provincial quality of the Left Bank, which in "Babylon Revisited" has nothing to do, curiously, with the expatriate hub of Montparnasse. Instead, Fitzgerald restricts his Left Bank to the rue Palatine - and by extension to the dour, ecclesiastical quarter that surrounds the Eglise St. Sulpice. Situated in the same neighborhood where the Fitzgeralds lived in 1929 and again in 1929, the address of the apartment refers explicitly to the Palatine Hills of Rome, linking the Peters to St. Peter and the Roman Catholic Church, an institution the lapsed Catholic Fitzgerald habitually associated with repression and guilt. All apartments on the short rue Palatine face the south facade of St.

famous expatriate literature, it is the place that receives a large part of the blame, setting France as the immoral and or liberating environment (depending on the point of view) that brought on the quick rise and downfall of so many real expatriates and their fictional characters. The narrative itself, when we examine the rhetoric of movement contained in the place, seems to bring this assumption to task, underscoring ambiguity. Just as Fitzgerald himself claimed in his essay, "The Crack-Up," it is this duality and the ability to face it that supports modernist genius: "the test of a first-rate intelligence is the ability to hold two opposed ideas in the mind at the same time, and still retain the ability to function" (*The Crack-Up*, 69). By focusing on the practice of place within the narrative we see in the topographical movement the outline of the textual effort to hold the contradictions of the situation together in the same thought.

Beyond his mapping of modernist contradiction onto the urban space, Fitzgerald also sets up the perspective of place that De Certeau theorizes. He shows in "Babylon Revisited" the way that practiced space, navigated by a blind practitioner, provides potential scenes of resistance and rejection of imposed societal pressures, but he also demonstrates that these practices interact with formation of identity and therefore create and magnify contradictions and ambiguities. Interestingly he also shows us a view of place that is strikingly similar to the one that De Certeau describes from the top of a skyscraper in New York City, leaving "behind the mass that carries off and mixes up in itself any identity of authors or spectators," putting "him at a distance" and transforming "the bewitching world" below "into a text that lies before one's eyes." It is from this distanced, map-like place that Fitzgerald, in his essay "My Lost City" contemplates the role that the city played in his identity formation as he engaged first as outsider and then slowly as the "archetype of what New York wanted." He writes that until that moment atop the skyscraper he "had seen only the

Sulpice--a circumstance that perhaps helps to explain the "fear of life" attributed to Marion Peters" (Kennedy and Bryer 322-323).

New York that offered itself for inspection - I was Dick Whittington up from the country gaping at the trained bears, or a youth of the Midi dazzled by the boulevards of Paris" (*The Crack-Up*, 24). He gains a new perspective on the city and on himself when he takes De Certeau's god-like place-position atop the Empire State Building:

Full of vaunting pride the New Yorker had climbed here and seen with dismay what he had never suspected, that the city was not the endless succession of canyons that he had supposed but that it had limits - from the tallest structure he saw for the first time that it faded out into the country on all sides, into an expanse of green and blue that alone was limitless. And with the awful realization that New York was a city after all and not a universe, the whole shining edifice that he had reared in his imagination came crashing to the ground. ("My Lost City" in *The Crack-Up and Other Stories*, 32)

In this way Fitzgerald's work pushes against de Certeau's characterization of the practice of place, which from the perspective of Fitzgerald's narrator leads to illusion, while observational distance breaks that illusion. This is an example of how literary modernism holds contradiction and paradox together using the paradoxes of place to support the analysis. The playing with categories of center and periphery, of received ideas about the geography of the city that we see in "Babylon Revisited", and the reversal of spatial practices reveal complicated intersections in Fitzgerald's fiction that more readily pair with the marginal expatriate modernists that I study here than one might have guessed. His distancing perspective, for example, informs my examination of Claude McKay's landscape views in Chapter 2, connects in surprising ways with William Faulkner's use of France as the basis for an imaginative landscape that I explore in Chapter 3, and the questions incited by placing these writers together provide fruitful starting points for other transnational modernist studies.

Similarly, Ernest Hemingway's well-known short story "The Snows of Kilimanjaro" also maps out an oppositional topography of Paris. For Hemingway, place always had a particularity about it and in France these particularities were beloved¹¹. H.R. Stoneback highlights the central importance of France for Hemingway in his life and in his fiction, highlighting that Hemingway's interaction and writing about France was in no way limited to Paris. He argues against a received critical notion of France as Hemingway's wasteland, arguing that any evidence that France participated in the erosion of Hemingway's Oak Park values is misplaced. He suggests instead that such an erosion has less to do with the place than with the specific people who populated it. Using primarily short stories as well as excerpts from *The Sun Also Rises* he highlights the ways that specific people and the influence of their money rather than the place itself were consistently at the root of any downfall represented in Hemingway's fiction, and therefore wrongly associated with France by his critics. Stoneback highlights the sympathetic nature with which Hemingway portrays native French people and their culture, often setting them in contrast with the clear excesses and navel-gazing of wealthy expatriates.

In "The Snows of Kilimanjaro" Hemingway uses the city's geography to complicate the expatriate experience by demonstrating the ways that place acted both as a source for his protagonist's downfall and as a site for productive and transformative creativity. Though the story is set in Africa, he uses the protagonist's memories of past marriages, literary struggle and commercial success to separate France into two imaginative spaces by dividing the topography of Paris into symbolic oppositions. According to Kennedy, the narrated flashbacks Hemingway uses suggest "the geosymbolic importance of Paris" setting it up as a "beloved place in the geography of Harry's life" that represents "safety and comfort, a refuge from misfortune and mortality." But the recollection of that place is troubled, as evidenced

¹¹ See Stoneback's outline of the way Hemingway wrote about and recommended France as a country full of people true to themselves and of topographical features that connected history

by the diverging accounts that Helen, his current wife, and Harry have of places they have stayed. Helen elicits luxury hotels that he "loved" to which he responds with disgust. Kennedy writes that this hint of disagreement highlights the

...discrepancy between Helen's carefully idealized remembrance of the recent past and Harry's troubled recollection of his early days in Paris. Her reference to the Pavillon Henri-Quatre elicits a sudden virulence, apparently because the hotel evokes for Harry not luxurious pleasure but degraded desire, associated with waste and possible transgression. His repugnant metaphor exposes a scornful self-contempt, rooted in his unmistakable disgust with love, the "dunghill," and sexual conquest, figured by the crowing cock--the latter reference slyly linking France itself (through its insignia, le coq gaulois) with phallic hybrid. (Kennedy and Bryer 329)

Another way to frame this is to consider how Hemingway is setting up a clear distinction between the place of France and the culture of American expatriates and their money in France. He seems to be splitting Paris into two realms, one that is closer to the 'real France' that he loved, and that includes the rest of the country, and another that is associated with Americans and their money. The latter is mixed up in a complicated relationship with desire for the unattainable, while the former contains a complicated connection to his childhood and to his literary aspirations.

In the story, the flashbacks center around a complex and cryptic retelling of former loves and losses: "He thought about alone in Constantinople that time, having quarreled in Parishe had written her, the first one, the one who left him...How every one he had slept with had only made him miss her more" ("Snows of Kilimanjaro" 48). The first and unnamed love, seems to occupy a space of incredible importance, "a totemic place" because she was "the one who left him" and therefore remains a present absence (330). From Hemingway's real life, this "first one" seems

and the imagination.

to be modeled on Agnes von Kurowsky—the Red Cross Nurse who in March of 1919 had written him to tell him of her engagement to an Italian officer. In the narrative she is associated with the Right Bank—Rue St Honoré and other places around Place de la Madeleine in the same area where Hemingway had worked in 1922 at the Anglo-American Press Club. The sense of loss he describes quickly becomes confused, however, because the sentiments seem to also attach to the wife with whom he had “quarrelled in Paris” and with a life that he experienced in Paris. The portentous statement: “and that was the end of the beginning” is followed with a description of the old working class neighborhood where he had lived with that first wife, a place on the Left Bank near the Panthéon, quarter around the Café des Amateurs where he “knew his neighbors in that quarter then because they were all poor” (51). This is an area that is given great importance, and with it, the wife with whom he had “quarrelled in Paris” and subsequently lost. This sets up an imaginative originary space that had remained sacred up until the moment of the narration: “He had never written about Paris. Not the Paris that he cared about” (52). The Paris he cherished was that poor area linked both with the wife of 1922 and with the beginning of his literary career:

And in that poverty, and in that quarter across the street from a Boucherie Chevaline and a wine co-operative he had written the start of all he was to do. There never was another part of Paris that he loved like that, the sprawling trees, the old white plastered houses painted brown below, the long green of the autobus in that round square, the purple flower dye upon the paving, the sudden drop down the hill of the rue Cardinal Lemoine to the River, and the other way the narrow crowded world of the rue Mouffetard. (51)

The comment about place implicitly connects his first wife with the place he loved and distinguishes both of them from the richer wives and the fancier parts of Paris,

implicitly associated with affluent kinds of expatriatism and with his literary success. It also takes up a temporal vantage point that is not entirely unlike de Certeau's theoretical one, represented by a grid-like place map that is accessible from a distance when one has stepped outside of the practice of life and of space. This distance initiates a transformation from practiced space into representational space: "By metonymic substitution, however, the old neighborhood becomes the site and symbol of Harry's longing for the irrecoverable: for youth, for his literary beginnings, for the self that he once was, and for the spouse whom he loved" (Kennedy and Bryer 333). In this way, Paris, and by extension the whole of France, becomes a symbolic space on which he writes desire and regret.

It is difficult to make clear distinctions between this fictional representation and the source material that it so closely imitates, especially because of the interrogation on the process and inspiration of writing that is imbedded in the text. For this reason, in his analysis, Kennedy moves quite smoothly into an argument about Hemingway's influences, arguing that the sexual openness of Paris and exposure to gender and sexual nonconformity are root causes of the dissolution of the marriage and all the losses that Hemingway/Harry stack up as chain reactions to that "end of the beginning." Kennedy's otherwise brilliant analysis falls short here because of the imbedded assumptions that still remain concerning Hemingway's identity and connection to modernist literary tradition. Kennedy fails to make a distinction between Hemingway's representations of France as a place with its own culture and social codes, and France as a space in which the values of unattached expatriates operate through monetary influence.¹² With a more transnational approach, one that

¹² The passage that I am particularly inclined to disagree with is the following: "The couple cultivated same-sex hairstyles, wore matching clothing, and fantasized about switching genders. The innocuous sexual game-playing hinted, however, at problems in their relationship. Hemingway's increasing restlessness led in 1925 to a tantalizing flirtation with Duff Twysden (the prototype of Brett Ashley) and soon thereafter to a steamy romance with Pauline Pfeiffer, an affair intermittently conducted (as *A Moveable Feast* implies) as a virtual ménage à trois." (Kennedy 334). I think a careful rereading of *A Moveable Feast* and of

does not automatically assume Hemingway's position in the expatriate community as one of insider, we can more easily read the complicated topology of the Paris and the France that he writes into his work and that demonstrate a more nuanced treatment of those early years, of his relationship with his first wife, and of his perspective on what makes a great writer. In his writing, Hemingway separates the two spaces and eventually places Hadley, the first wife, in the France he loves with the source and motivation of his early writing career. In spite of this critical misstep, Kennedy does conclude with an interesting and relevant claim that connects Hemingway and Fitzgerald with Faulkner by suggesting that this process of the revisiting of the ruins of early career and marriage fits squarely into Faulkner's prescription for good writing. In his Nobel Prize Address Faulkner declared that only "the problems of the human heart in conflict with itself...can make good writing because only that is worth writing about." (*Speeches and Essays*, 162). Additionally, Hemingway's use of imagined layers also connects with Faulkner's symbolic France that we will explore in Chapter 4.

What the examination of these two short stories brings to this study is the perspective of a divided city—Paris—that works in symbolic ways to express desire and regret. It is a reading that blurs boundaries to access symbolic meanings for place in their fiction, placing as secondary the often prioritized issue of American identity and instead treating these expatriate modernists as transnational. This divided geography, seemingly simple and direct, helps them to write the contradictions and ambiguities of modernity onto the very topography of the city that most typified Modernism for them and for their readers, but it also reveals the transnational nature of that modernism, decentering The City of Lights in order to demonstrate the way that France as a whole formed a cornerstone in the development of their aesthetic imaginaries. Considering their "canonical" works next

various letters along with a more transnational analysis of his work disprove this statement entirely.

to writers less known or less connected to this spatio-temporal location is a first step in questioning the received notions of 1920s France, expatriate modernism, and national identity in the interwar period.

Chapter 2 Jean Rhys's Mapping of Imperial Psychology in *Quartet*

Introduction

Jean Rhys provides the scholar of interwar expatriate modernism a view of that time and place that has been obscured, modified and willfully excluded in the years that followed the 1929 financial crash, the event that most dramatically marks the end of the frenzied literary, economic and social activity of that period. She was a rising figure in the social literary scene and the much younger protégé and lover of Ford Maddox Ford for a time. Although she earned high praise in Modernist circles for her early collection, *Stories from the Left Bank* (1927), she was also an outsider, which is why she fits so well into this project. In a time when Paris was becoming the colonized territory of a collection of highly visible American and British expatriates, and when nationality was becoming a central trope in self-identification, Rhys's origins were difficult to pin down to a solitary nationality. She was raised in an elite English family in Dominica, a British colonial island with strong French linguistic and cultural influences through its Créole population. As a result of her experience with the primarily African Créole population, Rhys associated blackness with the French language and with Catholic culture. For her, the French language was deeply associated with the otherness that blackness represented in that childhood context. When French later became a kind of second linguistic home, the operations of racial and linguistic otherness quickly became intertwined with her own experiences of being cast as other. These complex origins provided the foundation to Rhys's intersectional work, which explores aspects of identity connected to gender, race, language and the foreign within the context of imperial cosmopolitanism.

Rhys was sent to school in England and became a chorus girl before meeting her first husband Jean Lenglet and moving to France in 1919. She lived there for most of the following decade and it was during this time that she wrote her four early European novels, for which she received little attention until quite recently. In this

chapter, I will analyze her novel *Quartet* (1929) by focusing on the way that her inclusion of detail about Paris is concerned less with a characterization of the city itself and more with the way the characters project emotions, thoughts and concerns onto it. I will trace the temporal, spacial, psychological and linguistic topography that the narrative presents in order to demonstrate the way that her work uses imaginative layering in subversive ways, illustrating the intersections and absences that were being obscured and forcibly suppressed at the time.

Rhys's work overlaps with that of other modernist writers in her use of France. Like Fitzgerald, Rhys associates topographical features with a romantic imaginary that provides escape from fear and from the pressures of life. The difference in economic situations between the characters from Rhys's and Fitzgerald's fiction only highlights the extent to which place is strategically used in self-identification. In spite of this romantic imaginary, Rhys also emphasizes local culture and the lived reality of everyday connection with those cultures, much in the way that Hemingway did. A close analysis, however, demonstrates the way an experience as expatriate integrated into the host culture is coded differently according to gender. Rhys differs most significantly from her fellow modernists in the way she maps the Right Bank; she complicates both Fitzgerald's and Hemingway's mapping of the city by going beyond association with particular identity groups and reflecting instead a more nuanced vision of textual topographies, reflecting interiority onto the textual city. Her work also harkens back to a previous generation of writers and artists, based in Montmartre, who were less anglophone in their collective representation, though just as international.¹³

Early Rhys criticism focused on the autobiographical, confessional aspects of her writing and tended toward a view of 'Rhys women' as victims and underdogs unable

¹³ Apollinaire said "Voici le Montparnasse, qui est devenu pour les peintres et les poètes ce que Montmartre était avant pour eux: l'asile de la belle et libre simplicité." [1] *La Femme Assise* (36) "Here is it, Montparnasse, which has become for painters and poets what Montmartre was before it: an asylum for beauty and free simplicity." (My translation)

to conquer their personal circumstances. Beginning in the 1970s and with the critical success of *Wide Sargasso Sea*, critics began to produce readings informed by Caribbean and post-colonial literature that revealed in it the ubiquitous nature of divided subjectivity. This shift continued into the 1980s alongside much of the revisionist and restorative work that critics like Shari Benstock, Sandra M. Gilbert and Susan Gubar were instigating in literary and modernist studies. Since then, critics like Helen Carr, Judith L. Raiskin, Judith Kegan Gardiner, Mary Lou Emery, and Elaine Savory¹⁴ have considered Rhys's origins together with her understanding of divided intersectional identity. Raiskin, for example, explores "white Creole consciousness" in Rhys, putting it into discussion with Franz Fanon, Jean-Paul Sartre, Albert Camus and Albert Memmi in their work on Algerian independence (Raiskin 107). In this study I join a conversation already in progress about the ways that Rhys's early fiction, her European modernist texts, not only lend themselves to these kinds of post-colonial readings but also help to redefine our understanding of how "Modernism," and specifically expatriate and High modernisms, were reflecting complicated racial, sexual and economic realities.

In 2002 Delia Caparoso Konzett situated Rhys along with Zora Neale Hurston at the center of modernist traditions, focusing on her unique contribution as an avant garde theorist whose work exposes the commodification of ethnic and cultural identities in mass culture.: "Rhys reminds us that concerns of race and ethnicity are relevant not simply to those belonging to disenfranchised racial groups but to society

¹⁴ See Benstock, Shari. *Women of the Left Bank: Paris, 1900-1940*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1986. Gilbert, Sandra M, and Susan Gubar. *No Man's Land: The Place of the Woman Writer in the Twentieth Century*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988. Carr, Helen. *Jean Rhys*. 2nd. 1996. Tavistock: Northcote [u.a.], 2012. Judith Raiskin, *Snow on the Canefields: Women's Writing and Creole Subjectivity*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996. Judith Kegan Gardiner, *Rhys, Stead, Lessing and the Politics of Empathy*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1989. Emery, Mary Lou. *Modernism, the Visual, and Caribbean Literature*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007. Savory, Elaine. *Jean Rhys*. Cambridge Studies in African and Caribbean Literature. Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998. and *The Cambridge Introduction to Jean Rhys*. Cambridge Introductions to Literature. Cambridge, UK; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009.

as a whole, including Caucasians [...] Rhys 'radicalizes' and 'ethnicizes' this seemingly race-neutral tradition [of European modernism]" (9). As Konzett demonstrates, Rhys shows the modernist crisis to be intimately linked with colonial traditions of power and race. Similarly, Amy Clukey argues that Rhys pushes against the urban aspects of modernism. Clukey emphasizes the links between "capitalist-imperial expansion at the colonial periphery and the aesthetics of the metropolitan core" (439). Taken together, Konzett and Clukey make a case for the intersectional importance of race, language and the idea of the foreign in the development of modernist aesthetics. Rhys's work is located at these axes and I will argue that, as a result of these intersections, she provides a compelling and early version of what Patricia Collins called the outsider within perspective in connection with the lived experiences of African American women.¹⁵ The role of the setting, both of Rhys's career and of her early fiction, is critical to this project because of the complex communities that she interacted with in 1920s France. When we examine Rhys as part of that transnational crowd, we expose a less monolithic sense of what was happening in literary modernism in that period and place. In this way we reveal another layer of the palimpsest that is present at the intersections of language, race and the foreign in modernist formal experimentation. The concept and the mapping of place are critical to any exploration of these experiments and the intersections they reveal.

I will begin by considering the specific shape that Rhys's urban map took within a spatio-temporal structure, showing the ways that language is raced and how time provides order to spatial fluidity permitting the topological experimentation that makes Rhys's early work so compelling. Then I will consider the way that Rhys maps out zones of resistance using space to reveal and resist power structures that are linked to nation and language and providing a critique of privilege and imperial bias

¹⁵ See Collins, Patricia "Learning from the Outsider Within: The Sociological Significance of Black Feminist Thought." *Social Problems* 33(6): 1986. 14-32 and Crenshaw, Kimberlé. "Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence against Women of Color." *Stanford Law Review* 43, no. 6 (July 1, 1991): 1241-99.

in canonical Anglo expatriate modernism and its criticism. Finally, I will consider the way that boundaries between the interior and the exterior reflect those between local and global/national perspectives. As Rhys's characters resist cosmopolitan identification, their intersectional identities can only be read externally, either written on external perspectives or by projecting internal ones onto other people. In this way each location becomes a place imbedded with power and meaning through the movement or stasis of the protagonist, demonstrating the role of fear and belonging on the mapping of place.

The Shape of the Modernist City

I like shape very much [...] a novel has to have a shape, and life doesn't have any. (Rhys. *Smile Please*, 7)

The shape that Rhys so appreciated in a work of fiction manifests itself in her work as a narrative topography that follows the contours of the urban setting. She rejects description in favor of a psychological exploration that follows the contours of the city, functioning as a cultural outline and demonstrating the inextricable intertwining of interiority and exteriority. Description in the novel happens as a byproduct of de Certeau's practiced space. It is in the direct interaction between movement and topography that Rhys writes out the stakes faced by her character and the extent to which her actions are shaped by the social structures imbedded in the topography. On the other hand, the resistance that is present is only readable when we use the topological mapping of social structures and the power associated with them. The text becomes one of de Certeau's practiced places, a map we can read using Lefebvre's triad of space; we can identify the spatial practices at work, the representations of space that signal overarching power structures and the representational spaces which embody the complex symbolic systems providing a key to read them. In this way we can connect Rhys's textual map of the city to those of

Hemingway and Fitzgerald and examine the ways that gender and raced depictions of belonging impact our understanding of modernism. Additionally, the issue of belonging is constantly put to task as we follow the protagonist—is she Anglophone? Is she French? Is she international? Is she an outsider because she is a woman or because she comes from a colonial outpost? Since place is a thing that is *performed* in the text—through her movement set against her moments of paralysis—it, like our protagonist, is in a constant state of Deleuzian becoming, constantly connecting beneath the surface in rhizomatic intersectional patterns that produce surprising results.

In his introduction to her 1926 collection of short stories, *Stories of the Left Bank*, Ford Maddox Ford highlights the clean and uncluttered style of Rhys's work:¹⁶

Amongst the things that French youth rejects more violently than others is the descriptive passage, the getting of what, in my hot youth, used to be called an atmosphere. I tried - for I am for ever meddling with the young - very hard to induce the author of the Left Bank to introduce some sort of topography ... With cold deliberation, once her attention was called to the matter, she eliminated even such two or three words of descriptive matter as had crept into her work. Her business was with passion, hardship, emotions: the locality in which these things are endured is immaterial. (Ford in Rhys *The Left Bank*, 26)

Ford explains that Rhys's tight form provides for a privileging of raw human emotion over description. Indeed, Rhys provides information related to the setting only in

¹⁶ Many critics have explored the interesting dynamics inherent in the relationship between Ford Maddox Ford and Jean Rhys especially with regard to *Quartet*, which was inspired by the real events and relationships between Ford, his long-time companion Stella Bowen, Jean Rhys and her husband Jean Lenglet. I will not therefore dwell on it here, especially since my focus is on the imagined and invented aspects of the novel. For more on the autobiographical aspects of *Quartet* see Carole Angier's biography, *Jean Rhys: Life and Work*. Boston: Little, Brown, 1990 or Helen Carr's *Jean Rhys*. 2nd. 1996 ed. Tavistock: Northcote [u.a.], 2012. For a particularly interesting consideration of the differences between Ford's patronage of Rhys, and his support of Hemingway, see Irene Thompson's "The Left Bank Apéritifs of Jean Rhys and Ernest Hemingway." *The Georgia Review* 35, no. 1 (1981): 94–106.

ways that provide information about the character. One might argue that this is the actual focus of any “getting of atmosphere” that one might attempt, that the atmosphere ultimately serves characterization. It certainly becomes more current with the onset of stream of consciousness and earlier in third-person indirect discourse as practiced by Gustave Flaubert, most notably in *Madame Bovary*.

Like Ford, V.S. Naipaul recognizes Rhys’s instinct for form coupled with a lack of what he calls geographical explicitness. He, however, connects this lack directly with her West Indian identity, demonstrating the way that issues of belonging complicate the depiction of place:

Even in her early stories, of Left Bank life in Paris, she avoided geographical explicitness. She never “set” her scene, English, European, or West Indian: she had, as it were, no home audience to play to; she was outside that tradition of imperial-expatriate writing in which the metropolitan outsider is thrown into relief against an alien background. She was an expatriate, but her journey had been the other way round, from a background of nothing to an organized world with which her heroines could never come to terms. (Naipaul 29)

Naipaul’s controversial comments connect Rhys’s work with issues of race and colonialism. As Konzett argues, for Rhys, ethnicity is not a biological nor a socioanthropological feature; instead, it is based on a socialization in which race and ethnicity are not divorced from one another. In this way Rhys can be seen as a white ethnic writer who understands ethnicity in a racial sense” (Konzett 129).

In his comments, Naipaul also highlights a clear division in how critics define geographical explicitness. For Ford the creation of atmosphere serves an aesthetic function in that it provides sensory details that permit a reader to enter into an imagined space. Naipaul’s idea of setting, however, serves a political function; it defines the communities of outsiders and insiders to whom the novel is speaking. It

does not provide a mere topographical representation of the surface contours of place or of feeling or in the minute details of realism. Instead, for Naipaul, the setting provides a topological representation that outlines and tries to make sense of the connections and intersections of identity that occur whenever two or more people interact in any way.

From another angle, lack of geographical explicitness is a strange characterization to make of Rhys's work, for it is quite possible to map out the Paris of *Quartet* (1928) using historical and modern maps, and to track the protagonist's movements in a fairly detailed manner.¹⁷ One can attribute certain contradictions between Paris and the city represented in *Quartet* to a century of changes in urban topography or to intentional authorial inventions that serve symbolic and ironic functions. Elaine Savory has noted that geography is, indeed, very carefully employed in both *Stories of the Left Bank* and *Quartet* to indicate "the emotional, social and economic circumstances of her major characters".¹⁸ The focus on a principal character in *Quartet* provides the opportunity to see how that geography functions over the passage of narrative time and how development of character can be mapped onto urban space.

Rhys does not, however, provide atmosphere, as Ford characterizes it, nor does her narrative pretend an observational objectivity. To Naipaul's point, she does not establish a link between place and identity in the way that many other writers do. Instead she makes clear the degree to which 1) the descriptions of place are reflective of the focalizing character's psychology, and 2) that for the character, much of the topography can be interchangeable either with other locations in the city or with other places in the world based on their connection to memory. This is a phenomenon that I call imaginative layering, and that is also a significant feature in

¹⁷ I have actually created a detailed map of the narrative using Google maps. You can see that detail here:
https://drive.google.com/open?id=1MqxGDxFCA6_E_OjaYy7iOYEuSy4&usp=sharing.

the work of Claude McKay and William Faulkner. Imaginative layering is a literary technique that reveals complex intersections of identity between many forms of difference. It permits writers like Rhys, McKay and Faulkner, who write from outsider within perspectives, to blur and transgress linguistic, national, racial and gender boundaries. In this chapter we will focus more explicitly on the national, gendered and linguistic forms of difference, although racialized depictions are also embedded in representations of gender and nation, though very subtly, through the intersections of language and national identity, and implicitly in the way the protagonist's gender directs her movement and the textual mapping of the city.

Writing the City: A Temporal Mapping

The young protagonist of *Quartet*, Marya, is married to Stephan Zelli, a Pole involved in the trafficking of stolen art. They have lived in Paris for four years, having moved there from London, where they met and where Marya had been a chorus girl. When he is arrested, she is left without money or protection. Salvation from destitution comes quickly in the form of the high-society British couple, H.J. and Lois Heidler, who live at the center of Anglophone bohemian and expatriate life in Paris. They suggest that she move into a spare room in their apartment. When Heidler later insists upon making Marya his mistress, with Lois's tacit acceptance, the complex interactions between the four main characters lead to tragic ends. Rhys's urban map of Paris, organized by temporal clues and constant topological flux, provides a good example of the body-ballet that David Seamon evokes in discussing the creation of place. The text uses the interactions of these four characters to reveal the logic of the power structures that direct those movements giving meaning and order through temporal cycles that anchor the intersectional and fluid use of place.

