

THE UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA

Writing the Periphery:
Authority and Ideology in Canadian Travel Writing

by

Adam Thomas Colenso Carter

A Thesis

Submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

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ADAM THOMAS COLENZO CARTER

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies of
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Abstract

The thesis examines a collection of Canadian travel texts produced by eight writers from the colonial period to the present: Samuel Hearne's A Journey to the Northern Ocean, Anna Brownell Jameson's Winter Studies and Summer Rambles in Canada, Susanna Moodie's Roughing It in the Bush, Catharine Parr Traill's The Backwoods of Canada, Ken Mitchell's Through the Nan Da Gate, selections from Earle Birney's travel poetry, Norman Levine's Canada Made Me, and Frank Davey's The Abbotsford Guide to India. In examining these texts the thesis seeks to establish three things: the degree of authority the representor (narrator/travel writer) claims over her or his representation (a landscape, a people), the conventions of representation these texts employ in representing landscapes and peoples, and most fundamentally, the ideology implied by varying assumptions of authority and the use of certain strategies of representation. The thesis argues that much of this travel writing has remained within certain dominant conventions of representation and assumptions of authority that embody, aesthetically and ideologically, a kind of discourse of empire, but that certain travel texts work to undermine such a dominant discourse.

In an initial chapter I examine four colonial texts: Hearne, Jameson, Moodie, and Traill. I read these early colonial travel texts written by British writers on the colonial frontier as working out of a privileged geographical and cultural centre, and in the double process of colonialism working to bring the periphery within the centre, its gaze, conventions of representation, aesthetic categories and at the same time, condemning the periphery as inferior, outside the centre's

territorial limits--Other.

I turn in the ensuing two chapters to examine more contemporary travel writing and ask: to what extent do these later texts repeat or subvert (or repeat and subvert in an act of postmodern repetition) the forms, narrative strategies, and ideological presuppositions, of these colonial pre-texts? Do the travel texts of post-colonial Canadian writers display a sensitivity to Otherness, a wariness of the whole centre-periphery metaphor, of the inadequacies of language to represent foreign cultures? Or do they glibly and unconsciously repeat the forms and conventions of a discourse of empire? In a chapter that compares Ken Mitchell's Through the Nan Da Gate with selected travel poetry of Earle Birney, I argue that unproblematic views of language and received forms as adequate to the task of cultural representation, and liberal humanist assumptions about man's underlying identity across all cultures, largely predominate in both writers' texts, although with Birney one can begin to see this come under pressure.

The concluding chapter contrasts Norman Levine's Canada Made Me with Frank Davey's The Abbotsford Guide to India, as two travel texts that employ fundamentally different strategies in dealing with the Other of foreign people and places. Levine's text remains firmly within the colonial mode; his modernist Weltschmerz repeats the idea of a 'high' centralist European culture versus the dreary Canadian backwaters, and rehearses the post-colonial centralist stance of disavowing the peripheries. Davey's parody and postmodern deconstruction of the travel genre, on the other hand, attempts to place the earlier ideological assumptions of the travel text under attack.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Acknowledgements	ii
Abstract	iii
Introduction	1
Chapter 1 Conventions of Representation and Textual Authority in Four Colonial Travel Texts	14
Chapter 2 Textual Authority in Canadian Travel Poetry: Ken Mitchell and Earle Birney	53
Chapter 3 Repetition and Subversion: Norman Levine's <u>Canada Made Me</u> and Frank Davey's <u>The Abbotsford Guide to India</u>	77
Conclusion	96
Endnotes	106
Works Cited	111
Appendix	116

Introduction:

This laborious work . . . is only composed of mine own Eie-sight and ocular experience; (pluris est oculatos testis unus, quam auriti decem) being the perfect mirror, and lively portraiture of true understanding.

--William Lithgow, Most Delectable and True Discourse of a Peregrination in Europe, Asia, etc. [1614] (qtd. in Adler 12).

And although one should reade all the Topographers that ever writ of, or anatomized a . . . Country, and mingle Discourse with the most exact observers ... Yet one's own ocular view, and personall conversation will still find out something new and unpouced at by any other . . . and so enable him to discourse more knowingly and confidently and with a kind of authority thereof; It being an Act of parliament among all Nations that one eye-witness is of more validity than ten Auricular.

--James Howell, Instructions for forreine Travell [1642] (qtd. in Adler 13, underlining in original)

Tourism can never be more than rhetoric & device.

--Frank Davey, The Abbotsford Guide to India [1986] (90)

Travel writing is doubly peripheral. Existing somewhere on the unstable boundaries between literature, journalism, autobiography, and natural history, the field comprises a loose collection of prose narratives, poetry, journals, guidebooks, and scientific studies. It can be found as well on the margins of ethnographic writing. Although shunned by this professionalized, institutionalized discourse as touristic dabbings in the business of cultural representation, the conventions of the much older discourse of travel writing comprise, as Mary Louise Pratt has shown, an integral part of the multiple codes that necessarily traverse the ethnographic text. Like all writing, ethnography is tropological and certain of its tropes arise out of discourses that ethnography explicitly defines itself against. Pratt cites several classic ethnographic texts as examples of borrowings from the tropes of travel narratives, namely: the convention of the royal arrival of the traveller whom the natives greet as a king or a god, and the figure of the writer as castaway ("Fieldwork" 34-38). Usually the ethnographic text employs these tropes in its introduction before the objectified discourse commences but they infuse the body of the work as well. The more personal or involved (homodiegetic) narrative that characterizes the travel text persists, Pratt writes, "alongside

the objectifying description in ethnographic writing because it mediates a contradiction within the discipline between personal and scientific authority ..." ("Fieldwork" 32).

Countless other discourses traverse the travel text: geography, botany, economics, religion, etiquette, statistics, and art criticism, to name but a few of the most prevalent. The often very casual and unreflexive manner in which the travel text employs these discourses, makes them ideal artifacts for a contemporary ideological critique, one which reaches into current theoretical (political) debates on cultural and geographical centres and margins, the politics of representation, authority, and the relation between text and world.

Travel writing is peripheral in another sense. The travel text writes the periphery, produces a text about an "elsewhere" for the consumption of those "back home" -- the members of the writer's cultural, linguistic group. In a fundamental way, this centre-periphery "orientational metaphor" generates and structures the travel text.¹ The writer presents the peripheral locality in the language and forms of his or her locality or centre, and furthermore, chiefly presents those aspects of the peripheral locality that will be of interest to readers who share the assumptions of this centre. Immediately this creates an arbitrary opposition upon which to construct similarity, difference, proper versus unseemly behaviour, the exotic, the grotesque, and the picturesque. This act of aesthetic and intellectual appropriation-transformation is never ideologically neutral. To adopt what Edward Said has written in a related context (British and French travel narratives in Islam), these writers "construct, and the very act of construction is a sign of imperial power over recalcitrant phenomena, as well as a confirmation of the dominating culture and its 'naturalization'" (145-146).

Granted its peripheral status, what claims can we say travel writing makes? What are the underlying assumptions that guide the production of these texts? To what extent does a work claim to present the real as it addresses a culture or place, and conversely, to what extent does it foreground the limitations on the authority of its representation? The travel text as signifier, the locality it seeks to represent as signified: does the text problematize the relationship between these terms or make them appear transparent and natural? Does the seemingly informal, provisional

character of much travel writing diminish its claims to authority, or does it claim its own peculiar authority by virtue of this informality, invoking the prerogatives of the "eye-witness" who speaks simply and honestly of what he has seen?

This thesis examines a collection of "Canadian" travel texts produced by eight writers from the colonial period to the present: Samuel Hearne's A Journey to the Northern Ocean, Anna Brownell Jameson's Winter Studies and Summer Rambles in Canada, Susanna Moodie's Roughing It in the Bush, Catherine Parr Traill's The Backwoods of Canada, Ken Mitchell's Through the Nan Da Gate, selections from Earle Birney's travel poetry, Norman Levine's Canada Made Me, and Frank Davey's The Abbotsford Guide to India. In examining these texts the thesis seeks to establish, in the main, three things: the degree of authority the representor (narrator/travel writer) claims over her or his representation (a landscape, a people), the conventions of representation these texts employ in representing landscapes and peoples, and most fundamentally, perhaps, the ideology implied by varying assumptions of authority and the use of certain strategies of representation. My basic assumption is, as Linda Hutcheon writes, "that all cultural practices have an ideological subtext which determines the conditions of the very possibility of their production of meaning" (xii). Since the thesis is largely concerned with how a limited number of conventions of representation are employed in the description of a large variety of referents, I do not restrict my analysis to travel texts that explore only the Canadian culture and landscape, but extend the study to examine texts written by Canadians on other locations abroad. I argue that much of this travel writing has remained within certain dominant conventions of representation and assumptions of authority that embody, aesthetically and ideologically, a kind of discourse of empire, but that certain texts work to undermine such a discourse.

It may be useful to say a word about the terms "travel writing," "textual authority," and "ideology." I wish to define "travel writing" as broadly as possible. "Partly because it has never been fully professionalized or 'disciplined'," writes Mary Louise Pratt, "travel writing is one of the most polyphonous of genres" ("Scratches" 160). It should not be the critic's task to delimit these unstable boundaries, to arrest this genre subversion, but rather, to take account of it, to learn to

read it. Germaine Brée identifies three components of "the voyage motif" (88) that are sufficiently general for my purposes: "voyager (or voyagers), itinerary (movement through space), narrator (of whatever kind)" (88). By this definition perhaps too many kinds of texts could qualify as travel writing. I do not find this openness particularly troubling or inappropriate. However, I would add an additional qualification, one more related to the reading process, that seems definitional.

In The Predicament of Culture, James Clifford, an historian and critical theorist of anthropological writing, identifies the "predominant mode of modern field-work authority" (22) to be contained in the assumption "'You are there ... because I was there'" (22) -- the authority of first hand observation. This same assumption has long operated in the travel text (as the first two of my epigraphs attest). We could describe this assumption as a kind of contract between narrator and reader, a promise that the writer actually made the voyage described in the text, and will accurately describe what he or she saw. In other words, the travel text promises, no matter how much it stretches or plays with this promise, a non-fictional discourse. This contract would seem to distinguish travel writing from travel in the novel or in other forms of fiction in much the same way as a similar promise to go beyond the fictive distinguishes autobiography from the bildungsroman. While much of this thesis will attempt to put under suspicion the validity of any such claims to a discourse on the real -- "Tourism can never be more than rhetoric & device" (Davey 90) -- this does nothing to erase the reality of such a narrator-reader contract as the enabling operational principle in the travel text.

By "textual authority" I mean the extent to which a text foregrounds its observations and representations as constructs, the products of particular historical, cultural, and individual interests, perspectives, and conventions of representation, or conversely, presents its observations as the unmediated and natural truth. By this account, the text claims more authority over its referent to the extent that it approaches the latter category. In a related sense, I employ the term in gauging the extent to which a text claims to know and to judge, completely and unproblematically, its referent, or points to the limitations on its knowledge.

In a thought-provoking study, Iconology: Image, Text, Ideology, the critical theorist W.J.T. Mitchell provides a lucid explanation of his own use of "ideology", one which allows the concept's historical contradictions to stand as a fruitful, rather than a disabling, ambiguity:

"Ideology" ... I have used in a deliberately ambiguous sense, to play off what I take to be a kind of doubleness in its historical usage in Marxist criticism. The orthodox view is that ideology is false consciousness, a system of symbolic representations that reflects an historical situation of domination by a particular class, and which serves to conceal the historical character and class bias of that system under guises of naturalness and universality. The other meaning of "ideology" tends to identify it simply with the structure of values and interests that informs any representation of reality; this meaning leaves untouched the question of whether the representation is false or oppressive. In this formulation, there would be no such thing as a position outside ideology; even the most "demystified" critic of ideology would have to admit that he occupies some position of value and interest, and that socialism (for instance) is as much an ideology as capitalism.

I would like to keep both these meanings of ideology in play in this book in order to preserve and perhaps to confront certain values that seem to be entailed by each of them. Simply to work with the neutral account of ideology as a system of beliefs and interests is to forsake the critical force of the notion, its ability to mobilize interpretation, the uncovering of that which is hidden. The notion of ideology as false consciousness involves a salutary skepticism about explicit motives, rationalizations, and claims for various sorts of naturalness, purity, or necessity. The drawback of this notion, on the other hand, is that it can lead the critic of ideology into the illusion that he has no illusions, that he stands outside history, or "for" history as the agent of its inexorable laws. My notion of ideology will attempt to play both sides of this street ... (4).

Mitchell's refusal of an either-or position strikes me as apt. "Ideology" is, in a certain respect, a palimpsest: the older "vulgar" idea of false consciousness masking itself as nature and truth has been written over by the newer meaning of "the structures of values and interests that inform any representation of reality" -- but the older meaning remains and continues to inform one's usage.

I will be concerned to show, for example, how the aestheticization of landscape, and the totalizing representations of peoples, express an ideology. This is to point, in the newer sense, to the structures of values and interests that inform these representations. Furthermore, I do not wish to suggest that such representations are false with respect to some ideally true representation. I would agree that there is no meta-language, no position outside of ideology. I still want to suggest, however (and here the older sense of ideology creeps in), that such representations, in claiming the authority of nature and truth, and yet in being intimately tied to economic and political interests, have played an oppressive and appropriative role.

Over the last number of years a small body of critical writing has collected on the topic of Canadian travel writing. Two essays have attempted something of a broad overview: William Butt's "Canada's Mental Travellers Abroad," and, looking specifically at female writers, Marni Stanley's "Traveller's tales: showing and telling, slamming and questing."

Butt places himself in the role of genre critic à la Northrop Frye, and poses the question: "Does Canadian travel lit. add up to a literary babel merely? Or might it not instead if examined as a single body show some overall shape and coherence?" (290). Butt identifies several aspects of identity across a wide range of travel texts: firstly, the Canada that Canadian travellers leave is portrayed as "unrefined, undistinguished, ignorant, anal-retentive, a peculiarly bland and demonic kind of Henry-James North-American-Innocence" (290); secondly, the Canadian traveller brings "great but naive expectations" to their "newfound lands" (290); thirdly, either (as in a minority of texts) the trip doesn't meet expectations and nothing changes because the traveller remains too close-minded, or (as in the majority of texts) "the baggage of imported stereotypes gets lost at the airports" (291), and the travel writer begins to build "a bridge" (295) between the Canadian and the foreign cultures.

Butt may purport to be identifying the conventions of a Canadian travel genre, but he skips very quickly from text to mind. He achieves little beyond describing, thematically, a series of attitudes expressed in these texts. Butt sees E.M. Forester's "dictum to connect" (295), as a fundamental process in the travel text, and regards travel writing as a "sacred" (305), spiritual, activity: "Leaving a familiar land behind; sudden disruptions in consciousness; isolation, bewilderment, engulfment, disintegration; then reconstitution of self, of soul; new-emergent bonds to that other world and its people, until you're intermingled in something so exalted you'd have to call it sacred . . ." (305). Butt's sanguine, quasi-religious approach has been of little value to me insofar as it fails to address the kinds of questions I wish to pose. He does, however, articulate, and position himself alongside, the same liberal humanist ideology that many travel texts espouse. To this extent he helps one understand what certain travel texts might want to appear to have

achieved -- a kind of perfect understanding, or communion with the cultural Other. If one remains more interested in the gap than the bridge, one can then begin to deconstruct such a claim.

In looking at a broad range of travel books on Canada written by (generally British) women, Marni Stanley has provided a much more generative model for approaching the travel text. Stanley usefully employs the terminology of the narrative theorist Gerard Genette to arrange these texts along a schema from the highly mimetic, to the highly diegetic, and from the ethnocentric to the pluralistic. Stanley groups her texts into four categories she describes as "showing," "telling," "slamming," and "questing." Travel texts characterized by "showing", Genette's term for mimesis, aim for an unmediated representation of reality by disguising all observation as neutral information. In contrast to this, "telling", or diegesis, involves the narrator to a larger extent in the events of the narration -- s/he is both the story teller and a main character in the narration (53-54).

"Slamming" and "questing" are Stanley's own categories bearing no direct relation to Genette's considerations of narrative mood -- to the level of mimesis or diegesis in a given text. Slamming, a category "peculiarly related to travel writing" (55), can include both show-ers and tell-ers, and is meant to account for "the outrageous and frequently appallingly ethnocentric observations that the genre seems to license" (55). "Questing," the privileged term in Stanley's schema, includes those rare texts in which the author manages to transcend the narrow prejudices of his or her own culture. The common characteristics of such text are "intelligent observation and restraint in judgement" (56).

Stanley's application of Gerard Gennette with her first two categories allows one to address the question of the varying positions of authority produced by varying narrative strategies. In this respect she has approached the travel text in a manner somewhat similar to both the critics Edward Said and Mary Louise Pratt. I employ the observations of all three critics in the final section of chapter one. Stanley's criticism, however, remains within a traditionally evaluative mode: highly mimetic texts "tend to deteriorate into guide books" (54), diegetic texts are "bolder, more assertive and ultimately, more interesting" (54). For my part, I will not address such questions concerned with the value and integrity of travel writing as literature. Finally, in keeping with Butt's

approach, Stanley's consideration of ethnocentricity in the travel text is weakened, it appears to me, by a fundamentally liberal humanist outlook whereby "cultural baggage" (56), to use her (and Butt's) metaphor, can and should be left at home by the writer so that s/he can "share a vision" (56) with the people represented, or at the very least, find "a new perspective" (56), that is not simply the dominant perspective of the writer's own culture. While I would not wish to dismiss this possibility, ethnocentricity in travel writing appears to me to be much more problematic than the adoption of any openly sympathetic stance can easily counter. As I will attempt to show, various conventions of representation and totalizing descriptions act, probably unconsciously, as a form of intellectual and aesthetic appropriation that can easily run counter to an avowedly sympathetic portrayal of a given landscape or people.

The representation of landscape in travel and exploration literature has been the subject of a good deal more critical attention, much of which has some bearing on my approach. Critics of Canadian literature have argued for some time now that in describing the Canadian landscape writers have predominantly relied on European, and specifically British, aesthetic values and conventions of representation. As a result, these representations tell us more about the culture that produced them than they do about their putative object. The articles published by I.S. MacLaren on the aesthetics of landscape representation in exploration narratives are exemplary in this respect. These articles are: "David Thompson's Imaginative Mapping of the Canadian Northwest 1784-1812," "Retaining Captivity of the Soul: Responses to nature in the First Franklin Expedition," "The Grandest Tour: The Aesthetics of Landscape in Sir George Black's Explorations of the Eastern Arctic 1833-1837," "Samuel Hearne and the Landscape of Discovery," and "The Aesthetic Map of the North." In a similar vein Lorraine York in "'Sublime Desolation': European Art and Jameson's Perceptions of Canada," argues that Jameson's denigration of, and disappointment in, the Canadian landscape are traceable in part to her "expertise in European art as well as her familiarity with the eighteenth and nineteenth-century traditions of the sublime and picturesque . . ." (43). In The Wacousta Syndrome Gaile McGregor discusses the "conventionalization," and

"domestication," of the Canadian landscape. Susanna Moodie is McGregor's paradigmatic example of the former practice, Catharine Parr Traill of the latter (32-45).

This criticism has played an important role in historicizing vision, or ways of seeing, in demonstrating how the predominance of cultural, historical, aesthetic categories, rather than any direct, unmediated confrontation with a landscape, determines in good part the perception and representation of it. Few critics, however, are willing to explore the wider political-ideological implications of this process whereby a text brings the peripheral landscape within the aesthetic forms and conventions of the centre. What Dennis Cooley has noted in the context of prairie literature, that such critics remain largely committed to the ideal of authentic, uniquely Canadian, representations of the landscape, seems to be the case more generally as well (45). These critics argue that traditional representations rely on imported conventions, in part, to establish their inauthenticity. MacGregor's entire argument about the repression, avoidance, or plain inadequacy of the landscape representations in Canadian writing, as opposed to a healthier American alternative, is clearly premised upon such an authentic ideal. MacLaren also seems to valorize certain representations over others. Thus certain of David Thompson's verbal landscapes display for MacLaren a dialectical synthesis of British and Native ways of seeing that the critic seems to prefer to Hearne's more conventionalized representations (cf. "Thompson" and "Hearne"). York, having firmly established the role of European aesthetics in structuring and informing Anna Jameson's values, then asks if Jameson ever "succeed(s)" (55) in "escap(ing) the paradox of 'sublime desolation'" (55) -- ie. whether she produces any authentic representations of the landscape. To deny the authenticity of centrally informed representations of the landscape has, of course, its own nationalist political agenda, one which privileges local, indigenous, or at least dialectically fused, representations. It is difficult not to be sympathetic with such an agenda. For my part, however, I wish to bracket the thorny question of authenticity and read the representations of landscape not in terms of how near or far they are from the "truth", but for the cultural, political, and economic values and interests necessarily encoded within them.

A few critics have charted, without any discernable reference to an ideally authentic landscape, the variety or development of aesthetic responses to a given landscape or region. In "Sunrise on the Saguenay: Popular Literature and the Sublime," Patricia Vervoort charts the development of aesthetic responses to the Saguenay from texts up to about 1875 that employed the sublime to later texts that began to use a picturesque language (127). Beyond demonstrating this, Vervoort's only point seems to be that between Europe and Canada there was an historic delay in shifting from the sublime to the picturesque (127).

A more informative approach to a similar study has been provided by Richard C. Davis in "Fluid Landscape / Static Land: The Traveller's Vision." Davis charts the development of responses to the arctic beginning with Hearne's journal and closing the temporal framework of his investigation just prior to the First World War. Davis shows how, beyond the influence of aesthetic categories in isolation, the responses to a region will be influenced in good part by the tradition of the discourse that has arisen on that region. Each subsequent travel writer, familiar with the previous texts, is influenced by these texts and attempts, as well, to establish his own fresh perspective. Thus Davis sees a development in these responses to the arctic from what he takes to be Hearne's initially neutral, open-minded response, followed by responses steadily less favourable until the discourse reaches "the most damning of all written responses" (149) with Caspar Whitney's On Snow-Shoes to the Barren Grounds. Whitney's "nearly hysterical response" (150) leaves no room for further elaboration in a pejorative direction. The responses thereafter begin to become more laudatory until they reach a lyrical peak with Ernest Thompson Seton's The Arctic Prairies. Davis's approach is somewhat similar to Edward Said's "textual attitude," a situation in which the previous discourse on a region will dictate the individual writer's response. Like Said as well, while Davis accounts for the formative influence of the discourse on the writer's text, he does not exclude consideration of wider factors such as the writer's individual and historical context. But for all that is valuable in Davis's approach, he remains largely concerned with categorizing a group of travel texts as either positive or negative responses to the arctic -- a rather sparse opposition that falls silent on much that is important.

The strongest demonstration of how historical values and interests structure and inform representation in the travel text is provided by Bruce Greenfield in "The Rhetoric of British and American Narratives of Exploration." Greenfield compares and contrasts the rhetorical strategies of representation in Samuel Hearne's A Journey to the Northern Ocean with the journals of Lewis and Clark. "The rhetoric" of Samuel Hearne's text, Greenfield writes, "depends to a large extent upon Hearne's attempts to deal with the expectations of his employers, backers, and home audience on the one hand, and the specific demands of life and travel in remote regions of eighteenth-century North America on the other" (58). Thus Greenfield reads the representations in these texts as the product of the narrator negotiating the tensions, and contradictions, between his subject position as a writer, and his actual "experience" in the region. Writing as a representative of trading interests, Hearne speaks as a "go-between for radically different European and Amerindian cultures" (64). His text devotes much space to the representation of Native peoples and expresses an ambivalent attitude toward them -- occasionally sympathetic, occasionally condescending -- that reflects this ambivalent position.

Writing at an historically later period, as the representatives of Euro-American expansionism, Lewis and Clark's text cannot mediate the contradictions between the Euro-American and Native cultures. They are mapping out land for settlement, not representing a people to be traded with.

What we find in the Lewis and Clark History instead of resolution is the development of a way of speaking which, rhetorically at least detaches the land from its population and thus skirts the problem. Increasingly, as the narrative progresses, Lewis emerges as a specially equipped observer, who recounts his personal responses to the sublime and beautiful aspects of land conceived as a wild landscape rather than as an inhabited country. (62)

Greenfield's notion of the "real 'contents'" (61) of empirical experience that the travel writer must then "translate" (58) into a secondary content for his audience seems naive. I would agree with the critics of landscape aesthetics discussed above in saying that what is seen as the real is already filtered through translations -- historical, cultural paradigms. For the most part, however, Greenfield concerns himself with sophisticated ideological readings of representations in terms of

the narrator's conflicting subject positions and to this extent I have found his approach to be influential.

In a lengthy initial chapter I examine four colonial texts: A Journey to the Northern Ocean, Winter Studies and Summer Rambles in Canada, Roughing It in the Bush, and The Backwoods of Canada. I begin with Hearne because he so nicely establishes at an early point, the whole relationship between representation in the travel text, and the discourse of empire, the persistence of which in more mystified forms, I continue to see in later texts. I read these early colonial travel texts written by British writers on the colonial frontier as working out of a privileged geographical and cultural centre, and in "the double process of colonialism" (Stallybrass and White 41) working to bring the periphery within the centre, its gaze, conventions of representation, aesthetic categories and at the same time, condemning the periphery as inferior, outside the centre's territorial limits, Other.

I turn in the ensuing two chapters to examine more contemporary travel writing and ask: to what extent do these later texts repeat or subvert (or repeat and subvert in an act of postmodern repetition) the forms, narrative strategies, and ideological presuppositions, of these colonial pretexts? Do the travel texts of post-colonial Canadian writers display a sensitivity to Otherness, a wariness of the whole centre-periphery metaphor, of the inadequacies of language to represent foreign cultures? Or do they glibly and unconsciously repeat the forms and conventions of a discourse of empire? In a chapter that compares Ken Mitchell's Through the Nan Da Gate with selected travel poetry of Earle Birney, I argue that an unproblematic view of language and received forms as adequate to the task of cultural representation, and liberal humanist assumptions about man's underlying identity across all cultures, largely predominate in both writers' texts, although with Birney one can begin to see this come under pressure.

The concluding chapter contrasts Norman Levine's Canada Made Me with Frank Davey's The Abbotsford Guide to India, as two travel texts that employ fundamentally different strategies in dealing with the Other of foreign people and places. I read Levine's text as remaining firmly within the colonial mode. Levine's modernist Weltschmerz repeats the idea of a 'high' centralist

European culture versus the dreary Canadian backwaters, and rehearses the post-colonial centralist stance of disavowing the peripheries. Davey's parody and postmodern deconstruction of the travel genre, on the other hand, attempts to place the earlier ideological assumptions of the travel text under attack.

