THE EMPIRE OF ENGLISH LITERATURE:

EDITING THE GLOBAL ANGLOPHONE, 1947-1993

A Dissertation

Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School

of Cornell University

in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

by

Ben Angus Hay Fried

August 2022

© 2022 Ben Angus Hay Fried

THE EMPIRE OF ENGLISH LITERATURE:

EDITING THE GLOBAL ANGLOPHONE, 1947-1993

Ben Angus Hay Fried, Ph.D.

Cornell University 2022

"The Empire of English Literature" uncovers the editor's role in constructing the transnational networks that give material and imaginative shape to the emergent field of the Global Anglophone. Tracking works of fiction as they are transformed by the editorial process, I bring to light the competition driving the postwar expansion of Anglophone literatures: between the established institutions of London and New York and the growing institutions of rival literary capitals closer to home. In doing so, I present a fresh account of editorial power that integrates theories of creative reading and literary economy, demonstrating how the editor's reading mediates between writer and public, text and institution, anticipating reception and so reshaping composition. My chapters scrutinize six author-editor relationships, drawing on archival research conducted across four countries and recasting critical interpretations of V. S. Naipaul, Wole Soyinka, Mavis Gallant, Maeve Brennan, Vikram Seth, and Helen Garner. These close readings further illustrate the mediation between each editor's institution and two regions of the English-writing world: the BBC as it broadcasts Trinidadian and Nigerian narratives; *The New Yorker* as it publishes Canadian and Irish authors; and Penguin Books as it spreads to Australia and India. Arguing that editing provides a much-needed critical framework—at once aesthetic and commercial—for the Global Anglophone, I incorporate critiques of the rising discipline's

appropriation of postcolonial territory while guiding it towards a more pluralist future. “The Empire of English Literature” is the first scholarly work to illuminate the editor's part in enlarging literatures in English, advocating for a corresponding diversification of English studies and deepening our understanding of the editorial function in literary history.

Biographical Sketch

Ben Fried previously studied at the University of Cambridge, where he was a Gates Cambridge Scholar, and McGill University, where he received the Shakespeare Gold Medal. He was supported throughout his Ph.D. by a Doctoral Fellowship from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada. Born in New York and raised in Canada, his fate was sealed when he learned how to read. In addition to several stints as a student, he has been employed as the graduate assistant to Cornell's Committee on the Future of Scholarly Communications, the principal investigator on the Bombay Poets Digital Archive, a first-year writing seminar instructor, an editor for Open Book Publishers, a report writer for Cambridge's Centre of Islamic Studies, an English lector at the Université de Montpellier, an English teacher in Spain, and an editorial intern for various organizations—while working in more libraries and archival centers than he can count.

For my parents, who always keep me going.

There is then creative reading as well as creative writing.

—Emerson, “The American Scholar” (1837)

In literature, as in the theatre, much happens behind the scenes.

—Balzac, *Lost Illusions* (1839)

I think that if *all* English literatures could be studied together, a shape would emerge which would truly reflect the new shape of the language in the world.

—Salman Rushdie, “‘Commonwealth Literature’ Does Not Exist” (1983)

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

During the writing of this dissertation, I built up a pile of debts I cannot hope to repay. To advisors and archivists, family and friends, I offer these thanks for their encouragement, generosity, and insight.

I owe my advisory committee the largest share of gratitude for their constant good judgment and their endless patience with my equally endless drafts. My chair, Prof. Jeremy Braddock, has been a fount of mind-opening and project-shaping appraisals. His sage advice, intellectual and professional, has been essential from my earliest year at Cornell to my last. In fact, he was the very first Cornell person I met—over Skype, in an English spring—and I am so glad that he provided both my introduction to Ithaca and the clear-sighted supervision that this bulky project required. Prof. Andrew Galloway has been as generous a reader as any graduate student could hope for, bringing the sweep of his knowledge to bear on my efforts to chart the twentieth-century history of the book. His readiness to step from the medieval to the modern—as well as to put up with my miserable attempts at paleography—was deeply appreciated. Prof. Gregory Londe gave me a vocabulary with which to think about a more diverse future for English studies, a chance to teach in his advanced course on Irish fiction, and sensitive feedback on every aspect of my dissertation. Prof. Mũkoma wa Ngũgĩ was willing to join my committee at a later stage and precisely when I needed his expertise most on African literature. His *Rise of the African Novel* (2018) has been a close and challenging companion throughout my research, his warm responses to my work a source of delight and inspiration. I must thank two more professors who significantly shaped my intellectual ambitions at Cornell. Midway through my stint in the doctoral program, Prof. Laura Brown guided my independent

research project on the editor's emergence in the eighteenth century: this laid the historical foundation for the twentieth-century chapters to come. At around the same time, sitting in the Temple of Zeus café, Prof. Roger Gilbert made a suggestion that determined the structure of my dissertation, urging me to balance the chapters so that each one illustrated the mediation between an editor's institution and two regions of the Global Anglophone. My drafts overflowed the original scheme of three chapters, but Roger's architecture can still be seen in the three overarching sections that constitute "The Empire of English Literature." Finally, every PhD candidate passing through the Department of Literatures in English owes an enormous amount to Kara Peet, our Graduate Program Coordinator. She saved me from my own incompetence countless times, and I am very grateful for the order she brought to my graduate student existence.

My research ranged over four years, five countries, and a long pandemic season. The most exciting moments took place in interviews or in archives. I am beholden to a large number of legendary editors for their willingness to speak with me. Part One of my dissertation was enlivened by a crackling phone call to Wole Soyinka, at home in Abeokuta. Part Two led me to such *New Yorker* stalwarts as Roger Angell, Daniel Menaker, and Charles McGrath—as well as to the editor who brought William Maxwell into the Library of America and Maeve Brennan back into print, Christopher Carduff. Douglas Gibson filled in the Canadian half of this story and his own part in assembling Mavis Gallant's *Home Truths*. Part Three would not have been possible without the cooperation of David Davidar and Hilary McPhee, without their readiness to take part in several long Zoom calls unearthing large chunks of the past. I am grateful also to Maggie McKernan and Terry Karten for answering my questions about their roles in editing *A Suitable Boy*, and to Rukun Advani for his emails on the wider history of twentieth-century

English-language publishing in India. At the final count, “The Empire of English Literature” draws on twenty-five different archival collections. My project began at the New York Public Library, and archivists there remained tremendously helpful from first to last. When lockdowns spread in the spring of 2020, however, I feared that the dissertation was no longer viable, at least not in the form I had dreamed of and which still required research in Britain, India, and Australia. Librarians came to my rescue, sending me material in amounts I had not thought possible. I am especially indebted to Sophie Garrett at the University of Melbourne Archives, to Louise North at the BBC Written Archives Centre, to Hannah Lowery at the University of Bristol’s Special Collections, to Layla Hillsden at Leeds University Library, and to Martin Maw at the Oxford University Press Archives. The extent of my research was ultimately underwritten by the generosity of the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, which supported me throughout my PhD with a Doctoral Fellowship.

My deepest thanks are due to the friends and family who put up with me and who made life enjoyable despite my best efforts. A group of medievalists kept me honest and outgoing at Cornell: they know who they are. Old pals from Ottawa to Montreal to Cambridge made more of a difference to my sum of happiness than they realize with their messages, Zooms, and holiday rendezvouses. Meanwhile, the Hay-Frieds were the rock of my existence. My parents were the sounding board for all problems, the source of most solutions, and the swellest folks I know. My sister, Sochi, is an inspiration and the only person in the whole world who gets all the old movie references that swamp my mind.

Above all, one person kept me sane and buoyant. In the pandemic winter of 2021, I met a curly-haired Italian historian who changed my life. Without Benedetta, I would be lost; with her, I am found.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION: EDITING THE GLOBAL ANGLOPHONE 1

PART ONE: THE BBC 27

INTRODUCTION: HENRY SWANZY AND RADIO *VOICES* OF THE GLOBAL ANGLOPHONE 28

CHAPTER ONE: V. S. NAIPAUL'S *CARIBBEAN VOICES* 56

CHAPTER TWO: WOLE SOYINKA'S *WEST AFRICAN VOICES* 99

PART TWO: *THE NEW YORKER* 136

INTRODUCTION: THE BORDERS OF WILLIAM MAXWELL'S MAGAZINE 137

CHAPTER THREE: MAVIS GALLANT'S HOMECOMING 170

CHAPTER FOUR: MAEVE BRENNAN'S EXILE 224

PART THREE: PENGUIN BOOKS 282

INTRODUCTION: THE PENGUIN GROUP AND PUBLISHING (IN)DEPENDENCE 284

CHAPTER FIVE: HELEN GARNER AND THE FALL OF MCPHEE GRIBBLE 304

CHAPTER SIX: VIKRAM SETH AND THE RISE OF PENGUIN INDIA 325

CONCLUSION: TOWARDS A HISTORY OF THE EDITOR 359

WORKS CITED 387

TABLE OF FIGURES

FIGURE 1: LITERARY CAPITALS OF THE GLOBAL ANGLOPHONE xiii

FIGURE 2: EDITORIAL NODES AND INSTITUTIONAL NETWORKS xiv

FIGURE 3: A SELECTION OF *WEST AFRICAN VOICES* 117

FIGURE 4: THE TRADITIONAL MARKET AGREEMENT, CA. 1947 284

FIGURE 5: OUTPOSTS OF THE PENGUIN EMPIRE 284

FIGURE 6: THE EMERGENCE OF THE EDITOR 365

FIGURE 7: DUELING PREFACES IN *LES LIAISONS DANGEREUSES* 375

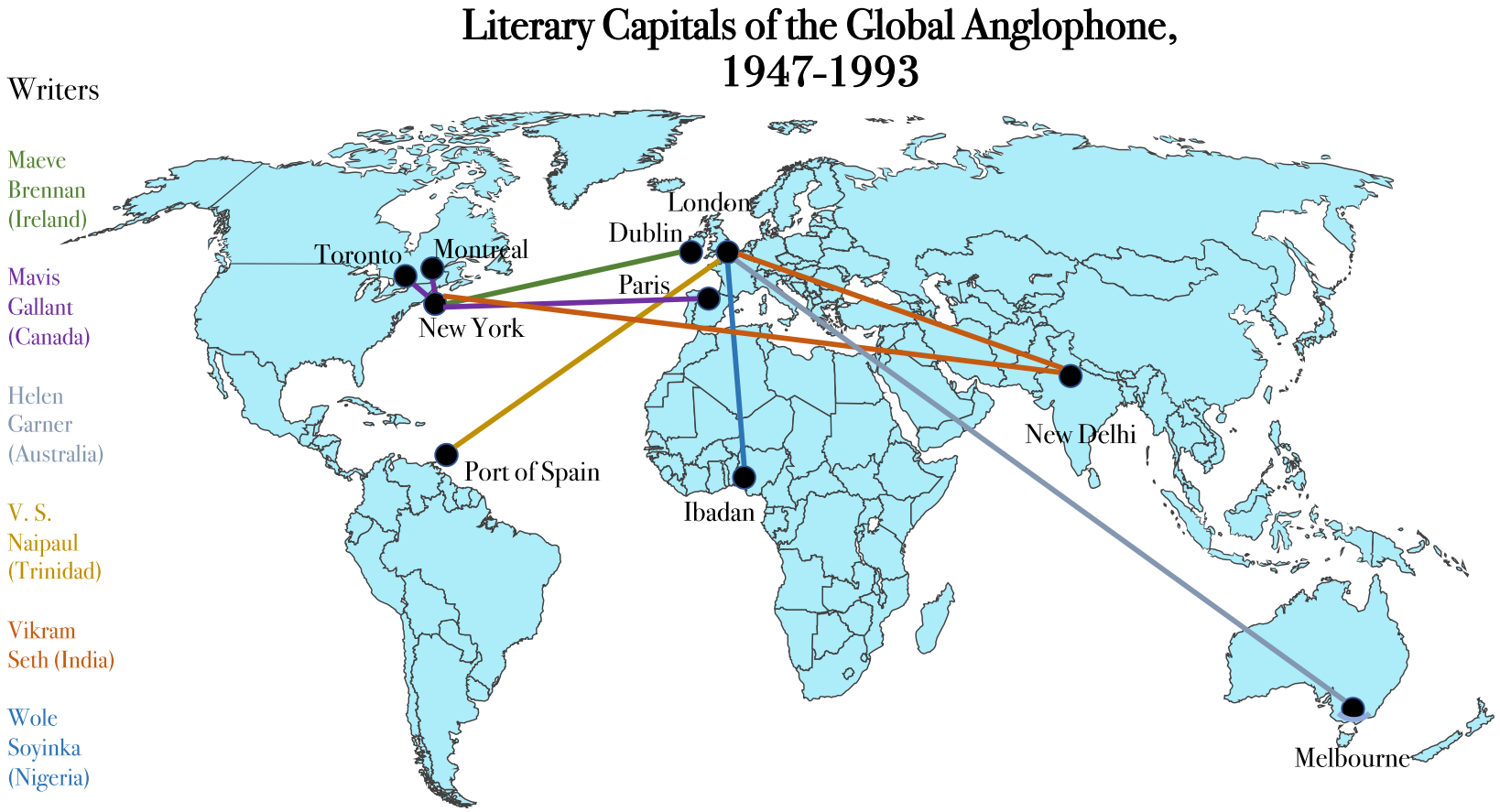


Fig. 1: The movement of writers, the range of editorial relationships, and the balance of publishing power

Editorial Nodes and Institutional Networks of the Global Anglophone, 1947-1993

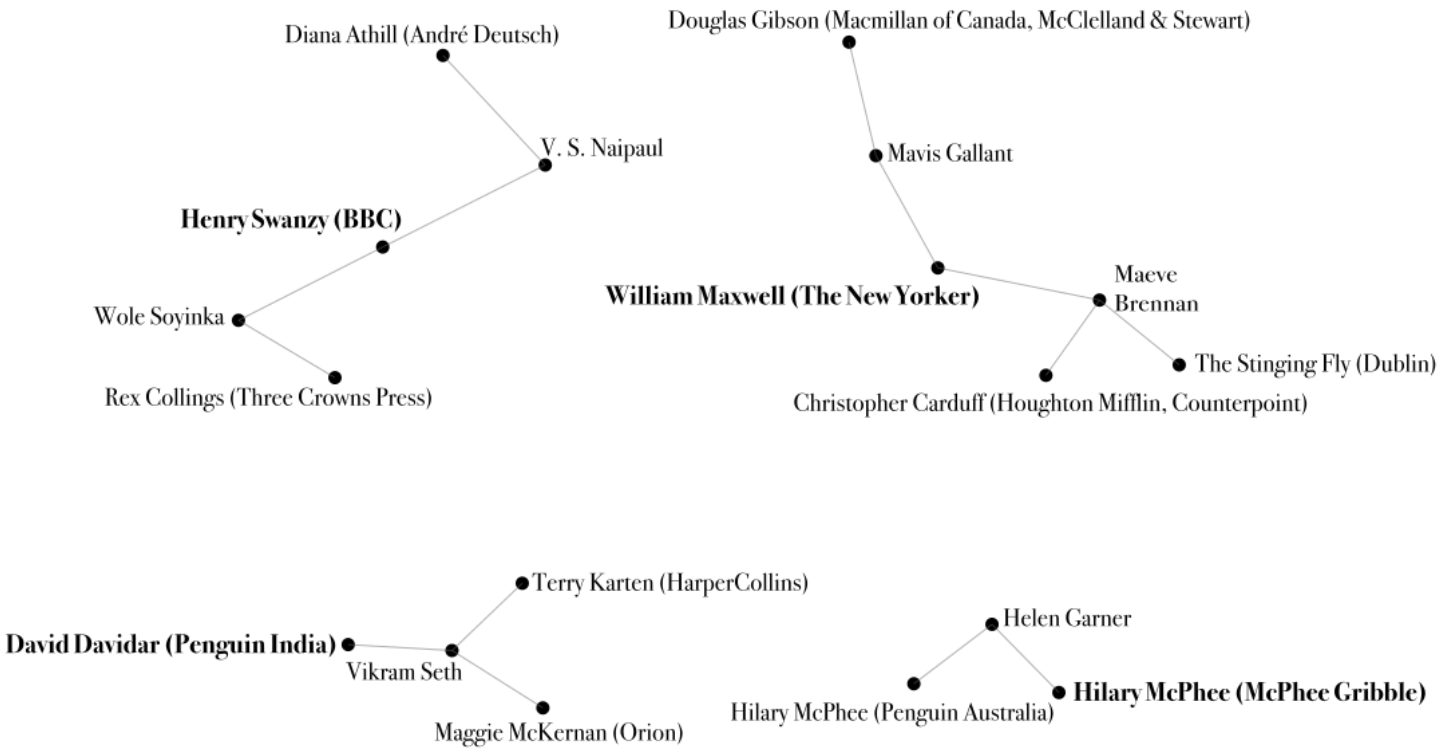


Fig. 2: Networks linking publishing institutions to Anglophone authors across five continents

INTRODUCTION: EDITING THE GLOBAL ANGLOPHONE

Here are three instances of editorial intervention determining the fate of a literary work: one creative, one destructive, one poised between the two, and all drawn from the pages that follow.

By 1992, Vikram Seth's novel had grown beyond expectation—in page count and advances received—but it was not yet ready for publication. He had come home after the surprising success of his Californian novel-in-verse *The Golden Gate* (1986), moving in with his parents in Delhi, living on royalties which eventually ran out, taking an eventual eight years to write one of the longest novels in the English language. Set against the backdrop of northern India and the newly independent country's first general election, the marriage plot of *A Suitable Boy* meanders gracefully through a constantly expanding landscape of subplots, secondary characters, and Indian languages. Reports vary on the size of the initial typescript Seth sent to his agent: the agent himself put it at 5,000 pages, his wife (who also happened to be the book's British editor) recalled a more modest "Everest" of 3,000. And as its worldwide launch approached, *A Suitable Boy* still overflowed any reasonable attempt at bookbinding. Seth left his parents' house—for his editor's in another part of Delhi. Seduced by an exchange of sonnets, the young writer had chosen David Davidar as his primary editor and Davidar's recently-founded Penguin India as his Indian publisher. In the months leading up to publication, he arrived at Davidar's doorstep with a portable writing desk, a demand that "every waking minute" should be devoted to whipping the book into its final shape, and an eagerness to enlist the whole household, including Davidar's cook, "who read not a word of English" (he was asked his opinion on the various cover options). Hundreds of cut pages later, this collaboration

between writer and editor produced the typesetting then taken by publishers in London and New York. The novel secured Penguin India's future and thereby helped to establish Delhi as an English-language literary capital; what is more, the aesthetic of translation that shaped Seth's style, his simple sentences accumulating to enormous size, was enabled, mirrored, and illuminated by his editor's divided loyalties in the global publishing ecosystem.

In 1977, and in the middle of a creative outpouring, the Canadian author Mavis Gallant suddenly stopped. Writing from Paris for her longtime literary home of *The New Yorker*, she had been publishing a series of short stories featuring the autobiographical figure of Linnet Muir and recapturing the lost Montreal of her youth. This had been a striking mid-career shift for a writer little read in her native land and better known abroad for her tales of the varieties of postwar European exile. More striking still was how her textual homecoming came to its premature end—lamented by Gallant herself in late-life interviews but unexamined by critics. What happened is that her editorial sponsor at the magazine retired. The fiction editor William Maxwell had encouraged the autobiographical strain in her fiction, just as he had for a constellation of twentieth-century *New Yorker* authors; his successor, Daniel Menaker, inherited both Gallant's sequence and a renovated Fiction Department eager to define itself against the literary standards of its own past. The magazine's archives bear witness to an escalating writer-editor exchange of doubts, misunderstandings, and rejections. Yet the end of the series in the pages of *The New Yorker* is not itself the end of the story. At the same time as Gallant abandoned her plans for future installments, an enterprising Canadian editor named Douglas Gibson wrote to ask if he might collect the Linnet tales for a book. The stunting of the series became the prelude to Gallant's belated introduction to a wider Canadian readership: needing more material, Gibson carved a Canadian canon from the author's body of work,

producing the pivotal volume *Home Truths: Selected Canadian Stories* (1981). The dynamics of expulsion and return within the Linnet stories are accentuated and replicated by their publishing history, shedding light on both a sea change within *The New Yorker* and a milestone in the maturation of homegrown Canadian publishing.

In 1954, the young V. S. Naipaul sat down in his place of part-time work—a room for BBC radio freelancers in London's Langham Hotel—and wrote the two sentences that confirmed him in his literary vocation. The first drew on the memory of a sound from Port of Spain, Trinidad; the second was invention, building on the setting and tone the first had established. The story of his own breakthrough was one Naipaul would tell and revise throughout the rest of his life, drawing renewed inspiration from a tale that itself takes the form of creative return. The moment revealed to Naipaul the strength of his childhood material; the resulting book, *Miguel Street* (1959), would blend the vernacular voices of Port of Spain with the retrospective, standard English voice of the Naipaul-like narrator. But what Naipaul diminished in the retelling—the radio background to this artistic leap forward—clarifies the stylistic divide that drives the stories in *Miguel Street* forward: the combined resources of oral and print culture, issuing not only in the form of the book but in the failures of the lives it chronicles, characters undone by their inability to master the educated literacy which the narrator alone possesses. For the reason Naipaul found himself in the Langham Hotel that day was that he had recently become an editor, producing a literary radio program to which he had previously been a steady contributor: *Caribbean Voices*. In fact, he had already been encouraged by his predecessor on the program, Henry Swanzy, to mine the material of Trinidad, to develop his dialogue, and to trim the descriptive fat from his prose. In Swanzy's place, however, Naipaul cast a narrower net for literary talent in the West Indies, hastening the

program's decline. But if Naipaul's editing was less generous and attentive to the variety of Caribbean voices, his fiction nevertheless performed the work of mediation which the BBC's Overseas Service, and its literary magazines of the air, existed to carry out, liaising between the cultural capital of London and manuscripts from the soon-to-be ex-Empire.

I have selected these three examples from the six writer-editor relationships whose textual wranglings, institutional settings, and literary consequences constitute the subject of "The Empire of English Literature." This dissertation is the first scholarly account of the editor's role in the postwar development of Anglophone literatures. Uncovering the transnational networks linking institutions in London and New York to Anglophone authors across five continents, it examines a half-century of publishing history, drawing editorial labor from the wings of literary history to center stage. "The Empire of English Literature" will ask how we can understand the creativity, or contamination, of the editor's contributions. It will adapt theories of reading and writing to match the evidence of editorial influence over literary culture. It will measure the degree to which editorial power is concentrated in an individual, and the extent to which it is inseparable from institutional character and clout. It will determine how editors have established—through impulses artistic and mercantile, using and abusing literary capital to enable creative expression and to deform it—a common sphere for literatures in English. In doing so, finally, it will recast critical interpretations of some of the twentieth century's finest short stories, novels, and plays, revealing how each reached its published form.

I. A Disputed Discipline

English is a literary language with two outsized capitals and many regions. Divided again and again by its common tongue, literature in English overflows national borders and the

corresponding system of country-classification by which academic English studies traditionally understands the business of writing and reading. Yet it recedes before the furthest horizon of world literature, since a shared language and a wide, if widely various, experience of the British Empire have left a living legacy that deserves to be understood on its own terms. Those terms are, admittedly, complex. Successive scholarly models have partially mapped this uneven topography of mingled difference and affinity, but an encompassing framework for the English literatures that make up "English Literature" has yet to emerge. Excluding the dominant Anglo-American axis, the now largely-discarded umbrella of "Commonwealth Literature" has been rejected precisely for reinscribing the imperial order, for imposing an outdated, condescending category with little remaining purchase on reality. Its passing coincides with the rise of postcolonial theory and of unsettled disputes over that term's proper ambit. "Some would deny it to white settler colonies," Stuart Hall observes, "reserving it exclusively for the non-western colonised societies" (246). For how can one extend the postcolonial sphere to both without advancing an equality of analysis that disguises profound inequality of experience? Anthologies and criticism which do so have a worrying tendency to "collaps[e] very different national-racial formations" and flatten historical discrepancies "with an easy stroke of the 'post'" (Shohat 102). The very attempt "to include all English literary productions by societies affected by colonialism" prunes postcolonialism of critical and political specificity. But, after all, Anglophone writing exists; ways must be found to discuss it fruitfully, despite and because of the great diversity it envelops. What conceptual architecture is equal to the fact of English literatures as they presently stand, spread and splintered across the globe? How can we understand the mingled motives of art and power that drive their expansion? Where do the literary centers lie, and who controls their means of production?

An opening for answers has arrived with the academy's latest disciplinary turn. Over the last decade, the "Global Anglophone" has taken institutional, if not intellectual, hold in English Departments.[1] It offers the questionable benefits of breadth and imprecision, the opportunities and hazards that accompany a lack of definition. Blandly descriptive, the phrase specifies only a language; its adjective provides the opposite of qualification. Swallowing those territories once called Commonwealth and still studied under the postcolonial aegis, this new term provokes considerable resistance. In 2018 and 2019, special issues of *Interventions* and *Post45* canvassed young scholars on their shifting professional terrain and uncovered at best a grudging acceptance, at worst a sense that the postcolonial is being asset-stripped in the academic equivalent of a corporate takeover. Introducing the *Interventions* issue, Ragini Tharoor Srinivasan asks "Who are we, if we are to be global Anglophonists and not postcolonialists?" (310). She answers, ambivalently, that this "renomination" at least leaves space for self-criticism, allowing the new Anglophonists to "work through and against English's hegemony in South Asia, its rapid global spread and omnipresence in the Academy" (312). Presenting the *Post45* series, Nasia Anam expresses a keener sense of what has been lost in rebranding, characterizing the new title as "more a marketing term than one reflecting an earnest shift in scholarly discourse," a heading that has no organic roots in "theoretical, generic, or disciplinary conversations." In appropriating the territory of the postcolonial, the Global Anglophone subjects it to a single measure: that of the English language, which is not quite the unifying principle the phrase seems to suggest. Starting from a fundamentally warped and warping premise, "an English-speaking world, not a world in which thousands of other

[1] The starting pistol was fired by the Modern Language Association in 2014, when it changed the name of its "Division" for "English Literature Other Than British and American" to a forum for "the Global Anglophone."

languages, literatures and writers in those languages existed," the Global Anglophone may be another addition to—if not the apotheosis of—what Mũkoma wa Ngũgĩ has named "the myth of the English metaphysical empire" (148). The ascendancy of this new field is indisputable, its utility much less so.[2]

Yet the Global Anglophone names a reality long distorted by piecemeal English studies: the spread of English writing and reading across the world, in conquest, resistance, and accommodation. Anam rightly spies the possibility for diminishment in this academic expansion. The act of "bring[ing] the U.S., Canada, Australia, and Ireland back into the fold without automatically necessitating an anticolonial perspective" may seem less like broad-minded analysis and more like a deliberate neutering of postcolonial dynamism. But leaving out those literatures generates a different set of limitations. It obscures the transnational networks of production and reception that do, in fact, give material and imaginative existence to a Global Anglophone. As even its opponents acknowledge, this rising discipline will be moulded by its first generation of practitioners. Anam concludes by wondering whether we can "marshal the Global Anglophone into becoming a politically and intellectually vanguard mode of critical inquiry" and replying that "in my view, we have no other option." Such a mode of inquiry could build on postcolonial foundations while incorporating Anglophone writing in all its varieties, attending to their imbalances while investigating the real relationships which bind

[2] Three recent works of literary scholarship demonstrate the three prevailing modes of engagement with the term. Daniel Elam rejects the phrase utterly, comparing the academic patch afforded postcolonial literature to London's Grenfell Tower and the Global Anglophone to that building's flammable, fatal "cladding." Daniel Ryan Morse comes to a reluctant form of acceptance, using the term in his subtitle and briefly in his introduction; he bows to the inevitable but does not develop the category further, voicing the common fear "that this may be a version of postcolonial criticism less attuned to politics" (17). Madhumita Lahiri, however, aligns herself with "the small but growing body of scholarship that argues for its conceptual utility," suggesting that the Global Anglophone can be redefined, recentered, and enriched by those who find themselves within it (22).

them.[3]

My argument is that a capacious, critical, and material framework for the Global Anglophone is already available to us, although it has not yet been recognized and investigated as such: the field formed by the relations between its writers, readers, and the publishing institutions that shape and respond to both. To the extent that these commercial and aesthetic networks exist, a Global Anglophone exists—the field of literary activity justifying the field of literary study. To map the topography of the Global Anglophone is therefore to locate its editorial centers of gravity and track the changeable currents of literary goods circulating between them. Publishing history unites, and editorial activity reveals, the creative processes by which writing enters the world and reaches its readers. If we follow that history, we see where power and creativity intersect, along axes of domination and independence, via literary capitals whose organizational and artistic biases can be at once enabling and repressive. As acceptance and rejection belong equally to the study of editing and publishing, so an editorial analysis has the capacity to explain both what is illuminating and what is distorting about the Global Anglophone. Conceived in this way, the rising discipline need not reinforce a neocolonial state of affairs; rather, it may house all those scholars seeking to understand the

[3] For instance, this dissertation expands on several works issued in the last decade which examine the role of London institutions in publishing the postcolonial. Such important precursors include Kalliney (2013), Davis (2013), and Low (2011). Indeed, Kalliney's exemplary study of midcentury "modernist networks," extending outward from London's cultural organizations and functioning "as sites of exchange between metropolitan and colonial writers," represents an intellectual model for my project (3-4). However, even these accounts exclude the settler dominions from their explorations of the capital's enduring international influence. Meanwhile, a different blind spot afflicts broader studies of postcolonial writers in the global literary marketplace (and their consequent commodification): an emphasis on marketing to the exclusion of other publishing functions, which in turn diminishes the agency of writers and editors alike. Huggan (2001) presents "the global trade in exotic—culturally 'othered'—goods . . . as being conducted from the '*centre*'" (26), yet those literary goods increasingly flow between established centers and rival hubs in the former "peripheries," the constitution of their texts and their "exoticism" mediated by multiple literary agents. And Brouillette (2007) examines how "postcolonial literatures facilitate the sort of incorporation of niche audiences that allows for global market expansion within transnational publishing" (56), but the professional mechanics of publishing and the textual engagement of editing are largely absent from her account.

state of literatures in English today and the forces that have shaped them. We may thus answer the challenge issued by Salman Rushdie four decades ago when refuting the existence of another, academy-inspired category—and fulfill his vision of a more accurate and equitable critical dispensation.

II. An Editorial Framework for the Global Anglophone

Rushdie's 1983 essay "'Commonwealth Literature' Does Not Exist" unfolds the concept's emptiness and traces its pernicious edge.[4] In practice, the term confines certain writers to a "ghetto," separating from the all-embracing genus "English Literature" that "body of writing created, I think, in the English language, by persons who are not themselves white Britons, or Irish, or citizens of the United States of America" (63). Even on its own terms the distinction immediately lapses into incoherence. Rushdie asks why "South Africa and Pakistan, for instance, are not members of the Commonwealth, but their authors apparently belong to its literature," and notes that England itself, though actually part of the Commonwealth, is curiously not included (62). Yet in rejecting this classification, he also makes the case for its renovation. Between national and world literature, the one inflating local specificity and the other diminishing it, there exists a shared sphere of language and loose literary affinity developing both centripetally and centrifugally—orbiting old capitals of cultural power while

[4] In 2001, Amitav Ghosh restated the case against the cultural Commonwealth, identifying the imperial assumptions underpinning both the word itself and its tacit insistence on English as a unifying trait. On March 18th, in a letter later made public, he wrote to the Commonwealth Foundation in order to refuse its Commonwealth Writers Prize for his novel *The Glass Palace*. His objections primarily concerned the backward glance baked into the connotations of the phrase, the way in which it "anchors an area of contemporary writing not within the realities of the present day, nor within the possibilities of the future, but rather within a disputed aspect of the past." Moreover, Ghosh pointed to the same paradox that exercised Rushdie, the linguistic exclusiveness of a category so geographically indiscriminate. The "Commonwealth" must be "a misnomer" as "a literary or cultural grouping . . . so long as it excludes the many languages that sustain the cultural and literary lives of these countries." Commonwealth Literature is a compound whose first term weighs down and distorts its second.

establishing new ones.[5] As Rushdie writes, "those peoples who were once colonized by the language are now rapidly remaking it, domesticating it . . . assisted by the English language's enormous flexibility and size, they are carving out large territories for themselves within its frontiers" (64). A more pluralist approach is possible, one that does not perpetuate either cultural or scholarly segregation but aims to see the Anglophone in the round. Rushdie offers a glimpse of this possible framework: "I think that if *all* English literatures could be studied together, a shape would emerge which would truly reflect the new shape of the language in the world" (70). But what is that shape?

[5] Contemporary debates over world literature as a reemergent intellectual framework turn, in large part, on the issue of language. Two prominent schools of thought are divided by the importance they give to the instrument with which literature is written. The Warwick Research Collective (WReC) applies the Marxist architecture of "combined and uneven development" to literary production, building on the world-systems analysis of Immanuel Wallerstein to define a hyphenated "world-literature" as "*the literature of the modern capitalist world-system*" (15). Their approach is unapologetically materialist, rejecting "institutionalised 'close reading'" and "an unambiguous fetishism of language" as manifestations of an "irrecuperable formalism," tainting the disciplines of both English and Comparative Literature (26-7). In deliberate contrast to "deterministic models" such as the WReC's, Karima Laachir, Sara Maragoza, and Francesca Orsini have proposed the concept of "significant geographies" in order to restore a respect for multiplicity to the study of world literature, refusing the flattening effect of "one dominant explanatory grid" and instead "ensuring sensitivity to the richness and plurality of spatial imaginings that animate texts, authors, and publics in the world" (292-93). The plurality of these overlapping geographies is, significantly, linguistic, since "our contention is that if we scratch the surface every society and literary culture *is* and has been multilingual" (294). Other influential critiques of world literature as a critical lens echo Orsini et al.'s twin contentions: that it is reductively materialist *and* reductively monological in its understanding of imaginative writing (indeed, that these limitations are intimately connected). Pheng Cheah argues for "a radical rethinking of world literature as literature that is an active power in the making of worlds," a creative power that has been disregarded by the academy's narrow focus on world literature as a product primarily of "circulation" (2-3). Emily Apter attacks the "translatability assumption" underlying "many recent efforts to revive World Literature," the premise that languages are fungible and that little is lost in the harvesting of global cultural resources "sponsored by some proponents of World Literature." Instead, and as "a deflationary gesture toward the expansionism and gargantuan scale of world-literary endeavors," Apter "invoke[s] untranslatability." Finally, Aamir Mufti's call to *Forget English!* (2016) portrays "the dominance of globalized English" within the theory and practice of world literature as a distorting Orientalism of our own day (13). One might reasonably suppose that these criticisms should apply even more acutely to the Global Anglophone—to the disciplinary development that encodes English's hegemony and that seemingly requires no knowledge of other languages or the many literatures that live within them. My dissertation, however, is devoted to the proposal that the Global Anglophone names a genuine realm of literary activity and that, as a field of literary study, it must therefore explore both instruments of language and means of circulation, observing how they operate in concert. Editing—with its simultaneously imaginative *and* material consequences, its inventive and destructive capacities—allows us to examine critically these two aspects of literary creation as they combine to shape writing in English worldwide. And while I outline my theory of the Global Anglophone in this introduction, my subsequent chapters will aim to prove the usefulness of this approach precisely by demonstrating how close and revisionary readings may arise from—and illuminate—the institutional background powering cultural production.

Publishing history in the postwar era offers one path to a synoptic, cross-cultural view. The business of books—deciding what will be printed and read—is the chief means by which literary power is both maintained and challenged. As publishing charts the changing relationship between literary capitals and literary regions, therefore, it tells a two-fold story. So complicated an evolution cannot be reduced to a simple contest between declining imperial influence and swelling literary self-determination. For one thing, cultural clout long outlasts direct rule. Books ensure the enduring dominance of London and New York, literary capitals by dint of their concentration of literary capital: the infrastructure of publishers and periodicals, agencies and awards which, staffed by professional readers, support and distort the creative act. Centers of cultural gravity, they continue to set standards and bestow prestige, offering more reliable access to readers and remuneration, acting on the materials of writers and manuscripts drawn from around the world. The persistence of this lopsided balance of power is inescapably imperial.[6] Indeed, a project such as this one runs the risk of simply reinscribing the power dynamics of existing publishing and linguistic inequalities, of unthinkingly internalizing and unthinkingly reproducing the imbalance which accords such clout to the capitals and such privilege to English.