There are, at the center of the narrative, two transnational communities: one self-legitimized, which occupies the spaces of the narrative in imperial ways, and the

¹⁸ Savory 39.

other, illegitimate and marginal. The first is a group of English speaking expatriates based in Montparnasse and represented by the Heidlers, the second is, what some of the local French characters call international. This is a raced community, a marginal and slightly illicit group that is associated with Marya's life with her husband Stephen and centered in Montmartre, the outmoded former artist colony. Within the narrative, a local French community that consists of small-business owners and service staff observe and comment upon both communities.

The shifting perspectives on these groups are mapped onto the city space through the protagonist's movement and descriptive focalization. The changing perspective is the result of Marya's shifting identity position as outsider and insider. In narrative form Rhys illustrates the intersectionality of identity-based oppression and the struggle of the individual against social collectivity. She transforms the topography of Paris into a reflection of the constraints and freedoms that the character feels, carving out margins and centers that are permeable, shifting and not objectively visible nor comparable to other modernist representations of the city. In this way, she demonstrates the way that places operate in contingent ways, Marya is a practitioner of the city, her movements illustrate the tactical practices of de Certeau's city walker, revealing the struggle that such a practitioner faces based on her identity positions in resisting the power structures imbedded in the layout of the city. Furthermore, Rhys provides an ideal example of what in the 21st century geographers have called a narrative understanding of place. In this model, place is both particular and universal; it provides a space of meaning, particular to the individual and associated with specific people and experiences, but it also functions as a *place concept*, as does Bachelard's image of the home as a privileged kind of place that frames the way people think.¹⁹

¹⁹ Of course one of the weaknesses in Bachelard's model, as we saw in the introduction is that the associations to home are far from universal, in spite of a popular idealized notion. Feminist critics like Gillian Rose argue that the focus on nurturing and domestic aspects of home are come from a masculinist point of view. Although I agree with her assessment that

In the context of the Left Bank the textual mapping of the city pivots on a topographical axis that corresponds to the two oppositional transnational communities. The "international" community is connected with the Boulevard St Michel, a street that intersects in a 'V' shape with the Boulevard Montparnasse, and which separates the Montparnasse quarter from the Latin quarter, an area which, as we will discuss later, becomes a marginal space of resistance associated with the "international" via its student population. In the narrative, this transnational axis helps to illustrate the topological shifts that occur in the text as Marya's movements and perspective on the city reflect her interiority.

On the first page of the novel the intersecting thoroughways seem to be prone to international and visibly poor populations of would-be seducers whom Marya dissuades by feigning Anglo superiority and obtuseness: "Often on the Boulevards St Michel and Montparnasse shabby youths would glide up to her hopefully in unknown and spitting tongues. When they were very shabby she would smile in a distant manner and answer in English: I'm very sorry; I don't understand what you are saying" (5). Marya's dismissive response underlines two important facts about her. First, she uses her English background as a shield against those who do not meet a standard she has internalized. Second, it appears that she is capable of interacting in "unknown and spitting tongues" when an interlocutor *does* meet that standard. This is one of the many small clues that the narrative provides to push against a view of Marya (and by extension, many of Rhys's other protagonists) as a 'mere victim'. As the plot progresses, Marya's use of Englishness, both in terms of identity and language, as a tool of superiority becomes more and more problematic,

Bachelard's position is problematic I do not agree with her conclusion. She fails to recognize that there are few for whom the reality of home is an actual place of self realization, security and control since it is often still lived in community of some type. bell hooks, on the other hand, completely disputes the premise, for her home is a place of resistance and empowerment. (hooks 1990). The concept of home as place is productive in that it illustrates a universal desire for self-actualization, security and control. Whereas, for Bachelard this connects with traditional domestication, for hooks it connects with a blow do those mores. Either way, the place as concept remains strong.

demonstrating her status as both insider and outsider in the Anglo modernist community. This is an example of a moment in the narrative where the protagonist pushes aside her raced identity, which is manifest elsewhere in the text when Anglo characters describe her in infantilizing and animal-like terms. Here, however she is able to stake out her whiteness through the English language. This mixed privilege, only accessible to her when faced with non-Anglo interlocutors, shows the contingency of identity markers based on context and urges us to confront these aspects in other texts.

At the same time, Marya also identifies with the international community to the extent that her life with Stephen in Montmartre is encapsulated within it; she attributes to it a security that is imaginary and based on a willful ignorance. At the end of chapter two, after having explained Marya's backstory, her life alone in London, and her marriage to Stephen, the narrator explains Marya's thoughts as she looks out over her balcony onto the Place Blanche in Montmartre: "One realized all sorts of things. The value of an illusion, for instance, and that the shadow can be more important than the substance. All sorts of things" (22). This portrait of illusion corresponds to the nostalgia that Marya attaches to her life with Stephen and that she locates in Montmartre. She thinks of it as an innocence, a "vanished youth," that perhaps stands in for an innocence that she didn't have in her own childhood.²⁰ Her life with Stephen is carefree and she is able, though not completely without disapprobation, to wander. She is at liberty to experience a free association with her surroundings similar to the Baudelarian flâneur that became a topos of the literary avant garde from the turn of the century and into the 20th century.

Although she lives in Montmartre during this time, her wandering often brings her to the Left Bank, and more precisely to Montparnasse, the "Anglo" center where her story will unfold, or rather, fall apart. The atmosphere (that thing that Ford

²⁰ No details are provided regarding Marya's childhood and so the reader is left to guess what type of experiences might contribute to producing such a woman.

claimed her work avoided) of the streets changes as Marya's story develops and areas of the city become further associated with various groups. As her position in these communities shifts, her attraction or aversion to them, and therefore her movement, reflect this change, creating a psychological atmosphere rather than a geographical one.

Few establishments that Marya frequents are actually located on the Boulevard St Michel. The exception is August's, the restaurant where the Heidlars ask Marya to move in with them and where Cairn, the American writer, meets with Marya on a Saturday afternoon, hoping to save her from her situation (47,91). Other establishments are located just off of the main throughway and closer to the Latin quarter than to Montparnasse. These establishments are generally associated with the non-Anglo international crowds and a resistance to the influence of the Heidlars. These include the restaurant for students that Marya seeks out, because it was not frequented by the "Montparnos," the Chinese Restaurant in the Rue de l'Ecole de Médecine, where Stephen and Marya dine on their last evening together after his release from prison, and the room of the young student from Tonkin, with whom Marya has a one-night stand after Heidler breaks up with her (121, 142, 152).

On the other side of the transnational axis from Boulevard St Michel is the Boulevard Montparnasse. These two boulevards hem in the neighborhood that Apollinaire described by declaring: "Voici le Montparnasse, qui est devenu pour les peintres et les poètes ce que Montmartre était avant pour eux: l'asile de la belle et libre simplicité."²¹ Marya is not a writer in the novel, but she does circulate with an artistic and literary crowd and her attraction to the place does seem to echo Apollinaire's view of it as a refuge for those preoccupied with beauty and simplicity.²²

²¹ *La Femme Assise* (36) "Here is it, Montparnasse, which has become for painters and poets what Montmartre was before it: an asylum for beauty and free simplicity." (My translation)

²² *Quartet* is not a novel about artists although the idea of literary modernist activity is an undercurrent that supports much what the novel has to say about modern life. It is also present in the source material as *Quartet* is a novel inspired by Rhys own experiences. For

Although the novel is not driven by a plot about writers or the act of writing, the gesturing toward the artistic life in Montparnasse points to a critique of literary culture that is directly connected to the broader social commentary on oppression and society.²³ It is on this Anglo side of the transnational axis that the narrative begins. The opening scene is set in the Café Lavenue, a “dignified and comparatively expensive establishment,” and although we never return to the café, except in a passing reference that the "Middle Westerners" are having a literary gathering there, it sets the tone for the role the street will play in the narrative, highlighting the importance of money and the idea of respectability required by the imperial-capitalist social forces that seem to dominate the Montparnasse scene. Marya’s use of English to rebuff unwanted advances, and her choice to wile away her hours in this café on Boulevard Montparnasse in these opening paragraphs, indicate that Marya already participates in a mindset of Anglo superiority before she ever meets the Heidlrs. It also prefigures the more explicit treatment of class and race that come in her later work. Reaching toward that work we can read Anglo as both a linguistic and racial marker even though her work here is much more coded in dealing with race. It is in juxtaposing Rhys’s work with that of Claude McKay and William Faulkner as well as other expatriate modernists, and putting them into conversation through transnational and intersectional practices that we uncover these underlying currents.

The transnational axis at the center of the city and the novel, is transformed through spatial practice as the novel develops. Rhys not only carefully maps the geographical space but connects that mapping to a textual and temporal outline that also corresponds to Marya’s shifting sense of identity and identification. As discussed

more on the autobiographical aspects of Rhys work see Angier, Carole. *Jean Rhys: Life and Work*. Boston: Little, Brown, 1990, Carr, Helen. *Jean Rhys*. 2nd. 1996 ed. Tavistock: Northcote [u.a.], 2012 and Savory, Elaine. *Jean Rhys*. Cambridge Studies in African and Caribbean Literature. Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998.

²³ For more on the ways Rhys’s choice to write protagonists who are not writers works as a critique of the modernist movement of which she was a part, see Jonathan Goldman’s

in the introduction, time is intricately wrapped up in the construction and practice of place, both in terms of the time needed to “dwell” in a space and therefore embed one’s self into the communities that shape it, but also in terms of the way that memory, origins and stories shape and are shaped by place through the chronological elements that connect them. The layering of story onto place is also a layering of time. In *Quartet*, the shifting boundaries of the practiced city and disjunctive place associations are ordered through a chronological logic. The narrative progresses through four seasons that provide a temporal framework for Marya’s shifting topographical movements in the city. However, the circular nature of seasons provide the framework for a layered understanding of time and place so that no movement in the city is left isolated but it is connected to the many other movements that are both within this text and in the many other texts that have written the modernist city or that have been a part of Parisian history.

The beginning of the novel is set in October and the winter months that follow; it is centered in Montmartre, where Marya is living. Before Stephen's arrest Marya’s often restless movement leads her to “walk for hours” in Montparnasse, down streets like the Rue Vaugirard, “one of those narrow streets full of shabby *parfumeries*, second-hand book-stalls, cheap hat-shops, bars frequented by gaily painted ladies and loud-voiced men, midwives’ premises...” (7-8). This walking is a true wandering of discovery, of a poet, of Baudelaire's flâneur. It is often tempered, however, by Stephen's disapproval, and Marya contents herself with the solitude of “quantities of books” in her room at the Hôtel de l'Univers (8). In these moments, Marya's Paris resembles that of the 19th century poet; her relative security (illusory as it may be) and her general lack of financial concern or obligation puts her into the company of those troubadours who, though sometimes poor, had enough security to escape the drudgery of a worker's obligation. There is, however, a difference that is evident on

the basis of gender. It is present in the repeated use of ellipses which seem to mark the forbidden reaches that are gendered. For example, Rue Vaugirard was a “very respectable thoroughfare on the whole. But if you went far enough towards Grenelle and then turned down side streets...” (8). These ellipses highlight the invisible limits that restrict her movement. They also foreshadow the role that gender will play in limiting this carefree wandering.²⁴

After Stephen's arrest, the textual city is transformed by a fear that Marya acknowledges had always been there "hidden under the more or less pleasant surface of things" even since childhood (33). Marya's movement is transformed into an "endless, aimless walking" in which she stumps out escape routes across the textual topography of the city between Montparnasse and Montmartre. The latter contains the fleeting illusory refuge of her hotel room where "as soon as she put the light out the fear was with her again - and now it was like a long street where she walked endlessly. A redly lit street, the houses on either side tall, grey and closely shuttered, the only sound the clip-clop of horses' hoofs behind her, out of sight" (34). The city follows her into the sanctuary of her room; the interior becomes an exterior connected by fear.

At the other side of the well-trodden escape route is Montparnasse. Immediately after learning that Stephen has been arrested, Marya seeks comfort and reassurance from Miss de Solla, an English Jewish painter who introduces her to the Heidlere; this movement highlights the degree to which her “Englishness” functions as a refuge, a solidity within her haphazard existence: “Marya emerged from the Métro onto the Place Denfert-Rochereau, thinking: ‘In three minutes I’ll hear somebody talking English. In two minutes, in a minute’”(26). Her instinct directs her toward something fundamental, in her panic she returns to her maternal language for comfort although she is also resorting to it as an imperial stronghold that has cultural

²⁴ For more on the gendered implications of the flâneur figure see Janet Wolff, “The Invisible Flâneuse.” And for another perspective that removes gender from the equation of the

currency. Here we see the complicated intersections of identity at work in a world where identity is an embedded entity in power structures. In this time, when nationalism as an ideology and marker of identity is on the rise, modernists are engaging in a complicated battle against the limitations of language to express reality, truth and beauty. Language however is at the very core of national ideologies and their potential for oppressing and silencing minority groups. The question of intention and driving force is critical to examining this tension between nationalism and modernism.

Semantically the narrative emphasizes illness, cold, and darkness; the weather is foggy and chilly, Marya is chronically sick and is left without means, requiring her to sell her dresses in order to survive. Her movements begin to bring her into the sphere of the French judicial system as she treks repeatedly to the Palais de Justice and then to the Santé prison facility at the edge of Montparnasse. Around her well-trodden path of fear between Montmartre and Montparnasse, she marks out a circuit of desperation that highlights the local French population, embodied in the doormen, warden and most specifically in the Hautchamps, the French couple who run the Hôtel de l'Univers where Stephen and Marya have been living. The portrait of this couple provides a "local" contrast to the Heidlere imperialist modernism and highlights the audacity of privilege at the center of what Rhys critiques in literary modernism.

The Spring of the novel is full of transition and the making of decisions as the temperatures warm up and a brief period of bliss is followed by complicated games of punishment and resistance. This warmer period centers around Montparnasse and is full of references to fine days and cheerful outdoor activity. Chapters Six and Seven feature a transitional time in which Marya's movements become a practical back and forth between the hotel and the prison that reflects her interior vacillation as she

wanderer, see Rosi Braidotti's *Nomadic Subjects*.

works through doubts about moving in with the Heidlers. In the end this decision is virtually made for her when Stephen fails to understand her reluctance and she receives a letter from her family in England which, although demonstrating concern about her wellbeing, essentially reminds her that she is on her own. By Chapter Eight she has already moved in and her movement shifts toward the Left Bank and a carefree circuit around the Heidlers' Montparnasse studio. She sometimes runs errands around the posh quarter surrounding the Louvre and once a week she takes a train out to Fresnes, a prison to the south of the city, accessed via the Porte d'Orleans, to visit Stephen. The vision of the city shifts as well from the fairly evenhanded treatment of the central axis of Boulevards that she gave at the beginning of the narrative toward one that shows a change in her perception of the Anglo and international communities associated with them:

But she vaguely disliked the Boulevard St Michel with its rows of glaring cafés, and always felt relieved when she turned into Boulevard Montparnasse, softer, more dimly lit, more kindly. There she could plunge herself into her dream. (67)

With her changing circumstances the location of "home" and of refuge shifts toward the Anglophone community. Her movement shifts, as does her perspective. The sudden and blissful spring, however, is accompanied by Heidler's pressing advances, Marya's resistance, and her eventual submission, once again when she comes to a point where she thinks that she has no other options.

There is a reversal in movement that occurs after Marya submits to Heidler's advances, underscoring the sense of nostalgia she develops for her life with Stephen and the illusion that she has attached to it. The reversed movement that begins once again between Montparnasse and Montmartre recalls the fear of Marya's precarious situation and the trodding also becomes associated with punishment at the hands of Lois Heidler. The narrative jumps from the seduction of Marya into a new chapter

where the three, Marya and the Heidlere are eating together at LeFranc's. The evening is full of clear attempts on Lois' part to punish Marya. Lois insists they go to a music-hall in Montmartre and then later, when it appears Marya is enjoying one of the acts, that they return to the Select Bar in Montparnasse. The movement inverts that of the first section where Marya flees from one "refuge" to another in order to escape a faceless fear. Here, Montparnasse slowly represents the oppressive elements of her life as the imperial nature of her relationship with the Heidlere becomes more and more apparent. Immediately following this scene, Cairn, an American short-story writer with no money, asks to meet her in Montmartre and offers to help her escape from her situation, prompting her once more to make this inverted trek in the pursuit of safety.

Marya continues her resistance in ever more erratic ways as Spring turns into Summer. In Chapter Fourteen, when the trio is on holiday in the country outside of Paris, she has a breakdown and insists that she will no longer submit to the abuse, demanding that Heidler provide separate accommodations for her. In terms of textual topography this demand is significant because it occurs outside of Paris, suggesting that part of the movement that occurs within the city actually reinforces her helpless state. In the countryside, away from the well-marked social maps, Marya finds a voice and demands it be heard. It is the absence of the Parisian social spaces and Marya's internalization of them that creates a moment of agency accompanied by a temporary peace. The Heidlere too are hemmed in by their social status and it is only the threat of what they see as impropriety that moves them to take a new kind of action with regard to Marya. The moments of the narrative that take place outside of Paris demonstrate the extent to which the urban is decentered in Rhys's modernist vision, in spite of its apparently central role. Here and later when Marya goes to the South, we see her exteriorized interiority shape shift away from the mapped form it

takes in Paris into one that engages in symbolic constructions associated with natural features, interior spaces and rural social mores.

Her return to Paris, however, reinscribes her helpless position as the narrative shifts into summer, and the oppressively hot weather marks more distress. It becomes clear that Marya has not escaped the manipulative punishments that Lois seeks to inflict and that although she is no longer living with the couple, she cannot escape the demands they impose upon the arrangement. Rather than finding more tranquility she finds herself further implicated in a game that takes on war-like language and dimensions as the summer temperatures mount. New boundaries are drawn across the city and others are blurred or reinforced. She is living on the fringes of Montparnasse and her movements shift so as to avoid the 'battleground' on Boulevard Montparnasse, which lies in-between the Hotel Bosphore and the Latin Quarter on the other side. Her circuitous movements around the Boulevard to the equally marginal space of the Latin Quarter highlights a social shift and a psychological one. No longer is the Anglo domain of Montparnasse a refuge and symbol of her own superiority. Rather, she marginalizes herself in order to avoid further abuse at the hands of this community.

The heat continues to be oppressive in the narrative as Marya prepares for Stephen's release in September and Heidler warns her of the consequences if she returns to live with him. In this transitional stage, the narrative focuses on the refuge in the marginal Latin Quarter. In a final act of resistance she ignores Heidler's threat and stays with Stephen for the few days before he leaves the country. A short blissful reprieve is accompanied by a break in the weather, as late September rains wash away the oppressive summer heat and the distress of Marya's situation. She secludes herself in this marginal haven until Stephen has to leave, at which point the temporary veil of illusion lifts and Marya once again feels the despair and hopelessness return. She reaches out to Heidler, who meets with her but ultimately

breaks off the affair, sending her to the South to keep her from “trailing around Montparnasse looking as ill as all that” (153).

At the beach, the motif of oppressive heat returns in the form of the blazing sun. This time the escape from Paris only highlights her dependency on Heidler and the oppression follows her in the form of a friend of the Heidlers. When the weather finally breaks and a cold wind comes in, it is accompanied by a letter from Stephen saying that he is returning to Paris. Marya also returns to Paris and she and Stephen take a room in the area between Montmartre and the Gare du Nord. This is another marginal area in the narrative that, just as the Hotel Bosphore and the Latin Quarter delimit Montparnasse, skirts the Montmartre area that functions as the center of the illicit international activity that accompanies Stephen’s movements. As Marya struggles to decide between Stephen, who must flee the country, and Heidler, who has renewed contact, the chill of the previous October sets in once again in preparation for the narrative’s, and Marya’s, tragic end. This temporal organization intersects with the spacial organization of the city as recorded by Marya’s movements in order to create a narrative space that projects interiority onto the exterior demonstrating the evolution of the protagonist, while also underscoring the cyclical nature of that evolution through association with the seasons and finally reemphasizing the imperial and patriarchal power structures that keep her locked in that cycle, thereby limiting the possibility for real transformation.

The Zones of Resistance in Imaginative Layering

As the narration lays out the topography of the textual city, the axis of the Boulevards St Michel and Montparnasse becomes central to the transnational critique of interwar social conduct in the city of lights that revolves around Marya’s shifting perspectives of these spaces. While early critiques of the novel discuss Marya as victims, a more careful deconstruction of the transnational topology of the city demonstrates the way that Marya moves at the boundaries of the imperial-like

structures of privilege operating within the social constructs of the city. She is not completely impassive in her misfortune. She *does* understand and use those boundaries to protect and benefit herself, at least to a point. Within the transnational axis on the Left Bank, the Rue de Rennes is an in-between space in which we see her using those boundaries in resistance. Her character brings together the contradiction at the heart of modernity; she is victimized, but she also acts out and within the narrative she is silenced but is never fully silent. She states her case and acknowledges that those who might call her a coward would never be able to withstand what she has withstood in her life.

Toward the beginning of the novel, Marya meets Miss de Solla while wandering the Rue de Rennes and looking at a “red felt hat” (5). At that time the street reminds her of Tottencourt Road, perhaps because of its bustling, cosmopolitan character. If this is the reason, however, Rhys does not provide evidence of it in her text. This is part of her stripping the topography of all elements that might imbue it with a character of its own. No detail is permitted except that which elucidates Marya’s character. The effect here is a sense of the layering of place that reflects Marya’s transnational interiority.

Later in the heat of the summer drama, the Rue de Rennes becomes associated with the changing aspects in Heidler after Marya’s outburst at the country house. They repeatedly meet at the Café de Versailles, which the narrator claims is “a peaceful place at three o’clock in the afternoon, given up to middle-aged men drinking bocks and young men writing letters. [...] Outside, the Rue de Rennes [stews] drearily in the sun” (120). In this restaurant Heidler insists that Marya “play the game” so as to avoid a spectacle, insisting that she visit Lois during her tea parties as though nothing has happened between the three of them. Marya, obsessing over Heidler’s hat, finds “something impressive, something which touches the imagination about the sight of an English bowler hat in the Rue de Rennes” (113). This

observation comes at a moment when it appears that Marya might be acting in her own interest, as she did so skillfully with those “shabby youths” in the Boulevards. She demands that she be treated as human and not an object or plaything, and yet this change in Heidler, symbolized in the hat, and its associations with English imperialism, breaks her resolve and brings her back to the same submissive place. Heidler repeats ad nauseum: “We can’t let Lois down,” and Marya responds, “All right. Very well. Just as you like[...] What’s it matter anyway” (120). This act of caving in can be puzzling for a reader who sees the potential for self-actualization in Marya. The reasons for her submission seem weak and inconsequential unless one remembers the central place that fear plays in Marya’s existence and the tiny area that this space of resistance takes up in her Paris. The bowler hat represents the invasion of imperial logic into her small refuge of resistance.

After Stephen's release from prison, it is in this same café where Heidler breaks off the affair, claiming "I've never shared a woman in my life, not knowingly anyhow, and I'm not going to start now" (147). Although Marya points out the inconsistency in his argument she ultimately succumbs to him and further claims that she loves him. The Rue de Rennes is geographically located in-between the axis boulevards and, in Marya's mind, it also situates itself between the overtly aggressive chaos of international life and the quiet but insidiously imperial impact of the Anglophone expatriate set. It is the place where she almost has what she needs and wants, but never quite sees it through. It is also a place that brings her past (London) and her present (her relationship with Heidler) together into one space.

On one particularly fear-filled evening, Marya exits to a foggy street and thinks about how it might be London. The narrator remarks that the "Boulevard Arago, like everything else, seemed unreal, fantastic, but also extraordinarily familiar, and she was trying to account for this mysterious impression of familiarity” (46). Her wanderings do not provide external stimulus to her fantasies and nostalgia but rather

provide a canvas upon which the author may reflect Marya's internal struggles and map out her disconnection from society. The importance is not placed on topographical nor topological characteristics of the street itself, but on the proximity of experience and memory for the characters. Making the Caribbean and London just as present in this version of Paris as are the fabled stomping grounds of literary expatriates in the 1920s.²⁵

This topographical experimentation that I call imaginative layering permits the novel to critique the sense of privilege and imperial bias that accompanies Anglo modernist life in Paris, and that has pervaded its critical literary history. Rhys highlights transnational interactions, emphasizing the way that the foreign becomes a floating signifier based on the economic and social security of the "foreigner," and based on his or her "value" in that system. Rhys's texts provide a model of urban modernism that pushes against the normative, prescriptive cosmopolitanism that is born out of empire and its privileges. This model functions within what Clukey calls a "stateless alterity," based on socially equal international contacts, and truly reflecting the transnational cosmopolitanism that many Modernists value. Her work reveals the tension between transnational values attributed to modernism and national identity written onto it. Part of my more global concern in this dissertation is that the nation-centered canonical view of expatriate modernism that we have received is still quite fully engrained in the popular view of the time, despite excellent critical work over the past 30 years to expose absences and silences in that approach. I am pushing against this nationalist perspective by demonstrating that modernist writers in interwar Europe were working in inherently transnational ways that consistently

²⁵ For more on the layering of the Caribbean with metropolitan locations like London and Paris see Erica Johnson's *Home, Maison, Casa: The Politics of Location in Works by Jean Rhys, Marguerite Duras, and Erminia Dell'Oro*. Madison [N.J.]: London: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press; Associated University Presses, 2003. In particular see page 148 for Johnson's analysis of *Voyage in the Dark*. See also Christopher GoGwilt's *The Passage of Literature: Genealogies of Modernism in Conrad, Rhys, and Pramoedy*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2011.

reacted to empire; this does not negate, however, the idea that as products of empire, modernists inadvertently upheld its most damaging features.

Rhys's protagonists explicitly resist the facade of cosmopolitan identification through a complicated negotiation of boundaries that shape interiority and exteriority using linguistic othering. Clukey observes that "While the Heidlars posture as the ultimate cosmopolites, it is Marya, with her unmarked subjectivity, who can achieve transcultural engagement and a genuinely participatory cosmopolitanism" (456). This is an interesting claim, for when we consider Marya's involvement in the lives around her and in the world at large, *engagement* is not a word that readily comes to mind. If she is engaged, her engagement is observational, not participatory. However, if we consider Rhys's use of language and the importance that language and cultural exchange play in terms of character and setting development, we may begin to understand the way that Marya is, in fact, extremely engaged in the transnational movements around her.

In *Quartet* the French language serves the purpose of reminding the reader of the sociolinguistic setting, providing context by highlighting the sense of foreignness of the setting and often by reminding the reader that the language of the narration is not necessarily the language of the characters. Part of the draw to France for Modernists was no doubt its foreignness, but for most expatriates it is a foreignness to be observed and not internalized. In Rhys's work, the foreign is inherently internal. For many other modernists a foreign setting provided enough difference to denaturalize language in a way that was observable on a daily basis. Rhys however takes this tool a step further, demonstrating the way that language shifts perspective both internally and externally and the way it operates on various levels of privilege in a transnational setting.

Consider also the use of this geographical layering in the short stories "Trio", "Mixing Cocktails" and "Again the Antilles" from *Stories from the Left Bank*.

In the narrative, the French language helps highlight the absurdity of the Anglo sense of ownership over French physical spaces. It is also central to the way that Rhys employs an outsider within perspective in the narrative. Language provides the link between all that functions as interiority in the topography of the city, and that which pivots out toward a model of the way that society impacts the interiority of the person. The moments of permeability between the exterior and the interior are key to this shift. After seeing Stephen in prison, Marya sits in a bar on the Avenue d'Orlean watching the door open and shut over the span of hours. Each time the door opens she sees "the crimson lights of the tobacco shop opposite and the crimson reflection on the asphalt and she began to picture the endless labyrinth of the Paris streets, glistening hardly, crowded with hurrying people. But now she thought of them without fear, rather with a strange excitement" (47). It is with this physical border between interior and exterior space that the narrative explores the breaking down of psychological delimitations. The fears and limitations that Marya feels are shifting in this moment, preparing the way for the changes that will come when the Heidler's insist that she move in with them.