Conventions of Representation and Textual Authority
in Four Colonial Travel Texts

But cultural identity is inseparable from limits, it is always a boundary phenomenon and its order is always constructed around the figures of its territorial edge.
--Peter Stallybrass and Allon White, The Politics and Poetics of Transgression (200)

This chapter examines textual authority and the conventions of representation in four texts: Samuel Hearne's A Journey From Prince of Wales's Fort in Hudson's Bay to the Northern Ocean, Anna Brownell Jameson's Winter Studies and Summer Rambles in Canada, Susana Moodie's Roughing it in the Bush, and Catharine Parr Traill's The Backwoods of Canada. An exploration narrative, a travel book, and two accounts of pioneer life: in many respects this might appear to be an oddly disparate collection of texts to form the basis of a comparative analysis. Several points of comparison, however, make such a study pertinent. Each text presents itself in part as a non-fictional account of the landscape and peoples, either native or immigrant, of what is now Canada. In this capacity each text presents a narrating 'I' who moves across the Canadian landscape providing descriptions of people, customs, and places. Each text then can be considered broadly as a form of travel writing, although perhaps only Jameson's text constitutes a travel book proper in the more restricted sense of a tourist-narrator's account of her adventures abroad. All of these texts, furthermore, were written in English by a British, or in Jameson's case Anglo-Irish, author for a primarily British readership.¹

To the extent that these texts share an identity, their diversity of theme, intention, genre, authorial gender, as well as historical and geographical location, indicate all the more strongly the pervasiveness and persistence of certain standard forms and conventions of representation throughout a wide variety of cultural production. Since I will argue in later chapters that these same forms persist in much travel writing up to the present, it is important to establish their pervasiveness in a variety of earlier texts. At the same time, however, there are significant differences between these texts and if it is necessary for the purposes of my argument to establish a

comparison among them, it is equally important that I not attempt to eradicate these differences in the search for an overarching identity. While all of these works may be understood broadly as part of a centralist discourse on a colonial frontier, and all were intended either initially or after revision to appeal to a wide readership, within this field each text's discursive position varies significantly from the others. Hearne writes as an employee of the Hudson's Bay Company. His observations are, in the first instance, directed back to his company in the form of a report relating to various of its economic interests in the region, trade, transportation routes, mineral resources and so forth. Moodie and Traill write as recent British colonists whose accounts of pioneer life are often directed specifically to the future British immigrant. Jameson writes as a self-conscious literary tourist and feminist producing a work for the burgeoning market in travel books. These differences in discursive position partly determine both the form and the content of each text's representations, the degree of authority the narrator assumes over his or her subject matter, and concomitantly, the ideological content.

In the first two sections of this chapter I address two areas of broad similarities between these texts: the representation of people and customs, and the representation of landscape. Across all four texts these representations display structural similarities. They rely on European, and specifically British, techniques of representation and tell us more about the culture that produced them than they do about their putative object. They are part of the "boundary phenomenon" referred to by Stallybrass and White in the epigraph to this chapter, the process whereby a culture constructs its identity differentially by demarcating what lies outside its limits, what is Other (Stallybrass and White 200). In the concluding section I consider more closely each text's discursive position and the textual strategies it employs, in an attempt to evaluate the differences between them with respect to how they address the reader, contain the periphery, represent it, speak on its behalf.²

Othering: the Timeless Eternal

The eye defeated the Aborigines.

--Marshall McLuhan and Harley Parker, Through the Vanishing Point (89)

Consider the following excerpts from a lengthy descriptive passage in Samuel Hearne's A Journey to the Northern Ocean:

As to the persons of the Northern Indians, they are in general above the middle size; well-proportioned, strong, and robust, but not corpulent. They do not possess that activity of body, and liveliness of disposition, which are so commonly met with among the other tribes of Indians who inhabit the West coast of Hudson's Bay.

Their complexion is somewhat of the copper cast, inclining rather toward a dingy brown; and their hair, like all the other tribes in India, is black, strong, and straight. Few of the men have any beard; this seldom makes its appearance till they are arrived at middle-age, and then is by no means equal in quantity to what is observed on the faces of the generality of Europeans; the little they have, however, is exceedingly strong and bristly. Some of them take but little pains to eradicate their beards, though it is considered as very unbecoming; and those who do, have no other method than that of pulling it out by the roots between their fingers and the edge of a blunt knife. Neither sex have any hair under their armpits, and very little on any other part of the body, particularly the women; but on the place where nature plants the hair, I never knew them attempt to eradicate it.

Their features are peculiar, and different from any other tribe in those parts; for they have very low foreheads, small eyes, high cheek-bones, roman noses, full cheeks, and in general long broad chins. Though few of either sex are exempt from this national set of features, yet nature seems to be more strict in her observance of it among the females, as they seldom vary so much as the men. Their skins are soft, smooth, and polished; and when they are dressed in clean clothing, they are as free from an offensive smell as any of the human race....

Their dispositions are in general morose and covetous, and they seem to be entirely unacquainted even with the name of gratitude. They are for ever pleading poverty, even among themselves; and when they visit the Factory, there is not one of them who has not a thousand wants....

They differ so much from the rest of mankind, that harsh uncourteous usage seems to agree better with the generality of them, particularly the lower class, than mild treatment; for if the least respect be shown them, it makes them intolerably insolent....

Notwithstanding all those bad qualities, they are the mildest tribe of Indians that trade at any of the company's settlements, and as the greatest part of them are never heated with liquor, are always in their senses, and never proceed to riot, or any violence beyond bad language. (Hearne 197, 198-199, 200)

The passage presents a characteristic example of what we may refer to, following Mary Louise Pratt, as "othering" ("Scratches" 138). This persistent and widespread form of ethnographic representation strives to stabilize and contain the people represented within a limited set of physical features and character traits peculiar to their racial or tribal "nature." The object of description remains at a highly abstracted level, in this case "the Persons of the Northern Indian," that is, any

and all members of this group, whose very definition as a group Hearne creates with a relatively arbitrary north-south division to which he attributes numerous significant racial distinctions. And indeed it is telling that the distinctions Hearne perceives in the character and behaviour of the northern versus the southern Natives correspond very closely to the well worn English stereotypes of the northern and southern Europeans. The violence and licentiousness of the latter always opposes the former's more reserved and reasonable nature.³ Could this dubious paradigm have structured Hearne's observations of the vastly different Native cultures he represents with such confidence and authority?

The people to be "othered" are further homogenized into a collective "they" in an implicit we-they opposition (Pratt "Scratches" 138). All the attributes applied to the Other are derived from or relative to this 'we' of the narrator and his implied audience: "above the middle height," "well proportioned," "very low foreheads," "high cheekbones," "Roman noses," "long broad chins," such rough descriptive standards make sense only in reference to an idealized 'classical body' with which, as Bakhtin argued, an ascendant bourgeois class in Europe sought to identify itself -- the classical body as the embodiment of 'classical' values, reason, truth, and decorum (Stallybrass and White 21-23). Edward Said's comments on the conventions of the western discourse of the 'Orient' are equally true of Hearne's representation of the Northern Indian. "They are always symmetrical to and yet diametrically inferior to, a European equivalent, which is sometimes specified, sometimes not" (71).

This collective 'they' is the subject of verbs in a "timeless eternal" tense, often the simple copula of identity (Said 72). "Their dispositions are in general morose and covetous. . . ." The object of study, already abstracted and homogenized, is thereby essentialized, its actions, its entire being, explained in terms of pregiven, immutable traits that characterize the tribe or race as a whole. This essence is both historical, in that we are to understand it as dating back to the dawn of time, and fundamentally ahistorical, in that it transfixes the being, the object of study, within a set specificity rather than understanding it as a product within the vector of multiple and changing cultural, political, historical forces.⁴ Related to this essentializing process is Hearne's reliance on

vitalism, the doctrine that a tribe or race possesses a peculiar vital principle that determines their overall disposition. "They do not possess that activity of body, and liveliness of disposition, which are so commonly met with among the other tribes of Indians who inhabit the West coast of Hudson's Bay." The reductive normalizing of this kind of representation is one of its chief ideological functions. "(The) task of ideology," Catherine Belsey writes, "is to present the position of the subject as fixed and unchangeable, an element in a given system of differences which is human nature and the world of human experience, and to show possible action as an endless repetition of 'normal' familiar action" (90).

Writing before the advent of a broadly liberal cultural relativism, Hearne provides a particularly straightforward example of how such an essentializing representation can openly justify an imperialist presence. If the Northern Indians are by nature "morose," then this moroseness cannot be attributed to their contact with the European presence in the region; and if they are by nature "covetous," then the trading activities of the Hudson's Bay Company can be seen to simply cater to this innate predisposition to acquire material wealth rather than creating or exacerbating it. The Natives, furthermore, can be justifiably ill treated in the manner that a profitable trade might require because by nature, "(they) differ so much from the rest of mankind, that harsh uncourteous usage seems to agree better with the generality of them, particularly the lower class than mild treatment." (We note also in this passage a common convention of the British traveller's observations: the perception of the peripheral culture in terms of the hierarchical class divisions that structure his own society). This form of totalizing representation, while ostensibly relating the objective truth of a given people's being, always expresses the interests of its representor to some extent, although often, as we shall see, in a more mystified form than in our present example. As with states, so with totalizing ethnographic representations -- they arrest people in order to control them.

Othering is characteristically a monological process. A transcendent speaking subject discourses on a given people and is empowered to construct these people without the reverse being the case. Nor do the represented people comment upon the construction of their own identity by

the observer. The representation, rather, has them standing silent and, as it were, at attention, while under the intense observation of the observing subject, himself unobserved. The only trace of a face to face encounter in such descriptions, as Pratt points out, is that they characteristically begin with "the body as seen/scene" ("Scratches" 139). In keeping with Pratt's observation, Hearne's representation of the Northern Indian commences as a detailed and intensely ocular bodyscape, measuring and contrasting the Indian's features against the implicit "classical body." Unlike the fixed position of the observed object, the gaze of the observing subject moves unrestrictedly from the relatively distanced position from which it comments upon the size and proportion of its specimen, to the intensely close, penetrating focus upon the quantity, texture, and presence or absence, of facial and other body hair. "(F)ew of the men have any beard . . . the little they have, however, is exceedingly strong and bristly . . . Neither sex has any hair under the armpits and very little on any other part of the body, particularly the women . . . Their skins are soft smooth and polished" As theorists like Michel Foucault and Terry Eagleton have argued, the body is the crucial locus upon which power and ideology operate, for power must control the body in the first instance -- or what else could it control? -- and yet at the same time the body represents the most potentially disruptive site against any such dominating forces.⁵ The bodyscape colonizes the other's body, names, positions, measures, and quantifies it, bringing it into the observer's possession and control in much the same way as the landscape portrait does for the surrounding terrain. This authoritative representation of the Indian as static, familiar, in a word, known, produces an unthreatening subject for its British audience, produces even, as Hearne's language in this passage betrays, an object of desire.⁶

As one of the key ideological functions of the early travel text was to produce stable, knowable, subjects for an encroaching empire, such instances of othering characterize each of the texts under discussion in this chapter to some extent.⁷ Such representations need not be, as is Hearne's description of the Northern Indian, predominantly pejorative and condescending. A fully laudatory account of a given people can fulfill the same ideological functions of othering as outlined above provided the representation remains in a similarly monological, timeless, and

totalizing mode. Catharine Parr Traill represents the Natives as fervent converts to Christianity, touching to behold in their pious, childlike, devotion. Traill goes so far as to profess to feeling "reproached" by the Native's "scrupulous observance of the Sabbath," by the fact that they "should alone gather to give glory to God in the wilderness" (136). Unlike Hearne, Traill does not quite represent the Native as a timeless, unchanging identity. Her text, however, places the Native within a meta-narrative of progress toward civilization and religious enlightenment, a benign process of transformation instigated by the colonial presence, that represents an appropriation of their identity at least as authoritative as Hearne's. Traill's representation, furthermore, is scarcely less static than Hearne's; the native by her account has simply shifted from one all encompassing identity to another. The "traits of cunning and war-like ferocity that formerly marked this singular people," Traill assures her reader, "seem to have disappeared beneath the milder influence of Christianity" (60).

To this picture of the Natives as meek Christian subjects Traill adds that the "race is slowly passing away from the face of the earth, or mingling by degrees with the colonists, till, a few centuries hence, even the names of the tribes will scarcely remain to tell that they once existed" (179). An editorial footnote attests to the accuracy of Traill's observation; it cites an alleged North West Company census to the effect that "the whole Indian population of that immense continent did not now exceed 100,000 souls" (179). This instance of editorial bolstering should alert one to the importance of Traill's claim. The idea of a noble but vanishing race provides a key to Traill's representation. It permits her to sentimentalize and idealize the Natives because they are ultimately doomed and therefore ultimately unthreatening to colonial interests.⁸

Edward Said has noted, in the context of the Western discourse on Islam, that the representations of the Other are characterized by a dynamic of over-esteem and under-esteem (150). This dynamic would seem to characterize fairly accurately the representations of the Natives in the texts under discussion here which seem to fall on either side of a binary division between the barbarian and the noble savage.⁹ In Roughing it in the Bush Susanna Moodie addresses the

previous representations of the Natives with the aim of redressing what she perceives as an overly romanticized emphasis upon their attributes.

It was not long before we received visits from the Indians, a people whose beauty, talents, and good qualities have been somewhat overrated, and invested with a poetical interest which they scarcely deserve. Their honesty and love of truth are the finest traits in characters otherwise dark and unlovely. But these are two God-like attributes, and from them spring all that is generous and enobling about them (155).

However, in openly attempting to correct earlier inaccurate representations of the Natives, Moodie remains in a similarly totalizing mode (one identity stands for all members of the race), and she limits herself to the selection of attributes that reinforce the barbarian/noble savage opposition. Moodie's Native, an odd sort of hybrid from both sides of binary, manages at one and the same time to have both "God-like attributes" and yet "characters otherwise dark and unlovely," as though no grey area between or outside these extremes were possible. Moodie's failure to provide any really new or fresh perspective on the Natives, despite her stated intention to do so, demonstrates the determining effect in this context of what Said calls a "textual attitude" -- a situation in which previous representations, previous texts, rather than any supposedly direct and unmediated confrontation with an empirical reality, determine the perception and representation of the referent (Said 93). A situation that strongly favours such a 'textual attitude,' Said argues, is "when a human confronts something relatively unknown and threatening and previously distant" (93). The confrontation with the Natives on the colonial frontier would appear to be a paradigmatic example of such a situation.

Of the texts under examination here Anna Jameson's Winter Studies and Summer Rambles in Canada most consciously attempts to avoid othering the Natives in the manner that we have seen thus far. There is a notable absence in this text of the kind of detailed ocular bodyscape of a normative Indian type followed by a set of timeless, universalized character traits and customs. Beyond merely avoiding such representations Jameson repeatedly draws attention to difference and gradation within the tribes she represents. "There may be a general equality of rank among the Indians; but there is evidently all that inequality of condition which difference of character and

intellect might naturally produce; whole families ragged, meagre, and squalid, and others gay with dress and ornaments, fat and well favoured . . ."10 Jameson will describe in detail the dress of a particular Native but stipulates that this "must suffice in the way of description, for I cannot further particularize dresses; they were very various . . ." (1943 170). When the text does provide generalized descriptions of the Natives' manners and customs, the narrator carefully specifies that these apply only to the tribes she observed and implicitly cautions against extending these observations beyond this limited context. "You will understand that these particulars, and others which may follow apply to the Chippewas and the Ottawas around me; other tribes have other customs. I speak merely of those that were brought under my own immediate observation and attention" (1943 182).

Jameson's text even begins to openly interrogate the hierarchical opposition between civilization and savagery upon which traditional representations and evaluations of the Native have been based.

. . . I wonder if any of the recorded atrocities of Indian warfare or Indian vengeance, or all of them together, ever exceeded Massena's retreat from Portugal, -- and the French call themselves civilized. A war party of Indians, perhaps two or three hundred, (and that is a very large number,) dance their war dance, go out and burn a village, and bring back twenty or thirty scalps. They are savages and heathens. We Europeans fight a battle, leave fifty thousand dead or dying by inches on the field, and a hundred thousand to mourn them, desolate; but we are civilized and Christians. (1965 132)

The emphasis upon "they" and "we" belongs to the text. It foregrounds for ironic effect the binary structure of othering that lies in the opposition of these two pronouns. In the process of othering 'they' will always be constructed as markedly inferior even when, as in Jameson's example, there is considerable transgression between the two terms.

For all this Jameson's text is not innocent; at the very least certain forms, conventions of representation, and assumptions of authority, speak through and undercut an intentionally sympathetic stance.

You can imagine that among a people whose objects in life are few and simple, that society cannot be very brilliant nor conversation very amusing. The taciturnity of the Indians does not arise from any ideas of gravity, decorum or personal dignity, but rather from the dearth of ideas and of subjects of interest The want of all

variety in their lives, of all intellectual amusements, is one cause of their passion for gambling and for ardent spirits. (1943 183)

Here we recognize more readily the familiar aspects of othering, the authoritative claim to know a people, the quality of their life, the nature of their thoughts, the causes for their behaviour, and the readiness once these aspects have been named, to dismiss them as inferior or worthless. Jameson makes her assessment of Indian "society" with a knowledge of the native languages that extends, as she cheerfully admits, to "a few words, (such) as ninni, a man; minno, good; mudjee, bad; mee gwedge, thank you; maja, good-bye" (1943 185). Interestingly Jameson's dismissal of Indian "society" appears to depend in part upon Said's "textual attitude" as outlined above. Jameson cites as an authority for her position Alexander Henry's Travels and Adventures in Canada and the Indian Territories between the Years 1760 and 1776 which mentions, Jameson writes, "the dullness of the long winters" spent amongst the Indians and specifies that "the topics of conversation are few, and are limited to the transactions of the day and the incidents of the chase (1943 183). In an explicit confirmation of the textual attitude Jameson professes to being "amused at every moment by the coincidence between what I see and what I have read" (1943 182). There would appear to be more at work, however, in this happy match of text and referent than an amusing coincidence; the antecedent discourse actively structures Jameson's observations.

Jameson occasionally represents the Natives as a grotesque, carnivalesque spectacle as in the following description of a Pottawattomi warrior.

The dandyism of some of these Pottawattomie warriors is inexpressibly amusing and grotesque; I defy all Regent Street and Bond Street to go beyond them in the exhibition of self-decoration and self-complacency.

One of these exquisites, whom I distinguished as Beau Brummel, was not indeed much indebted to a tailor, seeing he had neither a coat nor anything else that gentlemen are accustomed to wear; but then his face was most artistically painted, the upper half of it being vermilion, with a black circle round one eye, and a white circle round the other; the lower half of a bright green, except the tip of his nose, which was also vermilion.

His leggings of scarlet cloth were embroidered down the sides, and decorated with tufts of hair. The band or garter, which confines the leggings, is always an especial bit of finery; and his were gorgeous, all embroidered with gay beads, with strings and tassels of the liveliest colours hanging down to his ankle. His moccasins were also beautifully worked with porcupine quills; he had armlets and bracelets of silver, and round his head a silver band stuck with tufts of moose-hair, dyed blue and red; and conspicuous above all, the eagle feather in his hair, showing he was a warrior, and had taken a scalp -- i.e., killed his man.

Over his shoulders hung a blanket of scarlet cloth, very long and ample, which he had thrown back a little, so as to display his chest, on which a large outspread hand was painted in white. It is impossible to describe the air of perfect self-complacency with which this youth strutted about. (1943 169-70)

Jameson's foppish and effeminate warrior parallels in certain respects the dandyish English gentleman's obsession with fashion and appearance and thus amusingly transgresses, as well as reaffirms, the boundaries between centre and periphery, high and low, civilized and savage, polite and vulgar. Such transgressions, Peter Stallybrass and Allon White have convincingly argued in The Politics and Poetics of Transgression, "mirror the double process of colonialism" (41). The Other must be transformed into the Same, the savage must be civilized. By metaphorically comparing the Pottawattomie warrior to "Beau Brummel" -- George Bryan Brummel (1778-1840) an English dandy who set the trends in men's fashion for his day and whose name became synonymous with any fop or dandy -- Jameson establishes an underlying identity between the cultivated white man and the savage. But at the same time the Other's mimicry of the cultivated is treated as "grotesque" and excessive, the cause of derisive laughter. "I defy all Regent Street and Bond Street to go beyond them in the exhibition of self-decoration and self-complacency." This derisiveness "consolidat(es) the sense that the civilized is always-already given, the essential and unchanging possession which distinguishes the European citizen from the West Indian and the Zulu as well as from the marmoset and the manteger" (Stallybrass and White 41).

As with Jameson's clownish warrior with his "vermilion" nose, carnival imagery: images of the grotesque, of the body (and the bawdy), of violence, tears, and laughter, pervade the representations of the Other in Hearne's and Moodie's texts (although curiously less so with Traill who seldom abandons her sobre prose voice). Hearne titillates and amuses his reader with the following description of Indian custom.

It has ever been the custom among those people for the men to wrestle for any woman to whom they are attached; and, of course, the strongest party always carries off the prize

The way in which they tear the women and other property from one another, though it has the appearance of the greatest brutality, can scarcely be called fighting. I never knew any of them receive the least hurt in these rencontres; the whole business consists in hauling each other about by the hair of the head; they are seldom known either to strike or kick one another. It is not uncommon for one of them to cut off his hair and to grease his ears, immediately before the contest

begins. This, however, is done privately; and it is sometimes truly laughable, to see one of the parties strutting about with an air of great importance, and calling out, "Where is he? Why does he not come out?" when the other will bolt out with a clean shorn head and greased ears, rush on his antagonist, seize him by the hair, and though perhaps a much weaker man, soon drag him to the ground, while the stronger is not able to lay hold on him. It is very frequent on those occasions for each party to have spies, to watch the other's motions, which puts them more on a footing of equality. For want of hair to pull, they seize each other about the waist, with legs wide extended, and try their strength, by endeavouring to vie who can first throw the other down. (67-68)

The examples of local custom represented as a grotesque or carnivalesque spectacle, could be multiplied to include Hearne's account of wife-swapping (83), the practices of the tribal medicine men (123-127), the numerous accounts of the local diet (especially the Eskimo's, "I have seen them eat whole handfuls of maggots that were produced in meat by fly-bows; and it is their constant custom, when their noses bleed by any accident, to lick their blood into their mouths, and swallow it"; 105), and the Native's profuse weeping upon occasion, referred to by Hearne as a "crying match" (213). The text renders these, respectively, titillating, bizarre, repulsive, and ludicrous. Robert Kroetsch, furthermore, has written on how Susanna Moodie employs the carnivalesque in her representations of the colonial lower class (95-102).

The carnivalesque appears in these texts as the demonized 'low'-Other against which a 'high' imperialist culture attempts to construct itself as the epitome of reason, decorum, spirit and truth. It constructs its identity negatively through a process of exclusion, a drawing of territorial limits: 'No not that . . . and not that.' The Other -- the native, or the colonial 'lower' class -- becomes the object of a gaze constituting itself as respectable and superior by substituting observation for participation, derisive for participatory laughter. "The pure gaze implies a break with the ordinary attitude towards the world; which, given the conditions in which it is performed, is also a social separation" (Pierre Bourdieu, in Stallybrass and White 42). Rather than inverting hierarchies, as Bakhtin somewhat idealistically theorized, the carnivalesque is contained in these texts within a 'high' normative prose discourse, and by being held at arm's length actively maintains and defines the hierarchies of race, class, and power.

The process of exclusion, however, is never unproblematic. As Stallybrass and White have argued a recurrent pattern emerges:

The 'top' attempts to reject and eliminate the 'bottom' for reasons of prestige and status, only to discover, not only that it is frequently dependent on that low-Other (in the classic way that Hegel describes in the master-slave section of the Phenomenology), but also that the top includes that low symbolically, as a primary eroticized constituent of its own fantasy life (5).

The profusion of the grotesque, of excess, of the lower bodily stratum, in Hearne, Jameson, and Moodie's representations of the Other bespeaks an erotic fascination despite the unerring tone of moral and intellectual superiority. The distanced perspective of the observer never remains stable; the frame always threatens to burst and eradicate the viewer's distinctive position on the outside of the picture.

Although the unknown and potentially hostile aboriginal peoples would logically appear to be the most urgently in need of othering in the travel text, the practice extends, as I touched on above, to other groups. With the passage of time, increased settlement, and the development of communities, "Canadian women," to take one example, could be othered in almost as totalizing a fashion as the Indian.

The Canadian women, while they retain the bloom and freshness of youth, are exceedingly pretty; but these charms soon fade, owing, perhaps, to the fierce extremes of their climate, or the withering effect of the dry metallic air of stoves, and their going too early into company and being exposed, while yet children, to the noxious influence of late hours, and the sudden change from heated rooms to the cold, biting, bitter winter blast.

Though small in stature, they are generally well and symmetrically formed, and possess a graceful easy carriage. The early age at which they marry and are introduced into society, takes from them all awkwardness and restraint.

They have excellent practical abilities, which, with a little mental culture, would render them intellectual and charming companions. At present, too many of these truly lovely girls remind one of choice flowers half-buried in weeds. . . .

The high cheek-bones, wide mouth, and turned-up nose of the Saxon race, so common among the lower classes in Britain, are here succeeded in the next generation, by the small oval face, straight nose, and beautifully-cut mouth of the American; while the glowing tint of the Albion rose pales before the withering influence of late hours and stove-heat.

They are naturally a fine people, and possesses capabilities and talents, which, when improved by cultivation, will render them second to no people in the world; and that period is not far distant. (142-143)

While one would be strongly tempted to view the female population of Canada at any time in its history as a heterogeneous collection of people, Susanna Moodie evidently perceived strong overarching principles of physical and metaphysical identity between them. All the basic

conventions of othering are in place in this passage. The single representation, in a massive levelling of difference, stands in for all possible examples of the type. The narrator (arbiter) catalogues the type's physical features and assesses its "practical abilities," shortcomings, intellectual capacity, and tastes, in terms of an implicit European centralist ideal. Like Traill's Indians, Moodie's Canadian women are placed within a meta-narrative of progress, again inseparable from the colonial process, toward higher learning and culture, toward a point when they will no longer "remind one of choice flowers half-buried in weeds." Within this meta-narrative even the physiognomy of the type is improving, evolving away from the "high cheekbones, wide mouth, and turned up nose of the Saxon race, so common among the lower classes in Britain," toward "the small oval face, straight nose, and beautifully cut mouth of the American. . . ." Moodie's observation in this respect fits in neatly with her overall thesis on immigration to Canada: that it is a good idea for the lower classes who are willing to better themselves through hard labour, but essentially unsuited to the higher classes accustomed to the privileges of an hierarchical society. For the former Moodie holds forth in this representation the promise of upward mobility and even a progeny whose physical features will evolve away from its parents' class-physiognomy (if there is such a thing). The narrative voice assumes a benign, paternalistic tone, complimenting the subject (the child) on its progress, mildly chastising it on its shortcomings, and concluding with an optimistic prognosis on its rich potential for further development. This paternalistic tone is a familiar one in the travel text and I will have occasion to return to it in various contexts.