Yet it would be equally mistaken to characterize the modes of cultural production as merely extending the hegemony of powerful metropoles over far-flung dependencies. The rise of Anglophone literatures is also a local affair, postwar booms in publishing and political independence combining to establish new channels for artistic creation much closer to home. These domestic publishers and magazines and broadcasters do not occupy a separate world to

[6] Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, for one, does not spare publishing for its participation in the cycle of exploitation common to "the neo-colonial situation," a commercial logic of cultural production in which "we take from our languages, and the material is processed in European languages and resold in Africa as African literature" (127).

their larger counterparts but a cultural and commercial continuum. The relation of capital to region remains variable—open to both competition and collaboration—even as the regions build up their own bases of literary support. Individual works flow between these poles of production, mediated by them and mediating between them, testifying to the conditions of their publication even as they transcend them. Far from reestablishing Commonwealth Literature under a more marketable name, criticism that attends to this circulation—and, crucially, to the inventive literary labor underpinning it—can instead continue the unfinished project announced by Edward Said in *Culture and Imperialism* (1993), that renovation of "the partial analysis offered by the various national or systematically theoretical schools" along "the contrapuntal lines of a global analysis, in which texts and worldly institutions are seen working together . . . in which the literature of one commonwealth is involved in the literatures of others" (318).

The power to publish manifests in the editorial prerogative of selection and its textual consequences: acceptance and rejection, revision and distortion. The figure of the editor, therefore, is the prism through which this dynamic of converging power and creativity comes into view. Present at the gates of every domain of literary production, editors read and, by reading, mediate between writer and public, text and institution. It is the collaboration—and friction—between authors and editors in the making of texts that allows us to map the fraught territory of Anglophone writing, its crossing and recrossing of frontiers, at once building newly confident national canons and deepening a transnational system of creation and circulation. In consequence, the reality of the Global Anglophone requires a deeper account than literary scholarship has yet attempted of the nature and operation of editorial power. "'Wouldn't it be interesting to write the history of the editor, as a figure not in the history of literature but in the history of knowledge?'" mused Jill Lepore in 2017 (Cohen). The smaller task has only been

seriously attempted—and quite recently at that—by Susan L. Greenberg.[7] Her account falls short, however, in its restricted conception of editing as simply "a stage in the making of texts" (ix). Rather, it is an element of reading and writing—a form of reading which becomes writing—that illuminates both ends of the literary operation, an internal process with far-rippling external effects. From the wings, editors, and other agents of the editorial function, stage-manage the literary culture at large. Greenberg traces the growth of "a poetics that considers editing as a dynamic process with a built-in understanding of failure and a sense of the possible" (225). But how do poetics translate into power, the shaping of texts into the shaping of taste? At the crossroads of creation, editorial leverage exerts twin forces, the pull that gathers a circle of writers around an editor, the propulsion that directs writing outwards into society. Insofar as the editor's work can be reconstructed from archival material, that labor deepens our historical and theoretical understanding of writing and reading. It also reveals the shape of production and circulation that constitutes the Global Anglophone's concrete purchase on literature.

To this end, an editorial framework for the Global Anglophone builds on existing theoretical foundations. It draws together, and deepens, a theory of creative reading and a theory of literary economy, the individual activity helping to structure and explain the social domain in which books and magazines circulate. Editing clarifies both how reading generates writing and how institutions, themselves made up of multiple layers of readership, generate fields of production and reception. Thus, the editor demonstrates how the concepts of field and

[7] More historically circumscribed attempts at measuring editorial activity form a growing body of scholarship. See Philpotts, 39-64; Groenland; and Foley. Matthew Philpotts has already set editorial activity within a Bourdieusian framework, examining "the interaction between the personal habitus of the editor and the institutional habitus of the journal" (42). Where I differ is in my emphasis on the editor's reading and on what the study of this occupation not only draws from Pierre Bourdieu's analysis of the literary field, but on what it adds to it too.

mediation—as defined by Pierre Bourdieu and John Guillory—can be integrated to their mutual benefit.

Bourdieu's foundational analysis of "The Field of Cultural Production" (1993) leaves out two elements which happen to be related. One is the activity of editing, the other a coherent account of creativity. His field is a scene of ceaseless, generative competition for cultural prestige—the "space of positions and the space of position-takings" in "a *field of struggles*" (29). The positions which matter in the dissemination of writing, and the accumulation of its meanings, extend far beyond that of the writer alone. A sociology of literature

> has to consider as contributing to production not only the direct producers of the work in its materiality (artist, writer, etc.) but also the producers of the meaning and value of the work—critics, publishers, gallery directors and the whole set of agents whose combined efforts produce consumers capable of knowing and recognizing the work of art as such[.] (37)

In this light, the work of art reveals itself as the grain of sand through which we see the world of its fabrication as well as its representation. Of the various attempts to expose "the naïve vision of the individual creator" (34), Bourdieu's offers the richest social texture in exchange for the loss of solitary authorship: a chain of value-adding positions, and of their temporary occupying agents, stretching out endlessly from the work to encompass every eventual reader. Yet one position is curiously neglected in Bourdieu's economy of art; the editor, that ink-stained reader wielding the most immediate influence over the text, is nowhere examined. The figure of the publisher *is* important to Bourdieu, but precisely because it serves to undermine one of his principal targets: the mythology of creativity. In *The Rules of Art* (1996), Bourdieu enlists the publisher in his campaign "to suspend the charismatic ideology of 'creation', which . . . undoubtedly constitutes the principal obstacle to a rigorous science of the production of the value of cultural goods" (167). Yet Bourdieu dethrones the charisma of creation only to replace

it with the aura of consecration, since

> the merchant in art (dealer in paintings, publisher, etc.) is inseparably both the one who exploits the work of the artist by making commerce of his products and the one who, in putting it on the market of symbolic goods through exhibition, publication or staging, ensures that the product of artistic fabrication will receive a *consecration*[.]

By making the acquisition of prestige rather than the actual writing of a book the true point of its entry into the literary field, Bourdieu directs our attention down the chain of reception. There he is quick to put the publisher in his place too, lest delusions of grandeur and "the charismatic image of 'great' dealers or great publishers as inspired discoverers" take hold (168). Consecration apart, Bourdieu employs a quite limited understanding of a publisher's functions, declaring that "the publisher or the dealer can only organize and rationalize the distribution of the work" (148). That middlemen may also have a role in the *making* of the work does not arise as a possibility, for throughout Bourdieu's meditations on the field there is little sense of literature as something written and read, as opposed to marketed and prized, and none whatsoever of the editor's intermediary linking of these two ends of the literary exchange—the creative reading that anticipates reception and so reshapes composition.[8] I submit that what kindles a work of art and causes it to circulate through the positions of the literary field are the successive mediations each reader performs upon the text, pulling it ever further into the ever-shifting landscape of reception. Attention paid to such mediations can restore a vital dimension of creativity to Bourdieu's social anatomy.

For a mediation is a transmission that is also a recreation. By drawing a text into a fresh

[8] Bourdieu's declaration that the publisher "contributes to 'making' the value of the author he supports by the sole fact of bringing him or her into a known and renowned existence, so that the author is assured of publication" is at once a tautology—the publisher publishes—and a considerable simplification, since the means by which books find their readers are not a "sole fact" but a complicated and unpredictable process (168). The text of the literary work, and not just its value, is also subject to revision.

context that partially absorbs and partially distinguishes itself against the old, mediation sets that text in motion—both within the individual imagination and through the social environment encompassing that imagination. This operation is what is creative about reading, and it is what the editor so usefully illuminates. John Guillory defines mediation as a process which imposes "*distance* (spatial, temporal, or even notional) between the terminal poles of the communication process," but whose "distanciation" is at the same time a form of "*transmission*," tying those poles together (357). Though it "remains undertheorized in the study of culture," this concept can illuminate the long life of a piece of literature, the complexities of its creation and the still unfolding intricacies of its reception (354). As Raymond Williams notes, mediation is "not the neutral process of the interaction of separate forms, but an active process in which the form of the mediation alters the things mediated" (205). Each work is produced, sustained, and revised by a series of intermediary connections, between inspiration and creation, writer and reader, medium and remediation. And since "no cultural work comes to us except through such multiple categorical mediations" (Guillory 354), literature stands revealed as the sum of its relations. Like Bourdieu, Guillory moves outward from the work itself to the entirety of society, proceeding along a "larger chain of multiple and diverse types of mediation [which] can be represented in diagrammatic terms very roughly as follows . . . individual work] biographical oeuvre] genre] discourse] medium] social context] social totality" (359-60). Like Bourdieu, moreover, he neglects the complexities the work itself contains. Mediation does not merely occur between the work and the outside world; it is the constitutive operation of the work itself—beginning, in literature's case, with the translation of speech into writing, experience into art. Mediation fuels creation, which in turn feeds further mediation.

Thus, we can unite Guillory's understanding of how mediation kindles literary

genealogies with Bourdieu's understanding of how the interactions of a set of agents foster the field of production: mediation is precisely what those agents are up to. Furthermore, we can illustrate how these two theories of communications and power relations combine in practice by foregrounding the figure who escapes Guillory and Bourdieu both. The editor's interventions link the pre-publication revisions these thinkers neglect to the post-publication terrain they try to map. The first reader is a prime representative of creative mediation, occupying the pressure point where commercial and aesthetic concerns merge, and from which further mediations emanate. It remains to delineate how this conception of the field, animated by these editorial agents of mediation, applies to the particular domain of the Global Anglophone.

It is from Pascale Casanova's pioneering, Bourdieu-inspired examination of the global literary economy in *The World Republic of Letters* (1999) that I derive my understanding of literary capitals, exerting their artistic-cum-commercial jurisdiction over "linguistic-cultural areas" (117). It is against her too-rigid conception of these capitals' dominion that I develop my own analysis of the Global Anglophone's more supple and dialectical dynamic. For Casanova, the transnational field of literary production "is based on the opposition between a capital . . . and peripheral dependencies whose relationship to this center is defined by their aesthetic distance from it," an opposition which takes the form of "*literary domination*" (11, xii). Curiously, the terminology of Casanova's case does not match its details. The structure of literary power she sketches bears little resemblance to a state governed by the people and their representatives. As Perry Anderson points out, *The World Republic* actually follows the pattern of "empire more than republic." Moreover, Casanova's mislabeled empire, with its traditional European centers, exerts a remarkably centralized degree of cultural control. She defines the "'literature-world'" of a capital-ruled area as "a homogenous and autonomous sphere in which

the legitimacy of its centralized power of consecration is unchallenged" (117). Yet the dynamism of a literature, let alone the numerous literatures in English, stems from its heterogeneity—from the many challenges that writers, institutions, and critics present to centralized power. I maintain that the real-world dynamic is more flexible than Casanova acknowledges. The imperial system of world literature certainly develops through relationships of center and circumference—mediated by editors—but supposedly dominated writers can reshape a dominating literature in their own image. Homegrown operations and their editorial agents sometimes collaborate with capital counterparts—and sometimes defy them. The tension between national and transnational realms of reference, production, and reception can in fact be an engine of artistic development.

The inadequacy of certain critical judgments reveals the inadequacy of Casanova's model of literary power for the English-writing world. Indeed, she reserves some of her most scathing assessments for the subjects of my first and last chapters, two authors who stand at opposite ends of this dissertation's timeline. One of the most prominent literary targets in *The World Republic of Letters* is the Trinidadian-born, British-domiciled Nobel laureate V. S. Naipaul. Casanova gathers her criticism in a chapter entitled "The Assimilated" and under the heading of "Naipaul: The Need to Conform" (205, 209). Her particular argument—flowing from the overarching narrative of capital-based literary hegemony—posits Naipaul as "an outstanding example of a writer who wholly embraced the dominant literary values of his linguistic region; who, in the absence of any literary tradition in his native country, had no other choice but to try to become English." Without providing evidence from his early writing life, she nevertheless declares that upon his arrival in England, Naipaul sought "to embody the most perfect Englishness" (210). That supposed conformity manifested in aesthetic conservatism,

since "the traditional character of his stories and novels is the direct consequence of this pathetic search for identity. Ultimately, to write like an Englishman means having to conform to the canons of England." One would not know from this simplistic account that Naipaul's first literary outlet was the BBC radio program *Caribbean Voices*; that those sonic surroundings encouraged him to use Trinidadian dialect and material; that Naipaul himself became, for a time, the program's editor and a key figure in the London-and-BBC-based community of West Indian migrant writers; or that in 1964, fourteen years after leaving Trinidad for England, he reflected on the influence of English canons over his literary development and came to the opposite conclusion to Casanova: "the English language was mine; the tradition was not" (472). The available literary "vision was alien, it diminished my own and did not give me courage to do a simple thing like mentioning the name of a Port of Spain street." I will demonstrate that Naipaul's artistic motives, institutional surroundings, and literary results are far more mixed than Casanova's conceptual framework allows—and do so by tracing the dynamic mediation between radio and print, writer and editor, Trinidad and London that ultimately did give Naipaul the courage to name and recreate a Port of Spain street in his first publishable book, *Miguel Street*.[9]

Casanova is even more dismissive of Vikram Seth's *A Suitable Boy* (1993). The "programmed success" of Seth's novel is proof not of quality, but of the publishers' newfound ability "to manufacture bestsellers for an international public" (121). Indeed, "*A Suitable Boy* offered irrefutable proof of the virtually total domination of the English literary model over its cultural area" (121-22). That Seth should write a realist novel of nineteenth-century breadth is

[9] *Miguel Street* was the first book Naipaul submitted to, and the third one issued by, his publisher. See Athill, *Stet* 204-5.

of a piece with his use of English and his access to big publishers: they are all signs of assimilation to the literary capital's culture. It is curious, then, that he turned to a small Delhi-based publishing offshoot—Penguin India—and its editor David Davidar in their early, inauspicious years. It is curious that Casanova ignores the book's Indian publisher and Indian public; an Indian reader as eminent as Meenakshi Mukherjee has precisely the opposite reaction to *A Suitable Boy*, declaring that Seth's "novel might just as well have been written in Bangla where a tradition exists of long three-decker realistic stories about families" (183). Finally, it is curious that a supposedly neocolonial novel should be so extraordinarily sensitive to the status of English and the registers of other Indian languages, constantly alerting readers to switches and slips in language, and to the social strata they encode. Casanova misreads *A Suitable Boy*, and this misreading is characteristic both of her inelastic conceptual framework and of her revealingly Eurocentric assumptions about the range of aesthetic choices available to writers. Announcing that "the literary techniques [Seth] employed were both typically English and largely outmoded," she seems to charge him with being at once totally and insufficiently colonized—for had he been up to speed with the latest literary fashions, he would have known that realism was terribly passé (121). Casanova's attitude to supposed literary dependencies reveals a considerable blind spot in her cartography: the local work that has produced—in concert and conflict with the metropole's networks—rising literary centers outside of London and New York. The pluralist reality of Anglophone literatures, with hubs in Delhi and elsewhere, outstrips the *World Republic*.

By revising Casanova, I investigate these interconnected centers of editorial gravity and map the more intricate topography of the Global Anglophone, capturing the workings and the interweavings of literary domination and literary autonomy. The case studies I have chosen to

unfold offer evidence for Anglophone writing following a more complex material dialectic and arriving at more complex literary syntheses than Casanova permits. Structured by relationships that extend outward from the text, each primary partnership between writer and editor containing and evoking the larger creative tension of capital and region, the Global Anglophone is a necessary field of study, one that can do justice to the plurality of literatures in English and advance three interlocking levels of criticism: the textual, the institutional, and the global.

III. Six Writer-Editor Relationships

In short, "The Empire of English Literature" argues that editing provides a critical framework—at once aesthetic and commercial, encompassing acceptance and rejection—for this emergent field. I contend that transnational networks of production and reception give material and imaginative existence to a common sphere for literatures in English. By tracking the transformation of literary works as they pass along these networks and via the editors at their nodes, I uncover the institutional rivalry propelling the postwar expansion of literatures in English. For while I trace the function of the modern literary editor from the eighteenth century onwards, my study concentrates on a half-century of intense struggles over literary power. Spanning the period between the formalization of the Traditional Market Agreement in 1947 and the publication of *A Suitable Boy* in 1993—from the division of the English-reading world into spheres of British and American publishing dominance to the neoliberal ascent of multinational publishers—"The Empire of English Literature" incorporates critiques of the Global Anglophone's appropriation of postcolonial territory while proposing a more pluralist future for the discipline.

My dissertation investigates six case studies in editorial power, grouped into three parts

by shared publishing institution. These parts in turn contain two complementary chapters, each revolving around one writer-editor relationship and delving into separate areas of the Global Anglophone. My work proceeds both chronologically, through the second half of the twentieth century, and laterally, across media, geographies, and networks. **Part One** focuses on radio, the BBC, and a period encompassing the 1950s and early 1960s. **Part Two** concentrates on periodicals, *The New Yorker*, and an era of remarkable change for the magazine: the 1970s. Finally, **Part Three** centers on publishing houses, Penguin Books, and the globalizing 1980s and 90s. The six chapters are underpinned by extensive archival research and by original interviews conducted across six countries. All of them use the evidence of editorial contributions to develop fresh interpretations of significant literary works by major writers: two of them Nobel laureates, two of them prolific contributors to the English-reading world's most prestigious magazine, and two of them catapulted to enduring fame by their first novels.

Chapters One and **Two** compare the early careers of V. S. Naipaul and Wole Soyinka, arguing that the mediation of print and sonic resources within their first books, *Miguel Street* (1959) and *The Lion and the Jewel* (1963), derives in significant part from their artistic development under the auspices of the BBC's External Services and its producer-editor, Henry Swanzy. My chapter on Naipaul is the first to set his early fiction against the formative backdrop of both his apprenticeship and his editorship on air, contributing to the celebrated literary program *Caribbean Voices* and then succeeding Swanzy at its helm. My section on Soyinka, meanwhile, unearths the history and reconstructs the literary impact of the forgotten sister program to *Caribbean Voices*, a magazine of the air that was also steered by Swanzy: *West African Voices*. In doing so, I track Soyinka's increasing, and increasingly complex, uses of oral material from his uncollected short stories for radio to his first published work for the stage.

Chapters Three and **Four** analyze the *New Yorker* editor William Maxwell's influence over the mid-century Anglophone short story through his cultivation of the Canadian Mavis Gallant and the Irish Maeve Brennan. I reveal how the publishing history of their stories of childhood clarifies the polarity of home and abroad within them, illuminating the shifting standards of the metropolitan magazine as well as the growth of domestic publishers. Gallant's autobiographical Linnet Muir sequence recaptures the lost Montreal from which the child Linnet was cast out; its editorial treatment repeats those same movements of rejection and homecoming: the stories are first encouraged by Maxwell, then stifled by his successor Daniel Menaker, and finally repatriated by the Canadian publisher Douglas Gibson. Brennan's tales of her Dublin home alternate with New York writing and issue in story sequences devoted to the Derdon and Bagot families. These too are midwifed into the magazine by Maxwell, before his retirement and Brennan's descent into madness precipitate a long period of out-of-print obscurity—one relieved only posthumously by the actions of another editor working in concert with the aged Maxwell, Christopher Carduff.

Chapters Five and **Six** examine the expansion of the Penguin Group to Australia and India through the absorption of the feminist press McPhee Gribble and the founding of the subsidiary Penguin India. I argue that the fragmented form of Helen Garner's *The Children's Bach* (1984)—edited by Hilary McPhee in the same period as she surrendered her independence to Penguin Australia—deliberately captures the atomization of social bonds during the free-market 1980s, reflecting in its appearance and its revisions the dissolution of the postwar Australian independent publishing revolution. Finally, I demonstrate that Vikram Seth's *A Suitable Boy* fashions from its paradoxical combination of sheer size and short sentences an aesthetic of translation mirrored and facilitated by Penguin India, itself a half-homegrown press

occupying a productively divided place in global English-language publishing.

Throughout, I advance the institution as an organizing entity in literary criticism and concentrate on the individual within the institution whose proximity to the text corresponds to the largest degree of control over it. "The Empire of English Literature" is the first book-length work to illuminate the editor's part in enlarging literatures in English, advocating for a corresponding diversification of English studies to match this plural reality and deepening our understanding of the editorial function in literary history.

IV. Literatures in English

In the pandemic summer of 2020, as demonstrations for racial justice erupted around the US, my own Department at Cornell University took a decision that crystallizes the literary and academic issues bound up in the rise of, and dispute over, the Global Anglophone. The Faculty voted "to change our name from the narrow Department of English, to the more embracing Department of Literatures in English. The name change captures the fact that within the US and globally there are multiple literatures and many 'englishes'" (Boyce Davies and wa Ngũgĩ).[10] What relation does the phrase "Literatures in English" bear to the term "Global Anglophone"? Are they practically synonymous or are they false friends? If one is an attempt to recognize the diversity disguised by a singular "English," is the other mere neocolonial

[10] While Cornell's decision harkened back explicitly to 1968, when "the English Department of the University of Nairobi, Kenya renamed itself the Department of Literature," Carolyn Cooper has pointed out in Jamaica's *The Gleaner* that the University of the West Indies at Mona actually adopted this specific name change—Literatures in English—twenty-six years before Cornell. We may question the disproportionate attention given to one institution's choice over the other's, asking if this does not reflect the same, unequal distribution of power that the Faculty sought to criticize with its name change (Cooper makes this very point). However, it would also be in keeping with a more open academic dispensation for disciplinary changes—as well as literatures—pioneered outside the Anglo-American elite to remake and reinvigorate those powerful institutions of scholarship and teaching.

nomenclature?

In this dissertation, I outline another option, arguing that as-yet poorly-defined Global Anglophone can be guided in a more diverse direction. Publishing history and editorial action make visible the deep entanglements between Anglo-American institutions and Anglophone literatures, connections which both foster and warp writing, working with and against the creation of alternative literary infrastructure and alternative literary capitals. These entanglements represent the driving material dialectic of Anglophone literatures: the contest between established literary institutions in London and New York, themselves spaces contested by Anglophone writers, and developing institutions and capitals closer to home. That commercial competition generates the conditions of possibility for imaginative writing—its composition and circulation, its revision and repression. By following this dialectic, interrogating its editorial framework, and unfolding the works that emerge from it, the Global Anglophone can become a spacious, critical field for literatures in English.

This is not the end-point for reimagining English studies, of course. It is, instead, a way of thinking about vital connections and equally vital divergences across the English-writing world. Questions remain for Cornell and for every other university eager to have the discipline match the diversity of its subject. What does a change in name mean for changes in practice? How can courses offered, concentrations permitted, and projects encouraged combine to give students a grasp of the multiple, intersecting, living traditions that increasingly constitute the field of actual literary activity? What should be required reading, and what merely allowed along the edges? Do we continue to conceive of the discipline's progress as the expansion of a single canon, or might we try to reimagine the fabric of literature as stitched by sundry canons crisscrossing at myriad angles? Can any one department in an era of downsizing contain this

material, and might the effort help to reverse at least some of the profession's decline?[11] If our aim is to broaden the study of English so that it becomes more reflective of and responsive to all those who read and write in the language, then there is no reason why the answers should not also be various. The Global Anglophone could and should become an umbrella concept—and an intellectual arena—for such experiments with the discipline.

Because one might further suggest that the Global Anglophone will truly live up to its name only when it encompasses British and American literatures too.

[11] Joe Cleary's "The English Department as Imperial Commonwealth" (2021) is perhaps the most considered and rigorous attempt yet to envisage a more equitable English Department, wrestling with the problem of simultaneous expansion and contraction (the growth of literatures in English and the diminishment of the departments designed to study them). Cleary situates the development of academic English studies, and the dominance of the main Anglo-American axis of inquiry, within its wider imperial context, examining the means by which English departments worldwide "have long struggled to find ways to accommodate and teach both metropolitan British and their own national literatures in English" (146). He proposes several solutions, each of which would lead to either a merger or a division of present-day academic allotments: splitting the existing department into one for "Classical English" and another for "Modern English," combining English with other literatures in other tongues to produce multilingual faculties, creating new departments of national literatures outside the UK and US (167-70). Cleary anticipates the criticisms each of these innovations would be bound to attract, but it nevertheless bears repeating that such plans for the revitalization of English studies are restricted by the painful reality of declining enrolments, shrinking departments, and unemployed PhDs. On the other hand, revitalization *is* the only answer to decline, and I wholeheartedly agree with Cleary that the rise of "Global English" offers opportunities that our profession has thus far signally failed to seize. This dissertation aims to illuminate one path forward.

PART ONE: THE BBC

INTRODUCTION: HENRY SWANZY AND RADIO *VOICES* OF THE GLOBAL ANGLOPHONE

V. S. Naipaul and Wole Soyinka were separated by continents and attitudes; they were joined by an era, an institution, and the problem of expressing and exceeding a colonial legacy in instruments shaped, then and now, by imperial power. Both did so by marshalling the combined resources of sonic and print cultures, first under the aegis of the BBC's External Services—sending stories to its twin literary programs, *Caribbean Voices* and *West African Voices*—and then at the British publishing houses of André Deutsch and Oxford University Press,[1] where their works passed through another layer of editing, administered by Diana Athill and Rex Collings, "as part of a broader movement towards Commonwealth Literature'" (Low, "Finding" 22). Their initial creative negotiations between the material of home and the capital of London are crystallized in each author's first book, *Miguel Street* (1959) and *The Lion and the Jewel* (1963). For a time, moreover, these eventual Nobel laureates—one from Trinidad, the other from Nigeria—occupied the editor's, as well as the writer's, position in the expanding field of Anglophone literatures. Where Naipaul assumed editorial control of the Caribbean-centered radio program to which he began contributing as a student, Soyinka moved from its West African counterpart to become co-editor of *Black Orpheus*, a little magazine taking direct inspiration and talent from the Barbados-based journal *BIM*, passing "through a West Indian infancy and a West African adolescence" before achieving "full maturity, a rich, solid, and complex ripeness" (Lindfors 514). For the mediations that make up the Global Anglophone do not merely extend outward from London or New York; they establish creative relations between

[1] Soyinka's early plays were issued by Three Crowns Books, an OUP imprint devoted to Anglophone African and South Asian writing—and a rival to Heinemann's better-known African Writers Series. See Davis 142-61.

regions, the rise of Caribbean writers in turn "help[ing] launch this awakening of Anglophone literature in West Africa" (Bulson 200). To observe works travelling between literary centers is to bring the field of the Global Anglophone into focus, to see how the dialectic of national and transnational allegiances, the dueling institutional backgrounds of region and capital, propels the expansion of literatures in English. Part One of "The Empire of English Literature" will reveal the neglected radio background shaping and illuminating Naipaul and Soyinka's early careers, examining the fusion of Anglophone creative energy and London commercial power that helped to produce their first books—and that determined the diverging critical afterlives of their two pivotal programs.

An audio magazine combining poetry, prose, reviews, and discussion—a "half-hour creative workshop around the craft of writing" (Nanton, "London")—*Caribbean Voices* was broadcast over the BBC's Caribbean Service every Sunday evening from 1943 to 1958. It was produced, rehearsed, and delivered at Bush House, reaching the radio and rediffusion sets of the West Indies each week with the words "This is London calling the Caribbean." The program acted as a dual intermediary: between the solitudes of the Caribbean, on the one hand, and between the region's writers and print publication, on the other. An unwavering critical consensus affirms the role of *Caribbean Voices*, and that of its producer-editor Henry Swanzy, in fostering the postwar flourishing of West Indian literature. Yet next to nothing exists on the influence of the program it directly inspired: *West African Voices*. The reasons why are not immediately obvious, and scholarship has hardly begun to plumb the discrepancy. These magazines of the air shared an editorial remit, a place of power in the literary capital of London, and, for a time, the services of Swanzy. This symmetry extended to their status as literary islands appearing weekly within two broader currents of programming transmitted by the BBC's

External Services: *Calling the West Indies* and *Calling West Africa*. The programs drew manuscripts from overseas and from the growing diasporas in Britain; they supported and galvanized a late colonial literary generation—airing the transition between the end of Empire and the emergence of the postcolonial[2]—by providing a wireless outlet, and network, for English-writing Caribbean and African authors at a time when their venues for print were vanishingly small.

But while any fresh approach to *Caribbean Voices* must be set against a rich and growing critical heritage, *West African Voices* appears to have fallen silently into the void. Kamau Brathwaite sums up general opinion by calling *Caribbean Voices* "the single most important literary catalyst for Caribbean creative and critical writing in English" and Swanzy its "most influential producer (drive, enthusiasm, sympathy, critical acumen and length of service)" (87). For if *Caribbean Voices* "served as the midwife to West Indian writing in these crucial years," Stuart Hall recalls in his posthumously published autobiography, *Familiar Stranger* (2017), then it did so as "pioneered by that brilliant, dedicated producer, Henry Swanzy" (164). In contrast, *West African Voices* is unmentioned by companions to African literature, by histories of the BBC, and by nearly all of the numerous critics who write about *Caribbean Voices*.[3] The critical discourse surrounding Swanzy is a mirror of the larger imbalance, with one side proclaiming its debt and the other curiously unrepresented. The lede of his *Guardian* obituary outlines the producer's "significant and unique place in the history of West Indian literature"; at no point does this retrospective make an even vaguely similar claim for his influence over Anglophone African literatures (Nanton and Walmsley). Much as radio

[2] Trinidad and Nigeria gained independence in 1962 and 1960, respectively.
[3] Chapter Two will expand on the critical silence surrounding *West African Voices*.

remains discounted in the academic criticism of Naipaul and Soyinka, so no scholar has brought together in full, mutual illumination the two halves of Swanzy's career, the West Indian and the West African. Yet the editorial figure of Swanzy—setting standards and selecting accordingly—does link the two writers, the two programs, the two regions, and the two chapters of this first part of "The Empire of English Literature," casting the "lengthened shadow" by which, according to Emerson, we recognize an institution (26).

In 1946, the thirty-one-year-old Swanzy took over the production of *Caribbean Voices* after the departure of the program's founder, the Jamaican poet Una Marson; in 1954, he passed it on to the young V. S. Naipaul. While producing *Caribbean Voices*, he also inaugurated *West African Voices* and edited the journal of the Royal African Society, *African Affairs*.[4] Upon handing *Caribbean Voices* over to Naipaul, moreover, Swanzy moved to the Gold Coast Broadcasting System; there, he set up a kindred magazine of the air for Ghana, *The Singing Net*, and edited a resulting anthology that carries over the title theme, *Voices of Ghana* (1958). After four years on secondment to Ghana, he returned to Britain and to his position as a producer in the External Services, retiring in 1976 and dying in 2004 (Ramsden). Two collective research projects have recently excavated the broader contours of Swanzy's radio work, but neither "Scripting Empire" at Newcastle University nor "Decolonizing Voices" at the University of Warwick concentrates on *West African Voices*. The first focuses on the celebrated Caribbean portion of his career; the second expands on its Ghanaian sequel.[5] The upshot of this critical

[4] Swanzy's relationship with West Africa was personal as well as professional. Through the firm of F. and A. Swanzy, his family had been deeply involved in the nineteenth-century imperial trade to Ghana. See Swanzy, "A Trading Family in the Nineteenth Century Gold Coast."

[5] In 2018, when Victoria Ellen Smith reissues and introduces *Voices of Ghana* as part of the "Decolonizing Voices" project, she points out that "The Singing Net" was conceived "along the lines of *Caribbean Voices* and *West African Voices*"—but all of her examples of the editor's earlier work stem from the Caribbean rather than the West African radio magazine (15).

disparity is that we can recover a great deal about Swanzy's editorial standards for *Caribbean Voices*—from his letters, his critical round-ups on air, his contemporaneous essays, and from everything that others have written. We know that he saw the BBC as temporarily substituting for the infrastructure of a more enduring Caribbean literary culture, providing writers with a channel for publication, a network linking their previously isolated talents, and some amount of money while forums for print caught up. We know that the writing he encouraged emphasized local dialect and local detail, a standard of authenticity that some writers at the time and some critics since have chafed against. But these are precisely the details that have not yet been ascertained about Swanzy and *West African Voices*: the degree of his involvement, his editorial criteria, the sorts of relationships he developed with contributors. This introduction to Part One will outline the editorial habits of *Caribbean Voices* and their effect on Derek Walcott, leaving the fuller excavation of *West African Voices,* and its understudied archive, for my second chapter.

It is through Swanzy, therefore, that I will recover the characteristic shape of each program and explain the reasons for their contrasting posthumous fates, following the producer's scattered paper trail through the BBC Written Archives Centre, the University of Birmingham, and the Bodleian Library.[6] I will interrogate the basis of his power while measuring its textual ramifications. For where Swanzy was showered in both contemporaneous and post-hoc praise for his work with West Indian writers, a small shadow has been cast over his years in Ghana by a one-time contributor, Cameron Duodu, who recalls being told as a young writer

that if I wanted to have my stories broadcast, then I needed to treat my themes in a

[6] Swanzy's journals remain an elusive scholarly prize. The BBC Written Archives Centre holds a number of these diaries, dating between 1936-1961, but has not made them available to researchers.

> manner that would be "acceptable" to the "authorities" at Broadcasting House. I later discovered that these "authorities" were actually, one person: a guy called Henry Swanzy, who had joined the BBC in London with a first at Cambridge, and had subsequently been seconded to the Gold Coast Broadcasting Service as Head of Programmes. He had midwifed several West Indian writers on to the BBC's Caribbean programmes and he was in the Gold Coast to tell the Cameron Duodus too what they couldust [sic] write! So the Gold Coast bred different people from those in the Caribbean? So what? . . . He had ridden over my democratic rights as a writer with complete unconcern![7]

The ease with which Swanzy—a white Anglo-Irishman with impeccable Establishment credentials, apart from having been born in County Cork[8]—moved between positions of authority over Caribbean and Ghanaian literature is not only redolent of the late colonial era over which the producer presided. It also points to a potential weakness of the Global Anglophone: namely, that in facilitating critical movements of a similar breadth—a breadth which may betray shallowness—it can unthinkingly recapitulate an inherently imperial order. Yet the very fact that Swanzy's editorial sway did extend over writers of both regions makes the case for their comparison—and for a critical framework that encompasses Anglophone writings in all their diversity.

Thus, my anatomy of Swanzy's standards and his means of applying them will lay the foundation for questions more thoroughly answered in the two authorial case studies that follow. What is the role of radio, and the editorial function of the program producer, in fostering

---

[7] Like Edward Mendelson appraising William Maxwell's influence over American fiction in Part Two, Duodu recognizes the editor's power even as he disapproves of his right to wield it and condemns the uses to which he puts it. Not every detail of his pen-portrait is accurate, however: Swanzy attended Oxford rather than Cambridge. And whether writers in a literary world administered by editors have *democratic* rights is another matter.

[8] In fact, Swanzy's Irishness was not incidental to the editorial sympathy he evinced for his authors. "He said he felt a fellow colonial with people from the Caribbean," Anne Walmsley recalled in a 1998 Radio 4 documentary on *What Does Mr Swanzy Want?* Moreover, his empathy for struggling writers in general seemed to have been sparked by the "lukewarm" reaction he received from Cecil Day Lewis when submitting a long poem on the Battle of Britain to the BBC in 1941: "Thereafter, I never had sufficient confidence as I didn't get much encouragement, really, and I thought, perhaps out of a sort of empathy, that it would be nice to assist some of these writers from the West Indies if I could, because they didn't get much help either, really" (quoted in Griffith, "'This is London'" 200-01).

the rise of postcolonial literatures—particularly those initially starved of avenues for print? Were the literary and commercial relationships between capital institutions and Anglophone writers enabling, repressive, or an unstable and unpredictable mixture of the two? What this introduction will clarify, and what V. S. Naipaul's *Caribbean Voices* and Wole Soyinka's *West African Voices* will illustrate, is the creative operation of mediation: how print and sonic materials combine over the air and on the page, how that mediation is itself mediated by editors and their institutions.