The association with the boundaries of interiority and exteriority of physical space translates into a psychological one through the theme of confusion and the uncanny and this breach is portrayed as linguistic. In the vague fog surrounding the days after Stephen's arrest Marya is often depicted as an observer, unconnected with, and unable to comprehend what is happening around her. When she goes to visit Stephen in the prison, linguistic boundaries become the focus of the narrative when Stephen nervously suggests that they "are supposed to talk French." This restriction in her expression ignites a confusion that overwhelms her: "She had suddenly ceased to be able to understand French" (36). Without the ability to understand French or to speak English she is silenced at a critical moment in her narrative development and once again thrust into liminal spaces of identity.

The importance of language for Rhys stems from her childhood and is therefore deeply integrated into her ideas about identity. Elaine Savory, in her critical and biographical survey of Rhys's work, suggests that language is deeply embedded in the layered, intersectional approach that Rhys takes to writing character:

It is virtually impossible to overestimate the formative years in Dominica as shaping the idea of language Rhys worked with. The tension between the West Indian, white Creole accent she had as a young woman and could produce even in old age and the middle-class English voice she mainly used towards the end of her life reflects her response to British middle-class, largely literary connections. But her Caribbean childhood must have taught her that language is almost always a layered means of communication, with hidden codes and contrasting registers. (*Jean Rhys* 10)

In *Quartet*, Rhys demonstrates this multidimensionality through the use of code-switching and untranslated French. The narrative highlights such code-switching by italicizing all of the French expressions and words. Many of the English-speaking characters engage in code-switching throughout the novel. An English acquaintance explains that she is out of sorts: "Oh, I am not in my assiette as the dear French say" (41), Lois declares her need for some kind of naughty entertainment by mixing a typical French expression with patterns of French speech translated into English: "I'm bored, bored, bored! Look here. Let's go to a music-hall, the promenoir of a music-hall, that's what I feel like. Something canaille, what?"(85). Marya, talking with Heidler tries to preempt his plan to break off their affair by drawing his attention to a man observing them from across the café: "he knows, I am sure, that you are plaquéing me. And so does the waiter. Isn't plaquer a good word?" (149). These instances are all consistent with typical code-switching that occurs in multilingual contexts. The characters are speaking in English and the French insertions suggest various degrees of integration into the linguistic environment. These

examples all feature French expressions that seem to be used for emphasis. The word is not inserted out of necessity but for theatrical purposes. In these contexts, this use of French is a reminder of the othering process that language can engender, but the narrative generally fails to demonstrate any othering of English speakers, except in Marya's case; it is only when anglophones are considered from the native French character's perspective that they too are subjected to this process of linguistic othering.

In this shifting of focus, featuring French or other non-Anglo speakers, Rhys uses the italicized French to indicate that a conversation is not occurring in English. In all of these cases, Rhys does not translate the French but rather leaves it alone in the text in a distinctly modernist gesture. Sometimes Rhys's use of French in her texts signals both an immersion in French local culture and a nod to modernist foundations at the heart of that culture. In a moment of the narration where Marya is feeling the deep regret of allowing herself to fall into this dependent trap, she looks back at what she has lost, at the brief period when she felt secure and happy and she expresses that nostalgia with the lyrics of a French children's song: "Nous n'irons plus au bois; Les lauriers sont coupés" (89). The song has a long history in popular French culture that is associated with the loss of childhood innocence that often occurs with sexual awakening. Marya's sense of a "vanished youth" comes during brief moments of honest assessment and she feels the "horrible nostalgia, and ache for the past" that the song elicits. At the same time, the line gestures to the title of a novel by Eduard Dujardin, who James Joyce claimed as the father of stream of consciousness.²⁶ This connection with French modernism opens the topographical projects of the novel to a number of native treatments of the city that acknowledge more directly the historical layers of modernity in urban Paris, bringing us back to Baudelaire and his

²⁶ *Les Lauriers Sont Coupés* (1888). Joyce claimed that DuJardin was the father of stream-of-consciousness technique. Dujardin wrote in *Le Monologue intérieur: Son apparition, ses origines, sa place dans l'œuvre de James Joyce* (Paris, 1931), p. 99. "the whole of reality consists in the clear or confused consciousness one has of it."

observations on the changing city, and connecting us to French contemporaries of Rhys, such as Louis Aragon and his flâneur le *Paysan de Paris*, and to a rich history of mapping out the corners of the city by French writers. In this way, Rhys's mapping of the city reaches beyond expatriate tropes to local visions that push against the imperial ones implicit in Anglo-modernist depictions.

The Role of Place and Imperialism

There are several establishments on Boulevard Montparnasse to which the characters refer or which they frequent, and that play a part in the larger artistic and intellectual mythology of the Left Bank, both on the page and in real life. The cafés Dome and Rotonde, situated on either side of the Boulevard de Montparnasse, are two such places. In the text, they help to signal the process of being an insider and becoming an outsider and they frame the dynamics of power between the four main characters. As Tim Cresswell has demonstrated, place can signal possession, physicality and social hierarchy. Marya's movement within the textual city uses the urban space to outline the changing contours of her subjectivity while these pauses, in places like the Dôme and the Rotonde, work as geographer Yi Fu Tuan has theorized to transform a mere location into a place filled with symbolic meaning and associative layering (6). This transformation into place also moves the focus momentarily from Marya's psychological and subjective development toward the institutional and social frameworks that influence that development. In this way, place is formulated, in Henri Lefebvre's model, as an absolute space plus meaning within a power context.

One example of this dynamic is evident the first time the narrative stops at the Café du Dome, where a "mournful and tightly packed assembly" gathers. It is here that Marya first encounters Heidler's advances on the "empty and cold" terrace of the "dreadful" place:

I bet that man is a bit of a brute sometimes,' thought Marya. And as she thought it, she felt his hand lying heavily on her knee.

He looked kind, peaceful and exceedingly healthy. His light, calm eyes searched the faces of the people passing on the Boulevard Montparnasse, and his huge hand lay possessively, heavy as lead, on her knee.

Ridiculous sort of thing to do. Ridiculous, not frightening. Why frightening?

She made a cautious but decided movement and the hand was withdrawn.

(13)

The scene replays, in a rather comic way, the entitlement and affective interaction of imperialism. The Café du Dôme frames this power dynamic, demonstrating the way that Marya is seized within an imperial context and the uncertainty and contradiction of modernity. Marya's inconsistent observations of Heidler model the complicated rapport between colonizer and colonized. She sees him both as a kind benefactor, peaceful and healthy, exuding an innocence even in the face of such a "ridiculous" action (91), and she imagines his potential to be a "brute," both foreshadowing the direction of their relationship and gesturing toward the obverse psychological consequences of imperial logic that Franz Fanon highlights in *Black Skin, White Mask* in which there is a disjuncture between the body and the consciousness when a person, who believes him or herself to be part of a community or group, encounters racism, sexism or a number of other forms of othering that then exclude or marginalize his or her position within that group. The outsider within perspective is forged²⁷.

Later in the narrative, after months of living with the Heidlers, Marya is across the street, outside the similarly famed Café de la Rotonde and she crosses paths with Miss de Solla who seems anxious to relieve herself of Marya's company, suggesting

²⁷ *Black Skin, White Mask* provides both personal perspective and cultural psychological analysis. Fanon emphasizes the destructive power of language in the imperial system highlighting the split that occurs between the consciousness, which is colonized by language and the body, which is excluded and marginalized through institutional racism. See p 17-18.

that the arrangement with the Heidlrs has become common knowledge and that Marya has been positioned as the pariah in the situation (68). The place marks the shift in status from seized property to shunned abjection. These two establishments, situated on either side of Boulevard de Montparnasse were and are famous as locations where avant garde artists and writers gathered. They help situate the narrative both geographically and socially in precise ways. Rhys need not describe the atmosphere for she knows that the atmosphere is already written onto these locales. Her interest in the place is in the institutional and social framework that it provides to better portray the exterior forces that shape the interior topography that she is writing into the text. She cites them in a way that permits her to write against that received understanding of the historical and social space and the dynamics of the place, highlighting the colonial logic that accompany their cultural currency and the impact that these dynamics have on marginalized individuals.

Rhys portrays The Select Bar in a similar way; it is a place that today continues to be renowned for its unique atmosphere.²⁸ In *Quartet*, The Select is the place where the trio often ends up at the end of the night and it is the place where Marya is most overtly abused by the "Montparnos." Right after Heidler's rebuffed advance at the Dôme they continue on to the Select, though what happens there is not portrayed (13). The narrative does not bring the reader into the Select until the evening following Marya's submission to Heidler's advances. Fueled by drunken disdain from Guy Lester—a character who appears to be a young American writer Heidler is helping, perhaps a stand-in for Hemingway—Lois launches a series of direct and passive attacks at Marya setting the tone for the rest of their acquaintance (87-88). These real-life establishments can work as shorthand for presenting a certain kind of

²⁸ Noel Fitch, in his history of the Select quotes a frequenter who claims that a café is for "people who want to be alone, but need company for it"¹. The Select is the ideal place for this type of introspection. Fitch demonstrates the ways that The Select has managed to hold on to this idea while eschewing some of the traps of notoriety that the other cafés face. Fitch, Noel Riley. *Paris Café: The Select Crowd*. Brooklyn, NY: Berkeley, Calif.: Soft Skull Press, 2007.

life on the Left Bank and the inclusion and exclusion from that life that follow an imperial logic. Most of the significant moments in the narrative, however, occur in invented establishments that more blatantly represent the layering of identity that challenges the myths of modernist literature within transnational contexts.

One such location is Lefranc's, "half-way up the Boulevard du Montparnasse." Lefranc's is an invented establishment with an ironic and meaningful name full of thematic bravado. It is the narrative center for Anglo culture and language and it is the "home" establishment for the Heidlers. The name signifies the French currency of the time, the franc, underscoring the financial dimensions of cultural exchange at work in the novel. The name of the café also points to the transnational nature of intercultural transactions because it references the Germanic people who invaded the Pays de Gaul, lending their name to what would eventually become France. The fact that Lefranc's is the center for Anglo culture and language in the narrative points toward the kind of economic colonization that was rampant in the city in the aftermath of World War I.

Marya goes to Lefranc's three times over the course of the narrative. The first time is early in the novel, before Stephen is arrested, and it is the occasion when Marya first meets the Heidlers. She carefully observes the owners of the establishment: "The patron is provincial and affable. The patronne, who sits beaming behind the counter, possesses a mildly robust expression and the figure and coiffure of the nineties; her waist goes in, her hips come out, her long black hair is coiled into a smooth bun on the top of her round head" (10). This description, keyed to Marya's point of view, reinforces the idea that the Boulevard Montparnasse is a kind of refuge for Marya at this early stage in the novel. The patronne is "restful to the tired eyes" and the street is "softer, more dimly lit, more kindly." These observations, contrasting with the overall temporal themes of winter, cold and illness, give the impression of sanctuary. This is an idea that she also connects with her room in Montmartre at one

point early in the section. The narrator explains that “Marya went back to her bedroom from the misty streets and shut the door with a feeling of relief as if she had shut out a malignant world” (34). Here, moments of peace come from temporary reprieves from the fear, which is her driving motivation throughout the text even though the narrator more dismissively suggests she is “restless, lazy, a vagabond by nature” (14). Her moments of “weakness” come when she she is willing to shut her eyes to reality and embrace any illusion that might permit her to stave off her fear.

Her second visit to Lefranc’s occurs after she has sold her dresses; feeling depressed and vulnerable she accepts a dinner invitation with the Heidlers. Her observations of the interior space focus on people: the rush of profiles, arms and legs. She observes the people to whom the Heidlers attribute various labels and classifications: Cri-Cri, a thinly veiled version of the famed Kiki de Montparnasse, is one such personage whom Mrs. Heidler is anxious to have attend her parties: “People who got written about. Characters. Types. She began to discuss the famous lady, characters in general, beauty” (40). While the Heidlers reduce each person to a type (Lola Hewitt, for example, an Elizabethan), Marya observes those around her in terms of very specific physical attributes: Anna is “a small, neat American, with baby-blond hair, a keen eye and a very firm mouth indeed,” (41) and the lady at the bar wearing a turban is gaunt. These observations transform the place from a refuge into a parade of imperial logic, with its emphasis on classification and hierarchy while Marya’s perspective pushes against this logic with disinterested physical observations.

The final scene in Lefranc's comes after Marya has succumbed to Heidler’s advances. The three dine there together the following evening and a clear shift has occurred in the dynamics of the trio. Lois demonstrates her obvious animosity and Heidler pretends as though nothing has occurred. Marya is “absorbed, happy, without thought for perhaps the first time in her life. No past. No future. Nothing but

the present” (85). Marya’s bliss does not last, as it becomes clear that although Lois was unwilling to help Marya avoid the affair, she is most certainly prepared to punish Marya for it. In representing this scene the narration takes a step back from Marya’s perspective and keys itself to the restaurant’s French owners. Monsieur Lefranc “admired Lois Heidler. He considered her a good-looking woman, a sensible, tidy, well-dressed woman who knew how to appreciate food. Marya he distrusted, and he had told his wife so more than once” (84). He observes the trio and guesses the situation: “Ça y est. I knew it! Ah the *grue!*” So he waited on Lois with sympathy and gentleness; he waited on Marya grimly, and when he looked at Heidler, his expression said: ‘Come, come, my dear sir. As man to man, what a mistake you’re making!’” Monsieur Lefranc, the owner of the restaurant, provides a typical reading of the situation while his wife “beamed on Marya every bit as kindly as she beamed on Lois, for she was a plump and placid woman who never took sides, and when her husband (a very moral man) judged a female client with severity, she would often say: ‘Life is very droll. One never knows, Josef, one never knows.’” (84). There are several local and French perspectives like this that Rhys uses to broaden the reader's understanding of Marya’s situation in a global and political way. Their views help to illustrate intersectional and marginal identity positions. As a member of the expatriate community, Marya is also outside of it. Her gaze does not see her surroundings as foreign and therefore removed from herself; the complexity of her intersectional identity can only be read externally, either through a topographical reading of her writing-of-the-city, through the shifting external perspectives on Marya, or through her own self-projection onto others, just as her emotions are projected onto the topography.

From her first encounter with the Heidlers, Marya figures as an outsider within. The narrator observes that the Heidlers and Miss De Solla spoke of her “in the third person as if she were a strange animal or at any rate a strayed animal — one not quite

of the fold” (11). This theme of exclusion and infantilizing objectification continues throughout the narrative as she reacts to her increasingly constrained circumstances: “she was in a frenzy of senseless fright. Fright of a child shut up in a dark room. Fright of an animal caught in a trap” (90). The local view of Marya pushes against this animalistic and childish view of Marya by grouping her with other marginal groups and by opening up the narrative perspective to alternative imperialisms than the Anglo-Saxon one embodied by the Heidlers.

L’Hotel de l’Univers, where Marya and Stephen have been living as the narration unfolds, is a place that sets up a duel between national/linguistic identification and that of transnational movement. This opposition, as we have seen, is written into the textual topography of the city as Marya traverses it, but it is also explored in the interactions between the French couple who run the hotel, and Marya. In one scene Mrs. Hautchamp observes Marya as the latter receives word from Stephen of his whereabouts after the arrest. Narratively the focalization of the scene triangulates between Marya, Mrs. Hautchamp’s observations of her and Mr. Hautchamp’s detached and incomplete response to them.

It’s a pity all the same,’ thought the watching Madame Hautchamp, who noticed that the young woman was pale and had a troublesome cough. ‘Ah, all these people,’ she thought.

Madame Hautchamp meant all of them. All the strange couples who filled her hotel — internationalists who invariably got into trouble sooner or later. She went back into the sitting-room and remarked as much to Monsieur Hautchamp, who was reading the newspaper, and Monsieur Hautchamp shrugged his shoulders; then, with an expression of profound disapproval, he continued his article which, as it happened, began thus:

‘Le mélange des races est à la base de l’évolution humaine vers le type parfait.’”

‘I don’t think,’ thought Monsieur Hautchamp - or something to that effect.

(33)

This scene showcases the attitudes of the Hautchamps, representatives, along with a number of waiters and shop clerks, of the native French population silently filling in the crowds that surround the all too often oblivious Anglo modernists. What the narrative does here, though, is different from the moments when, from Marya’s perspective, the French service staff and local clientele respond silently to the privileged Anglo takeover of Montparnasse and the Left Bank in general. Here the focus is on an “international” population and one that can not be called privileged but rather that is unfortunate in its precarious legal and financial position. From Mrs. Hautchamp’s perspective, Marya is a victim to be pitied, one of the many of her kind who populate the hotel, a strange species of people linked with illicit affairs and misfortune. Mr. Hautchamp’s opinion is slightly more obscured. His “expression of profound disapproval” upon returning to the article he had been reading, headlined – THE MIXING OF THE RACES IS AT THE ROOT OF HUMAN EVOLUTION TOWARD THE PERFECT SPECIMEN (my translation)—might suggest that he disagrees with Mrs Hautchamp’s pity or, perhaps more likely that he agrees with her and therefore finds the idea, that the mixing of races will benefit humanity, absurd. His unfinished thought is not only unfinished, but is dismissed as not requiring specification, a given perhaps.

When the perspective shifts back to Marya, the emphasis on the letter that “was written in English on cheap, blue-lined paper” (33) underlines her connection to the privileged Anglo set that contrasts with the Hautchamp's view of her. The shifting identity categories that various characters attribute to Marya underscore her own internally shifting identification. While the Hautchamps see her as a pitiable international, and the Lefrancis as both vixen and victim, the Heidlars see her as a

creature to be rescued, seduced and tolerated. Marya's own view of herself, however, is most clearly defined by her projection onto strangers around her.

She projects herself onto women she anonymously observes and these projections reveal subtle aspects of her character and reinforce the narrative's statement about privilege and oppression. In the early narrative winter, right after receiving the letter from Stephen that explains his arrest, Marya goes for a walk through the foggy streets. As she is in the middle of composing a letter to her family back in England, she observes a sad and sullen girl in the café: "Opposite her a pale, long-faced girl sat in front of an untouched drink, watching the door. She was waiting for the gentleman with whom she had spent the preceding night to come along and pay for it, and naturally she was waiting in vain" (33). Marya's observation of the girl, and her projection of personal experiences onto her, seem to reflect a deep-seeded fear that no one will come to her aid, that she has been stood up in life. Her present misfortunes have not *created* the fear; it is rather a constant part of her existence:

She spent the foggy day in endless, aimless walking, for it seemed to her that if she moved quickly enough she would escape the fear that hunted her. It was a vague and shadowy fear of something cruel and stupid that had caught her and would never let her go. She had always known that it was there-hidden under the more or less pleasant surface of things. (33)

This fear is key to Marya's character development and is the central force driving the plot. It is this fear against which she battles throughout the narrative and which drives her into the inertia that ultimately keeps her locked in a role as victim; despite Cairn's attempts to intervene and her own occasional burst of agency.

Later, in the heat of summer, Marya again projects herself onto a stranger in a café. As Marya sits drinking a Pernod to prepare to see the Heidlars, she watches a lady "exactly like Pierrot and every now and then [the woman] would turn and look at herself in the glass approvingly. Eventually, gathering up her belongings, she moved

out with stately and provocative undulations of the hips” (122). This allusion to the stock character Pierrot, echoes the practice of typecasting that Marya has noted in the way the Heidlars encounter the world, dictating the characteristics of everyone around them. She then places herself in the place of the woman, imitating her movement and looking at herself in the mirror with despair:

...hopelessly, thinking, ‘Good God, how ugly I’ve grown!’ Loving had done that to her — among other things — made her ugly. If this was love— this perpetual aching longing, this wound that bled persistently and very slowly. And the devouring hope. And the fear. That was the worst. The fear she lived with — that the little she had would be taken from her. (122)

Marya casts herself as the sad clown and it reinforces the ability of fear and social pressure as inscribed upon the topography of the city to undermine any personal development and agency that she has shown to this point.

From the moment in the text when Marya has her one small triumph in Brunoy and then returns to Paris and moves into the Hôtel du Bosphore the narrative slips into a regular use of the modal verb *would*. As a modal form that expresses both the conditional mood and the habitual past tense the grammatical choice infuses the narrative with a sense of routine and the hypothetical. Through Marya’s perspective the narrator recounts the routine into which she falls, the banality of lovemaking and daily movement within and around the city: lunch with Heidler in the Café de Versailles on the Rue de Rennes and his insistence that she go to see Lois, that she “play the part,” “the lonely nights” that become a routine of drinking a couple of Pernods at the bar next to her hotel, then walking, “carefully avoiding the Boulevard du Montparnasse” to a student’s restaurant where she could avoid the “Montparnos” and encounter reflections of herself in the people around her. It is through this extended relation of the habitual and the hypothetical that the narrative is able to convey Marya’s downward spiral from that moment in Brunoy when “she had still

reacted” to the hopeless and listless “thing” she has become, “reconquered” by a system of habits and expectations and worn down by fear and her own desire to be desired. It is a spiral that is not fully understood if not read through the lens of movement in transnational spaces. Marya's fear, desperation and hopelessness is pounded into the pavement of the city streets she treads so that the Rhysian Paris becomes a map of her character's subjectivity and the people she encounters either reflect her interiority or project their own transnational and intersectional views onto her.

The deep interiority that we see in the characters of High Modernists like James Joyce and Virginia Woolf is not accessible to Rhys's characters. Rhys demonstrates the economic limits for imperial subjects, showing how the focus on extreme interiority of characters like Clarissa Dalloway or Stephen Dedalus is something Rhys' characters can't afford. Her work uses modernist techniques to represent interiority while shifting attention from metropolitan perspective toward ones that have been marginalized from its privileges through discriminatory identity politics. As Clukey suggests: “From a Rhysian perspective, metropolitan modernism's celebration of extreme subjectivity appears self-congratulatory, the result of national and economic privileges bestowed by imperial expansion” (447). Clukey points specifically to free indirect discourse as an instrument that “depict[s] the psychological fragmentation and subjective dissolution of cosmopolites who lack the economic security that enables deep interiority (445). Rhys, instead offers an interiority that is not grounded in any form of stability, be it economic, gendered or racial. Rhys’s characters stabilize themselves in relation to their surroundings, avoiding particular streets or cafés, and frequenting others based on their social and economic status at any particular moment and thereby writing their identity and subjectivity onto the urban setting. Her work and the work of other recovered modernist writers provide us with a perspective of expatriate interwar Modernism in

France that reveals the "layers of identification" that were ignored in the early years of myth-writing that helped to canonize so many of its practitioners. She provides a picture of "Modernism as caught in the mesh of gender" demonstrating, as Bonnie Kime Scott has argued, that it is "polyphonic, mobile, interactive, sexually charged; it has wide appeal, constituting a historic shift in parameters" (Scott 4). She also, however, demonstrates the pervasive impact of imperial logic and power structures in "European," "white," and "modern" contexts and the way that intersections of identity play a vital role in those contexts. By exteriorizing her interiority, by casting her interiority either as a projection onto the city or onto other characters, and by using these topographies to reveal imperial power structures at work within modernist culture, she provides a truly transnational modernist project that reveals the economic realities driven by gendered and racialized social pressures that impact her art, implying their inevitable impact on that of other modernists.

Chapter 3 Nomadic Origins and Collective Identity in Claude McKay's *Banjo*

Introduction

Engaging with the work of Claude McKay means moving modernist urban narrative in France beyond the city of Paris. While Jean Rhys disrupts the idea of Paris operating as a modernist character of itself, and replaces it with a topography that acts as a mirror reflecting the emotional fragmentation of individual characters, McKay's urban modernism completely decenters Paris as expatriate metropolitan center in France. Instead, he uses the topography of the city of Marseilles to illustrate the systematic boundaries that modern conceptions of race create, constraining both literary production and individual self-realization. This view of Marseilles therefore challenges popular conceptions of France as a racially, sexually, and politically progressive space, revealing a dissonance in the depiction of France as modernist symbol centered in the image of interwar Paris.

Like Rhys, McKay embodies a complicated national identity that makes grouping him with American or British modernists problematic. His racial identification and political activities bring him into a variety of literary realms, including the Harlem Renaissance and early 20th century American and British radical leftist writing. He can arguably be called a father of French Négritude²⁹ and labeled a forerunner in Black Arts and Black Power literary movements. Certainly one can call him a Jamaican writer, based on his family background and birthplace, and thus place him within the context of Caribbean writing. Such a move also often puts him within the realm of diasporic writing, a category to which much Caribbean writing belongs but that also connects him to writers from all over the world. The diaspora classification certainly has its advantages in terms of precision, for in 1912 at the age of 22, after publishing his first book of poetry, Claude McKay left Jamaica to attend university in America.

Of his first years in America, McKay wrote in his autobiographical sketch, *A Long Way from Home*: “My leisure was divided between the experiment of daily living and the experiment of essays in writing. If I would not graduate as a bachelor of arts or science, I would graduate as a poet” (10). To that end he sought a way to make a living that would not hinder him from pursuing his writing. He spent several years as a railroad porter, then as a contributor to radical socialist publications in New York and in London. In 1922 he embarked on a “magic pilgrimage” to Russia, receiving an enthusiastic welcome from the Soviet bureaucracy and the Russian people and addressing the Third Communist International in Moscow as an independent poet. McKay was keen on emphasizing his independent artistic point of view, claiming to be “merely a poet” and not an official delegate and declaring that he “could never be a disciplined member of any Communist party, for [he] was born to be a poet” (136). Though, as Kotti Sree Ramesh and Kandula Nirupa Rani demonstrate, this insistence should not completely overshadow the extent to which he was an active participant in communist and socialist politics, especially in his early years in America and in England. Still, his hope that Communism might be an effective political instrument for addressing problems of discrimination around the world was ultimately destroyed during his trip to Russia, and rather than returning to the United States, he traveled to France via Germany and began an 11 year relatively nomadic existence moving between Europe and North Africa. He eventually moved back to the United States but never returned to Jamaica, though his writing certainly did. Displacement is a key aspect of McKay’s life and an important feature in his work, but how might we classify his travel? The terms used to describe various types of displacement are many and each comes with its own signifying baggage and contextual accuracy.

McKay might most readily be called a vagabond and in critical discussion he often is, but given his proximity to and engagement with Modernism, such a determination

²⁹ See Cooper 1987 215-216 regarding McKay’s contact with the Nardal sisters and his role in putting many of the African-American writers coming to Paris in contact with them as well as

begs the question: why not call him a flâneur, as many of his modernist contemporaries have been described? What separates his displacement (and that of his characters) from the tradition of Baudelaire, from the wanderings of Joyce, of Hemingway, and even of a flâneuse like Jean Rhys. Or, why is he not simply a tourist? The easy response to these questions is that he himself used the term to describe his motivations:

I was gripped by the lust to wander and wonder. The spirit of the vagabond, the demon of some poets, had got hold of me. I quit college. I had no desire to return home. What I had previously done was done. But I still cherished the urge to creative expression. I desired to achieve something new, something in the spirit and accent of America. (A Long Way from Home, 9)

McKay's declaration reveals an important factor that is central to this chapter. He directly connects the figure of the vagabond and that of the poet; it is an historically rich connection that brings to mind mediaeval troubadours of the 12th and 13th centuries who also wandered in the South of France. And yet McKay's poet vagabond embodies a sense of Americanness that expresses itself in both language and culture. His movement is both a rejection of home (i.e. Jamaica) and an internalization of an adopted American identity that he will then eventually transfer to the French setting of his 1929 novel *Banjo*.

Implicit in his choice to use the word vagabond, however, is an economic and legal connotation that is critical to the context of the novel. In the etymology and usage of the word vagabond, contrasted with that of flâneur, is an underlying distinction in both English and in French that demonstrates an emphasis on the lack of economic means and, perhaps as a direct result, loss of any stable sense of home or permanent residence; the flâneur wanders from his home for a day, the vagabond has no home awaiting his return. The term vagabond is also connected to behavioral and

his influence on the thinking of Black French writers.

hygienic connotations that suggest a lack of control and restraint, often prompting legislative action and forcing upon him the categorical layer of the fugitive. These legal and economic connotations are underlying themes that are revisited semantically and figuratively throughout the text.