"Monarch-of-all-I-Survey": the Representation of Landscape

The barren landscape stands forth like an illuminated text presenting itself to the scrutiny of a very strong, refortified ego.

--Edward Said, Orientalism (173)

The representation of landscape marks another broad area of similarity or convergence amongst these four texts. In "Conventions of Representation: Where Discourse and Ideology

Meet, "Mary Louis Pratt provides an extremely insightful discussion of both pre-colonial and post-colonial travel writing. "There is much to be gained," Pratt writes,

from an analysis of linguistic representation which decenters the question of truth versus falsehood, fiction versus nonfiction, literary genres versus nonliterary genre, and focuses instead on generalized strategies of representation. . . . I propose . . . to exemplify a kind of stylistic analysis that (a) works across the fiction-nonfiction line and (b) deals simultaneously with aesthetic, social, and ideological dimensions of discourse What I want to illustrate is how landscape descriptions, in some cases, embody aesthetically and ideologically a kind of 'discourse of empire,' while in others the representation is designed to undermine or replace such a discourse. ("Conventions" 144-45)

The conventions of representation Pratt isolates, and the ideological connotations she draws from them, can be usefully applied to the descriptions of landscape in the texts examined here.

The majority of landscape representations Pratt analyses belong to the class she terms the "monarch-of-all-I-survey" scene ("Conventions" 145). In this traditional seer-seen relationship the narrator is situated on some elevated height of land and describes the panorama that unfolds beneath him or her providing simultaneously a verbal and visual 'picture in words'. As Pratt points out, this is a commonplace device of European Romanticism, poetry and prose alike. Pratt identifies a minimum of three conventions belonging to this class of representation. In the first place the scene is aestheticized. The narrator constructs it as a realist painting or photograph ordering it in terms of the background, middleground, foreground, and the spatial relations between the various component parts. Some kind of aesthetic judgement either follows upon, or is strongly implied by this authorial arrangement of the scene. Secondly, a density of meaning is sought in the passage -- what Kenneth Hughes refers to as the "materialization of space" (158). The narrator represents the landscape as extremely rich in material and semantic substance. The text constructs this density of meaning through the use of a large number of nouns, adjectival modifiers, and other determiners. Thirdly, a relation of dominance is predicated in such descriptions of seer over seen. The metaphor of the painting most clearly expresses this relationship. The viewer represents the scene in its intricate relation to his own unique perspective; he is both its creator and critic.

Pratt points to the ideology encoded in several examples of the "monarch-of-all-I-survey" scene. This will vary significantly according to individual context. Largely, however, in both colonial and post-colonial texts, this descriptive category remains within a binary system of appropriation or rejection encoded, respectively, as aesthetic praise or condemnation. Anna Jameson exemplifies perfectly the expression of delight through the desire to appropriate when she writes of Mackinaw Island that she "should have dearly liked to filch (it) from the Americans, and carry (it) home to you in my dressing-box, or, perdie, in my tooth-pick case . . ." (1943 195). A narrator's delight or disappointment in a given landscape will be expressed as a purely aesthetic one, but this aesthetic response nonetheless encodes a particular social meaning, an ideology. The meaning attributed to the landscape in our second convention, is the narrator's construct, this meaning is constructed by and for him or her. Through this imposition of meaning, as through aestheticization, the narrator expresses his or her interests in the landscape and by extension the interests of those peoples and institutions for whom s/he speaks. Finally, the metaphor of the painting implies the power both to own and to judge the scene.

With respect to the first two conventions at least, as Pratt points out, the terms can be completely reversed without disrupting the system, while remaining homeostatic ("Conventions" 149). One can, that is, express a revulsion for the landscape and attribute only a sparsity of meaning to it, while remaining within the same set of ideological presuppositions. This point is homologous to the one made earlier on the ideological similarity of idealized and demonized representations of people.

In his essay "Samuel Hearne & The Landscapes of Discovery," I.S. MacLaren argues that in his descriptions of nature and geography Hearne's "awareness is generally controlled by modes perceiving nature which he shared with his age" -- namely, the sublime and the picturesque ("Hearne" 28). MacLaren, correctly I believe, does not concern himself with whether or not Hearne might have read the aesthetic theories of Edmund Burke, William Gilpin, or others (no doubt he did not) but simply contends that these taxonomies of landscape description "had become entrenched in the British understanding in Hearne's lifetime" (28) and that the traveller or explorer

employed them "whether he knew he was doing so or not" ("Hearne" 28). MacLaren suggests, however, that the deployment of such taxonomies is relatively innocent.

. . . this habit permitted Hearne to describe foreign natural scenes in terms of or in contrast to landscape familiar to him and his readers. This process of identification of nature bears an affinity with the purpose of astronomical measurement: just as the determination of longitude and latitude told the traveller/explorer where he was in relation to Greenwich, so the habitual description of terrain by means of the Sublime and the Picturesque told him and his readers where he was relative to the landscapes roundabout Greenwich and the rest of England and Scotland. As the aesthetics of landscape appreciation had grown up with the science of cartography in the second half of the eighteenth century, Hearne's habitual identification of terrain in terms of these two eighteenth century modes of perceiving and describing nature demonstrates nothing more, in a sense, than his affinity with his age. ("Hearne" 28)

MacLaren's explanation of Hearne's "habit" of aestheticization is acceptable enough so far as it goes. The ideological implications of aestheticization, however, extend far beyond a degree of harmless orientational relativism, a kind of measuring of one place in relation to, or in terms of, another. Indeed, MacLaren's analogy of astronomical measurement does not appropriately describe the process of aestheticization. To aestheticize is not simply to describe a distant place in relation to a more familiar locale but often to transform or express the desire to transform that place into the very likeness of the familiar locale. I wish also to reverse MacLaren's emphasis in his contention that this process represents "nothing more in a sense than (Hearne's) affinity with his age." It does indeed demonstrate this, but in my approach this point becomes of central rather than peripheral importance; it further demonstrates the affinity of Hearne's text with the broad-based processes of imperialist expansionism that were at this time mapping and defining the peripheries of the world.

In A Journey to the Northern Ocean perhaps the most perfectly rendered example of a picturesque landscape, as well as being a text book case of Pratt's monarch-of-all-I-survey scene, is Hearne's description of his spring encampment in March 1770 at the southern end of Shethanei Lake (Manitoba) (MacLaren "Hearne" 34).

The situation of our tent at this time was truly pleasant, particularly for a spring residence; being on a small elevated point, which commanded an extensive prospect over a large lake, the shores of which abounded with wood of different kinds, such as pine, larch, birch, and poplar; and in many places was beautifully contrasted

with a variety of high hills, that shewed their snowy summits above the tallest woods. About two hundred yards from the tent was a fall, or rapid, which the swiftness of the current prevents from freezing in the coldest winters. At the bottom of this fall, which empties itself into the above lake, was a fine sheet of open water near a mile in length, and at least half a mile in breadth; by the margin of which we had our fishing nets set, all in open view from the tent. (14)

Hearne commences the aestheticization process by characterizing the scene he is about to describe as "truly pleasant," thus determining for the reader the appropriate aesthetic response to adopt toward the representation -- delight. Hearne then organizes his scene in terms of a realist painting with snow-topped hills rising above the trees in the background, the expansive lake in the middleground, and in the foreground off to one side, the "fall or rapid." Variety and contrast, key elements of the picturesque according to William Gilpin, its first and perhaps most influential theorist, characterize the scene.¹¹ The trees of variegated species are "beautifully contrasted with a variety of high hills", and the turbulent vertical falls contrast with the partially frozen, horizontal lake. With this variety of surfaces and objects one envisions a concomitant variety of light, shade, and colour. This terrain, far more than the others Hearne traverses on his journeys, more closely approximates the idealized English landscape of picturesque travel literature and the popular pastoral imagination; this approximation accounts in part for the high aesthetic value Hearne places upon the scene.

Inseparable from aestheticization is Pratt's second convention whereby the narrator imposes a density of (his or her) meaning on the referent. By naming a large number of material referents, "a lake," "trees . . . pine, larch, birch, and poplar," "hills," "summits," "a fall or rapid," "fishing nets," and adjectival modifiers, "large," "abounded," "high," "fine," Hearne constructs a scene rich in material and semantic substance, constructs an object worthy of possession.

In concurrence with Pratt's third convention of the monarch-of-all-I-survey scene, the representation establishes a relationship of dominance of seer over seen predicated in part upon the speaker's position on "a small point which commanded an extensive prospect." The choice of the word "commanded" with its militaristic trace, nicely foregrounds this relationship of dominance. On the one hand this advantageous perspective simply follows one of the first rules of picturesque landscape composition. In sketching a landscape, Gilpin states, "your first consideration is to get

it in the best point of view. A few paces to the right or left make a great difference" (63). The fixity, distance, and height of Hearne's perspective, however, imply a good deal more than the adherence to a compositional precept. Joseph Addison, the first British aesthetic theorist, described the delight in the vast panorama in terms that connected it with the ego's desire for power over its environment. "The Mind of Man naturally hates everything that looks like a restraint upon it, and is apt to fancy itself under a sort of Confinement, when the Sight is penned up in Compass, and shortened on every side by the Neighborhood of Wall or Mountains" (qtd. in Hipple 17).

Perspective in both visual and verbal representations, as Marshall McLuhan and Harley Parker have shown, is a culturally and historically produced form of representation, one inseparably connected to the rise of the autonomous bourgeois individual and a predominantly visual culture.

Perspective itself is a mode of perception which in its very nature moves toward specialism and [subject-object] fragmentation. It insists on the single point of view (at least in its classical phase) and involves us automatically in a single space. Inasmuch as three dimensional space is a concomitant of one dimension in time, we find [subject-object] fragmentation developing in both space and time, and in both poetry and painting. Because of the insistence on single times and single spaces, the possibility of "self-expression" arises. (12)

McLuhan and Parker help us to understand the semiotics of Hearne's fixed perspective, that in this originating gesture alone his representation is already implicated as an ideological construct. To diectically order a landscape in its detailed relations to the fixed perspective of the single viewer ("two hundred yards from the tent was a fall"), almost as a manifestation of his own ego ("the hills showed their snowy summits"), would be completely foreign to a medieval European and much more so to a Native, to those who communally inhabit a landscape rather than gazing upon it as an object of curiosity or desire.¹²

The metaphor of the verbal description as painting has been fully realized in Hearne's encampment scene. Hearne neatly frames his landscape within a single paragraph enhancing, as MacLaren notes, its picture-like effect ("Hearne" 35). In the following passage Pratt considers the ideological implications of the painting metaphor. (For my context I have simply replaced Pratt's references to the British explorer Sir Richard Burton with Samuel Hearne).

If the scene is a painting then [Hearne] is both the viewer-critic there to appreciate it, and the verbal painter who produces it for us. The scene, in other words, is produced by and for [Hearne]. From the painting analogy it also follows that what [Hearne] sees is all there is, and that the landscape was intended to be seen from precisely where [Hearne] emerged upon it. Thus the whole scene is diectically ordered with reference to his vantage point. The viewer-painting relation also implies that [Hearne] has the power if not to own then at least to judge this scene. ("Conventions" 147)

As the artist-producer Hearne constructs a scene of pentitude that expresses his desire if not to appropriate the scene, at least to dwell and repose within it. Upon his guide's recommendation that they await the completion of the spring thaw before continuing their journey, Hearne's expedition resides for several weeks in this location. The narrating 'I' shifts temporarily from scientific explorer and Hudson's Bay Company employee, to tourist and sportsman as Hearne traps game, catches up on his journal, and generally appears to rest and enjoy himself (MacLaren "Hearne" 35). The important thing to note, however, is that Hearne's desire for the land expresses itself only indirectly as a purely aesthetic appreciation of a beautiful scene. As Pratt stresses, however, in any instance of the monarch-of-all-I-survey representation, "the conventional aestheticization of the landscape simultaneously articulates a particular social meaning, an ideology" ("Conventions" 147).

This form of landscape representation is homologous to the intense 'bodyscape' in the representations of people examined earlier. In both cases the speaker's gaze roams unrestrictedly and intricately over the object, in this case aided by its heightened perspective, and in both cases the aim is a totalizing representation. The verbal landscape attributes a single aesthetic value to a scene; the bodyscape attributes a single racial nature to a given people. Each is a monological representation in which the unquestioned 'natural' standards of measurement and evaluation derive from, and are relative to, the speaker and his or her culture.

Having examined in some detail the conventions of the monarch-of-all-I-survey scene we must note that such verbal portraits are not common in Hearne's text. This can be attributed in part to the dearth of attractions in the arctic for what William Gilpin termed "the picturesque eye" (23). Those terrains that cannot be rendered in terms of the dominant British aesthetic categories may be

either hastily dismissed or ignored, or may even go unnoticed. Hearne's description of "Grizzled Bear Hill" is a telling instance of a conflicting landscape aesthetic between himself and the Natives.

The place where we lay that night, is not far from Grizzled Bear Hill; which takes its name from the number of those animals that are frequently known to resort thither for the purpose of bringing forth their young in a cave that is found there. The wonderful descriptions which the Copper Indians gave of this place exciting the curiosity of several of my companions as well as myself, we went to view it; but on our arrival at it found little worth remarking about it, being no more than a high lump of earth, of loamy quality, of which kind there are several others in the same neighborhood all standing in the middle of a large marsh, which makes them resemble so many islands in a lake. The sides of these hills are quite perpendicular; and the height of the Grizzled Bear Hill, which is the largest, is about twenty feet above the level ground that surrounds it. Their summits are covered with a thick sod of moss and long grass, which in some places project over the edge; and as the sides are constantly mouldering away, and washing down with every shower of rain during the short Summer, they must in time be levelled with the marsh in which they are situated. (89-90)

Hearne, the text suggests, would not have described this scene at all had he not been led by the Copper Indians "wonderful descriptions" to expect a truly magnificent sight. Thus the passage provides us not only with an example of a conflicting landscape aesthetic, but with the representation of a scene that might normally have been omitted from description. Hearne's distaste for the scene speaks at least as much for his aesthetic presuppositions and their ideological dimension as does his glowing portrait of the spring encampment.

As in our earlier passage Hearne commences his description by placing an overall aesthetic value on the scene, in this case he finds "little worth remarking about." As in the spring encampment scene as well, however, he nonetheless goes on to describe it in some detail. The scene is not particularly amenable to a pleasing realist portrait and is the antithesis of the picturesque. In the first place Hearne's perspective is now reversed: he looks up toward the "high lump of earth", a considerably more restricted view. "The Mind of [western] Man" to recall Addison, "naturally hates everything that looks like a restraint upon it" Hearne mentions nothing in the foreground besides an unspecified expanse of the "large marsh", suggesting perhaps that the relatively close proximity of the hills to the shore foreshortens the foreground. Presumably the hills block out the background as well, confining the scene to a blunt middleground. There is little variety, contrast, or uniqueness in the scene; the island-mounds, Hearne informs us, are all

relatively similar so that one description stands for all. "Grizzled Bear Hill," the largest, "is about twenty feet above the ground that surrounds it," and therefore the hills are far too small to achieve the proportions of the sublime. The sides of the mounds appear to violate Hearne's sense of aesthetic decorum by being "quite perpendicular" rather than more gently sloping. The sides of the hills, furthermore, "are constantly mouldering away, and washing down with every shower," effectively discluding the hills as symbols of fortitude and transcendence, as indeed does the "thick sod of moss and long grass" on their summits compared to the pristine "snowy summits" of the spring encampment. The hills are time bound, as Hearne sees it, and therefore unworthy of aesthetic status within a culture that seeks to privilege the eternal and transcendent.

The text represents the scene at best as something of a loathsome oddity. Hearne gives no explanation for the high esteem in which the Natives hold "Grizzled Bear Hill," perhaps a spiritual significance based upon its contiguous relationship to the grizzly bear. Hearne seems to intend his negation of the scene's aesthetic value as a purely visual spectacle to act as a sobering corrective to the Natives' exaggerated and inexplicable praise for it. The representation acts simultaneously to negate the Natives' local cultural authority. Unlike the spring encampment, "Grizzled Bear Hill" holds nothing of value for Hearne in any of his multiple subject positions as Hudson's Bay Employee, Explorer, or picturesque sightseer. The dismissal of the scene's aesthetic value encodes its dismissal as an object worthy of possession by Hearne and those for whom he speaks. In both the descriptions of Shethanei Lake and Grizzled Bear Hill a binary system of appropriation/rejection, encoded as aesthetic praise or condemnation, structures Hearne's discourse -- "a kind of discourse of empire" (Pratt "Conventions" 145).

I.S. MacLaren has argued that the large part of the arctic that Hearne cannot render in terms of the picturesque he renders in terms of the sublime, as a terrifyingly "boundless or endless nothingness" ("Hearne" 29). Certainly the "general privations . . . Vacuity, Darkness, Solitude, and Silence," that Edmund Burke listed as aspects of sublime terror are not infrequently emphasized in Hearne's representation of the barren lands (Burke qtd. in Hipple 90). It is perhaps more noteworthy, however, that Hearne's text most frequently rejects verbal landscape portraiture

of both the sublime and picturesque variety in favour of a cataloging or inventory-taking of the land's general topography as in his account, here, of the Copper Mine River and its adjacent lands:

Besides the stunted pines already mentioned, there are some tufts of dwarf willows; plenty of Wishacumpuckey, (as the English call it, and which they use as tea); some jackasheypuck, which the natives use as tobacco; and a few cranberry and heathberry bushes; but not the least appearance of any fruit.

The woods grow gradually thinner and smaller as you approach the sea; and the last little tuft of pines that I saw is about thirty miles from the mouth of the river, so that we meet with nothing between that spot and the sea-side but barren hills and marshes.

The general course of the river is about North by East; but in some places it is very crooked, and its breadth varies from twenty yards to four or five hundred. The banks are in general a solid rock, both sides of which correspond so exactly with each other, as to leave no doubt that the channel of the river has been caused by some terrible convulsion of nature; and the stream is supplied by a variety of little rivulets, that rush down the sides of the hills, occasioned chiefly by the melting of the snow. (107)

We do not readily find this form of landscape representation in Jameson and Moodie's texts although Traill's preoccupation with naming (flora, fauna, birds) approaches it. This inventory taking results from the text's deliberately scientific stance, what Edward Said describes as a text's "intentional category" (157), whereby it suppresses the perspective of the narrator's individual ego, or 'I', in favour of the 'neutral and objective facts'. This form of representation is less a visual picture than a placing, naming, measuring, and quantifying in the abstract of what is out there and where to find it. If the metaphor for our previously examined form of representation was the painting, the metaphor here is the map. Like the painting, however, the map is produced by and for Hearne and those for whom he speaks; their interests dictate both the form and content of the observations within it.

One of the express purposes of Hearne's voyage, although largely a specious one as Richard Glover argues¹³, was to chart the route to the mouth of the Copper Mine River and determine the viability of extracting and transporting back, the reputedly free and abundant copper to be found there. The description of the terrain in the vicinity of the mouth of the Copper Mine River, then, appears to be directed toward assessing the possibility of sustaining any form of prolonged settlement during which such an enterprise could take place, a possibility Hearne easily negates by noting the absence of food and wood in the vicinity. I will explore further the question

of "intentional categories," and discursive positions, and the manner in which they partly determine the form, content, and authority of a text's representations in the concluding section of this chapter.

In The Backwoods of Canada, Roughing it in the Bush, and Winter Studies and Summer Rambles in Canada, we see the persistence of certain conventions of representation isolated in Hearne's text: the aestheticization of the landscape according to dominant British aesthetic categories, the narrator as critic and creator of the scene before her, and the encoding of particular interests and ideologies as purely aesthetic judgements. In addition, these later texts frequently represent the landscape as being in need of transformation, a transformation usually justified in terms of improving the scene's aesthetic value. To imagine how a scene might be corrected in order to improve its aesthetic quality was identified by William Gilpin as a "great amusement" (49) of picturesque travel. "We examine what would amend the composition; how little is wanting to reduce it to the rules of our art; how trifling a circumstance sometimes forms the limit between beauty and deformity" (49). In the colonial context, however, the ideological implications of "amend(ing) the composition . . . to reduce it to the rules of our art" are relatively straightforward.

This tendency to represent the landscape as being in need of transformation is particularly marked in The Backwoods of Canada. In the following passage Traill describes the country around Amherst, Ontario:

The outline of the country reminded me of the hilly part of Gloucestershire; you want, however, the charm with which civilization has so eminently adorned that fine county, with all its romantic villages, flourishing towns, cultivated farms and extensive downs, so thickly covered with flocks and herds. Here the bald forest of oak, beech, maple, and bass-wood, with now and then a grove of dark pine, cover the hills, only enlivened by an occasional settlement with its log-house and zig-zag fences of split timber: these fences are very offensive to my eye. I look in vain for the rich hedge-rows of my native country. Even the stone fences in the north and west of England, cold and bare as they are, are less unsightly. The settlers, however, invariably adopt whatever plan saves time, labour, and money. The great law of expediency is strictly observed; -- it is born of necessity. Matters of taste appear to be little regarded, or are, at all events, after considerations. (55)

By establishing, metaphorically, an underlying 'natural' identity between the peripheral landscape around Amherst, and the "fine county" of Gloucestershire within the privileged British centre, Traill establishes the scene's rich potential. The centralist travel writer frequently employs this

trope to bestow aesthetic value upon a particular scene. In praising the Grand River at Brantford, Ontario, "this noble stream," Jameson writes, "I was involuntarily reminded of the Thames near Richmond; the scenery has the same character of tranquil and luxuriant beauty" (1943 75). The identity Traill refers to, however, has yet to be fully realized, there is work to be done. "Nature here has done all, and man but little . . ." (29). The scene cannot achieve its full picturesque potential without a balanced intermingling of nature and civilization, that is to say, without more of the colonial presence.¹⁴

In a similar vein Jameson comments that she "can hardly imagine a more beautiful or more fortunate position for a new city than this of Chatham" (1943 131). Jameson catalogues the district's numerous natural endowments and concludes:

A rich soil, abundant pasture, no rent, no taxes -- what here is wanting but more intelligence and a better employment of capital to prevent the people from sinking into brutified laziness, and stimulate to something like mental activity and improvement? The profuse gifts of nature are here running to waste, while hundreds and thousands in the old country are trampling over each other in the eager, hungry conflict for daily food. (1943 133-132)

Except with Jameson, the necessity to transform the landscape becomes a moral, as opposed to a strictly aesthetic, imperative: feeding a hungry colonial motherland. The divergence in motivation might well lie in the difference between writing as a tourist seeing the land in terms of what it might produce for the centre, and writing as a colonist settling upon the land.

If Hearne's landscape aesthetic seemed to imply a 'take-it-or-leave-it' attitude, the attitude in these later texts seems often to be 'take-it-but-improve-it.' The difference can be related to the differences in both historical context and the regions described between these works. These later texts were produced at a time and place -- the early to mid-nineteenth century in largely Upper Canada -- when the transformation of the land by the colonists was well under way. In the case of The Backwoods and Roughing It the texts were produced by writers themselves actively involved in the transformational process. The providential mission of the colonists, as Moodie saw it, was to "reclaim the waste places of the earth, and make them subservient to the wants and happiness of

its creatures" (xvii). The representations of landscape in these texts consequently record the possibility, often expressed as the necessity, for such a transformation.

As a narrator Traill occupies (at least) two conflicting discursive positions within her text: the nature lover who catalogues flora and fauna and renders scenes of picturesque beauty for her reader, and the colonist-farmer whose mode of production entails the leveling of large portions of the natural environment.¹⁵ As we have seen, Traill partially resolves this conflict by privileging as aesthetically superior a comingling of nature and settlement that more closely approximates the rural English landscape. But when the narrator must partake in razing acres of forest for farm land, this conflict becomes particularly acute. Once again, the text finds its resolution on the aesthetic level.

I was disappointed in the forest trees, having pictured to myself hoary giants almost primeval with the country itself, as greatly exceeding in majesty of form the trees of my native isles, as the vast lakes and mighty rivers of Canada exceed the locks and streams of Britain.

There is a want of picturesque beauty in the woods. The young growth of timber alone has any pretension to elegance of form, unless I except the hemlocks, which are extremely light and graceful, and of a lovely refreshing tint of green. Even when winter has stripped the forest it is still beautiful and verdant. The young beeches too are pretty enough, but you miss that fantastic bowery shade that is so delightful in our parks and woodlands at home.

There is no appearance of venerable antiquity in the Canadian woods. There are no ancient spreading oaks that might be called the patriarchs of the forest. A premature decay seems to be their doom. They are uprooted by the storm, and sink in their first maturity, to give place to a new generation that is ready to fill their places.

The pines are certainly the finest trees. In point of size there are none to surpass them. They tower above all the others, forming a dark line that may be distinguished for many miles. The pines being so much loftier than the other trees are soon uprooted, as they receive the full and unbroken force of the wind in their tops; thus it is that the ground is continually strewn with the decaying trunks of huge pines. They also seem more liable to inward decay, and blasting from lightning and fire. Dead pines are more frequently met with than any other tree.
(96)

The descriptive language encodes the conflict between the narrator's two discursive positions as she alternately praises the woods' beauty -- "(even) when winter has stripped the forest it is still beautiful and verdant" -- and condemns them as inferior both to her expectations, and to the woods in Britain. The conflict resolves itself with the narrator as nature lover making way for the narrator

as colonist-farmer (destroyer of nature) through the expression of disappointment in the woods as a visual spectacle.

On the connotative level the representation justifies the imminent destruction of forest land in three ways.¹⁶ In the first place, the Canadian woods are represented as aesthetically inferior to British woods. They are lacking in both "majesty of form," and "elegance of form." Their destruction will represent no great loss to the picturesque eye. Secondly, the trees are physically inferior; they are not meant to stand for any length of time. "A premature decay seems to be their doom."¹⁷ Traill's representation of the woods bears an affinity in this respect to her representation of the Natives as discussed above; both are shown to be subject to a process of 'natural' extinction that ultimately serves to exonerate the colonists from blame for merely speeding this process along somewhat.