I. Swanzy's Standards and the Development of a Transatlantic Literary Network

Midway through his editorship of *Caribbean Voices*, Swanzy published an article setting out the program's purpose. In it, he argues for radio's role as an intermediary: helping to forge from the Caribbean's scattered islands and peoples, and the orality of their present lives, "a really significant regional literature" (21).[9] "Prolegomena to a West Indian Culture" (1949) identifies a need and a lack to which radio offers one answer. The Caribbean is

[9] Throughout this section of my dissertation, I use the term "orality" sparingly and carefully. The orality-literacy dyad, so influential in the development of media and sound studies, has been subjected to much-needed scrutiny over the last decade. Jonathan Sterne's "The Theology of Sound: A Critique of Orality" (2011) is especially convincing in its excavation of a deeper, more technologically-complex history of "early media," one which the simplistic—and frequently ethnocentric—division between "oral" and "literate" cultures has obscured:

> There are at least four major communication technologies that predate writing and that could conceivably have performed some combination of the functions Toronto School authors [i.e., Harold Innis, Marshall McLuhan, Eric Havelock, Jack Goody, and Walter Ong] attribute to writing: painting, sculpture, architecture (especially its monumental and ornamental forms), and musical instruments. (221)

As Sterne concludes, "we must construct new studies of early media and new ethnographies that do not posit the ascendancy of the White, Christian West as the meaning of history" (222). Nevertheless, both editorial and authorial figures within these chapters do use the term "oral" to discuss decolonizing societies in which literacy rates and print opportunities lagged (and where vibrant street life, in Naipaul's case, and rich mythic traditions, in Soyinka's, provide more than enough artistic material). Moreover, Ong's concept of "secondary orality" holds a special relevance for the particular circumstances of writing for radio, directing literate tools towards acoustic ends. I therefore employ "orality" on occasion—and in addition to such near, but less heavily freighted, cognates as "sonic" and "acoustic"—as a means of describing not an *absolute distinction* but rather situations in which, to different degrees and ends, "oral" and "literate" *overlap*.

characterized by "the special need to communicate provided by small islands, *isolated* as their very name implies"; where print could bridge the open water in different circumstances, "the trouble for West Indian writers is that there are far too few readers" (21-22). Instead, these societies are "still largely illiterate, unspecialized, given to open air gatherings" (21). Into this space of residual orality and burgeoning literacy bursts the BBC. Though it broadcasts from a considerable physical and political distance, and while Swanzy himself is "only a temporary caretaker" (23), *Caribbean Voices* has the power both to substitute for the larger "apparatus of a literary culture" and to stimulate its development.

> In fact, with the exception of the week-end editions of the newspapers, the literary pages in the dailies, and the occasional gallant small anthology, of which one must particularly mention the Barbadian *BIM* under the editorship of Frank Collymore, there are no outlets or forum of exchange, except the B.B.C. (22)

Thus "the main value of a programme like *Caribbean Voices*" is to minister to the practical wants of a writer's life. It "provide[s] an outlet for writers who would otherwise be mute, a means of inter-communication with like minds, and, if anything so sordid can be mentioned, money" (28).[10] These necessities met, a literature can arise in which the BBC collaborates with more local and print-bound channels. As Swanzy declares in a letter to his ally Collymore, "'in our yoked chariot, the BBC represents Mammon and cash, the magazine the spirit and credit'" (Nanton).

From that objective—to nurture both a literature and the institutional infrastructure required to sustain it—certain editorial standards follow. Though they are articulated with greater precision and selective purpose in Swanzy's correspondence with his Caribbean

[10] A letter which Swanzy wrote a year earlier offers more particulars on this point: "I am limited to £30 for the 28 1/2 minutes [of the program], and at present rates, both for writers and readers, I calculate that prose works out at roughly one guinea per minute, but poetry at two guineas or more" (Letter to Gladys Lindo, 20 April 1948).

partners, he also provided considerable on-air advice. Twice a year, the producer would deliver critical summations on the contributions of "The Last Six Months," developing the themes of his "Prolegomena" while carefully offering more praise than censure. In addressing the program's audience, Swanzy was an editor speaking to writers, since any listener to *Caribbean Voices* was a potential writer, if not an actual contributor already: both criticism and congratulations were submission guidelines in semi-disguise. For instance, "The Last Six Months" broadcast on 15 August 1948 takes note of the increasing flow of manuscripts—"you do seem to like this outlet"—while warning that the quality of the prose "has been a little disappointing . . . it has all been much of a muchness. No definite personality has appeared, nor any really remarkable theme." Nevertheless, Swanzy commends the poetry and declares that "on the whole, the themes that your writers deal with are becoming wider, more ambitious and more accurate, treatment and theme making a harmony together" (1-3). Five years later, dissecting "The Last Six Months" on 1 March 1953, Swanzy suggests that "exactness, whether of feeling or technique, and of course in most cases both" has been "the common-quality that I see uniting all the best items of the six months that have gone" (1). Accordingly, he too has become more exact in his judgments, his praise reflecting both a growing confidence in the quality of the submissions and a clearer enunciation of what those commendable qualities are. Swanzy is most stimulated by works which mine the resources of the vernacular, as in

> the most accomplished piece of writing that we heard, the long study of the Calypsonian, Razor Blade, by Samuel Selvon . . . it was a most brilliant use of the sly, slurred dialect of Trinidad, every line and sentence as clean and exact as a new pin . . . All these Trinidad expressions can be geared up into poetry by a natural writer like Selvon.

In contrast, his criticism is reserved for seemingly less authentic language, such as "the American mannerisms of John Wickham in Breaking Point." A writer being West Indian by birth is not in itself sufficient cause for inclusion or celebration on the program; Swanzy's half-

stated criterion is a vitality in language and theme born of closeness to the common life of the West Indies—as perceived by the producer. In 1948, Swanzy radiates confidence in the "new literature" coming to be, "because you are all engaged in expressing the secrets of one region, lovely and varied, enough, but still one, unique" (1).

An editor's account can, of course, be self-interested. Mediation may warp as well as enable. Does Swanzy not underrate the distorting, and even demeaning, effect on West Indian authors of having to write for radio and the BBC? Is his emphasis on the local not limiting for aspiring writers, a drawing of imaginative borders that verges on the patronizing? After all, the "main theme" of the Overseas Service—previously the Empire Service—was "'the projection of Britain'" across the airwaves (Briggs 126). This choice of venue for the maturation of an independent literary culture can seem incongruous at best and bitterly ironic at worst. On the program, however, Swanzy openly entertains doubts about the suitability of an editor like himself and an institution like the BBC to the business of building West Indian literature. In "The Last Six Months" of August 1948, he discusses the on-air literary criticism provided by "Arthur Calder-Marshall, the novelist . . . and the poet Roy Fuller," acknowledging that

> you will probably say that all three of us are Britishers, with our own values and background, different from yours. We are conscious of this difficulty, really conscious of it, but we haven't met the criticism so far, of too much European uniformity, except on the technical side of broadcasting. (1)

He repeats the self-accusation a few lines later, referring to "this limitation, of European judgement, which I do think ought always to be stressed." Later still, he remarks on the unexpected response to one of the program's efforts to combat this disparity directly, namely their "policy of using West Indian voices to read West Indian material" (4). It turns out that listeners preferred skilled to merely authentic radio readers, with the result that "we have taken note, and besides trying at more West Indian voices, we hope to have English readers from time

to time." Swanzy even returns to the same theme at the end of the broadcast,

> We do realise that the European voice, as well as the European way of looking things, may not entirely help the West Indies, which has its own voice-rhythm and its own view of life. All I can say is, I hope that the contributions for the coming six months will be strong enough to stand up to the worst that we in London can do to them, either in presentation or in criticism. Good-night. (5)

Swanzy's mitigations extend beyond mere acknowledgement. Michael Niblett has applied Bourdieusian theory directly to the case of *Caribbean Voices*, arguing that Swanzy's editorial preferences reflect the internal conflict of an individual at occasional odds with his habitus, "a certain lack of adjustment to that habitus of middle-class respectability . . . integral to the vision of egalitarian imperialism promoted by the corporation" (126). However, we must extend our analysis from this habitus, embedded in class and institution, to the transatlantic network that Swanzy established. For he did not work alone, but through Caribbean intermediaries. And it is in correspondence with those collaborators that Swanzy's editorial principles are refined and emerge most explicitly.

Writers in the islands did not send material directly to Swanzy or to London. Everything they wrote and delivered passed through the program's Jamaica-based agent, Cedric Lindo: a screen for submissions, a conduit for rejections, and together with his wife, Gladys, the only official employees of *Caribbean Voices* in the whole region.[11] It is in letters to Lindo that

[11] That the agent was Cedric would not be obvious from a cursory glance at either the program's records in the BBC Written Archives Centre or the correspondence kept among the Swanzy papers at the University of Birmingham. Those letters are all either addressed to "Mrs. Lindo" or signed "Gladys R. Lindo"—Cedric's wife. Yet Swanzy left persuasive evidence that Cedric performed the actual editorial duties under his wife's name, a masquerade in which they were both complicit. Swanzy's preface to the *Caribbean Voices* archive states that Cedric "was responsible for all pre-selection of the scripts" ("Note by the Producer"); on the first letter he received from "Gladys," dated 14 September 1946, Swanzy has added a note indicating that "all letters [were] from Cedric Lindo." Late in life, interviewed by Alison Donnell, he enumerated "'the various links in the [program's] chain of communication: Cedric Lindo, Frank Collymore, A.J. Seymour'" (Donnell 88). In another interview from the same period—the 1990s—Swanzy mentioned Cedric but not Gladys (Griffith, "Interview"). Glyne A. Griffith, in his *The BBC and the Development of Anglophone Caribbean Literature* (2016), explains the curious substitution by pointing out that "when Cedric agreed to serve as sub-editor for *Caribbean Voices*, he was employed by the Jamaica Fruit and Shipping Company and did not want there to be any appearance of a conflict of interest" (42).

Swanzy makes and justifies his selections; Lindo's own missives query and clarify the editor's decisions, educating him on West Indian realities. Less diplomacy is required between them than on air, and their correspondence illuminates both the business of *Caribbean Voices* and the cultural ends that business served. A series of rejections on 15 January 1947, early in Swanzy's tenure as producer, illustrate the varieties of reasons, largely aesthetic but occasionally political, for which a piece could be sent back:

> The two by Jan Williams are about characters that are too well known—I have kept her essay on Sam Lord. The essay by Mittelholzer is just a little bit "wet." The short story by Alred Graham has too little point. The story by Pat Mitchell is, I think, politically undesirable, as well as being artistically incoherent.—she seems obsessed by the colour relationship . . . Mrs. Ormsby Marshall's story is a little prosy, like all her contributions[.] (1)

The note about a "politically undesirable" story is proof, if we needed it, that *Caribbean Voices* did not represent a space of utter artistic freedom. Operating under certain constraints imposed by his institution and background, Swanzy conveyed those same constraints through the instrument of his middleman, Lindo, and the revealed preferences of each week's program. On 23 July of that same year, Swanzy offers a glimpse of the amount of editing typically performed at BBC headquarters once his initial selection was made. Informing Lindo of the corporation's recent undertaking that it "shall not in any way change the manuscript without express permission," Swanzy argues that "it seems scarcely possible under the peculiar circumstances of Caribbean Voices" and adds "that I wonder whether it would be possible for you to send a letter to potential contributors saying that we must reserve the right to sub-edit items?" In turn, Lindo instructs the producer in the facts on the ground. To Swanzy's suggestion that "Trinidad has no literary outlet at all, I gather" (22 March 1948), for instance, he replies that "actually

---

Whether Gladys played a part beyond bestowing her name is unknowable, and so it is best to assume that Cedric was the operating sub-editorial force in Kingston.

Trinidad has a better literary outlet, I consider, than any other West Indian colony as the "Sunday Guardian" does publish at least two short stories each week" (3 April 1948, 1).

What patterns emerge from this tissue of acceptance, rejection, and explanation? What is Swanzy looking for? On 6 August 1947, he anticipates later declarations on air and in the "Prolegomena" by contending that "a specific West Indian weltanschaung[sic]—I am sorry, its the only word that will do—is still in the making" (1). Three strong predilections follow from Swanzy's commitment to realizing that West Indian worldview through literary radio (though each also carries within it the potential to distort): the near-requirement of "local colour," a definite leaning towards local dialect, and an obligation to represent all areas of the Anglophone Caribbean. The issue of "local colour" crops up throughout Swanzy's correspondence, frequently because contributors themselves complain about it and the way in which it can devolve into a form of exoticism, a performatively inauthentic "authenticity." On 31 October 1947, Lindo passes on the concerns of one writer who feels this emphasis an artificial constraint and hopes that "'Mr. Swanzy is prepared to widen the scope of his programmes. One or two pieces recently have not had local colour predominating and if there is any chance of something less pictorial being accepted I should like to submit a few pieces of a different nature'" (1). Yet though Swanzy replies that "you can assure them, that so far as my judgement goes, I try to keep an open mind, and offset my own interest in "local colour" of such a picturesque pattern as you have in the West Indies" (20 April 1948, 1), the stress on locality and particularity abides. It does so above all in the language that Swanzy allowed on air. Here, however, one can argue that the editor's appetite for dialect led to a greater breadth of voices than might otherwise have reached the airwaves. Lindo himself found Swanzy's linguistic attitudes too lax: "but—and this is a very big BUT—your inclusion of Mrs. Hoad's piece of doggerel about her 'fish-pie made

with ya,' has shaken my belief in myself as 'an admirable screen' as you were pleased to call me in your talk in January" (8 March 1948). Indeed, Glyne A. Griffith suggests that the producer grew increasingly frustrated "with the sub-editor's middlebrow view of what constituted good writing" (*BBC* 7). Finally, Swanzy kept one eye on geographical diversity as he cajoled work out of writers:

> While we are on the question of material, is there any chance of jogging Barbados, especially Vaughan and Collymore . . . We have had nothing from them for a long time. And how about British Honduras? . . . I do not remember having seen anything at all, and it would be rather nice to include at least something from Belize. Again, don't you think we ought to have something about the death of Claude McKay?" (23 June 1948)

The balance of aesthetic and social aims issued in a double editorial consciousness, a commitment to individual talent *and* to developing a tradition. On 18 October 1948, for instance, Swanzy writes two letters emphasizing the nearly contradictory calculations behind his decisions. To Lindo, he acknowledges that "in our case the literary values must take second place to the social values of broadcasting," finer discriminations giving way before the needs of broader inclusion and encouragement. Justifying the BBC's role to a Mr. Debysingh, on the other hand, he argues that literary values, expressed in judicious criticism and spurred by financial reward, will in fact advance those same social values:

> We realise, for instance, that any criticism from London might well be doing what we complain of in the past, the imposition of alien standards to a regional culture which ought to develop of itself. On the other hand, we are certainly under the impression that comment by literary men, as opposed to schoolmasters, is likely to help build up a better tradition than the "heritage" of English literature, which has not, so far as I am aware, produced any valuable West Indian writing in the past . . . All this, I agree, is interim work which should best be done from a West Indian Centre, but there is a third element of a literary culture, which the B.B.C. fills, and that is an effective demand for writers—the guarantee of an audience and of some financial return.

Aware of the need for "a West Indian Centre" to buttress the building of literary capital closer to home, Swanzy is especially keen to pay tribute to the "man more responsible than most,

indeed than any, for the development of West Indian culture . . . the editor of BIM" ("Last Six Months," 1 March 1953, 5).

What the BBC returned to the West Indies via the airwaves of *Caribbean Voices* was often already mediated on its way to the metropole, passing not merely through Lindo's hands but the pages of *BIM*. First appearing in 1942, and running for decades thereafter, Frank Collymore's little magazine was based in Barbados and aimed at the whole of the West Indies. It preceded and nourished *Caribbean Voices*, paving the way for cross-island cultural exchanges and publishing many of the writers, and works, that would then be broadcast by Swanzy's program. The relationship between the two magazines—one of the air and the other in print—was concentrated in the collaborative friendship between their two editors. A schoolmaster who taught George Lamming at the Combermere School in Bridgetown, Collymore presided over *BIM* from its first appearance until well into the 1970s. After the war and as British authority receded, his enthusiasm for a West Indian federation fed the growing pan-Caribbean scope of his small journal, for "'I found myself enthusiastic for contributions from the islands, and I was not disappointed. During the years that followed we were publishing material from Trinidad, Jamaica, British Guiana, St Vincent, St Lucia'" (quoted in Baugh, *Frank Collymore* 172). And that material included plenty of works by "the major writers of the first great wave" of postwar West Indian writing: prose by "Lamming, Mittelholzer and Selvon," poetry by "[Kamau] Brathwaite, Eric Roach and [Derek] Walcott" (174). While Naipaul published only two short pieces in the magazine—one in 1962, the other in 1964—"there was even a cheerfully, openly smiling, non-acerbic V.S. Naipaul, at the BBC's 'Caribbean Voices' microphone, something of a collector's item, as the frontispiece to No. 36 (Jan.-June 1963)" (176).

The conjunction of *Caribbean Voices* microphone and *BIM* frontispiece was no isolated coincidence; rather, it was a particularly neat illustration of their ongoing collaboration, the BBC picking up *BIM*'s print and broadcasting it to a much larger listenership, Collymore scouting and promoting local writers to Swanzy, regional and capital institutions combining in the production of text and audience through the efforts of their editors. Collymore offered contributors his eye for talent and a chance to publish, but he could pay them very little (and eventually nothing at all); given the delicacy of that arrangement and his acute sense of cultivating a fragile literary ecosystem, "it should not be surprising to find that Collymore tended, as far as possible, to be modest in making or suggesting changes to manuscripts accepted for publication in *Bim*" (181). As Collymore would write to Baugh in 1966, "'our one policy has been through the years to encourage creative talent'" (*An Index to Bim* 14). What he could not provide, however, Swanzy supplied: money, more rigorous editing, and proximity to the London publishing houses which would ultimately make a writer's career. Their symbiosis meant, moreover, that *BIM*'s exposure through the BBC would ensure the magazine's own growth: "its favourable reviews on the programme . . . had the double effect of increasing the magazine's circulation as well as expanding its circle of contributors" (Cobham 149).

This image of complementarity may invite some doubt. Did the larger institution take advantage of the smaller one? Does *BIM* deserve a larger share of the retrospective critical glory given to *Caribbean Voices*? In fact, the private record of this editorial partnership bears the public one out. Swanzy's praise for *BIM*, extolled over the airwaves, peppers his correspondence with Lindo, making clear his preference for Collymore's publication over its main regional rival: "[A. J.] Seymour sent me a copy of his magazine Kyk-Over-Al, which I found extremely disappointing. Do you think that they are a little bit too complacent and

insulated in that quarter?" (20 August 1948). Interviewed in 1971, Collymore recalled meeting Swanzy just once and admitted that "'I cannot remember what he looked like'"; nevertheless, he affirmed that Swanzy "was the man who really made it [*Caribbean Voices*]" and modestly acknowledged that "'I would write Swanzy and send him an occasional script and make suggestions'" (Sander and Munro 21-2). Between *Caribbean Voices* and *BIM*, Swanzy and Collymore, a transatlantic literary network came into being, at once drawing Caribbean literature towards London and bringing it to a wider West Indian audience. Their greatest joint success lay in fostering the early career of Derek Walcott.

II. The Discovery of Derek Walcott

Swanzy's letters, donated to the University of Birmingham,[12] track the development of the editors' friendship—constructive criticism flowing in both directions—alongside the young poet's explosive growth. On 7 January 1949, Swanzy writes

> I found the present BIM really very good indeed. This is not only because so much came from the Caribbean Voices stable, but also because of the organisation, which was almost perfect, granted the material, the paper and typography. I have only one criticism on production and that is the frightful lino-cut (?) at the beginning. With this torn out, BIM is a magazine of the highest class! (1)

Replying on 22 January, Collymore notes that "I am still disappointed with the W.I. readers of poetry" on the program, and then announces

> Now: I think I have made an important discovery. Last Monday Harold Simmons of St. Lucia sent me a recently published volume of poems by young Derek Walcott. Have you ever heard of him? Walcott, who is nineteen years old to-morrow, writes with remarkable fervour. His literary forbears are obviously Hopkins, Auden and Dylan Thomas, especially the latter; but his work is obviously sincere and wonderfully mature. If you have not yet received a copy of 25 Poems, perhaps I do not know when I have read anything so exciting. I have written Simmons to get more information about him,

[12] The collection of letters at Birmingham's Cadbury Library document Swanzy's involvement with *Caribbean Voices*, but they do not extend beyond that dimension of his professional life.

> and to ask him to forward you a copy if he has not already done so. (1-2)

West Indian literature reached its readers and listeners through a series of connections—Simmons to Collymore, Collymore to Swanzy—in which the *BIM* editor was a linchpin. Yet in this case Collymore could not simply make the introduction and trust the network, thus set in motion, to carry the young poet's work forward. Overcome by enthusiasm, he added postscript after postscript, quotation after quotation.

> P.S. I find I must include a few more scraps from Walcott's book to give you a better idea of the high quality of its verse; it's the best I8ve [sic] read for a long time . . . Isn't that marvellously well done? You must get his book and have it reviewed . . . Every poem, every page contains this marvellous imagery. I have read nothing so stimulating for a long time . . . the following extracts will give you some idea of the excellence of his poetry . . . and from the strange and deeply moving SAINT JUDAS . . . I think you will be able to gather from these fragments some indication. I should like to know what you think of the work of this young man. I am told he is teaching at St Mary's, Castries. (2-3)

Swanzy was slower to reach this pitch of praise, but a combination of his own reading and Collymore's contagious zeal produced an editorial conversion. On 9 February, he writes that "I must thank you very much indeed for letting me see the work, or a foretaste of the work, of Derek Walcott . . . I am very eager to use him. But I do not think I should do so until I have got his permission." On 30 March, he adds

> It is exceedingly kind of you to send me a copy of the poems of Derek Walcott. If you heard the broadcast, you will realise that we think as highly of him here as you do. In fact, I had to be dissuaded from using the fatal word "genius" in his connection. I am sure that you will be glad to see I have developed from the rather tepid comments I made to you on the first extracts that, with such warm magnanimity you sent to me.

Broadcasts followed and the young poet's career quickened. That summer, Collymore alerts his counterpart to "the script of Walcott's new poem, Epitaph for the Young, the publication of which he has asked me to undertake for him," and asks him for "a competent critique of the book to appear in our W.I. press concurrently with publication" (19 June 1949). The sense of

literary synapses firing is further heightened by the appearance in this letter of "another query: George Lamming has written me asking my advice on his coming to England . . . He has a pleasant, deep voice. Is there any chance of his free-lancing in your dept?" Several months later, Swanzy reveals that Walcott's "Epitaph" has further occasioned "three rather breathless pages which I dictated in intervals of work on Nigeria" (6 December 1949). Those pages—a letter to Walcott himself, dated 18 November 1949—offer a closer, longer, and more critically-engaged reading of a contributor's work than can be found anywhere else in Swanzy's papers.

"I am, you see, treating you by absolute standards," Swanzy notes towards the end of his letter (3). Though the implication of this aside is that Swanzy would generally judge other Caribbean voices by lesser criteria, the application—the sheer depth of this letter's exegesis of the twelve cantos of the "Epitaph"—illustrates the different levels of readership, and levers of relationship, that shaped the literary field revolving around *Caribbean Voices*. Collymore fulfilled the editorial function of discovery, Swanzy the equally editorial function of critique (and circulation). He offers Walcott mixed praise and criticism—"if I may say so, it ["Epitaph"] seems to me to mark a closer feeling for design than your first poems, although perhaps there is, to some extent, less verbal felicity" (1)—before interrogating the young poet's certainties with a series of questions:

> The title itself: beware of pity and self-pity? Does only the past comfort us? Have electric lights really superceded the stars? . . . Can one talk about the fading of colour from the mind at 19, before it is formed? . . . Is all human love really confusion? . . . Brilliant phrases, but I wonder about the true nature of your attempted dualism[.] (1-2)

Swanzy observes a pattern in the early cantos by which "you seem to end better than you began" (1), while also suggesting that the poem itself begins more powerfully than it ends: "Canto 11 and Canto 12, seem to me to be almost entirely irrelevant to the structure of the poetry, and indeed to contain very little poetry in themselves" (3). After analyzing each canto in turn, he

concludes his letter with more practical, and radio-specific, criticisms of Walcott's verse play *Flight and Sanctuary*, suggesting cuts and consistency (balancing the language of characters and the length of scenes):

> I should like, if possible, to try and produce it, although our resources are not great. Is it the right length? It has to fit in to 28 1/2 minutes. I feel that one could cut a certain amount of the chorus, whose language is a little at odds with the young men's, as well as Barton's. "Too insensible. . . .. my careless slickness". Other criticisms are the curtain in the middle of the first scene—and the length of the second scene, which is surely far too short to balance the first? Also, the last line seems far too "corny" for the actual spiritual content of the struggle that has going on [sic] immediately before, and the language used. You will forgive these criticisms, I know.

Though Walcott's response was long in coming—dated "Feb. 11, '52," it begins "after almost three years here is a letter from me, and I blush with shame" (1)—he replies in kind, the poet rising to the editor's interest.

Walcott's letter too is an outpouring, chock-full of typos and run-on sentences, motoring on for a page and a half, single-spaced, before the first paragraph break. In it, he expresses the root tension of *Caribbean Voices* for a Caribbean writer: it represented a source of acceptance from a literary culture, and nerve center, that the author also aimed to challenge. That Swanzy should be the audience for Walcott's scrutiny of his own fluctuating feelings towards English literary power is an appropriate irony, since both program and producer embodied that power in an unusually collaborative and accessible form. On the one hand, Walcott declares that

> When I remember how many things I should write you about in connection with Caribbean Voices, I hardly know where to begin. What I remember very clearly however is the reading of 25 Poems three years ago on the programme. It was the first time I had really listened, and perhaps it was the amazing fact that a thousand miles away one could hear one's voice speaking, and perhaps it was the thought of the vast unseen audience of radio that made me feel so humble and afraid, but it was one of the most moving things I have ever listened to . . . Well I suppose that it wasnt [sic] only the programme alone, but the fact that I had been accepted so violently as a poet that was a little overwhelming.

Acceptance widens Walcott's horizons, introducing him to a necessary audience and eliciting

a useful critical reaction, for "Roy Fuller's criticism of the poems was excellent. I have re-read it recently, and I see even more clearly how judicious is the criticism, how level headed and yet keen." Indeed, "you might as well ask the writers here to give up writing as close down CV which is a source of income in one way and an outlet in the other way. Without Caribbean Voices I think that many of the West Indain [sic] writers would be choked" (3). Yet Walcott also attaches the strange adverb "violently" to the process of metropolitan acceptance. His attitudes to the West Indies and to England are both riven with ambivalence. On the one hand, he recalls going over "your long exposition in the cinema the evening I got it" and "look[ing] then at those half-savage, middle-class inane faces [in the cinema] and wonder[ing] if I belonged there, and what it would come to if all writers felt so anti-native" (2)—a near-Naipaulian note of disgust. On the other hand, Walcott's resounding "P.P.S." reads "I am happy that I wasnt [sic] born in England, because I want to be in the crowd when English Literature shakes hands with the natives and says 'Dr Livingstone you are presumptuous!'" (3). The first "feeling" of alienation is "what makes all the writers migrate to England, apart from the business of making a living"; the second note of defiance is what makes Walcott "glad that I was not writing in England" (2). Curiously, Walcott describes those who stay in the islands as condemned to "a sense of writing on the air"—an expression to capture the painful ephemerality of writing in a late-colonial, largely-oral culture—while turning to literal writing of the air, *Caribbean Voices*, as his means of working towards a more substantial literary career. Indeed, the subsequent correspondence between Walcott and Swanzy was consumed by the poet's request that the editor place his first novel with a London publisher and Swanzy's ultimately unsuccessful efforts to do so.[13] For Walcott's knotted position—writing against and through

[13] The novel, *A Passage to Paradise*, was never published. See Bruce King, *Derek Walcott: A Caribbean Life*

England, of and away from the West Indies, on and past the air—was reflected by *Caribbean Voices* itself. Moving back and forth across the Atlantic, the program constructed an editorial space in-between, connecting capital and region, radio and print, writers in the islands and writers in London. The feelings which seem so convoluted in Walcott's letter were processed by the program into coherent art: *Caribbean Voices* and its editor functioned as mediators of the wider West Indies-London exchange, a vehicle through which, in John Guillory's terms, "distanciation" and "transmission" were simultaneously achieved.

Ultimately, Swanzy's sense of *Caribbean Voices* as a necessary incubator of the postwar West Indian literary boom matches the valuation of his writers and later academic commentators. In *The Pleasures of Exile* (1960), George Lamming points out that in the absence of local radio interest, "it was London, or nothing" for aspiring writers (67). Yet just as necessity provokes invention, opportunity produces community, and community in turn fosters culture, "the magic of the B.B.C. box" performing miracles of connection between the literary-minded (66). On a regional level, "'Caribbean Voices' enabled writers in one island to keep in touch with the latest work of writers in another island"; at a more local one, "West Indian writers would meet in the same house and listen to these programmes." Swanzy is as indispensable in Lamming's account as in everyone else's, for "no comprehensive account of writing in the British Caribbean during the last decade could be written without considering his whole achievement and his role in the emergence of the West Indian novel" (67).[14] Decades later, the scholar Laurence Breiner concurs. He begins by acknowledging that "within the colonial

(2000), pp. 96-7.

[14] His care for writers exceeded purely literary concerns, Lamming points out: "If you looked a little thin in the face, he would assume that there might have been a minor famine on, and without in any way offending your pride, he would make some arrangement for you to earn" (67). Though keeping authors together, body as well as soul, could not fail to improve their chances of writing well.

context the transaction facilitated by *Caribbean Voices* is complex" (99). Editor and writer were both subject to multiple and contrasting pressures, "to write 'British'" or "to write 'exotic,'" "to select for 'West Indianness'" or to prefer "work with a recognizable relationship to the tradition." Yet "the *Caribbean Voices* program was always self-conscious about balancing its real service to Caribbean culture (especially in default of any other medium) and its metropolitan filtration of the material" (100). As a result, its "record of editorial openness with relatively few critical blind spots" really did provide "the occasion for imagining a [West Indian] community, and the imagining went a considerable way toward realizing that community" (105). Both medium and mediator were imperfect, generous, and generative forces.

Lamming closes his recollections of *Caribbean Voices* with a line he attributes to fellow contributor Sam Selvon, one in which Swanzy stands for the communicative function of radio itself, a channel through which human voices are released and amplified. By then, the producer had gone to Ghana and entrusted *Caribbean Voices* to his handpicked successor. As "Sam Selvon always says when we meet, 'The Voices stop. Henry gone and the Voices stop'" (68). The voices did not officially stop until 1958, but decline set in soon after Swanzy's departure—and Naipaul's accession (for reasons which Chapter One will make clear). The second half of Swanzy's life passed in lesser proximity to literary creation and has consequently attracted much less attention.[15] He came back to the BBC and to his producing post for the Overseas Service, serving in his last five years at the Corporation as the senior scriptwriter for talks and features emanating from Bush House (Ramsden). The Written Archives Centre contains several

[15] Even at the time, his literary presence and influence were perceived to have given way as soon as he was uncoupled from the program. In 1960, Lamming asks—rhetorically but also mournfully—"On which floor and in which House of the B.B.C. is Henry Swanzy working now? What is he producing?" (67).

boxes of scripts either written or overseen by Swanzy in his latter days. They frequently display his affinity with and knowledge of the Commonwealth, as it then was and as one might also expect of a Service aimed at newly postcolonial nations; in 1961, for instance, he composed and narrated a four-part "West African Journey."[16] More rarely, they offer glimpses into his literary leanings, the occasional program on Coleridge or Ezra Pound—always critical pieces, never original fiction or poetry again—more than balanced out by features on "The Common Market," "Made in Sheffield," and "The Girl Guides' Jubilee." In 1975, at the end of his tenure, Swanzy reviewed a new novel by his old charge V. S. Naipaul. Making no mention of their one-time creative connection, Swanzy sums up his praise and his criticism for *Guerrillas* in a single, repeated adjective: "merciless." The editor still has an eye for strengths and weaknesses; Naipaul offers "exceptional penetration," but his ruthless clarity strikes Swanzy as less than "the whole truth," and that is why "the book, which fails in the charity of commitment, which fails to acknowledge even the possibility of actual disinterested strength, fails to touch the heart." Swanzy never lost interest—despite naming the work's flaw, he concludes by calling it "the best and most significant of the nine novels by V. S. Naipaul that I have read." Yet not once after his return from Ghana did he create or take charge of a regular literary program. With the end of the 1950s, moreover, the age of BBC literary magazines of the air also drew to a close, superseded by an expansion of print opportunity that they themselves had helped to provoke. Other important programs would arise—*African Theatre* is a long-running and

[16] That same year, he also produced and narrated "'The Mountains of the Lion': A portrait in sound of Sierra Leone on the eve of Independence, by Henry Swanzy and John Akar, with impressions of the country and people recorded on the spot by the BBC and the Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service." Akar was not only the Director of Broadcasting in Sierra Leone but a veteran of Swanzy's forgotten sister program, *West African Voices*. The scripts suggest a slight bias towards African subjects—other titles include "East Africa – The Larger Unity," "Signposts in Kenya," "Uganda in Search of Itself"—but Swanzy's versatility is everywhere visible. In 1972, for instance, he sketched two Canadian politicians, delivering an obituary for Lester Pearson and a profile of Robert Stanfield.

understudied engine in the development of Anglophone African drama[17]—but Swanzy's *Voices* of the Global Anglophone subsided. The producer's slide from prominence was also that of his medium, radio lessening in importance to postcolonial literatures as its period of initial postwar centrality passed.

III. Naipaul and Soyinka

Restoring this radio background to the center stage of literary criticism can transform our readings of the early works that V. S. Naipaul and Wole Soyinka began to write while they were still contributing to their respective *Voices*. For though the pieces Naipaul and Soyinka produced for radio remain largely unpublished, and available only as scripts at the Written Archives Centre, the formative tension of these early creative conditions—caught between the sonic and the written—suffuses the two works that secured their writers genuine publishing contracts: Naipaul's *Miguel Street* (written in 1955 and published in 1959) and Soyinka's *The Lion and the Jewel* (first performed in 1959 and published in 1963). The first is a sequence of linked short stories, the second a play. *Miguel Street* and *The Lion and the Jewel* date from the period when Naipaul and Soyinka were beginning to detach themselves from radio, and yet the two works were broadcast, in part or in whole, on the BBC. Both emerge from, and are replete with, *Caribbean Voices* and *West African Voices*; each revolves around the disruptive force of English education, whether in a Port of Spain street or a Nigerian village. While Naipaul's stories are caught between the standard English of their narrator and the dialect of his neighbours, between periodic eruptions of calypso and a constant concern with schooling, Soyinka's play mixes verse and prose, mime and dance, English and Yoruba to capture the

[17] See Cordeaux, "The BBC African Service's Involvement in African Theatre."

comedy of a love triangle whose entanglements are also those of tradition and modernization, the forces vying for the African future. Each work arises from a struggle between the auditory and the literate—a contest drawing on divisions that mirror both the creative context of the authors' wireless days and the social context of their decolonizing homelands. Each work gives form to their fusion.

To read *Miguel Street* and *The Lion and the Jewel* for the mediations they perform, as well as the mediations that made them possible, is to fill the gap in the critical record where Naipaul and Soyinka's literary apprenticeships ought to be. The story of Naipaul's breakthrough, his discovery of his material and tone in *Miguel Street,* is well-known. However, the coincidence of its elements—that Naipaul should find his voice while writing against the aural background of *Caribbean Voices*—has been neglected by both the writer and his critics. Meanwhile, radio plays a crucial and crucially unexamined part in the career of Wole Soyinka, extending from his first contributions to the Nigerian Broadcasting Service, to his frequent appearances on *West African Voices* while living in Leeds and London, to his periodic renewal of this BBC partnership over the ensuing decades of his still fruitful writing life. *The Lion and the Jewel* not only displays the interaction of stage and page; placed in the context of the radio stories preceding it, this play also illuminates the role of the wireless in shaping Soyinka's aesthetic and audience. By tracing the echoing trajectories of Naipaul and Soyinka's creative youths, the subsequent two chapters will interpret the authors' early works in the light of their conditions of production and explore the sharply diverging fortunes of their two radio programs.