Alternatively, a term that might be particularly appropriate in the context of interwar France is tourist. There were certainly a number of tourists surrounding McKay during his time in France, many of them were fellow artists from Harlem. However, economic status and motivation distinguish the two types of movement. Zygmunt Bauman, in *Globalization: the Human Consequences*, explains that “the tourists move because they find the world within their (global) reach irresistibly attractive—the vagabonds move because they find the world within their (local) reach unbearably inhospitable. The tourists travel because they want to; the vagabonds because they have no other bearable choice” (47). Bauman articulates a delineation that may help us to theorize a model of the interwar expatriate that deconstructs some Modernist myths of France and that may also help us draw lines of connection between that period and ours in terms of race relations, nationalism, and issues of immigration. He describes the machinations between globalization and localization at the end of the 20th century, drawing comparisons between aristocratic/feudal systems of stratification and capitalist/democratic ones, citing the new mores and walls of immigration and citizenship and the lack of any concept equivalent to *noblesse oblige* to counteract the “reallocation of poverty and stigma from above” (47). This sense of an economic division in modes of displacement is further complicated by the underlying connections between race and poverty. Michael Chaney defines vagabondage as a “multiply raced state of the vagabond in perpetual diasporic displacement” (54). In McKay’s work and in his biography we can see the transnational practices of displacement that at times disrupt the kinds of individual metropolitan practices that de Certeau outlines, requiring us to look to Lefebvre’s

more nuanced consideration of spatial groupings and the way they work in contrast and connection with one another. Here we will more specifically consider how those spaces are layered onto one another in ways that impact both individual and group identities.

One of my over-arching concerns is to show the ways that the interwar period stands as an important founding moment in transnationalism. We can trace many of the features that have been attributed to postcolonial literature back to this interwar period, thereby providing more interesting opportunities for comparative analysis of works from a variety of geographical and temporal settings. McKay's *Banjo* provides an illuminating and innovative perspective on this historical moment, using not only thematic and metaphoric tropes of the vagabond but also narrative and formal strategies that imitate the incessant movement, indeterminacy and loss of center that vagabondage represents. In short, within the figure of the vagabond, McKay illustrates the disorientation of modernity. It is a transnational figure that ignores borders and layers experience. In this way, it has much in common with Rosi Braidotti's nomad, which is an alternative figuration of subjectivity that has the theoretical benefit of moving away from the strictly solitary and masculine images that are associated with figurations like vagabond and flâneur. In this study Braidotti's figure of the nomad helps also to dissolve the notion of center and originary sites of authentic identity; it also provides the basis for viewing displacement as both physical and socially constructed. Braidotti connects physical and psychological displacement and demonstrates the interdependence between psychological identity and interaction within social structures as the primary zones of impact when one is displaced. In a similar way, geographer E.C. Relph's conception of place—as space in which a sense of community and time spent provides the links of attachment between individuals—highlights the role of place to that interaction. The figure of the nomad is also situated in a liminal space that avoids assignation of class.

Braidotti writes: “The migrant bears a close tie to class structure[...] By contrast the exile is often motivated by political reasons and does not often coincide with the lower classes; as for the nomad, s/he is usually beyond classification, a sort of classless unit” (22). Quoting Deleuze and Guattari, she further highlights the boundary-crossing nature of the figure: “The life of the nomad is the intermezzo...He is a vector of deterritorialization” (Qtd p 23). By erasing the boundary implicit in travel, the one drawn from the origin to the destination, the figure of the nomad erases the normal spatial and temporal reference points of displacement. In this study I extend Braidotti’s conclusions to consider how modernist techniques like imaginative layering provide such an erasure while also leaving the traces of origins and destinations in palimpsestic narrative layers.

I wish to extend current conversations centered on the motifs of movement to more extensively consider the complicated intersectional subject position that McKay occupies, and that he then reflects in diverse ways within his characters. By focusing on the textual mapping of space and place in McKay's 1929 novel *Banjo*, I advocate an intersectional contextualization of his work that enhances our understanding of modernist anglophone writing in France by connecting the conceptualization of space with the use of language and the resulting dialectic construction of self and the other. I will argue that McKay creates a transnational form using narrative and linguistic innovations for representing space, identity and community; it is a form that provides a portrait of a kind of imagined community capable of transcending the nation and transgressing both official and nonofficial borders of identity. I will demonstrate how McKay attempts to forge an imaginary unity within his fragmented transnational federation by layering imaginative spaces in a way that blurs lines of difference and sets as a foundation the idea that all individuals have similarly constructed identities based on the idea of home and origins. I will analyze McKay's use of vagabondage as both theme and formal organizational principle, which allows him to map the city

and its social spaces in such a way as to highlight the dynamics between institutional forces and individual acts of agency and resistance, and I will explore his innovative use of "federated speech" to give voice to a collective struggle without resorting to unifying tropes that rely on notions of the nation or that try to construct a larger nation out of nations, calling it international. Instead, I argue, McKay critiques the failure of the international as an imaginary nexus for community and proposes a transnational basis for community that puts each individual at the center of his or her own story, acknowledging difference and contradiction within community and thereby undermining binaries of center/margin and exclusion/inclusion that are key to national imaginaries.

Mapping the Transnational City

While vagabond, with its poetic, economic, racial and American connotations, is the figure that McKay prefers to use to describe his own displacement, it is also a term he uses to depict his characters. In *Banjo* he uses it to describe the two primary characters and to explain their approaches to life and the characteristics that are specific to each philosophy. The title character, we are told in the first pages "was a great vagabond of lowly life. He was a child of the Cotton Belt, but he had wandered all over America. His life was a dream of vagabondage that he was perpetually pursuing and realizing in odd ways, always incomplete but never unsatisfactory" (8). Banjo, like Jake in McKay's first novel, *Home to Harlem* (1928), is comfortable with himself, and his vagabondage is of the open and generous kind that places no obligations on others and evades those that others might put on him. He lives viscerally, knows his worth, and affirms it by acting within his own sense of dignity, seemingly unaffected by the wounds of racism and modernity. Ray, the Haitian poet who also appears in *Home to Harlem*, is introduced in *Banjo* as a "vagabond poet," and the narrator explains how Ray loved the common black drifter environment "with the poetical enthusiasm of the vagabond black that he himself was" (174). His

affection, however was not a “superior condescension” nor a “feeling of race solidarity;” he did not relate on the superficial levels of the intellect that George Simmel claimed as the domain of the “metropolitan man” who must react to rapid and constant changes of modernity in the urban context. Ray’s connection to the urban environment is not dominated by the intellect but connects to the deeper, relational levels of the unconscious that Simmel claimed were generally found in slower, small-town contexts. Here McKay upsets this depiction of the modern man’s response to modernity, both challenging the centrality of the urban in modernism’s literary reaction to modernity and highlighting the absence of racial and gender distinctions in Simmel’s model of the metropolitan man.

Banjo follows Ray across the Atlantic to Marseilles, France where he meets a group of vagabonding “beach boys” led by the charismatic and free-living Banjo. The novel, subtitled “A Story without a Plot,” depicts the wandering lives of this group of friends in the late 1920s as they negotiate the changing immigrant landscape that becomes increasingly restrictive as the 1930s approach.³⁰ The novel is organized into three parts in which three distinct developments occur with respect to narrative perspective and the mapping of the city. First, the narrative perspective becomes increasingly more aware of the institutional constraints on the characters. Second, the mapping of the city and representation of the social spaces become increasingly internalized so that by the end there seems to be a correspondence between the social

³⁰ France was in a peculiar position in terms of immigration because of its low population growth from the end of the 19th century into the 1930’s. It was much like the United States in its high immigration rates and it maintained a laissez-faire immigration practice from the 1880’s through the 1920’s. The period that McKay writes about is an interesting one in which restrictions on that movement are beginning to be put into place. It was only in 1927 that the word “nationality” was included in an immigration law and the conceptualization of this term is central to understanding the way transnational modernism developed. His work shows that although the restrictive laws were not yet in place, the restrictions were beginning to be enforced and this institutional violence was first felt by those living on the margins and visually identifiable as outsiders. For more on the history of immigration in France see Bunle, H, *Mouvements migratoires entre la France et l’étranger*, Paris: PUF, 1943; Cordeiro, A, *L’immigration*, Paris: La Découverte, 1987 and Lequin, Y. (ed.), *Histoire des étrangers et de l’immigration en France*, Paris, 1992. For an analysis on the ways the immigration policies and practices impact the development of self and the conception of the other, see Kristeva *Etrangers à nous-mêmes*, Paris: Folio essais. 1988.

space of the Ditch³¹ and Ray's articulation of instinct, while the marginal—and more respectable—spaces of the city are connected with his depiction of the intellect.

Finally, the movement of the characters becomes more purposeful or forced and less wandering, thereby undermining the premise of vagabondage on which the narrative is based.

In Part One of the novel, the narrative, keyed to Banjo's perspective, provides the first mapping of the city by following the natural rhythm and concerns of the beach boys'³² vagabond life; the narration only hints at the broader contexts that can and will constrain the freedoms of the "boys", merely implying the physical 'constraints' in the cordoning off of landmarks. The narrator tells us that the "men on the beach spend the day between the breakwater and the docks and the nights between Bum Square and the Ditch." This initial delimitation of the spatial territory within the novel connects to physical landmarks in Marseilles (though, in the case of the Ditch, no longer existent places) and contributes to a congruent holistic view of the city:

The quarter of the old port exuded a nauseating odor of mass life congested, confused, moving round and round in a miserable suffocating circle. Yet everything there seemed to belong and fit naturally in place. Bistros and love shops and girls and touts and vagabonds and the troops of dogs and cats all seemed to contribute essentially and colorfully to that vague thing called atmosphere. (15, my emphasis)

The imagery of encircled belonging in this passage sets the stage for exploration of spatial practices that will both reveal the subjectivity of the characters and implicitly

³¹ The Ditch is the name the narrative gives to the Quartier Réservé, an actual neighborhood designated in the 19th century as the legal domain for prostitution, much to the chagrin of bourgeois and aristocratic residents who then moved to newer areas of the city. Prostitutes were licensed and subsequently their movement was restricted to the area. In French literature and popular imagination the area was alternatively described as a picturesque court of miracles and a dangerous lair for criminals (Montel, Laurence. "Les vieux quartiers de Marseille au XIXe siècle." *Histoire urbaine* n° 36, no. 1 (June 1, 2013): 49–72.). In part as a result of this contradictory identification, the area became a principal location in the French Resistance during WWII and was therefore leveled in 1943 by the Nazi army.

suggest the work of institutions that inflict alienation on those characters. There is confusion and chaos but there is also a vague sense of belonging within this geography and the balancing of these aspects creates a unique sense of the idyllic nature of their vagabond existence within this space.

Throughout the text, the narrator is omniscient and extradiegetic, though extremely selective in what it portrays, keying variously to characters perspectives as they navigate the urban space of Marseilles. In the first 'idyllic' vagabond section, the narrative perspective stays focused on the narrow world that it has mapped out, looking up only once to glance beyond, toward the Estanque to note, as the "beach boys" make their way from the docks, the way the "factories loomed on the long slope like a rusty-black mass of shapes strung together, and over them the bluish-gray hills were bathed in a fine, delicate mist, and further beyond an immense phalanx of gray rocks, the inexhaustible source of the cement industry, ran sharply down into the sea" (18-19). The passing reference to the commercial resources on the horizon is one of the few moments in the first section when larger economic contexts are suggested. The horizon, from the narrative perspective, bears witness to institutional powers that will increasingly come into conflict with the characters.

Similarly, the narrative fleetingly highlights the commercial aspects of the Ditch itself, and the forces driving its sex trade. As the boys walk past one of the most notorious of its streets, Rue de la Reynarde

...where a loud jarring cluster of colored lights was shouting its trade [they see s]tanding in the slimy litter of a narrow turning, an emaciated, middle-aged, watery-eyed woman was doing a sort of dance and singing in a thin streaky voice. She was advertising the house in whose shadow she danced, and was much like a poorly feathered hen pecking and clucking on a dunghill. (43)

³² 'Beach boys' is the term they use to call themselves

The woman is a passing feature, and the characters, accustomed to such sights, do not take notice. Only the narrator takes time to linger over this grotesque advertisement for the sex shop.

In tracking the movement of the characters within the delimited space of Marseilles, the narrator highlights buildings and places that shape the existence of the 'boys.' Some of the buildings are pointed out in passing with ominous foreshadowing. The beach boys avoid "the populous Rue de la République" the narrator tells us, "and take instead Boulevard de la Major, passing by the shadow of the big cathedral and the gate of the Central Police building, to reach Bum Square" (7). Although religion and armed forces are not present in the portrait of life that Banjo's perspective provides in Part One, they are forces that loom in the background, indirectly presiding over the events in the Ditch and the lives of the 'beach boys'.

The indirect presence of these authorities also reveals itself in the way the boys navigate the spaces. As "[s]undown found the boys in the Place de la Joliette" and they began to make their way from café to café, they took "the quiet way of the Boulevard de la Major to reach the Ditch" because, as some of them "had not the proper papers to get by the police" they tried to avoid them as best they could. The narrative does not represent any oppression or abuse from the police within the present action of the novel but rather uses verb tenses to communicate habitual events, suggesting that the boys have acquired these specific patterns of movement from experience, trial and error: "By way of the main Rue de la République they were more likely to be stopped, questioned, searched, and taken to the police station. Sometimes they were told their papers were not in order, but they were only locked up for a night and let out the next morning" (19). In this tracking of habitual movement and the commentary of it, the reader perceives the margins of the boys' experiences, the exterior forces that, though downplayed early in the narrative, are

actually driving their lives and the novel. The downplaying of these episodes early in the narrative highlights the agency of the “boys,” while suggesting the inefficacy of official forces to constrain the vagabondage. At the same time, this downplay of such encounters with law enforcement will ultimately prove to be unreliable as the narrative reveals the invisible constraints that such activities place on the lives of the “beach boys.”

The mapping that occurs in the narrative sets out to represent what I would call transliminal social spaces in the city. These are spaces that are marked by their particular characters but which blur various identity boundaries or provide a space in which the dynamics of intersecting identities play out. The narrator highlights the individual businesses that represent various communities mixed together in this small area. The boys pass through “humid, somber alleys thick with little eating dens” of Mediterranean peoples “Greek, Jugo-Slav, Neapolitan, Arab, Corsican, and Armenian, Czech and Russian” (8). Each place is described in terms of its location in or around the Ditch as the narrator follows the boys’ movements, then, if the boys happen to stop for a while, the narrator scans the crowd, providing a characterization of the space by panning over the people that occupy it. More or less international, more or less colored, each space, in the visual collage that the narrative throws together, reflects particular aspects of gender, sexuality, origins and the foreign (*Banjo* 38, 41-42). In the first part there are three such locations that are given this collage-like descriptive treatment. The occasion is an evening of music-making that temporarily realizes Banjo’s dream of forming an “orchestra” (16) that might organically support his vagabond life. Banjo has serendipitously met four ‘colored’ seamen with instruments: ukelele, mandolin, guitar and horn. Over the course of the night they play in three different places, first the Café African, an oasis for the black populations attracted to the diversity of the port town, second an international “showy love shop of methodically assorted things” demonstrating a mixing of eras,

genders, styles and classes, and finally the café tucked away in the belly of the Ditch that becomes “Banjo’s hangout.”

The first stop, the Café African, is a space in which “All shades of Negroes came together” (38). By way of explanation the narrator delineates the sharp group dynamics that operate among French speaking colonials in Marseilles: Antilleans making “a little aristocracy of themselves,” North Africans and Madagascans falling somewhere in the middle, and West Africans (called Senegalese) set apart as the savages. Such stiff divisions and prejudice can only be overcome only by “a magic thing,” money. It is the capital that the Senegalese owner had amassed while living in the U.S. that permitted him to open this space and to become the first Black in the town to own such a business. It is important to highlight that the money that provides this place of privilege came from an American sojourn. In the text, as in McKay's political writings, the matter of American status trumping that of race in France is a central theme that made his work stand out from that of his contemporaries. The Café African is important in its ability to encourage—through music, dancing and wine—community among the diverse Black populations brought to the port. That ability depends upon commercial success; economic prosperity is one of many factors that provide sources of division and disagreement within the racial communities represented in the text. Such a space permits the narrator to highlight the differences within a community that is often portrayed as monolithically primitive and to suggest origins for those differences while still acknowledging the essential similarities that make that communal space so attractive in a diasporic context.

The second stop represents a commodified imperial nostalgia. A Martiniquan leads them to a “showy love shop of methodically assorted things,” a description that announces importance of both sex and commodity exchange in the space:

It was very international. European, African, Asiatic. Contemporary feminine styles competed with old and forgotten. Rose-petal pajamas, knee-length

frocks, silken shifts, the nude, the boyish bob contrasted with shimmering princess gowns, country girl dresses of striking freshness, severe glove-fitting black setting off a demure lady with Italian-rich thick long hair, the piquant semi-nude and Spanish-shawled shoulders. (44)

The material detail highlights a kind of exoticized and nostalgic sexuality that Anne McClintock in her 1995 study on race, gender and sexuality, *Imperial Leather*, claimed was the "mass marketing of empire" that contributed to the Western reinvention of domesticity and race.³³

By contrast, the third and final stop is a more broadly integrated stage, "chock-full of a mixed crowd of girls, seamen and dockers, with two man-of-war sailors and three soldiers among them" and even a "slumming" French soldier with an aristocratic air. This final destination becomes Banjo's hangout and he is at home in it: "Here you're just like you would be at home. This is my street" (48). The multiple perspective that the narrative uses to describe the music and dance-filled scene is not limited to an exoticized representation and yet does not reject it either:

Shake down Death and forget his commerce, his purpose, his haunting presence in a great shaking orgy. Dance down the Death of these days, the Death of these ways in shaking that thing. Jungle jazzing, Orient wriggling, Civilized stepping. Shake that thing! Sweet dancing thing of primitive joy, perverse pleasure, prostitute ways, many-colored variations of the rhythm, savage, barbaric, refined-eternal rhythm of the mysterious, magical, magnificent, the dance divine of life. (49)

In this space the dance equalizes and the music, like language later in the novel, operates across borders, blurring them and highlighting articulations of identity. Furthermore, the layering of "home" onto this space through Banjo's character, highlights those articulations as sometimes occurring simultaneously. While Rhys's

³³ See Anne McClintock *Imperial Leather* 1995 p 17.

treatment of Paris decenters the city as modernist topos, writing onto the space a larger imperial context through topographical interiority, McKay's use of Marseilles inherently opens up the exploration of modernism and the urban to an interactive transnationalism that is more external in its characterization but still serves to highlight the colonial underpinnings of expatriate life. While Rhys's urban topos reflects one character's interiority, McKay uses the city to emphasize the way an individual develops his sense of self in the context of a communal life and under the pressure of institutional forces.

In Part Two, the introduction of Ray shifts the view of the city so that rather than rest in the day to day visceral aspects of the "beach boys" life in Marseilles, the narrative expands our perspective of the city southeast of the Ditch toward the Corniche and northwest toward l'Estanque, a landscape to which the narrative alluded in Part One with a faint hint toward the commerce involved in the life of the port. Within the second section of the novel, the economics of the context become more specific. The boys talk about how much the police are paid (25 francs a day, reason enough for them to be brutal), the narrator specifies the cost of meals, of newspapers, of transportation and the specific rituals that the beach boys follow to divvy up any panhandling profits amongst themselves.

At the same time a specific aesthetic is attached to all of these features so that commerce and art are tangled up together within the text and within Ray's imagination as a writer. Even his status as a vagabond is portrayed within the context of economics:

In America he had lived like a vagabond poet, erect in the racket and rush and terror of that stupendous young creation of cement and steel, determined, courageous, and proud in his swarthy skin, quitting jobs when he wanted to go on a dream wish or a love drunk, without being beholden to anybody. Now he was always beholden. (54)

Being a vagabond is equated with poetry; the narrator explains how Ray loved the common black drifter environment “with the poetical enthusiasm of the vagabond black” (174) highlighting the community aspects of the life and the value that those relationships added to his existence, but this is tempered by a vague yet unmistakable allusion to compromised principles that such an existence requires within the economic realities of the context. In Marseilles, Ray finds “A great vagabond host of jungle-like Negroes trying to scrape a temporary existence from the macadamized surface of this great Provençal port. There was a barbarous international romance in the ways of Marseilles that was vividly significant of the great modern movement of life” (57). Marseilles becomes a stand-in for understanding the way that modernity operates on a global scale and rather than romanticizing away the economic specificities of that experience, the narrative melds the economic into the poetic.

The mapping of the city in this section provides the opportunity to see it as a landscape artist might. When Ray and Banjo first meet, Ray suggests they head down to the Corniche, “one of the three interesting things of the town from a pictorial point of view” that he had discovered in Marseilles. As they walk down the Quai de Rive Neuve toward Catalan, the narrator pans out the perspective to observe the horizon:

Two ships were going down the Mediterranean out to the East, and another by the side of l’Estanque out to the Atlantic. A big Peninsula and Orient liner with three yellow-and-black funnels was coming in. [...] In the basin of Joliette the ships’ funnels were vivid little splashes of many colors bunched together and, close to them in perspective, an aggregate of gray factory chimneys spouted from their black mouths great columns of red-brown smoke into the indigo skies. Abruptly, as if it rose out of the heart of the town, a range of hills ran out in a gradual slope like a strong argent arm protecting the harbor, and merged its point in the far-away churning mist of sea and sky. (58)

This observation harkens back to the view of the Estanque with its abundant supply for the cement industry. But here, from the perspective of the poet, nature and industry, poetry and commerce are melded together. The ships' funnels are colorful splashes next to the smoke spouting factory chimneys bleeding into the indigo of the evening sky. The artistic, commercial and international are assembled in one vibrant image that is almost immediately followed by a representation of racial violence in the allegedly tolerant French space. It is nightfall when Banjo and Ray return by "the splendid avenue called the Prado" to find Bum Square "full of animation" and a diverse crowd until "an onrushing company of white laborers" attack a group of Senegalese. It is a physical representation of violence that is then reinforced, nuanced, varied and layered in the storytelling that I will address in more detail below. The specificity of the violence is in part so vivid because the narrator insists on the physical positions of those involved: "Bugsy and Dengel, *coming from the docks*, appeared at the *southwest* corner of the square, just as one of the blacks was felled" (59, my emphasis). This insistence on directional specificity lends the narration the feeling of a news report and contributes to the pattern of combining news stories with stories told by the characters in the cafés.

In the third part, the narrative replaces the sense of poetic vagabondage with one of urgent survival, providing a picture that more clearly explains the motivations that Bauman attributes to the vagabond, that "they find the world within their (local) reach unbearably inhospitable." Suddenly their wandering between cafés, love-shops, the breakwater and the docks morphs into frequent and purposeful treks to the consulate and up the windy road to the hospital as well as forced visits to the police station. This shift requires a reassessment of all that had come before so that the romantic and carefree nature of the vagabond jazzing that the novel had so vibrantly portrayed to this point is completely undermined. In the transition from Part Two the group falls apart, each going his own way for a season, unaware of the

institutional forces that are working against them in the form of racial politics, legislation and economics. The narrator uses the specificity of the French context to articulate these changes, alluding to the 1928 elections and fall of the Radical government as well as the stabilization of the franc in order to cast the pall of this larger context on the lives of the boys: “They knew very little about governments, and cared less. But they knew that suddenly francs were getting scarce in their world, meals were dearer in the eating-sheds and in the bistros, and more sous were necessary to obtain the desirable red wine and white, so indispensable to their existence” (192). The narrator goes on to point to the racial dimensions of changes in the port “threatening to destroy their aristocratic way of life” as the crews of the ships to this point largely “colored” are replaced by “white crews” who were not inclined to feed the beach boys (192). In this section the movement that the narrative maps is less wandering and more directed by need or by force.

As the boys reassemble in the Ditch, Ray finds it changed, and the boys themselves changed: “Everything works out to a change[...]So the life of the Ditch remained, but for Ray the aspect was changed. It was gray now. He was thinking of moving on and taking with him the splendid impression that the beach boys lives had left him in that atmosphere. [...] Though the Ditch was dirty and stinking he had preferred it to a better proletarian quarter because of the surprising and warm contacts with the men of his own race and the pecuniary help he could get from them at critical times. Their presence had brought a keen zest to the Ditch that made it in a way beautiful” (201). For Ray, the Ditch is a place that represents community and returning to fundamental human interaction. His self-realization is impossible without this interaction. The mapping of Marseilles layers many places onto France, creating a transnational modernist palimpsest that challenges the more monolithic one of Paris as France. The narrative movement resists and transforms borders while institutions and other power structures continue to reassert clear and defined lines of

topography and subjectivity. The progressively more revealing narrative mapping helps the reader to see these circulations and quarantines and to understand the poetic importance of transnational human contact, and the role of race in the realization of modern subjectivity.

When Ray learns that Banjo has become ill, the narrative maps for the first time the placement and nature of the rooms where the boys live. Suddenly the term *chambre noire* is thrust into the narrative as the narrator explains Banjo's illness and suffering. Later, when another of the boys, Bugsy, dies, the narrator again brings us to a *chambre noire*, explaining that they "are among the distinctive human contributions to Mediterranean cities of blessed sunlight and beautiful sea and blue sky, where the tourists go for health and play. [...] Rooms built it would seem, particularly to exclude the sun. Rooms without windows open to the air. If you are too poor to take a room with a window, you might be able to afford one of these" (222). Up to this point in the narrative the places where the boys stay are given little significance. In this third part, Ray's living arrangements become particularly important in exploring the nature of the color problem in this French city and in portraying his interior struggle between instinct and intellect.

After Bugsy's funeral Ray moves "to a nice little hotel in the center of town"—that is to say, on the periphery of *Banjo's* mapped narrative city, centered in the Ditch—with a

...small, cheerful room, very clean, and a window overlooking a garden through which the morning sun poured. Just then he was beginning to write some of the scenes of the Ditch and he felt lifted out of himself with contentment to sit by a sunny open window and work and hear sparrows chirping in the garden below. It was a solitary delight of the spirit, different from and unrelated to the animal joy he felt when in company with the boys in the Ditch. (224)

Ray begins to believe he can strike a balance between intellect and instinct, between the spiritual and animalistic human needs, but his satisfaction is short-lived as the forces of economics intersecting with racial prejudice begin to constrain his movement. His decision to move to the sun-lit hotel comes at the suggestion of Crosby, a American poet, who had brought him money from a common acquaintance to support his writing. The mapping of their positions relative to one another becomes critical in exploring a key experience for Ray:

Crosby's hotel lay West of the Canebière and Ray's to the east. The east was more respectable in Marseilles than the west. [...]Ray made his way to his respectable quarter in his most respectable rags, armed with respectability in the form of the Paris editions of the New York Herald Tribune, the British Daily Mail and le Journal. (227)

This passage sets up an encounter with the French police in which Ray is roughed up, taken to jail, beaten, kept overnight and then unceremoniously, without explanation, released the next day. Ray writes a letter to seek explanation of his treatment and is summoned to the prefecture. He is given no satisfactory explanation but is told that “the policemen had made a mistake owing to the fact that all the Negroes in Marseilles were criminals” (229). The inspector tells him that if he decides to prosecute, the officers will certainly lose their jobs. As Ray sees the behavior of the policemen in the context of the larger institutional and societal prejudices, he does not wish to prosecute but rather simply to understand the motivations for his treatment. In his movement around the city he comes to the conclusion that his problem is the result of stepping out of place, out of the accepted location for his blackness, the one mapped out earlier in the novel, seemingly by the boys themselves, and yet as we near the end of the novel we see that what appeared to be aimless wandering was actually quite directed: “He went to his hotel and got his bag and returned to the Ditch. It was moving out of the Ditch that caused the policeman to

take me for a criminal nosing round the quarter of respectability, thought Ray. Better had I stayed down here with Banjo and the boys where the white bastards thought I ought to be” (240). In this moment the freewheeling vagabond life is revealed to be a fiction, though a powerful one. It is a fiction that gives “the boys” a sense of agency and freedom in the face of the constraining tropes of nationalism that assert their power through the complex interplay of race, class and gender in the modernist city. In this moment McKay jumps ahead in terms of geographical criticism and makes fairly explicit what Relph and later Cresswell would highlight about the concept of place: that it is both socially constructed—used as a tool of oppression to ensure that marginal populations stay confined to a marginal place—and affectively created by the individual as a potential tool of resistance and self-determination.