Lastly, and as a direct consequence of their physical deficiency, the woods are represented as being without any significant history. "There is no appearance of venerable antiquity in the Canadian woods." To represent the peripheral landscape as being without history, as a tabula rasa, is a dominant topos in the discourse of empire. Jameson similarly bemoans the absence of history in the Canadian landscape. "In Canada the traveller can enjoy little of the interest derived from association, either historical or poetical" (1943 75). To predicate the absence of history on the territorial edges of empire serves both to excuse the colonial presence, by claiming that nothing significant was there before 'we' arrived, and to justify its actions by claiming that 'we' must begin to make things happen there. While this attitude informs much of the descriptive language in these travel texts it is, perhaps, never more directly stated than when Traill writes. "Canada is the land of hope; here everything is new; everything is going forward" (210 my emphasis).

Much has been made of Traill's resilience, optimism, and pragmatic ability to adapt to the frontier.¹⁸ With respect to the aesthetics of landscape, however, Traill's eye would appear to be somewhat less adaptable. In the closing letter of The Backwoods, which strives to maintain an optimistic tone, Traill will only go so far as to say that "the eye becomes familiarized even with the objects the most displeasing, till they cease to be observed" (250), suggesting more a progressive

numbing of the senses than a shift in aesthetic sensibility. What is more, she directly follows this statement by looking forward, yet again, to a fundamentally transformed (anglocized) landscape.

Some centuries hence how different will this spot appear! I can picture it to my imagination with fertile fields and groves of trees planted by the hand of taste; -- all will be different, our present rude dwellings will have given place to others of a more elegant style of architecture; and comfort and grace will rule the scene which is now a forest wild. (250-51)

In Roughing It in the Bush the representations of landscape, as Gaile McGregor has noted, are infrequent. "To a great extent, if we judge by her books, Mrs. Moodie avoided looking too hard or too often at nature in the broader sense at all" (37). In large part, to anticipate the concluding section of this chapter, this absence can be attributed to the text's highly diegetic quality, to its concentration on inward emotional experience and narrative anecdote as opposed to outward mimetic description.¹⁹ However, "(the) few panoramic views confronted in Roughing It in the Bush" (McGregor 37), largely confined to the journey up the St. Lawrence River in the opening two chapters, are highly conventionalized representations.

As the sun rose above the horizon, all these matter-of-fact circumstances were gradually forgotten and merged in the surpassing grandeur of the scene that rose majestically before me. The previous day had been dark and stormy, and a heavy fog had concealed the mountain chain, which forms the stupendous background to this sublime view, entirely from our sight. As the clouds rolled away from their grey, bald brows, and cast into denser shadow the forest belt that girdled them round, they loomed out like mighty giants -- Titans of the earth, in all their rugged and awful beauty -- a thrill of wonder and delight pervaded my mind. The spectacle floated dimly on my sight -- my eyes were blinded with tears -- blinded by the excess of beauty. I turned to the right and to the left, I looked up and down the glorious river; never had I beheld so many striking objects blended into one mighty whole! Nature had lavished all her noblest features in producing that enchanting scene. (22-23)

The peculiar mixture of terror, awe, and delight of the Burkean sublime is the aesthetic category within which the narrator constructs this representation. The gloom of the "previous day," "dark and stormy" with a "heavy fog," sets the scene. Obscurity and darkness, according to Edmund Burke, are in themselves sublime, inducing the terror of the unknown. "To make anything very terrible, obscurity seems in general to be necessary. When we know the full extent of any danger, when we can accustom our eyes to it, a great deal of the apprehension vanishes" (Burke 52). Light, too, can be sublime especially "such a light as that of the sun, immediately exerted on the

eye, as it overpowers the sense. . ." (Burke 70). Moodie's representation, then, moves from suspenseful darkness to revelational clarity as the "clouds (roll) away from (the mountain's) grey, bald brows," startling the viewer's eye with their sudden appearance. The forest belt around the mountains "cast into denser shadow" by the shifting clouds, create a chiaroscuro effect, a dramatic contrast of darkness and light. The immense size of the mountains, and the power that they signify to the viewer, are further conventional characteristics of the sublime in Moodie's scene (Burke 57, 63). The narrator compares the mountains to "mighty giants -- Titans of the earth, in all their rugged and awful beauty," constructing them as objects of terror and immense strength. "Besides those things which directly suggest the idea of danger, and those which produce a similar effect from a mechanical cause," Burke writes, "I know of nothing sublime which is not some modification of power" (57). The power most frequently signified in the sublime representation of landscape is one that emanates from a metaphysical point of origin, in Moodie's case, from God.

As with the representations of landscape discussed thus far, Moodie constructs her representation within a set of established conventions that "naturalize" the scene for her readership.²⁰ Moodie may declare that the panorama at Grosse Isle "was a scene unlike any I had ever beheld, and to which Britain contains no parallel" (23), but the contemporary British reader would nonetheless feel very much at home with both the way in which the scene is constructed and the aesthetic and emotional responses attributed to it. The metaphor of the painting structures and informs Moodie's representation as it did in our previous examples. The sublime scene at Grosse Isle continues on at some length with the narrator ordering the scene according to her unique perspective complete with explicit references to the picture's "front," "middle space," and "background," a catalogue of the numerous and varied objects within the viewer's frame (ships, houses, churches, people, trees), and references to how certain of these objects add to the aesthetic effect of the "whole" (23). Again the scene is created by and for the viewer, she is both its creator and judge.

The relationship between seer and seen in the Burkean sublime is a twofold movement. On the one hand, the sublime initially appears to reverse the domination of seer over seen that characterizes the monarch-of-all-I-survey category. The confrontation with the sublime landscape occasions the viewer to reflect upon her or his minuteness and impotence in the face of God's power. "But whilst we contemplate so vast an object, under the arm, as it were of almighty power, and invested upon every side with omnipresence, we shrink into the minuteness of our own nature, and are, in a manner, annihilated before him" (Burke 61). Moodie expresses this sense of self-annihilation in terms of a temporary, Wordsworthian fusing of subject and object. "The spectacle floated dimly on my sight -- my eyes were blinded with tears -- blinded by the excess of beauty."

In contemplating the sublime, however, the self moves from this initial sense of impotence to self-glorification as it participates in the power and glory of the spectacle before it. Burke defines the sublime as "tranquility tinged with terror" (114) (out and out fear for one's life does not qualify), and this distance permits of a vicarious identification with the scene's imminent power.

Now, whatever, either upon good or upon bad ground, tends to raise a man in his own opinion, produces a sort of swelling and triumph, that is extremely grateful to the human mind, and this swelling is never more perceived, nor operates with more force, than when without danger we are conversant with terrible objects; the mind always claiming to itself some part of the dignity and importance of the things which it contemplates. (Burke 46)

Thus the individual's delight in the sublime Burke attributes in large part to his or her "ambition" (45), or we might say, substituting a more Nietzschean language, his or her will to power. Confronted with "wonderful combinations of beauty, grandeur, and power, at every winding" (28) of the St. Lawrence River, Moodie expresses precisely this sense of the self partaking of these qualities. "How the mind expands with the sublimity of this spectacle, and soars upward in gratitude and adoration to the Author of all being, to thank him for having made this lower world so wonderously fair . . ." (28 my emphasis). The mind gives benediction, yet infinitely "expands" and "soars upward" to do so, placing itself almost on a level with God.

If, as Terry Eagleton has recently argued in The Ideology of the Aesthetic, there is an ideological dimension peculiar to the Burkean sublime, it lies in this representation of, and identification with, power (53-56). Eagleton, while recognizing the potentially revolutionary force of the aesthetic as a realm of freedom and critique, associates the rise of the dominant theoretical discourse on aesthetics from the eighteenth century onward, to the "middle class's struggle for political hegemony" (Ideology 3). Working out of Antonio Gramsci's classic notion of bourgeois hegemony Eagleton writes: "(the) ultimate binding force of the bourgeois social order, in contrast to the coercive apparatus of absolutism, will be habits, pieties, sentiments, and affection. And this is equivalent to saying that power in such an order has become aestheticized" (Ideology 20). A privileged aesthetic realm is constructed to mediate and resolve the contradictions (in a manner somehow natural, transcendent, and beyond analysis) between the particular and the universal, the laws of the heart and the laws of reason, the body and the state. "Structures of power must become structures of feeling; and the aesthetic is a vital mediation in this shift from property to propriety" (Ideology 43). Eagleton stresses an homology between the bourgeois subject and the autotelic work of art as theorized in formalist aesthetics. "Like the work of art as defined by the discourse of aesthetics, the bourgeois subject is autonomous and self determining, acknowledges no merely extrinsic law but instead, in some mysterious fashion, gives the law to itself" (Ideology 23).

The distinction, however, between the various other aesthetic categories (most notably, the beautiful), and the sublime, Eagleton relates to the distinction between the state's indirect, internalized force, and its direct unmasked force -- the distinction Gramsci makes between 'hegemony' and 'domino', or Louis Althusser makes between the 'ideological state apparatuses,' and 'repressive state apparatuses' (Ideology 54-55). "As a kind of terror, the sublime crushes us into admiring submission; it thus resembles a coercive rather than a consensual power" (Ideology 54). The sublime's phallic representation of raw power encodes, in a suitably diffused aestheticized manner, the repressive power of the state, to render the subject into submission should its hegemonic forces fail to do so. In support of Eagleton's argument Burke does explicitly

associate sublime terror with the repressive power of the state. "The power which arises from institutions in Kings and commanders, has the same connexion with terror. Sovereigns are frequently addressed with the title of dread majesty" (Burke 59).

In the context of Moodie's representation, then, it may not be too much to suggest that the sublime, referring on the denotative level to the power of God, encodes on the connotative level the immense power of the imperialist presence within the landscape; God and imperialism being in any event virtually synonymous to a patriotic nineteenth century British colonist. Recalling Moodie's notion of the colonist's providential mission, "to reclaim the waste places of the earth, and make them subservient to the wants and happiness of its creatures" (xviii), the power that inheres in the sublime landscape can be read as synonymous with the imperial power that will achieve this end. Even if one rejects this argument and is unwilling to concede that the sublime landscape refers to anything more than an immense natural power, the imperialist discourse, in claiming the landscape as a territorial possession, claims that power unto itself.

A passage in Winter Studies and Summer Rambles more directly inscribes onto the sublime landscape the omnipresence of imperial power. Jameson is travelling down Lake Huron by canoe with a party of voyageurs. Setting the mood for the ensuing scene, at an evening's encampment two fallen pines accidentally catch fire creating a "wildly magnificent" blaze.

The waves, the trees and bushes and fantastic rocks, and the figures and faces of the men, caught the brilliant light as it flashed upon them with a fitful glare -- the rest being lost in deepest shadow. Wildly magnificent it was! beyond all expression beautiful, and awful too! the night, the solitude, the dark weltering waters, the blaze which put out the mild stars which just before had looked down upon us in their tender radiance! -- I never beheld such a scene. (1965 142)

The stasis and comfort of the normal order collapse as the blaze erases the "tender radiance" of the stars and throws the scene into a chaotic intermingling of opposites ("brilliant light"/"deepest shadow") that is both "beyond all expression beautiful, and awful too." Some momentous event has been portended.

The following morning, as her party sets off down the lake, Jameson, again employing the sublime, describes a strangely forboding, yet ominously beautiful, dawn.

The burning trees were still smouldering; daylight was just creeping up the sky, and some few stars yet out, when we bestirred ourselves, and in a very few minutes we were again afloat; we were now steering towards the south-east, where the great Manitoolin Island was dimly discerned. There was a deep slumbrous calm all around, as if Nature had not yet awoke from her night's rest; then the atmosphere began to kindle with gradual light; it grew brighter and brighter; towards the east, the lake and sky were intermingling in radiance; and then, just there, where they seemed flowing and glowing together like a bath of fire, we saw what seemed to us the huge black hull of a vessel, with masts and spars rising against the sky -- but we knew not what to think or to believe! As we kept on rowing in that direction, it grew more distinct, but lessened in size; it proved to be a great heavy-built schooner, painted black, which was going up the lake against the wind and current. One man was standing in her bows, with an immense oar, which he slowly pulled, walking backwards and forwards; but vain seemed all his toil, for still the vessel lay like a black log, and moved not; we rowed up to the side, and hailed him -- "What news?"

And the answer was that William the Fourth was dead, and that Queen Victoria reigned in his place! We sat silent looking at each other, and even in that very moment the orb of the sun rose out of the lake, and poured its beams full in our dazzled eyes. (1965 142-143)

The chaos of the previous evening's fire behind them, the scene moves from the smouldering ashes (a funeral pier for the king and his régime?), through the calm of the awakening dawn, pregnant with a kind of Wordsworthian presence of Being, to the ghostly black ship bringing news of the King's death and the Queen's succession. Simultaneously with this news, the scene culminates in the brilliant dawn of day and the new era. We might, adapting the classic convention of representation identified by John Ruskin as the pathetic fallacy, refer to this as the 'imperialist fallacy': the idea that nature responds sympathetically to the deaths and successions of kings and queens in every corner of the empire. Jameson's text, however, gives no indication that it self-consciously holds this description to be a fallacy, a kind of poetic conceit, but presents it, like its descriptions of Native customs, national politics, and the numerous other discourses that traverse the travel text, as non-fictional (re)-presentation. In a nearly explicit equation of the aesthetic and the political Jameson professes to feeling sublimely awed by the pervasiveness and reach of imperial power. "The idea that even here, in this new world of woods and waters, amid these remote wilds, to her (Queen Victoria) so utterly unknown, her power reaches and her sovereignty is acknowledged, filled me with compassionate awe" (1965 143).²¹

Discursive Positions:

I have argued at some length for the aspects of underlying identity in the four texts under discussion here, in terms of the repetition of certain forms that produce totalizing and authoritative representations of people and places. Each of these texts works out of the notion of a privileged geographical and cultural centre, and in the "double process of colonialism" (Stallybrass and White 41) outlined above, each brings the periphery within the centre, its gaze, rules of observation, aesthetic categories, and condemns the periphery as inferior, outside the centre's territorial limits, Other. But to avoid reducing these texts to an overarching sameness or unity, in a process similar to the one I have criticized, I conclude with some consideration of the discursive positions and narrative strategies that produce the real differences between them, and consider as well, the ideological implications these entail.

The critics Edward Said, Mary Louise Pratt, and, in a specifically Canadian context, Marni Stanley, have each adopted somewhat similar, or at least complementary, approaches to the examination of the relationship between narrative strategies and authority in the travel text. While these critics employ varying terms they seem commonly to recognize a continuum of discursive positions (what Said refers to as 'intentional categories'), from texts aiming for the scientific ideal of an egoless purely objective representation to texts aiming for the Romantic counter ideal of a highly individualistic, idiosyncratic representation. The continuum ranges between what Pratt refers to as the "informational" (scientific) travel text, to the "experiential" (impressionistic) travel text, or what Stanley refers to, employing Gerard Genette's terminology, as travel texts characterized by "showing" (mimesis), or "telling" (diegesis) (Said 57-59, Pratt "Scratches" 144, 151-152, Stanley 52-56). Each critic considers the ideological implications of these various positions (which is the most, or the least, authoritative, totalizing, ethnocentric?) and concludes that the question remains highly problematic, that no strategy is innocent. (Although Stanley, as noted in the introduction, remains the most sanguine about the possibility of a text transcending the limitations of its writer's culture).

These discursive positions, both Said and Pratt emphasize, are interrelated; no category ever contains a 'pure' representative type. The scientific and impressionistic discourses are likely to co-exist, however unevenly, in any given text (Said 58, Pratt "Scratches" 158). Keeping this important proviso in mind, A Journey to the Northern Ocean would appear to belong predominantly to the scientific-informational category. Pratt best summarizes the project of these texts:

... to produce what they themselves referred to as "information." Their task, in other words, was to incorporate a series of interlocking information orders -- aesthetic, geographic, mineralogical, botanical, agricultural, economic, ecological, ethnographic, and so on. To the extent that it strives to efface itself, the invisible eye/I strives to make those informational orders natural, to find them there uncommanded, rather than assert them as products/producers of European knowledge or disciplines. In turn, those knowledges are the products/producers of a project they likewise presuppose and seldom bespeak. It is a project whereby to use Daniel Defert's terms, Europe "takes consciousness of itself . . . as a planetary process rather than as a region of the world." ("Scratches" 120)

Such texts are characterized by a monological narrating 'I' that strives to remain unified, neutral, and self-effacing. The narrator, rather than constructing his or herself as an idiosyncratic character within the narrative, remains relatively absent, a disembodied, transcendental voice, for such idiosyncrasies would act only to undercut the authority such texts implicitly seek (Stanley 53-54).

While Hearne may not succeed very well in achieving this objective scientific goal, we recognize it as the implicit ideal in his text. The infamous account of the Eskimo slaughter, to take one example of a narrated event, represents both the collapse of the narration into a personal, confessional mode as Hearne expresses his indignation and horror at this act performed by the Natives on his expedition, and struggles to establish his own innocence in the affair, and an almost equally horrifying triumph of scientific detachment, as when advancing with his party to the Eskimo encampment, he continues to observe the course of the Copper Mine River and to assess its navigability (Hearne 97). Beyond the ideal of self-effacement, another convention that clearly ties Hearne's text in with a scientific-informational discourse is his concern with refuting earlier accounts of the region and establishing the superior accuracy of his own observations. Hearne, for example, takes issue with the inaccuracies of previous descriptions of the beaver and, in a lengthy

footnote at the end of his narrative, vigorously refutes numerous claims of a "Mr. Jeremie," a former governor at York Fort, and a previous explorer in the region (Hearne 149-150, 193-195).

We have already noted Hearne's monological, abstract, and categorizing representations of people and topography. Significantly, Hearne devotes the final two chapters of his text, after the completion of the narrative, to an ethnography of the Northern Indian, and a zoological and botanical discussion of the animals and plants in the northern region. In these chapters the narrator has free reign to discourse at lengthy detail, as a scientist-expert on the region without the disruptions of narrative. Pratt notes that a separate chapter on ethnography was characteristic of much nineteenth century exploration writing, and that the practice "textually splits off indigenous inhabitants from habitat Indigenous peoples are relocated in separate manners-and-customs chapters as if in textual homelands or reservations, where they are pulled out of time to be preserved, contained, studied, admired, detested, pitied, mourned" ("Scratches" 145-146). Similarly, Said considers the European observer's ability to disrupt the ordinary narrative course of human life, and to piece together masses of information in lengthy passages of texts, to be one of his chief sources of power over his object of study, and the main way he achieves scholarly credibility and legitimacy (163). The narrator in the scientific-informational text, the "land scanning, self-effacing producer of information," represents, or speaks for, the state by measuring, charting, stabilizing, and generally taking inventory of the frontier in advance of conquest (Pratt "Scratches" 152). The theoretically detached and objective position of the state vis a vis its subjects, is homologous to the objectivity and detachment sought by the narrator in these texts.

Contrasting sharply with Hearne's discursive position are the highly personal, even sentimental, narrative voices in Winter Studies and Summer Rambles, and Roughing It. In these highly diegetic texts at least as great an emphasis is placed upon the narration as upon the representation. The narrating 'I' creates a persona for the narrated 'I', who functions as a character within the story. Because the narrator is more present as a character in these texts, she is more "responsible for the statements made and conclusions drawn" (Stanley 54). The observations of

such a narrator are more likely to appear to be the perspective of a fallible individual than the unmediated 'truth'. As opposed to the unified, authoritative, speaking subject sought by the informational text, the narrative voice in these texts is split simply by virtue of the speaker being both narrator and protagonist, and tends to split even further.

The speaker in the experiential text may display an awareness of its relative subject position, an awareness of itself seeing and being seen. Jameson is our strongest example. As an Irish woman Jameson occasionally foregrounds her doubly marginalized and dominated subject position. After ironically comparing and contrasting the 'barbaric' Native warrior to the 'civilized' European soldier she concludes: "one scalps his enemy, the other rips him open with a sabre; one smashes his brains with a tomahawk, and the other blows him to atoms with a cannonball -- and to me, femininely speaking, there is not a needle's point of difference between the one and the other" (1965 132-133 my emphasis). At another point Jameson compares the poverty of the North American Natives to the poverty in Ireland and concludes: "the most miserable of these Indians would spurn the destiny of an Irish poor-slave -- for he is at least lord over himself" (1943 232). Jameson's less totalizing account of the Natives must be understood in part as a consequence of her awareness at first hand of the power of marginalizing forces.²²

Moodie and Jameson's texts permit of a greater dialogic in the Bakhtinian sense than do either Hearne or Traill. They occasionally "represent the Other's voice in dialogue with the voices of the self and often tender the Other some credibility and equality" (Pratt "Scratches" 151). John Thurston has commented upon the dialogic in Roughing It, on how the narrator's 'high' discourse comes under attack by a barrage of colonial voices. The text attempts to contain and condemn these voices as 'low'-Other, but it cannot deny them access and they work to disrupt and undermine the hierarchies the text seeks to maintain (Thurston 200-01). While Jameson lacks Moodie's ear for local dialect, her text as well is not infrequently given up to other voices, as when she quotes at several pages length from a petition by the Hurons to Sir John Colborne protesting that their land not be seized for colonial settlement. At the end of the cited passage Jameson rhetorically demands if "there is not much reason as well as eloquence in this appeal" (1965 110).

If we can associate the distanced, unified speaker of Hearne's text with the state, then the more familiar, sentimental voice of Moodie and Jameson's experiential texts must "be associated with that critical sector of the bourgeois world, the private sphere, home of the solitary, introspecting Individual" (Pratt "Scratches" 152). But while these texts appear in some respects to be less authoritative and closed than their scientific counterparts, it is difficult to privilege them as somehow less ideologically implicated in the European expansionist project.

Though positioned at the centre rather than on the periphery, and though composed of a whole body rather than just an eye, this European too is passive and incapable of intervention. This voice too is innocent, though its innocence lies not in its self-effacement but in its isolation and vulnerability. In short, European expansionism is as mystified in this literature as in the informational kind. (Pratt "Scratches" 152)

The experiential text, furthermore, seeks a peculiar authority, a truth of its own, in writing the periphery with an impressionistic, individualistic, voice. Jameson illustrates this goal when -- in the only passage relating to methodological approach in any of these texts -- she writes:

. . . I know no better way of coming at the truth, than by observing and recording faithfully the impressions made by objects and characters on my own mind -- or, rather, the impress they receive from my own mind -- shadowed by the clouds which pass over its horizon, taking each tincture of its varying mood -- until they emerge into light, to be corrected, or at least modified, by observation and comparison. Neither do I know any better way than this of conveying to the mind of another the truth, and nothing but the truth, if not the whole truth. (17)

Here, echoing the oath of the court, Jameson invokes the authority of the eye/I witness. But as Volishinov has argued, "individualistic subjectivism," like its detached, objective counterpart, is in many respects a false position (Volishinov 281-299). The word is irredeemably social, as we have seen in examining the representations in these texts in which a discourse of empire structures and informs the supposedly 'private' aesthetic and emotional utterance.

Both the informational and experiential travel text play a role in naturalizing and containing the frontier for its readership. If the informational text provides the illusion of relaying the unmediated facts on the periphery, the experiential text gives the reader the sense of experiencing it at first hand. The two discourses complement even as they challenge and demystify each other. The detached objective account acts as a prophylactic against the more chaotic impressions at the experiential level, just as the more confessional mode counters this scientism with a necessarily

human, fallible dimension. As liberal political theory would have it, the state and the individual are mutually dependent and act out each other's common interests.²³

Textual Authority in Canadian Travel Poetry:

Ken Mitchell and Earle Birney

The dream: to know a foreign (alien) language and yet not to understand it: to perceive the difference in it without that difference ever being recuperated by the superficial sociality of discourse, communication or vulgarity; to know, positively refracted in a new language, the impossibilities of our own; to learn the systematics of the inconceivable; to undo our own "reality" under the effect of other formulations, other syntaxes; to discover certain unsuspected positions of the subject in utterance, to displace the subject's topology; in a word, to descend into the untranslatable, to experience its shock without ever muffling it, until everything Occidental in us totters and the rights of the "father tongue" vacillate -- that tongue which comes to us from our fathers and which makes us, in our turn, fathers and proprietors of a culture which, precisely, history transforms into "nature."

--Roland Barthes Empire of Signs (6)

and defecar on dose goddam guidebook.

--Earle Birney, "Sinaloa" (35)

In examining the travel poetry of Earle Birney and Ken Mitchell in light of such questions as I raised in the previous chapter, of the centre versus the margin, textual authority, and conventions of representation, one must begin by taking account of the position these texts assume by virtue of being constructed and presented as poetry. From structuralism and semiotics we have learned that genres, by virtue of convention (and interdiction), specify certain rules of "production, consumption, topic, medium, manner and occasion" (Hodge and Kress 6). With respect to "topic," certain contents will be excluded, by convention, from modern poetry. The most notable exclusion for our context is the pictorial representation of landscape. While Mitchell and Birney's travel poems certainly refer to the landscape, they do not engage in the kind of detailed verbal portraiture examined in the previous chapter. Romantic landscape poetry had its day, of course, but were Birney and Mitchell to attempt such representations (without irony or parody) their texts would appear dated and quaint. (In contemporary prose narratives, however, verbal landscape portraiture still occurs frequently. I analyse these representations in their contemporary manifestations in the final chapter).

With respect to "consumption," a reader's expectations, as well as the conventions of reading he or she employs, will differ radically between, say, the travel poem and the scientific ethnographic text, or even the homodiegetic prose narratives we have discussed thus far. We can safely classify Mitchell and Birney's travel poems as being, in Pratt's terminology, "experiential," as opposed to "informational" texts. By virtue of a very basic, almost definitional convention, poetry, whether lyric or narrative, makes less of an attempt than other forms of discourse to efface its speaker's perspectives, desires, and emotional vicissitudes, makes less of an attempt, that is, to produce detached and scientific "information." (As I will argue, however, certain poems attempt to produce more objective and detached representations than others). With respect, finally, to "production," poetry is, perhaps, the most overdetermined form of writing, the discourse that most obviously foregrounds its status as a written, artistic construct. Given both poetry's experiential and overdetermined qualities, travel poetry might be seen as the form of cultural representation that makes the least claims to the authority of truth. Yet despite (or because of) these qualities, poetry has traditionally assumed a more intuitive and immediate grasp of truth, and of a truth somehow more essential than that achieved by an rationalist discourse. As Terry Eagleton points out, such assumptions played a central role in establishing the validity of English literary studies within the universities (Literary Theory 44, and ch. 2 passim). Certain travel poems continue within this tradition in making strong, universal truth claims.

It would appear, then, that one cannot arrive at any ready conclusions as to the textual authority of travel poetry as poetry. One must look, rather, to the construction of the individual text as defined by difference within the system of conventions of the larger discourse of the genre. Proceeding along these lines we can perceive within travel poetry a range of positions on the representation of a foreign culture, or Other, in language. The positions assumed by Ken Mitchell and Earle Birney's travel poetry range from texts that exhibit glib, unreflective assumptions about descriptive language and received forms as adequate to the task of cultural representation, to texts that begin to problematize and undercut the authority of their representations and to question their own presuppositions.