About each other Naipaul and Soyinka were less than complimentary, but even their mutual criticism clarifies aspects of their mutual mediations. In an echo of the central conflict in *Miguel Street,* as well as a venting of sheer authorial competitiveness, Naipaul scorned

Soyinka by insinuating that there was something less than written about his work. Paul Theroux recalls raising Soyinka's name in conversation with Naipaul when they both lived in Uganda in the mid-1960s, asking him

> "What about African literature?"
> "Does it exist?"
> "Wole Soyinka. Chinua Achebe."
> "Did they write anything?"
> "Novels," I said.
> "Mimicry," he said. "You can't beat a novel out on a drum." (27)

When Soyinka won the Nobel Prize in 1986, Naipaul repeated the derisive question, with its clear assumption of the superiority of the written over the oral (clearly mistaken in Soyinka's case, given his blending of both), asking "'Did he write anything?'"—and then adding "'The Nobel Committee are doing it again . . . Pissing from a great height,' he said. 'On books'" (271-2). For his part, Soyinka has described Naipaul in terms redolent of the compromises entailed in submitting to capital institutions and their literary culture, calling him "'an unfortunate creation of the British literary establishment'" (Bentsi-Enchill 141).[18] Speaking after Naipaul's death in 2018, moreover, Soyinka spelled out the corollary of establishment "creation"—the writer's self-betrayal, literary and racial—and declared that "my immediate instinct the moment I heard the news was 'Ah! The white race has lost a good writer'" (Túbọ̀sún).[19] That sonic and print, self-creation and institutional influence, are rather more mixed in each case is what makes a comparison between these rarely compared writers valuable and instructive—a lesson in how the Global Anglophone as a field of literary activity operates and what the Global Anglophone

[18] Soyinka himself has not been immune to this strain of criticism. In "Towards the Decolonization of African Literature" (1975), Chinweizu, Onwuchekwa, and Ihechukwu accuse him and the other "Ibadan/Nsukka poets" of being "ineffectual imitators" of both European and African traditions, of exhibiting "voluntary cultural servitude—and worse, servitude to somebody else's dead past" (31).

[19] Though unlike Naipaul, he finds himself moved to praise as well, adding that "between you and me, I think he wrote one of the most beautiful novels ever written, *A House for Mr Biswas* . . . there is nothing to beat *Mr Biswas*."

as a field of literary study can reveal.

CHAPTER ONE: V. S. NAIPAUL'S *CARIBBEAN VOICES*

V. S. Naipaul told the story often. During the second half of his life, in autobiographical essays and autobiographical novels, he would return to it as to a touchstone, revisiting and revising a tale that itself takes the form of creative return. A young man from Trinidad, full of the ambition to be writer and the anxiety that he will fail, adrift and poor in the London of the early 1950s, sits in his place of part-time work—a BBC freelancers' room in the Langham Hotel—and suddenly writes the opening sentences of the book that confirms him in his vocation. He discovers his material and, with it, his tone. The catalyst for this outpouring is the memory of a childhood sound; the book that emerges is *Miguel Street*, a short-story sequence chronicling the noisy lives of a neighbourhood in Port of Spain; the radio program for which Naipaul was working at the time of his breakthrough is *Caribbean Voices*. The creative act combines the elements this scene contains: a Trinidad past and a London present, a sound and a sheet of paper, a building devoted to the production of audio programming and an individual whose aspirations are set on print. These details are widely acknowledged, and yet the interaction of auditory background and print activity in the making of *Miguel Street* is remarkably under-analyzed, not least by the author himself. His period of apprenticeship with *Caribbean Voices* and his period of editorial control over the program are both longer and more significant than his accounts or the current critical record admit. For Naipaul's retellings diminish what critics disregard and yet a study of *Miguel Street* confirms: his breakthrough is founded on a fusion of orality and literacy, a mediation itself mediated by his later revisions of the story of his writerly beginnings, by his editing of the manuscript for his publisher, André Deutsch, and by his relations with Henry Swanzy, his producer and predecessor at *Caribbean Voices*. By unfolding

these various exchanges, and fleshing them out with archival evidence, I arrive at a novel reading of *Miguel Street*—and at a reconstruction of the editorial culture of *Caribbean Voices* in the moment of the book's conception and the program's transition, from the outsider editorship of Swanzy to the insider ascension of Naipaul himself. This chapter will read into the bifurcated form of Naipaul's first publishable book the divided setting which kindled his creativity, caught between the ambient orality of his radio room and the purposeful literacy of his typewriter. *Miguel Street* combines the cacophony of its inhabitants, their dialogue and dialect, with the singular, retrospective, and educated English voice of its narration. Naipaul's stories, so full of Caribbean voices and so wedded to writing, demonstrate that mediation is a creative principle, one that structures the relationship between literary capital and literary region. At the origin of Naipaul's literary self-discovery lies the connection between radio and print—itself a proxy for the productive tension between Trinidad and London—overlapping and clashing and producing the discrete unity of a work of art.

I. The Retellings

As he grew older, V. S. Naipaul returned again and again to the story of his beginnings as a writer. Each revision alters the record of events which led to *Miguel Street* in 1955, written when its author was twenty-two and working at the BBC. In "Prologue to an Autobiography" (1982), *The Enigma of Arrival* (1987), *A Way in the World* (1994), "Reading and Writing" (1998), the Nobel lecture "Two Worlds" (2001), *Half a Life* (2001), and finally the introduction to his *Collected Short Fiction* (2011), Naipaul adds certain details and removes others, at times simplifying the tale and at others thickening its remembered texture. Perhaps he gravitates to this moment of suddenly liberated creativity in order to recapture it, or merely to remind himself

that it was possible. After all, the story itself illustrates the inventive potential of return, the way in which one can move forward by going back: unmoored in London, Naipaul allows his imagination to go home and mine the material of childhood. Though his later accounts remain in the medium of print, Naipaul's ceaseless reframing bears more than a passing resemblance to the transposition of "older works of art" into "later media" that "recent media theorists call remediation" (Guillory 322). The new arises from the old, one way of telling from another. But though media actually intersect at the point of Naipaul's breakthrough—a collision which helps to generate it—the relationship of radio and print is clouded by the multiple accounts he later gives. The overall tendency of these rewritings is to reduce radio, and the vital connections it offered Naipaul, first to the ambient noise surrounding his literary work and then to near silence. For throughout his retellings, and in the residual hints of orality which ventilate them, Naipaul is both writing against the background of radio and breaking free of it. His continued circling around the much-mediated moment of *Miguel Street*'s composition suggests what the book itself confirms: though the author increasingly separated print and air in the story of his artistic self-founding, their friction provided its spark.

In the first and most expansive of his retellings, "Prologue to an Autobiography," Naipaul acknowledges the importance of his surroundings to the eventual success of *Miguel Street* while largely overlooking the role they may have played in its actual composition. Originally published as the first of two long narratives in *Finding the Centre*, these pages are rich in their evocation of the BBC, and fairly generous in the tribute they pay to the relationships Naipaul developed within the "Victorian-Edwardian gloom" of the freelancers' room where he sat down, "some three months short of my twenty-third birthday," and wrote "on an old BBC typewriter, and on smooth, 'non-rustle' BBC script paper . . . the first sentence of my first

publishable book" (53-4). He follows his earlier self along this path of discovery, revealing that it was, in essence, a process of recovery, of finding within himself the resources of a writer. The "luck [which] was with me that afternoon" strikes at the moment when his chosen vocation seems most uncertain (57). He sits at the typewriter "after two failed attempts at novels," without any sense of direction, and finds his way forward simply "because that first sentence was so direct, so uncluttered, so without complications, that it provoked the sentence that was to follow" (58). It is a "Port of Spain memory" which produces that opening line—"I wrote: *Every morning when he got up Hat would sit on the banister of his back verandah and shout across, 'what happening there, Bogart?'*" (54)—and which sets other recollections ringing, disclosing to the young writer his own wealth of as-yet unshaped experience. Over the next "five or six weeks" he writes the stories that will become *Miguel Street*, in a rush of inspiration that gradually slows and eventually exhausts itself (64). But though he comes "to the end of what I could do with the street, in that particular way," and while the narrator of these stories finally leaves the island, "as I had left Trinidad five years before," Naipaul has made his start and found his voice in "a tract of experience I hadn't before contemplated as a writer" (64-5). In the beginning was a return: "To become a writer, that noble thing, I had thought it necessary to leave. Actually to write, it was necessary to go back" (79).

Naipaul is quick to credit the atmosphere of the BBC, and the worldly connections it afforded, with advancing his work. He even suggests that one environment directly influenced the other, the room of writing bequeathing something of its ambience to the street of memory. He describes "the freelances' [sic] room" as "like a club: chat, movement, the separate anxieties of young or youngish men below the passing fellowship of the room" (60). This "atmosphere I was writing in" becomes "that atmosphere I gave to Bogart's Port of Spain street"; the bareness

of its space shapes Bogart's own quarters, a servant's room with "hardly any furniture" (61). But Naipaul quickly passes over the osmosis of influence to discuss the more solid realities of professional encouragement. He recounts the supportive reactions and actions of three men—all employees of the BBC, though in what capacity and for which program Naipaul does not say—to whom he passed "the three typed sheets" of that first story. John Stockbridge "made a serious face and spoke a prodigious prophecy about my future"; Andrew Salkey "detected, and made me take out, one or two early sentences where I had begun to ridicule, not the characters, but the idea that what I was doing was a real story" (62); and Gordon Woolford offered "the most wholehearted acceptance," taking Naipaul to the BBC club where "he read the story over again, and he made me read it with him, line by line, assessing the words and the tone." Once the book is completed, moreover, Salkey acts as a go-between with the London publisher André Deutsch, though "the publisher that Andrew Salkey took the book to sent no reply for three months (the book remained unpublished for four years)" (64), for Deutsch shared the "publishing dogma" that short stories do not sell and required novels from the young Naipaul first (Athill, *Stet* 204). Without "the fellowship of the room that afternoon," Naipaul acknowledges, "I might not have wanted to go on with what I had begun" (61).

Beyond this room and its occasional residents, however, the background to the composition of *Miguel Street* recedes into dimness—and a state approaching silence. What, after all, was Naipaul doing at the BBC and in the freelancers' room when he was not writing *Miguel Street* on company paper and a company typewriter? Between the accumulation of material, in his Trinidadian childhood, and its eventual outpouring in the London of his insecure early twenties, there appears in "Prologue" no mediating step. We learn little of the two failed novels which preceded his breakthrough, and no more about his "part-time job editing and

presenting a weekly literary programme for the Caribbean" than this brief description, offered in the second paragraph of the piece. That the program was called *Caribbean Voices*, that he had been submitting writing to it for several years, that he continued to work for it while this first inspiration ran its course, that well before *Miguel Street* was published one of its stories, "B. Wordsworth," would be adapted into a radio play starring Salkey, Woolford, and Naipaul himself as the narrator (Biswas)—of all this, the reader of "Prologue" learns nothing.

Naipaul pays close, absorbing attention to the mechanics of print, telling us that on the fateful day he "set the typewriter at single space, to get as much as possible on the first sheet and also to create the effect of the printed page" (59). It is the other medium, the very air filling a broadcasting building like the Langham Hotel, whose mediation Naipaul omits. Nevertheless, there are occasional cracks in Naipaul's account where the oral background of his breakthrough spills over. His concern for the cadence of his opening lines, his sense that "together, as sentences, words, they had set up a rhythm, a speed, which dictated all that was to follow" (58), displays the tuned ear of someone whose work was, in part, to read aloud on the air. This correspondence between employment and art is made explicit when Naipaul recalls how he and Woolford read the story together: "we might have been rehearsing a broadcast" (62). The stripped-back narrative style, moreover, may owe something to the suggestiveness of radio, the manner in which it kindles the sensuous imagination through sound alone, stimulating the senses through their very deprivation. Naipaul remarks of his first two sentences that "though they had left out everything—the setting, the historical time, the racial and social complexities of the people concerned—they had suggested it all; they had created the world of the street" (58). Finally, the catalyst which unleashes his creativity is not an image but a sound, "the shout of 'Bogart!'" (78). Intimations of orality punctuate this "Prologue," though its author's anxiety

and ambition aim squarely at print.

Five years later, midway through *The Enigma of Arrival*, Naipaul returns again to that inspired afternoon—though this time it appears in stark isolation from its institutional context. The author reflects that going from Trinidad to England had caused "the separation of man from writer" (147); *Miguel Street* inaugurates their reconciliation, demonstrating in the act of writing that they are one and the same, that Naipaul's material is Naipaul himself. This second account echoes certain terms, of speed and simplicity, used in the first. The "Prologue" recounts how "that afternoon in the Langham Hotel Port of Spain memories, disregarded until then, were simplified and transformed. The speed of the narrative—that was the speed of the writer" (59). In *Enigma*, "I wrote very simply and fast of the simplest things in my memory. I wrote about the street in Port of Spain where I had spent part of my childhood" (147). Doing so, Naipaul discovers "that my subject was not my sensibility, my inward development, but the worlds I contained within myself," and that from this recognition arose a particular voice. For "all at once, within a matter of days, material and tone of voice and writing skill had locked together and begun to develop together" (148). Yet the specificity and scope of the previous telling slip away. Naipaul does not name his "first book," nor does he inform the reader as to his whereabouts on the day when "vision was granted me of what my material as a writer might be" (147). Not only does *Caribbean Voices* go unmentioned, the BBC itself vanishes from this version. The acoustic inspiration becomes more vaguely pictorial; rather than hearing Bogart's shout pierce the writer's block, we are informed that "out of a great mental fog there had come to me the idea of the street" (148). Naturally, there is not enough space in every work to provide more detailed description, orally-inflected or otherwise. Yet it is striking that the writing of *Miguel Street* emerges in *Enigma* as a more solitary, and less sonic, triumph. The environment

surrounding and suffusing his development is cropped from the portrait, leaving Naipaul himself as the sole medium for his inspiration.

His subsequent work, *A Way in the World* (1994), restores a radio setting to the *Miguel* moment, but shifts our focus from the fellowship of the freelancers' room to a new figure called Foster Morris. One of the book's linked narratives concerns this English writer, who once authored a book about Trinidad called *The Shadowed Livery*, and his brush with the Naipaulian narrator, then holding "a small part-time job in the BBC in 1955, working on a half-hour weekly literary programme for the Caribbean" (84). Their encounter, though facilitated by the radio program, is firmly based in print and results in crucial, if negative, editorial advice. The narrator has been struggling with a novel and sends Morris his manuscript. "Within days he had sent it back, with a long typed letter, a page and a half in single spacing. The first sentence of his letter was: *I have read your book and my advice to you is to abandon it immediately*" (88). Unburdened by the novel, if "dreadfully abased," the narrator decides "to make a fresh start as a writer" and "within days I had begun to write about Port of Spain street life" (90). Then "I blessed the name of Foster Morris, this unlikely figure from the past who had set me free." He is unlikely partly because he is fictionalized. It was Arthur Calder-Marshall, an English novelist and house critic for *Caribbean Voices*, who read the manuscript of Naipaul's early, never-published, and now-lost novel—called, it so happens, *The Shadow'd Livery* (McNearney)—and "'wrote a long letter back with single spacing on two sides of a big sheet of paper. He began by saying, you must abandon this book at once . . . And it was out of that, that some despairing weeks later I began to write in the BBC, the first story of *Miguel Street*'" (French 157). *A Way in the World* concentrates on this stern editorial encouragement to the exclusion of acoustic remembrances, and places it at a greater remove from Naipaul's radio work than was the case

in life. Moreover, it introduces in passing a second example for the young writer—an example whose contrast to the first is barely registered. "At tea in the BBC canteen one day we were talking about George Lamming's autobiography, *In the Castle of My Skin*," and the discussion of "a small, comic episode" within it causes the narrator to absorb "as a new truth what I really had always known . . . that comedy, the preserver we in Trinidad had always known, was close to me" (89). Lamming, a contributor to *Caribbean Voices* and a significant figure among the West Indian writers congregating in London, offers another kind of encouragement, one closer to home but of less interest to the older writer looking back. Meanwhile, a pattern has emerged: revision is an engine of creativity. Naipaul revisits the sources of his first inspiration, carrying certain aspects of it forward and leaving others behind, folding these shifting versions into larger works where they stand, at some distance from the center, as recurring narrative talismans.

In the writings of his last decades, Naipaul continues to revise this story, steadily diminishing the role of radio in his account while at the same time, and at curious cross-purposes, emphasizing the importance of voice to his emergence as a writer. In the essay "Reading and Writing," everything adjacent to his attempts to become a writer is reduced to "nothing": "nothing happened with my writing during those five months [in London]; nothing happened for five months afterwards" (14). Looking back on the "one day, deep in my almost fixed depression, [when] I began to see what my material might be: the city street from whose mixed life we held aloof," Naipaul omits the surroundings and the sonic spark which ignited this vision. Nevertheless, as if unconscious of the connection, he then fixes upon the sound, "the language, the tone, the voice for that material." When he introduces two new elements to the tale, models for his developing style, they produce a "mixed voice": "Part of the voice was

my father's from his stories of the country life of our community. Part of it was from the anonymous *Lazarillo* [*de Tormes*.]" Three years later, having been awarded the Nobel Prize in 2001, Naipaul delivers his lecture and does not fail to bring us back to that day when "there came to me the idea of starting with the Port of Spain street to which we had moved from Chaguanas" (192). Revealing his method of suggestive excision—"I suppressed the child-narrator's background. I ignored the racial and social complexities of the street. I explained nothing."—Naipaul also suppresses the backdrop to his breakthrough. The BBC receives not a mention. Yet in discussing his aesthetic of the surface, "stay[ing] at ground level, so to speak" and "present[ing] people only as they appeared on the street," he pays unspoken tribute to the techniques of radio. As Marshall McLuhan notes, this medium of sound creates "depth involvement," a disproportionate response on the part of the listener, precisely by staying on the surface of a single sense (298). In the same year, Naipaul publishes his penultimate novel, *Half a Life*, and gives his radio experience to the protagonist, Willie Chandran. But though Willie works for a program resembling *Caribbean Voices* and writes a book of short stories at the same time, the lessons he learns from the former have more to do with speaking than writing, while the inspiration that feeds the latter stems from cinema rather than sound. In the studio, he "listened carefully and picked up everything. Don't listen to your own voice; try to see what you are talking about; speak from the back of the throat; don't let your voice fall away at the end of a sentence" (75). The stories arise from another direction, "and whenever Willie felt he was running out of material, running out of cinematic moments, he went to see old movies or foreign movies" (84). Naipaul separates the writing from the radio, even as he compulsively returns to the point of their conjunction.

The final revision occurs in the introduction to his *Collected Short Fiction*, published

seven years before his death. Though not long, this piece combines and summarizes all the elements previously strewn across his various versions. He mentions his "good fortune to land a little editorial job at the BBC," where he would encounter "real writers and real critics" (vii). He recalls the "dreadful half-book" he had been working on prior to the breakthrough, and how a man met through radio read it "and said that I should forget this work." The inspiration emerges out of "great depression, of rejection and general hopelessness . . . one afternoon, in the freelancers' room in the Langham Hotel, then a part of the BBC" (viii). And what he discovers, along with his material, is a "tone of voice." It "was hard for me to understand where I had got it" and "many years later I thought the voice came from the Castilian"—the fact that this voice emerged against the auditory atmosphere of *Caribbean Voices* does not, even at the last, warrant the writer's retrospective attention. The possibility of creative mediation between his job and his vocation, the sounds of radio and the sentences of print, the present tense of London and the past in Trinidad, remains largely unexplored.

One can understand his reluctance. Even now, and especially then, a published book is the sign of a serious writer. If *Miguel Street* represents a breakthrough, then it must break free of what preceded it—the sub-literary world of radio. Moreover, the danger of determinism stalks any attempt to reckon with technological influence; the presence of radio in Naipaul's life need not be replicated in his work, and its effect may in any case be incalculably diffuse. And yet the book which provides the basis for these later revisions—and which in fact follows from an earlier apprenticeship on air that the author's retellings leave out altogether—draws both its energy and its structure from a conflict between sonority and literacy, the modes of communication whose overlap produces what Walter Ong calls the "secondary orality" of radio, that partial synthesis characteristic of the twentieth century: a "more deliberate and self-

conscious orality, based permanently on the use of writing and print" (136).[1]

II. The Voices of *Miguel Street*

Though Naipaul later repressed much of its radio background—a silencing in which his critics collude—he considered *Miguel Street* fit for broadcast at the time of its composition. Not only was "B. Wordsworth," the sixth of its seventeen stories, performed as a play on the *Third Programme*, Naipaul sent the full manuscript "to the head of the Third Programme, the novelist P. H. Newby (who in 1969 would win the first Booker Prize)," hoping that it might be read aloud on the BBC's Home Service (French 184). Newby turned it down. His internal memo declares that Naipaul "lacks the discipline you need to write concisely and he hasn't even been able to set his material in perspective. It remains material, very raw. It surprises me that he has succeeded in persuading a publisher to bring it out" (7 May 1958). In fact, concision and perspective are two of the qualities which mark *Miguel Street* from its first sentences, typed in the Langham Hotel, lines which leave out the complexity of their setting and yet suggest its fullness, which locate the narrative at the level where it will stay: a street in Port of Spain, seen and heard by a narrator recalling his 1940s boyhood. The simplicity of the sentences (concision) and steadiness of the narratorial gaze (perspective) might even be considered legacies of the nexus which produces these stories. For the friction which ignites Naipaul's creativity, caught between the oral environment of his working life and the determined literacy of his artistic ambitions, can be read into the divided form of his first publishable book. *Miguel Street* mediates between the vernacular voices of its inhabitants and the standard English voice of its

[1] See the introduction to Part One for my discussion of the limitations, both conceptual and ethnocentric, of Ong's treatment of the orality-literacy dyad. But while his distinction between the two is overly schematic, the more mixed notion of "secondary orality" remains a rich resource for radio studies.

narration. This fissure not only issues in the sound and shape of the book, it generates its thematic thrust—the failure which undoes the lives each story portrays in turn, a failure of learning and literacy which the narrator alone escapes, as he alone leaves Trinidad.

Of the critics who have written about *Miguel Street,* nearly all remark on its bifurcated language—the colloquial energy of its characters and the educated tone of its narrator—but none follow this discord back to the setting from which it emerges: radio. Though Bruce King is keen to examine both the "sound patterns" (25) and the "two-part structure" (29) of these stories, he makes no mention of the *Caribbean Voices* which accompany their composition. Fawzia Mustafa focuses on "the code-switching [that] happens at the level of the framing narrative itself," between "the standard English of the narrative interludes or transitions" and "the dialect and distinct syntax of a more local Trinidadian English" (34). Yet Naipaul's history of "freelanc[ing] for the BBC Caribbean Service" is dispensed with in half a sentence (14), and his literary "apprenticeship" is dated to "the exercises of *The Mystic Masseur*, *The Suffrage of Elvira*, and *Miguel Street*" (33), without a word for the author's earlier work. Weiwei Xu, who also picks up on the "vernacular versus elitist" tension in *Miguel Street* (288), also disregards the possibility that radio anticipates this very dynamic. This pattern of neglect, which perhaps owes something to Naipaul's own selective self-history, is repeated in studies of the author by Selwyn R. Cudjoe, Rob Nixon, Dagmar Barnouw, and Gillian Dooley. Meanwhile, those scholars who come to this crossroads from the other direction—who study *Caribbean Voices* rather than Naipaul in particular—tend to reinforce the disconnect, briefly mentioning Naipaul's incubation with the program while ignoring its influence on his later work. Even Hyacinth M. Simpson, in the course of arguing that the program's short-story writers "were engaged in discovering and finetuning an oral aesthetic," passes over *Miguel Street*. Simpson

does speculate that "no doubt his first two novels, *The Mystic Masseur* (1957) and *The Suffrage of Elvira* (1958) were outcomes of that [BBC] learning experience" (2). How they come out, though, is a mystery he leaves the reader to unfold. In their critical reception, the sounds of *Miguel Street* are orphaned, cut off from the half-oral, half-literate environment that surrounds Naipaul's desk in the freelancers' room.

The orality of these stories resides in the voices which fill them. The residents of Miguel Street talk in the patois of the street, listen to the calypsos native to Trinidad, and occasionally lapse into resonant silence. In "Prologue to an Autobiography," Naipaul presents the moment of his breakthrough as a call-and-response between the first sentence and the second. This is how "Bogart" begins:

> Every morning when he got up Hat would sit on the banister of his back veranda and shout across, "What happening there, Bogart?"
>
> Bogart would turn in his bed and mumble softly, so that no one heard, "What happening there, Hat?" (9)

"The first sentence was true. The second was invention" ("Prologue" 58). If the movement between the two expresses the essence of Naipaul's creative departure, they also contain in miniature the sonic structure of the whole collection. The narrative voice is casual but grammatically correct, attentive to sound—the initial "shout" and the echoing "mumble"—while absorbing the full sensorium of sight and gesture. Within this narrative frame, however, the characters speak a different, and uniquely Caribbean, tongue. The elision of auxiliary verbs is Naipaul's primary, though far from sole, strategy for capturing the cadence and accent of Port of Spain conversation. Moreover, the proportion of dialogue to narration on display in this opening exchange is true to all seventeen stories. We can see, or rather hear, why Naipaul developed one of them into a radio play, and believed them all suitable to be read aloud on the Third Programme. Compare "Bogart" to "The Mourners," a story written when Naipaul was

beginning to submit work to *Caribbean Voices*. Though set in Trinidad, the earlier tale keeps to formal, stiff speech and derives its rueful comedy from that drier source. A father refers to his dead son as "'a fine child. We wanted—or rather, I wanted—to enter him in the Cow and Gate Baby Contest. But Sheila didn't care for the idea'" (60). The acoustic contrast emphasizes the explosion of *Miguel Street*. Naipaul's sense of liberation is no retrospective fiction. It is partly, though only partly, a victory for the vernacular.

Characters do not merely talk; they listen. The narrator listens more closely than anyone else, and recalls the calypsos that punctuate several stories with short bursts of song, a piece of sonic variety common to radio broadcasts. Henry Swanzy's special broadcast for British audiences in 1953, "Voices of the Caribbean: A programme compiled from the regional literary programme, Caribbean Voices," follows precisely this pattern, opening with the news that "West Indians abroad are accustomed to being asked whether they speak English at home. As a matter of fact, most of them have spoken nothing else for over three hundred years, either pure, or mixed," before segueing into a performance of "the Calypso, the one living folk music of the Empire, made from the slurred and rapid speech of Trinidad" (1). In similar fashion, the second story in *Miguel Street*, about a wayward carpenter named Popo, features the "calypso about Popo that was the rage that year": "*A certain carpenter feller went to Arima / Looking for a mopsy called Emelda*" (22). The title character of "The Pyrotechnicist" sees his struggles reflected in another calypso and sings, "*The more they try to do me bad / Is the better I live in Trinidad*" (82). Ten more calypsos are heard over the course of the collection, refrains whistled and remembered by people for whom the songs are a chorus that makes sense of their lives. When Naipaul later writes, in *The Middle Passage* (1962) and a less generous mood, of his return to Port of Spain—"the noisiest city in the world" (50)—he nevertheless gives calypso its

due as "a purely local form" which "deals with local incidents, local attitudes, and it does so in a local language" (66). It is of a piece with the local voices which populate *Miguel Street*—and that occasionally fall silent.

Even more common than the calypsos are the white lines which punctuate each story, cuts which at once separate and join passages of print. We hear an echo of Naipaul's spell as an editor, stitching together a program from motley material. Time passes and tones change in these brief moments of dead air. "His Chosen Calling" is a story about a boy named Elias and his many unsuccessful efforts to pass the Cambridge Senior School Certificate Examination. The descent of his ambition to be a doctor is measured out in blank space, subjected to a rapid series of transitions that progressively reduce him at the end of the story to a would-be "'sanitary inspector'" (43), a furious exam failure who tells another man to "'Shut your arse up, before it have trouble between we in this street'" (44), and finally a scavenger-cart driver who insists that "'I really like the work'" (45). Elias's fate is played out in pauses as well as in speech. The atmosphere of this book, like the atmosphere of its making, is highly tuned to the acoustic.

Yet "His Chosen Calling" indicates that orality is only half of the story. The vivid voice of Elias, like that of so many Miguel Street dwellers, is shadowed by literacy, by the world of reading and writing which intersects with Naipaul's street life and stands ever-present in the narrator's retrospective style. Newspaper headlines are as common as calypsos and white lines. Early in his career as an exam-taker, Elias confesses his weakness:

> "Is the English and litritcher that does beat me."
>
> In Elias's mouth litritcher was the most beautiful word I heard. It sounded like something to eat, something rich like chocolate.
>
> Hat said, "You mean you have to read a lot of poultry and thing?"
>
> Elias nodded. We felt it wasn't fair, making a boy like Elias do litritcher and poultry. (41)

This comedy of misunderstanding—the inability to translate literate terms into common speech,

the substitution of "litritcher" and "poultry," beautiful as they may sound—anticipates and explains Elias's failure.

Several characters are similarly defeated by print. "Man-man" is "hypnotized by the word, particularly the written word, and he would spend a whole day writing a single word" (47). The madness that will later see him institutionalized emerges in his attempts to write, taking all day to chalk the word "school" on the pavement and never finishing: "He drew a very big S in outline and then filled it in, and then the C and the H and the O. But then he started making several O's, each smaller than the last, until he was writing in cursive, O after flowing O." The poet B. Wordsworth—"'Black Wordsworth. White Wordsworth was my brother. We share one heart'" (57-8)—claims to compose one line each month. Yet these lines, if they exist, are not written down, and his story ends with the confession that "'All this talk about poetry and the greatest poem in the world, that wasn't true, either. Isn't that the funniest thing you have heard?'" (65). One year later the narrator walks down B. Wordsworth's street and cannot find his house: "It was just as though B. Wordsworth had never existed." Only the narrator has a comfortable relationship with writing. Though he speaks as a boy in the same dialect as everyone else, he also has a part-time job as a sign-painter. For Bogart, he writes a sign reading, "TAILOR AND CUTTER / Suits made to Order / Popular and Competitive Prices" (10); for Popo the carpenter, he does the same (18). Moreover, he passes the exam that Elias fails: "Mr. Cambridge gave me a second grade" (44). *Miguel Street* ends with the one character who fully straddles the oral and the literate leaving; what the book contains, Trinidad cannot. "How I Left Miguel Street" begins with the narrator's mother declaring that "'You getting too wild in this place'" (215) and closes with his memory of how "I left them all and walked briskly towards the aeroplane, not looking back" (222). In between, he receives a government scholarship to

study in England. Thus, the narrator follows in his creator's footsteps—except that the creator does look back, for *Caribbean Voices*, and, in looking back, forges the stories of *Miguel Street*. This is the return which Naipaul ceaselessly revisits in the second half of his life, wondering at the mysterious sources of its power, still living and working off its residual energy.

His first and most immediate revisions, those made to the manuscript submitted to André Deutsch, demonstrate that the contrast between narratorial and neighbourhood voices was even more pointed in its original incarnation. A typescript has been kept in the V. S. Naipaul Archive at the University of Tulsa: it displays changes to the text itself in Naipaul's own hand and comments in the margin from an editor (almost certainly Diana Athill[2]). While not extensive, the visible editing shifts the text in two clear directions, towards less self-examination on the part of the narrator—which in practice means trimming more explicit statements of the educational gulf separating him from the rest of the street—and towards even greater simplicity of style, decreasing the rare instances of clutter in Naipaul's sentences, shortening paragraphs, and generally furthering the radio-friendly directness that already characterizes the draft. The authorial cuts to "Bogart" and the editorial comments on "The Thing Without A Name"—the first two stories in the collection—are representative. In the latter, Athill urges her writer to "keep it flowing. Leave out the semi-colon"; suggests that a paragraph of eight short sentences be split in half; remarks "cliché" next to the phrase "old familiar noises" (with the result that Naipaul excises "familiar"); runs a line through the redundant introduction to Popo's calypso, "~~You know the one, beginning~~"; recommends replacing "~~They received him like a hero when he came back.~~" with the simpler "He came back

[2] She would edit all of Naipaul's books until 1984, though "he was easily the most difficult writer I've ever worked with" and after "the first time he left, I remember saying to André: 'It's such a relief I don't have to make myself like him any more'" ("Diana Athill").

a hero"; and cuts the expository sentence "~~I felt that if I had time I could find a lot of sense in all Popo's sayings.~~," commenting "Suggest leave out. Reader has same conclusion." In "Bogart," Naipaul's hand strikes out the more roundabout formulation "~~as I have said already~~" and replaces the cumbersome "~~The man addressed in this way~~" with plain "Bogart." His most substantial revision concerns the learning of his narrator; Naipaul cuts a whole paragraph on the first page that makes immediately obvious what the rest of the book takes pains to establish gradually and cumulatively:

> "~~I suppose that these men, Bogart and Popo, were in a way poets; and now that I can read and have learnt some biggish words, I think it wouldn't be too wrong to say that they were suffering from a type of weltaanschaung.~~"

The revisions which sharpen the composition of these stories reveal the same constitutive tension that animates the story of their composition, itself revised over and over—both follow from the primary orality of Naipaul's Trinidad boyhood and the secondary orality of his radio youth.

With this manuscript, Naipaul entered the field of print that was coming to be known, in the 1950s, as Commonwealth Literature. Its capital was never in doubt, particularly in the immediate postwar period when the cultural motions of that sweeping geographic area bent to the gravitational force exerted by a sufficient mass of interconnected London residents: groups of expatriate Anglophone writers, a small number of publishers willing to bet on their untested market appeal, and a few critics who acted as conduits to the emerging readership. In her memoir *Stet: An Editor's Life* (2000), Diana Athill reveals not merely that "V. S. Naipaul came through Andrew Salkey who was working with him at the BBC," but that another André Deutsch author, the Canadian writer Mordecai Richler, also acted as an intermediary: "Andrew I met through Mordecai Richler when he took me for a drink in a Soho club" (204). The

elements of Athill's account, rephrased and analyzed in scholarly terms, appear in important recent works of postcolonial publishing history by Gail Low (2011), Caroline Davis (2013), and Peter Kalliney (2013). As "more liberal" publishers like André Deutsch awoke to the possibilities of the wider Anglophone world, "the current interest among publishers in the newly freed countries" developed in tandem with a realization that "there are, after all, a vast number of Indians, Africans and West Indians in the world—a potential reading public beyond computation—and nowhere, except in India on a tiny scale, were these masses able to produce books for themselves" (103). This sense "that a vast market for books lay out there, ripe for development" proved to be somewhat "ill-advised," the role of those same metropolitan publishers in perpetuating the productive imbalance goes unexamined by Athill, and yet self and literary interest combined in a passing vogue for the Commonwealth. While "this trend did not last long . . . it served to establish a number of good writers" (205). *Miguel Street*, submitted in the mid-1950s but only published at the end of the decade, encompasses both the lift and the crest of the wave. Athill knew that Deutsch would be wary of a book of short stories,

> So before talking to him about it I gave it to Francis Wyndham who was with us as part-time 'Literary Adviser', and Francis loved it at once and warmly. This probably tipped the balance with André, whose instinct was to distrust as 'do-gooding' my enthusiasm for a little book by a West Indian about a place which interested no one and where the people spoke an unfamiliar dialect. I think he welcomed its being stories because it gave him a reason for saying 'no': but Francis's opinion joined to mine made him bid me find out if the author had a novel on the stocks and tell him that if he had, then that should come first and the stories could follow all in good time. Luckily Vidia was in the process of writing *The Mystic Masseur*. (204-5)

In turn, Wyndham wrote a seminal critical survey of "The New West Indian Writers" for the June 1958 issue of *Harper's Bazaar* (UK edition), appearing one year before the belated publication of the book he had sponsored and one page before "His Chosen Calling," excerpted as that issue's featured short story. There, Wyndham points out that "just as more and more of

the good novels published recently in France come from North Africa, so in England during the 1950's a handful of West Indian writers are producing fresh and interesting books, unusual both in content and in style" (63, 94). He names Samuel Selvon, George Lamming, and V. S. Naipaul as the leading lights—a remarkably prescient piece of talent-spotting, although given Wyndham's front-page prominence in London criticism and backstage influence in London publishing, canon-making is the better term—but adds that "they do not, in fact, form a group; they are as varied technically as they are racially." While Wyndham cannot be faulted for recognizing the variety of these writers, his failure to mention their multifaceted connections, professional and personal, can be summed up by the complete absence in his article of the institution that united all three men: the BBC. The role played by *Caribbean Voices* in preparing a whole coterie of West Indian writers for London publication vanishes. Wyndham may well have thought this information unnecessary for his British audience, which after all would not have been privy to broadcasts on the Overseas Service, yet his separation of the writers from their BBC background anticipates Naipaul's own uncoupling of the radio and print parts of his career. In Naipaul's telling and retelling, *Miguel Street* operates as the hinge in this history, the moment when he broke free of his inhibitions and truly became a writer; the book itself leads us back to the program and the institutional sphere in which the author was embedded.