Communal Constructions of Place

McKay’s layering in *Banjo* blurs lines of difference within and among individuals; this is a universalizing move that suggests a common ground in the construction of identities and the subsequent transgression of the borders that make up those identities. His layering of place also provides for a rich exploration of the dynamics between the operations of cold, unfeeling, impersonal institutions within government and commercial systems and human contacts including amicable, indifferent and violent encounters. This is a more subtle treatment than the simple depiction of the primitive as a positive force to push back against atrocities and constraints of civilization that may be found in much modernist literature.

Read as a sequel to McKay’s first novel *Home to Harlem*, *Banjo* provides a geographical inversion of the configuration of place providing a complex interrogation of the way the idea of home and identity intertwine. In *Home to Harlem*, Europe is offstage as an elsewhere that permits what Édouard Glissant called the “retour,”³⁴ while in *Banjo*, Harlem and other locations in the United States

³⁴ In *Le Discours antillais* (Paris: Seuil 1981), Glissant explains the *retour* and *détour* are two strategic reactions to displacement. Return is the obsession with origin, with permanence and

and Jamaica are the imagined elsewheres that function as figurations of home. The geographical figuration of elsewhere, like the subjective one of the other, is weighed down with signifying baggage that traces the history of circumatlantic displacement, forced migration to and histories of slavery in the New World, as well as new retours and detours in the form of expatriation and vagabondage in pursuit of liberty and origins. In "Traveling Harlem's Europe," Michael Chaney provides a helpful analysis of the way that tropes of vagabondage help us understand this history of displacement and its function in the text. Using the history of slave narratives to foreground modernist Black vagabondage narratives, Chaney demonstrates the way that the motif turns the idea of the Grand Tour on its head, inverting signs, using Harlem, for example "as a standard of comparison, a point of reference from which to survey Europe." Blacks in Europe, at least American ones, reverse the poles of colonialism within their travel narratives, solidifying national identity by mapping Harlem onto Paris and other metropolises while also reinforcing a transnational identity. The search for a homeland is still present however, in the transnational circulations of racial discourse. Chaney highlights McKay's use of a narrative progression that collapses to launch transnational dialogue, emphasizing "tropes of movement, national identity, narrative fracture, and collaborative or embedded orality. Posing questions of racial identity alongside questions of nation and class, the vagabondage plot stages an encounter of identities decontextualized from native racializing frameworks" (54). In connecting McKay's text with slave narratives that came before it, and analyzing it along side Gwendolyn Bennett's short story "Wedding Day", Chaney places McKay's work into context with African-American and Harlem Renaissance literary traditions and by extension provides a foundational conversation about the way that tropes of home, belonging, nation, and authenticity circulate within an African-American cultural framework.

unity, while detour is the search for one's identity in the elsewhere, where one can more readily observe and identify the structures of domination.

Chaney argues that McKay does not present Harlem nor Marseilles nor even Jamaica as determinative sites of authenticity in the quest for selfhood. Instead, *Banjo* maps a “triangular localization of textual places which recharts a hermeneutic circulation rather than a calcification of roots. The valuing of routes over roots is manifest in the texts as characters bicker over authentic forms of “black” self presentation and cultural community” (69). By setting up a definition of layered place in McKay’s work that takes into consideration the multiple places that represent origin along the route, I extend Chaney’s argument in order to explore the intersections of individual and collective identity connecting it to other expatriate modernist writers. In a way that connects to Gertrude Stein’s proclamation in *Paris, France* that the writer needs “two countries, the one where they belong and the one in which they live really,” McKay’s work is concerned with the dichotomy between home and elsewhere, belonging and isolation. In Stein’s construction, home is the place where one belongs but cannot “live really,” and it is this central conflict that leads a writer to construct an imaginary world in the first place. Expatriation was her answer that, as Lynn Weiss has pointed out “simply completes and confirms the existing psychological and perhaps spiritual alienation” (18) that often powers a writer’s creative vision. McKay certainly follows a similar trajectory and his relationship to and exploitation of place provide interesting confirmation and counterpoint to the modernist tropes that have thus far laid the foundation for critical study. Like Rosi Braidotti, whose work as a thinker, she claims, has no mother tongue, only starting places and shifting intersections,³⁵ McKay seems to claim no homeland but rather gestures to a variety of starting places that trace the complicated history of national, racial and linguistic origins that shape his sense of

³⁵ “My own work as a thinker has no mother tongue, only a succession of translations, of displacements, of adaptations to changing conditions. In other words, the nomadism I defend as a theoretical option is also an existential condition that for me translates into a style of thinking.” (*Nomadic Subjects* 1)

belonging and alienation.³⁶ In *Banjo* the vagabond has embarked upon one of Glissant's "détours," which provide the complex connection to place that fosters the imaginative layering of self. Displacement provides the opportunity to be someone else and to look back on the many versions of the self; if the self can be multiple then the communities can also be complex, layered and transnational in their makeup.

For McKay the elsewhere operates as a multiply layered site of origin, the site of identity for characters confronted with modernity—fragmented, restless, fluid, without boundary and constantly in flux. McKay reaches to the imaginary of the native, mapping it onto the French port, providing the historical connections and contexts that give hope to the black man facing modernity, laying the foundation for a pan-african nationalism that capitalizes on the dialectic between the particular and the universal, alternating between the articulation of political and material realities and the poetic capture of the setting. Ray is captured by the "magic of the Mediterranean, sprayed by its foamy fascination [...the] gorgeous bowl of blue water unrestingly agitated by the great commerce of all the continents. He loved the docks" (54). But if the text insists on Ray's preference for this European city, the linguistic reaching toward images of home and the mapping of tropical places onto this French port betray the imaginative gymnastics that are required to arrive at such a fascination. Ray's love of the ports is presented in terms that impose images of home and of origins. He loves the "picturesque proletarians from far waters whose names were warm with romance" who carry

Barrels, bags, boxes, bearing from land to land the primitive garner of man's hands. Sweat-dripping bodies of black men naked under the equatorial sun, threading a caravan way through the time-old jungles, carrying loads steadied and unsupported on kink-thick heads ...Barrels... bags...boxes... Full of the wonderful things of life. There was a barbarous international romance in the

³⁶ This kind of displacement and formulation of place gestures back to Braidotti's nomad figuration and the accompanying deterritorialization that Deleuze and Guattari theorize.

ways of Marseilles that was vividly significant of the great modern movement of life. (56)

The modern is expressed in terms of a primitive native that, in its evocation of the Caribbean, echoes of home for McKay and that betrays a multiple-consciousness based on a race-based experience of modernity, one that is implicit in the narration and that becomes explicit within the dialogue. McKay accepted conventions of primitivism but his characters were real and marginal in their experiences; the picaresque black wanderer (Jack and Banjo) and the wandering intellectual full of “self-doubts, hesitation and inhibitions” are the vehicles by which McKay asserts the artist’s right and duty to address any and all aspects of his experience that moved him to creative expression. Wayne Cooper, in his biography of McKay adds that “Such right and duty encompassed even the endorsement of white stereotypes if they contained aspects of black existence vital to the black man’s character and survival” (243).

Michel Fabre suggests that it is McKay’s Jamaican childhood, his contact with nature and with country people, which accounts for his insistence on the instinctual:

...he refused to become an aesthete divorced from nature and the people. A Third World partisan before the term existed, he proudly proclaimed his blackness. He was convinced that Americans like himself had much to gain from traveling abroad and experiencing a variety of cultures, but he felt by no means culturally inferior to the French. (96)

This self-assertion potentially came from the cultural power of American origin (adopted as it may have been in McKay’s case) in France. Part of the revelation in the layering of place that McKay performs in his text, is in the articulations of both an individual’s subjectivity and that of an entire community. In this way, his text measures not only the impact of a complicated and articulated identity but also the weight and cultural power of each articulation.

In *Banjo*, the mapping and layering of place within the narrative reflects McKay's complex national, political, social and literary identities. The layering that I am highlighting is meant to get beyond oppositions and binaries that have been used to frame discussions of American modernisms and the Harlem Renaissance. Work on literature of the interwar period generally fixates on the oppositions between the rural and the urban, focusing on the way that the vast schisms torn into society by the instruments of modernity—the Great War, industrialization, political revolution, scientific discovery and spiritual paralysis—have influenced perception of the self in relation to collectives, tradition and history. McKay's alternation between the pastoral and the picaresque³⁷ demonstrates the tension that these binaries between the rural and urban provide and such an analysis helps critics to place him into American traditions, specifically that of the Harlem Renaissance. Considerations of his use of the pastoral and picaresque have been useful in identifying key concerns in his work, but discussion of these two literary forms fails to engage with other formal and narrative innovations for which McKay should be credited. His creation of a “plotless novel” driven by “federated speech” is one example of the way that he plays with and distorts the form of the picaresque and the pastoral, stitching the two together with a kind of oral storytelling tradition. By using innovative narrative techniques to recount the complex and contradictory experiences of an entire community, McKay reveals the connection between individual and communal identity, inspiring an entire generation of French-speaking black writers.

"Federated Speech" as Fragmented Universal

The narrative strings together a series of stories that the multilingual, multinational band of characters recount, providing intersecting perspectives on race

³⁷ Robert Bone in *Down Home* highlights the way this tension between rural and urban became a characteristic of Harlem Renaissance literature, emphasizing the trope of mobility, a truly American characteristic, because the Great Migration had, as Paul Kellogg explained in *The New Negro* provided a “belated sharing in the American tradition of pioneering by the Black folk from the South. ...an induction into the heritage of that national tradition, a

relations throughout Europe, Africa and the Americas. The characters argue, debate and tell stories about their experiences. Individual experiences of home are layered onto one another in order to reveal a complex, contradictory and nuanced international experience of blackness that is further complicated with various white perspectives that emphasize the way race functions within the intersections of class difference.

Michael Chaney calls this dialogic narrative disruption “federated speech” and explains that it is an innovative device that “dismantles narrative progression” and:

...spells out its version of a marginalized counter narrative to rising European nationalisms, founding an independent caucus of subordinated colonized speakers who weigh in on international race issues [...] Often taking place in nationally raced saloons[,] these moments of argumentation over current events between figures from highly racialized and nationalized positions pause the unfolding drama of Ray's maturing vision of Panafricanism and Banjo's picaresque romps, thus creating spaces of narrative flux, disjunctures wherein new sites for mapping hybrid national identifications emerge. (69-71)

Federated speech is a technique that mirrors political endeavors to conglomerate diverse populations of blacks, resisting Western colonialism while also pushing against primitivist modernist aesthetics and the idea of France as a promised land of equality for all blacks. While Chaney briefly outlines the way that federated speech adds to the transnational and transnarrational value of the text by considering a small section of storytelling that occurs at the center of the novel, here I am extending his argument in order to expose the way that storytelling among the characters and within the narration operates across the entire novel, interacting with the mapping of place in the city and the layering of imaginative spaces onto it in order to develop

baptism of the American spirit that slavery cheated him out of, a maturing experience that Reconstruction delayed.”

what DuBois happily called “a sort of international philosophy of the Negro race.”³⁸ Thanks to its popularity as a racial haven for African-Americans, France is an ideal setting for this kind of experiment. In that context McKay is able to both affirm Dubois' hopes and challenge him to think beyond the particular nature of race relations in the United States and the Americas. The use of France as a setting and symbolic tool reveals the need to move beyond nationalistic conceptions of PanAfricanism.

In the first part of the novel, stories are related by the narrator within the context of encounters between the boys. The stories, summarized in the narrative as back story, provide a sense of the way they pass their time together and the way they build connections. We see the motley crew that gathers around Banjo walk along the streets and occupy certain cafés and bars in the Ditch: “They were picturesquely conspicuous as they loitered along, talking in a confused lingo of English, French and Native African” (20). It is as though the reader is observing the boys from a distance, tracing their movements and encountering the atmospheres of the places where they stop to gather. The extradiegetic narrator fills in the gaps of back story and inside jokes so that the little direct speech that we overhear makes more sense and so that we can understand more fully the kind of connections these boys have developed in their time together. For example, early in Banjo’s encounter with the other boys on the beach he exclaims that if he were given a little café to do with what he wanted, he would “try everything doing excep’n’ lighting it afire” (17). The narrator then explains that all the boys laughed at this reference to an “American brown boy” who had come to the port and refused to have anything to do with the “beach boys” nor did he heed their warnings about the dangers in the Ditch. When he is subsequently swindled and robbed he sets the place on fire, landing him six months in a French prison. In another episode the narrator explains how Goosey’s story of losing all his money one

³⁸ Quoted in Ramesh and Rani, 121.

night in Marseilles comes out when the boys meet an old shipmate on the docks. The narrator recounts the story, providing dialogue of the incident itself, but Goosey and his friend are not given voice in the diegetic present. The tale is related as backstory in order to explain the nick-name “light’s out Ginger” and to demonstrate the way that storytelling builds community and a sense of history among the boys (32). These summarized stories do not give voice to the boys but rather introduce the reader to them from a slight distance, providing a view of their lives and their interactions that is comparable to the mapping technique used to represent their movements and the geographical dimensions of their lives.

When Ray enters in the second part of the novel, the use of dialogue and the manner of storytelling shift just as the narrative perspective and mapping of the city had done. The narrative slowly begins to cede place to direct dialogue from the boys, although the narrator continues to recount some backstories, including Banjo’s retelling of his first encounter with Ray that had already been narrated in mimetic emplotment. The narrator explains that in Banjo’s retelling, “The proprietress of the restaurant became a terrifying virago who would have him arrested by the police, if Ray had not intervened. And when he threatened to call in the police against her, she begged him not to and handed over the change in tears” (68). This particular retelling is interesting in itself because it demonstrates the malleability of the storytelling and highlights the impact of perspective on the stories. The narrator also resorts to narrative summary when, Goosey, as a new arrival encounters Ray and Banjo and “told his story of the ‘broad’ and the Ditch, told it heartily as many other colored boys before him had done” (70). This particular story summary serves the purpose of demonstrating constant movement of peoples arriving in the port town and a shared experience of the Ditch by each of the boys who become part of their band of vagabonds. The stories permit various characters to put themselves into the shoes of the others and to identify the links that might connect them. For the reader they

provide windows into the operations that build up transnational interaction and reveal the links and challenges that are at work in the background.

The full dialogue storytelling in the second part is placed in the Café African where, after the violent attack by white laborers on blacks in the square, the boys gather to recuperate and vent. This particular occasion gives the opportunity for the narrator to provide back story on the Senegalese bar owner, his origins, success in America and his current success and concerns. This back story is put up against the experiences and assumptions of the diverse patrons in his bar. The discussion begins between the Senegalese bar owner and a Senegalese seaman who disagree on the state of racism in France, as others join the discussion they argue over whether various prejudices are rooted in color or class difference. The café owner eventually pulls out the journal *La Race Negre* and reads a list of oppressions and abuses of which the French colonial government is accused. As the discussion turns toward Marcus Garvey and the Back to Africa movement, many of the Americans, including Banjo, jump in. Throughout the heated discussion, Ray sits and listens without adding anything to the discussion. When Banjo asks him why he did not join in, he replies, “I always prefer to listen, [...]You know, when he was reading that paper it was just as if I was hearing about Texas and Georgia in French” (65). This imaginative layering of place between France and the U.S. South is central to McKay’s treatment of subject identity and intersectionality. Ray is a character who is often accused by critics, such as James Giles,³⁹ for haranguing the other characters. This accusation of didacticism at the cost of aesthetic integrity is an argument I wish to challenge with this analysis of the importance of dialogue and storytelling to McKay’s aesthetic project.

In *Banjo*, individual experience is assembled into a fragmented, contradictory communal experience. The narrator works to use pieces of individual experiences to

come to general conclusions about the “color problem.” Part of this is accomplished within the narrative by Ray, who focuses on encouraging, listening and collecting those stories in order to work through his own struggle to live and write from a balance between intellect and instinct. His education and artistic inclinations lean him toward the intellect and make him feel comfortable operating within this “civilized” world. However, the advice, remarks and reactions he receives from “the white world” create what Dubois calls a double-consciousness that requires him to explore how his external appearance might shape his identity or might provide deep roots to origins that will give him a sense of belonging he is missing in the “white world”.

Right at the center of the second section is a chapter entitled “Storytelling” in which a group is gathered in the Café African on a rainy afternoon and Ray tries to get some of the Senegalese to tell stories from back home. When they hesitate he starts them off with one from the West Indies. As the Senegalese and then some of the Americans begin to recount trickster stories and morality tales they perform their regional origins, connecting the West Indies, Black America and Africa through similar themes of subversion in the face of oppressive domination and appropriation of identity. Banjo and Ray then add personal experiences that are set in Paris and which demonstrate the way that appropriative desire shapes the supposedly race-free zone of interwar France. In Banjo’s story, we see a resistance that comes in the form of taking advantage of one’s exploitative value without a sense of obligation. It is an instinctual resistance in which Banjo does not allow himself to be bound by civilization’s rules of obligation and is not trapped by the material dependence that might also bind him. He therefore subverts the system of appropriation by living in the moment. Ray, on the other hand, recounts his time posing in artist studios in Paris and thereby gives a voice to the mute subject of primitive erotic art. When two

³⁹ "But with few exceptions, McKay has Ray lecture the other characters (and the reader), instead of placing him in dramatic situations and having his ideas emerge through his

white men arrive, one Irish and one English, the storytelling shifts focus from raced appropriations to political rejection and oppression. The Irishman confirms claims that the French in the colonies present a very different national character. He tells of being jailed in Algeria, refused water for many days and of a French colonial warden spitting in his face. The Englishman recounts being beaten in Pentonville where he had been imprisoned for extremist agitation. In the use of federated speech “transnational positions” are made evident providing examples of what Homi Bhabha calls interstices, “the overlap and displacement of domains of difference” in which personal and collective values, interests and identity are negotiated (2).

When he is challenged for the nature of his stories by Goosey, one of the “beach boys,” Ray separates the physical struggle against oppression from the aesthetic and intellectual one that resides in the act of storytelling:

I’ll fight with [my race] if there’s a fight on, but if I am writing a story, well, it’s like all of us in this place here, black and brown and white, and telling a story for the love of it. Some of you will listen, and some won’t. If I am a real story-teller, I won’t worry about the differences in complexion of those who listen and those who don’t, I’ll just identify myself with those who are really listening and tell my story. You see, Goosey, a good story, in spite of those who tell it and those who hear it, is like good ore that you might find in any soil in Europe, Asia, Africa or America. The world wants the ore and gets it by a thousand men scrambling and fighting, digging and dying for it. The world gets its story the same way. (98)

In this argument Ray suggests that the struggle of the storyteller, and by extension of the writer, is one that is universal and that when a writer is successful in creating a “good story,” no matter the identity of the writer or audience and no matter the intentions, that contributes something of fundamental value to the world. A “real

actions” (Giles 88). Giles, James. R. Claude McKay. Boston: G.K. Hall, 1989.

storyteller” tells the story for the sake of the story and allows it to direct the purpose. When Goosey responds that Ray “might bring us a lot of dirt” with his story, he responds, “Many fine things come out of dirt — steel and gold, pearls and all the rare stones that your nice women must have to be happy. [...] I am writing for people who can stand a real story no matter where it comes from” (98 – 99). This statement illustrates the way McKay’s aesthetic and his politic intertwine, prompting him to challenge the pressure from African-American elite race leaders to clean up the portrayal of black life. By asserting the power of the narrative to make sense of life and to shape it, he does not let the political take precedence over the aesthetic, neither does he ignore the political that is engrained in all facets of life including art.

As the narrative continues, Ray begins to tell a larger portion of the stories, or the stories are keyed to his perspective, as though he is slowly becoming the narrator. The stories become more and more contradictory and the cognitive and artistic dissonance that Ray is experiencing becomes more and more evident. This is particularly evident after Banjo and Buggy get into a fight over whether Banjo should give money to a starving little white child. As Ray remarks, Banjo’s action is instinctual and it is evident that he takes little time to worry about the role of his race in the external interpretation of his actions. He operates on a moral compass that reacts to need as he sees it. For Ray, this incident triggers a memory of a time, not long after the reports of the massacre at Amritsar had begun to circulate, that he encountered a one-armed Englishman begging. His two Indian companions dismissed the man with the bitterness of an oppressed people. Ray felt conflicted in that moment between an instinctual human feeling and a raced intellectual reaction that took into account the history and context at play in the encounter, he understood the refusal but he wished at that moment to be able to help the one-armed man: “Ray felt ashamed. Ashamed that the man should be forced to beg. Ashamed of the refusal. Ashamed of himself. Ashamed of humanity” (141). This potent memory begins a

longer episode of musings about humanity, charity and race: “Only within the confines of his own world of color could he be his true self.... Should I do this or not? Be mean or kind? Accept, give, withhold? In determining his action he must be mindful of his complexion. Always he was caught by the sharp afterthought of color, as if some devil’s hand jerked a cord to which he was tethered in hell” (142). It is in this moment of internal discord that he is able to clearly articulate his artistic intention: “He could bring intellect to the aid of instinct.” This becomes his aesthetic as a poet and his formula for self realization. As the novel continues into the third section, Ray pits the ideal of Banjo’s instinct against the many avatars of intellect and civilization he encounters so that the dialogue begins to play out in various cafés around the port with a variety of artists, intellectuals, and “civilized bums” who all fail to understand the value in the instinctual to the mounting irritation of Ray. In one example of this, Ray explains the idea of primitivism-as-resistance to a mulatto student who was hesitant about being seen in the Café African: “There are different ways of growing big and strong, for individuals as well as for races. [...] Getting down to our native roots and building up from our own people...is not savagery. It is culture” 169,172). Another example is when Ray becomes irritated at Crosby’s failure to understand why, in the face of the racial motivations behind the police arresting and beating him, he does not wish to subject himself further to white civilized institutional scrutiny, deciding in the face of this incomprehension that he will return to the Ditch where his instinct can develop less hindered by civilization’s double standards. It is perhaps Ray’s increasing hostility that generates the impression that he aggressively lectures the other characters. I am suggesting that Ray’s frustration must be viewed as one part of his interaction in the story, that his silence and observation in earlier sections are just as important, and that taken together they provide a key to understanding the innovative narrative techniques that McKay is using. Furthermore, this dialogic narrative technique must also be seen as integrated

into the mapping of place and the layering of imaginative space that take advantage of the unique aspects of France for exploring issues of race and modernity in the interwar period.

McKay's use of vagabondage as both theme and formal organizational principle, allows him to map the city and its social spaces in such a way as to highlight the dynamics between institutional forces and individual acts of agency and resistance. McKay attempts to forge an imaginary unity within a fragmented transnational federation by layering imaginative spaces in a way that blurs lines of difference and sets as a foundation the idea that all individuals have similarly constructed identities that emanate from their conceptions of home and origins. This suggests that, diverse as those ideas may be, they still function in similar ways for each individual. McKay uses "federated speech" to give voice to a collective struggle without resorting to unifying tropes that rely on notions of the nation or that try to construct a larger nation out of nations, calling it international. By using the imagined "promise land" of France as a setting he critiques the way that the national, as an imaginary nexus for community, falls short. He proposes a transnational basis for community that puts the individual at the center, acknowledging difference and contradiction within community and thereby undermining binaries of center/margin and exclusion/inclusion that are key to national imaginaries.

Chapter 4 "Like Ripples across the Water": Faulkner's Transnational Palimpsest

Introduction

One might wonder at William Faulkner being included in this study of anglophone expatriate writers in France. Easily the most widely known of my three primary authors, the name Faulkner does not generally conjure up images of 1920s France, even for many well versed Faulknerians. And yet, for a few of us, France holds a special place in Faulkner's work. Faulkner brings together the issues of place and identity, home and belonging, race, gender, and imperial oppression that we explored in the work of Rhys and McKay, but he does so from a vantage point that diverges greatly from that of the expatriate modernist. The key to Faulkner's treatment of place in general, and of France in particular, is in his positioning of the past in relation to the individual and to mass culture. Time is an element in the exploration of place that is central to understanding narrative and to uncovering articulations and layering in the stories that make up Faulkner's representation of the History/the histories of the South. Faulkner's haunted understanding of the past and its impact on the present guides his fiction and provides the key to connecting his work with transnational modernism of the interwar period.

The importance of France in Faulkner's life is not difficult to uncover.⁴⁰ In the series of letters he wrote on his first trip to Europe in 1925, his evocative descriptions of post-World War I France betray a sense of both appreciation for and affinity with

⁴⁰ Michel Gresset, for example, in his article "Vignette to Vision" provides a helpful delineation of critical approaches for studying the role that France plays in Faulkner's work; the first is a bibliographic one in which we consider the relatively large amount of time he spent in France during his international travel and the impact that his first trip, taken in 1925, seems to have had on his view of international affairs, particularly issues of war. The second would consider the the imaginative impact that France had on the writer long before he was ever struck by the tragic heroism of provincial farmers in World War I battlefields or impressed by the polite French children in the Luxembourg gardens. In such a consideration one would look to his appreciation for Balzac, Flaubert and the French Symbolists as well as his familiarity with Eduard Dujardin, the little known French writer who first championed the stream-of-consciousness style that made such an impact on readers of *The Sound and the Fury*. The echoes of these influences have been well documented by critics like Michael Millgate and Percy Adams. Gresset and other critics also provide a clear indication of the important influence that Faulkner had on France, an influence that can be characterized by

the French, their history and culture. Faulkner spent nine days during his visit walking in the war zones of France and wrote to his mother in strangely nostalgic terms of what he saw:

...beyond that eight miles it looks as if a cyclone had passed over the whole world at about 6 feet from the ground. Stubs of trees, and along the main roads are piles of shell cases and unexploded shells and wire and bones that the farmers dig up. Poor France! And now America is going to hold their noses to the grindstone. If some of those Senators would just come over here, see what France has done to repair that country in which every single house was burned, see farmers plowing and expecting every minute to strike an unexploded shell and be blown to kingdom come, see children up to 10 and 12 crippled...Certainly a country rich enough to afford Prohibition can help them a little. The French are polite, but not really courteous; they are not kind-hearted...but they are heroic. In England, in America, there would have been a revolution, as there was in Russia. (Faulkner, *Selected Letters* 28)

His focus on the large-scale geographical scars and the stalwart efforts of the ordinary man against such an indiscriminate destruction, his proud declarations about the character of the French, and his reproach against American politicians mark a sense of solidarity that, I would argue, comes from a parallel that Faulkner draws between France and the U.S. South. The image that he conjures, of the farmers and their efforts in the aftermath of the war, demonstrates an imaginative association with the agrarian culture of the South and provides one of the earliest textual examples of Faulkner finding correspondence to his home in France. In his description of the destroyed landscape in which “every single house was burned” one cannot help but think of Sherman’s scorched-earth tactics in his March to the Sea. Faulkner’s hometown had also been subject to such all-out destruction during the Civil War and

Jean-Paul Sartre’s statement to Malcolm Cowley that “For the young people of France, Faulkner is a god” (Williamson 268).

his reaction to the devastation of the French landscape in a place far from home suggests his empathy with France that comes from internalization of the destruction that occurred in the South in a time far from his present.⁴¹ France as a place-concept is connected directly with Faulkner's ideas about home and the connections he makes between history, war, and the image of home.