A collection of loosely interconnected travel poems with accompanying photographs, Ken Mitchell's Through The Nan Da Gate seeks to represent, in "the heightened language of poetic narrative" (7), Mitchell's impressions of China garnered during a year of teaching English in Nanjing. The introduction briefly touches on the problem of cultural representation:

The Chinese have made an observation about Western visitors to their country. It goes something like this: "If they stay a week, they write a book about China. If they stay a month, they write an article. If they stay a year, they don't attempt anything so foolish. (7)

By presenting this paradox the text bows to the Otherness of its referent, to the problematic nature of the attempt to bring "the paradoxical world we call China" (7), within the sphere of western understanding. But the reader can easily relate this saying to a curiously similar English maxim: 'the more one learns the less one understands.' The similarity between the two maxims undercuts the passage's denotative utterance connoting, rather, the universal nature of all folk wisdom.

The text gives voice to the represented in this introductory passage, allows for the Chinese view on the fact of being represented. It seems, then, to promise the beginning of a dialog. This, however, never develops in the subsequent, largely monological, text. The introductory clause "(it) goes something like this" undercuts the status of even this rare instance of dialog by lending a low modality to the ensuing statement. The concept of modality as taken from linguistics and semiotics signifies the status, authority, and reliability, of a message, its ontological status, its value as truth or fact (Hodge and Kress 124). The study of modality is not concerned with the relation between a linguistic message and some actual truth outside the text, but simply with the degree to which such a message presents itself as truth or fact.

All utterances are modalized to some extent insofar as they will indicate how they are to be received. Numerous aspects of language act as modality markers: verb tense, mood, punctuation, even the syntactical arrangement of the sentence. As Hodge and Kress note, the present indicative assumes a relatively high modality. "It indicates proximity in time, and hence verifiability . . . [and] can therefore function as a signifier of a signified of a different kind of proximity, that is social proximity and hence of high affinity, 'truth', 'factuality' 'reality'" (126). Hypothetical

forms or "modal auxiliaries", 'if', 'then', 'would', are "indicators of ontological distance, uncertainty, tentativeness" (126). Similarly, the statement, "it goes something like this," lends a dubious status to what follows as though the text were indicating that this is not exactly how it goes, that the statement has been modified to suit the purposes of the introduction. To allow only a low modality for the statement belonging to the represented while the narrator in all of the poems employs the present indicative, signifies control by the representor over the represented. The introduction, furthermore, attributes the maxim not to any particular subject but to "the Chinese," a monolithic Other, as though all had made such an observation or, alternatively, as if it had sprung subjectless from the bosom of the country. This seemingly small gesture indicates the text's collusion with a well worn Western stereotype: the China of the wise little Confucius-like saying.¹

The introduction aims as well at creating a pleasant, humorous irony. Mitchell did, in fact, reside in China for one year and therefore his book, according to the Chinese, is a foolish endeavor: having been adequately exposed to the enormity of China's Otherness he should, the maxim suggests, know better than to produce a book on the subject. The irony participates in the convention of self-effacement typical of the introductions to scholarly works whereby the text accedes to the impossibility of doing justice to a subject prior to attempting to do it justice in any event. The convention, however, is not typical of the introductions to literary works and its inclusion here, in a collection of poetry, signifies the text's desire to be understood not so much as a fictional discourse, but as a discourse on the real. The very concept of doing justice to a subject implies some ideal of truth that with enough information garnered, and the proper methodology chosen, one could theoretically achieve. The difference between a fictive discourse and a discourse on the real is, of course, a difference in the degree of authority a text claims for itself.

In Figures of Literary Discourse Genette distinguishes between mimetic and diegetic utterances in a manner that (though somewhat confusingly at variance with his other definition of these terms) proves useful in gauging levels of textual authority. Mimetic utterances by this definition pertain only to the fictive universe within the text while diegetic utterances refer to the extra-textual historical world outside of it (128-137). As Len Hatfield writes:

Mimetic utterances have little authority in the historical world. So, for example, in this volume [Yeats' wild Swans at Coole] we discount the extra-textual authority of Beggar Billy Byrne's comment 'It's certain my luck is broken,' because its reference is to the world within his poem, 'Under the Round Tower.' The diegetic level of authority, on the other hand, shows up in textual features that seem most clearly to refer to the world outside of the text, the historical realm of the author himself. While we may still not fully credit all the claims in such parts of the text -- particularly the diegetic explanations -- we do ascribe to them a different kind of authority than we grant to the fictional persona (14-15)

Through the Nan Da Gate contains a preponderance of such diegetic utterances from an introduction more reminiscent of an ethnographic text than a collection of poetry, to the citation of historical events, names of political figures, and even statistics: "[of] every hundred primary students/ one goes on to high school./ One in ten thousand makes/ university" (23).

The introduction then is equivocal. It broaches the problematic of cultural representation but gives little consideration to how such questions might effect form and presentation. "When I returned home in 1981," the introduction continues, ". . . I was asked a barrage of questions on the 'truth' about China. China cannot be easily explained, and knowing that, I put together a collection of visual images -- slides -- that would allow people to form their own impressions" (7). While the text concedes the difficulty of explaining the "truth" about China it appears to retain this time honoured quest as its implicit goal. The work includes photographs, conceived as non-coercive transparent signs, to bring presence to the reader, to allow him to see China for himself and arrive at his own truth. (We shall see, however, that the photographs do coerce the reader, causing him to choose only certain signifieds from amongst a multiplicity of signifiers). In addition to explaining the inclusion of photographs the introduction refers, somewhat obliquely, to its use of "the heightened language of poetic narrative" (7). By characterizing its language in this fashion the text would seem to ascribe to the traditional view of the essentializing power of poetry, to its ability to capture a truth that eludes other discourses.

"Faces of China," a striking two page photograph, precedes "Face," the first poem in the collection (see appendix I). In the photograph three elder Chinese men stare out at the viewer from behind what appears to be a lunch or coffee counter. The half face that spills off the left edge of the frame seems bemused although the viewer cannot see enough of the face to read the expression

with any confidence, a condition that signifies, perhaps, the reader's more general inability to read the signs of this locality. The face next on the right wears a tight frown (of disapproval?); shadows darken the left side of this face lending it an enigmatic quality similar to the divided one on the left. The man's positioning signifies power. His body faces the viewer squarely, arms crossed in front of him; his chin tilts slightly upward so that the eyes stare downward at the viewer; the frown emphasizes a strong rigid jaw-bone. The face on the far right is softer, less imposing, yet more searching. The subject leans downward and forward, his chin resting on one hand, in a gesture that to the western viewer signifies (à la Rodin) thoughtfulness.

The dominant figure of chiasmus, the reversal of the conventional observer/observed relationship, accounts for much of the text's disruptive effect. Three faces: bemused, stern, and inquisitive, each invested with the authority of age, take in the viewer, unsettle him with the variation of their responses to him whom they look out at. The signified of the second order connotative system one assumes is precisely this unease (note the small blurred fist in the foreground), the unease of the outsider, the non-participant in the codes of this culture.

In a strategy often repeated in the collection the visual image closely relates to the ensuing poem to the extent that we can, adapting some observations by Barthes, speak of photo and poem as the iconic and linguistic aspects of a single text ("Rhetoric" 25-26).

Face

"Welcome to Foreign Experts"
the Nanjing billboards say
to put new workers at ease,
Chinese welcome no mere etiquette
but a fundamental principle:
acquisition of Face.

If you understand Face
you may comprehend
the middle Kingdom.
Reputation. Power. Humility.
Dignity.

The Foreign Expert -- Zhuan Jia --
acquires Face by harrowing experience.
He tolerates close scrutiny
wherever he goes -- restaurants,

buses, sidewalks, especially
public toilets. Mobs gather
when he pauses in the street.

"Hello," a voice says.

"Hi. How are you?"

"I am fine. Are you Canadian?"

A hand extends
from a curtain of blue arms.

"Will you be my friend?"

Within weeks the Expert
pretends to be German.

Face demands
that he keep traffic moving.

Vice Chairman Deng Xiaoping
is reigning champion of Face.

The Little Foreign Expert,
Andrew, is three years old
and weird as a unicorn.
Rambling in Shanghai's parks
he becomes a prime attraction,
endangered from overpetting,
prize trophy in the camera-
crazy proletarian paradise.
Twenty years ago these Shanghai
workers were Red Guards
Screaming for imperialist blood --
The Little Foreign Expert's blood.

Face is everything
lost or won
in a single gesture
a thoughtful gift
a careless lie. (12-13)

The linguistic text "Face" relates to the preceding iconic text "Faces of China" in that while the former discourses on the unease of confronting a foreign culture the latter signifies unease visually. The texts serve a reciprocal and coercive anchoring function upon each other. Taken together they emphasize certain signifieds in each text and eliminate others.

I might have read "Faces of China" in a different fashion than in my previous analysis, perhaps as the varied reactions of three men whose dinner is unaccountably late, or as an argument across a table of which the viewer can only see one side. The small fist in the foreground could then be interpreted as banging against the table to add rhetorical force to a point being made by its owner. The ensuing verbal text, however, dictates that the visual text should be read in the context

of an alien's confrontation with a foreign culture. The linguistic text characterizes the confrontation as a "harrowing experience" and as embodying the historical tension latent in the fact that "twenty years ago these Shanghai/ workers were Red Guards/ screaming for imperialist blood -- The little foreign expert's blood." Going back to the photograph one reads it in terms of this confrontation seeing ambiguity, tension and derision in the various facial expressions directed toward you, the viewer, as you assume the place of the alien. The linguistic text eradicates the other possible readings of the iconic text.

The anchoring of the visual text by the linguistic text, as Barthes notes, ultimately serves an ideological purpose:

the text directs the reader among the various signifieds of the image, causes him to avoid some and to accept others; through an often subtle dispatching, it teleguides him toward a meaning selected in advance. In all these cases of anchoring, language obviously has a function of elucidation, but such elucidation is selective; it is a matter of a metalanguage applied not to the whole of the iconic message but only to certain of its signs; the text is really the creator's (and hence the society's) right of inspection of the image: anchoring is a means of control, it bears a responsibility, confronting the projective power of the figures, as to the use of the message; in relation to the freedom of the image's signifieds, the text has a repressive value, and we can see that a society's ideology and morality are principally invested on this level. ("Rhetoric" 29)

Reciprocally, the iconic text lends presence to the linguistic text, the authority of an having-been-there (Barthes "Rhetoric" 33), the myth of an un-coded copy of reality. The faces in the iconic text capture, as the rhetoric would have it, the essence of "Face," the enigmatic concept on which the linguistic text verbalizes. Thus even though the poem employs a highly denotative syntax (and more on this shortly), it refers any meaning that might escape its "regime of representation" (Easthope 46), back to the supporting visual image. This produces a kind of redundancy through an over insistence on signification that Barthes has termed, in a slightly different context, "the prattle of meaning" (S/Z 78-79). Many of the collection's subsequent photographs and ensuing poems are paired in a similar fashion.

The poem "Contradictions" lists some of the "billion contradictions" (16) the narrator perceives in the Chinese landscape. "The Royal Ming statues stand/ in vast fields of cabbage,/ their feet buried in mounds of human excrement" (16). (An image George Bataille would have had

much to say about). The photographs preceding the poem present two such juxtapositions: an "old teahouse and new apartment" (14), and a "traditional harvest scene" (15) in which "electric winds blow the chaff" (16). Again the iconic and the linguistic texts aim at reproducing one another. In all such instances the iconic and linguistic texts provide a classic example of what Derrida calls "supplementarity": "the compensation through proliferation on the part of the signifier for a signified which can never be made fully present" (Silverman 37).

As is characteristic of the entire collection, "Face" offers little resistance to the unimpeded linear reading more often associated with the plain prose discourse than the over-determined discourse of poetry. A respect for the completion of the syntactic unit largely dictates the division of line. With the exception of the second stanza that employs, for emphasis, a period after each of the four qualities of Face, the text does not use punctuation in any disruptive manner. The normative subject-verb-object order remains intact, and the text consists for the most part of grammatically complete sentences. The stanzas divide, much like prose paragraphs, by the completion of a particular idea. The very accessible style signifies a certain confidence, or high modality, in "standard English" as a descriptive system adequate to the task of cultural representation.

Elaborating from traditional linguistic usage, Hodge and Kress employ the concept of modality in a related sense to describe

the stance of participants in the semiotic process towards the state and status of the system of classification of the mimetic plane Modality expresses affinity -- or lack of it -- of speaker with hearer via an affirmation of their affinity about the status of the mimetic system. . . . Modality points to the social construction or contestation of knowledge systems. Agreement confers the status of 'knowledge,' 'fact' on the system, or on aspects of it; lack of agreement casts that status into doubt" (122-123).

Through its normative grammatical structure Mitchell's travel texts suppress the materiality of the signifier to allow for an insistence upon the signified. Even such traditional poetic "ungrammaticalities" as rhyme and rhythm that do at least draw attention to the materiality of language and to the text as artistic construct, are absent.² On the one hand the poem deals with ego's entry into a radically different culture. The enigmatic concept of "Face" which is

"everything" and can be "lost or won in a single gesture," signifies this system's Otherness. However, rather than showing the breakdown of the occidental self on the level of language (surely a breakdown in conventional meaning) the text simply states, diegetically, that this occurs. "The foreign Expert -- Zhuan Jia -- acquires Face by harrowing experience." One could say, in the manner of Paul de Man, that the poem's rhetorical mode (diegesis -- the present indicative) deconstructs its own thematic assertion (1-19). A language that carefully sustains the ego in the absolute subject position leaves the reader in doubt as to the validity of the assertion that this ego has experienced a radical shift. In passing over the problematic of language in representing a completely foreign sign system, the text signifies its agreement, or acquiescence, with the dominant mimetic system.

In keeping with its high modality the text exhibits a high degree of textual authority. Two narrative levels are maintained in this poem and in the collection as a whole between the narrator proper and the focalizer, referred to in the third person as the "Foreign Expert."³ The distance between narrator and focalizer is negligible, and the distinction between them does not appear to serve any real purpose on the plane of expression. In other words, the narrator appears to be the Foreign Expert and vice-versa. Thus while the poems scrupulously avoid the first person singular we could easily rewrite them in this tense by substituting "I" for each reference to the "Foreign Expert." In this fashion, as Barthes maintains, we can ascertain that the text is internally rather than externally focalized ("Structural Analysis" 283). On the connotative level, however, the distinction assumes more meaning.

"Foreign Expert" can signify both the English teacher in China, and the producer of a text on China. The first sense implies a negation of authority. The narrator refers to himself only in terms of the classification he is given within this society, only as those whom he seeks to represent refer to him. To this extent he defines himself within their system of representation and abrogates his own. Furthermore, the appellation emphasizes that the narrator's knowledge lies in areas far removed from this culture: he is an expert only in things foreign to this locality, namely, the English language. At the same time, however, the second connotation implies authority. In this

sense the Foreign Expert is the expert on the foreign locality, the one who has gained knowledge of China and seeks to impart this knowledge to the reader. The division between narrator and focalizer, though largely specious, appears in this light as a distancing device, a way of claiming a greater authority than the reader would attribute to the always provisional "I". If we examine the claims the text makes we see that this more authoritative sense predominates.

The text discourses on the "fundamental principle" of Chinese culture: "the acquisition of Face." The "Foreign Expert" possesses knowledge of this quiddity; he "acquires Face by harrowing experience." Thus the text constructs at the outset a narrator/focalizer who has discovered the truth of Chinese culture, or at least its "fundamental principle," and can present it in the reductive form of four basic components: "Reputation. Power. Humility./ Dignity." Interestingly enough, these are not far from what one might describe as the four fundamental aspects of Western Protestant culture. The narrator repeats such totalizations elsewhere in the collection.

The opening stanza of "Ren Li" consists of a series of simple declarative statements.

Work is salvation,
work is therapy.
Work defines, liberates,
and entertains.
In China work is life. (41)

The indicative tense and the concision of each statement establish a high modality or truth value in the passage. Lines one and two equate work in static terms with "salvation" and "therapy." In lines three and four work becomes an active agent, defining, liberating, and entertaining the subject. The final line returns to the static copula and equates work with life itself, with the totality of existence for the Chinese. By shifting from work's essential attributes to work's essential functions to a final equation of work with life, the text reinforces on the linguistic level the ubiquity and overall importance of work in China: work is both subject and object, stasis and process. The remainder of the text simply expands upon the well entrenched cliché of "the industrious Chinese."

Similarly the final stanza of "Bai Qiuen," narrating a visit to an "isolated Village," concludes:

On the porch children mingle
 while the hosts provide a smoke
 of blinding Yunnan tobacco,
 the sampling of pastries with tea.
 The spectacular hospitality
 of simple country folk
as universal as fresh air. (60 my emphasis)

"We find again here," as Barthes notes in an essay on "The Blue Guide," "this disease of thinking in essences, which is at the bottom of every bourgeois mythology of man (which is why we come across it so often)" (Mythologies 75).

Gauging textual authority in the large body of Earle Birney's travel poetry proves more difficult than in Mitchell's single collection. Birney's assumptions on language and poetry have never remained static. Frank Davey characterizes the language of Birney's early poetry as "anglophile and elitist, its point of view arrogantly authoritative, paternalistic -- as if his working class background, his Trotskyist egalitarianism, had been defeated by the academic discourse of authority" (Reading 20). Davey adds, however, that Birney's "turning to dialogue in his poems after 1950 implies a resistance to hegemony and authority and recognition that language inevitably exemplifies local ideological positions" (Reading 26). In keeping with Davey's observations, Birney's travel poems range from authoritative commentaries that take an unproblematic view of language as a system of representation, a position similar to that in Mitchell's texts, to a view which begins to foreground the problematic, perspectival, and ideological aspects of representation. These variations in position, however, do not always follow a neat early/late dichotomy according to the date of a poem's composition, as Davey's comments suggest, but appear to be equally influenced by the degree to which the locality, the text's referent, is perceived as Other.

In "A Walk In Kyoto" (1958), textual authority begins to break down in the face of the persona's complete inability to read the signs of the Japanese culture, specifically, his inability to differentiate between male and female, masculine and feminine:

the magnolia sprig in my alcove
 is it male the old discretions of Zen
 were not shaped for my phallic western eye
 there is so much discretion
 in this small bowed body of an empire

i stand hunched
 and clueless like a castaway in the shoals of my room (4-8, 11)

The lower case "i" expresses the breakdown of authority on the level of the signifier as do the instances of disjunctive syntax:

Lord Buddha help us all there is vigour enough
 in these islands & in all islands reefed & resounding
 with cities but the pitch is high high as the ping
 of cidasas (those small strained motors concealed
 in the propped pines by the dying river) & only male
 as the stretched falsetto of actors mincing the roles
 of kabuki women or female only as the lost heroes
 womanized in the Ladies Opera-- (21-28)

In his confusion the persona's thought process becomes disjointed and hesitant as indicated by the breaks within lines-- ". . . cities but the pitch is high high . . ." -- and the jumbled syntax of "only male as," and "female only as."

"Sunday Nightfall in Winnipeg" (1959/1970), a later poem, but one that refers to a locality much closer to home for the poet, maintains a higher degree of textual authority. A traditional nature/culture opposition structures the poem and establishes its hierarchy of values. The text reduces Winnipeg "this deadtreetrunk of a city" (21) where the "wind blows but the stink hangs" to a signifier of urban iniquity and decay. The persona longs to transcend his lamentable surroundings but only manages to do so in the final stanzas as he moves toward nature.

on the gritted pane suddenly
 i see behind me the faraway Sun
 driving a last shaft
 between deepblue rainclouds

 i walk alone in the wind & the dusk

toward the beautiful
antediluvian
sky (29-36)

The meaning of the signifiers confronting the persona in "Kyoto" are opaque, in "Winnipeg" they are immediate and transparent.

At the same time one should note that while "A Walk in Kyoto" thematizes the difficulties of reading the foreign sign system, it too concludes with an image of clarity and transcendence that seems to resolve the persona's humanist quest for "the simple song of a man" (31) amidst the "competing waves/ of signs in two tongues & three scripts" (29-30).

at the inn i prepare to surrender again
my defeated shoes to the bending maid but suddenly
the closed lotus opens to a smile & she points
to where over my shoulder above the sagging tiles
tall in the bare sky & huge as Gulliver
a carp is rising golden & fighting
thrusting its paper body up from the fist
of a small boy on an empty roof higher
& higher into the endless winds of the world (40-48)

The imagine -- virility, freedom, play -- completes the persona's quest for a sign of celebration and of masculinity on what, as his maid has told him, is both "Boys Day" and "Mans Day." This final moment of clarity reaffirms the universality of human culture that had been thrown into doubt in the disequilibrium portion of the text. The signs in "Kyoto" are opaque but not impenetrable, boys will be boys.

That textual authority in travel poetry should vary in relation to the degree to which the traveller perceives a given locality as a departure from his own culture, is not particularly remarkable. To the extent that a text fails to recognize the limitations upon its authority produced by cultural difference it demonstrates a kind of ethnocentrism, or epistemological absolutism that had been parodied at least as early as Swift in Gulliver's Travels. Two characteristics that would appear to be more specific to certain of Birney's travel texts are the overt manner in which political class consciousness structures representation, and the use of dialogue to undercut the authority of a monological representation.

"Prosperity in Poza Rica" speaks of the inevitable relationship between wealth and the possession of advanced technology.

With a gnarled stick
in a gnarled hand
the Indian ploughed
the ashen land

With the derrick's fist
through the blackened soil
the Mexican plumbs
to lakes of oil

In the honking town
the lawyers treat
the drillers drink
and the beggars eat

On the slithering hills
in hands of brick
the Indian ploughs
with a gnarled stick (1-16)

On the one hand, this very closed tightly constructed text exhibits a high degree of textual authority. In testimonial fashion the text seeks to lay bare the truth of a particular socio-economic situation, its inequities and injustices. One can interpret the authority the text imposes on language through a strong metrical pattern and tightly controlled rhyme scheme, as a meta-sign for the authority the text claims for its representation. The text incorporates both past and present into its vision as indicated by the shift in tense from "ploughed" to "ploughs" in the first and final stanzas. Furthermore, the repetition of the first line in the last line of the poem creates a circularity implying that this process of exploitation will continue indefinitely. The image of "slithering hills" suggests an oppressive backsliding inimical to social progress. The poem, then, does not seek to represent a fleeting phenomenological experience but more authoritatively, an historical constant.

By taking a clear political position, however, the text foregrounds its own ideological stance and thereby undercuts any claims to the absolute authority of its representation. The text's position is perspectival, concerned not so much with the truth of a particular situation as with taking sides on behalf of one group against others in a struggle for power. A Marxian, and more

specifically a Trotskyian, paradigm structures and informs the poem and when read in light of this meta-system the poem assumes a rather different character than what I have just given it.

One of Trotsky's major contributions to Marxist thought was his theory of "uneven and combined development" (Pearce 489). In his writings on the economies of peripheral or colonized regions Trotsky noted the co-existence in these economies of both precapitalist and advanced capitalist modes of production, a result of the imperialist intervention in these economies by advanced capitalist states. While this intervention destroys the balance in the indigenous economy and leads to far greater inequalities of wealth than previously known, at the same time it introduces revolutionary modes of production that could potentially benefit the indigenous population. To achieve socialism, Trotsky theorized, these regions need not pass through the classical Marxist stages from feudalism through capitalism to socialism. Given that aspects of advanced capitalist technology are already in place these stages can be telescoped or even skipped. Since the introduction of this technology takes place in a colonial or semi-colonial situation the country affected will acquire a stronger proletariat than the native bourgeoisie. The native bourgeoisie are in part the beneficiaries of the colonial economy -- largely an economy for the supply of raw materials to the highly industrialized centres -- and are therefore unwilling or unable to lead a bourgeoisie revolution for the promotion of their own class interests. The task of the revolution "falls to the proletariat leading the lower orders of the pre-capitalist sector in a revolution which proceeds immediately from the abolition of feudal survivals to taking steps in the direction of socialism" (Pearce 489).

In reading "Prosperity in Poza Rica" as structured by the Trotskyian paradigm of "uneven and combined development" the "gnarled stick" and the "derrick's fist" come to represent the coexistence in this economy of both feudal and advanced capitalist modes of production. The contrast between the Indian who "ploughed/ the ashen land" and the Mexican who "plumbs to lakes of oil" indicates the sparsity produced by the feudal mode of production as opposed to the plenitude accruing from the capitalist mode. The third stanza turns to the "honking town" and shows the social prosperity derived from the advanced mode of production. That the "drillers

drink/ and the beggars eat" indicates its positive potential to benefit all. Yet in this economy as presently structured the driller and beggar depend upon the bourgeoisie, synecdochely represented by the lawyer, to "treat" them to share of this prosperity, a share undoubtedly smaller than the bourgeoisie's own.

The final stanza returns to the Indian. Entirely excluded from the wealth engendered by the new mode of production, and embodying the hatred of the aboriginal toward his colonizer, he represents the most revolutionary element in the society. The subtle shift in the epithets between the parallel first and fourth stanzas indicates this violent revolutionary potential. "Ashen Land" that had indicated the sparsity of the feudal mode of production becomes "slithering hills" suggesting mass movement and unrest. The Indian's "gnarled hand" (worn, twisted) becomes "hands of brick" -- weapons in struggle. The gnarled stick itself takes on a threatening aspect as the poem, like the blow from a club, comes down to an emphatic close with it. The poem now implies a linear evolutionary movement in keeping with the Marxian view of history as opposed to the pure circularity suggested by the first reading. The society begins in the feudal agrarian stage in the first stanza, moves to the "combined and uneven development" of the colonial stage in stanzas two and three, and closes in the revolutionary stage that moves toward socialism. The authority the text imposes upon language by virtue of its rigid construction, far more rigid than is characteristic of Birney's travel poetry at this period, can now be read as a meta-sign for the authority of a colonial class system -- one that must be broken.

While "Prosperity in Poza Rica" presents various overdetermined signs that foreground a perspectival, ideological positioning and thus undercut an otherwise authoritative mode of presentation, "Sinaloa" achieves a more formally innovative and ultimately successful deconstruction of the travel poet's authority. The poem consists of one side of a dialogue between a local Mexican and a Canadian tourist (presumably our travel poet although his identity beyond the fact that he is a tourist is irrelevant). As in Mitchell's photograph "Faces of China" the dominant figure of chiasmus, here the reversal of the conventional roles of representor (travel poet) and represented (the Mexican, his culture and landscape) accounts for much of the poem's rhetorical

force. The tourist never speaks directly but, rather, the Mexican characterizes (burlesques) the tourist and his guidebook's perspective, often in the form of a rhetorical question, and then attacks this perspective.⁴ The text repeats this rhetorical strategy in each homologous stanza.