The form Naipaul's first inspiration takes inscribes the dynamics at play in its discovery. Radio's generative tension, the sounds and the scripts of *Caribbean Voices*, reappears in the oral atmosphere and literate undertow of *Miguel Street*. The creative moment consists in their combination. Thus the form of *Miguel Street* echoes mediations already present in Naipaul's apprenticeship with and editorship of *Caribbean Voices*. These two periods of Naipaul's career overlap, the first beginning well before that famous afternoon in the Langham Hotel, the second

carrying on past the publication of his earliest novels. Neither has received much critical attention. While Glyne A. Griffith has recently examined Naipaul's spell as Henry Swanzy's editorial successor, the two men's working relationship remains unexcavated and only Patrick French's biography has truly attempted to set Naipaul's writing against his wireless phase in mutual illumination.[3] Yet the oral-written dialectic within *Miguel Street*, once unfolded, offers a synecdoche for the home-capital dialectic without: the editorial environment which shapes Naipaul and which he shapes in turn.

III. An Apprenticeship on Air

In *Letters Between a Father and Son*, the volume of correspondence between Seepersad and "Vido" Naipaul published in 1999, two names recur as the objects of a shared ambition and a shared fear of failure: *Caribbean Voices* and Henry Swanzy. Audiences and writers alike—and the *Caribbean Voices* audiences included many writers, whether fresh hopefuls, dedicated amateurs, or semi-established figures—knew the name of the program's presiding spirit, projected by voice and reputation across the ocean. Long before Naipaul began to write *Miguel Street* at the BBC, while simultaneously attempting to fill Swanzy's shoes, he and his father numbered among the program's listeners and contributors. The letters they exchanged between 1950, when Naipaul left Trinidad for Oxford, and 1953, when his father died at the age of forty-

[3] Typically, Sue Thomas's chapter on "V. S. Naipaul" in *West Indian Intellectuals in Britain* (2003) begins in 1958—the end of Naipaul's tenure at *Caribbean Voices* coinciding with the publication of his first two novels—and leaves his earlier years in Britain untouched. In her *Publishing the Postcolonial* (2011), Gail Low briefly recounts the publication history of *Miguel Street* and examines the "natural point of contact and support" that was *Caribbean Voices*, but at no point does she discuss Naipaul's earlier work for the program, his later role as its editor, or how *Miguel Street* might bear the imprint of both (96). Peter Kalliney, in similar fashion and his "Metropolitan Modernism and Its West Indian Interlocutors" (2007), does not build on Naipaul's own account of his association with the BBC. Rather, he limits his analysis of Naipaul's part in the "moment when metropolitan institutions, such as the BBC, were being refashioned as instruments of incipient postcolonial literary production" (94) to Naipaul's printed recollections, foregoing an investigation into the author's editorial years.

seven, his hopes as an author still unfulfilled, revolve ceaselessly around writing—around questions and anxieties of material, style, and audience. But while they both dreamed of print, they wrote primarily for the air: for the BBC and Mr. Swanzy, a figure who comes to represent concentric rings of literary power, linking program, institution, medium, and capital. With his father, Naipaul was at once pupil and cajoler; in their letters the shadow of Swanzy, and the shaping power of editorial expectations, becomes visible. I will demonstrate how Naipaul's apprenticeship on air, as mediated by each father figure, laid the groundwork for both his richly realized first book and his rather less successful editorship.

One can trace the early, and still largely uncollected, writings of V. S. Naipaul in two places: his father's letters and the BBC's archives. Mixing paternal love, editorial encouragement, and hard-won professional savvy, these messages chart the slow divergence in their fortunes. They began as fellow writers for the same audience; they end with the son outstripping his father, even before the composition of *Miguel Street*. On September 15th, 1950, Seepersad Naipaul makes his first, but far from last, mention of Mr. Swanzy and *Caribbean Voices*. Couched within a letter of fortifying advice—"I can't imagine seeing you write a bad story . . . Good reading & good writing go together . . . Write often" (29-30)—is the news that "Mr. Swanzy has paid me some fine encomiums on my short stories in his half-yearly review of poems and prose in Caribbean Voices" (29). The attractions of radio are immediately evident: editorial appreciation, listeners, and, though Seepersad does not mention it in this letter, money. One month later, the younger Naipaul's only poem, a "solemn, adolescent cry of anguish" called "Two Thirty A. M." (French 77), became his first piece broadcast on *Caribbean Voices*. Seepersad urged him to continue submitting to this radio magazine, declaring that he would "do better sending your poems to the BBC for Caribbean Voices than to other high-brow

publications. West Indians are being encouraged to write and any promising work is usually accepted" (46). Though it comes over the air and not in print, *Caribbean Voices* is the most promising path to being published—one they walked together for the next three years.

Their connection passed through letters and airwaves. Seepersad continued to coax and coach his son, reminding him that "they pay very well" (76), delivering the imperatives to "cultivate Swanzy" and "write on W. I. themes" (135). On May 6th, 1951, he notes that he will listen to "your story" later in the month—"The Mourners," a revised version of which is later published in *The Flag on the Island* (1967)—and adds that "I hope my own story will come off shortly . . . Let's hope Swanzy will find it good too" (144). Two years later, once Vido begins working part-time for the program, Seepersad can report that

> It was grand hearing your voice over the radio last evening . . . The reception wasn't good throughout, though; and but for the fact that we knew in advance that you would be reading a story on Mary, we may not have known your voice at all. You spoke well, and we didn't find any nervousness or anything of the kind on your part. (317-18)

Yet radio was ultimately not enough for either Naipaul. The wireless publishing of *Caribbean Voices* became a means to an end—and that end was print. Seepersad had previously issued a collection of stories called *The Return of Gurudeva* in Trinidad; his hunger to have it revised and published in the literary capital of London soon becomes a dominant thread in the correspondence. His Oxford-based son is enlisted as typist, editor, and agent—roles for which Naipaul shows little to no enthusiasm. Seepersad mentions the project as early as March 1951, asking if "you think you can see a publisher or two (during your vac) about publishing my Gurudeva stories, in addition to a few of the more recent stuffs I did for the B.B.C." (110). By June 1953, he

> shall most certainly be posting them [the stories] to you by tomorrow or day after. You will have to re-type a small portion of 'The Return of Gurudeva" . . . Please read the whole thing sentence by sentence . . . I think 'Uncle Dalloo' could be considerably

> improved by some careful cutting or pruning. You may try your hand at this, if you like, after the exams. (321)

He gives Vido power of selection as well as revision, declaring that "if you happen to dislike any of the short-stories—you are at liberty to exclude them from the collection" (323). A note of desperation, mixed with incomprehension, enters Seepersad's letters as these entreaties are met with inaction. "You probably have not yet received the MSS that I mailed you on June 10." Two months later, he asks "what is happening with 'The Adventures of Gurudeva'? I realise your exams have just finished and so I expect to hear about it" (339). When Seepersad died suddenly in the early autumn of 1953, the unpublished book was uppermost in his family's minds.[4] Vido's sister writes to his Oxford tutor and reveals that Seepersad "thought that Vidia was ill. You see, it's quite some time since Vidia write to Pa. The publishing of his stories & book must be done. He gave his life to that" (370). His mother adds that "as Pa's elder son you have one more duty to perform. That is the publishing of his book. That Vido was Pa's life" (372). Yet Seepersad's stories would not be published by a London press until 1975. Instead, the son fulfilled and surpassed his father's ambition with the writing of *Miguel Street*, his own book of stories and his own step beyond *Caribbean Voices*.

Where Seepersad's missives chronicle the merging of his writerly aspirations with those of his son, Vido's letters record his increasing independence. Paradoxically, this independence derives from making his father's material and medium his own. The correspondence complicates the older writer's claim, repeated in all his retellings of *Miguel Street*'s

[4] Seepersad's last months and the retrospective shame his son felt at his distance, emotional and physical, will be familiar to readers of *A House for Mr. Biswas* (1961), the novel that Naipaul made of his father's life. Looking back, he does not spare Anand, the Vido stand-in, for his self-absorbed silence:

> [Mr Biswas] missed Anand and worried about him. Anand's letters, at first rare, became more and more frequent. They were gloomy, self-pitying; then they were tinged with a hysteria which Mr Biswas immediately understood. He wrote Anand long humorous letters . . . [but] Anand's letters grew rare again. There was nothing Mr Biswas could do but wait. (586)

composition, that he had no conception of his real material until that afternoon in the Langham Hotel. In fact, the creative pressures of writing for *Caribbean Voices*, at once limiting and focusing the scope and subject of any submission, caused him to turn to short stories about Trinidad almost as soon as he arrived at Oxford. His first references to the program and to Swanzy are breezy. On March 28th, 1951, he writes that "I have sent a story to Swanzy; and brother, if it is accepted, I intend to churn the stuff out as fast as I can write. I can use the cash" (111). Radio is a semi-lucrative sideline while he composes the serious novel that will confirm him as a writer. An acceptance "means that for two weeks' work, I shall have raked in more than fifteen guineas. Not bad! And I am only eighteen!" (113); in the meantime, "my novel is not complete as yet, but I have been working on it like a dog for the past fortnight" (114). The editorial advice he provides to his father, however, anticipates the self-discovery he would later locate at the origin of *Miguel Street*. In frustration at Seepersad's fragile self-confidence—understanding it perhaps all too well—he insists that the elder Naipaul has all the material he needs:

> YOU HAVE ENOUGH MATERIAL FOR A HUNDRED STORIES. FOR HEAVEN'S SAKE START WRITING THEM. YOU CAN WRITE AND YOU KNOW IT. STOP MAKING EXCUSES. ONCE YOU START WRITING YOU WILL FIND IDEAS FLOODING UPON YOU. DON'T LOOK FOR DRAMATIC STORIES OR FOR HUMOROUS STORIES. AS SOMEBODY ONCE SAID EVEN A HAND IS DRAMATIC. EVERYTHING IS DRAMATIC. MATERIAL MATERIAL YOU HAVE IT EVERYWHERE. (152)

Vido's ambivalence about radio as a proper medium for literature emerges in this same letter. He counsels Seepersad to "choose about sixteen [of his stories] for publication," encouraging the dream of a book which he will later neglect, and adds that "writing for radio is different. What reads well in print may make bad radio material" (153). The experience which gave rise to this distinction, however, reads in retrospect like useful training in the importance of

concision and dialogue to carry a story over the air: "My story which is being broadcast in September has had its prosy parts knocked off. The conversation is being used" (154). Another letter from 1951 brings news of another story accepted, though Swanzy "ask[ed] me to rewrite the last page, which he thought was 'too literary'" (127). By 1953, Naipaul still feels that the house expectations of *Caribbean Voices* are having a distorting effect upon his writing. A new story "is a pot-boiler, and I am quite ashamed of it. But I think it is what Swanzy wants . . . But I am sure you will be delighted to hear me speaking for about twelve or fifteen minutes" (315). Yet these doubts about the medium coexist with an ever-surer sense of where his own material lies. In the last letter his father read before his death, Vido writes that "I do wish I could see Trinidad more clearly. And my, the stories that I seem to be writing. There is no lack of material. I feel sure a three month stay in Trinidad would keep me writing for three years" (361). His writing directs him homeward even as he settles into a precarious London existence.

To point out that Naipaul has a firmer and earlier grip on his writerly material than he would subsequently assert is not to argue that the older writer lies outright. That said, some critics have suggested as much. Gillian Dooley remarks on the same discrepancy between these letters and "Naipaul's later narrative of his youth" (16), declaring that the second "must therefore be exposed as a later adjustment of memory, a dramatic turning point that is, in essence, fictional" (17). The drama of the breakthrough is definitely sharpened by omitting the apprentice-work that led up to it. Naipaul mentions the unpublished novels, but never the stories he writes for *Caribbean Voices*—though he will later include revised versions of some of them in *A Flag on the Island* (the BBC Written Archives contain the others as radio scripts, their recordings having been all wiped clean). As Patrick French notes, the first of his stories to be broadcast, "This is Home," may be "ponderous and laden with uneasy symbolism," yet it

nevertheless suggests a continuum to Naipaul's development, containing "certain key themes—dislocation, homelessness, anxiety about the relationship between men and women—that he would write about repeatedly in his later work" (86). Selwyn R. Cudjoe goes even further in diluting *Miguel Street*'s claims to originality by suggesting that "many of the themes . . . are found in short stories written from 1929 and 1951 by other [West Indian] writers" (19). And though Derek Walcott does not directly refer to *Miguel Street*, his well-known critique of Naipaul takes aim at the myth of his creative singularity, a myth perpetuated by the retellings which isolate Naipaul's first book from its radio context. "The myth of Naipaul as a phenomenon, as a singular, contradictory genius who survived the cane fields and the bush at great cost, has long been a farce," though, as Walcott notes, "it is a myth he chooses to encourage" (128). But the shifting, selective, and ever-developing nature of Naipaul's revisions should not obscure the emotional truth at their heart. It is perhaps more accurate to suggest that while Naipaul made use of Trinidad for *Caribbean Voices*—as the remit of the program and the standards of Swanzy require—he did so while still thinking that his more serious and novelistic material lay elsewhere. The spark which provokes that first print-publishable work was less the discovery of previously unpondered material than the realization that this supposed sideline should in fact be his main subject.

Radio directed and disciplined the young Naipaul's writing. The two editorial lessons he passed on to his father—the declaration that "MATERIAL MATERIAL YOU HAVE IT EVERYWHERE" and the necessity of having the "prosy parts knocked off"—are ones which Naipaul absorbed and learned to apply to himself. In 1967, by then a celebrated author, he revised some old stories for inclusion in *A Flag on the Island*, declaring on the copyright page that "all but two of the shorter pieces in this collection have appeared in periodicals in England

or the United States" (vi). That pair originally aired on *Caribbean Voices*: "The Mourners" and "My Aunt Gold Teeth." To compare their published forms to the earlier versions kept in the Written Archives Centre is to observe that the revisionary instincts which shaped *Miguel Street* were still operative for the writer-cum-editor. Naipaul returned to the earlier material and cut them thoroughly, making them even leaner and, ironically, more suitable for the medium they were leaving. As transmitted over the "Colonial Service, Sunday 16th September, 1951," "The Mourners" opens with ten paragraphs, all but one of which is eliminated in *A Flag on the Island*. This eventually discarded beginning sets the scene—a household grieving for a dead baby—at considerable, descriptive length. The published version skips "the pink sofa in the sitting room," the objects on "a table nearby," the "dainty, embroidered handkerchiefs" of women in mourning (5), and instead opens with the narrator's first action: "I walked up the back stairs into the veranda white in the afternoon sun" (58). Furthermore, Naipaul reduces the pile-up of expository statements like "They used my mother rather coolly; and she would say that this was so because she was blacker than they" or "Yet I liked going to the Big House. It was so rich, so secure" (6). As with *Miguel Street*, the social context becomes more implicit, focalized through an insider's eyes, subordinated to the concise observations and single gaze of a young narrator.

In "My Aunt Gold Teeth," broadcast over *Caribbean Voices* on 22 August 1954, Naipaul's revision follows a similar process of elimination. The cuts extend from single words to full sentences, from shorter paragraphs to a gutted and gutting ending. In bringing the tale of Gold Teeth, her sudden passion for Christianity and the subsequent death of her husband, to the bare page, Naipaul peels away redundant expressions and embraces the power of understatement. He replaces "and she was fat, horribly, monstrously fat" (1) with "and she was very fat" (13), "the problem was pressing and a quick solution was imperative" (6) with "the

problem was pressing" (18); he reduces the dialect from heavily transliterated speech like "'Man,' she said in English, 'ah t'inkin' 'bout goin' to de chu'ch to pray'" (7) to the less obtrusive technique of simply omitting the auxiliary verb in "'Man,' she said in English, "I thinking about going to the church to pray" (18-9). Yet, seizing his second chance, Naipaul also reverses one cut made to the original script. The penultimate paragraphs had allowed Gold Teeth to confess and repent of her conversion, while leaving the reader to doubt whether she deserves such punishment. Either the editor, the author (who also read his story over the airwaves), or time constraints determined that the story should end more abruptly and brutally:

> ~~"I have always said it, and I will say it again," my grandmother said that night, "I don't like these Christian things. Ramprasad would have got better, if only you, Gold Teeth, had listened to me and not gone running after these Christian things."~~
>
> ~~Gold Teeth sobbed her assent: and her body squabbered and shook as she confessed the whole story of her trafficking with Christianity. Then she ritually destroyed every reminder of Christianity in the house.~~
>
> "You have only yourself to blame," my grandmother said [that evening], "if you have no children now to take care of you." (9)

When Naipaul restores the struck-through lines in 1967, he is not simply displaying heretofore carefully rationed reserves of tenderness. Rather, Naipaul complicates the emotional texture of the scene while simplifying his language, reinstating Gold Teeth's agonized apostasy, adding the hostile incomprehension of a generalized family "we"—"We listened in astonishment and shame. We didn't know that a good Hindu, and a member of our family, could sink so low"—and having "my grandmother's shame turned to pity" only for her to end the story nevertheless with that merciless final line (21). The writer who revises himself in this ruthless way, while identifying and repeating one of his keywords, "shame," has matured in confidence—and in editorial experience.

Miguel Street grows out of radio, and the father so enmeshed in the medium, while outgrowing them both. In fact, it emerges not merely from Naipaul's days as a radio writer, but

from the years, 1954 to 1958, he spent as a radio editor, the successor to Mr. Swanzy.

IV. Editorship and the Work of Mediation

When André Deutsch finally brought out *The Adventures of Gurudeva* at Naipaul's behest, the son contributed a foreword to his father's work. There, more than in any other piece of writing, Naipaul expands on what *Caribbean Voices* and its editor Swanzy meant to those like Seepersad, the isolated and frustrated would-be writers of the West Indies. The story begins with a vacuum: the absence of literary channels in Trinidad. "There were no magazines that paid; there were no established magazines; there was only the *Guardian* [newspaper]" (114). Into this territory deprived of avenues for literary expression, *Caribbean Voices* arrived and with it "there at last appeared a market." Swanzy brought money, "standards and enthusiasm." Not only did the BBC pay "sufficiently well," Swanzy himself "took local writing seriously and lifted it above the local." His praise spurred on Seepersad, "who had never been praised like that before" (115). With "the stimulus of that weekly radio programme from London"—crossing a distance which was substantial in one direction, as stories and poems went "by boat to Swanzy for consideration at his office in Oxford Street" (French 85), and immaterial in other, as the finished product reached West Indian wireless sets—"my father, I believe, found his voice as a writer" (115). What Naipaul sketches for his father, in other words, is another variation on the tale of a writer's beginnings: though with the difference that he includes here what he disregards elsewhere, the vital presence of *Caribbean Voices*. Vital because it offered an outlet and an editor, one whose "judgement of my father's later work was sounder than mine" (116) and to whom Naipaul dedicates the finally published book (127). The main elements of this tribute to Swanzy and his program are echoed in numerous memoirs and critical

accounts of *Caribbean Voices*. But what made Swanzy such an effective and enabling editor? How did his program cultivate a flourishing literature—one that bridged late colonial and postcolonial in the decade leading up to the islands' political independence—from an institution at the very heart of the declining imperial center of London? And what happened to *Caribbean Voices* when Naipaul took the helm? The difference in their critical attitudes to Seepersad's work, one generous and interested, the other half-ashamed, hints at the gulf that would grow between their editorial methods.

Caribbean Voices mediated between script and speech, written and oral—capital and region. Thanks to its institutional heft, and the corresponding underdevelopment of literary infrastructure in the Antilles, London exerted an almost irresistible gravitational pull on writers of the postwar generation. It became, in the words of Kenneth Ramchand, the "West Indian literary capital" (42). To this day, London has preserved its primacy as a publishing hub for the Anglophone world in general but the West Indies in particular; the English-speaking Caribbean remains the one area of the world not covered in *The Oxford Companion to the Book* (2010). "The History of the Book in Latin America (including Incas, Aztecs, and the Caribbean)" comes closest geographically and does not mention any of the former British colonies of the West Indies. Naipaul himself would apply rather more charged terms to this dynamic and its effect on his early life, spent "traveling from the periphery, the margin, to what to me was the center" ("Our Universal Civilization" 506). Yet it is not insignificant that once Naipaul reached that supposed center, he began to write about the home he left; mediation makes unstable and dynamic the seemingly solid categories it connects. *Caribbean Voices* drew writing and writers to its BBC headquarters only to return them, via the airwaves, to an increasingly self-aware culture. The prime agent of this process was the editor, with his power to select for broadcast.

Swanzy's period in charge coincided with the program's high noon of popularity and influence, Naipaul's stint with its decline. Neither success nor its dwindling can be attributed entirely to either man. Nevertheless, the contrast in their practices illuminates them both—and may confound expectations about where editorial sympathy is most likely to be found. The outsider Swanzy offered encouragement, becoming the node in a burgeoning West Indian literary network; without personal ambition as an author, acknowledging his inexperience of the actual region, and aware of the ironies of his own power, Swanzy reached out to the most prominent Anglophone editor in the Caribbean itself, Frank Collymore of the little magazine *BIM*, and developed a transatlantic editorial partnership to their mutual benefit. The insider Naipaul, self-certain and with a writer's competitive drive, provided more criticism than motivation and contributed to a decisive shift in the program's focus, turning away from unpublished writers back home and towards a professional circle of expatriate writers already established in London. Ultimately, the two editors diverged on the merits of the very medium they worked in. Where Swanzy saw radio as fostering a larger literary culture, balancing and directing the oral and aural towards the written and read, Naipaul was more ambivalent, at times begrudging both his writers and the placeless air they wrote for. That ambivalence, though it dampened his career as an editor, fueled his creative departure—for even as he curated each week's *Caribbean Voices*, Naipaul began to write *Miguel Street* on the side.

Distance is a spur to correspondence; proximity is the enemy of archives. While Swanzy emerges as a constant presence in the ocean-going, father-son dispatches, few letters between Naipaul and his radio editor appear among Swanzy's papers at the University of Birmingham. We must assume that Naipaul's nearness in Oxford, and then his post-graduation move to London, made face-to-face contact more common between the two men. However, there are

hints in that handful of letters—all dating from the early 1950s—of the polymorphous part Swanzy played for his contributors. His strictly editorial input, anticipating the criticism of P. H. Newby and foreshadowing the style developed in *Miguel Street*, is displayed on 31 August 1953, when Swanzy informs the young man that "I thought the longer study was a little too long for the programme, and in any case had too many shifts in the point of view to make good radio." A brief letter from Naipaul, dated 7 March 1952, suggests what Swanzy's encouragement could mean beyond radio-publication itself, namely validation for his work as a writer plus the possibility of extra employment as a reader (on air): "I find it pleasing that you think my sketch good. I shall be happy to read it myself." Finally, Swanzy acts as a confidant, adviser, and reference for the ambitious Trinidadian floundering in a country where, Oxford degree notwithstanding, he had few connections—not to mention "'an unfortunate name & face'" (French 129). On 17 August 1953, having taken a summer job as a farm labourer, Naipaul sends "two pieces which I hope will be of some use to you" and then entreats the editor, "Do you know of any temporary job that I could do—something in September? It is really getting grim." Although Swanzy does not come through on that occasion, he does write two letters of recommendation for Naipaul the subsequent year. The first follows Naipaul's application for the position of "'television apprentice' in America. Experience in television is not necessary, but experience in radio or 'creative writing' is desirable" (4 June 1954). The second is sent to Guy Wint of the *Manchester Guardian*, a joint reference for

> two rather gifted Hindu writers from Trinidad. The first, Samuel Selvon, who wrote a delightful little novel, A Brighter Sun, which received pleasant notices and remarkably little money . . . The other is V.S. Naipaul, of a Brahmin family from Nepal, who has been reading English at Oxford for the last three years, and got a 2nd last summer. His short stories are quite acute and mature for an undergraduate.
>
> Both these men are exposed to the difficulty of talent in small islands, and both would, I think, be very useful on some writing job, because of their special experience,

and skill in English. (9 June 1954)

Naipaul was turned down for the American television apprenticeship; the *Guardian* introduction led nowhere. By the autumn of 1954, his postgraduate studies at Oxford had come to an abrupt end,[5] and he had been unable to secure stable work in India or in London, despite advertising his skills in *The Times* and approaching "two dozen advertising firms" (129). The man whose author bios would later boast that he "began to write, in London, in 1954. He has since followed no other profession" (*Enigma of Arrival* 2) was, in November 1954, "penniless, failing, and increasingly bitter" (French 135). Anguished at the prospect of returning to Trinidad, his tail tucked tightly between his legs, Naipaul had already confided in Swanzy that winter: "The future is as blank as ever. Nobody loves me, nobody wants me. In England I am not English, in India I am not Indian. I am chained to the 1000 sq. miles that is Trinidad; but I will evade that fate yet" (19 February 1954).[6] That Naipaul did evade this fate—though in a complicated, mediated manner which leaves Trinidad at the center of his early writing—was due, finally, to Swanzy's patronage. At the beginning of December, planning for his secondment to the Gold Coast Broadcasting System, Swanzy tapped Naipaul as his successor.

> In a conversation recorded for a television documentary twenty-five years later, Swanzy asked whether the job had been helpful, coming when it did. Naipaul had no doubts:

[5] Naipaul was judged to have failed his viva by a professor whom he took to be acting "'quite deliberately, & out of racial feeling'" (French 128).

[6] On May 14th, 1954, Naipaul also wrote a fairly desperate letter to J. Grenfell Williams, Head of the BBC's Colonial Service:

> One thing I certainly do not want to do: go back to Trinidad or any other island in the West Indies if I can help it. I very much want to go to India. But there are many difficulties. I cannot be employed on the Indian side because I am British, and on the British side, I cannot be employed because I am not English I think it is almost impossible for me to do anything worthwhile in this country, for reasons which you doubtless know . . . I am willing to try anything now. But, as you know, my interests are largely literary—both the written and the spoken word. I deeply regret obtruding a purely personal problem on you; but if you can reveal a glimmer of hope. I will be very grateful.

Williams replied on July 8th, revealing that "I have delayed answering your letter of May 14th because I have been looking into the possibilities," but that "I do not know of any vacancy in the B.B.C. at the moment for which you might apply. It is, of course, always possible for you to contribute occasional broadcasts to "Calling the West Indies", but that is clearly not what you want."

> 'That saved my life, really. I was living more or less at the limit of despair.'" (French 139)

The turning point of one writer's life is testament to the importance of *Caribbean Voices*, and to Swanzy's actions at the head of it. Whether this decision was doubly fateful, leading directly to the program's decline (it ended only four years later), is open to debate.

Causation and correlation are rarely easy to disentangle, and among critics only Glyne A. Griffith, J. Dillon Brown, and, to a lesser extent, Rhonda Cobham have laid the groundwork by examining Naipaul's editorial practice in any depth. We can begin with the case for mitigation. Naipaul actually passes many of his duties over to Edgar Mittelholzer in 1956, and of course an editor can never be held entirely responsible for success or failure, since his part is to provide a conduit between work and audience. Neither the quality of the first nor the attention of the second are entirely in his control. For all that, one might have thought that the transition from a British to a West Indian editor, from foreign to native-born hands, would have given *Caribbean Voices* another and perhaps even more vibrant lease on life.[7] Naipaul himself, in his final broadcast before the program was reshaped into the shorter and lesser "Caribbean Literary Magazine" (Griffith, *BBC* 162), contends that this looming "change is a sign of maturity; it would have been disgraceful if, after ten years, there could not have been this change" ("Comments on West Indian Literature," 31 August 1958, 1). He recalls that "I came to the programme in nineteen fifty-four, when Henry Swanzy left it," leaving aside his previous history as a contributor and paying tribute to his predecessor: "he had given the programme form, he had discovered and encouraged the talents which today are so widely known; he had

[7] Indeed, this transition was a form of restoration, returning the program inaugurated by Jamaica's Una Marson to a Caribbean editor. On the foundation laid by Marson, see Griffith, "'This is London'" 197-200, and Whittington 153-84.

taste, a quality which is as rare, I feel, as the genuine creative ability." Yet Naipaul adds that while "'Caribbean Voices' was his creation"—an assertion that elides Una Marson's original role—

> even in nineteen fifty-four Henry was beginning to feel that the programme had lost some of its impetus, and his final assessment of the literary situation in the West Indies was a gloomy one. Today the gloom does not seem to have been justified. But the fact was that I came to a programme which was tired and was beginning to have little usefulness. It was becoming the resort of the third-rate amateur who could turn out consistently third-rate work.

This assessment, exculpatory where he himself is concerned and harsh where others are, indicates that in fact, and for interesting reasons, Naipaul was mostly ill-suited to the role of editor.

In *The BBC and the Development of Anglophone Caribbean Literature* (2016), Griffith pins much of the blame for the program's demise on Naipaul and Mittelholzer for "focus[ing] critical attention primarily on established writers rather than on nascent talent in the region. As a result, listener interest waned, undermining any possible justification for continuing the program." Where Swanzy placed his faith in radio's ability to nurture unknown writers and, through them, a burgeoning literature, Naipaul seemed unable to invest such selfless energy in the medium and in other, lesser-established authors. Where Swanzy constructed a network that simultaneously drew on and built up homegrown publications, Naipaul concentrated on the smaller nexus of West Indian expatriates in London itself. Naipaul depended to a much lesser extent on Lindo and Collymore—regional agent and editor alike receding in importance—and his selection narrowed accordingly. Griffith acknowledges that "some of the changes to the format were a consequence of the program's success" in building an emergent "post-war literary canon" and helping draw writers to the capital (143-44). But the list of Naipaul's faults is long: his "tendency to criticize perceived weakness in submissions without offering clear and

focused guidance in the manner than Swanzy had employed"; his refusal to "draw upon Swanzy's earlier emphasis on 'local color' as a defining feature of the literature" (145); his "perceived need to curb creative exuberance and enthusiasm and winnow the field of would-be writers"; his "dismissive and, at times, scathing" tone, both on and off air (154);[8] and the damning fact that "the final four years of the program hardly witnessed any new-to-program voices."[9]

The new editor's "Survey of the Literary Output of West Indian Writers in 1955" (broadcast on 22 January 1956) is certainly suffused with the self-defeating sense that his own venue cannot offer genuine literary validation. The aim of a Caribbean writer, Naipaul implies, should be to publish a novel in London—not a short story or a poem on a radio frequency that will only be heard by a limited audience at home. Comparing the situation of West Indian literature favourably to that of New Zealand, he nevertheless narrows the circle of success to the fact that "last year four West Indian novels were published in Britain . . . And, really, four novels in one year is an achievement for a small territory. It proves that the West Indian literary

[8] The *Caribbean Voices* scripts at the Written Archives Centre certainly testify to Naipaul's biting tongue, although his harsher comments are occasionally struck out—the victims of slightly more charitable second thoughts. On 5 February 1956, for instance, Naipaul briefly discusses two pieces read out on air. "The Anancy story [by Eula Redhead] isn't the type of story we want to encourage in 'Caribbean Voices' . . . [the style] wavered from flabby officialese . . . to colloquialism." In a negative confirmation of what he really wants, Naipaul declares that "neither is really simple writing." On the other hand, Cecil Gray, who had submitted that other "melodramatic" piece, is spared the following lines: "~~At one time I considered Cecil Gray one of the better prose-writers in the West Indies; but in his story tonight he has become just a little too lush. An over-fondness for the rich simile and metaphor leads to this sort of carelessness~~[.]"

[9] J. Dillon Brown's "Coda" to *Migrant Modernism* (2013) briefly takes up the editorial transition at *Caribbean Voices* and sketches a similar narrowing, though Brown sets it within the more familiar mid-century rubric of declining literary innovation and resurgent aesthetic conservatism. For "if Swanzy's tastes tended toward an embrace of the ostensibly liberal aims of prewar literary experimentation, Naipaul's most certainly did not" (172)—indeed, "Naipaul's predilections favor a literary style that is aesthetically assimilated into the regnant British mode of writing advocated by Amis and other Movement figures" (175). This critical move itself assimilates Naipaul's literary career to regnant British modes, overlooking his earliest work and the role of radio in mediating both his "notorious (and anguished) antipathy toward the Caribbean" and his self-discovery as a writer in that same relationship towards his home (171).

drive is not a postwar flash in the pan" (1). Furthermore, Naipaul is quick to puncture even that level of accomplishment, declaring that "none of these novels had any extraordinary merit or success; and for the majority of reviewers and readers in this country they, and many hundreds more published in 1955, are now forgotten" (2). Swanzy himself could fall prey to pessimism on the air. In August 1948, for instance, his "Last Six Months" laments that "sometimes one wonders what is the good of a programme like *Caribbean Voices* . . . it is ephemeral, and above all, it is so incredibly remote." But while the previous editor was determined to leaven criticism with praise, his successor did not seem to feel it his duty to buck up the semi-professional troops. Moreover, though distance frustrated and occasionally blinkered Swanzy—"What can one really do at a distance of 4,000 miles?" he asks—it also gave him the advantage of critical detachment. Naipaul's analysis of the West Indian literary situation is formed and deformed by his own upbringing within it—by the complex of ambition and shame it bred in him. Naipaul exhibits a clear understanding of the material basis for West Indian literary dependence and derivativeness: "the West Indian writer must bear with this indifference until a West Indian audience is created large enough to support him by buying his books" (3), and yet the absence of that audience ensures that "the books he has read are the books of English and American and European writers . . . so with the professional West Indian writer we have the danger of art following art, not art following life" (5). He is deeply concerned with "the West Indian literary predicament," defined as "the West Indian sense of frustration, the peculiar West Indian claustrophobia," born of a combined cultural and geographical isolation. Yet his own hunger to escape that predicament fuels his certainty that the proper professional arena lies in London, his deprecation of the very radio program that he is helping to broadcast back to the Caribbean, and his belief (projected across the region though crossed out in his script) that "~~Getting away from~~

~~the West Indies is still one of the West Indian writer's main preoccupations. It gives him a sense of freedom and breaks down his feeling of isolation~~" (3). This "Survey" ends where Naipaul's interest truly begins: in the writer of the future, who bears a passing resemblance to the editor himself. "For all its literary exuberance, the West Indies, I feel has not yet produced an inventive professional writer, capable of looking out of himself and still remaining true to his earth. We can only watch and wait. But we need not to be despondent; for this is only the beginning" (6).

Naipaul's letters home bear out the essential criticism of his editing: that it is self-interested, and therefore of secondary interest to the self in question. They chart the progress of his disenchantment with *Caribbean Voices* and his sense of being distracted from the real business of writing. When he tells his family about securing the editor's position in December 1954, after that desperate period of failing to find work, his excitement is measured but real:

> Every week now you will be able to hear me on the radio, if you listen. I am doing the programme Caribbean Voices, the one that Henry Swanzy used to do, and the programme which broadcast Pa's short stories. The job is extremely easy and interesting. I only need to go out on the days of recording; for the rest I can stay at home, and do my own writing. (*Letters* 410)

But like other writers before and after him, Naipaul discovers the difficulty of balancing professional employment with artistic vocation. By May 1955, he is running down his own program, asking "whether you people at home ever listen to any of those programmes on which I work. They are awful, aren't they, but one has to do them because one has to make a living" (422). He never describes the details of editing or presenting, for "what I am really working on is my writing, my own writing" (423). His lack of patience and generosity as an editor is most easily explained by his hurry to be an author. Radio is something to be surpassed, a rejection subsequently repeated in his accounts of these writerly beginnings.

Nevertheless, it is possible to argue that Naipaul was a better editor than Griffith allows,

even if what his editorial eye illuminates most consistently are the technical concerns of his own developing style. Naipaul flipped the proportions of encouragement and criticism present in Swanzy's summaries of "The Last Six Months"—and reversed the ratio of quoted material to his own editorial pronouncements—but this also suggests a heightening of standards, an increased rigour and a diminished latitude stemming from his position as a West Indian insider. Rhonda Cobham, for one, sees Naipaul as a valuable corrective to Swanzy on the not unimportant issue of language. "The limitations of the English critics with regard to the question of language are thrown into relief by the way in which the same issue was handled by V. S. Naipaul during his time as editor of *Caribbean Voices*," she argues, pointing out that "the Trinidadian editor was particularly sensitive to the problem of achieving the right blend of dialect and standard, and to the danger of reproducing colourful dialect for its own sake" (155). Cobham points us to his introduction of Veronica Fonrose's "Extract from a Story," an instance of praise immediately followed by a lash of fault-finding, both of which are precise and instructive:

> [This extract] has been chosen because the dialect has been so accurately and richly reported. But when you listen to it you may observe how unnaturally the straight narrative sits with the dialect conversation. This . . . is one of the problems the West Indian writer has to solve; how to make his prose style consonant with his dialogue. ("Introductory" 21 August 1955)

Indeed, that problem is already familiar to the reader of *Miguel Street*, who recognizes it precisely because the book provides a solution: a narration of simplified yet scrupulously standard English setting off the characters' dialect, a structural and stylistic divide consonant with the stories' thematic fractures along oral and literate lines. As an editor, Naipaul identified the dilemma of mediation—how a writer's prose style must simultaneously reproduce and absorb common Caribbean speech, a difficulty which at once lends itself to and draws upon the

larger radio dynamic of secondary orality—and worked towards his own answer. The editorial round-up on *Caribbean Voices* was still a writing clinic, but the writing that shone was his own. Naipaul's valedictory "Comments on West Indian Literature" turns contributors into characters. Their plots are mockingly digested and spat out as admonitions: "No stories, either, about the starving artisan winning a fortune from some game of chance. No stories of convicts returning to murder faithless mistresses. No stories of black men making love to white girls. No stories of peasants oppressed by fire, flood and Civil Servants and reduced to beggary" (2). Their meetings with the editor are transformed into miniature sketches—little scenes marked by the same balance between amused literate narration and comic vernacular dialogue as the fiction he has been writing on the side.