Also critical to this study, however, is the imaginative appropriation of France that can be found throughout his fiction. Michel Gresset, in his article "Vignettes to Vision," makes a case for France-as-symbol in Faulkner's fiction. He does this by way of a rapprochement between Faulkner's impressions of France, as indicated in his letters, and his improbable choice to set our last encounter with Caddy Compson - "the darling of [his] heart" - in the South of France in 1943.⁴² Gresset suggests that such a choice illustrates how France had become associated "not with a particular geography nor even with a certain type of civilization, but much more symbolically with an historical landscape scarred by war" (102). In this way, Gresset argues, France serves a symbolic purpose for Faulkner that has little to do with the real France. Using close readings of several short stories that are connected, either in setting or by allusion, to France, Gresset argues that the "French"⁴³ short stories "Crevasse" and "Carcassonne" are best understood as affective landscapes that set up a system of images connecting France to a view of history determined by war and tragedy, and aesthetically connected to the Gothic.⁴⁴ This idea of affective landscapes

⁴¹ I cannot help but think of Sutpen's return after the Civil War to his plantation in *Absalom, Absalom!*, as he surveyed his life's work, "a part of him encompassing each ruined field and fallen fence and crumbling wall of cabin or cotton house or crib" (AA 129).

⁴² From the "Compson Appendix" included in the Portable Faulkner version of *The Sound and the Fury*.

⁴³ I use quotes here because, as Gresset points out, the only thing evidently French about these stories are their titles, demonstrating that Faulkner's literary use of France has very little connection to any representational realities of the country itself.

⁴⁴ Faulkner both maintains the importance of remembering the past and its role in the present, as he did in his remarks in a 1962 speech: "Let the past abolish the past when - and if - it can substitute something better; not for us to abolish the past simply because it was"

providing connections between Faulkner's South and France is central to my study. I extend Gresset's findings by applying a similar lens to two other "French" works in order to demonstrate connections between his Southern imagined spaces, most typically embodied in Yoknapatawpha, and his characterization and use of France as an imagined space in his fiction. I also connect this idea of affective landscapes to the transnational theory of place that I have set up in the preceding chapters, asking specifically in what ways imagination, as opposed to practiced place, transforms the operations of place in the modernist text?

Specificity of place has come to be known as central to Faulkner's genius, and his emergence as a major writer is widely identified with "the moment he discovered, upon the advice of Sherwood Anderson, the fictional possibilities contained within his native milieu" (Hamblin 168). Faulkner himself encouraged such an assessment when he cited *Sartoris* as the novel in which he "discovered that my own little postage stamp of native soil was worth writing about and that I would never live long enough to exhaust it, and by sublimating the actual into apocryphal I would have complete liberty to use whatever talent I might have to its absolute top" (Meriwether 255). But as Robert Hamblin has noted, those who wish to make a case for Faulkner as a regionalist make much of the first half of that statement, ignoring the second. Indeed, in tilling his own soil he created the apocryphal Yoknapatawpha County, which was modeled on Lafayette County and populated with a diverse cast of characters who were inspired by the inhabitants of his hometown. However, the apocryphal nature of that fictional place must be emphasized and revalorized if we are to understand the role of place in Faulkner's fiction.

To this end, within the past twenty years, critics have begun widening the view of Faulkner's work as regional and the 2001 Faulkner and Yoknapatawpha

(Faulkner and Meriwether, *Selected Letters and Essays*, 169) and consistently expresses the weight and dread associated with it by symbolically associating it with the Gothic, which, as Gresset argues is not given any kind of specific currency but rather quite universally stands as the word and feeling of dark, domineering and haunting aspects of the past.

conference on Faulkner and War⁴⁵ contributed to this trend by highlighting some of the World War I short stories and novels that had been hitherto largely ignored or rejected as inferior to titles that seemed to be more explicitly Southern and patently modernist. Unsurprisingly, renewed interest in these works, many of which take place in French settings, has provided an opportunity to reconsider the importance of France in relation to the whole of Faulkner's oeuvre. Of particular interest in much of this criticism are five stories written early in his career and later grouped together in his *Collected Stories* under the title "The Wasteland."⁴⁶ The five stories: "Ad Astra," "Victory," "Crevasse," "Turnabout," and "All the Dead Pilots," take place during or immediately following the First World War and all are implicitly or explicitly set in France. The investigation into these World War I stories has often resulted in readings that connect them—thematically, stylistically and structurally—with the Yoknapatawpha stories. Many of these critics emphasize a sense that the First World War was of pivotal importance to Faulkner. Michael Millgate, for example, explains that Faulkner "seems to have recognized it as the one event of his own lifetime commensurate with that Civil War which had been the crucial event in the history of his own region and his own people" (103). For this reason, when he later sought to write what he called his "big book," his "magnum o," he set the "epic poem" in France during World War I (Faulkner, *Selected Letters* 233, 191). *A Fable* (1954) was his most ambitious novel and took him 10 years to complete, in part because his time was divided between Rowen Oak—his home in Mississippi—and Hollywood, where for lack of funds, he found himself bound in writing contracts that limited his ability to work on his own fiction.

⁴⁵ The 1982 "International Perspectives" conference also contributed to a geographical broadening of criticism.

⁴⁶ Faulkner named and organized the sections of the *Collected Stories* and this title, so reminiscent of T.S. Eliot's *The Waste Land*, most certainly is meant to comment on a similar historical and literary space as that revered example of Modernist experimentation.

The novel was based on the idea to set the Christ story in a contemporary setting; he saw it as a fable from the beginning, “an indictment of war perhaps,” (178) that erased time and space by melding wars together. He wrote that if the book could be accepted as a fable, “the locale and contents won’t matter” because although the Allied forces, and their commanding generals, would be depicted as the villains of the story, the actual villain would be a “fabulous and imaginary” (247) element intended to make a larger case:

The argument is (in the fable) in the middle of that war, Christ (some movement in mankind which wished to stop war forever) reappeared and was crucified again. We are repeating, we are in the midst of war again[...]that is the argument: We did this in 1918; in 1944 it not only MUST NOT happen again, it SHALL NOT HAPPEN again. i.e. ARE WE GOING TO LET IT HAPPEN AGAIN? now that we are in another war, where the third and final chance might be offered us to save him. (Faulkner, Selected Letters 180)

The ideas were enormous and Faulkner vacillated on the form for years, expressing concerns about the size of the work and his proximity to it, as well as on whether it would be accepted and understood in its time (258, 262). In 1947 he wrote: “It’s getting right now. It was a tragedy of ideas, morals, before; now it’s getting to be a tragedy of people” (250). Then in 1953, just a year before it was finally published he wrote:

I know now - believe now- that this may be the last major, ambitious work; there will be short things, of course. I know now that I am getting toward the end, the bottom of the barrel. The stuff is still good, but I know now there is not very much more of it, a little trash comes up constantly now, which must be sifted out. And now, a last, I have some perspective on all I have done. (Faulkner, Selected Letters 348)

He clearly saw this novel as an important addition to his oeuvre and it may be, as François Pitavy has argued, that *A Fable* is the de-centered center of Faulkner's work. It certainly is a novel that helps us understand his other fiction more fully, and, as I will argue, puts into perspective the relationship between Yoknapatawpha and France in his imaginary.

When we step outside of the American South and travel with Faulkner across the Atlantic to the World War I novels and stories that sandwich and pepper the Yoknapatawpha ones, we begin to discover that there are important connections to be drawn between these alternative places and histories and the ones that support claims to a distinctly Southern sense of history and place in Faulkner's fiction. There is a tension between the elements that make Faulkner's work specific to the South and to Mississippi, and the more universalizing tendencies that increasingly and more overtly pervade his work and his depiction of the craft of the writer. It is within this tension that Faulkner most productively addresses the major concerns of his fiction: language, race and the freedom of the individual. In this chapter I will explore the way that Faulkner maps France onto the American South in order to carve out an aesthetic freedom in addressing these concerns. I will argue that, although Faulkner grounds most of his writing in the South, focusing on the ramifications of the Civil War and politics of post-Reconstruction Mississippi, he does so to provide a foundation for an aesthetic project in which he collapses history and place using modernist narrative techniques. These techniques are the tools of language that Faulkner uses to confront the major conflicts of his own Southern home and of the larger global context he generally prefers to observe from a distance. The mapping we find in Faulkner's work, both iconographic and textual, provides an example of de Certeau's theoretical place, the grid-like views seen from aerial perspectives that provide distance and shift the experience from practiced place to observed and

imagined space.⁴⁷ Faulkner is no stranger to pedestrian practiced place, he activates a rural version of it in his Yoknapatawpha fiction, and the specificity that is celebrated in his work is a direct result of this conception of place. However, the vision is not complete, as the postage stamp quote shows, unless we add distance. Mapping is the primary distancing tool that we observe in Faulkner's fiction; however we mustn't forget the role of imagination and the specific nature of the transformed vision that it provides.⁴⁸ When we connect all of this by analyzing layers of place, time and narrative, we reveal the richness of the role of place in modernist fiction and the centrality of Faulkner's work in cobbling together a corrected vision of the role of France in expatriate fiction of the interwar era.

⁴⁷ In other contexts, those of Imperial Britain in India, Sara Mills describes a parallel contrast between the contact zone and idealized distance. Given the wider context of Faulkner's WWI fiction and the imperial echoes that are implied... and in conversation with McKay's colonial portrayal of global movements and racial tensions and Rhys's imperial portrayal of metropolitan space how do these authors move us toward a different transnational modernism? They provide parallels to the issues seen in postcolonial studies but provide frameworks that work in the colonial/imperial/global setting of post-WWI. They push against nationalisms in the midst of the strengthening of those nationalisms. They can help us to consider writers like Woolf and Eliot and the High Modernism centered in London rather than in Paris with an eye to transnationalism that these authors outline in their work. And of Joyce with an eye for how Dublin and Ireland fit into the margins of imperial centers, both metropole and colonial outpost. After all the connections of McKay and Rhys to Britain are just as strong as to the more American expatriate vibe. Joyce was certainly part of the expatriate crowd

⁴⁸ Edward Said outlines a poetics of space following Bachelard that is helpful as we consider the role of the imagination in Faulkner's treatment of place: "The objective space of a house—its corners, corridors, cellar, rooms—is far less important than what poetically it is endowed with, which is usually a quality with an imaginative or figurative value we can name and feel: thus a house may be haunted, or homelike, or prisonlike, or magical. So space acquires emotional and even rational sense by a kind of poetic process, whereby the vacant or anonymous reaches of distance are converted into meaning for us here. The same process occurs when we deal with time. Much of what we associate with or even know about such periods as "long ago" or "the beginning" or "at the end of time" is poetic—made up [...] there is no doubt that imaginative geography and history help the mind to intensify its own sense of itself by dramatizing the distance and difference between what is close to it and what is far away" (55). Does imaginative knowledge infuse history and geography or override it? Said here sets up his argument about the power of imaginative knowledge in present political and social realities and in the interactions between people along various axes of power. In Faulkner's case these axes of power are local, they are Southern, they are racial and they are intrinsically linked with the history of slavery and civil war. The context is very different from the British imperialism that Said discussed but are the ramifications similar? Can Said help us to connect Rhys, McKay and Faulkner? And can he also help us to connect these marginal "expatriates" with Hemingway and Fitzgerald? Do the poetics of space and Orientalism connect in transnational modernism in ways that might help us to better understand the time and the place?

Imaginative Layering as link between War, Race and Place

Faulkner cannot be said to have been a restless traveler, though his travels are key to the scope and nature of his work. As with McKay, Faulkner's travel highlights the issue of color-consciousness, but his approach relies more fully on imaginative layering and symbolic representations of place rather than on displacement or the *dépaysement* of expatriate life per se. Faulkner is not a vagabond nor is he a nomad. Rather, he is a flâneur who has wandered off of the streets to take a vaulted view, to gaze upon de Certeau's theoretical place and to imaginatively layer it onto the pavements his feet have pounded, the practiced spaces of the American South. In his incessant movement between practiced and theoretical space, Faulkner, like McKay, provides a portrait of the articulations between the particular and the universal, where the particular expresses itself variously as the local, the native, the primitive, the national or quite abstractly as "home," and where the universal is understood in different contexts as the national, the international, the diasporic, the transnational or *ailleurs* (elsewhere).⁴⁹ He maps an imaginary landscape palimpsest by conflating both time and space in his fiction in order to explore and challenge static conceptions of identity that aid in robbing the individual of his personal liberty. Faulkner's imaginative conflation of home and elsewhere is the tapestry upon which he weaves the complicated stories that emerge from the articulations of race, individual identity and collective power structures. When he travels to France, the issues of his Southern home are never far from his mind, whether his voyage be physical, as we saw in his letters, or imaginative, as we will see in his fiction. In fact, the use of an elsewhere, symbolized by France, provides a sharpened focus with which he is able to dispense with sublimated depictions of race relations through cognitive distance.

⁴⁹ It is significant to note that national can be located both within the particular and the universal, highlighting the extent to which "multiple perspectives of place" are at work. This multiplicity is the same that permits "home" to be seen both as a location of safety and of terror and it is a multiplicity that creates the foundation for intersections of alliance that we saw in McKay's federated speech and that are foundational to any movement of resistance

Rather than allow his imagination to rest content with his “postage stamp of soil,” and his characters to stay in Yoknapatawpha, he sends them across the Atlantic, sending with them a color consciousness that operates in the background and in-between spaces of his idealized European elsewhere. As Edouard Glissant so eloquently put it: “When the county spreads out toward distant shores, its damnation goes with it [...] in *A Fable* the ship of shadows is built on the run in the glow of bombs and in the terror of the trenches of the First World War. The curse of the European war is complete, continuous, renewed, and perfected in Jeffersonian fatality. The faraway echoes the county” (Glissant, *Faulkner, Mississippi* 235). Indeed, the problems, concerns and experiences of the locals orbiting around Jefferson in Yoknapatawpha County are given universal expression on the battlefields of the Great War: the history of the Bundren family, linked to France through Darl’s service in World War I, finds unexpected resonances in the poverty surrounding the French front; issues of race exposed in Quentin’s tellings and retellings of Sutpen’s story echo against *A Fable*’s French and American narrative layers which tell and retell the story of the struggle between the individual and institutions. Faulkner further reinforces these links and resonances by placing Southerners who are connected to Yoknapatawpha, into French spaces, as he does in the short story “Ad Astra,” where he explores the mechanisms that connect and divide individuals as they negotiate their positions within society. John Lowe has highlighted the connections between “Ad Astra” and Faulkner’s Yoknapatawpha novels by pointing out the role of the character Bayard Sartoris, who figures in *Flags in the Dust* and whose family is featured throughout Yoknapatawpha fiction. In fact, Sartoris is one of two Southerners in the short story; the other is called Bland, quite possibly Gerald Bland, Quentin Compson’s Harvard classmate from Kentucky who appears in *The Sound and the Fury*. Furthermore, in *A Fable*, the strategic placement of Black characters in

against hegemonic oppression (See Avtar Brah for more on the role of diaspora and borders in setting up multiple perspectives of place).

the narrative, particularly the American soldier, Philip Manigault Beauchamp, a black private from Mississippi, no doubt connected to the unforgettable Lucas Beauchamp, provide a direct link to Yoknapatawpha and, as Teresa Towner has argued, racialize the narrative even when the discussion of race is not overt.⁵⁰ By placing both white and black Southerners in the World War I French setting, Faulkner highlights connections between the French and the Confederate South stemming from the shared experience of fighting a war at home against an enemy, and with alliances that are not as stable and Manichean as the tropes of war suggest. In addition, the presence of these characters, who have wandered over from the Yoknapatawpha texts,⁵¹ grounds the French setting in Faulkner's apocryphal geography, layering the imaginative geography of France onto the landscape of his apocryphal South.

In this way, the South, France and World War I come together in a nexus of mythic and tragic human activity to provide an imagined space where Faulkner can work out techniques for his art and the philosophy of the writer's duty in the larger scheme of society. The result of such experimentation is a clear political development in his oeuvre that, until recently has been seen to mark a falling off in his "genius," and as a result the work of his later period is frequently seen as aesthetically inferior to canonical titles like *The Sound and the Fury* and *Absalom, Absalom!*. Although an argument for the aesthetic quality of Faulkner's later work is beyond the scope of this project I do wish to prompt reconsideration of *A Fable* and the World War I short

⁵⁰ See Theresa M Towner, *Faulkner on the Color Line* (University Press of Mississippi, 2000) and Richard Godden, *William Faulkner: An Economy of Complex Words* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2007). Towner provides a convincing portrayal of the racial undercurrent in Faulkner's later fiction arguing that "Faulkner took racial culpability as a given and became increasingly interested in scripting responses to it." Godden also provides a provocative reading of *A Fable* addressing issues of race through the twice removed figure of the Black Jew. His analysis is particularly interesting in light of my argument because of the causal link he establishes between economic structures and Faulkner's text.

⁵¹ We are lead to assume that these are indeed the same characters that we see in the Yoknapatawpha novels, however, they do not forcibly have to be. Faulkner often reused names while changing the apparent details of a particular character. Merely the fact of using the same names, however, links these characters to Yoknapatawpha.

stories as being complimentary, and perhaps even necessary, for a more complete appreciation of the commonly accepted genius in his creation of Yoknapatawpha.

The explicit focus on war in Faulkner's treatment of France distinguishes his contribution to interwar modernism from that of McKay and Rhys, connecting it instead to e.e. Cummings' *The Enormous Room*, Rebecca West's *Return of the Soldier*, Virginia Woolf's *Jacob's Room* and to lesser known works by writers like Victor Daly, who wrote an account of war from the perspective of an African American soldier in *Not Only War*. The implications of linking war with explicit explorations of racial concerns further sets his work apart in interesting ways. Both war and race are often discussed in absolute terms: black and white, enemy and ally, right and wrong, and yet the reality of the lived experience of war and race is much more nuanced and complex. Treating these elements together highlights the way each imposes identity categories, demanding a complex negotiation between finding commonality and highlighting difference. The very nature of identity and identity categories is such that we are constantly navigating multiple borders of belonging and exclusion that determine who we are with and who we are against.

In the context of war stories, and of literature preoccupied with war, the marginal setting of armistice is critical for its power to destabilize identities that are ostensibly kept in strict hierarchical order within the parameters of wartime politics. While in typical expatriate modernist works written and/or set in France, displacement is a destabilizing creative force, in Faulkner's work, history itself is the impetus for this dizzying placelessness. Noel Polk notes, in the *Faulkner and War* introduction, that the Armistice is a typical "cove" of peace in which Faulkner sets much of his fiction. It is a "momentary lull" between wars where warriors and non-combatants alike must learn to deal both with the unsettling/unsettled nature of peace and the memory of what war has done. Even in his Civil War stories Faulkner rarely depicts battle per se but focuses instead on memories and consequences, on ways that war serves to

regulate human interaction long after the guns have ceased to fire. In his World War I fiction he explores the role of peace and the memory of war on subjectivity in a way that is informed by collective Southern memory of the Civil War.

Why does he focus on the peripheries of war? Some have suggested that it has to do with his own placement on the peripheries of war, his *almost* service in World War I and his bizarre fabrication of frontline service, complete with a limp attributed to wounds sustained in air combat.⁵² But this is a limited explanation that tends to elevate the cult of experience and ignore an understanding of war based on a variety of perspectives from every degree of “participation” in hostilities. Faulkner’s war fiction blatantly questions who is qualified to represent the experience of war, who can claim to have “seen war,” as Captain Bogard put it in the World War I short story “Turnabout?”⁵³ Such an explanation also fails to take into account Faulkner’s rather consistent challenge to fidelity and verisimilitude throughout his fiction. Indeed much of Faulkner’s work tends to pose the question of whether it is enough to have

⁵² There have been a number of attempts to explain this tendency in Faulkner’s fiction and in his life. Keith Gandal, for example, argues that a concern with missing the opportunity to play a part in the “heroic” front line battle is the impetus for much of the work by Faulkner, Hemingway and Fitzgerald.

⁵³ In “Turnabout” we see the international competitions and pissing contests reflecting the coding of heroics. In this brilliant short story we have American pilots sizing up the performance of their British naval allies. The American Captain Bogard, has taken responsibility for a young British naval officer named Hope, who has been picked up by an MP for obstructing traffic in the French town. He takes Hope back to the base to sober him up and the talkative young officer entertains the other American pilots with stories of the “games” he and his co-sailor Ronnie play during their runs in the small fast boats they operate. The pilots make fun of the young Hope, who is described as resembling “a masquerading girl” (475) and who they speculate is messing about while performing menial tasks in his boat at night, spending the rest of the time drunk and sleeping in the streets of the village. Some of the pilots express resentment at the thought of this young British sailor playing around while Americans are spending money and lives on a war that is not their own. They decide to take him out on a night raid to “show him some war” (484). When Bogard later goes out on a run with Hope, he discovers that the young officer’s playful way of describing his job actually masks the very dangerous task of launching torpedos at German ships from close range. Bogard realizes that the façade has been completely misleading and the young officer actually faces greater danger each day and potential sacrifice than he or any of his fellow pilots had ever imagined. The episode begs the question - what is heroism and who is allowed to judge it? Captain Bogard comes to understand through his experience with the young British naval officer a new threshold for definitions of heroism. It is a heroism that is not spoken, the acts of which, in the storytelling process, are coded as child’s play, but it is a make-believe that hides something more serious

been present during an event in order to understand it. His implicit argument is that it takes a writer's imagination and talent to work through the contradictions and connections that are central to experience. In *Absalom, Absalom!*, a novel that often stands as *the* model of Faulkner's Yoknapatawpha genius, the characters downplay and even challenge the ontological importance of fact, revealing the constructed nature of history, and highlighting the extent to which that history is cyclical and inevitable. Quentin, as a narrator removed chronologically from the story he tells, appropriates Southern history through imaginative representation when he claims: "If I had been there I could not have seen it this plain" (155). This suggestion, that in order to understand and represent the implications of an event, the writer's vision is more important than personal experience, challenges realist notions of the need for detailed accuracy. In the same way, Faulkner seems to suggest in "The Wasteland" stories that a war experience cannot be expressed by those who live it, perhaps because the horrors they see and the terror they feel surpass language and that only the talent of a writer, who is able to manipulate this language into what it is not, is able to render it. In this way, Faulkner suggests the power of narration and by extension the power of the writer to shape experience and to express subjectivity.

The Apocrypha of the Writer's France

The link that Faulkner highlights between France and Yoknapatawpha consistently reveals this aesthetic project that privileges the imagination over experience. Another example is in the importance of the Southern French medieval cité of Carcassonne to Faulkner's work. Robert W. Hamblin positions Carcassonne as the symbolic counterpoint to Lafayette County, Mississippi. He claims that Faulkner's discovery of the value in his own "postage stamp of soil" was only an initial step in his maturation as an artist, suggesting that while "Oxford [Mississippi] and its environs, may have supplied the raw materials," for Faulkner, it was Carcassonne, and the power of the imagination that it represented, "that produced the great art[...]In his

curious geography of the imagination both Oxford and Carcassonne are part of Yoknapatawpha” (169). Faulkner consistently identified “observation, experience and imagination” (Meriwether 248) as the key influences on good storytelling, but Hamblin argues that Faulkner clearly privileged artistic imagination. Citing Faulkner’s hostility for “facts” and mere “reporting” and his “preference for a fabricated literature over a representational one” (156) Hamblin explores the ways that Faulkner’s entire body of work takes reality and imagination and brings them together into the same narrative spaces, permitting each to meld into the other so that it can no longer be a question of what ‘really happened’ or could happen but rather what new thing can we see or understand or experience through the story.

Hamblin chronicles examples of Faulkner’s “richly inventive originality” from the Yoknapatawpha fiction in order to demonstrate how Faulkner elevated creative expression out of reality. In the short story “The Bear,” for example, he creates a larger than life, heroic episode out of what realistically would be simply the presence of a bear. The novel does not represent a real bear but “communicate[s] the idea of the bear as it exists in Ike’s imagination.” In this way the “world of fact has been infused and transformed by the creative imagination” (165).⁵⁴ In *The Hamlet*, Faulkner takes the comic and potentially grotesque story of Ike, and his love affair with his cow, and “evokes another world where reality has been suspended and the poet’s imagination rules...”, a place where “through the transforming power of the mythic imagination” a story of bestiality “becomes, if only briefly, a joyous and moving account of a perfectly devoted lover who braves fire and beast to rescue his beloved” (166). Imaginative word play converts the world into a place of heroism and beauty. Taking what is often dismissed as an irrelevant and irreverent episode in the

⁵⁴ Faulkner said, in discussing “The Bear” with a group of students at the University of Virginia “There’s a case of the sorry shabby world that don’t quite please you, so you create one of your own, so..you make the bear a little more of a bear than he actually was” (FIU 59 my emphasis)

novel, Faulkner elevates it to a place where language is used to layer imagination onto experience. It is within this territory of elevated language and surreality that Faulkner's concept of France resides, and the cité of Carcassonne operates as a synecdoche of that imaginative space.

Faulkner's use of Carcassonne as a poetic touchstone, representing both the poetic imagination and the work of the artist has been well-documented. When asked to comment on the resurgence of Southern writing in the 20th century at the University of Virginia, he associated it with a kind of resistant imaginative creation: "I myself am inclined to think it was because of the barrenness of the Southerner's life, that he had to resort to his own imagination, to create his own Carcassonne."⁵⁵ Reference to Carcassonne also appears in a similar way in *Absalom, Absalom!*, when the narrator refers to Thomas Sutpen's grand "design" (209) as "fabulous immeasurable Camelots and Carcassonnes" (129). Here the reference makes mythic shorthand of the cité by connecting it with Camelot, providing correspondence with legend and with the idea of romance and optimism. Perhaps the most significant example however, is the short story that Faulkner wrote early in his career⁵⁶, entitled "Carcassonne" which he ultimately placed in prominent spots at the end of his collection *These 13* (1931) and then later as the final story in the *Collected Stories* (1950) within the section entitled "Beyond."

The story has been described as a "prose poem," "a poetic fantasy," and "a poetic fable" (qtd in Towner and Carothers 460). The narrative action of the story is extremely limited; James Carothers sums it up as "A young man lies down to go to sleep, allowing his mind to wander" (Carothers 81). Through these mental

⁵⁵ *English Department Faculty and Wives*. Faulkner at Virginia. University of Virginia: T-127, 1957. <http://faulkner.lib.virginia.edu/display/wfaudio13#wfaudio13.4>.

⁵⁶ Joseph Blotner suggests that the poem was written or rewritten in 1930, perhaps from drafts started several years earlier. He notes that the three surviving manuscripts contain clear connections to the novels *Mosquitoes*, *The Sound and the Fury*, and *As I Lay Dying*.

ambulations the protagonist reflects on the relation between the body and the imagination, a reflection that turns into a conversation as the skeleton insists on human mortality while the young man resists this idea, declaring “*I want to perform something bold and tragical and austere*” (899). This meditation lies in the context of many direct and elliptical allusions to great feats of imaginative creation and literary expertise including the Old and New Testaments, Homer’s *Odyssey*, tales from the First Crusade by Torquato Tasso, Sir Walter Scott and Benjamin Disraeli, Shakespeare’s *Hamlet* and *The Tempest*, Eliot’s *The Waste Land* and “The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock,” and even, perhaps, work by Hemingway.⁵⁷ In the end, the protagonist’s ambivalent fate does not overwhelm what Hamblin calls “the symbolic victory of the imagination in imposing its will upon the harsh reality of the setting” (152) nor does it eradicate “the celebration of the transcendent and transmutable power of the imagination” (153) that the story sets out to express. Faulkner himself described the poem by bringing it back to his own journey as a writer:

I was still writing about a young man in conflict with his environment. It seemed to me that fantasy was the best way to tell that story. To have told it in terms of simple realism would have lost something, in my opinion. To use fantasy was the best, and that's a piece that I've always liked because there was the poet again. I wanted to be a poet, and I think of myself now as a failed poet, not as a novelist at all, but a failed poet who had to take up what he could do. (Faulkner, *Faulkner in the University* 22)

Although the story itself is not set in Carcassonne but rather in a port town called Rincon⁵⁸ the significance of the title falls in line with his use of the cité elsewhere.

Blotner, Joseph Leo. *Faulkner: A Biography*. One vol. ed. New York: Random House, 2005. 253-254.