Si señor, is halligators here, your guidebook say it,
 si, jaguar in the montañas, maybe helephants, quién sabe?
 You like, dose palmas in the sunset? Certamente very nice,
 it happen each night in the guia turista
 But who de hell eat jaguar, halligator, you heat em?
 Mira my fren, wat dis town need is muy big breakwater--
 I like take hax to dem jeezly palmas.

So you want buy machete? Por favor I give you
 sousand machetes you give me one grand bulldozer, hey?
 Wat dis country is lack, señor, is real good goosin,
 is need pinehapple shove hup her bottom
 (sure, sure, is bella all dose water-ayacints)
 is need drains for sugarcane in dem pitoresco swamps--
 and shoot all them anarquista egrets.

Hokay, you like bugambilla, ow you say, flower-hung cliffs?
 Is ow old, de Fort? Is Colhuan, muy viejo, before Moses, no?
 Is for you, senor, take em way, send us helevator for w'eat.
 It like me to see all dem fine boxcar stuff full rice,
 sugar, flax, rollin down to dose palmstudded ports
 were Cortes and all dat crap (you heat history?)--
 and bugger de pink flamingos.

Amigo, we make you present all dem two-wheel hoxcart,
 you send em Québec, were my brudder was learn to be padre--
 we take ditchdiggers, tractors, Massey-Arris yes?
 Sinoloa want ten sousand mile irrigation canals,
 absolutamente. Is fun all dat organ-cactus fence?
 Is for de birds, señor; is more better barbwire, verdad?--
 and chingar dose cute little burros.

Sin argumento, my fren, is a beautiful music,
 all dem birds. Pero, wy you no like to ear combos,
 refrigerator trucks? Is wonderful on straight new ighway,
 jampck wit melons, peppers, bananas, tomatoes, si, si. . . .
 Chirimoyas? Mangos? You like! Is for Indios, solamente,
 is bruise, no can ship, is no bueno, believe me, senor--
 and defecar on dose goddam guidebook. (1-35)

The text generates a series of related oppositions from the primary opposition between local and tourist: poverty/wealth, nature/culture, rural (pastoral)/industrial, exotic spectacle/functional use, archaic/modern. In a humorous fashion, the local's comments deconstruct the touristic ideal of the picturesque ("pitoresco") by revealing how this ideal rests on the suppression of all the

aspects of a prosperous capitalist state (everything on the right side of the binary) that allows for tourism in the first place, and on the denial of these aspects to the impoverished country that remains dependent on the tourist's dollars. The "machete" and the "two-wheel hoxcart(s)" are quaint anachronisms to the tourist evoking, perhaps, pastoral fantasies of a pre-industrial organic society. The local, however, consistently reverses the tourist's hierarchy by privileging the modern and industrial -- "muy big breakwater," "one grand bulldozer," "ditchdiggers," "tractors" - over archaic technologies and a pastoral aesthetic. A greater authority belongs to the local's discourse as one who lives within the rural society and mocks the idealization of it. This local authority punctures the tourist's organicist fantasies, fantasies created from within the tourist's position as a materially comfortable member of a Western industrial state.

Barthes ties the aesthetic of the picturesque as defined by one species of the guidebook, the Blue Guide, to a "Helvetico-Protestant morality . . . which has always functioned as a hybrid compound of the cult of nature and or puritanism (regeneration through clean air, moral ideas at the sight of mountaintops, summit-climbing as civic virtue, etc.)" (Mythologies 74). Given the informing ideology of the picturesque it is "in the last analysis, quite logically and quite stupidly, the gracelessness of a landscape, its lack of spaciousness or human appeal, its verticality, so contrary to the bliss of travel, which account for its interest" (Mythologies 74). The tourist and his guidebook in "Sinaloa" present a similar aesthetic. To the tourist the Mexican landscape exists as pure spectacle and therefore he privileges characteristics that differentiate it from his own lived (ie. transformed) landscape: "montanas," "palmas in the sunset," "pitoresco swamps," and "flower-hung cliffs." The Mexican's discourse subverts this aesthetic by countering each privileged item with another related to actually living within the landscape: Chopping down "dem jeezly palmas," "drains for sugarcane in dem pitoresco swamps--," and a "straight new ighway." The objects pertaining to the tourist's aesthetic are largely characterized by being vertical (metaphysical) while the objects pertaining to the local's counter aesthetic are characterized by being horizontal (material).

Frank Davey, while noting the Birney's turn toward dialogue represents a less authoritative mode of representation, nonetheless lists "Sinaloa" amongst Birney's poems that "almost fully realize," a pastoral view of nature, an organicism "grounded in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Romantic ideologies of benevolent Nature and Golden Age harmony" (Reading 29). Davey's reading implies that the local's discourse is constructed in entirely negative terms. From the a priori assumption that Birney's poetry exhibits an organicist view of nature (as much of it does), Davey assumes that the text adopts an oppositional stance toward the Mexican's utilitarian, entrepreneurial discourse. According to this reading the tourist's higher aesthetic appreciation for the landscape opposes the Mexican's desire to transform it in the name of material prosperity.

Davey's is certainly one possible reading of the text. It demands that the binaries set up in the poem (nature/culture, pastoral/industrial, etc.) remain static and stable, the former privileged over the latter. The realization, however, that the binaries are inextricably bound to one another, that the tourist can only travel, relax, and idealize nature as a form of supplement to an economy that decimates it, immediately dissolves this first reading. One could say much the same of the touristic picturesque as the historian Perry Miller said of the appeal of nature in American Romantic literature and painting, that it served largely to assuage national anxiety about the ongoing destruction of America's vast and impressive natural heritage (Miller 211). It would appear, furthermore, that Davey's reading could not account for the Mexican's anger as most emphatically expressed in the final line of each stanza: "and shoot all dem anarquisto egrets," and "bugger de pink flamingos," "and chingar dose cute little buroos," (except perhaps, as the aggression of an evil capitalist). The anger appears rooted in the opposition between the wealth of the tourist's country and the poverty of the Mexican's own. While the Mexican ostensibly directs his aggression toward the landscape, these are, at the same time, as many attacks on the tourist's aesthetic, designed to shock and offend it, as the final line, "and defecar on dose goddamn guidebook," drives home. The poem cannot be read either as simply reversing the pastoral/industrial hierarchy, that is, as a kind of pro-industrial tract, but as problematizing the relationship between the two terms in an unstable, ironic, and unauthoritative fashion.

The most marked difference between Birney's and Mitchell's post-colonial travel poems and the colonial travel narratives discussed earlier lies in the stance each configuration of texts adopts towards its referent. Whether it be expressed through Birney's Trotskyite sympathies for the oppressed indigenous peoples of Latin America, or Mitchell's enthusiastic embrace of communist China, these later texts aim to be openly sympathetic with, and often to celebrate, the peoples and places they represent. Absent is the kind of obvious cultural arrogance that marked (to varying degrees) the texts of Hearne, Traill, Moodie, and Jameson. One would want to attribute this difference to numerous factors which would include, at the broadest level, a relatively recent shift in Western sensibility away from unexamined ethnocentric notions of cultural supremacy toward a view that at least pays lip service to cultural relativism, to the idea that all cultures are different but equally valid, that there are no absolute standards with which to judge one against the other. More specifically one might attribute this openly sympathetic stance to Mitchell and Birney's status as post-colonial Canadian writers. Subjugated themselves to a long history of British, and later American, cultural and economic domination, one could legitimately expect the Canadian writer to suspend judgment on, and even to champion, these other localities, other peripheries. From this still very broad figuration of "the Canadian writer," one would want to narrow the focus even further to include Mitchell's and Birney's avowedly left-wing political outlook (with its traditional emphasis upon colonial exploitation, and its not uncommon idealization of the Maoist revolution) as partially determining their text's position towards these localities.

To be less sanguine, however, one would have to conclude by admitting that to a certain extent these texts adopt a more open minded, uncritical stance toward their referent because they can afford such a position. As discussed in detail in chapter one, Hearne, as a Hudson's Bay Company employee, and Moodie and Traill as settlers, each speak from contextually specific positions that represent vested economic and political interests in the periphery. These interests

speak through, and structure, the ostensibly aesthetic, private, or purely informational utterances. Like the tourist, however, the travel writer producing a text for a small literary audience back home has no such immediate and obvious investments in his or her locality. In this respect Mitchell's and Birney's position is closest to Anna Jameson's in whose text we see a similarly open-minded, uncritical stance. However, as Birney's "Sinaloa" foregrounds so effectively, the travel writer's deracinated condition, while it allows for this suspension of judgement, entails its own peculiar distortions, idealizations, and hypocrisies. Mitchell, on the other hand, might well have reflected on his function as an English teacher in China, as arguably a forerunner of Western capitalist interests in the region, and thus a contributor to the demise of the culture his poems simultaneously celebrate.

But placing to one side what I perceive as this intentionally sympathetic representation that these travel poems seek to convey, the approach in this chapter has been to examine the formal, rhetorical strategies these texts employ, and to ask what presuppositions and what claims to authority their use entails. These strategies have risen for the most part within Western discourses of poetry and descriptive language, and consequently, one often has the sense of reading more about one's own culture in these texts than about the supposed referent, just as in the colonial travel narratives one seems to be reading more about eighteenth or nineteenth century Britain (its aesthetics, behavioural codes, class structures, desires) than about the Canadian "frontier." It is more than a little curious that the representation of China that Through The Nan Da Gate constructs is so in keeping with the larger Western, and particularly Canadian, view on China at the time of its production. Canada has traditionally maintained friendly relations with China that include a lucrative wheat trade, various cultural and student exchanges, and in the figure of Norman Bethune, a shared hero. Thus for various political, economic, and historic reasons, communist China has never existed under the pall cast over the Soviet Union; it has not been seen as a similarly oppressive regime. Most recently this has changed. Since glasnost and the massacre in Bei Jing, "Russia," and "China," as western signifiers, have undergone something of a semantic reversal. History has quickly undercut the authority of Mitchell's representation and one suspects

that if he were to write of China today the same monolithic picture of an intensely driven, idealistic culture, infused with a spirit of socialist cooperation and community, would not emerge. Undoubtedly this totalizing representation had no greater validity in Mitchell's China of 1980, but western presuppositions about the country -- again, Said's "textual attitude" (93) -- seem to have played a greater role in the production of this representation than did any 'direct experience.' To the extent that Mitchell's texts lend a high modality to the dominant mimetic system they would appear bound to repeat its dominant presuppositions, its ideology.

In a similar vein, much of Birney's travel poetry is informed by humanist notions of an underlying cross cultural identity or "brotherhood" (Birney 72). In many of the anecdotal narrative poems ("A Walk in Kyoto," "Cartagena De Indias, 1962," and "Four Feet Between") the persona must cut through the morass of cultural, linguistic difference until he discovers the underlying level of sameness at which he can identify with an individual or a people -- a discovery that comes as epiphany, confirmation, and closure. To a large extent, then, both Mitchell's and Birney's travel poems seek to naturalize the Other, to bring it within the ken of western understanding and the sign of the identical. To this degree they would appear to repeat the imperialist appropriation of the margins to the centre.

Still, one can argue convincingly that Birney's poems deconstruct their own humanist assertions by actualizing a multiplicity of cultural difference and only a single aspect of identity. The boy playing with the kite on the rooftop in "A Walk in Kyoto" is a shaky foundation upon which to maintain a humanist ideology given the stupefying confusion of signs that precede this image. Furthermore, the overt manner in which political consciousness structures representation, particularly in the Mexican poems of the 1950s ("Pachucan Miners," "Late Afternoon in Manzanilla," "Irapuato") represents one strategy by which Birney's texts foreground their own perspectival, ideological position, demonstrating that observation is never strictly empirical and natural, but dependent upon a structuring paradigm. In themselves, however, these poems often exhibit a high degree of textual authority, making strong truth claims for their own position. Only through the use of dialogue in an exemplary poem like "Sinaloa," does the travel poet begin to

relinquish his authority over the representation -- begin, to quote the epigraph to this chapter, "to descend into the untranslatable, to experience its shock without every muffling it, until everything Occidental in us totters. . ." (Barthes, Empire 6).

Repetition and Subversion:

Norman Levine's Canada Made Me andFrank Davey's The Abbotsford Guide to India

The proper nouns "Norman Levine" and "Frank Davey," may never have appeared in one sentence before much less have formed the basis of a comparative analysis. One mentions Norman Levine in the same breath as one speaks of John Metcalf, Brian Moore, or Mordecai Richler; one compares Frank Davey to George Bowering, Fred Wah, or bp Nichol. Indeed, the reasons for not discussing these two writers in the same context are compelling. As a paradigmatic high modernist brimmed full of Weltschmerz and ennui, as an internationalist who speaks from a firmly centred position in espousing the superiority of "high" culture, and in letting drop, frequently and weightily, that most withering of all pejoratives in the cultural supremacist's lexicon: "provincial," Norman Levine appears to us much as the last of the grand old Victorians must have appeared, as sort of a quaint hold-over, nostalgic, formidable, and dreary. Frank Davey's poetics, on the other extreme, have their roots in the radical Tish movement of his undergraduate days in Vancouver in the late 1950s and early 1960s. Under the direct influence of the American Black Mountain School, this group of poets came to emphasize natural (ie. vernacular) speech patterns, poetry made from experience as it is experienced phenomenologically and not as it is reflected back upon in tranquility, and, perhaps most importantly, the preeminent importance of the local and the particular as opposed to the universal and the general. Within this basic framework Davey's methodological presuppositions have remained very much in process displaying a steadily increasing engagement with structuralist and post-structuralist theory.¹ What two writers, then, could be further apart, less amenable to comparison? Why belabour the obvious differences?

Yet while this obvious gap might render certain thematic comparisons trite, from the perspective of an "ideological discourse-focussed criticism,"² it is an ideal situation. Canada Made Me and The Abbotsford Guide To India both belong to the loosely defined genre of travel writing

and address the central question in this thesis: what strategies does a travel text employ to deal with other peoples and places in language? The two travel texts are appropriate ones with which to conclude this selective analysis for they provide instances of both repetition and subversion. Levine's text, a travel journal across Canada circa 1956, remains classically within the position of the cultural supremacist who employs the dominant conventions of representation, and assumes a powerfully authoritative voice, to maintain the superiority of a centralist, European culture. Davey, on the other hand, writes in highly self-reflexive, parodic manner aimed at undercutting all claims to authority and moving the text out of the mode of the colonizer.³

The familiar, bleak, tone of Canada Made Me recalls such central works of the Modernist canon as T.S. Eliot's The Waste Land, and less centrally but more specifically, Whyndam Lewis's Self Condemned, a novelized account of Lewis's war years spent in Canada while exiled from Britain for fascist sympathies. Levine self-consciously places himself within a tradition of exiled artists who have rejected North America for being a cultural wasteland. Significantly in this respect, the two travel texts Levine cites are Henry James's The American Scene (245), and Henry Miller's The Air Conditioned Nightmare (9). At one and the same time Levine's text expresses an identification with a more "exotic" (44), "cosmopolitan" (256) European culture, and a vague but permeating nostalgia for the passing of this old order.

In Canada Made Me Levine, after nearly a decade of self-imposed exile in Britain, returns to Canada to tour the country of his birth, to keep a journal, and eventually to publish a book about his experiences. As in the colonial travel texts discussed in chapter one, Levine writes specifically for the British. Published in Britain in 1958, the work would not be published in Canada until 1979. Once again the goal is to bring the margins with the comprehension of the centre, its aesthetics, conventions of representation, behavioral codes, and so forth. However, in a post-colonial period during which Europe's influence as well as its actual territorial possessions are waning, the dominant gesture, as Mary Louise Pratt points out, will be to disavow the old frontier as hopeless, worthless -- a failure ("Conventions" 150). This gesture is the systematic opposite of the desire to appropriate expressed in the colonial texts. Levine employs the same conventions --

aestheticization, density of meaning, domination of seer over seen -- but at a different historical moment to make a very different sort of meaning.

The work's major theme seems to be Levine's own deracinated condition, the result of being born and raised in Canada, a lamentable condition that has left him without any significant history, culture, or sense of place. In the introductory chapter "The Emigrant Ship," narrating the boat journey to Canada, the text sets up the contrast between the speaker's situation and that of the great British writers. Levine describes an American graduate student on board the ship.

The American student had returned from a six-weeks 'pilgrimage' of England. He said he had been to see Wordsworth country, Hardy country, Bronte country, Shakespeare country. And he had filled up notebook after notebook with 'raw material' for his proposed thesis on 'The Influence of Place' He said he had enough material to keep him busy for the next ten years. (19)

Here, then, we have an allusion to the dense and significant history that went into the creation of these writers' works, the radical Other against which Levine's view of Canada defines itself. Repeating what we have seen to be a dominant topos in the discourse of empire, Levine predicates an absence of any significant history on the periphery. In North America we are reduced to these quick, pathetic raids on European culture, to ransacking their largesse.

Waiting to descend the gangplank at Halifax harbour, Levine draws in his theme explicitly:

And while we waited I wondered why I felt so reluctant to get off the ship. . . . Perhaps it was the image that I did not understand. Though I called Canada home - - and by Canada I meant only parts of Ottawa, Montreal and the Laurentians -- I felt no particular sense of belonging there. But then neither did I feel I belonged particularly anywhere else. Was that one's inheritance, a rootlessness? Or maybe it was just curiosity that drives one back to see where one had grown up? But that kind of journey can be done leisurely, in comfort, and in old age. Or was it something more personal? A kind of personal destructiveness that one is condemned to carry. Of going back to places that one left innocent, knowing that one's equipment has changed. (21-22)

The passage, inadvertently one assumes, contains the narrator's single admission of the limitations on the authority of his voice: "Though I called Canada home -- and by Canada I meant only parts of Ottawa, Montreal, and the Laurentians -- I felt no particular sense of belonging there." In the vast majority of contexts the I/eye in Canada Made Me, like the constantly shifting I/eye in The Abbotsford Guide To India, is a foreigner to the unique configurations of sign systems that

comprise each sight or locality. Unlike in the latter text, however, this condition never acts as a restriction on the authority the eye/I claims for itself. In the course of his numerous stop-overs the narrator provides summary judgements upon landscapes, individuals, entire communities and regions, until the title Canada Made Me begins to ring with a rich New Critical irony connoting both: Canada made me what I am, this rootless and melancholy waif; and Canada made me seek exile by being too crass and barren to dwell in. In Roughing It in the Bush Susanna Moodie's sublime rhapsodies along the St. Lawrence expressed a euphoria of arrival as the narrator reveled in the power of the landscape's unmeasured potential. With Levine arrival has been reduced to a sense of dread and detachment. "I expected some kind of recognition to appear as we moved towards the land. But it continued to approach silently and monotonously like the funeral of someone you don't know" (21).

While a textbook case of Pratt's "monarch-of-all-I-survey" scene as outlined in chapter one may elude us in Canada Made Me, examples in which most or all of these conventions are being employed nonetheless infuse the work. In the following passage, Levine describes the South Saskatchewan River as it flows through Saskatoon.

The river was muddy. Large slabs of dirty ice, partly submerged, went by slowly in the brown water. I thought of funerals, coffins, shrouds. Along the sides, the banks sloped to the river. Old bits of dead grass, like tufts of hair, stuck out of the mud. Near the riverline the snow had not melted. There were large bites in the snow where the water sucked out chunks, pulled them down into the water, and carried them away. I crossed the bridge. Looking back to the other side was the Bessborough Hotel. Like the Chateau Laurier, it combined the function of a railway hotel and civic monument; but the guts were commercial. (127)

Clearly, all three of Pratt's conventions are in operation in this passage: aestheticization, density of meaning, and the domination of seer over seen. The scene, spring ice-break on the South Saskatchewan River, is portrayed as exceedingly ugly -- repulsive. With the use of diegetic markers the text carefully orders the scene in relation to the viewer's perspective: the ice is "partly submerged," in the water, the eye is shifted "(along) the sides" where "the banks sloped to the river," then down "near the riverline," and finally toward the Bessborough Hotel in the background.

The text establishes density of meaning, or the materialization of space, on the one hand, through the large number of material referents: "river," "slabs of ice," "water," "banks," "grass," "mud," "snow," and "hotel." Moreover this density is greatly intensified through the addition of adjectival modifiers and metaphoric analogues many of which are derived from nouns: "muddy," "dirty," "coffins," "shrouds," and the like. As Pratt notes, such modifiers, "introduce whole new material referents into the discourse" ("Conventions" 146). The text attempts, then, both to render the scene realistic (hence the diectics and the material referents), and to tightly control the representation's meaning through modifiers, similes, and metaphor. The speaker's height on the bridge implies the domination of seer over seen as does the authorial control indicated by the employment of the first two conventions. Following a further convention noted in the colonial travel texts Levine neatly frames his landscape within a single paragraph, setting it off from the rest of the text, and enhancing its pictorial effect. Such framing techniques are another method of authorial control and closure indicating that "what [he sees] is all there is. No sense of limitation on [his] knowledge or authority is suggested" (Pratt "Conventions" 149).

If we agree, as Pratt suggests, that "the conventional aestheticization of the landscape simultaneously articulates a particular social meaning, an ideology" ("Conventions" 149), then what is the social meaning encoded in Levine's aesthetic condemnation of the spring ice-break along the South Saskatchewan River? The preceding events in the narrative assist the reader in drawing a metaphoric connection. Levine has been to visit a girl he had known in his student days in Montreal, someone who later went on to spend several relatively interesting years in England and on the continent before settling into "small town respectability" (126) in Saskatoon. Levine visits her for lunch and finds her to have grown exceedingly bored, domesticated, and dull. The descriptive landscape, then, clearly becomes an extended metaphor for the wearisome death-in-life nature of existence in a provincial backwater. The macabre description turns to the language of death: funerals, coffins, and the slow decomposition of bodies -- a language that permeates the entire text -- to represent what is essentially water and earth. "Old bits of dead grass, like tufts of hair stuck out of the mud;" "There were large bites in the snow where the water sucked out

chunks," like, we are invited to assume, hunks of flesh falling of a decomposing corpse. The lives of the people here are like this, the metaphor suggests, passive, rotting away.

The metaphor builds upon the cliched hypogram, "the river of life," but in Michael Riffaterre's terms, through a linguistic process the text reverses the traditionally pastoral and philosophical lexicon pertaining to this well worn conceit (39-46). Here we are presented with "the river of death," a river out of a Stephen Spielberg horror film, a river teeming with the dead and the dying. And as often in Canada Made Me the mood, tone, as well as some of the basic imagery, recall such central works of the modernist cannon as T.S. Eliot's The Wasteland.

Unreal city,
Under the brown fog of a winter dawn,
A crowd flowed over the London Bridge, so many
I had not thought death had undone so many (60-63)

The quality of the voice, and the basic theme of decay and death, are much the same across the two works, only Levine has the crowd flowing under the Broadway bridge in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. The point here is not simply one of influence, but more importantly in our context, the extent to which Levine's representation of the periphery will be determined by the stance he adopts as an artist. If he chooses to write in a high modernist mode (and in the mid-fifties only the most avant-guard were doing otherwise) this will dictate to an extent the language he uses and the position toward his subject matter that he adopts -- Romantic exuberance and Postmodern indeterminacy are not available to him, only Modernist Weltschmerz.

As discussed in chapter one, the conventional "monarch-of-all-I-survey" representation always remains within the binary pair, appropriation/negation, encoded in aesthetic terms as praise or condemnation. In this passage Levine expresses the ideology of negation and disassociation. As a centralist and a cultural supremacist Levine's message in this descriptive passage, as it is through nearly all of Canada Made Me (Levine shows little preference for the other regions of the country), is that nothing of value or interest exists in these places. They are to be rejected and fled from by the artist, or anyone who wishes to lead a meaningful existence. The inhabitants of these locations are to be alternately pitied, condemned, spoken of with irony, or even ridiculed. He

understands these people far better than they understand themselves, although he is a complete stranger in many of his surroundings. He "left innocent" (22) but has returned now that his "equipment has changed" (22) -- now that he has ingested a 'high' culture against which to condemn this 'low'-Other.

In the following passage Levine, standing somewhere on the outskirts of Winnipeg, sums up his impressions of the place and, again, describes the landscape.

I had never before experienced this physical sense of space quite so forcefully. It reminded me of a person I know, a woman, who says very little, who listens to what you say, who says 'Yes' or else encourages you to keep on talking with a slow sleepy smile, or else just sits in the same room and says nothing. But all the time her presence sucks one into inactivity. A heaviness, a tiredness, a limpness, emanates from her that reduces you until you yourself feel tired heavy and limp. Nothing I saw in Winnipeg had the brittleness of sophistication or of gaiety.

From one of the muddy riverbanks I looked back to the city. The flat melancholy prairie land was still covered in large patches of snow, the same grey colour as the sky. And the flatness the emptiness of land and sky reduced the importance of the jumble of buildings set in it. A string of telephone poles as far as I could see. I remember in Cornwall they had the repeating image of a man on stilts. Here, no sense of movement. Land. Sky. Horizon. Blowing dust. The undecorated buildings. All simple, without complexity, and yet left one exhausted. It just drained away oneself like some indifferent natural blotter. (106)

Again the text expresses negation and disassociation through the aesthetic rejection of the landscape -- even the snow is grey.

The passage aims for a sparsity as opposed to a density of meaning in its description of the landscape. There is nothing to be seen but, to quote W.O. Mitchell, "the very least common denominator of earth and sky." While the passage concerns itself less with the creation of an actual picture than our previous example, it employs metaphor even more explicitly to tie down the scene's meaning. Winnipeg is likened to a dull and inadequate woman, one who is neither brittle, gay, nor sophisticated. The metaphor of course is run through with the cultural codes pertaining to a white male in the mid 1950s: women are essentially nice pieces of fluff, the too solid kind are repulsive (perhaps threatening). The metaphor allows nothing more to be known about this woman; like the city, the subject of this analogue, her description begins and ends in an authoritative manner, on the aspects of brittleness, sophistication, and gaiety.

An hierarchical, and "phallogocentric"⁴ system of oppositions structures the text's aesthetic dismissal of the landscape. In the following partial list, the parenthetical terms on the left side of the binary are the unstated, privileged "male" qualities the text implies are absent or lacking from the prairies, the terms in quotations on the right are the inferior "female" qualities the text actually predicates as belonging to the region: (man)/"woman"; (speaks)/"listens"; (fast)/"slow"; (alert)/"sleepy"; (speech)/"says nothing"; (activity)/"inactivity"; (lightness)/"heaviness"; (virility)/"a tiredness, a limpness"; (erect)/"flat"; (plentitude)/"emptiness"; (complex)/"simple"; (presence)/"drained oneself away." Significantly, the viewer fears that the landscape could erase his identity, could drain him away "like some indifferent natural blotter." An interaction with this landscape could effect a transgression of these unstable antitheses around which his identity and values have been constructed, could rob him of the privileged terms that he tacitly applies to himself, sucking him "into inactivity," castration, death.