> I was threatened with violence by a Jamaican whose philosophising I had cut out of a story. A poet who held all punctuation in contempt said sulkily, "If was E.E. Cummings, you wouldn'ta put comma and full stop all over his poem. You ain't have to tell me. Is only because I black." A man came one day, slapped down a pile of manuscript on the desk, and said, "My name is Jones. I write about Sex." Another writer came and announced one day, "I stop writing short stories. Is only poetry for me." "Only poetry! Why is only poetry for you?" I asked. "It shorter," he said . . . Every West Indian writer is now using dialect. Two years ago this wasn't so. As a man from St. Vincent said, "They does laugh at we, man." After hearing one of my own plays, an aggrieved West Indian lady said to me, "I never hear nobody talking so by me. Perhaps they does talk so by you." (2-3)

By his own account, Naipaul had few successes as an editor, declaring that "during my time on the programme we discovered only two new writers of any worth—Michael Anthony of Trinidad and Leslie Roberts of Jamaica." To that short list, however, we must add Naipaul himself. Though recognized and promoted by Swanzy, his confidence in his material and methods took off under his own watch. Naipaul signs off from the program with a typically backhanded compliment, though one that, again typically, contains an irreducible measure of honesty. "One can learn a lot from all writing—perhaps more from bad writing than from

good—and I learned a lot from Caribbean Voices" (1).

In fact, Naipaul learned more from radio than he would ever acknowledge again.[10] His editorial weakness—an ambivalence about both the medium and the region it reached—is at the root of the powerful divide that shapes both the structure and the sound of his first finished book, the sequence of stories torn and stitched between the oral life of a Trinidad street and the escape offered by English education. Though Naipaul's editing sinks beneath Swanzy's standard, his art performs the work of mediation. On February 10th, 1956, he writes to his sister Kamla with the long-dreamt-of news.

> This is the letter I have been longing to write home ever since I left Trinidad. It is about my book . . . I decided to change my style of writing completely. In the beginning of June or thereabouts I began a series of connected stories about a street in Port of Spain. The stories please all who read them . . . [they will be called] MIGUEL STREET, Sketches of a Street in Port of Spain. (431-2).

[10] It is this neglect, on the part of both the author and his critics, that I have labored to rectify. My concentration on Naipaul and Swanzy may nevertheless seem somewhat out of step with recent scholarship seeking to surpass the centrality of London to Caribbean literatures. The most revisionist of recent Caribbean critical collections is titled *Beyond Windrush: Rethinking Postwar Anglophone Caribbean Literature* (2015) for a reason. The *Empire Windrush* sailed from Jamaica to London in 1948, bringing a large number of passengers to stay, and ever since its name has been synonymous with that first generation of postwar West Indian immigrants. As the volume's editors point out, however, the dominance of the Windrush's writerly cohort in the critical history of Caribbean literature has drowned out other Caribbean voices—an irony given the importance of *Caribbean Voices* to their own artistic and career advancement. The "narrative of Windrush writers as the founding generation of Anglophone Caribbean literature" was established by the writers themselves, a version of events then codified via their authors' access to the literary capital (in both senses of the term): degrees from British universities, contracts with British publishers, connections to British critics—and, crucially, relationships with each other (Brown and Rosenberg 4). The writers gathered in London had a pan-Caribbean breadth and a coffeehouse intimacy unmatched in the islands themselves. Their collective narrative is a good one, but "an account of West Indian literature that privileges exiled male authorship" is very far from being the full story (5). As Alison Donnell notes in the same volume, "the established cultural phenomenon of *Caribbean Voices* as a launchpad for male West Indian literary careers" has in fact diluted the more mixed reality of the program itself, leading to the current critical inequality whereby "virtually all of the women writers whose work it broadcast remain unfamiliar to readers and even researchers of Caribbean literature today" (79). My chapter does not directly redress this imbalance, but it has benefitted from the fine recuperative work of Donnell and others, and I believe that the ways in which it broadens our understanding of *Caribbean Voices*—using the largely untold history of Naipaul's apprenticeship and editorship to illuminate both the program's heyday and its decline—complements this wider renovation of West Indian literary history.

CHAPTER TWO: WOLE SOYINKA'S *WEST AFRICAN VOICES*

The obscurity into which *West African Voices* has fallen can only be measured by silence. Neither it nor the BBC receive an entry in *The Companion to African Literatures* (2000), a place in Stephanie Newell's *West African Literatures* (2006), or a mention in Milton Krieger's overview of "The Formative Journals and Institutions" in *The Cambridge History of African and Caribbean Literature* (2000). Published in 2020, *The Cambridge History of Black and Asian British Writing* represents the leading edge of literary scholarship; only James Procter's chapter on "Transnational Cultural Exchange: The BBC as Contact Zone" refers to *West African Voices*, and he merely points out that while

> [Henry] Swanzy seems destined to be remembered for the singular achievement that was *Caribbean Voices*, and even had to occasionally remind his colleagues that he was based in the African Service, he was also the first producer of *Caribbean Voices*'s sister program *West African Voices* (154).

We are left with Peter Kalliney's passing remark that one show was "less successful" than the other (151).[1] This is an observation rather than an explanation, however, offering no measure beyond posthumous critical neglect for the supposed failure of a program that nevertheless ran from 1949 until at least 1958, airing the early stories of such authors as Amos Tutuola, Cyprian Ekwensi, and Wole Soyinka.[2] So why does one program have such a presence in Caribbean

[1] The historical work that inquires most deeply into the BBC's postwar programming for West Africa is Caroline Ritter's *Imperial Encore: The Cultural Project of the Late British Empire* (2021). But although Ritter points out that *Calling West Africa* was initiated in imitation of *Calling the West Indies* and "in an effort to reproduce the model that worked for Caribbean audiences" (83), she does not explore the literary magazines broadcast as part of those larger schedules. James Procter's forthcoming *Scripting Empire: Broadcasting, the BBC and the Black Atlantic, 1939-1968* will do much to rebalance the critical account; in the meantime, however, this chapter represents the first sustained attempt to recover *West African Voices*.

[2] The uncatalogued boxes of *Calling West Africa* material that I have examined at the BBC Written Archives Centre extend into 1958. It is unclear how much longer *West African Voices* and its parent program, *Calling West Africa*, broadcast beyond that date. By the end of June 1959, the wording in Soyinka's contracts had shifted from "Calling West Africa: West African Voices" to "Calling West Africa: Writers' Club." In 1971, J. F. Wilkinson, then head of the BBC African Service, sketches the succession of programs from *West African Voices* to *Writers'*

criticism and the other so little in Africanist scholarship? What difference would it make to our understanding of the postwar development of Anglophone African literatures to revisit those forgotten *Voices*?

The editorial figure of Swanzy links the two programs and underscores the curious disparity in their critical legacies. His entry in the *Dictionary of National Biography* gives textual shape to these scholarly disproportions: after spending five of its ten paragraphs on *Caribbean Voices*, the article even makes a mistake in the half-sentence it devotes to *West African Voices*, declaring that he began producing the program while on secondment "in the Gold Coast" (Ramsden). In fact, Swanzy worked on the two *Voices* simultaneously from 1949 to 1954 (while also editing the journal of the Royal African Society, *African Affairs*), a conjunction that becomes clear in his correspondence with a Caribbean collaborator, Frank Collymore, editor of the little magazine *BIM*. On 7 January 1949, the producer reveals that "now I have another literary program on my hands within it [the BBC], this time to West Africa." Two months later, an unsigned paragraph, tucked away in the BBC Written Archives Centre between scripts for *Calling West Africa*, announces "a pioneer series of literary programmes under the title West African Voices," a regular slot combining stories, poems, and talks that will "make its contribution to West African self-consciousness in the cultural field" ("West African Voices"). When Swanzy begins to disengage from both *Voices* in 1954, moreover, musing on how "it is hard to spend one's entire life as a ghost, or at least a distant emanation," he complains to Collymore that "one gets absolutely no credit over the kind of

---

Club and beyond:

> At one time or another most African authors and poets have contributed to 'West African Voices', which began in 1948 [sic], or to its successor 'Writers Club' which covered the whole continent. This in turn has given way this year to 'The Arts and Africa', a more wide ranging programme dealing with writing, music, painting, sculpture and so on. (183)

work represented by Caribbean Voices, West African Voices and the journal of the Royal African Society" (15 March 1954). Swanzy's dissatisfaction is compounded by profession and medium, his ghostliness a function of the invisibility inherent to both editing and radio. Credit came eventually, but only partially, and the remaining blind spot in the producer's record similarly afflicts accounts of the writers he broadcast.

The year before Swanzy's departure, *West African Voices* aired a short story from a young man in Ibadan, Nigeria: "The Olumo Rock" by Wole Soyinka (3 November 1953). The following autumn, as Swanzy relocated to Ghana, Soyinka moved in the opposite direction, taking up residence and further undergraduate studies in Leeds. Like V. S. Naipaul, he arrived in postwar Britain as a student and quickly began to increase his supply of stories to the BBC. For radio runs through the career of Wole Soyinka, punctuating his artistic evolution and his political engagement. His arrest in 1965 after holding up a radio station "at gunpoint and broadcasting a message denouncing electoral fraud in Western Nigeria" was only the most dramatic intersection between the medium and a writer whose efforts to put drama on the air stretch from his student days to his late radio plays of the 1990s ("Case Histories: Wole Soyinka"). But like Naipaul again, Soyinka himself understates this dimension of his work, particularly as it relates to his apprenticeship on *West African Voices*. In 1972, he writes an article about "his dealings with the BBC" for the corporation's own magazine, *The Listener*, but of his broadcasts home in the 1950s, he merely remarks that "Bush House," the headquarters of the External Services, "became a familiar holiday haunt" (581-2). Soyinka's memoirs *Ibadan* (1994) and *You Must Set Forth At Dawn* (2006) perform the same glancing, retrospective diminishment, referring to "all those short stories and talks over the BBC" only in passing and as unelaborated background for the more important business of drama and politics awaiting the

author on his return to a nearly-independent Nigeria in 1959 (*Ibadan* 6). And as with Naipaul, critics largely follow suit.[3] James Gibbs is alone among Soyinka scholars in addressing the role of radio in his early life and in insisting that "writing for the BBC was an important part of Soyinka's apprenticeship as an author" ("Glutton" 206).[4] This is an understandable impulse, since the relationship with BBC Radio—though it extends to a handful of plays aired on *African Theatre* in the 1960s and is steadily renewed with *Die Still, Dr. Godspeak!* (1982), *A Scourge of Hyacinths* (1991), and *Document of Identity* (1999)[5]—must inevitably be overshadowed by

[3] Scholarly summaries of Soyinka's writing life do emphasize the importance of his years in Leeds and London, working for the then-radical Royal Court Theatre as a script-reader—but they do so without mention of the radio work leading up to his first plays. Gerald Moore's early critical study, from 1971, covers the mid-to-late 1950s in five pages. He concentrates almost entirely on Soyinka's development as a playwright in London, describing the attraction of the theater as "man speaking to men, without the interposition of canvas, microphone, camera or the printed page" (11)—a more-or-less accurate (if needlessly gendered) description of stage performance, but one that obscures the vital role of both microphone and printed page in shaping and disseminating Soyinka's dramas. Biodun Jeyifo's magisterial *Wole Soyinka: Politics, Poetics and Postcolonialism* (2004) similarly skips over the author's early association with the BBC. It is not even referred to in Jeyifo's otherwise richly informative "Chronology" of Soyinka's life; he splits "the five-year sojourn in the UK" (1954-59) strictly between studies in Leeds and plays in London (xxv). A more recent collection of tributes and reminiscences, *WS: A Life in Full* (2011), is not quite as full as it could have been. Radio reappears at intervals: Abiola Irele recalls that soon after Soyinka's arrival in Ibadan he began "chair[ing] a weekly discussion over the radio on national affairs" (57); Doig Simmonds summons up "the famous incident when Wole and Femi Johnson conspired to hold up the NBC broadcasting station and broadcast a false speech purporting to be Premier Akintola" (165); Soyinka's 1997 launch of Radio Kudirat, a pirate station beaming opposition messages to Nigerian listeners during the Abacha regime, also receives due attention (151). Nowhere named, introduced, or interpreted are the numerous literary pieces Soyinka submitted to his first major publishing institution: the BBC.

[4] Gibbs has laid the foundations for a closer analysis of Soyinka's relationship with radio, particularly during the 1950s and 60s. He casts an eye over Soyinka's work for Nigerian airwaves, examining the author's scripts for the "weekly, fifteen-minute radio comedy, *Broke-Time Bar*," which ran in the early 1960s ("'Yapping'" 22). And in "The BBC Became a Glutton for Punishment," Gibbs briefly outlines a few of Soyinka's pieces for "Calling Nigeria," paying particular attention to the correspondence between Soyinka and the nonfiction "talks" producer Sheila Stradling, who "played an important, if unspectacular, role in his creative life" (213). However, he does not distinguish between "Calling Nigeria" more broadly and *West African Voices* as a weekly show within that wider current of broadcasting (the primary difference being that "Calling Nigeria," as the province of Sheila Stradling, consisted of non-fiction programming while *West African Voices*, the creation of Henry Swanzy, emulated the format and brought forth the content of a literary magazine). Nor does Gibbs attempt a critical analysis of Soyinka's style or themes, ignoring the young writer's fiction in favour of his talks. Those remaining tasks are taken up by this chapter.

[5] Soyinka's papers at Harvard's Houghton Library chronicle the resumption of his creative relationship with radio and the BBC in 1982. On March 11th, George Bennett, the Head of the African Service, writes to request a rather large favour:

> Despite the threats to External Services, the African Service is still alive and kicking . . . I am most anxious to keep our relatively expensive but enormously popular and cherished series of African Theatre productions going. Could you write a half-hour play for African Theatre's next season—to be produced at the end of this year? We would appreciate it enormously . . .

Soyinka's writing for the stage.

Nevertheless, the BBC Written Archives Centre contains a considerable number of uncollected Soyinka stories and talks—a scattered archival record that recasts the writer's early career and begins to explain the broader factors, at once institutional and social, that have condemned *West African Voices* to obscurity. In 1990, James Gibbs produced the sole scholarly article that juxtaposes "Caribbean and African Writing in the BBC's Written Archives." He lists the available scripts composed by a number of Caribbean writers, paying particular attention to Naipaul's efforts, as well as to those written by Soyinka. Gibbs observes that "a catalogue listing contributions by Caribbean authors has been prepared" (152), but that "the scripts broadcast to West Africa . . . have not been catalogued and this means that sorting through the boxes is both time-consuming and exciting" (155). Thirty years later, this basic archival inequity persists, the West African material remains uncatalogued, and Gibbs's hope that this "store-house of material by the older generation of African writers" would be disentombed is still unfulfilled. The contrast extends beyond the BBC's own premises: not only are the Caribbean documents well-arranged and well-used, a complete set of copies has long

---

Four years away from winning the Nobel, Soyinka is already the greatest prize *African Theatre* can secure. He agrees one week later to an autumn deadline, and the editorial correspondence proceeds with Nick Barker, the producer of *African Theatre*, and Florence Akst, the producer of *African Features* ("standing in as Script Editor" while Barker travels to Japan). This exchange is further mediated by Rex Collings, Soyinka's longtime British publisher, who also passes on messages from the author to the BBC. They remind Soyinka of the strictures of radio drama: not only the half-hour length for plays, but the fact that they "can have no more than seven characters . . . It is often difficult to distinguish between a large number of voices in radio drama, particularly on shortwave!" (Barker to Soyinka, 6 May). By July 23rd, Soyinka reports that the script is "completed as a matter of fact—only trimming down remains." The title passes through the following variations between the draft's completion and the play's production: "Won't you die still, Dr. Godspeak?" (23 July), "Die Rev. Dr. Godspeak!" (11 October), and "Die Still, Rev. Dr. Godspeak!" (19 October). Akst's two recorded editorial reactions are, first, to confess that "I burst out laughing aloud on page nine—I hope that's what you intended me to do" (11 October) and then to ask for greater clarity on a crucial plot point: "The matter I want to raise is the extent to which Eleazar Hosannah is recognised for being responsible for the demise of Godspeak. I would suggest that for clarity two speeches are expanded . . . page six, speech three . . . and page fifteen, speech eleven" (19 October). *Dr. Godspeak* remains unpublished as a radio play; revised and staged, it was produced and published as *Requiem for a Futurologist* (1983). Once again, radio had sparked Soyinka's creativity and shaped the printed form it eventually took.

been available for research at the University of the West Indies in Mona.[6] There is no corresponding repository in Africa, no means for African researchers to examine the BBC papers beyond arranging an expensive trip. This contrast in archival care and availability is not the only possible explanation for the diverging critical afterlives of *Caribbean Voices* and *West African Voices*. In fact, it may seem rather circular: if scholars showed a greater interest in the material, the BBC might do more to facilitate their work; if the BBC would properly index and arrange this material, more scholars might be inclined to investigate its uncharted riches. However, this circularity is not a fallacy of argument but a genuine obstacle to research.[7] It is only by examining the traces and reconstructing the operations of *West African Voices*—through Soyinka's wireless writings—that we can properly begin to judge its content and fate relative to its Caribbean counterpart.

How do the faded papers transcribing now vanished voices allow us to reconstruct authorial development, editorial influence, and institutional power? To what degree is the late colonial meeting place of the BBC mirrored in its archival center, and to what extent has curation further separated its various streams of broadcasting? What work remains to be done in these archives? And is there a critical framework commensurate to the convergences *and* divergences of the BBC's mid-century literary magazines? Through the case study of the neglected twin program to the celebrated *Caribbean Voices*, and the equally neglected work which the young Soyinka released through that channel, I argue that these radio *Voices*

[6] These copies allowed Rhonda Cobham to produce one of the first scholarly accounts of *Caribbean Voices* without having to travel to Britain: "The Caribbean Voices Programme and the Development of West Indian Short Fiction: 1945-1958" (1986).

[7] For instance, I was able to secure scanned copies of *Caribbean Voices* documents during the coronavirus pandemic. Catalogued and familiar to curators, these files were easily accessible. Requests for West African material were rebuffed—disinterring specific scripts would require too much labor from a small workforce with an ever-increasing abundance of documents to process—and had to wait until the pandemic eased sufficiently for the Written Archives Centre to reopen to visitors.

illuminate the interwoven and unequal editorial geographies that have structured the Global Anglophone as a field of literary production and that ought to guide contemporary scholarship in its attempts to conceptualize the Global Anglophone as a field of academic study. Soyinka's early mediations—contemporaneous to Naipaul's and culminating in his first published play, *The Lion and the Jewel* (1963)—reveal the interaction of parallel forces in parallel tension: radio and print, home and metropole, Yoruba and English, the established institution of the BBC and the emerging literary infrastructure of freshly postcolonial regions. His critical talks explore the ever-pressing issues of language and tradition for West African writers; his preparatory stories, though light, funny, and clearly written more for money than posterity, repeatedly rehearse situations of exile and longings for home; his play, written in England and performed in Ibadan, constitutes both a leap in sophistication—the writer spreading his imaginative wings beyond the limits on length and narrative complexity imposed by *West African Voices*—and a further fusion of orality and literacy in theme and style.[8] By tracking Soyinka from air to archive, and from stage to page, this chapter recovers a long-forgotten formative environment for Anglophone African literatures at large.

[8] I use these heavily freighted terms advisedly and with a keen awareness of the dangers of cliché, or worse. It would take more space than any single footnote could contain to provide a full accounting of "the orality-literacy dyad" as both "a central trope in the work of artists and a recurrent category in analyses of African literatures" (George 15). I follow a number of leading African scholars in treating these paired labels not as a binary—with "the written and the civilized being identified with Europe as a whole, while the rural, the oral, and the ahistorical were identified with Africa" (Ngũgĩ 108)—but as richly intersecting modes of expression which exist, as Olakunle George puts it, in "an ongoing relationship of coevalness and simultaneity." Literature mediates the hyphenated and highly-productive tension in this dyad, staging the interface between the resources and rhythms of the oral, on the one hand, and the conventions and readerships of print, on the other. In Abiola Irele's succinct summing-up, "the problem of the African writer employing a European language is: *How to write an oral culture*" ("African Imagination" 61). On this problem, see also Ato Quayson, *Strategic Transformations in Nigerian Writing* (1997). Not only does Soyinka himself meditate on this tension for the BBC, above all in his series on "A Place for West African Literature," he also enacts it in his stories for radio and his scenes for the stage, both of which give voice to the frictions and syntheses of "secondary orality" (Ong 136). What is more, and as this chapter will detail, *The Lion and the Jewel* explicitly frames its love triangle as a clash between the oral and the literate—only to subvert their respective overtones of tradition and modernity.

I. The BBC Written Archives Centre

The first impression a visitor receives on arriving at the BBC Written Archives Centre is one of sheer disproportion: a sense of imbalance between the scale of the world-famous broadcasting corporation and the size of the white bungalow that sits off a residential street in Caversham, a quiet suburb of Reading, England. Yet this small, low-slung building—along with the extension to its north side—is, in fact, where the BBC's paperwork has come to be housed, catalogued, and studied since the Centre's creation in 1970. Program scripts for radio and television, contributor files, production documents, policy papers, and the BBC's own publications: the print traces of decades of output are all contained within these single-story walls. Extending from the Corporation's founding in 1922 up to the present day, encompassing both its "home" and "external" services, the Centre's holdings amount to "4.5 miles of material, including over 250,000 files of correspondence and 21,000 reels of microfilm" ("Caversham Park"). These facts are announced along the wall of the little locker room. From there, one enters the reading room, a space with only five desks, where a small staff of curators summon the files that researchers frequently cross oceans to examine.

These records are, to a large extent, what has survived of the BBC's early and mid-century programming—decades during which many radio and television broadcasts either went unrecorded or were later wiped.[9] They have provided the informational bedrock for several histories of the BBC, beginning with Asa Briggs's official five-volume chronicle, *The History of Broadcasting in the United Kingdom* (1961-1995). In fact, Briggs's magnum opus was what "spurred" the creation of an archives center in the first place: its earlier incarnation, inaugurated

[9] See Procter, "The Empire Scripts Back."

in 1957, as the BBC's Historical Records Office ("Caversham Park"). More recently, the archives have nourished a number of scholarly projects that seek to measure the Corporation's literary impact beyond Britain's shores, to investigate the role of radio and this particular institution in supporting and distorting postcolonial literatures. Such works are centered on the BBC's Colonial Service—the wireless cultural programming directed to various parts of the waning British Empire during and after the Second World War. These shows were shaped by institutional imperatives, by the more heterodox inclinations of their employees, and by the creative tensions between them—between the Corporation's official mandate to promote the "projection of Britain abroad" and the complicating efforts of producers within the BBC as well as of writers without (Webb 9). What is more, a number of figures straddled the boundary between insider and outsider, arriving in Britain with the first waves of postwar migration from the colonies and finding work not only as contributors, but as editors and readers for magazine-style radio programs that combined poems, short stories, reviews, and critical discussion. The names of late-colonial and soon-to-be postcolonial authors who found an early literary berth aboard the BBC include those of Caribbeans like Naipaul, Derek Walcott, Una Marson, Louise Bennett, Samuel Selvon, George Lamming, and Kamau Brathwaite; South Asians such as Mulk Raj Anand, G. V. Desani, and M. J. Tambimuttu; and West Africans numbering Tutuola, Ekwensi, Soyinka, and Chinua Achebe.

The remarkable abundance of mid-century literary talent gravitating towards the BBC—where it was then packaged and propelled outwards—has inspired a swelling, if skewed, collection of academic titles over the past two decades. Most concentrate on individual programs and sections within the Colonial Service, although scholars like Peter Kalliney and James Procter have developed overarching concepts of the BBC as a creative network or

"contact zone" to account for the astonishing, and astonishingly productive, overlap of Anglophone authors within its London locations and across its transnational airwaves.[10] Kalliney's work on the interactions, and interweaving aesthetics, of colonial and metropolitan modernist writers concentrates on various institutional sites of exchange, with the BBC taking pride of place as "the most extensive and effective cultural network of the late colonial period" (Kalliney 4). Procter's recent essay on 'The BBC as Contact Zone' similarly focuses on the "significant degree of literary exchange and echo *across* the various and putatively self-contained Colonial Services of the BBC" (Procter, "Transnational" 154). Nevertheless, the balance of this scholarly attention has been strikingly lopsided. The bulk of books and articles focus on one show and the many literary careers it launched: *Caribbean Voices*.[11] In contrast, the Eastern Service has been subject to only belated excavation, with Daniel Ryan Morse leading the way and arguing that "a limitation of the fact that the Caribbean service has received the lion's share of attention is that it has become a kind of shorthand for empire radio *tout court*" (19).[12] Yet even the Eastern Service is less neglected than the African, whose programs appear to have vanished into thin, unrecorded air.[13] The Written Archives Centre has played a crucial part in sustaining this unbalanced critical account; its records hold the potential for righting the inequity.

---

[10] The concept of the "contact zone" derives from Mary Louise Pratt's groundbreaking work on such sites of exchange. In her "Arts of the Contact Zone" (1991), she "use[s] this term to refer to social spaces where cultures meet, clash, and grapple with each other, often in contexts of highly asymmetrical relations of power" (34).

[11] A partial catalogue of this scholarship would cover Breiner (2003); Cobham (1986); Donnell (2015); Griffith (2016); Nanton (2000); Niblett (2016); Procter (2015 and 2018); and Whittington (2018).

[12] Other works which explore the Eastern Service include Bainbridge and Stadtler (2013); Nasta (2011); and Ranasinha (2010).

[13] Although it focuses exclusively on *African Theatre*, Shirley Cordeaux's brief survey of "The BBC African Service's Involvement in African Theatre" (1970) is one of the very few exceptions to this scholarly hush. A handful of historical works do examine the BBC's operations in Africa, but they largely ignore the content of the programs themselves. See Armour (1984) and Wilkinson (1971).

II. The Forgotten Program

A stay at the Centre reveals curators surprised by requests for West African, rather than West Indian, material. Their mild astonishment is indicative of the popularity of one set of files and the neglect of the other. Yet it also belies a fact that the documents themselves quickly establish: the closeness of the two programs in conception and personnel. Once summoned, the many boxes of *Calling West Africa* scripts appear: filled with flaking folders, roughly organized by date—the progress of years occasionally interrupted by the label "misc."—and with no attempt made to separate the literary material of *West African Voices* from the non-fiction "talks" characteristic of its surrounding programming. What is more, misplaced pages from *Caribbean Voices* are occasionally strewn between series on subjects such as "Famous Folk of Colour," "Harlem Highlights," "Teaching You to Dance," "The Engineering Profession," "Introduction to England," and "English Grammar," as if BBC staffers themselves could not always tell the two programs, and regions, apart. This overlap extends from their titles, their structure, and such sporadic mistakes to include recurring names: Swanzy's above all, but also those of the Barbadian writer George Lamming and the Trinidadian cricketer-broadcaster Kenneth Ablack, whose duty as a *Caribbean Voices* producer doubled after Swanzy's departure and extended to *West African Voices*. Even V. S. Naipaul's voice was occasionally heard on African airwaves, presenting his series on "Reading For Your Delight: 'My Own Favourites.'" These intersections—and the later mingling of archival files—are partly a function of the programs' parallel constitutions and shared production headquarters. However, they also suggest burgeoning possibilities for creative reciprocity between the regions that individual *Voices* expressly articulate. On October 7th, 1954, Gordon Bell of Barbados speaks to African

listeners on "West Africa & the West Indies," calling for "a canal of mutual understanding . . . to be cut between the two areas"—a canal that the BBC program is itself helping to carve out. One year later, the example of the West Indies causes John Akar (later head of the Sierra Leone Broadcasting Services) to praise Lamming as one of the "Famous Folk of Colour," to lament the contrasting and "appalling dearth of writers of recognizable stature in West Africa," and to dream of "a conscious literary movement, such as is going on in the West Indies today."[14]

Yet distinctive differences also proliferate. For one thing, *West African Voices* seems never to have fully distinguished itself from its surrounding programming in the manner of *Caribbean Voices*. Scripts for short stories and poems are not always labelled with the program's title, nor did the magazine establish as firm a grip on a steady slot in the schedule, moving from Wednesdays to Mondays in 1955, and again to Fridays in 1957. Following Swanzy's withdrawal in 1954, this same period was characterized by managerial instability, with a flurry of part-time producers like Ablack and E. R. Edmett leading the program before Adisa Williams assumed more lasting control in 1956. Furthermore, the surviving documents betray a strikingly smaller emphasis on criticism. Swanzy's round-ups on "The Last Six Months" were a feature of *Caribbean Voices*, surveying the broadcast material and promulgating his editorial standards on air. These were supplemented by regular, if sometimes paternalistic, reviews by the program's in-house British critics, Arthur Calder-Marshall and Roy Fuller. In contrast, I found no such round-ups and reviews among the West African files.[15]

[14] "I know my Nigerian listeners will say 'but what about Amos Tutuola and Cyprian Ekwensi?'" Akar acknowledges, before declaring that "West Africa should and can produce more Ekwensis and Tutuolas." But while he deplores "pioneers like Ekwensi and Tutuola receiv[ing] little or no encouragement," Akar neglects to point out that both were regular contributors to *West African Voices*.

[15] This is not to say that no such criticism was ever transmitted over *West African Voices*. In fact, Frances Ademola, the Ghanaian broadcaster and one-time BBC trainee and reader, can recall at least "one programme in which Henry Swanzy reviewed what had gone on for the past six months" (Odamtten and Gadzekpo 100). It would be strange indeed if such a staple of *Caribbean Voices* never featured on its sister program. Nevertheless, the absence of such

Calder-Marshall appears occasionally, but only to discuss recently-published and frequently non-African books, not the literary material being read out over the program's own airwaves. Swanzy's selection criteria for this second program seem to have been more implicit, accumulating through acceptances and rejections rather than being publicized clearly for potential contributors, and Swanzy himself appears less as a presiding editorial authority in the scripts than as an impersonal linking voice, merely introducing pieces and providing transitions.[16]

An atypically forthcoming Swanzy announces on September 22nd, 1954 that "tonight we devote our West African literary programme to some contributions from the Gold Coast, an important part of the world, which is not heard of so much in this weekly literary magazine as it should be," adding that the evening's "items are taken from the various stages of the life of Gold Coast people: a folk-tale, a poem on a mosque at dawn, a dramatic poem of a woman saved by faith, a poetic account of an African schoolgirl." From these remarks, we can discern at most an editorial imperative of inclusiveness: a desire for the program to be geographically, formally, and thematically encompassing. But that general principle tells us little about editorial deliberations, authorial revisions, or relations of power. And Swanzy normally adopted a tone of even more studied neutrality. A more representative statement, in a script broadcast that same

scripts in the West African files suggests, firstly, that criticism did not play as large a part and, secondly, that these documents, in their current (dis)order, may be incomplete.

[16] Swanzy penned no West African equivalent of "Prolegomena to a West Indian Culture," despite having the perfect venue for such an essay within his own purview: the quarterly journal *African Affairs*. In fact, *West African Voices* features only twice in Swanzy's periodical—both times in the year of the program's launch, with Swanzy printing a direct transcription of broadcast material on each occasion. In the Spring 1949 issue, "West African Voices" informs readers that "a new literary programme has been started in the West African Service of the B.B.C., and this article is a reprint of one of the talks [by D. C. Osadebay, E. L. Lasebikan, and J. H. Nketia]" (151). Four months later, "West African Voices: 2" declares that "last quarter, we gave an example of traditional West African poetry, broadcast in the Regional transmission of the B.B.C. Readers may be interested now to read some examples of original writing in English" (242).

year, announces in unadorned declarative sentences that "After that sad story of woman's jealousy by Mabel Jolaoso, we end with two poems which set up the other principle of love. One is by a man, Kunle Akinsemoyin from West Nigeria. It is called Can I?" (9 June 1954). After which Swanzy falls silent, and a reader takes up the poem. One further, crucial difference is that Swanzy and *West African Voices* did not appear to possess a partnership in the region comparable to the collaboration between *Caribbean Voices* and *BIM*, Swanzy and Collymore. The radio producer's correspondence with the magazine editor opens a window onto Swanzy's thinking and methods that no available documents at the Written Archives Center can match. The Caversham files do not even reveal the identity of the BBC's West African agents: the individuals who presumably fulfilled the same function of screening submissions, and thereby knitting together a transnational network, as Cedric Lindo performed in Jamaica.

Swanzy's scattered personal papers largely replicate and entrench this imbalance. His letters at the University of Birmingham relate solely to his correspondence with *Caribbean Voices* contributors and collaborators; meanwhile, his papers at the Bodleian Library contain "no direct reference to *West African Voices*," although "there are . . . references to the Ghanian/Gold Coast Broadcasting Service more generally," as the Special Collections superintendent informed me (Sales). Swanzy's unpublished diaries promise more intimate reflections and unguarded observations—that in December 1953, for example, Frances Ademola "reads a story by Martha Bello, 'My First Baby,' in a sexy voice" (quoted in Odamtten and Gadzekpo 101)—but access to them is restricted.[17] The upshot is that the background operation of *West African Voices* remains blurry at best, visible only through occasional

[17] These journals are divided between the University of Warwick and the Written Archives Centre, where my requests to examine them were politely refused.

apertures and cumulative effects: the rare memo, the announcer's aside, the weight of pieces and authors accepted. And what is discernible in Caversham, finally, makes it difficult to avoid the conclusion that the producer's efforts were unequally divided between his two programs: *West African Voices* did not even announce his eventual exit on-air.

To archival inequity and editorial reticence, we may add other, sociological reasons for the programs' diverging paths in critical memory. Surveying the period of the "1940s-1970s" for *The Cambridge Companion to British Black and Asian Literature* (2016), Susheila Nasta points out that "by far the largest group [of migrant writers] came from the West Indies, along with several individuals from South Asia and Africa," making a revealing distinction between "group" and "individuals" (28). Ian Sanjay Patel's recent work on postwar immigration to Britain, *We're Here Because You Were There* (2021), confirms that "the largest numbers of non-white migrants in the 1950s were African-Caribbean people from the West Indies," citing a study from the end of that decade which estimated "the total number of non-white people living in Britain [at] 210,000, including 115,000 West Indians, 25,000 West Africans, 55,000 Indians and Pakistanis, and 15,000 from other territories" (113, 117). The primary reason for this disproportion was that the British state, alarmed by the unintended consequences of its own British Nationality Act of 1948,[18] had collaborated with India and Pakistan, as well as with the still-colonial governments of West Africa, to restrict immigration; authorities "in the Caribbean, however—exercising the measure of self-government they enjoyed—did not cooperate in this administrative scheme to block non-white British citizens from migrating to Britain" (113).

[18] This Act had granted Commonwealth citizens the right to move to and reside in Britain—with outcomes unforeseen by its political patrons, who were thinking less of migration than of a "post-war imperial project" which depended on "the constitutional unification of Britain with the empire and Commonwealth" (17-18). As Patel's important study makes plain, "the story of post-war immigration," rich in painful irony, "is in fact a story largely about British citizens' attempt to enter Britain" (19).