⁵⁷ For a critical analysis of these allusions see Towner and Carothers *Reading Faulkner*, 461.

⁵⁸ Noel Polk has located Rincon in Puerto Rico while some other commentators have located it vaguely somewhere in Latin America.

The reason for Faulkner's identification of Carcassonne with imaginative creation has been a source of great intrigue among critics for decades. None of his primary biographers believe that he ever visited the cité during his walking tour of France in 1925 or on any of his subsequent trips. It is likely, as Hamblin has pointed out, however, that Faulkner had seen photographs and heard about its romantic history, dating from the fifth century BC, in his French classes with Professor Calvin Brown at the University of Mississippi in 1919-1920 or during his travels in Europe. He may have even read about it in feature stories like this one from the magazine *Travel* published in 1922:

As you approach the city from the lower town beyond the river and lift up your eyes to the hill and behold its titanic wall with its cloud of towers and turrets surmounted by a citadel you will find it hard to convince yourself that what you see is not a phantom metropolis, a figment of some artist's imagination. (Montaque, "Citadels of the Centuries," 6)

This vision of a fanciful place that suggests the power of creative imagination to transcend the limitations of reality are in line with the way that Faulkner treated the image in his fiction. I am arguing that this idea of Carcassonne as a symbolic image of creative expression extends to France as a whole, which functions, not just as an image but as a place-concept in which he is able to explore his native soil even more freely.

In order to consider this idea and develop it in terms of the role of France as a place-concept in Modernist literature, we must first return to Faulkner's postage stamp claim.⁵⁹ In it he explains the importance of the local and the idea of home in his art but he also suggests that using that material requires sublimating the actual into the apocryphal. Some commentators have extended this idea to argue that

⁵⁹ "I discovered that my own little postage stamp of native soil was worth writing about and that I would never live long enough to exhaust it, and by sublimating the actual into

Faulkner, in his Yoknapatawpha fiction, engages in myth-making. Joseph Urgo, however, emphasizes the distinction between myth and apocrypha and argues that Faulkner's use of apocrypha is meant to intentionally set his world and his work apart from the idea of myth-making and legend: "A myth helps to interpret reality by transforming what is mysterious or "other" in life into intelligible patterns and forms. Myths explain how things came to be; they tell us how we got here, and why things are the way they are" (14). While myths provide a sense of stability, he argues that apocrypha "exists as a challenge to the real by offering alternatives to what is commonly accepted as authoritative, official, or genuine. The impulse behind composing an apocrypha is not to explain, harmonize, or put into order. An apocrypha aims to upset and to create a sense of competing accounts, not a single version, of the real" (14). Urgo argues for the critical importance of the rebellious and alternative nature of Faulkner's creation. "The 'postage stamp,'" he writes, "was not worth writing about as an act of explication or even explanation, but as an act of imaginative rebellion against the native soil" (20). This rebellious link of home and origin to imaginative creation provided Faulkner with the "complete liberty" to accomplish his duty as a writer and it was in connection to France that he often chose to do this.

"Ad Astra" and the Blurring of Boundaries

As with Rhys and McKay, it was during the interwar period, during his stays in France, that Faulkner began to exploit the potential in the imaginative layering of an apocryphal France with Southern spaces. One of the World War I stories that he wrote during this period, "Ad Astra" demonstrates how such layering helped him work through issues of identity, war, and history in the American South. In "Ad Astra" several American and British soldiers, an Indian subadar and a German prisoner of war find themselves questioning any sense of identity following the

apocryphal I would have complete liberty to use whatever talent I might have to its absolute top" (Meriwether 255).

Armistice of November 11, 1918. The narrator begins “I don’t know what we were. With the exception of Comyn, we had started out Americans, but after three years, in our British tunics and British wings ... I don’t suppose we had even bothered in three years to wonder what we were, to think or to remember” (407). In the immediate aftermath of the Armistice, the former soldiers are trying to renegotiate their place and purpose in a world where the only structure that can make sense of their hybrid status—as American soldiers wearing British uniforms—has been dismantled. It is a world where the “enemy” has been defeated, leaving a vacuum where the German “other” used to be. The story underlines this struggle with a French/American brawl inspired by the affront the French soldiers feel when the Americans bring a German prisoner into a French bistro.

In the lull of ordering hierarchies and power machinations that define wartime, Faulkner satirizes the boundaries of national identity, challenging the specificity of war and suggesting affinities between characters based on common experiences and philosophies. The German prisoner of war bonds with the Indian subadar, for example, over the philosophy of brotherhood in the face of aristocratic traditions. The subadar declares “In my country I was a prince. But all men are brothers,” and the German recounts how he confronted his father to reject his aristocratic birthright after having learned to distrust the hierarchical structure: “You say fatherland; I, brotherland, I say, the word father iss that barbarism which will be first swept away; it iss the symbol of that hierarchy which hass stained the history of man with injustice of arbitrary instead of moral; force instead of love” (417). The shared philosophy of brotherhood between the Indian and German sets the tone for drawing connections across nations and languages and ultimately these connections underscore Faulkner’s aesthetic project and his use of imaginative layering to accomplish it.⁶⁰ Meanwhile,

⁶⁰ The connection between the subadar and the German soldier is further destabilizing for readers today with the hindsight of WWII and nearly a centuries worth of critical work on early 20th century racial superiority philosophies. Although these stories predate Hitler and

the connection between the word father and oppression highlights Faulkner's preoccupation with the power of hierarchical structures over individuals.⁶¹ The highly optimistic view of brotherhood is challenged, however, in a number of ways. First in breaking down former alliances and emptying meaning from former constructions of the enemy, Faulkner questions the "mechanisms of power which hold [the] masses in place during and between wars" (Polk viii). These mechanisms include the strict military hierarchies and adversarial oppositions that operate to maintain order during wartime. Communities and alliances forged during times of war, when a clear enemy is identifiable, in peaceful times, can fall apart without the structure and purpose that war provides. Without war, individuals seem to be freed to negotiate their own identities and positions within society and this prospect can be daunting. In these periods, any recognizable type of difference is motivation enough to prompt confrontation, and the soldiers on both sides seem to be searching out such a conflict, both as a cathartic action in the absence of that provided by combat, and to express the bitterness and resentment that has formed within the alliances. The French express outrage over the destruction of home and the latent "occupation" by foreign forces of French spaces. Now that armistice has been declared, the Germans are no longer a viable threat and so the French displace this frustration onto the 'occupying' armies that have not 'gone home yet.'

This situation can be read as gesturing toward Southern frustrations in the aftermath of the Civil War because of the links between family and enemy that he highlights in the discussion between the German prisoner and the Indian subadar and because of the layering of Yoknapatawpha onto France. The fact that Faulkner

WWII I think it may still be interesting to examine Faulkner's exposure in the 1920's to writings that later supported his racial ideologies.

⁶¹ Faulkner had a vexed relationship with his own father and with the idea of fathers in general. For more on this relationship see Watson, James G. "My Father's Unfailing Kindness: William Faulkner and the Idea of Home" and Porter, Carolyn in *Faulkner and Psychology* edited by Kartiganer and Abadie and

emphasizes such issues in an international context suggests two things: 1) that Faulkner is considering the possibility that problems considered unique to the South may have more universal origins in the human condition, and 2) that even though the South, within this context of the dueling imperial approaches and aristocratic histories of Great Britain and France, might more readily be connected to Great Britain because of its own vestiges of aristocratic and colonial culture in the form of slave trade, the move to connect the South instead to France, with its dismantled aristocracy, republican ideals and cultural colonialism, opens up new possibilities for thinking about issues of race and identity and the legacy of colonialism and slavery. This is a link that he exploits later when he connects Haiti to Yoknapatawpha in *Absalom, Absalom!*.⁶² Faulkner makes a clear move to position the discussion of race in a context that is not Southern; in this French context, there is a history, but that history is not haunted by the physical presence of slavery and the social ramifications of segregation law. Faulkner, distancing the discussion of race by placing it in an *elsewhere*, resists the suffocating nature of Southern history with regard to race—finding it impossible to approach race in a simple and direct way in that context and therefore displacing it momentarily, never completely removing it from the context of the South but always maintaining the imaginative connection of the two places by layering France and the South onto one another.

The placement of Southerners in French spaces provides a distance with which Faulkner is able to experiment and work through issues inherent to the history of the South. This distancing provides a space in which the issue of race is not weighed down by the specific baggage of American slavery and post-Civil War Reconstruction politics. It is a space similar to that provided in science fiction; it is a place where the artist can explore contemporary, often sensitive issues of identity, in worlds that are

⁶² The exploration of McKay's work, with its revelation of French racial hypocrisy in the colonies, helps to inform that of Faulkner's by widening our contextual understanding of race relations in France and the US South.

removed from reality in order to provide for a more critical exploration of identity issues that impact both the writer and the reader. In this way Faulkner creates a narrative space in which the Southerner Bland, in “Ad Astra,” can be critical of the racial practices of the British Empire. Early in the story he is the one to allude to racial inequality regarding the subadar: “He can attend their schools for the bleachedskinned...but he cannot hold their commission, because gentility is a matter of color and not lineage or behavior” (409). As Reginald Martin and others have argued, there is a pattern, even in Faulkner’s early work, of concern with the many strains of racial disharmony in social interaction. The changed setting and racial politics make it perhaps more acceptable within the South to discuss these issues of equality and access. Martin writes: “In these stories, there is frequently a background narrator who implies that the black characters involved in the plot are at least as important and as good as the white, but because the world values color over content, the characters of color find themselves socially disadvantaged” (53).⁶³ I wish to highlight that, while Faulkner most certainly provides this critique (subtly in his early fiction, more explicitly in his later work), he also goes to great lengths to move beyond the discussion of race in his exploration of identity. Race is central, but it is not all.

In “Ad Astra” we see him do this through a collapse of racial, national and ethnic identities into difference based on language, much in the way that Jean Rhys does. For the anglophone soldiers, the German prisoner, with his lofty talk of brotherhood, is an amusing distraction, whom they treat, as James G. Watson puts it, “as a relic rather than as a prisoner of war” (Watson 28). One of the soldiers even claims he always thought of “taking one home,” lamenting that he “never could find a good one. A whole one” (412). The German functions as a pawn with which to taunt the French soldiers whom they clearly see as inferior. The reasons for this perceived superiority

⁶³ One striking example of this is in *Intruder in the Dust* when the narrator perpetually refers to the black character Alex Sanders by name without allowing him to speak or without giving him any narrative focalization to demonstrate his importance in moving the plot forward.

are not clear. In part it seems to come from an alignment of France with the rescued damsel in distress, a country saved and therefore mastered. In this way race, nationality, and language also combine with gender to determine the fluid subjectivities of the characters involved, and to demonstrate the way that all of these intersections of identity complicate the situation. The clear objectification of the German prisoner might be extended to the French in the right circumstances, as we will explore below.⁶⁴ In all of this positioning Faulkner highlights the instability of identity categories because the lines of division between “us” and “them” are in constant flux. Here the “us” consists of the anglophone soldiers, emphasizing language as a determining category but always still maintaining contact with the feminization and racialization of the other.

Later the owner of the bistro, an old woman, further supports the conflation of identity based on language. For the French, the German is an invader of home, a destroyer of country, and his presence is a reminder of a struggle for power that played out in their own backyard. The old woman articulates this idea when she cries out:

Boche! Boche! Broken! Broken! Every cup, every saucer, glass, plate - all, all! I will show you! I have kept them for this day. Eight months since the obus I have kept them in a box against this day: plates, cups, saucers, glasses, all that I have had since thirty years, all gone, broken at one time! (422)

Her exclamation triggers an eruption of the tensions that had developed in the power play between the soldiers. In the midst of the fight she spits in the face of the American narrator and shrieks “Thou, too! [] It was not England that was devastated! Thou, too, come to pick the bones of France. Jackal! Vulture! Animal!

⁶⁴ If we draw this aspect out and consider the link between France and the South, this attitude could be a critique of actions and attitudes taken by the North toward the South in the aftermath of the Civil War. I think these aspects point toward the potential for an interesting feminist reading of the story that emphasizes links between colonial France and Britain and the slave-holding U.S. South that I am suggesting here.

Broken, broken! All! All! All!” (423). She conflates identity based on language and demonstrates concerns that move beyond those emphasized by the military apparatus.

The woman’s outburst highlights the fact that the former allies find themselves on separate sides because of the implications of a war whose frontlines are also homefronts. The bistro owner’s concerns bring to mind both the domestic and commercial sacrifices that have been made while the soldiers have been more concerned with abstract hierarchical positioning. The old woman reminds the soldiers and the reader that the war has invaded *her* bistro, *her* home, *her* country, and that the issues are material and not simply ideological, there is physical evidence of the war.⁶⁵ This is a phenomenon that can also be linked to Faulkner’s representation of the Civil War and its impact on the South. In such a model Great Britain might be equated with the North as the industrial, modern and cosmopolitan oppressor and invader, though the “British” soldiers in question are primarily American, a detail that highlights the confusion and identity renegotiation at the core of war and peacetime politics. The old woman is not interested in the fact that these American, Southern men might be in a position to empathize in her plight, but it is precisely in this intersection that Faulkner emphasizes the fluidity of identity against static nationalist discourse. The momentary focus on her perspective highlights the point that Faulkner made in the letter he wrote to his mother after visiting the French battlefields. In the space of the bistro, in the immediate aftermath of the Armistice, renegotiation of identity—and the hierarchical collective constructions of those identities—is still in process. In the space of the narrative, Faulkner begins to lay the

⁶⁵ The importance and power of physical evidence of war is an idea that harkens back to Shreve’s outburst in *Absalom, Absalom!* as he tries to understand Quentin’s relation to the South: “I’m not trying to be funny, smart. I just want to understand it if I can and I dont know how to say it better. Because it’s something my people haven’t got. Or if we have got it, it all happened long ago across the water and so now there aint anything to look at every day to remind us of it. We dont live among defeated grandfathers and freed slaves (or have I got it

ground work for consideration of identity centered around the theme of the individual against the collective, whatever shape that collective may take and whatever other aspects of difference may be involved, including geographical and historical ones. By placing Southerners in European locations, as he does in the World War I fiction, Faulkner shows how the idea of “Southern,” rather than acting as a fixed identity category is renegotiated to include the characteristics of “French,” “Indian,” “American” and a number of other national groups based on comparable experiences of war, tragedy and death. In this way he explores issues very dear to a transnational modernist perspective by blurring lines and pushing against the classifications that falsify lived experience. As we will further explore by analyzing imaginative layering in *A Fable*, Faulkner’s treatment of place is central to this exploration, and plays with the dynamics of movement and stasis as well as distance and practiced engagement, in ways that push against other modernist conceptions of place, including those set out by Rhys and McKay.

Echoes of Place in the Narrative Repetition of A Fable

While Faulkner certainly sends his Yoknapatawpha characters into French spaces in order to provide productive distance for dealing with issues that are too weighted down with local memory in the South, his imaginative French landscapes also occasionally invade Yoknapawtapha by providing links to French characters and by imbedding a sense of connected space and time in the narrative structures. This invasion seems to be a part of the foundational imaginative conception of Yoknapatawpha. In *The Hamlet* Faulkner reminds the reader of the very evident connection to France preserved in the name of the small hamlet, Frenchman’s Bend, in the southeast corner of the county:

He had quite possibly been a foreigner, though not necessarily French, since to the people who had come after him and had almost obliterated all trace of

backward and was it your folks that are free and the niggers that lost?) and bullets in the dining room table and such, to be always reminding us to never forget“ (289, my emphasis).

his sojourn, anyone speaking the tongue with a foreign flavor or whose appearance or even occupation was strange, would have been a Frenchman regardless of what nationality he might affirm. (236)

In an understated joke, Faulkner conflates the identities of the generations that came after the Frenchman with the foreigners that they saw as outsiders.⁶⁶ In *Absalom, Absalom!* there is also the French architect, “a small, alertly resigned man with a grim, harried Latin face, in a frock coat and a flowered waistcoat and a hat which would have created no furore on a Paris boulevard” (26), held captive by Thomas Sutpen. Similarly, the slaves that Sutpen brought over, Mr. Compson, dryly comments, spoke “a sort of French and not some dark and fatal tongue of their own” (27). The connection between the black slaves and the French language links the narrative space of language with racial consciousness. This is further supported by Sutpen’s association with Haiti, a former French colony from which Sutpen, in an historical anachronism, has brought the slaves after putting down their rebellion on a French plantation.⁶⁷ In this text, language works in the same way as race in an othering process where blackness is associated with the French language. In the same passage in which Quentin retells Sutpen’s slave rebellion story, language is posited as a “meagre and fragile thread” that between birth and death, the past and the future

⁶⁶ Later in *Intruder in the Dust* Faulkner expressly identifies the “Frenchman” as “Louis Grenier, the elegant, the dilettante, the Paris-educated architect” who built the plantation on the banks of the Yoknapatawpha river that is still called “the old Frenchman place” (74).

⁶⁷ The interesting anachronism between the actual slave rebellion of 1791 that established the republic of Haiti in 1804 and the story of Sutpen putting down the slave rebellion on a French sugar plantation in 1827 is the subject of Richard Godden’s interesting observation about the intentionality of such an “error.” He writes: “Faulkner wishes to foreground the continuous potential for revolution within the institution of slavery” and he therefore needs Haiti to stand as an symbol of that potential. He continues: “in Sutpen’s slaves Faulkner creates an anomalous archaism; they are historically free and yet doubly constrained, by a fiction (*Absalom, Absalom!*), and by a counter-revolutionary violence (Sutpen’s which is necessary to the workings of the plantation system)”(494). Faulkner’s use of this symbol of rebellion is meant to highlight the racial anxieties at play in the South, both in the early 19th century and, as captured through the telling and retelling of Sutpen’s story (first by Sutpen to General Compson in 1835, to his son and then to his grandson, Quentin and then to Shreve in 1910. By this recycling of story even the reader becomes implicated in the racial anxieties and, as the story is finally transmitted to us we are urged to examine the racial anxieties in today’s society that might echo against those of the fictionalized 1827 setting.

provides the link that gives life to the spirit: “the language [creole French] by which the little surface corners and edges of men’s secret and solitary lives may be joined for an instant now and then before sinking back into the darkness where the spirit cried for the first time and was not heard and will cry for the last time and will not be heard then either” (202). France, in Yoknapatawpha, provides a symbol of foreignness as a concept that links fear to a history haunted by collective memories of slavery, war and tragedy.

In the latter part of his career Faulkner brought all of these connections together in *A Fable*, his 1954 novel set somewhere on the French front in May of 1918. On the surface it is the story of a mutiny and attempted fraternization, brutally quelled with a barrage of fire from both sides and the execution of the corporal who is identified as the leader of the initial movement. This “central” storyline is complicated with a vast range of characters, subplots and storytellers who expand the reach of the primary action, which is chronologically organized by and punctuated with allusions to the life and passion of Christ. Faulkner wrote that the source for *A Fable* was the idea to synthesize the legend of the Unknown Soldier and the story of the Passion into “a fable, an indictment of war perhaps” (Faulkner, *Selected Letters* 178).

Rather than belabor the Passion allegory in his interpretation, François Pitavy focuses on the opposition between what he calls the “two orders” of the novel. The first is the transnational immutable military order that dominates the primary narrative and the lives of its characters; the second is the American pastoral heroic tale of the stolen racehorse and the small society surrounding it. In one order he shows the struggle between the military hierarchy that depends on the perpetuation of conflict for its survival and the ordinary man who must be kept ignorant of his submissive power. In the other order he shows the victory of individual freedom to pursue desire rather than be used as an instrument to an end determined by impersonal societal institutions and constructs of authority. Using Pitavy's image of

two orders I will focus here on the way that *A Fable* fits into Faulkner's transnational project. While in "Ad Astra" and his other World War I stories, Faulkner places Southerners in France in order to connect the two spaces and experiment with issues of identity in alternative places, in *A Fable*, three aspects contribute to the unique layering that unifies Faulkner's Yoknapatawpha and World War I fiction. The first is in the treatment of place using tropes of movement and organization of space that link Yoknapatawpha and France while blurring time and space in the narrative topology, the second is the transnationality of the characters who speak a number of languages and come from places all over the world, and the third aspect can be seen as these characters move in a seemingly fluid manner between and within the "two orders" of France and the American South, leading to a layered storytelling narrative that blurs both chronological and geographical boundaries and unites the whole of Faulkner's work.

A Fable is set in a symbolic France, dehistoricized and despacialized in ways that are reminiscent of Faulkner's treatment of Carcassonne. As Gresset argues, France does not exist in the novel as an actual setting: "Toward the end, i.e., before it is reintroduced as a highly specific setting in "Tomorrow," France is hardly more than the sound of its name, whatever meanings the book itself has piled upon it. [It] is neither a concept nor an image but [...] a concept-in-image in which the signified outcrops the signifier by far" (113). In the description of the French land- and cityscapes, the specificity of place for which Faulkner is celebrated, if not completely absent, is distorted by the force of the imagination. Just as his vision of "Carcassonne" conflates the historical figures of the First Crusades with a place name that was involved in conflicts from the Fourth Crusades⁶⁸ that occurred two centuries

⁶⁸ The allusions in the short story are to important figures in the First Crusade in the 11th century to take control of the Holy Land. Carcassonne however is connected to the Albigensian Crusades which took place in the 13th century in the South of France, as a part of the pope's effort to wipe out the Cathar movement in what was then called Occitania. For

later, his vision of World War I France conflates literary images of medieval European cities with his lived experience, often stretching the French setting beyond recognition by the dictates of his imagination. It is in Faulkner's conception of place that we see the transnational take full form; while in Rhys' work, the city provides a topography on which to explore the transnational psyche, and McKay's metropole provides a map of the imposition of social structures on individuals, Faulkner's France is completely transformed by the dictates of the writer's imagination and serves only as a template, a palimpsest that is often barely visible.

The map-like presentation of the town of Chaulnesmont in *A Fable* connects it directly with Faulkner's textual and visual representations⁶⁹ of Jefferson as the hub of Yoknapatawpha county. The French town is organized around a city square that Faulkner calls the "Place de Ville" to which "the broad boulevards" converge "like wheel spokes" (4). Such a place, as Gresset points out, does not exist in any French city,⁷⁰ a detail that contributes to the despatialized depiction of France. However, Faulkner is not aiming to "create an atlas", or at least not a faithful one, but "to convey a feeling" of France (Gresset 115), a feeling that, I argue, is parallel to the one that he attempts to convey in all of his Yoknapatawpha fiction. In describing Chaulnesmont, the narrator connects the town to Jefferson, both in terms of spatial organization and in the kind of movement that animates it. The correlation is evident in a comparison between the scene in *Intruder in the Dust*, in which Chick describes the crowds that gather to wait for Lucas Beauchamp after he has been accused of killing a white man, and the one from *A Fable*, in which the crowd has gathered to wait for the arrival of the mutinied regiment.

more on the Crusades see Riley-Smith, Jonathan. *The Crusades: A History*. 2 edition. Yale University Press, 2005.

⁶⁹ Faulkner provides both detailed descriptions of the town of Jefferson in his Yoknapatawpha fiction and several maps of the imagined county, including population data. These can be found in *The Portable Faulkner* as well as *Absalom, Absalom!*

⁷⁰ Faulkner is likely inspired by the *Place de l'Hôtel de Ville*.

In the opening paragraphs of *A Fable*, the narrator takes a map-like view of the city, putting an imagined pilot above the city to observe the movement below:

A French or British or American aviator (or a German either for that matter, if he had had the temerity and the luck) could have watched it best: hovel and tenement voiding into lane and alley and nameless cul-de-sac, and lane and alley and cul-de-sac compounding into streets as the trickles became streams and the streams became rivers, until the whole city seemed to be pouring down the broad boulevards converging like wheel spokes into the Place de Ville, filling the Place and then, pressed on by the weight of its own converging mass, flowing like an unrecoiling wave up to the blank gates of the Hôtel where the three sentries of the three co-embattled nations flanked the three empty flagstaves awaiting the three concordant flags. (4)

This grid-like view, echoing Fitzgerald's depiction of New York in "My Lost City," provides a theoretical view of the city that, in *Intruder in the Dust*, the narrator establishes by consistently highlighting the position of the crowd in relation to the central space and its "four main streets leading out of town in the four directions" (253). Similarly the "county's scarce-mapped perimeter" (256), real only on paper and in the collective imagination of the inhabitants, in *A Fable* becomes a literal boundary that takes the form of a fortified medieval wall.

The movements of the crowds are linked in both novels through metaphors of water that emphasize the nonviolent force and weight of the masses of people. In *A Fable* the "trickles became streams" and the crowd "seemed to be pouring," "flowing like an uncoiling wave" (4); later the crowd takes on the scope of a flood, "slowing and stopping now because of its own massy congested weight, merely stirring and shifting constantly faintly within its own mass while it stared, mazed and patient" (4). Such a description echoes the "mass of movement" depicted in *Intruder* that flows "back toward the Square like the turn of a tide, already in motion" (248), "already

pouring back" (249), and then finally "streaming," "clotting," and condensing "into four streams" (253). Similarly the "huddling" of the "fading and shapeless mass" (225) in *A Fable* resembles the "dense impenetrable mass," "dense and slow dowelled into one interlocked mosaic" (324) that *Intruder* portrays. In *A Fable*, France, like Yoknapatawpha County, is an imagined and created place mapped in unique ways that support Faulkner's aesthetic project of writing about "the problems of the human heart in conflict with itself" while demonstrating the struggle of the individual against the collective (Meriwether, *Speeches* 119).

In the logic of the text, the characters themselves reinforce the symbolic function of the setting.⁷¹ The corporal's sister, Madga, claims that France is:

...a word a name a designation significant yet foundationless like the ones for grace or Tuesday or quarantine, esoteric and infrequent [...we were] bound for France as others might be for some distant and irrevocable state or condition like a nunnery or the top of Mount Everest ... some peculiar and individual esoteric place to which no one really wants to go save in idle speculation yet which reflects a certain communal glory on the place which was host to the departure and witnessed the preparations. (322)

The specific place of departure to which the sister is referring is given little importance, but rather, becomes itself, a symbol of origins, the place from which one comes. Though for the sister this place is the Balkans, her discussion pulls in echoes of the myriad places of departure represented by the many characters in the novel: America, Britain, France, Africa, the West Indies, Germany, the Middle East, and China. All of these places are points of departure represented in the text, and they also represent a transnational population, a diverse cast of characters who lay the

⁷¹ Faulkner's use of place names also contributes to this symbolic depiction. As Pitavy has noted, Faulkner only uses fictive names for the two central settings Chaulnesmont and Vienne-la Pucelle. All other places, towns and battles, such as Passchendaele, Chemin des Dames and Verdun are real place names that have passed into collective memory and stand as symbolic allusions to the horror of all wars.

foundation for the undercurrent of ideas that haunt the text. For example, the issue of race is ever-present through the constant yet silent presence of Black Senegalese soldiers guarding the mutinied regiment and in the novel's discussions of origins and nation⁷². Rather than grouping the populations into "internationals" as Rhys does, Faulkner names the specific places of origin, setting up a more polyphonic mode of transnational narrative that is reinforced in the use of layered storytelling.