Levine's condemnation of the prairie landscape must be understood, as well, in terms of the eighteenth-century aesthetic of the picturesque, examined in chapter one, an aesthetic that continues to inform Canada Made Me. (Although given the system of oppositions that structure this aesthetic category: rough/smooth, variegated/plain, vertical/horizontal, I am, perhaps, making the same point as above only in a slightly different fashion). Norman Levine on the outskirts of Winnipeg expresses much the same distaste for a plain field as did William Gilpin in his key text on the picturesque:

An extended plain is a simple object. It is the continuation of only one uniform idea. But the mere simplicity of a plain produces no beauty. Break the surface of it as you did your pleasure ground; add trees rocks and declivities; that is give it roughness, and you give it also variety. (Gilpin 28)

Toward the end of Canada Made Me Levine provides a description of his privileged (British) landscape, actualizes the tacit ideal against which he has evaluated the Canadian landscape. The representation is of St. Ives Cornwall where Levine has resided for the better part of his self-imposed exile:

I remember looking at St. Ives -- from the height of the bus stop at the Malakoff and further up from Tregenna Steps -- it was the perfect picture-postcard. A piece

of land flung out like a small bent finger into the Atlantic; the C of the harbour; the waves coming in like horizons in reverse; a few fishing boats; gulls; the lighthouse in the bay; and the pretty little sand beaches. (214)

Distanced, rugged, variegated, complex (but also spaced and balanced), the panorama is pure picturesque. Levine goes on to comment that this idyllic representation masks the true economic squalor within this community, and more broadly, that any distanced perspective must inevitably fail to represent the less seemly reality beneath the surface. His point is reminiscent of the opening chapter of Roughing It in the Bush. One moment Mrs. Moodie is given over to sublime rhapsody at the sight of the landscape, only to be appalled the next moment by the vulgar, carnivalesque behaviour of its inhabitants. The captain of her ships warns her: "Don't be too sanguine, Mrs. Moodie; many things look well at a distance which are bad enough when near" (24). Still, Levine's qualification about the sordid human depths underlying even the most attractive geographic surfaces would seem only to reinforce, rather than diminish, the status of the picturesque as his aesthetic ideal.

Much earlier in the text Levine makes a telling reference to this same landscape. By an "absurd" coincidence, he finds that the single painting in his parent's apartment in Ottawa is a "water colour of St. Ives . . . done from the Malokoff looking down to the harbour" (39) -- ie. from the same perspective as in the above passage. He attempts to explain to his parents the significance of this scene but finds: "It did not really interest them. Their curiosity was confined to what is local; what they can be part of. Neither they nor the owner knew what the watercolour was" (39). The parents with their lack of interest in the St. Ives landscape stand, metonymically, for the local, the immediate and (as the text would have it) the merely ignorant. By extension, then, this picturesque landscape itself would appear to stand for the universal, the transcendent, and the true; not the mere representation of it on the wall, but the real landscape and the superior culture of which it is a part.

Beyond privileging an eighteenth-century landscape aesthetic, Canada Made Me repeats yet another strategy that we noted in the colonial travel texts to represent the periphery as low-Other. In Winnipeg Levine takes a tour of a meatpacking plant. His guide is "a short stocky young man"

(99) named Gerry. Gerry commits an initial transgression of decorum by referring to the narrator as "Norm from the start" (99). "This show of friendliness," Levine informs his British audience, "is odd until you realize it means nothing, it's a convention" (99). In the course of the tour Gerry commits further transgressions.

In another room men and women were by tables cleaning the guts to be used for casings. Gerry stopped and became sentimental. 'If I have an hour or so free from my desk I usually go and play with the guts here. I like the feel of them. I worked in a mortuary before coming here and I always wanted to get hold of the guts, but I couldn't. I knew that here was a stiff lying just full of guts that I couldn't get hold of. Have you every had guts go through your hands? It's a wonderful feeling.'

In another room girls were sitting on chairs by small tables in straight rows like a classroom by conveyor belts which carried sliced pieces of bacon

'See them gas away,' Gerry said. 'You know what they're talking about? If they got shagged last night. All of them are easy as anything. A bunch of dopes, doing it for free; they haven't even finished public school. Yesterday I pulled the pants off this one.' He pointed to a young heavily-built girl with blonde close-cropped hair. 'She's got the biggest tits I've seen, but the smallest nipples. If you like, come back to my room and you can see what's going on in the cars in the car-park with my binoculars. I'm going with one in the cafeteria and a friend of mine is going with one in the gut room. They've asked us to take our holidays with them so we're using their cars. We'll drive down to California.' He grinned. 'It's really a shagging holiday.' (103)

The text frequently constructs the peoples on the periphery as sordid and vulgar by identifying them, as here, with the grotesque, the excessive, the body. One is reminded of Hearne's Natives, or Moodie's low colonials. Gerry inquires "'(have) you ever had guts go through your hands?'" with a passion that a connoisseur of wine might inquire 'have you every enjoyed a glass of Madeira?' -- a grotesque parody of the cultured sensualist that simultaneously transgresses and reaffirms the boundary between 'high' and 'low', 'centre' and 'periphery.' Gerry's sexuality is represented as similarly repulsive: crude, leering, and victimizing.

In Edmonton Levine visits a hotel beer parlour. The hotel's desk clerk has provided him with a copy of the Edmonton Visitor's Guide, and Levine contrasts the language of civic boosterism found in this tourist pamphlet, with its references to "men of vision and imagination" (137), who helped shape the "city's destiny" (137), with descriptions of the ribald goings-on in the beer parlour.

A man in a suede windbreaker and a black cowboy hat held up a large magazine with a picture of a nude girl, her legs apart. Then he began to lick her with his

tongue. Then he held the magazine up and showed everybody with a foolish grin where he had set the paper. The others sat drinking. The fawn stetsons; the short boots, shiny leather; the sports shirts . . . the uniform of oil men. And later, when I went into the toilet, there was one of them counting his dollars methodically, putting some in one pocket and some in the other. Then he took a new dollar bill, unzipped his fly, took out his penis, wrapped the dollar bill around it like a sling, and holding his penis in the dollar he went over and urinated. (137)

The juxtaposition of these two texts, tourist pamphlet and beer parlour, could potentially be humorous but somehow it is not. Levine, it would appear, does not aim for laughter but to uncover a truth, that beneath the tourist pamphlet's inflated claims to greatness Edmonton "in fact . . . was still a small town, dull and boring" (138). Eliminate the narrator's appolonian sobriety, the detached gaze, and this beer parlour scene could well appear in one of Robert Kroetsch's novels. In such scenes as these, however, Levine is never a part of what he represents. Beyond the vaguely articulated but permeating sense of Weltschmerz, we learn shockingly little about the narrator's own body, its desires, excesses, or even the restrictions he places upon it. He defines himself, rather, in opposition to Gerry in the meat plant, or the oil men, these low-Others, as the epitome of reason, judgement, and restraint -- as the one who doesn't belong, the exile.

Which of all the possible enunciative positions should the reluctant historian adopt and which avoid? How not write the travelogue, the adventure story, the grand reportage, the utopia, the pilgrimage, the ecstatic (or ironic) access to wisdom, the ethnographic fable of rapport, the humanist rite of passage, the scientific myth of discovery, the quest (for woman, for the bizarre, for suffering, for art, for renewal, for an authentic voice)?

--James Clifford, The Predicament of Culture (170)

For long we hadn't heard so much news, such noise

--John Ashbery, "Two Scenes" (6)

As indicated in one of his recent essays "Ideology and Visual Representation: Some Post Cards from the Raj," Frank Davey is highly conscious of the inevitable relationship between representation, both visual and linguistic, and ideology, and more specifically, the relationship between conventional Western methods of representation and the discourse of empire. In this essay Davey analyses a collection of colonial Indian postcards produced by the British. He finds

an ideological significance in almost all aspects of these representations: in the angle at which a photograph was taken, in the amount of space afforded to the subject (an individual, a building, a monument), in the material means of reproduction (photograph or drawing), and in the linguistic captions that sometimes accompany them. Davey finds for example, that a reproduction of a British building or ship, a sign of empire, is conventionally shot from a distance, affording the subject a good deal of space and allowing it to dwarf smaller indigenous structures around it. In addition, such representations will conventionally be shot from an angle to lend it a realistic, three dimensional effect. Indian architecture, by contrast, is often shot dead on at close range, affording the subject only a two dimensional, cramped, less imposing effect. One postcard of the Taj Mahal was drawn rather than photographed, placing it, as Davey notes, "under the sign of the past" (45).

Very much in keeping with this essay's critique of the ideological semiotics of cultural representation, Davey's The Abbotsford Guide to India attempts to subvert the conventions of representation that we have examined thus far, to approach a cultural text (India) with a broader paradigm than the binary system of appropriation and negation, aesthetic praise or condemnation. The text seeks to avoid any of the standard "enunciative positions" (170) so brilliantly articulated in my epigraph by the meta-anthropologist, and cultural critic, James Clifford. For each of these familiar positions will be articulated and ordered in advance by a conventional western narrative structure and thus doomed to repeat the West's dominant ideologies of self, conquest, and humanist identity. The successful tourist experience -- much like the construction of a work within the rules of a specific genre -- is a process of exclusion, of keeping out everything that doesn't belong, by definition, within the category of the tourist experience: wretched poverty, disease, politics. (Davey's text parodies this process of exclusion with its long lists of prohibitions, of what the tourist must not do, must not eat, must not say, if one is to have the proper experience). In subverting the dominant conventions of representation of the travel book or tour guide, and in avoiding any stable enunciative positions, Davey's basic strategy is to renounce this process of exclusion, to free the text up to an unshielded barrage of signification from literally hundreds of different discourses. This open barrage of signification perhaps reflects more accurately than either

the tour guide with its sweeping generalizations and breezy optimism, or the traditional travel book with its authoritative commentary, the experience of a new culture where one is confronted with innumerable signs that one has no method of naturalizing. One could say, as James Clifford writes of Victor Segalen's novel Rene Leys, that "(what) remains are surfaces, mirrors, doubles -- an ethnography of signs without essential content" (159).

Let us examine, in the first place, how the text subverts or displaces the three dominant conventions of representation at work in Canada Made Me and in each of the colonial travel texts. In the following passage the text explicitly addresses the problematic of landscape representation.

The potted bougainvillaeas bloom on the crenellated rooftop. What is needed is a text of such beauty that you could read it without lamenting the absence of purpose, of significant movement, of timetable, of anxieties about sin, the absence of governors in the palaces, the low proportion of verbs in the vocabulary. 'Seventy-five years ago the view from your window was the same one the Lake Palace offers for your holiday pleasure today.' What is needed is a lens which could show us the presence or absence of fish in the nets of the distant almost motionless boats. What is needed is a beautiful fish. Udaipur is one of the cleanest cities in India. I didn't stay in the Lake Palace Hotel, I stayed in the Laxmi Vilas Palace Hotel, which was once the Maharajah's hunting palace, & it looks from a hilltop onto gardens of bougainvillae and picturesque lakes that enfold parks & more gardens. All of this was once the official India & now it officially earns tourist dollars, & the bicycles & battered city buses go their mysterious Eastern ways, away from the lakes & palaces. (73)

The passage commences with an intensely lyric sentence. "The potted bougainvillaeas bloom on the crenellated rooftop." Everything is in place for a textbook case of Pratt's "monarch-of-all-I-survey" scene: the heightened, distanced perspective on the rooftop, the flowers in the foreground, the picturesque lake below and beyond with the "distant almost motionless boats." However, having introduced the expectation of such a representation the text goes no further and displaces what should typically follow: the convention of aestheticization whereby the speaker pronounces upon the scene's aesthetic value, and simultaneously articulates a social meaning, an ideology. The speaker is troubled by the denial of history in such a representation, of the claim that the view has remained "the same" for "seventy five years." The speaker is aware, as Levine, Hearne, Moodie, or Traill never seem to be, of the indeterminable number of things that any synchronic representation from a single perspective must exclude. "What is needed is a text of

such beauty that you could read it without lamenting the absence of purpose, of significant movement, of timetable" The speaker is aware that what he sees is not all there is to see. "What is needed is a lens which could show us the presence or absence of fish in the nets of the distant almost motionless fishermen." Finally, the speaker is aware that the picturesque scene is a colonial construct, what "was once the official India" of the colonial postcards upon which Davey performs his deft semiotic readings. Any repetition of the construction of this scene within the text, therefore, will be a tacit repetition of the colonial process -- of the appropriation of the margins to the centre. Thus the text continually defers making such a representation, continually gestures toward it, then halts and questions its shortcomings, its ideological motives.

The dominant relation of seer over seen, Pratt's second convention, also collapses in this text.

Don't try to imagine the heat. It is unimaginable. It is unnecessary to imagine. Try sweating, not imagining.

In our open taxi we continue sweating. It is at least a gesture, a concrete image. An elephant blocking the road is a very concrete image. An elephant blocking the road so you must stop & sweat & consider drinking a bottle of warm cola is even a concrete advertisement. More concrete than a page. More concrete than the two sweaty rupees we pay for our cola.

'In fact' there is entirely no need for mimesis. The elephant is not imitating anything, but he is here, & the cars & scooters & bullock carts that can't get past are here also. & the children & cousins of the owner of the elephant who are selling the warm cola under the tree that the elephant is not imitating. (48)

Here, in a further meta-comment on representation, there is none of the spatial distance we found in Levine's and the colonial texts. The speaker is not outside the scene, creating and judging it from a detached perspective, but inside where the heat "is unimaginable." Rather than being above the scene the speaker is on a plane with it, signs approaching from all directions. As a result "there is entirely no need for mimesis." Mimesis can only be created when a static individual represents a stable world that exists out there as Other. Furthermore, there can be no domination of seer over seen in this text insofar as it provides no coherent viewing subject to perform either the seeing or the dominating. As Smaro Kamboureli writes: "If characterization is resolved at all in this poem, it is by Davey escaping from the lyric trap of the "I," by shifting the discursive space from which the "I" speaks; the subject/object dyad in this poem never achieves any significant stability" (116).

As the passage continues it addresses the problem of representing this scene in any manner that could at all do it justice.

But you decide on an imitation, a filmed & privileged elephant (what other kind of elephant is there in this 'underprivileged' country), decide on a question: how to take a picture of an elephant? Answer: You walk backward faster than the elephant walks forward. You walk backward, hoping not to step in elephant dung. You walk backward hoping backward is away from the picture frame. You find you are a shy tourist, you want not only to imitate the unscheduled stop into a photo of a happy elephant, you want also to keep your hands & feet clean, you want to keep your belly smooth. Above all you want to keep out of the picture. . . . (48)

The elephant (the referent), appears too large, and too much in process to be captured by the photograph, the arrested synchronic representation. In foregrounding the signified the rhetoric of the conventional representation makes selection, framing, and positioning -- "keep(ing) out of the picture" -- appear natural and transparent. This scene, however, problematizes these material processes, making them, rather than the referent, the prime focus of attention, showing them to be far from natural or transparent. Should the tourist's photograph turn out, it will only have done so as the result of a series of hurried gestures of which the photograph itself will show little trace.

The status of the last of Pratt's descriptive conventions, the density of meaning, is somewhat equivocal in The Abbotsford Guide. Certainly the text always propounds the density of meaning in the sense that masses of information are infiltrating from every direction: "The urban landscape of India can saturate the visitor with signification" (96). The text never predicates, authoritatively, an absence of significance in a given place, as does Levine towards the Canadian prairies. But insofar as this convention refers to the "materialization of space" (Hughes 158) that accompanies the construction of a realist verbal portrait, and the employment of highly selective adjectival modifiers and metaphors that tightly control the meaning of a representation -- as in Levine's portrait of the South Saskatchewan River -- by refusing conventional portrait all together, Davey's text necessarily displaces such techniques.

The text refuses conventional representations of peoples as well as landscapes and thereby avoids the practice of othering outlined in chapter one: the predication of physical and behavioural attributes to a given type -- Hearne's "Northern Indian," Moodie's "Canadian Woman" -- ones

which apply, by definition, to all members of the group. The section of the guide on "Indian Women" parodies, over-mimes, this form of representation. It contains, on the one hand, the same vast generalizations: "The women of India are very beautiful" (27). But then there are obvious contradictions and qualifications that produce uncertainty, undermining the text's authority. "Indian young people do not flirt in public Indian young people flirt in public but in a language unintelligible to western observers" (27). Another such qualification refers to a dominant subtext of tourism -- the sexual adventure. "It is understandably difficult for a westerner to flirt with a married or unmarried Indian It is easy for a westerner to flirt with an Indian but difficult for the westerner to know whether or not it is permissible" (27).

"The Indian Family" (22), similarly raises the expectation of a brief, lucid explication on this particular topic. The section commences with a conventional, seemingly authoritative sentence, that suggests that the speaker is familiar with the generic "Indian Family" and will describe it for us with the aid of the drama metaphor. "In the Indian family each member has a role in the daily drama" (22). The next sentence, however, frustrates this expectation by taking "drama" not as an extended metaphor for the family, but metonymically as a point of departure in and of itself. "Indian street theatre spans a range from the camel-driver's miming of his camel to the melodramatic fires of communal riots" (22). In the remainder of the passage the text makes as many references to acting as to the family and seldom draws any connection between the two. The reader's "aborted anticipation," Kamboureli correctly points out, "prevents India as text from being subsumed by the touristic fallacy that otherness can be appropriated" (116). By refusing a position of authority on the generic Indian family, the text rejects the idea that broad, sweeping statements can be made about such an essentially metaphysical concept, particularly by an observer from outside the language and culture. As the text states elsewhere: "Avoid all urges to totalize" (16).

The photographs in The Abbotsford Guide differ significantly from the photographs in Ken Mitchell's Through The Nan Da Gate. Mitchell's photographs, as we noted in chapter two, are dispersed throughout the book alongside the poems, and a photograph, or pair of photographs, frequently bears a close relation to a poem, serves to illustrate it in some manner. Both the iconic

and linguistic texts work to supplement each other in the Derridian sense -- work to compensate "through proliferation on the part of the signifier for a signified which can never be made fully present" (Silverman 37). To this extent Mitchell's photographs are, in a conventional way, the more attractive of the two. Classically composed, the collection includes the mandatory breath taking panoramas (50, 59) and heart warming humanist portraits (8, 36, 39, 61).

Davey's photographs, by contrast, are set off in their own section where they speak more to each other and bear a less immediate and coercive relation to the linguistic texts. Concerned more to problematize the gap between signifier and signified than to mute it, Davey's photographs appear to be deliberately amateurish: under (sometimes over) exposed, poorly composed, and with less than startling subject matter. Several of the photographs suggest an extended play on Earl Birney's line in "A Walk in Kyoto": "the old discretions of Zen / were not shaped for my phallic western eye" (5-6). "Lingam, Vijayanagar (15th Century)" (34) shows only a cylindrical object as seen through a dark square opening; "The Qutb Minar, Delhi (13th century)" (36) shows a tower rising high behind a curved archway; a photograph of an anthill (41) displays numerous phallic forms curving upwards and outwards in several directions; and in an otherwise unremarkable picture of a houseboat a sign on the roof announces its name to be the "Dongola Palace" (37). Other photographs attest to the titillation sought by the tourist (the voyeur): the erotic stone carvings in the temple in Khajuraha (35), and the stone carvings of large breasted "Buddhist Worshippers" in the Kanheri Caves (39). With both their material deficiencies, and their selection of topic, these photographs reflect back upon their producer, the harried western tourist snapping away at whatever catches his eye, more than they point outward to the presence of India, to the encapsulation of some genus loci.

As travel texts Canada Made Me and The Abbotsford Guide to India employ very different strategies in approaching the Other of foreign peoples and places. Levine, while he purports to

writē of home, speaks in the discourse of empire in tacitly (sometimes explicitly) holding to a set of absolute cultural standards formulated in Britain and Europe, against which other localities can always be judged inferior and hence subservient -- that which cannot be placed under the sign of the same is radically rejected. With its cultural arrogance Levine's text remains in the centralist mode of the colonizers but reverses the historically earlier encoding of appropriation through aesthetic praise to rehearse a post-colonial disavowal of the periphery as a vulgar failure. In London again, Levine closes his journal with these words:

I left the pub and went out into the light rain and walked along the High Street towards Kensington Gardens. I wondered why I felt so bitter about Canada. After all, it was all part of a dream, an experiment that could not come off. It was foolish to believe that you can take the throwouts, the rejects, the human kickabouts from Europe and tell them: Here you have a second chance. Here you can start a new life. But no one ever mentioned the price one had to pay; how much of oneself you had to betray. (277)

Canada Made Me indicates that the discourse of empire is not strictly the possession of the imperialist in the historical sense, but a collection of conventions, a stance, that can be unknowingly adopted by even the colonized. Levine, seemingly oblivious to the wider cultural-historical codes that interweave his text, believes himself to be making only the most private of utterances.

The Abbotsford Guide to India commences with a lengthy series of comic comparisons between Davey's home town of Abbotsford, B.C., and the immensity of India. "Abbotsford is the centre of Canada & India is the centre of the world. / Both India & Abbotsford missed the Industrial Revolution . . ." (3). On the one hand, by speaking from the decidedly peripheral locality of Abbotsford, this catalogue over-mimes the normally tacit, unreflexive process of the conventional travel text whereby the periphery is understood in terms of the writer's centre -- a centre-periphery metaphor that produces entirely arbitrary notions of cultural identity and difference. On the other hand, given the inevitability of this process -- there is no meta-language with which to speak neutrally of all localities -- the catalogue announces a philosophical-ideological stance, namely, the need for an awareness of the extent to which we remain, in all our observations, within a certain finite set of paradigms, never absolute but determined by specific

linguistic, historical, cultural, and geographical forces. To accept this position is to relinquish the prerogative to speak authoritatively and summarily in one discourse about that which clearly falls outside the limited purview of that discourse, or in the terms of our discussion, to cease to encode the western system of appropriation and negation under the guise of aestheticization. As Davey puts it: "Do not say audibly, 'Back home this would make a nice summer place'" (84).

Conclusion

From the dubious position of having no formal ethnographic training, and very little lived experience of any foreign culture, that is, from a position conspicuously lacking in its own authority, I have attempted to launch this critique of cultural representations in a selection of Canadian travel texts. In this respect I too am no doubt guilty of the touristic fallacy, of taking in too much too quickly yet nonetheless expounding upon it all with confidence and authority. Hopefully one can find no pretensions on my part either to have completed anything like a comprehensive study of Canadian travel writing (I self-consciously chose to discuss a few texts in some detail rather than attempting an overview of a great number), or to the possession of some truth about the multitude of peoples and places written in these texts, a truth against which I could then contrast these representations and evaluate to what extent they 'got it right.' To an extent every (re)-presentation attests to its own falsity, makes present to the reader that the actual referent is absent and must be spoken for (Said 20-21). To the extent that there is an ideal, or privileged term that structures this critique (as indeed there must be to some extent), it is a skepticism of any straightforward, positive assertion about the Other, an appreciation for what Adorno considered "thy tyranny of identity" -- the suppression of heterogeneity in the name of identity (see Jay 68, 70). Guided by such a predisposition one looks for the travel text to exhibit a certain reflexivity, or self-consciousness, upon (to name only a few aspects) the text as an intertextual construct, the writer's subject position, the values and interests that structure and inform any representation, and the very real (and often unequal) relations of power that mediate the representation of self and Other.

The Abbotsford Guide to India, one such highly reflexive discourse, continually introduces the forms, conventions, and ideological assumptions of the travel book only to submit them to a radical critique -- a continuous, non-synthetic dialectic of beginnings and dispersals as though "this kind of tourist/poet cannot abide the text he creates" (Kamboureli 118). In the resultant text the reader fails to feel at home, is refused any easily assimilable knowledge about India. Masses of

information are proffered in the form of statistics, cultural mores, religious practices, 'individualistic impressions,' but they never add up to a big picture as seen from some transcendental position. (By contrast, in Levine's more metaphoric text the overwhelming number of descriptive passages, narrated events, and dialogues, all converge in confirmation of the text's overarching thesis or meaning: Canada as the wasteland). Even the status of the information is seriously compromised, subject as it not infrequently is, to blatant contradiction and falsity. The text confirms our contemporary disbelief in epistemological systems, in the knowledges and totalities they create. Theorizing on the forms a hypothetical "postmodern ethnography" might take Stephen Tyler writes:

We confirm in our ethnographies our consciousness of the fragmentary nature of the post-modern world, for nothing so well defines our world as the absence of a synthesizing allegory, or perhaps it is only a paralysis of choice brought on by our knowledge of the inexhaustible supply of such allegories that make us refuse the moment of aesthetic totalization, the story of stories, the hypostatized whole.

But there are other reasons, too. We know that these textual transcendentals, these invocations of holism, of functionally integrated systems, are literary tropes, the vehicles that carry imagination from the part to the whole, the concrete to the abstract, and knowing them for what they are, whether mechanistic or organismic, makes us suspect the rational order they promise" (132).

The Abbotsford Guide to India goes some distance toward realizing such a postmodern ethnography.

With a different strategy, Earle Birney's "Sinaloa" also reflects back on the process of cultural representation destabilizing the dichotomous oppositions, and the relations of power upon which ethnographic representation conventionally rests. Refusing to stand at attention and be represented, Birney's Mexican is both vocal and threatening. In his 'broken' English he challenges the travel poet's authority to speak for the local, systematically challenges each aspect of the landscape privileged within the tourist/poet's aesthetic. Neither Davey's nor Birney's text should be conceived as a perfect model for cultural representation in the travel text (how many more texts could parody the Travel Guide, and how useful or interesting would they be?), but both stand in welcome relief to the unselfconscious representations produced in the majority of texts discussed in this thesis. The reflexive strategies employed by Davey and Birney act, as Stephen

Tyler suggests the postmodern ethnography will, in part, as ". . . an odd kind of lit. crit." (138) with respect to earlier forms of representation. Since there is no position outside of ideology, no metalanguage with which to discourse neutrally about the Other, such reflexivity is necessary if the travel text is to avoid being entrapped within the ideologies of appropriation and of naturalization, that necessarily accompany the dominant mimetic systems.

However, as Mary Louise Pratt argues in her discussion of the post-colonial travel texts of Paul Theroux and Alberto Moravia, the traditional conventions of representation are still a dominant mode of discourse in travel writing ("Conventions" 148-152). In Through the Nan Da Gate, and Canada Made Me such traditional conventions, and their accompanying assumptions of interpretive authority, speak through and undercut Mitchell's sympathetic representation of China, and Levine's denigrating (but allegedly private) representation of Canada. Mitchell's text seems only to repeat the West's, and particularly Canada's, dominant images of China. Levine's text repeats the familiar centralist construction of the periphery as low-Other.