Naturally, these growing communities included colonial and Commonwealth students, "over 10,000 [of whom] had arrived by the mid 1950s," Naipaul and Soyinka among them (105). The outsized place held by *Caribbean Voices* is therefore also due to the plain fact that the West Indian migrant population in Britain was more numerous at the time, and that the writers among them constituted a more cohesive circle with greater access to the literary capital's literary capital—and a correspondingly larger capacity for setting the critical agenda. The "narrative of Windrush writers as the founding generation of Anglophone Caribbean literature has often been taken for granted by critics" (Brown and Rosenberg 4), perhaps because so many drafts of that narrative were composed by Windrush writers themselves, from George Lamming in *The Pleasures of Exile* (1960) to John Figueroa's anthologies of *Caribbean Voices* (1966).[19] While Tutuola, Ekwensi, Achebe, and Soyinka enjoy a comparable centrality in accounts of Nigerian literature in English, none of them stayed long in London—indeed, Tutuola never lived there—or emphasized the role of radio in their literary development to anything like an equivalent extent.[20] Thus, social and archival factors have combined to drive the critical disparity.

And yet memory is not coterminous with influence. Forgotten now, *West African Voices* nevertheless offered a platform for a rising generation of African writers in English—and employment for a number of producers whose names are these days obscure, including such prominent women as the *Calling West Africa* show-runners Mary Treadgold and Sheila Stradling.[21] In fact, no names are more prominently and regularly displayed across the West

[19] The lack of an established critical narrative surrounding *West African Voices* does mean, however, that scholars rediscovering the program can work to avoid the gender gulf characterizing "the established cultural phenomenon of *Caribbean Voices* as a launchpad for male West Indian literary careers" (Donnell 79). The reality in both cases is that many of the *Voices* were female.

[20] This is despite the fact that all of them also worked at one time or another for the Nigerian Broadcasting Service: Tutuola as a storekeeper, Ekwensi as the Head of Features, Achebe as a producer (later Director of External Broadcasting), Soyinka as a freelance contributor.

[21] Another understudied program, *Calling East Africa*, was similarly in female hands: those of Sylvia Hingley

African files than theirs, not even Swanzy's. The BBC *Yearbook* of 1947 tells us that "the West African programmes continue to be organized by Mary Treadgold, assisted by Sheila Stradling, who lived for many years in the Gold Coast" (86). Yet I have been unable to uncover anything else about the latter, while the former is remembered more for her children's books than for her twenty years at the BBC ("Lives in Brief"). Meanwhile, those few authors who achieved fame did so primarily through the media of print and stage: Tutuola, Ekwensi, Soyinka, D. O. Fagunwa, T. M. Aluko, J. P. Clark, Peter Abraham, and Chinua Achebe, who occasionally contributed to *Calling West Africa* from his position at the Nigerian Broadcasting Service.[22] Nonetheless, they were encouraged and sustained for a few crucial years in the 1950s by publication on the air—as were many others whom even students of Nigerian, Ghanaian, and Sierra Leonean literature would struggle to recognize today: among them, D. A. Obiomah, Kunle Akinsemoyin, Albert Kayper-Mensah, Seth Jectson, Mabel Jolaoso, and the program's most frequently broadcast poet, Kenneth MacNeill Stewart. An essential environment for the growth of Anglophone African literatures is waiting to be recovered and evaluated in Caversham, along with the uncounted, uncollected stories and poems which capture the literary ambitions of that era.

(*Yearbook* 86).

[22] The August 2nd, 1956 edition of *Calling West Africa*, for instance, begins "with a talk by Chinua Achebe of Onitsha Province, Senior Talks Assistant in the Nigerian Broadcasting Service. Mr. Achebe, who has been in England for the past four months taking a special course with the BBC Training School, has called his Talk—'From London to the Provinces.'" (A marginal note for the reader helpfully spells out "AH-CHAY-BAY.") The young writer's impressions of England are worth preserving: he finds a warm welcome and a male mining choir in Wales; he talks for a long time to "an old woman, a shop-keeper" in York; he discovers that people outside of London, while friendly, have quite a shaky grasp on African geography. Meanwhile, "the thing that struck me most about London when I first arrived was the quietness," in contrast to Lagos where "the vehicle is the lord of the road, and we petty men (if I may quote Shakespeare out of context) we petty men walk under its huge legs to find ourselves dishonourable graves."

Fig. 3: A selection of *West African Voices*

One of these less-remembered contributors was Davidson Nicol of Sierra Leone. The first African fellow of a Cambridge college, he wrote fiction as Abioseh Nicol and filed a *Calling West Africa* report from the Paris Congress of Black Writers and Artists in 1956. There Nicol plainly identifies both the major problem and the partial solution for budding writers like himself:

> It seemed to me that there were not enough opportunities for West Africans to publish their work. This literary programme '~~Calling West Africa~~ [West African Voices]' on which you are listening to me, is one of the few avenues in which you can hear the work of West African writers. We very badly need a literary journal.[23]

That Nicol was not entirely sure of the program's name suggests its difficulties in distinguishing itself from the broader schedule on the BBC African Service—its weak brand differentiation.

[23] The Congress itself was organized by a literary journal—*Présence Africaine*—which may have shaped Nicol's thinking. See Mũkoma 3.

The following year, the German-Jewish academic and Nigerian transplant Ulli Beier founded *Black Orpheus* for precisely the purpose of supplying that badly-needed literary journal. Based in Ibadan, initially subtitled "A Journal of African and Afro-American Literature," drawing heavily on West Indian and Francophone African authors in its early numbers, eventually co-edited by Wole Soyinka himself, *Black Orpheus* became one of two little magazines whose pivotal importance "to the intellectual history of that time and place"—Africa in the first decades of decolonization—has long been recognized (Benson 1). The other was *Transition*, launched in Uganda and shifting to Ghana after it ran into political troubles. Both were part-funded by the Congress for Cultural Freedom, the CIA's covert arts-supporting advocacy group, and eventually edited by Soyinka, who took over *Transition* in 1973 (Mũkoma 3).[24] Given how they "concentrated the energies, the aspirations, and later, unfortunately, the disagreements of a whole literary and intellectual generation" (Benson 11), one cannot help but wonder why *West African Voices* did not develop an alliance with *Black Orpheus* along the lines of *Caribbean Voices*' partnership with *BIM*. They shared an editorial aim—"to encourage and discuss contemporary African writing," as the magazine's first issue declared (Beier, "Editorial" 4)—and *Black Orpheus* went on to publish a number of authors who had previously been broadcast over the BBC. Yet not one issue of its original run, from 1957 to 1967, mentions *West African Voices*; the fourth number, from October 1958, warmly reviews Swanzy's collection *Voices of Ghana*, but without mentioning its radio origins and paying only partial tribute to "Mr. Swanzy

[24] In his book on *Black Orpheus, Transition, and Modern Cultural Awakening in Africa* (1986), Peter Benson considers the combined impact of the two magazines and declares that

> as editorial publicists, cultural midwives, arbiters of taste, moderators of debate, posers of intellectual challenges, and agents of unity and continuity, men such as Ulli Beier, Rajat Neogy, Gerald Moore, Jahnheinz Jahn, J. P. Clark, Wole Soyinka, Abiola Irele, Ali Mazrui, Ezekiel Mphahlele, and Paul Theroux had a far more central importance than an editor normally has. (12)

This dissertation argues that editors tend to be of more central importance than normally realized, but Benson's summation of the editorial duties and intellectual energy driving both *Black Orpheus* and *Transition* is well-taken.

who has done a lot to encourage African writing when he was editor of 'African Affairs'" ("Book Reviews" 59).[25] One can only speculate as to the reasons why: Swanzy had gone to Ghana by the time Beier launched the periodical; perhaps *West African Voices* was already running out of steam. Yet a looser network did spring up, linking writers temporarily in London to the swelling concentration of literary ventures in an almost-independent Nigeria. The BBC did supply the introduction between Soyinka and Beier, as the latter would later recall,

> I first met Soyinka in September, 1958 in London, where I was spending my bi-annual leave from the University College, Ibadan. A Nigerian friend at the BBC told me about a young poet and showed me three examples of his work: The Immigrant, The Other Immigrant and My Next Door Neighbour. I was intrigued and rang the author to make an appointment. Wole and I met at an art gallery called 'Gallery One' and had a long, animated conversation. He agreed to let me publish the poems in *Black Orpheus*, which was at the time just one year old. ("Birth" 102)

That first connection, among others, led to the birth of the Mbari Club: the cluster of writers, musicians, and artists who gathered around the University of Ibadan and established a theater, an art gallery, and a publishing press—all in addition to *Black Orpheus*, which Mbari "adopted" as "its official publication" (Nwakanma 180).[26]

> On July 20th 1961, we were able to open MBARI, the African artists' and writers' club in Ibadan. The first three years of MBARI were the period of the closest and most intense collaboration between Wole and me . . . Our publications programme featured the first publications by such distinguished writers as Wole Soyinka, Christopher Okigbo, J. P. Clark, Alex LaGuma, Dennis Brutus and others. (Beier, "Birth" 105)[27]

---

[25] Strikingly, *Voices of Ghana* is featured in this issue alongside "Caribbean Little Reviews," in which *BIM* "takes the palm for literary eminence" (58), and *People of the City*, by one of the most regular of BBC contributors, Cyprian Ekwensi: "the first West African to write a modern novel about contemporary life" (53).

[26] It was Achebe who "suggested the name Mbari—in reference to the Igbo shrine of the goddess *Ala* or mother earth, 'whose walls are often flooded with murals depicting all man's preoccupation in peace and war'" (Nwakanma 179).

[27] Mbari published seventeen books under the editorship of Chistopher Okigbo—before civil war erupted in 1967 and Okigbo was killed in the first months of the fighting. James Currey, the longtime editorial director of Heinemann's African Writers Series, has written that "the Mbari list seemed to give hope that independent Nigeria would be the new center for the publishing of plays, novels, and poetry by African writers" ("Literary Publishing" 10). That hope was crushed not only by the war but by the enduring (im)balance of publishing power. Currey observes "that Mbari, as a Nigerian publisher of literary work from all over Africa, did not have the sales knowledge and could not afford to reach the market throughout the rest of English-speaking Africa and the

Thus, Soyinka's early wireless pieces illustrate the purpose served by *West African Voices*, while anticipating the means by which it was surpassed.

III. Soyinka's *Voices*

It is startling to record the sheer number of uncollected words Wole Soyinka produced for the BBC's African Service during the three years he studied in Leeds and the subsequent two he spent in London, working as a reader for the Royal Court Theatre (1954-1959). They amount to at least ten short stories and twenty nonfiction "talks."[28] Until Soyinka's return to Nigeria, moreover, his only works issued in print were the three poems published in *Black Orpheus*, no. 5 (October 1958). Radio was his primary outlet in England, even as he began to write his first plays: *The Invention* (1957), *The Swamp Dwellers* (1958), and *The Lion and the Jewel* (1959). Two aspects of these long-neglected scripts strike the present-day reader: the first is how little they resemble the later Soyinka in style, the second is how directly they address the anxieties of the aspiring West African writer. When Soyinka writes to the "talks" producer Sheila Stradling in October 1955 and suggests a series on "A Place for West African Literature," she embraces the idea, adding that "I cannot help feeling that it is not necessary to ask you to write in a simple conversational style, as the first talk you did for me was so very good." Indeed,

---

Commonwealth"—with some (self-) justification, Currey adds "it was only when London publishers subcontracted [the titles] from Mbari that they became widely known and easily available internationally."

[28] Like Naipaul, Soyinka also offered himself as a voice to read the work of others. Indeed, the Written Archives Centre has kept a brief letter of application addressed to the Home Service in April 1959:

> Dear Sir,
>
> I sing folk songs—Nigerian, European & American, Negro spirituals etc.—could you give me an audition?
>
> Wole Soyinka
>
> [P.S.] I accompany myself on a guitar.

While his pieces were generally submitted to the African Service, Soyinka was occasionally broadcast on Home Service programs such as *Woman's Hour*.

the scripts we can survey are all composed of fairly short declarative sentences, comic items ranging from four to eight pages in length, frequently ending with a literal punchline. They do not anticipate the rich symbolic manner of his more mature work, the poetic, metrical density of utterance that approximates Yoruba and leads Abiola Irele to declare of *A Dance of the Forests* (1960) that "we were all bewildered by Soyinka's play at these [first] rehearsals, and I'm not sure I've fully grasped its meaning even now, after multiple readings of the printed text" ("Wole" 58)—if anything, this plain style prefigures the prosaic speech frequently reserved for British characters in Soyinka's later dramas (ten Kortenaar 324).

But though the program provided the young student with little scope to explore dramatic verse, it did allow him to develop, out loud, his approach to two persistent problems for West African authors. That same series on "A Place for West African Literature" directly addresses "the problem of language" and the related issue of "the intrusion of foreign influence" ("Talk 3" and "Talk 4"). While the first difficulty "never arose when literature still followed the oral tradition," the imposition of English, the arrival of print, and the possibility of reaching a wider audience than any one language group within Nigeria can command has produced "the plight of West African writers. Ought they to write in English or their own languages?" Soyinka's clear and unapologetic answer has remained roughly the same from this broadcast in 1956 to the present day: it is precisely because of "the diversity of languages in West Africa, [that] the best part of the literature is being produced, and will continue to be produced, in English. I don't think we should let this worry us."[29] Yet his ease with English coexists with a deep concern for

[29] Interviewed in Stockholm, on the receipt of his Nobel prize and with the challenge of Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o's renunciation of English in mind, Soyinka declared that "I will not go back to writing in Yoruba. No way. Because within the boundaries of Nigeria, we have at least 200 different languages. Why should I speak only to the Yoruba alone? I will not accept that" (Bentsi-Enchill 142).

cultural self-confidence. Warning against "foreign influence"—foreign ways of thinking and perceiving—he reminds listeners and potential writers of their own wealth of material. "Ours is a new field which has not yet been sufficiently tapped, even by European writers. Stories which are woven around the West African way of life . . . [will] put some fresh blood into the available literary products of today." The apparent contradiction between material and medium, West African culture and the English language, is in fact a motor of creative mediation. "The fact that we shall be using a foreign language to cloth a culture is no reason why we should adulterate the culture itself," for, "on the contrary, I think that the material they [our myths] contain, fused with a more modern form of writing, will produce a new brand of literature which will have an unmistakeable West African brand on it."

It need hardly be added that the young Soyinka was already practicing what he preached, building his stories out of overlapping productive tensions: using English to describe Yoruba experience, writing scripts for the acoustic medium of radio, and, repeatedly in these early bursts of fiction, contrasting West African and English ideas of home. Soyinka broadcasted a comic series of "Johnny" stories, featuring a Nigerian student in Britain, from March through December 1955: "Johnny Just Come," "Trials of a Bowler," and "Johnny Versus the Post Office." The first introduces Johnny as an immigrant whose self-respect will not allow him to passively integrate, and it establishes the reversal of BBC perspective, examining Britain and its natives as strangers in a strange land, that generates much of the series' humor.

> From the moment Johnny stepped into England, and even three years after he had stayed there, it was easy to see, even with one eye closed and the other blinking under a dose of onions, that johnny [sic] had only "just come". He was just the type who wouldn't reconcile himself to the eccentricities of the English way of living. (1)

The story invites us to laugh at and with Johnny. To laugh at his astonishment at being unable to order palm wine on his arrival in Liverpool—"to him, it was absolutely inconceivable that

palm trees, which grewy [sic] by the thousand in his country should be absolutely unobtainable in any country in the world"—and at the second-hand embarrassment his Nigerian friends feel, one later admitting "that it [Johnny's surprise at an escalator] was one of the many occasions when he was very grateful for his dark skin, for that alone hid his blushes of embarrassment" (1-2). To laugh with his defiance at slights real and perceived, his refusal to accept the slightest condescension. Conversation takes up a third of the story's eight double-spaced pages, as Soyinka stages a series of testy encounters between Johnny and various locals: with a shopgirl who mocks his unfamiliarity with the coinage—"'What's so funny about my not being able to tell your coins apart? . . . Have you ever seen a palm tree in all your life?" (4)—with a bus conductor whose accent defeats him, with his fellow inmates at a London hostel. In fact, the only cuts visible in the script are to Soyinka's overflowing dialogue, his already visible urge to use the vocal resources of radio to go beyond descriptive, narrative prose towards the quick-fire oral confrontations of drama.

> "Q" said the conductor.
> "I beg your pardon?"
> "Q"
> ~~"Again, I'm sorry."~~
> ~~"Q"~~
> "I'm afraid I haven't caught it yet."
> "Q!!!"
> "Oh, queue. ~~I'm sorry I catch on quicker.~~ But—er—does that mean I should join a queue or something?"
> ~~"NO, SIR!"~~ The conductor was certainly getting a little peevish. "It only means Thank you. Anything more, sir?"
> "No, ~~thanks.~~ That's all I wanted to know. Q!"
> [. . .]
> ~~K'you, K'you, K'you, K'you, up and down the bush, through John and then found that he had been thinking aloud.~~
> [. . .]
> ~~"You want to find out where you should come down?"~~
> ~~"No, it isn't that. Oh yes, I'll want to enquire about that also. Meanwhile,~~ I just wondered if you would mind telling me roughly how many passengers ride on your bus each day."

(5)

"Trials of a Bowler," in which the wind sends Johnny's hat to the top of a tree, is enlivened by a telephone-based monologue consisting entirely of Johnny's one-sided pleas, ellipses standing in for radio silence and preparing the way for punchlines: "Hallow . . . hallow. Is that the Fire Station? Now listen carefully. I want you to come and rescue my hat . . . Yes, my hat. It is right on a tree top . . . Cat? . . . Who's talking about a cat? I said 'hat', my hat, my black bowler hat"—and so on for twenty-six sentences (5). Finally, "Johnny Versus the Post Office" centers on an extended comparison between the town that Johnny left, Abadina, and the town where he now finds himself, Rishton, and on the comedy of frustration that flows from his attempts to achieve "'at homeness'" (2). His initial sense of coming to "feel thoroughly at home in Rishton," since "everyday, he discovered some new thing which made him think of Abadina," runs afoul of the local post office and his attempts to retrieve an ill-conceived break-up letter before it is sent on to his English girlfriend. And though "he, Johnny, alone and unaided had licked the British postal system, and flouted its red tape with the greatest ease," his triumph turns sour at the end: the girlfriend sends him her own letter of rejection (7).

Compared to the poems published three years later in *Black Orpheus*, these radio stories cover similar territory—the immigrant's experience of England—in a much tamer style. Johnny faces light mockery at worst; his interactions with the English are all essentially comic. "The Immigrant," "And the Other Immigrant," and "My Next Door Neighbour" sketch a seedier scene in rougher language, giving voice to more complicated feelings of sexual longing, humiliation, and anger. The Immigrant "scans the gaudy bulbs / (For the fiftieth time) / Of dancing Hammersmith palace," approaches a woman whose "eyes had said, / 'You? Not at any price!,'" and fantasizes of a "knife that waited on the slight, / On the sudden nerve that would

join her face / To scars identical / With what he felt inside" (8-10, 36-7, 42-5). The Other Immigrant "contemn[s] / All whiteness in a face" and repeats "Our new-coined / Intellectuals' slogan— / Negritude," naming the racism that hovers, palpable but unspoken, throughout Johnny's adventures in this "alien, white society" (36-7, 51-3, 55). The contrast between *West African Voices* stories and *Black Orpheus* poems certainly suggests a freelance author's delicate awareness of what was more or less likely to be broadcast, of what was acceptable to and desired by the program.[30] Within certain constraints, Soyinka nevertheless continued to pursue his fictional investigations of "at homeness" from abroad. Another story, "A Tale of Two Cities" (15 February 1957), reverses the polarity of the Johnny series, tracking the travels of Mr. Pinkerton from London to Lagos, a young Englishman whose preparations are exacting but inadequate: having "resolved to learn every detail about his land of exile," he heats his flat "by means of the fiercest coal fire London had ever felt," borrows "books from the 'Travel and Adventure' section of the municipal library," sees "every Tarzan film which came to the local cinemas," and boards the plane with "'Fifty-two Years of Hunting Among the Balengula Warriors of the Dark Continent'" in hand (2-3). Even a tale set entirely within a Nigerian village, "Every Goat Must Have Its Day" (24 May 1957), revolves around the conflict between characters with defiantly different conceptions of home, pitting the "newly arrived" Schoolmaster Batunde against the irascibly traditionalist Grandma Kemta (1). Determined "to succeed where the previous teachers had failed, and to rescue his pupil from the hands of the mad Grandma Kemta"—his pupil being her granddaughter—Batunde arrives, "with a few

[30] The acrid unfolding ironies of Soyinka's poem "Telephone Conversation"—a dialogue between an African seeking lodging and a landlady wishing to know "HOW DARK?" (10)—were, nevertheless, broadcast over the BBC's World and Home Service in 1965 (Soyinka's contract has been kept in his BBC contributor file and describes him as the "well-known Nigerian Poet").

books under his arm," only to find his will no match for her "almost demonaical [sic] laughter" (1, 5, 6). Indeed, this is precisely the dynamic, between English education and residual oral traditions, that Soyinka then expands—beyond the bounds of length and language permissible on *West African Voices*—into his first published play: *The Lion and the Jewel*.

IV. *The Lion and the Jewel*

To turn to *The Lion and the Jewel*, therefore, is to see how stage, page, and air combine in the making of Soyinka's aesthetic and his audience. Written while the author was still in England, performed in Ibadan in 1959, published by Oxford University Press in 1963, and broadcast over the BBC in 1966, *The Lion and the Jewel* emerges at a many-avenued junction. Yet the play is typically understood as a straightforward satire, a comedy "making fun of pompous, Westernized schoolteachers" and illustrative of Soyinka's "lighter vein," in the words of the *Encyclopedia Britannica* ("Wole Soyinka").[31] Indeed, the progress of its love triangle—a beautiful young woman and her two suitors, one a schoolteacher both pompous and Westernized, the other an aging, much-married village chieftain—would seem to reassert the virility of the old order and confirm the impotence of the mimic-man class, playing out a clash between the forces of ritual-transmitted tradition and book-based colonial education that is by now pure postcolonial cliché. However, Soyinka's treatment of the conflict produces a more knotted synthesis than the critical reception recognizes, just as the play's creative confluence includes new, complex, and overlapping means of channeling this confrontation.

[31] Martin Banham traces the turn Soyinka's lighter vein took to independent Nigeria's own trajectory: "From *The Lion and the Jewel* (1963) to *Kongi's Harvest* (1967), we see Soyinka observing the absurdities of his society with an eye that is initially tolerant and affectionate but which becomes fiercer and more specific as, in the world about him, the aspirations of Independence turn sour" (112).

The Lion and the Jewel reaches audiences first through full-bodied performances at the freshly-built Arts Theatre in Ibadan, performances which directly precede Soyinka's founding of a theatre company, the 1960 Masks, as a vehicle for an independent Nigeria's cultural renewal; it then adds readers and listeners through the print and acoustic agencies of powerful British institutions—one of which, the BBC, had already given the young writer his apprenticeship on air. Bernth Lindfors has reconstructed the circumstances of the Third Programme's radio production of *The Lion and the Jewel* and recovered the report the corporation's Audience Research Department later compiled. In this version, the play began with a scene-setting introduction, outlining the principal characters and relationships, revealing a concern for the audience's ability to follow certain events and elements—an awareness of the not-quite perfect fit between dramatic material and audio medium, which in turn suggests how Soyinka had outgrown the placeless stage to which he was now returning:

> For this delicious comedy of African village life, Wole Soyinka has used verse-rhythms for the dialogue and drums for the mimed dances. It is the story of Sidi, beloved by the Europeanized school teacher. When a full-length photograph of her appears as a two-page spread in a glossy magazine, her status soars far above that of Baroka, the elderly chieftain of Ilujinle, who reflects that it is five full months since last he took a wife. (Quoted in Lindfors 212)

While the audience generally approved of the program—"ranking two points above the average [for 1966] and only three points below the leading broadcast"—some members felt the play "'was not best suited to radio treatment, as containing a number of situations that called for visual representation . . . [particularly] the mimed dances (with characterisations and action described by a Storyteller) which did not come over very effectively, it was held'" (213). Nevertheless, this wireless performance heralded Soyinka's even more triumphant return to the Royal Court Theatre later in 1966, with a staging of *The Lion and the Jewel* by the Ijinle Theatre Company (210). Both of these British successes, moreover, were preceded and enabled by the

play's publication in OUP's recently-launched series for Anglophone African and South Asian writing: Three Crowns Books.[32] In comparison to Heinemann's more celebrated African Writers Series (AWS), Three Crowns Books was "small, controversial, financially unsuccessful and short lived," an imprint established in 1962 and lasting until 1976 (Davis 1).[33] Nevertheless, Soyinka's entry into the series not only provided Three Crowns with a "brand image," it also gave rise to the most important publishing relationship of Soyinka's career—his lifelong partnership with the editor Rex Collings ("Three Crowns").[34]

---

[32] See Davis (2013) for a full and deeply-researched account of "how OUP assumed a role as both gatekeeper and 'consecrator' of African literature in this period of decolonisation" (5).

[33] The AWS also began in 1962, with Achebe as "editorial advisor" for the first ten years of its existence. Much has been written about this deeply influential series, and about the institutional backing that turned Achebe's aesthetic preferences into textual reality. The question of whether he cultivated or stunted the development of Anglophone writing across the African continent can hardly be resolved, of course, but both praise and criticism illuminate Achebe's power of selection. One of the young publishers involved, James Currey, recalls a typical meeting in Heinemann's head office and the weight Achebe's opinion would carry:

> After the discussion had gone on for some time about whether certain subjects would cut out the book from schools, Alan Hill in the chair would say, 'Well, James, what did the old Chinua say?' He knew, everyone knew, that if I had brought the proposal to the meeting then young Chinua Achebe would already have said 'yes' (even if it was on the telephone while passing through London from the Uli airstrip in Biafra to raise funds in America). So Alan Hill would say, 'Right James. You want to do it? Go ahead and do it!' (*Africa* 6)

In 1988 and a lecture entitled "The Empire Fights Back," Achebe himself declares that

> The launching of Heinemann's African Writers Series was like the umpire's signal for which African writers had been waiting on the starting line. In one short generation an immense library of new writing had sprung into being from all over the continent and, for the first time in history, Africa's future generations of readers and writers—youngsters in schools and colleges—began to read not only David Copperfield and other English classics that I and my generation had read but also works by their own writers about their own people. (51)

Soyinka was less sure. He tells Jane Wilkinson that "quite a large portion of it was total dross" (147); on the occasion of Achebe's death, moreover, he acknowledges that "'at the beginning, I was very skeptical of the Heinemann's African Series," since "as a literary practitioner, my instinct tends towards a suspicion of 'ghetto' classifications'" (Inyang). But where Soyinka concludes that "all in all, the odds come down in favour of the series," further notes of dissent continue to sound, suggesting that among all the possibilities open to postcolonial African writers—of all the styles, subjects, and languages available to them—Achebe and the AWS selected and enforced a single standard, using overwhelming institutional authority to impose their own narrowness on a continental literature. Mũkoma wa Ngũgĩ argues that Achebe set "the African literary tradition on the path of realist novels that, whether first in English or translated into English from French, were political and in Standard English even as they tried to 'Africanize' that English" (19). Rather than free African writing from "the English metaphysical empire," the AWS and its British publisher exacerbated the ongoing colonial condition, the continued subservience to "the ideological superstructure of English" (20).

[34] Their relationship extended well beyond Three Crowns. As Davis points out, "when Collings left OUP for Methuen in 1965, he negotiated that Soyinka would go with him," and even later in their respective careers "Collings continued to publish Soyinka's work under his own imprint," with the writer using "Collings's offices in Paddington as a base when he was in the UK" (148-9). Throughout, Collings "secured exceptionally high

The Oxford University Press archives track Collings's growing awareness of a young Nigerian playwright—and his increasing confidence that Soyinka's work might be the making of Three Crowns Books. On February 14th, 1962, having returned from West Africa "on a quest for an African Shakespeare" (Davis 144), Collings writes a memo and a letter. The in-house memo reveals that "when I was in Nigeria I was told that Joan Littlewood had discovered a very good play by a Nigerian. I could not discover either the name of the play or of its author." His letter to Littlewood, a well-known London theatre director, seeks to determine both the missing names and the "possibility of our getting a copy of the script to look at." Given that "we are about to start printing and publishing in Nigeria itself," Collings and OUP are particularly "anxious to publish the works of local authors wherever possible." Six days later, Littlewood confirms that "the play is The Lion and the Jewel; the author is Wole Soyinka"; moreover, she declares, "I think he is a brilliant writer, and I have passed your letter on to him." Thus oiled by connections, references, and happy accidents, the wheels of publication are set in motion: Collings contacts the head of OUP's newly-established Ibadan branch in independent Nigeria—Chief Thompson Tanimowo "Tani" Solaru—and asks him to "see Mr Soyinka if he is in Ibadan and explain to him our great interest in work of this nature," adding in a postscript that "if this play is as good as Joan Littlewood thinks . . . it would be a great thing if we could get hold of it for publishing" (22 February).[35] What is more, he writes twice to Soyinka himself—while appealing to another Ibadan employee, Neal Burton, to "PLEASE get the script" (14 March)—before at last the news arrives from Solaru that "Wole Soyinka looked in today having recently returned from a visit to East Africa . . . (he flits everywhere it seems)"

royalties for Soyinka." Their working partnership only came to an end with Collings's death in 1996.

[35] For further details on OUP's operations in Nigeria, see Dawn D'Arcy Nell, "Africa" (in *The History of Oxford University Press, Volume IV: 1970-2004*), pp. 653-87.

(26 June). In little more than a week, Collings sends his report and recommendation to publish further up the OUP food chain. The recommendation is resounding (and a reminder that the primary market for Three Crowns was educational):

> This is not alas an altogether suitable play for schools—but nor is an unexpurgated Macbeth. But it is certainly right for university and adult students. As good English it should provide a prescribable text for examinations above school certificated.
>
> This does not really matter and is but an excuse for the play is good—so good that we ought to publish it. Not least of its merits being that it is so beautifully simple in speech as in plot, in setting as in execution. Produced over here—with an all African cast—it would be a wow. (4 July)

While the rest of the report is little more than plot summary in short sentences—"This is a play. The author is a Yoruba."—Collings is quick to isolate the central conflict and its apparently clear-cut political connotations. "The young village schoolmaster, Lakunle, who is the representative of the Euopena [sic] detribalized African," loses the woman he covets when "she brutally scorns him, telling him in effect that she would rather the old virile ancient chieftain-god than the young feeble dithering westernized schoolmaster."[36] Another reader for the press, John Bell, throws his weight behind the publication of this "authentic African play," despite "the basic theme of virility which would not normally figure in your school textbooks quite so undisguisedly" and "the discomfiture of the butt figure, the schoolmaster, [which] is perhaps a little alarming in its implications" (19 July). The terms and the stakes of the play's dramatic argument seem straightforward enough to its early British readers: on one side, virility and tradition; on the other, feebleness and Westernization (or "detribalization")—with the implication that the play's "authenticity" at least partly derives from the camp it eventually

[36] Writing the day after to Solaru, Collings further suggests that he will take a light-touch editorial approach to the text, since Soyinka's "is genuinely creative writing, of great interest and vigour, and is not something which we could regard as for the normal junior school situation (in other words open to considerable 'editing' at our suggestion)" (5 July).

chooses (that Soyinka himself opts for a British publisher should perhaps begin to complicate this dichotomy). By the end of the month, Collings can write again to Solaru, announcing the news that OUP will publish not one but two Soyinka plays—the other being *A Dance of the Forests*[37]—as a first salvo in a grand publishing project.

> The idea is that we should here in London publish a series of plays emanating from Africa. We have already lines on plays from Sierra Leone and Ghana. We have also yet to work out the best way for marketing these plays in England and the rest of the world . . . it is a new departure for this side of the Press, and it is so satisfactory that quality of these plays is so exceptionally high—the difficulty is to find plays of an equally high standard to go with them. (30 July)

To that end, and though OUP's series never equaled the AWS in influence, "Soyinka rapidly became the main draw for the Three Crowns series in attracting new African playwrights, for example Lewis Nkosi, John Pepper Clark, Joe de Graft, Obi Egbuna and Athol Fugard" (Davis 147).

Ever since, the critical reception of *The Lion and the Jewel* has rehearsed the same debate—in much the same language—laid out in those early readers' reports. Issues of *Black Orpheus*, in 1964 and 1966, review the playwright's accumulating publications, each time emphasizing the lightness of *Lion*'s comedy and the clarity of its contest between tradition and modernity. Una MacLean calls the play "pure comedy and excellent entertainment . . . a kind of African beauty and the beast fable," in which the beast is the old chief and the schoolteacher scarcely counts (50). Martin Esslin finds that the play, "in a much lighter mood, again contrasts the present and the past, the forward looking moderns and the upholders of past traditions," an

[37] Gerald Moore's reader's report on *A Dance of the Forests* is an unqualified rave:

> To my mind it is the outstanding play so far produced in Africa, alike in its boldness of conception, the range and power of its dramatic effects and the beauty of its language . . . I have no doubt at all that the play should be published as soon as possible, and under your imprint. It will serve at least three purposes; educational, literary and dramatic, not only within African but outside it also. (2 August)

antithesis which "surely also has an allegorical meaning" and whose meaning is evident: "Wole Soyinka seems indeed a romantic!" (38). In an essay entitled "The Conflict Between Tradition and Modernity in *The Lion and the Jewel*" (2000), Basavaraj Naikar concludes that "the final triumph of African tradition over modernity and Westernization is obviously an objective correlative of Wole Soyinka's philosophy which recognizes the post-colonial need for nativization or reculturation and rediscovery of the past glory and grandeur" (183). Biodun Jeyifo too accentuates the play's supposed lack of ambiguity, declaring that "it is perhaps the only play by [Soyinka] that is written entirely in a comic spirit uncomplicated by a dark, brooding humor," that its target is plainly the schoolteacher's "superficial, naive, and pretentious view of progress, modernity and Westernization," and that it is, finally, "the only one of Soyinka's plays to end with an unambiguously happy resolution" (106-7). Among Soyinka's interpreters, Femi Osofisan alone suggests a deeper continuity between "his 'serious' and 'lighter' plays, . . . between *The Lion and the Jewel* and, say, *Death and the King's Horseman*," in which the contest between modernity and tradition is not heavily stacked on either side. In each play, rather, "there seems to be a continual, restless swing . . . between on the one hand a sincere and passionate quest for modernising impulses and, on the other, a loving celebration of the exotic tropes of tradition"—an unresolved internal struggle that Osofisan calls Soyinka's "rite of antithetic self-revising" (181).

Read in the revisionary light of the media that shaped and reshaped the play's dissemination, and set in the forgotten context of Soyinka's apprenticeship on the half-written, half-spoken airwaves, *The Lion and the Jewel* unfolds such near and yet fruitful contradictions. The young woman Sidi, the Jewel of the title, rejects the teacher and his "ragged books" (3), while nevertheless embracing her own "book of images" (22): a magazine. In fact, the word

"book" is repeated again and again throughout the play, acquiring steadily more complex valences. At first, the literacy of Lakunle, the teacher, is material only for insults. A "book-worm" in Sidi's eyes, his "wretched books" are noteworthy primarily as the source of his "big loud words / And no meaning" (14, 21, 3). Her final dismissal—"Out of my way, book-nourished shrimp" (67)—would seem to suggest little change over the three acts and one day that the play lasts ("Morning," "Noon," "Night"). Indeed, Lakunle's speech at times confirms the stereotype and devalues the literacy he so proudly exhibits. "It's in my books. / Women have a smaller brain than men," he declares on one occasion, his internalized imperial attitude to the villagers rising to full, plaintive pitch: "I am misunderstood by you / And your race of savages" (5, 4). Defending his modernizing refusal to pay Sidi's bride-price, moreover, he seems less a critical thinker than a thesaurus disgorging his rote-learned vocabulary, piling up synonyms without developing their significance:

> A savage custom, barbaric, out-dated,
> Rejected, denounced, accursed,
> Excommunicated, archaic, degrading,
> Humiliating, unspeakable, redundant.
> Retrogressive, remarkable, unpalatable. (8)

Yet throughout the long struggle of seduction that occupies the middle of the play, Sidi herself is entranced by a book, even if the book is actually a magazine and the reason why is that it contains a photograph of herself. The word punctuates her dialogue not just with disdain, but with wonder: "The book? Did you see the book? / Had he [a visiting photographer] the precious book / That would bestow upon me / Beauty beyond the dreams of a goddess?" (11). And though Lakunle's insistence that "Alone I stand / For progress" prepares us for a purely traditionalist rival, the old chieftain and Lion Baroka swiftly reveals himself to be capable of surprises (26). He ensnares Sidi not with manly power, but with feigned impotence and a stamp

machine for letters. He is introduced as a "sworn [enemy] against our progress" (25), yet fascinates the young woman with "the habit of talking with paper" (54). He competes on the teacher's own terrain; showing Sidi the strange machine, and the "trim red piece of paper / In the corner" of an addressed envelope, he boasts that "not even the school teacher can tell / What magic this performs" (53, 54). Moved to eloquence by the demands of seduction, Baroka's speech even begins to resemble that of Lakunle. On his initial appearance, the Lion mocks his rival's "good morning," replying "Guru morin guru morin, ngh-hn! That is all we get from 'alakowe'" (17). Yet when he encounters Sidi's resistance, she observes that now "you speak / Almost like the school teacher, except that / Your words fly on a different path" (57). For despite his penchant for buffoonery, Lakunle also reaches intoxicated heights of rhyming, rhythmic language with his accumulation of learned, foreign terms: "My Ruth, my Rachel, Esther, Bathsheba / Thou sum of fabled perfections / From Genesis to the Revelations" (21)—names which Sidi nevertheless spurns in favour of more homegrown comparisons, imagining "the ballad-makers and their songs / In praise of Sidi" (22). These characters mine multiple poetic registers and resources, never entirely conforming to the stock positions the play seems at first to have reserved for them (and which its critics continue to impose nonetheless). So too, of course, does the author.