Another way that Faulkner transforms textual space into a palimpsest of space, time, and identity is through the use of repetition and layering in the narrative structure. A particularly fitting example and explanation of this technique is in *Absalom, Absalom!*, when Quentin describes the creation of a story using water metaphors that highlight the connective ability of narrative:

Maybe nothing ever happens once and is finished, Maybe happen is never once but like ripples maybe on water after the pebble sinks, the ripples moving on, spreading, the pool attached by a narrow umbilical water-cord to the next pool which the first pool feeds, has fed, did feed, let this second pool contain a different temperature of water, a different molecularity of having seen, felt, remembered, reflect in a different tone the infinite unchanging sky, it doesn't matter: that pebble's watery echo whose fall it did not even see

⁷² The corporal's sister later highlights the importance of home and of belonging as presented in the form of citizenship thereby reinforcing the inescapable centrality of nationality in the formation of identity:

"by Beirut I even knew what haven meant and now at last in France I believed that we - he- had found them. Home: who had never known one before: four walls and a hearth to come back to at the end of day because they were mutually his walls and hearth; work to be done not for pay or the privilege of sleeping in a hayloft or left-over food at a kitchen door but because the finished task was mutually his too to choose between its neglect and its completion. Because already he was not just a natural farmer: he was a good one, as though that half of his blood and background and heritage which was peasant had slept in untimed suspension until his destiny found and matched him with land, earth good and broad and rich and deep enough, so that by the end of the second year he was my husband's heir and would still be co-heir even if we had children of our own. And not just home but fatherland too; he was already a French subject; in ten more years he would be a French citizen too, a citizen of France, a Frenchman to all effect and purpose, and his very nameless origin would be as though it had never been."

moves across its surface too at the original ripple-space, to the old
ineradicable rhythm... (210)

The “ripples” spreading across the umbilical-cord-like rivers to new ocean “pools” suggest not only repetition of the story but physical movement across geographical expanses. *Absalom, Absalom!* is a novel that portrays the ‘Southern Faulkner’ at his best while introducing a more universalizing aesthetic that leads us to the World War I battlefields. Just as the act of story-telling connects Shreve and Quentin “born half a continent apart yet joined, connected after a fashion in a sort of geographical transubstantiation by that Continental Trough, that [Mississippi] River” (208), the Civil War lives on in its retelling and the retelling of its effects on the lives of Southerners; it then connects across the “pool” of the Atlantic in Faulkner’s World War I fiction and in his infusion of symbolic France into the rest of his work. These Southerners—and Faulkner himself—bring the ripples of the Civil War to the French battlefield and experience the same isolation, death, and separation but in new places and in new ways. Kartiganer writes that Faulkner “...tells stories, then he tells them again. Within each of the novels he creates a series of voices that report, interpret, or perform a single event, circling it, like ripples in a pool surrounding the no longer visible stone of their occasion” (22).

In *A Fable* this repetition is facilitated by variable focalization that destabilizes the third person narrative voice of the novel, and with the layering effect of multiple plotlines that generate a plethora of narrators and narratees within the primary story. Rather than several narrators recounting and embellishing the story of a single man and his ambition, as in *Absalom, Absalom!*, in *A Fable* there are a number of narrators telling different stories that are versions of the same story—that of the struggle between institutions and individuals—told in different places and times by characters who become symbolic parallels and oppositions to one another. For example, part of the Generalissimo’s backstory is filled in by a staff captain in a Quai

d'Orsay café to the Quartermaster General and three other listeners (215), then years later (though immediately within the text) when the staff captain visits the Quartermaster in the hospital he corrects this version and provides the connections to the story that Marthe, the corporal's half-sister, will later tell the Generalissimo concerning his affair with her mother and his true identity as father of the corporal, Stefan (241). Between these two story-telling episodes is one in which a British, French and American officer each recount the death of one of their soldiers, claiming that the corporal is *that* soldier. The various stories layer to become the amalgamated story of the corporal and the General, destabilizing both of their identities as individuals. Besides the allegorical identity as a Christ figure, the corporal Stefan is given a number of possible identities in the many versions of stories told about him, most of which are impossible to consolidate. Within the logic of the text, his allegorical identity is diminished through layered characterizations and Faulkner also challenges expectations about the centrality of Stefan as protagonist. While he appears to be the central character, he does not truly function as one; instead he is central only inasmuch as he provides an opposition and parallel to other characters. For example, Pitavy suggests that the horse in the American tall-tale story is a more successful version of the corporal and perhaps the "true hero of the novel" because it, like Caddy Compson, is kept alive in the narratives of those dedicated to it. For the small society around it, however, it is the "very form of desire" and not merely an object of desire. Its dedicated protectors ultimately kill it to set it free from being made an instrument for the desires of others. In another parallel, the runner can be seen as a more active and enduring version of the corporal (and of the individual). Rather than merely resisting the war as the corporal has done in refusing to attack, the runner aims to bring the two sides together to fraternize in no man's land. Faulkner does not provide simple one-to-one correspondences and does not permit the runner completely to replace Stefan as the Christ figure. Instead, the runner

represents a darker ideal that I would argue is associated with old-testament biblical theology; it is an idealism that is willing to sacrifice self and others to a higher cause. Through a pursuit of the corporal and his “disciples” within the main plot, the runner is also connected to the deputy who pursues the horse and its servants in the American horse thief vignette. The parallel pursuits of the deputy, motivated by a desire for truth, and the runner, motivated by a delirious pride and insistence on the primacy of the individual, complicates a simplified view of the dichotomy between the institution and the individual where the former is evil and the latter good. This type of juxtaposition of characters demonstrates the problematic nature of fixed polarities and challenges the “values” that nations invoke to justify war in the first place. Such a critique extends itself to race in Faulkner’s work because of the association that he establishes between issues of war and race in dehistoricized narrative layering. Herein lies Faulkner’s desired “indictment of war” in a novel that is a metafictional performance and repetition of the same story in both France and America where the characters are cast and recast in a variety of roles within the larger functions of the fable. The central message, if there is one, seems to be an anti-ideological stance that acknowledges the absurdity of a system of thinking that statically classifies individuals and their places in society.

The story repetition and layering of characters complements the spatial layering between the French and US South geographical and temporal contexts. It is a repetition that rewrites the past into the present, launching it forward. It also provides a platform that is resistant to static ideological systems on which Faulkner can negotiate the tensions between his sense of duty as citizen and writer and his dearly guarded belief in the liberty of the individual. In his use of repetition Faulkner questions the idea of a progress that denigrates or disregards the past. In 1962, just months before he died, Faulkner warned against dismissing the past in a speech to the American Academy of Arts and Letters: “Let the past abolish the past when - and

if - it can substitute something better; not for us to abolish the past simply because it was" (Meriwether 169). This seems to be Faulkner's strategy throughout his life for negotiating the tension between nostalgia for an heroic, mythic past and hope for a better future. For Faulkner, the fact that something is in the past is not reason enough to write it off. In a similar way he argues that just because something is Southern, and therefore tainted by the legacy of slavery and segregation, does not mean it has no productive value. Faulkner uses his fiction to find spaces in which to demonstrate this point and France, as place-concept, is central to this purpose.

The narration in *A Fable* layers episodes that illustrate, from various vantage points, the same story—that of the struggle between institutions and individuals; this episodic (re)construction provides intersecting storylines with characters who become symbolic parallels and oppositions to one another. It is a novel that is built upon an imaginative connection between France and the US South that shapes the narrative using oppositional and layering techniques to connect the two geographic spaces. This layering of place, history, character, narrative technique and plot provides a master guide to the layering that Faulkner performs throughout the rest of his fiction. Without a reevaluation of the importance of the themes of France and war in Faulkner's fiction and a willingness to de-canonize his Southern material, the true genius of *A Fable* is lost and the richness of this writer's aesthetic project is unduly limited. I have argued here that our conception of Yoknapatawpha is too limited if we consider it correspondent to or contained within the space of Lafayette County because the social issues Faulkner addresses are both specific to the South and included among more universal human concerns—Faulkner refuses to make a choice between the two just as he refuses to make a choice between the aesthetic and ethical aspects of his duty as a writer.

In 1982, the Faulkner and Yoknapatawpha conference explored international perspectives on/of Faulkner. In Joseph Blotner's talk "From the World" he pondered

what accounts for Faulkner's appeal to other nations and suggested that "because Faulkner writes about man in history about eternal questions, or as Faulkner put it, about the same griefs grieving on universal bones, the Mississippi author's voice transcends ephemeral, manmade boundaries and is heard by people all over the world" (304). Locating Faulkner as a transnationalist, as Blotner does here, provides readers and scholars who focus on the regional and local in Faulkner's fiction an opportunity to approach that specificity with a lens that highlights a more expansive intertextuality and provides new links with writers, like McKay and Rhys, whose work seems to call and respond to it. If, as I have argued, Faulkner's work is spurred by an imaginary of the elsewhere mapped onto home, McKay's work is generated by an imaginary of home that is mapped onto the foreign and Rhys's work navigates a topological mapping of subjectivity onto place, then to what extent do these geographical dialectics help us understand the complex articulations of race, gender, class and nationalities. It would be productive to consider the ways that their depictions of home and the foreign, boundaries and movement, and the struggle of the individual against institutional and mass collectivities contrast with that of other modernist expatriates and travelers. In this way we can begin to ask questions about the way the dialectic of place might find expression in larger literary circles leading to a reevaluation of the way transnationalism functions as a link between modernist, postcolonial and other literary categories.

Chapter 5 Conclusion

Coming Home

I set out here to write a transnational study that de-centered Americanness from Modernist studies. Initially, I thought I would round it out by connecting my introductory remarks about the American Paris mythology with issues of identity that come from British expatriate models. In the end, however, I discovered that to be another project entirely. Here, Americanness, it turns out, was not only my point of departure but the terminus as well. It is central to who I am as a person and as a scholar. I set out to decenter, destabilize and ultimately reject that Americanness as I have often attempted to do in my own life. Instead, I find that it is inextricably wrapped up in everything I do. Though it is not central, nor even forcibly dominant, it is connected to every aspect of my identity. In retrospect my authors say so much about who I am. Hemingway and Fitzgerald are emblems of the 1920's Paris jazz-culture I so admired as a girl. Faulkner represents the small-town girl I left behind many years ago, and my memories of living in a town where everyone knew everyone, and where tall-tales, larger than life characters and local scandals were part of an important narrative heritage. In Rhys I find reflected my life as a young adult, living in-between spaces and simultaneously belonging and not belonging to the groups with which I spent my time. McKay represents still awakening political aspects of my intellectual and social life, the questions that I ask myself about what it means to be engaged and what my role in the world should be. In this study I have formalized an internalized sense of the intricate web of contradictions that these combined aspects of my life engender. I have also formalized the perpetual conflict I experience as I bump into the received notions that each of these identity categories impose upon my life.

Here I have argued that Hemingway and Fitzgerald, along with the many other expatriate writers one thinks of when dealing with 1920's France shared an imaginary

place that was grounded in the lived space of France. It is this shared imaginary that provides the landscape for a transnational modernism that blurs boundaries and contradicts hegemonic categorizations that shape dominating power structures. I have tried to demonstrate here the ways that place can figure as the point of contact for a transnational modernism that privileges articulations and intersections rooted in lived experience rather than imposed binaries. I have also tried to demonstrate the way that lived experience and imagination layer onto one another in palimpsests that support the contradictory articulation of identity that comes out of lived experience in various communities.

I have considered the way that textual spatial linguistic practices in modernist writing connect to narrative spatial practices, exploring the way that time and place shape people's lives, and interrogating the articulations of responsibility between society and the individual. In Hemingway and Fitzgerald, the connection between autobiographical information and the spatial practices of their characters shed light on the importance of France as an imagined space in much the same way that it did for Rhys. All three authors turn de Certeau's characterization of the practice of place on its head and demonstrate the way that observable distance can actually shatter illusion while simultaneously reinforcing it. Walking the streets of the city becomes much less a visceral experience and more an intellectual examination of power structures and their impact on the freedom of the individual when it is transformed into a textual mapping of the city. In a similar way McKay highlights the same narrative transformation. His decentering of Paris and his rich use of Marseilles as the domain of the urban flâneur helps to highlight the racial and sexual disparities that still persist in work by other modernists. He also points us toward the more conceptual transnationalism that detaches itself entirely from any obligation to topographical fidelity and that we saw at work in Faulkner's treatment of France as the imaginary layer of his conception of home. This interaction between imagined

and lived spaces is one of the intersections where contradictions of modernity and of life can reside.

All of these writers bring us back to the intersections of identity, language, place and power. They endeavor, each one, to use language in ways that liberate it and them from the imagined communities of nation, race, gender and class. They demonstrate the connection between movement and language, between text and place and the role of place and language in the multiple axes of power that come together in Foucault's heterotopias. They demonstrate the way that memory and identity connect with time in spatial narratives and provide universal place concepts. Through Rhys's gender inflected interiority, informed by issues of class and race that are framed by imperial structures and McKay's expanded vision of urban internationalism we can locate intersections of language, origins and race and the way they resist the oppressive elements of institutional power structures. McKay and Rhys both decenter Paris, albeit in very different ways, opening up a clearer understanding of the role France plays in transnational movements. Faulkner, however, by turning the whole of France into a place concept, layers American and French spaces in order to challenge the received notions of both by blurring lines between physical, imagined and social aspects of space through poetic use of language. He challenges ideas about the ways that regional, national, and transnational identities interact and influence one another, which allows readers to better understand the interactions of literary expatriates of every kind.

In the days that followed the attacks in Paris on November 13th 2015 I found myself thinking about connections between the U.S. and France in ways I hadn't for an extremely long time. A *Time* article published just days after the attacks laid out the relationship by connecting the outpouring of support and concern from Americans to similar reactions from France towards the U.S. in the days following the attacks of 9/11. The article quoted David Sedaris, who had spoken on a segment of

This American Life about his experience living in Paris in those dizzying days following the 9/11 attacks. His reflections reminded me a great deal of Rhys, McKay and Faulkner as well as many other expatriate writers in the interwar period. Their exploration of the idea of nation and the interplay between those ideas seemed to be echoed in the complex shifting between tropes of unity and polarity that Sedaris portrayed as he described the church service he attended at the American Cathedral that became a media and political event. He explained:

It was all very tasteful, but failed to satisfy the 200 or so Americans who'd come with a sudden desire to be with their people. It's different for visiting tourists, but the Americans who actually live here go to great lengths to avoid one another. Now we wanted to hand out and share our emptiness, but it wasn't on the program.

Sedaris captures a shapeless and mutating but powerful feeling of community that crops up in many forms but has perhaps most powerfully manifested itself in the form of nationalism over the past two centuries. In this study, I have made a connection between anglophone writers, whose complex relationships with national identities resist unifying tropes, and France as a lived and imagined place that both reinscribes those tropes and liberates the writer from them. This connection is rooted in my own questions about identity and belonging: about how one creates and maintains ones identity, and the role that the idea of "home" plays in that process. It is in moments of great tragedy and great struggle that we go into survival mode and unexpected expressions of unity can crop up in the same breath that horrific acts of hate do. As thinkers, as critics, we have become highly suspicious of the powerful manipulation that entities like the media, politics and institutional structures are able to perform over our lives, and so we guard the pure moments and hesitate sharing them for fear of losing them. I am convinced that these are the moments that great poetry and great literature seek to create and yet they live in small, seemingly

insignificant ones that any person can experience. In the 1920's, in that turbulent and wild period of traumatic recovery and wild abandon, literature, and all art for that matter, was doing something new, something unique that could only come together in that way, in that Paris moment. It is unique, it is compelling, but it is also part of a palimpsest of moments spread out over countless places and spaces; it is a story that repeats itself today and it is a story that no doubt existed long before.

Bibliography

- Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. Verso Books, 2006. Print.
- Apollinaire, Guillaume. *La femme assise chronique de France et d'Amérique*. Paris: Gallimard, 1979. Print.
- Baudelaire, Charles, and Jonathan Mayne. *The Painter of Modern Life, and Other Essays*. London: Phaidon, 1964. Print.
- Bauman, Zygmunt. *Globalization: The Human Consequences*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1998. Print.
- Beach, Sylvia. *Shakespeare and Company*. Bison Books, 1991. Print.
- Benstock, Shari. *Women of the Left Bank: Paris, 1900-1940*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1986. Print.
- Berman, Marshall. *All That Is Solid Melts Into Air: The Experience of Modernity*. New York, NY: Penguin Books, 1988. Print.
- Bhabha, Homi K. *The Location of Culture*. London; New York: Routledge, 1994. Print.
- Boyle, Kay, and Robert McAlmon. *Being Geniuses Together, 1920-1930*. North Point Press, 1984. Print.
- Braidotti, Rosi. *Nomadic Subjects Embodiment and Sexual Difference in Contemporary Feminist Theory*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1994. *Open WorldCat*. Web. 20 Aug. 2015.
- Carothers, James B. *William Faulkner's Short Stories*. Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1985.
- Carr, Helen. *Jean Rhys*. 2nd. 1996. Tavistock: Northcote [u.a.], 2012. Print.
- Chaney, Michael A. "Traveling Harlem's Europe: Vagabondage from Slave Narratives to Gwendolyn Bennett's 'Wedding Day' and Claude McKay's Banjo." *Journal of Narrative Theory* 32.1 (2002): 52-76. *Project MUSE*. Web.
- Clukey, Amy. "No Country Really Now': Modernist Cosmopolitanisms and Jean Rhys's 'Quartet.'" *Twentieth Century Literature* 56.4 (2010): 437-461. Print.
- Collins, Patricia Hill. "Learning from the Outsider Within: The Sociological Significance of Black Feminist Thought." *Social Problems* 33.6 (1986): S14-S32. Print.
- Cooper, Wayne F. *Claude McKay: Rebel Sojourner in the Harlem Renaissance*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1987. Print.

- Cowley, Malcolm. *Exile's Return: A Literary Odyssey of the 1920s*. Penguin Books, 1976. Print.
- Crenshaw, Kimberle. "Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence against Women of Color." *Stanford Law Review* 43.6 (1991): 1241–1299. Print.
- Cresswell, Tim. *Place: A Short Introduction*. Malden, MA: Blackwell Pub., 2004. Print.
- Cummings, E. E, and George James Firmage. *The Enormous Room: A Typescript Edition with Drawings by the Author*. New York; London: Liveright, 1994. Print.
- Daly, Victor. *Not Only War; a Story of Two Great Conflicts*. New York: AMS Press, 1970. Print.
- de Certeau, Michel. *The Practice of Everyday Life*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984. Print.
- Emery, Mary Lou. *Modernism, the Visual, and Caribbean Literature*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007. Print.
- English Department Faculty and Wives*. University of Virginia: T-127, 1957. Audio Recording. Faulkner at Virginia.
- Fabre, Michel. *From Harlem to Paris: Black American Writers in France, 1840-1980*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1991. Print.
- Fanon, Franz. *Peau Noire Masques Blancs*. Points essais. Points French, 1971. Print.
- Faulkner, William. *A Fable*. New York: Random House, 1954. Print.
- . *Absalom, Absalom!* New York: Modern Library, 1951. Print.
- . *Flags in the Dust*. New York: Vintage International, 2012. Print.
- . *Intruder in the Dust*. Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group, 2011. Print.
- . *Selected Letters of William Faulkner*. New York: Random House, 1976. Print.
- . *The Collected Works of William Faulkner*. London: Chatto & Windus, 1949. Print.
- Faulkner, William, and James B. Meriwether. *Essays, Speeches & Public Letters*. Modern Library pbk. ed. New York: Modern Library, 2004. Print. The Modern Library Classics.
- Fitzgerald, F. Scott. "Babylon Revisited." *Norton Anthology of American Literature. Volume D, Volume D*,. Ed. Nina Baym and Mary Loeffelholz. 8th ed. New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 2012. 675–689. Print.

- . *The Crack-Up, with Other Uncollected Pieces, Note-Books and Unpublished Letters*. Ed. Edmund Wilson. [New York]: [J. Laughlin], 1956. Print.
- Flanner, Janet (Genet). *Paris Was Yesterday, 1925-1939*. Mariner Books, 1988. Print.
- Gilbert, Sandra M, and Susan Gubar. *No Man's Land: The Place of the Woman Writer in the Twentieth Century*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988. Print.
- Gilroy, Paul. *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness*. London; New York: Verso, 1993. Print.
- Glissant, Edouard. *Faulkner, Mississippi*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000. Print.
- GoGwilt, Christopher Lloyd. *The Passage of Literature: Genealogies of Modernism in Conrad, Rhys, and Pramoedya*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2011. Print.
- Goldman, Jonathan. *Modernism Is the Literature of Celebrity*. 1st ed. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2011. Print. Literary Modernism Series.
- Gresset, Michel. "From Vignette to Vision." *Faulkner, International Perspectives: Faulkner and Yoknapatawpha, 1982*. Ed. Ann J Abadie and Doreen Fowler. Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1984. Print.
- Hamblin, Robert W. "Carcassonne in Mississippi: Faulkner's Geography of the Imagination." *Faulkner and the Craft of Fiction: Faulkner and Yoknapatawpha, 1987*. Ed. Doreen Fowler and Ann J Abadie. Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1988. Print.
- Hemingway, Ernest. *A Moveable Feast*. Simon & Schuster, 1996. Print.
- . "Snows of Kilimanjaro." *Norton Anthology of American Literature. Volume D, Volume D*. Ed. Nina Baym and Mary Loeffelholz. 8th ed. New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 2012. 826–842. Print.
- Kennedy, Gerald, and Jackson R. Bryer, eds. *French Connections: Hemingway and Fitzgerald Abroad*. London: Macmillan, 1998. Print.
- Kennedy, J. Gerald. *Imagining Paris: Exile, Writing, and American Identity*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993. Print.
- Khagram, Sanjeev, and Peggy Levitt, eds. *The Transnational Studies Reader: Intersections and Innovations*. New York: Routledge, 2008. Print.
- Konzett, Delia Caparoso. *Ethnic Modernisms: Anzia Yezierska, Zora Neale Hurston, Jean Rhys, and the Aesthetics of Dislocation*. 1st ed. New York; Houndmills, England: Palgrave, 2002. Print.

- Lefebvre, Henri. *The Production of Space*. Trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith. Oxford: Blackwell, 2007. Print.
- Lippard, Lucy R. *The Lure of the Local: Senses of Place in a Multicentered Society*. New York: New Press, 1997. Print.
- Martin, Reginald. "Faulkner's Southern Reflections: The Black on the Back of the Mirror in 'Ad Astra.'" *African American Review* 27.1 (1993): 53–57. JSTOR. Web.
- McClintock, Anne. *Imperial Leather*. Routledge, 1995. Print.
- McFarlane, James. "The Mind of Modernism." *Modernism: A Guide to European Literature 1890-1930*. Ed. Malcolm Bradbury. Penguin Books, 1978. 71–94. Print.
- McKay, Claude. *A Long Way from Home*. New York: Arno Press, 1969. Print.
- . *Banjo*. London: X Press, 2000. Print.
- . *Home to Harlem*. New York and London: Harper & brothers, 1927. Print.
- Meriwether, James B. *Lion in the Garden; Interviews with William Faulkner, 1926-1962*. New York: Random House, 1968. Print.
- Millgate, Michael. "Faulkner on the Literature of the First World War." *A Faulkner Miscellany*. Ed. James Meriwether. UP of Mississippi, 1974. 98–104. Print.
- Mills, Sara. *Gender and Colonial Space*. Manchester, GB: Manchester University Press, 2005. Print.
- Monk, Craig. *Writing the Lost Generation: Expatriate Autobiography and American Modernism*. Iowa City, IA: University of Iowa Press, 2008. Print.
- Montague, T Graydon. "Citadels of the Centuries." *Travel* 39 (1922): n. pag. Print.
- Murat, Laure. *Passage De l'Odéon: Sylvia Beach, Adrienne Monnier Et Lavie Littéraire À Paris Dans L'entre-Deux-Guerres*. Paris: Fayard, 2003. Print. Histoire de La Pensée.
- Naipaul, V.S. "Without a Dog's Chance." *New York Review of Books* (1972): 29–31. Print.
- Pitavy, François. "The Two Orders in A Fable: A Reappraisal of Faulkner's 'Elephant.'" *Mississippi Quarterly: The Journal of Southern Cultures* 62.3–4 (2009): 381–425. Print.
- Pizer, Donald. *American Expatriate Writing and the Paris Moment: Modernism and Place*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1996. Print. Modernist Studies.

- Polk, Noel, ed. *Faulkner and War: Faulkner and Yoknapatawpha, 2001*. Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2004. Print.
- Putman, Samuel. *Paris Was Our Mistress, by Samuel Putman*. Place of publication not identified: Viking, 1947. Print.
- Ramesh, Kotti Sree, and K. Nirupa Rani. *Claude McKay: The Literary Identity from Jamaica to Harlem and Beyond*. Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland, 2006. Print.
- Relph, E. C. *Place and Placelessness*. London: Pion, Ltd, 1976. Print. Research in Planning and Design 1.
- Rhys, Jean. *Quartet*. New York; London: Norton, 1997. Print.
- . *The Left Bank & Other Stories*. Ed. Ford Maddox Ford. Freeport, N.Y.: Books for Libraries Press, 1927. Print.
- . *The Letters of Jean Rhys*. Ed. Francis Wyndham and Diana Melly. New York, NY: Viking, 1984. Print.
- . *Smile Please: An Unfinished Autobiography*. Ed. Diana Atwell. New York: Harper & Row, 1979. Print.
- Savory, Elaine. *Jean Rhys*. Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998. Print. Cambridge Studies in African and Caribbean Literature.
- . *The Cambridge Introduction to Jean Rhys*. Cambridge, UK; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009. Print. Cambridge Introductions to Literature.
- Scott, Bonnie Kime. *The Gender of Modernism: A Critical Anthology*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990. Print.
- Seamon, David. "Body-Subject, Time-Space Routines, and Place-Ballets." *The Human Experience of Space and Place*. Ed. Anne Buttimer. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1980. 148–65. Print.
- . *Geography of the Lifeworld: Movement, Rest, and Encounter*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1979.
- Sedaris, David. "Before and After." *This American Life*. WBEZ, 21 Sept. 2001. Radio. Transcript.
- Sharpley-Whiting, T. Denean. *Negritude Women*. Minneapolis, MN; London: University of Minnesota Press, 2002. Print.
- Simmel, Georg. "The Philosophy of Money (1900)." *The Continental Aesthetics Reader*. Ed. Clive Cazeaux. New York: Routledge, 2000. Print.
- Stein, Gertrude. "An American and France." Typescript of Lecture. American Literature Collection, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University, 1936.

- . *Paris France: Personal Recollections*. London; Chester Springs (Pa.): P. Owen, 2003. Print.
- . *The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas / by Gertrude Stein*. New York: Vintage Books, 1961. Print.
- Stevens, Wallace, and Holly Stevens. *Letters of Wallace Stevens*. New York: A.A. Knopf, 1966. Print.
- Stoneback, H.R. "France outside of Paris in Hemingway's Work." *French Connections: Hemingway and Fitzgerald Abroad*. Ed. Gerald Kennedy and Jackson R. Bryer. London: Macmillan, 1998. 33–60. Print.
- Towner, Theresa M. *Faulkner on the Color Line*. University Press of Mississippi, 2000. Print.
- Towner, Theresa M., and James B. Carothers. *Reading Faulkner: Glossary and Commentary. Collected Stories*. Univ. Press of Mississippi, 2006. Print.
- Tuan, Yi-fu. *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1977. Print.
- Urgo, Joseph R. *Faulkner's Apocrypha: A Fable, Snopes, and the Spirit of Human Rebellion*. Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1989. Print.
- Walkowitz, Rebecca, and Douglas Mao. "The New Modernist Studies." *PMLA* 123.3 (2008): 737–748. Print.
- Watson, James G. "William Faulkner and the Theatre of War." *Faulkner and War: Faulkner and Yoknapatawpha, 2001*. Ed. Noel Polk. Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2004. 20–35. Print.
- Weiss, Andrea. *Paris Was a Woman: Portraits from the Left Bank*. London; San Francisco: Pandora, 1995. Print.
- Weiss, M. Lynn. *Gertrude Stein and Richard Wright: The Poetics and Politics of Modernism*. Univ. Press of Mississippi, 2012. Print.
- West, Rebecca. *The Return of the Soldier*. New York, N.Y.: Dial Press, 1982. Print.
- Winkiel, Laura. "Gendered Transnationalism in 'The New Modernist Studies.'" *Literature Compass* 10.1 (2013): 38–44. *Wiley Online Library*. Web.
- Woolf, Virginia. *Collected Essays 1*. London: Hogarth Press, 1966. Print.
- . *Jacob's Room*. Mineola, N.Y.: Dover Publications, 1998. Print.
- . *The Waves*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014. Print.
- Yeats, W. B. *Michael Robartes and the Dancer*. Churchtown, Dundrum: The Cuala Press, 1920. Print.