The acceptances that a reflexive discourse implies, that our knowledge and our representations are always positioned and partial, need not lead to a kind of cultural solipsism, or to the conclusion that it is impossible to know anything about another culture. As James Clifford has argued in discussing contemporary innovative forms of ethnographic writing, a rigorous political and epistemological self-consciousness, once built into the structure of "ethnographic art," can become a source of representational tact rather than an occasion for self (or ethnocentric) absorption ("Partial" 7). (Clifford defines ethnography in a broad sense as "diverse ways of thinking and writing about a culture from the standpoint of participant observation" (Predicament 9). His definition includes the travel book and the poetry of William Carlos Williams in addition to the anthropological study). The subjectivities produced in ethnographic writing are "constructed domains of truth, serious fictions" (Predicament 10). Beyond the intractable question of their ultimate truth or falsity these representations are "social facts" (Rabinow 234-261). In playing an integral role in the multi-subjective, power-laden and incongruent ways in which cultural identities are negotiated, they have a material reality. Once having abandoned the claims of an earlier naive

realism the construction of these subjectivities becomes a question of ethics and politics (or openly becomes such, for in effect it always was) as much as it becomes an occasion for repeated mediations on the 'endless free play of the signifier,' within a postmodern inter-textual universe. Or if I can put this simply, one should be equally suspicious of overly relativized preciousness in travel writing as of the unselfconscious representation. While one should be suspicious of the imperial tendencies of the attempt to understand another culture, one should not discard understanding as a value or goal (see Rabinow 258).

In addition to this (qualified) protest in favour of reflexive discourses, my critique of travel writing has been informed by what might be described as a sceptical attitude toward visualism, the predominant authority traditionally invested in the eye in ethnographic representations, and relatedly, a mistrust of monological authority. To outline, in conclusion, the details of this position somewhat more explicitly may suggest how newer paradigms of cultural representations could attempt to avoid both the glib interpretive authority of a naive realism on the one hand, and the dangers of a hermetic reflexivity on the other. It must also be pointed out, however, that no representational strategy, old or new, is innocent or unproblematic.

In a remarkable study, "Origins of Sightseeing," sociologist Judith Adler writes, "the traveller's body, as the literal vehicle of the travel art, has been subject to historical construction and stylistic constraint. The very senses through which the traveller receives culturally valued experience have been molded by differing degrees of cultivation and, indeed, constraint" (8). Examining travel books and treatises on travel method (popular in the sixteenth century), Adler traces the ascendancy of the eye over the ear in travel practices from the sixteenth to the late eighteenth century. Openly secular forms of tourism were first practiced by European elites in the early sixteenth century (Adler 9). At this point travel was primarily conceived of as "a reflective and disciplined exercise of the ear and the tongue" (Adler 10). As part of their diplomatic training for careers in the royal court, the aristocracy travelled abroad to learn foreign languages and discourse with learned and cultivated individuals. To the extent that sight was emphasized at all it was almost exclusively in the context of reading. The traveller confirmed with his eyes what the

classical texts had already written about a given locality. "Any sightseeing which takes place remains at the service of textual authority" (Adler 10).

Through the course of the seventeenth century with the advent of science's empiricist epistemology the eye is privileged and becomes by far the traveller's most important sensory organ. But sight itself should not be regarded as static in travel, there are historically shifting ways of seeing. Broadly, Adler identifies two conceptions of the role of the eye in travel practices. (These conform to the continuum discussed in my first chapter between the scientific "informational" travel text, and the subjective "experiential" travel text). "The 'eye' cultivated in the initial period of sightseeing [from the seventeenth to late eighteenth centuries] was deliberately disciplined to emotionally detached, objectively accurate vision . . ." (Adler 18). Furthermore, a criterion of public as opposed to private relevance determined what objects were worthy of being seen and represented in the travel text: "generally useful knowledge" such as the outlay of a foreign city, as opposed to descriptions of art works.

The latter part of the eighteenth century, however, witnessed a change in the dominant canon of sightseeing.

The traveller's "eye," hitherto bound by a normative discourse rooted in fealty to science, became increasingly subject to a new discipline of connoisseurship. The well trained "eye" judiciously attributed works of art, categorized them by style, and made authoritative judgements of aesthetic merit as travel itself became an occasion for the cultivation of "taste." . . . travellers were less and less expected to record their observations in an emotionally detached, impersonal manner. (Adler 22)

Adler largely attributes this shift in sightseeing conventions to a certain exhaustion in the earlier taxonomical measuring, categorizing, and counting of objects in the world's frequently travelled landscapes. As this "information" became exhaustively catalogued the traveller could no longer hope to gain recognition from a style of observation caricatured by Emerson as "counting the cats of Zanzibar" (qtd in Adler 22). Thus the travel discourse gradually adopted different objects and different ways of seeing. But one would also wish to attribute this shift in sightseeing conventions to the advent of Romanticism, to the rejection of an exterior scientific objectivity that found its ground of truth in the interiority of the bourgeois subject.

What Adler so effectively demonstrates is that "the strong present link between tourism and sightseeing should not be taken for granted or regarded as static in nature" (8), and further, that the privileging of a particular sense in a given historic period always entails an ideological significance.

"One is tempted to suspect," Adler concludes,

. . . that during a period in which, for the first time, a single system of interrelated markets began to span the globe, a style of travel performance which privileged the eye for comprehensive inventory served as one of the rituals through which European cultural and intellectual elites sought to take title to "the whole world" then coming into view. (24)

I mentioned in my first chapter, in discussing the differing strategies of representation employed in A Journey to the Northern Ocean, on the one hand, and Roughing It in the Bush and Winter Studies and Summer Rambles on the other, the shift Adler speaks of from the scientific to the sentimental eye/I. (The Backwoods of Canada being something of a hybrid between these two positions). Canada Made Me, Through the Nan Da Gate, and much of Birney's travel poetry ("A Walk in Kyoto," "Sunday Nightfall in Winnipeg") have all largely remained within the second side of this opposition as impressionistic travel discourses, controlled by a coherent narrating subject, and relying predominantly on the authority of the "eye witness." I believe we are beginning to see signs, however, of a challenge to the historic authority invested in sight. What are the consequences of the West's strongly visualist taxonomical imagination in representing their own and other cultures "as though they were theatres of memory, or spatialized arrays" (Clifford "Partial" 12)? Our deeply ingrained ocular metaphors have constituted cultures as things to be observed rather than heard, invented in dialogue, or transcribed. I have attempted to point out the insidious effects of texts that claim the truth of vision for their own rhetorically constructed, ideologically situated, ways of seeing: the effects of constituting the Other, through a detached gaze, as a grotesque or carnivalesque spectacle; of the intense 'bodyscape' that transfixes the being of the observed subject in an immutable identity; of the detailed aestheticized landscape that constructs its object either as one worthy of appropriation or as being without any real value. Both the poverty and the imperialist tendencies of the visualist imagination are, perhaps, never more evident than in Hearne's negation of "Grizzled Bear Hill." Hearne hears from the Natives that this

is a place of great significance, but he sees "little worth remarking about" (89). The authority of the latter sense reigns unquestioned and supreme.

Once we have disputed the authority of first hand observation a radically different paradigm for cultural representation might suggest itself. "Once cultures are no longer prefigured visually -- as objects, theatres, texts," Clifford writes, "it becomes possible to think of a cultural poetics that is an interplay of voices, of positioned utterances. In a discursive rather than a visual paradigm, the dominant metaphors for ethnography shift away from the observing eye and toward expressive speech (and gesture)" ("Partial" 12). The cultural poetics Clifford invokes is modelled, of course, on Mikhail Bakhtin's concept of the polyphonic novel. The form is perhaps best realized for Bakhtin in Dostoevsky's novels.

A plurality of independent and unmerged voices and consciousnesses, a genuine polyphony of fully valid voices is in fact the chief characteristic of Dostoevsky's novels. What unfolds in his works is not a multitude of characters and fates in a single objective world, illuminated by a single authorial consciousness; rather a plurality of consciousnesses, with equal rights and each with its own world, combine but are not merged in the unity of the event. (Bakhtin 6 emphasis in original)

Along these lines one can begin to conceive of a practice of travel writing that constitutes culture as "heard" as much as "seen," as discursively created in the non-synthetic interplay of many contending voices. Culture would no longer be conceived as a static object to be described and interpreted by the viewer, but as a constantly shifting, open-ended process of negotiation (contestation) between the traveller, the locals (not just one standing in as a kind of Lukacsian 'type' for everyone else, but many and "each with its own world"), and the reader. Such a polyphony would seem to promise to dispense with not only the monological and visualist paradigms of a naive realism, but as well, with an overly acute self-consciousness of our inability to know anything with certainty about another culture. While the polyphonic text would not resolve this uncertainty, "a plurality of consciousnesses, with equal rights" would seem to dissolve the occasion for such self-consciousness. When culture becomes conceived as being continually made and re-made, the acute crisis at the failure to find its ontological ground ends.

But the invocation of a Bahktinian dialogy as a paradigm for a poetics of ethnographic writing, while promising, remains problematic. Few travel texts lack at least some element of dialogy; Roughing It in the Bush, and Canada Made Me frequently engage the voices of others. However, as Clifford points out, such "quotations are always staged by the quoter and tend to serve merely as examples or confirming testimonies" (Predicament 50). In Winnipeg Levine meets a young T.V. producer for lunch, an intellectually sophisticated Hungarian immigrant. The text represents him as virtually starving for intellectual companionship and has him discourse at length on the absence of any significant culture in Canada (106-108). His testimony lends the text's overarching thesis the authority of a local voice.

Of course, it is easy to imagine a text that would abdicate such an obvious authorial control over other's voices, and one would not wish to describe a text as polyphonic unless it did so. But even a seemingly oppositional "unmerged" voice such as Birney's Mexican (note the possessive) in "Sinaloa," remains a representation of the other's voice subject to the poet's construction within five, seven line stanzas -- arguably a displacement more than an elimination of monological authority. What are the implications of 'doing the locals in different voices' as a polyphonic cultural poetics might recommend? If the subjectivities produced in the travel text refer to less than 'real' individuals 'out there', one would still want to maintain that they are something more than invented characters in a novel. Thus the representation and the arrangement of these voices by the writer assumes a political and ideological dimension.

Two, perhaps more tangible, difficulties should be noted in passing as further limitations on a polyphonic travel text. The first is language. Unlike the anthropologist in the participant observer mode, the tourist moves quickly across the surfaces often ignorant of the languages of the localities s/he passes through. How in this event does one include the voices of others? The second difficulty is definitional. Given that one could include the play of multiple voices, at what point does one cease to have a travel text? The travel text seems to presuppose an identifiable consciousness or consciousnesses moving through space. This difficulty, however, lies at an extreme end of polyphony where, perhaps, all distinctions between genres dissolve.

Is The Abbotsford Guide to India a polyphonic text? On the one hand, as Kamboureli notes, the text largely dispenses with the subject-object dyad (116), with a unified viewing subject who looks out at a world subject to a coherent explanatory discourse, thus dispensing with the visual and monological paradigms of authority. But if the text refuses a narrating "I" who speaks to us of what he saw, it also fails to represent the coherent voices of others (even presuming they could speak English) giving us their perspective. One might, then, be tempted to dismiss any notion of The Abbotsford Guide as a polyphonic text. I would argue, however, that Davey's style of multiple-discourse-jamming does achieve a kind of polyphony if not in the traditional novelistic sense then in a more radical sense yet. In refusing to locate its utterance in identifiable speaking subjects (a narrator, locals, or others) the text refuses to stage dialogue in a kind of virtuoso performance of the controlling author. The result is a kind of undomesticated heteroglossia that recognizes that languages always precede their "origins" in speaking subjects. Textualization, the very fact of putting the spoken word "into" a written and printed form, changes the utterance fundamentally. As Walter Ong writes: "It (writing) is not a mere appendage to speech. Because it moves speech from the oral-aural to a new sensory world, that of vision, it transforms speech and thought as well" (8). Davey's is one strategy for recognizing and playing off a difficult double-bind articulated by Clifford: "If interpretive authority is based on the exclusion of dialogue, a purely dialogic authority would repress the inescapable fact of textualization" (Predicament 43).

My analysis of Canadian travel writing is, perhaps, best situated within what James Clifford has identified as "a pervasive postcolonial crisis of ethnographic authority Who has the authority to speak for a group's identity or authenticity? What are the essential elements and boundaries of a culture? How do self and other clash and converse in the encounters of ethnography, travel, modern interethnic relations?" (Predicament 8). The signs of this crisis of authority can be seen everywhere, in the disputes over male novelists employing female narrators ('appropriating the

female voice'), to the protests of Natives angered at the construction of their identity in traditional histories and in W.P. Kinsella's fiction. At best this crisis promises to raise awareness of the inevitable limits on authority in any given text or discourse, of the writer's relative subject position, of the often unequal relations of power that structure the representations of Self and Other; at best it cautions against unselfconscious representations and encourages dialogic. At their worst these protests, with an extreme and probably naive confidence in local authority, threaten to keep everyone in his or her place, never daring to speak beyond the confines of autobiography.

Professional ethnographers: anthropologists, sociologists, "area studies" experts (on Russia, the Far East, etc.), can gather over the conference table, or dedicate a special issue of a favourite journal, to discuss and recommend more innovative, open-ended strategies of ethnographic representation -- careers and reputations hang in the balance.¹ To make such recommendations of the non-professionalized practice of travel writing would be foolish if not pretentious. An undisciplined travel writing will no doubt continue to employ all the strategies of representation currently available, traditional and innovative, although with a predilection for those most readily accepted by a broad, non-specialist readership.² For this very reason the travel text will continue to constitute a more accurate gauge of a period's predominant conceptions of self and other than more professionalized practices of cultural representation -- to constitute a locus of its epoch's cultural codes, its knowledges and its vulgarisms. "If we collect all such knowledge, all such vulgarisms" Barthes wrote, "we create a monster, and this monster is ideology" (S/Z 97).

END NOTES

Introduction

1. For a discussion of orientational metaphors and the manner in which they structure language, see George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, Metaphors We Live By (ch. 4, and passim).

Chapter One

1. As Richard Glover notes, even Hearne's journal, originally written in the form of a report to the Hudson's Bay Company, was extensively revised and added on to for its publication in Britain (Glover, xxx-xliii).

2. Here I am adopting Said's language closely when he proposes, in examining textual authority, to look at a text's "strategic location" (20), that is, the author's position in a text with respect to the Oriental material he writes about. Said, then, examines the kind of narrative voice in these texts, the type of structure the writer builds, the kinds of images, themes, and motifs that circulate in his text. All of these, Said writes, "add up to deliberate ways of addressing the reader, containing the Orient, representing it, speaking on its behalf" (20).

3. Here, for example, is Hearne on the dispositions of Southern versus Northern Indian women:

... the Southern Indians, who are remarkable throughout all their tribes for being the most debauched wretches under the Sun. So far from laying any restraint on their sensual appetites, as long as youth and inclination last, they give themselves up to all manner of even incestuous debauchery; and that in so beastly a manner when they are intoxicated, a state to which they are peculiarly addicted, that the brute creation are not less regardless of decency. I know that some few Europeans, who have had little opportunity of seeing them, and of enquiring into their manners, have been very lavish in their praise; but every one who has had much intercourse with them, and penetration and industry enough to study their dispositions, will agree, that no accomplishments whatever in a man, is sufficient to conciliate the affections, or preserve the chastity of a Southern Indian woman.

The Northern India women are in general so far from being like those I have above described, that it is very uncommon to hear of their ever being guilty of incontinency, not even those who are confined to the sixth or even eighth part of a man" (81-82).

I comment later in this chapter on the function of such passages, with their peculiar mixture of moral condemnation and sexual fantasizing, in the representations of the Other.

4. This critique of the essentialist, metaphysical presuppositions of ethnographic representation was probably first launched, in a specifically Orientalist context, by Awar Abdel Maleli in the early 1950s (see Said, 97-98).

5. Eagleton views the aesthetic in part as a hegemonic force through which "structures of power" (43) are inscribed onto the body as "structures of feeling" (43). But Eagleton stresses an area of freedom within the body that can resist these inscriptions.

'Deep' subjectivity is just what the ruling social order desires, and exactly what it has most cause to fear. If the aesthetic is a dangerous, ambiguous affair, it is

because, as we shall see in this study, there is something in the body which can revolt against the power which inscribes it; and that impulse could only be eradicated by extirpating along with it the capacity to authenticate power itself" (28).

6. In The Politics and Poetics of Transgression Peter Stallybrass and Allon White repeatedly stress the fascination and desire encoded in a 'high' discourse's representation of a 'low' Other. "But disgust always bears the imprint of desire. These low domains, apparently expelled as 'Other', return as the object of nostalgia, longing and fascination. The forest, the fair, the theatre, the slum, the circus, the seaside-resort, the 'savage': all these, placed at the outer limit of civil life, become symbolic contents of bourgeois desire" (191).

7. In an excellent essay, "The Rhetoric of British and American Narratives of Exploration," Bruce Greenfield makes much the same point. "For the reader, the first-person narrator was a kind of imagining factotum, a literary handyman, whose personal experiences in strange environments represented many other imaginative efforts to incorporate the new lands and peoples of the Americas into a European world view" (57). And further on: "(what) Hearne and others like him came to write about their travels, their task was to translate what they had learned from the local environment and peoples into knowledge which was comprehensible and useful to European imperialists" (58).

8. Statistically it was true that the death rate amongst the Native population rose dramatically with colonial settlement at the time Traill wrote, but as Brian Dippie argues in The Vanishing American, the ideological construction of this as a 'natural' process, was used to justify an array of abusive and neglectful government policies (1-32, and passim).

9. The binary nature of the white man's representations of the Natives has frequently been noted. Dippie, for example, writes that: "the European image of the India oscillated between the noble savage and the bloodthirsty devil" (6). In The White Man's Indian Robert F. Berkhofer notes how these two opposing images were employed as 'empirical evidence' in the political theories of Thomas Hobbes and John Locke to prove, for Hobbes, that man's existence in the state of nature was indeed, "nasty, brutish, and short," and for Locke, that it was a more reasonable and dignified state of affairs. "In the books of Hobbes and Locke the Indian had moved from the contrasting descriptions of explorers and settlers to the ideological polemics of social philosophers" (22).

10. I have worked from two, both heavily edited, editions of Jameson's text: James J. Talman and Elsie McLeod Murray's (Nelson, 1932), and Clara Thomas's (McClelland and Stewart, 1965). I distinguish the editions in my references by placing the date of publication prior to the page citation. In "'Femininely speaking': Anna Jameson's Winter Studies and Summer Rambles in Canada," Bina Friewald comments upon the ideological function of editing the 'excesses' of this text's feminine voice, as has been done in every successive edition after the first (65).

11. Of the picturesque painter William Gilpin writes: "(variety) too is equally necessary in his composition: so is contrast. Both these he finds in rough objects and neither of them in smooth" (20).

12. In Landscape and Ideology Ann Bermingham has argued that landscape only emerges as an aesthetic object with land closure and increasing industrialization -- with the increasing movement of people away from the land. Its new value as an aesthetic object was intimately tied to its increased value as an economic object (1, 9).

13. It was Moses Norton, the Governor of the Prince of Wales's Fort at Churchill, "who launched Hearne on his journeys over the Barrens in search of copper which had long since been

known both to exist, and to be useless" (Glover, xii). Glover argues that the real motivation for the expedition was simply Norton's eagerness "to impress his masters in London" (xiii).

14. In an afterword to a recent edition of The Backwoods of Canada D.M.R. Bentley writes: "Both disturbed and excited by the processes of destruction and construction that constitute settlement, it (The Backwoods of Canada) finds its golden mean in the "Order in Variety" (to quote Alexander Pope's 'Windsor-Forest') of the picturesque, the aesthetic that shapes all Traill's descriptions of the ideal combination of the naturally irregular and geometrically ordered" (297).

15. Ann Bermingham points out that this is a contradiction at the heart of the picturesque, in Britain as well as in the colonial context. Uvedale Price, after Gilpin the major theorist of the picturesque, was "a gentleman farmer . . . concerned to increase production by maximum use of land, improved machinery, and so forth; as a theorist of the picturesque, however, he preferred an irregular, overgrown landscape dotted with dilapidated cottages and peopled with gypsies and beggars. The aesthetically pleasing landscape was not the economically productive one" (66). The picturesque landscape as Price constructed it was "a largely abandoned one" (69), and this pathos cut two ways. "On the one hand, the picturesque landscape celebrated a rural way of life as that which had been or was being, lost. On the other hand, the manifest desolation of the landscape could work as a justification for transforming it to a more efficient vital one" (69). In the colonial context the landscape is not-yet-picturesque, not abandoned so much as isolated and not-yet-inhabited. The manifest desolation and call for transformation, however, are much the same.

16. On the ideological signified as a "second order semiological system" or connotation, see Roland Barthes, "Myth Today" (114) in Mythologies.

17. D.M.R. Bentley argues that Traill's botanical descriptions are "refutations of the myth, traceable to the French naturalist Buffon (and evident in works as diverse as Oliver Goldsmith's The Deserted Village and Alexander McLachlan's The Emigrant), that nature in the New World is fallen and debased, that "the flowers [of Canada] were without perfume, and the birds without song" (298). In this description of the "Canadian Woods", however, Traill seems to be firmly within this tradition.

18. Michael Peterman writes: "Traill's strengths as a writer are her clarity, firm sense of identity, optimistic spirit, and above all her attention to detail, which is particularly evident in her observation of nature" (703). Comparing Moodie and Trail Marni Stanley writes: "Moodie shunned it (the wilderness) and held back little of her animosity in her books. . . . Her sister Traill takes to the bush more readily and, a new Eve in the garden, is soon naming plants and singing the praises of the richness of the land" (52).

19. On mimesis and diegesis see Gerard Genette's discussion of narrative "mood" (Genette, ch. 4). To the extent that the dearth of landscape description is attributable to the text's diegetic quality, MacGreger's thesis that it is motivated by a kind of Freudian denial or repression of a direct confrontation with the landscape seems misplaced.

20. "The strange, the formal, the fictional," Jonathon Culler writes, "must be recuperated or naturalized, brought within our ken, if we do not want to remain gaping before monumental inscriptions" (134). Correspondence of signifier and signified is the goal: "to naturalize a text is to bring it into relation with a type of discourse or model which is already, in some sense, natural and legible" (Culler 138).

21. Part of Jameson's reverie in this scene is attributable to her early feminist perspective and the fact that, specifically, a woman has acceded to the throne. Unlike Bina Friewald, however, I do not believe that this serves to divorce her text from the imperialist expansionist project. Often "Jameson speaks with great force against a selfish, shortsighted, irresponsible

colonialist ideology" as Friewald maintains (72), yet equally often her text is situated firmly within a discourse of empire. I elaborate upon this in the final section of this chapter.

22. Here, however, I must resist the impulse to categorize and note that probably the finest instance of awareness of the self seeing and the self being seen, resulting in a parody of both self and Other as mutually estranged and repulsive, occurs in Hearne's text. Here is Hearne's representation of the Natives' representation of himself.

As I was the first whom they had ever seen and in all probability might be the last, it was curious to see how they flocked about me, and expressed as much desire to examine me from top to toe, as an European naturalist would a non-descript animal. They, however, found and pronounced me to be a perfect human being, except in the colour of my hair and eyes: the former, they said, was like the stained hair of a buffaloe's tail, and the latter, being light, were like those of a gull. The whiteness of my skin also was, in their opinion, no ornament, as they said it resembled meat which had been sodden in water till all the blood was extracted. On the whole, I was viewed as so great a curiosity in this part of the world, that during my stay there, whenever I combed my head, some or other of them never failed to ask for the hairs that came off, which they carefully wrapped up, saying "When I see you again, you shall again see your hair" (78).

23. The Backwoods of Canada -- more so than the other texts -- is a hybrid, combining a scientific botanical discourse and pragmatic advice, with expressions of personal preferences, and sentimental parables. I would not, however, in a dialectical fashion, wish to privilege it as the ideal synthesis of these two positions.

Chapter Two

1. The Strength of this myth may account for the popularity of the fortune cookie that, as Zhang Longxi points out in "The Myth of the Other: China in the Eyes of the West," is "so popular in every Chinese restaurant in the United States [and Canada] but are unheard of in China" (130).

2. In Semiotics of Poetry Michael Riffaterre lists "deviant grammar or lexicon" (2), referred to as "ungrammaticalities" (2), as one of the chief ways poetry disrupts the mimetic representation of reality.

3. In the language of narratology the focalizer (usually a character within the represented world) is the one through whom events and perceptions are filtered or 'focalized.' The concept of focalization permits one to consider the distinction between who speaks and who sees. This distinction is often conflated with the traditional concept of "point of view". See Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan Narrative Fiction (ch. 6).

4. The rhetorical strategy adopted by the Mexican in this poem approaches one described by Jill D. Sweet in "Burlesquing 'The Other' in Pueblo Performance." To quote the essay's introductory abstract: "The author contends that through this humorous performance process, the Pueblo people make sense of, disarm, and incorporate into their world foreign people, ideas, an events. As the Pueblo comics and clowns play at being tourists and other non-Pueblo people, they redefine for the Pueblo communities what it is to be Pueblo" (62).

Chapter Three

1. See Davey's "Reading Canadian Reading," for his own account of the development of his critical thought, in Reading Canadian Reading (1-18).
2. The wording is Davey's own (Reading 4).
3. In an insightful review, Douglas Barbour has contrasted Davey's work with Ken Mitchell's Through the Nan Da Gate. My approach in this chapter is similar to Barbour's in arguing that Davey's approach to another culture appears more satisfying than these more traditional forms. See "Tourists," Prairie Fire (86-89).
4. Toril Moi provides a concise definition of this relatively recent neologism: "Derrida . . . labels the mainstream of Western thinking logocentric, due to its consistent privileging of the Logos, the Word as a metaphysical presence Phallogocentrism denotes a system that privileges the phallus as the symbol or source of power. The conjuncture of logocentrism and phallogocentrism is often called, after Derrida, phallogocentrism" (179). Levine's landscape representation clearly privileges both logos and phallus. The predication of their absence defines the prairies in its inferiority.

Conclusion

1. See James Clifford, and George E. Marcus, eds., Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography, (A School of American Research Advanced Seminar). This collection of essays provides both an excellent attempt to deal with these kinds of questions, and a review of other literature in the field.
2. To this extent travel writing is not strictly "undisciplined." Numerous strictures on what is deemed publishable and readable will act to dictate the forms it will take.

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Appendix: "Faces of China,"
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