The play's sustained tension between English literacy and Yoruba ritual issues not merely in dialogue but in the broader divisions of Soyinka's formal structure. While *The Lion and the Jewel* gives its finest poetry to English, those stretches of talk are interspersed with silent ceremonies and end in Yoruba song. Dramatic passages are supplemented by enormously long and detailed stage directions, supplying descriptions of what is speechless, danced, and drummed on stage. The written is spoken, and the wordless is read. Each act is punctuated with

"mimes," breaks in the central dialogue-driven conflict which broaden the scope of the play with flashbacks and widen the possibilities of its staging with music and dance. Thus, the first act includes "a mime" of the magazine photographer's "entry into Ilujinle, and his short stay among the villagers," bringing the audience up to speed on this crucial prior development while allowing "*The drums resume beating, a different, darker tone and rhythm, varying with the journey. Full use of 'gangan' and 'iya ilu'*" (16). Soyinka's directions extend to four packed paragraphs. In the second act, meanwhile, we witness another piece of the past: Baroka diverting the railroad and its promise of modernity around Ilujinle, recreated through the image of "*a white surveyor examin[ing] his map*" and the sound of his work team "*fill[ing] the chorus. 'N'ijo itoro', 'Amuda el' ebe l'aiya', 'Gbe je on' ipa' etc.*" (26). And with the Jewel seduced and ready to wed the Lion at last, the play closes on "*festive air, fully pervasive*," a carnival scene in which Sidi sings solely in Yoruba—although Soyinka's Three Crowns edition helpfully translates her words in a footnote.[38]

> Tolani Tolani
> T'emi ni T'emi ni
> Sun mo mi, we mo mi
> Sun mo mi, fa mo mi
> Yarabi lo m'eyi t'o le d'omo. (67)

The play never loses its balance. In its final passage to print, *The Lion and the Jewel* achieves a parallelism between prose and poetry—Soyinka's corrected proofs for Three Crowns bear the command "run-on," repeated twenty-five times, insisting that broken lines of verse be reserved for the three main characters, juxtaposing their poetic intensity against the prosaic speech of the

[38] Tolani Tolani
She belongs to me, belongs to me
Come close to me, wrap yourself around me
Only God knows which moment makes the child.

village ("Typescript")—which no single item for *West African Voices* could contain on its own, but that the program as a whole strove to foster.

Whereas *Miguel Street* is haunted by failures of education, and ends with literate escape, *The Lion and the Jewel* seems to promise the restoration of an oral-rooted regime. Yet in fact both arise as compounds—mediations—of the resources that feed them, at once written and sonic. In each case, a formative environment for such mediation—the writer's radio background—has been neglected by authors and critics alike, an opportunity for illumination left obscure until now. The wider work of recovery, which in recent years has been extended to the women of *Caribbean Voices* by Alison Donnell and to the BBC's Eastern Service by Daniel Ryan Morse, must now expand beyond Soyinka to recapture the lost *West African Voices* of that first postcolonial generation.

PART TWO: *THE NEW YORKER*

INTRODUCTION: THE BORDERS OF WILLIAM MAXWELL'S MAGAZINE

William Maxwell is perhaps the most significant and least studied of mid-century American literary editors. This conjunction of literary impact and scholarly neglect tells us something about the constitutional reserve of editors. It also speaks of the challenge editorial practice poses to a literary criticism still largely invested in the aura of original authorship and in methods tied to the singular published text—in the very outcomes which editorial labor seeks to produce and which the growing field of editorial studies necessarily undermines. Betraying the editorial ethic, making visible what was intended to be invisible, can only be justified by what it reveals: a more accurate picture of how writing enters the world and reaches its readers.

As a case study in the uses of editorial power, Maxwell accentuates the contradictory qualities of his profession, having been at once uncommonly recessive and uncommonly influential. On the one hand, his importance is beyond question. Fiction editor at *The New Yorker* from 1936 to 1975, Maxwell possessed an unrivalled proximity to the emerging canon of mid-century short fiction in English.[1] The stories of John Cheever, Mavis Gallant, Shirley Hazzard, Vladimir Nabokov, Frank O'Connor, J. D. Salinger, John Updike, Sylvia Townsend Warner, and Eudora Welty all passed through Maxwell's hands on their way to publication in the country's most prestigious middlebrow magazine. That this became such a well-walked path to the status of classic can hardly be coincidence. On the other hand, Maxwell's involvement in these works is rarely dramatic. A 1948 letter to O'Connor conveys his characteristic tone and tact: "I think that, in general, the editing and queries are fairly restrained,

[1] Maxwell left *The New Yorker* twice early in his tenure to dedicate himself wholly to writing, only to return each time.

sensible and self-explanatory. But if there are spots where you feel that none of these adjectives applies, I hope you'll point them out" (O'Connor and Maxwell 5). An editor with a light touch does not lend himself to easy description or precise measurement. Tributes to Maxwell deepen the mystery of his contribution. When he died in 2000, *The New York Times* declared that "as an editor he helped a generation's finest writers find their voices" ("Dear Sylvia"). The cliché elides what it also implies, the puzzle of this process and the smoothed-over complications of its product. Maxwell was the "'most sympathetic reader you can imagine,'" in Eudora Welty's words, but the motions and effects of this sympathetic reading are buried in the stories themselves, interpretation folded back into composition (Ross and Wolff 133). Where it stops seems as important as where it leads, since Maxwell taught his protégés "that the best editors know when to put their pencils down" (Kiernan 88). Yet restraint, line by line, coexists with authority, issue by issue, over the magazine's character—the prerogative of selection that sets the perimeters of the field in which writing reaches its public. Maxwell's closeness to a composition, as its first reader, corresponds to a curiously elastic form of involvement and control. Though he plays a defining role in shaping the American short story, that role is peculiarly hard to define.

This section of "The Empire of English Literature" offers the first sustained, scholarly inquiry into Maxwell's editorial practice and his non-authorial authority. It examines, in turn, the affinity between Maxwell's editing and his own fiction; his working relationships with two of the mid-century's leading short-story writers, John Updike and John Cheever; and the consequences of his retirement for the *New Yorker*'s fiction department, whose subsequent renovation of personnel and standards shaped the internal struggle over Maxwell's magazine-published novella, *So Long, See You Tomorrow* (1979). The following two chapters, on "Mavis

Gallant's Homecoming" and "Maeve Brennan's Exile," will illustrate in even greater depth the effects of and the constraints on his power. For Maxwell's influence over the mid-century short story—visible in the alterations, suggestions, and questions preserved in letters and on typescripts—can only be understood within the environment and ambit of his magazine, each instance of editing a negotiation with that institution's tradition which has the potential to alter, if ever so slightly, its existing order.

So what did Maxwell actually do? He read. He queried and suggested, accepted and rejected. Between composition and publication, he offered the intercession of a reader looking for what was possible in the text as well as what was actual. The editor may realize—in both senses of the term—the potential in a piece of writing, the latent clarity and style in a sentence, the hidden shape and direction in a story. Yet distortion may be as likely an outcome as realization, ruination the shadow of productive collaboration. One editor among several, Maxwell's selection and revision of texts takes place against the backdrop of "the *New Yorker* story," that enduring stereotype which, while considerably oversimplified, nevertheless captures the magazine's penchant for conventionally realist stories chronicling the domestic lives of a white upper middle class—a demographic which, not coincidentally, overlaps with the editors themselves.[2] Maxwell alternately heeds and bucks this aesthetic and social current, although he does little to disturb its racial homogeneity. The archival records of Updike's stories of Pennsylvania boyhood and of Cheever's increasingly experimental fiction reveal both the

[2] See, for instance, Jonathan Franzen on this "distinct literary genus," its "carefully-wrought, many-comma'd prose" tracing the problems of "well-educated white characters," in "The Birth of 'The New Yorker Story.'" In September 2021, the *New Yorker*'s archivist, Erin Overbey, posted a Twitter thread detailing the diversity ratios of the magazine's editors and writers, results which generally found "mastheads resembl[ing] member registries at Southern country clubs circa 1950"—and revealed that the period from 1990-2020 was even less diverse than the 1980s which preceded it.

scope and the limits of the editor's sympathetic reading. I argue that Maxwell at once enforces and expands the company line, reluctantly policing *The New Yorker*'s more rigid notions of realism while drawing ever more wide-ranging autobiographical story sequences from a constellation of writers. By tracing the shifting borders of William Maxwell's *New Yorker,* I delineate the editor's mediations—between writer and public, text and institution—while analyzing the creative function of such mediation, the levels of readership that produce a published work and propel it into the wider landscape of reception.

I. An Editorial Aesthetic

By mapping the topography of Maxwell's influence, I will confront his richly undeserved academic neglect, both as a writer and as an editor. Despite being hailed as "our greatest domestic realist" by Christopher Carduff and admired in abundance by his fellow authors—"my favorite North American writer," Alice Munro told *The Atlantic* in 2001—Maxwell has been the subject of a single critical study (Carduff, Feinberg). True to its subtitle, Barbara Burkhardt's *William Maxwell: A Literary Life* (2005) fills in the details of his two careers. In doing so, however, she holds them apart, passing over the possibility of a creative connection, or coherence, between the profession of reading and the vocation of writing. "His intense engagement with others' work," though it "slowed progress" on his own projects, is notable mainly for having placed Maxwell "at the center of a world-class-community of writers" (180-81). How the two activities may have informed each other remains unasked and unanswered. In the scattered essays, reminiscences, and histories of *The New Yorker* which comprise the additional critical discourse on Maxwell, this separation has become habitual. His office existence is treated as a "parallel life," its intersections with the main business of writing

largely ignored (Campbell 19). Even John Updike, the other half of Maxwell's longest and sunniest working relationship, compresses "his unstinting editorial attention" to half a sentence when it comes time to consider the editor's own fiction, the fruit of those "four days of the week, [when] he stayed at home and wrote, reporting to the typewriter straight from breakfast" ("Imperishable Maxwell"). While the coronavirus pandemic has resulted in a minor Maxwell revival—several of his works are charged with the atmosphere of the Spanish Flu of 1918—A. O. Scott's recent tribute perpetuates the pattern of discussing first the fiction and then mentioning, almost as an afterthought, the "honorable place in the history of American writing" reserved for Maxwell's editing.

Curiously, the only scholar to place Maxwell's editing alongside his writing in mutual illumination does so as a severe critic of both. Edward Mendelson's *Moral Agents* (2015) charges Maxwell as an immoral actor, a writer who used his editorial position to project his own limited values, aesthetic and ethical, on American literature at large. Though Mendelson does not admire Maxwell's character, he appreciates his power and makes a trenchant, if abbreviated, attempt to chart its consequences. He begins by observing that "in the nineteen-forties and fifties a new style of novels and short stories—plotless, undramatic, quietly nuanced, faultlessly phrased—became dominant in American literary fiction" (79). This presiding style, he adds, "was largely the work of one man, William Maxwell." Though his editorial touch may have been light on any given story, the cumulative effect was heavy enough to distort a literary culture: "No other writer in America had ever had anything like this kind of invisible imperial power, and it was made possible only by Maxwell's institutional status" (79-80). Mendelson reasons by equations. Maxwell was "the gatekeeper who opened the pages of the magazine to writers whose style he approved"; therefore, he was responsible for the synthesis of style which

the magazine blended and promoted (79). And since this periodical was America's most prominent arbiter of middlebrow taste, the *New Yorker* style became the nation's own literary base note. In similar fashion, Mendelson argues that the fatalism of Maxwell's own stories seeped into those of his writers, his "contempt for any ethical understanding of life" metastasizing through the body literate (83). But while Mendelson expands on his moral critique of Maxwell's writing, in matters of editing he merely asserts, offering no proof for the *New Yorker*'s supposedly singular style or Maxwell's unique role in fostering it. Nothing in his account would indicate that Maxwell was one editor among many, an anchor of the magazine's fiction department but not its autocrat. Without evidence of the editorial process in action, his argument is as imprecise as it is tendentious.

The novelist and the editor are bound by method more than moral inadequacy. The keynote of the editor's fiction, the pattern of his creative process, is revision, the Latin root of which means "to pay another visit" (*OED*). Maxwell's writing returns again and again to the scene and tragedy of his childhood: his mother's sudden death from the Spanish Flu and his subsequent exile from Lincoln, Illinois. Each fictional flight back aims to recapture this lost world. In his *Paris Review* interview, he defines his artistic impulse as "the need to put things back the way they were before" ("The Art of Fiction No. 71"). But to revisit is also to disturb, and Maxwell alters the account as he adds to it, using different points of view and shifting narrative structures to draw new discoveries out of the same piece of the past. Although Maxwell's first novel, *Bright Center of Heaven* (1934), does not touch on his mother's death—and he describes his fifth, the French-set *The Château* (1961), as a means of "not coming home"—*They Came Like Swallows* (1937), *The Folded Leaf* (1945), *Time Will Darken It* (1948), and *So Long, See You Tomorrow* (1980) all do come home, as does his family history,

Ancestors (1971). Toward the end of his life, with no more novels to write, Maxwell turned to first-person stories describing people he had known in his childhood, collecting them in *Billie Dyer and Other Stories* (1992). Thus his writing advanced by a twofold process of rearrangement. At the level of the page, Maxwell cut and pasted. "If a good sentence occurs in an otherwise boring paragraph, I cut it out, rubber-cement it to a sheet of typewriter paper, and put it in a folder," he told the *Paris Review*, adding that "sometimes I try that sentence in ten different places until finally it finds the place where it will stay."[3] To examine the typescripts in the William Maxwell Papers is to encounter sheet after sheet made up of pasted segments, many now beginning to come unstuck. This is the paper trail of an editorial impulse, although one that he would learn to restrain when working with other writers. Between his own books, however, the habit of moving pieces around and finding new connections did not diminish; the micro-revision of sentences extended to the macro-revision of narrative. The progression from novel to novel is more akin to a circling. Maxwell himself saw his perpetual subject with undeceived eyes, acknowledging that at the age of 25 "I had no idea that three-quarters of the material I would need for the rest of my writing life were already at my disposal" (*All the Days* ix). What he makes of this material—and Maxwell's phrase illuminates the special attention given to family houses in all his fiction—is "the Natural History of home."

One scene, of a father and son walking together in grief, recurs in each book that deals directly with the wound which split open Maxwell's life. Repetition is a measure of his artistic fidelity, variation the expression of his artistic development. Maxwell moves forward by going

[3] When he began to edit at *The New Yorker*, on the whim of Wolcott Gibbs, Maxwell first applied his own method of revision to the text at hand: "I cut and changed things around and made it the way I thought it ought to be," but "in time I came to feel that real editing means changing as little as possible."

back, his creation a form of recreation. Towards the end of *They Came Like Swallows*, the father of the Maxwell-like family finds himself circling his wife's coffin,

> mak[ing] the circuit from the library out into the front hall, then through the living-room, which was filled with flowers, and into the library again. He would have preferred to walk alone, but [his son] Robert stood waiting at the foot of the stairs and James did not have the heart to refuse him. (172)

In the more straightforwardly autobiographical mode of *Ancestors*, Maxwell reveals that "my father walked the floor with his hand on my shoulder, and spoke hopefully about the future, but his face was the color of ashes" (281). Maxwell's next novel, *The Folded Leaf,* contains an echo of this scene, father and son visiting the grave of their dead wife and mother in "the small town [where] they had once lived . . . they made this journey every year" (81). The characters' return to Lincoln, the circling of their feet and lives around this symbol of loss, mirrors Maxwell's own creative process. His last novel, *So Long, See You Tomorrow,* surveys the same territory as *Swallows* and, despite the later work's slim size, expands it. Twice, the narrator of *So Long* recalls his father moving through the house. Near the beginning, he "would walk from the living room into the front hall, then, turning, past the grandfather's clock and on into the library, and from the library into the living room . . . his face was the color of ashes" (7-8). The route resembles that in *Swallows*; the phrase "color of ashes" comes straight from *Ancestors*. Moreover, the end of the novel contains a return-within-the-return:

> After six months of lying on an analyst's couch—this, too, was a long time ago—I relived that nightly pacing, with my arm around my father's waist. From the living room into the front hall, then, turning, past the grandfather's clock and on into the library, and from the library into the living room. From the library into the dining room, where my mother lay in her coffin. (148)

To his analyst, "I meant to say *I couldn't bear it,* but what came out of my mouth was 'I can't bear it.'" The sentence that takes us from and to the living room offers, word for word and comma for comma, the precise phrasing of the earlier account. It may seem a circular sentence

for a circular novel, leaving us back at the beginning. But two departures break new ground, bringing us directly to the absence at the heart of this revisionary activity—"together we stood looking down at her"—and drawing past pain into the present tense, from "*I couldn't bear it*" to "'I can't bear it.'" Revision, after all, is "an act whose creativity is founded in its discrepancies," making of Maxwell's Lincoln a constantly expanding house, its inhabitants widening from the single family in *Swallows* to the town characters who live again in *Billie Dyer* (Macfarlane 41).

So Long is itself only partly the story of Maxwell's childhood bereavement. That first, familiar tale is woven in and out of a second. The narrator, looking back on his childhood, finds himself moved to write about a different loss suffered by a different boy in the same town: the murder and subsequent suicide committed by the father of his playmate Cletus Smith. Both boys suffer shipwrecks and then disappear from each other's lives. Years later, the narrator sees and ignores Cletus in the hallway of a Chicago high school. *So Long* is "a roundabout, futile way of making amends," an attempt at restitution across time that is nevertheless shaped by cleavages, not least by the shift from memoir to fiction that cuts across the middle of the novel (5). Having relied that far on newspaper reports and his own memories, the narrator openly declares that he will continue Cletus's story by inventing what he cannot know: "the one possibility of my making some connection with him seems to lie not in the present but in the past—in my trying to reconstruct the testimony that he was never called upon to give" (64-5). This will require a "mixture of truth and fiction," and to begin with, "I need to invent a dog"—Cletus's dog Trixie, the vivid depiction of whose inner life will be a source of discord between Maxwell and his own *New Yorker* editors, Roger Angell and William Shawn, when the work is published across two issues of the magazine in 1979. But this feat of fiction ends on the

understanding that its kind of restitution can never be enough. The narrator's final phrase, praying that Cletus was ultimately "undestroyed by what was not his doing," offers only a double negative (153). *So Long* is about sundered lives and how writing may almost repair the broken pieces; it is about the possibilities and the failures of revision, of trying to get things right in writing. This tension within revision expands into the creative dynamic between writers and editors.

II. Two *New Yorker* Writers

Almost without exception, Maxwell's writers sing their gratitude to his editing, to his talent for motivation and his refusal to impose his own solutions, instead guiding "you into the reaction that comes most naturally to yourself" (O'Connor and Maxwell v). The praise does not necessarily clarify the process by which the short stories in question were received, altered, and published. An editor who feels "that it is not the work of an editor to teach writers how to write," as Maxwell says of himself, leaves the true nature of his activity in some doubt ("Art of Fiction"). Authors who declare, like Mavis Gallant, that they "owe him everything" and also that "he made no attempt to influence his writers" tend only to repeat the riddle ("Preface" xviii, "The Art of Fiction No. 160"). Edward Mendelson raises an eyebrow at this "cult" of the editor's admirers and at the adjective "'saintly,'" which "recurs in everything written about Maxwell and his work" (83). Indeed, the writer who provides the most detailed testimony of a working relationship with Maxwell, John Updike, also scribbles at the bottom of a letter from August 29th, 1958, "P.S.: You're a living saint." The partial exception to the chorus of praise is another John—Cheever—for whom Maxwell's coaxing was not always positive and productive. Together, their dealings with *The New Yorker* provide a more complex portrait of

their first reader than either hagiography or Mendelson's hatchet job have so far provided. The letters, queries, and typescripts kept in the *New Yorker* records, as well as various authorial archives, reveal two pronounced tendencies: the editor's particular gift for encouraging autobiographical fiction—the *New Yorker* genre of "reminiscence" reaches its apex under Maxwell's watch—and his productively mixed feelings about maintaining the magazine's strictures on both acceptable social geography and acceptably realist style. These individual impulses are bound up with the imperatives of a corporate entity, the levels of whose complex editorial machinery are only occasionally glimpsed in the author-editor exchanges. It is by mediating between those levels, at times complying and at others resisting, that Maxwell makes his mark on the magazine and, through the magazine, on the mid-century short story—an influence which can be measured by the consequences of his retirement, on the fiction department in general—and on Gallant and Maeve Brennan in particular.

Two instances of mediation from early in Maxwell's career set the scene, illustrating both Harold Ross-era restrictions on the magazine's fictional landscape and the editor's embryonic efforts to broaden its range. In one letter to Peter Taylor and another about Eudora Welty, Maxwell is the advocate of the magazine with the writer, and of the writer with the magazine. In the foreground he filters the *New Yorker*'s tenets through to authors, in the background he defends authorial practice to the editorial hierarchy. Negotiating between the two, Maxwell manages to move both by degrees. In 1943, rejecting Taylor, Maxwell is plain about the problem: "The story belongs to a world that is essentially remote from New York City. The editors have in their minds an imaginary map of Manhattan which includes, strangely, all of Connecticut and Long Island, Florida, New Jersey, Hollywood, and wherever New Yorkers go." This finite topography accompanies a circumscribed conception of realism, one

that privileges clarity and linear chronology over more complex narrative structures. On December 13th, 1946, Maxwell pleads with fellow editor Gus Lobrano on behalf of the multiple Southern perspectives of Welty's "The Whole World Knows."

> The piece violates every canon of this magazine and it's absolutely first rate fiction with wonderful things all through it which raise it, for me, above anything we've run in years . . . there must surely come a time with any magazine when the usual editorial canons have to be laid aside in favor of a work of the highest quality. (Welty and Maxwell, 393)

Anticipating the criticisms of Mendelson, Maxwell warns that "the cult of clarity and literalness pushed to its logical conclusions (where we are rapidly pushing it) will end eventually in a kind of monotonous, mediocre, factory-made fiction that is completely divorced from life." His appeal fails. Many years later, the retired Maxwell writes a letter to John Updike that recalls and combines these twin constraints:

> Ross and Katharine [White] had strange ideas of what the magazine couldn't print. No stories about the Jewish problem or homosexuals. No dirty language. No sexual explicitness. In his mind Ross had a map of where New Yorkers went: The metropolitan area and Long Island, Bermuda, Florida, and California, Europe. They didn't take stories set in the Middle West, or in the past. (30 July 1992)

Those boundaries could block Maxwell himself, keeping his Midwest- and past-haunted stories out of the magazine for a number of years (Carduff, "Library"). In the very next paragraph, Maxwell returns to the trouble of publishing Welty and his "page-long impassioned appeal for the story," to which "Ross added one sentence: Maxwell can't make me arty." At least "[William] Shawn was much more open to new kinds of fiction. And seldom failed to approve of something I thought the magazine should take." The transition from Ross to Shawn in 1952, from one editor-in-chief to another, allowed certain house habits to loosen. So too did Maxwell's progress within the 43rd Street headquarters, gaining through seniority and an expanding circle of writers the power to alter as well as implement editorial policy. He *did* eventually publish Welty in *The New Yorker*.

John Updike's partnership with his primary editor was "long, unusually fruitful, and nearly frictionless" (Begley 143). Their dealings illustrate the matter and manner of Maxwell's creative involvement. Its central function is recognition, the simultaneous apprehension of authorial intention and artistic shortcoming; its success rests on the ability to convey criticism while galvanizing productive revision. In his own account of working with Maxwell, Updike pays tribute to both "a friend to excellence in literature" and "the caretaker of my livelihood" ("Stalwarts" 783). These two aspects of editorial action, the literary and the commercial, blend together under the banner of reading. Maxwell's presence in the creative process anticipates and clarifies the broader literary exchange, giving "the ideal reader a living face" and making "writing well seem infinitely worthwhile, and yet tangible" (782). One letter from Maxwell, written on May 7th, 1958, displays the qualities of encouragement, protectiveness, and astute critical appraisal that invigorated the young Updike. Responding to the 26-year-old author's worries about being lumped in with other *New Yorker* writers—recently dismissed en masse "under the heading of shallow sophistication" by Maxwell Geismar—the editor offers insight both personal and artistic. First, he articulates for Updike his own anxiety, asking "Could it be that Maxwell Geismer [sic] has merely given expression to certain fears you already have? Fears that do not apply to Salinger and Fitzgerald but your own work in relation to this magazine and its editors?" Then he delivers a rebuttal, offering reassurance and stimulus in equal measure. "I don't find your work shallow," he declares, citing a passage from Turgenev.

> 'Believe me, he finds satisfaction in himself alone; the life that surrounds him provides him with the contents of his works; he is its <u>concentrated reflection</u> . . .' That's what you are right now, old boy, and that's what I hope you will continue to be, and it's not shallow for the simple reason that life itself is not shallow.

In 1958, Maxwell is criticizing the critics to come, claiming and recasting the ground on which Updike will be most consistently attacked in future decades: the charge of self-absorption,

exemplified by David Foster Wallace's claim that "no U.S. novelist has mapped the solipsist's terrain better than John Updike," and the somewhat conflicting accusation that he surrendered his artistic identity to a magazine, as in Jeffrey Meyers's insistence that "the outpourings of John Updike . . . exemplify all the faults of the *New Yorker*." Maxwell points out that influence flows in two directions, and that "it is a slightly different magazine because you are now published in it." Little wonder that many years later, in 1992, Updike would reread Maxwell's old notes and observe "What a torrent of encouragement and loving advice and undeserved flattery over the years! Where would I be without it?"

While Maxwell's major recommendations were not frequent—the lists of queries passed from editor to writer largely involve more minor points of logic, clarity, and punctuation—he sometimes discerned a different shape within a draft or perceived the literary potential of unwritten material: for instance, hearing "a story about my elementary-school days" and recognizing "'that's a short story' and I wrote it up" ("Stalwarts" 781). This story, "The Alligators" (1958), acts as a test case in minimal editorial alteration and maximal editorial impact. Its suggestion, encouragement, and acceptance set Updike firmly on the path of mining his own Pennsylvania past, a rich vein that results in the Olinger stories. Updike revisits his hometown of Shillington, under the guise of Olinger, again and again for Maxwell and *The New Yorker*. When he publishes the stories as a book in 1964, Updike writes that if "I had to pick a few to represent me, they would be, I suppose, for reasons only partially personal, these" ("Foreword" 15). The editor's initial spark of interest, subsequently sustained, encourages in another writer a pattern of return that echoes and surpasses his own. Though Updike's style is radically different and his territory far wider, he too displays a marked tendency to "recursiveness," as William Deresiewicz observes: "we return, in Updike, to better depart,

depart to better return—like all adults in coming home." Though a letter from Maxwell on February 19th, 1958 delivers "the preliminary editing of 'The Alligators' with the reassurance that "it isn't drastic—just questions of style (magazine) and style (literary)," the effect of his approval is deeply felt. "Nothing could I have been gladder to hear than your impression that the Alligators read like one long poem. Flattery or not, I am excited to an insomniac pitch and ready to disgorge the whole mass of Pennsylvania," Updike had declared on January 21st. An editor's recognition can turn the creative tap on (just as an editor's apathy can turn it off again). Christopher Carduff agreed with me that this had been a particular pattern of Maxwell's editorial career: encouraging writers "to explore autobiographical stories, to get closer and closer to their lived experience" (Personal Interview). In doing so, Maxwell expanded the prominence of an already-recognizable *New Yorker* genre. A market research report carried out in 1961, and kept among *The New Yorker*'s business records, identifies "reminiscence" as both a staple and a weakness, arguing that "'reminiscence,' like coasting downhill, tends to depend on past performance and to have limited future interest." If autobiographical sequences survived and thrived until Maxwell's retirement, therefore, they did so in spite of commercial pressure and because of concerted editorial support.

John Cheever's more scattered comments about Maxwell color Updike's assessment with shades of antagonism and disappointment. Maxwell's exercise of power—the ability to reject—emerges more clearly in Cheever's account, and less benevolently. The editor is not only a creative enabler, but a sometime obstacle too. In weighing Cheever's remarks, we must distinguish between unjustified paranoia and a more justified frustration that the author's outlet of choice, *The New Yorker*, was at odds with his more experimental impulses. For though "Cheever would always esteem Maxwell's literary advice, and was properly grateful for the

man's support in almost every department of life," failures of mutual understanding shadowed the successes and sometimes gave way to hostility (Bailey 175).[4] Following a party at which he fell from a first-story window and "just missed being impaled on an iron-spiked fence," Cheever mistakenly "went to his grave believing he'd been pushed by his great friend and *New Yorker* editor" (176). Working the story into his journals, he declares "there's this chap named Marples who keeps saying that he loves me and then he tries to kill me" (211-12). Years later, Cheever repeats this formulation to Allan Gurganus:

> Bill, after forty years, remains indecipherable. I thought I once understood him. It seemed that he was a man who mistook power for love . . . I once shouted at him: "You may have invented Salinger and [Harold] Brodkey but you didn't invent me" . . . He loves me and would love to see me dead. (*Letters* 314-15)

Yet weeks earlier, Cheever had arranged for one of Gurganus's manuscripts to reach Maxwell, describing him as "the best editor on the scene" (303). The bipolarity of their relationship suggests a source of conflict that the surface record of Maxwell's largely unobtrusive editing cannot in itself explain. Cheever's assertion that Maxwell "invented" Salinger and Brodkey betrays a darker understanding and fear of Maxwell's influence—however exaggerated. The curious description of the editor as "a man who mistook power for love" cuts to the heart of editorial tension, its clash of egos and aesthetics, the suspicion that support may shade into control.

For Maxwell's readerly recognition could also fall short with Cheever, failing to follow the writer fully where he wanted to go. As Cheever became more unorthodox, as his realism "mined the element of the fantastic," he came into conflict with the magazine's ingrained

[4] The incomplete sympathy between writer and editor was partly a function of their deeply closeted era: the "vague intimacy between them" on the subject of sexuality never "quite translate[d] into intimate words or acts" (Bailey 175).

commitment "to a literary ethos of naturalism, plausibility, and the emotional identification of reader with character" (Yagoda 290). An unusually marked-up typescript for the classic story, "The Country Husband" (1954), offers an unusually clear display of a writer being reined in. Though Cheever "was so exalted" upon finishing the story "that he drove [it] at once to Maxwell's house in Yorktown Heights," though Maxwell himself "would always remember his own sense of 'rapture'" on reading it, and though Jonathan Franzen identifies "The Country Husband" as one of the key works in which Cheever "was laying down the template for 'the *New Yorker* story,'" its "core-cultural suite of images of the fifties," the magazine's pencilled-over pages show significant alterations—all tending in the direction of plainer speech replacing Cheever's more poetic flights, or excesses (Bailey 208, Franzen). A selection of the words and phrases exchanged for more common ones, or simply cut, include: "~~febrile~~ [overheated]"; "~~clement~~ [mild]"; "~~home-ing~~ [commuting] train"; "~~by a misjudgement of force~~ [accidentally]"; "lying ~~in~~ [on] her ~~lair~~ [bed]"; "the ~~triestesse~~ [dismal feeling]"; "puts down her ~~silver~~ [knife and fork]"; "~~afterglow~~ [sunset]"; "~~the archness of his look made him seem heraldic~~"; "the deepest ~~water~~ [part] of some [submerged] memory"; "~~snowdeep~~ mountain [deep in snow]"; "snow~~deep~~[-covered] mountain"; "~~that world that threatens the province of enlightenment.~~" A lusher lyricism is kept in check, bringing the language of the story more in line with its protagonist, the simultaneously constrained and dreamy Francis Weed. However, Cheever's "The Swimmer" (1964) represents a turning point in two senses. On the one hand, it is "a story in which traditional realism is thoroughly transcended" (Susan Cheever 138). Ned Merrill passes from an ordinary, well-lubricated, suburban Sunday gathering "through a string of swimming pools, a quasi-subterranean stream that curved across the country," swimming home to strangely reduced circumstances, an elastic sense of time, and a terrifyingly empty house

(John Cheever, "Swimmer" 28). On the other hand, this story and the author's demands to be paid more for it precipitated a drastic curtailment of his career with *The New Yorker*. Susan Cheever notes that "in the eighteen years after *The New Yorker* published 'The Swimmer,' only seven Cheever stories appeared in the magazine (almost a hundred had appeared in the eighteen years before that)" (139). The typescript exhibits only the slightest of changes, yet thereafter he wrote less and was rejected more. Maxwell admits as much to the author's daughter, taking the somewhat self-exculpatory view that

> 'His stories collided with the *New Yorker* idea of fiction . . . Character as a confining force got less and less strong in his work. He extricated himself from ordinary realism . . . He tried things that we felt just weren't possible,' Maxwell says. 'It turned out that anything was possible.' (137-38)

Cheever's rejections occur along two longer, fluctuating trajectories: the author's descent into alcoholism and the slow march of editorial climate change, which moved too slowly for him. *The New Yorker* was an environment in which certain forms of fiction thrived and other kinds withered, and whose equilibrium shifted gradually under Maxwell's pressure, before his retirement precipitated the simultaneous flourishing of one trend which he had quietly nurtured—a fitfully increasing tolerance for more radical narrative forms—and the downfall of another, with "reminiscence" discouraged as too reminiscent itself of the ancien magazine.[5]

III. Levels of Readership

Like every other magazine but to a more tangled extent, *The New Yorker* is produced by readers for readers. When Robert Gottlieb arrived at the magazine in 1987, finally putting

[5] As one of those young editors, Charles McGrath, told me, "I was determined when I became a fiction editor that whatever the so-called *New Yorker* short story was . . . I didn't want it anymore. And Maxwell, to some extent, belonged to that tradition."

an end to the long reign of William Shawn, he discovered "a system so complicated, so obsessive, and so brilliant that after I got over being both confused and dazzled by it, I really did fall in love with it" ("Editing" 158-61). The sheer complexity of the magazine's editorial machinery in the mid-to-late twentieth century resists easy description, but it consisted of "levels and levels of readership," embedding such eminent figures as Maxwell and Shawn in a system that simultaneously supported and regulated their power, producing and eventually integrating at least six proofs of every single piece. In giving Maxwell both the credit and the blame for *New Yorker* fiction, Mendelson echoes the judgment that other critics have previously handed down on Shawn.[6] Both conclusions are simplistic as well as mutually contradictory, reducing an institution to an individual and acts of negotiation to mere diktat. One instance of the editor being edited, the then-retired Maxwell submitting *So Long, See You Tomorrow* to his former colleagues in 1979, recapitulates the protracted struggles over reminiscence and experiment that characterized his tenure at the magazine. The surviving query sheets illustrate both the creative and destructive potential of editing, the manner in which an editor's reading mediates between institutional tradition and the individual talent, at once changing the writing and being changed in turn.

So Long undergoes two major alterations during the editorial process and is spared a third. Maxwell's primary editor was his old colleague Roger Angell; in the principle editorial drama, however, Angell served largely as liaison between author and editor-in-chief. But to begin with, Maxwell had to appease the poetry editor, Howard Moss, who protested the initial title of *Palace at 4 a.m.*—after a Giacometti sculpture that features in the novel—since "'he

[6] In his famous attack on the magazine in 1965, Tom Wolfe blames the "homogenized production" of "the *New Yorker* style" on "the museum curator, the mummifier, the preserver-in-amber, the smiling embalmer" himself: William Shawn (276, 262).

himself had written a play with that title'" (Burckhardt 235). Maxwell would regret submitting to this objection, "'still prefer[ring] the title I didn't use because it says, or stands for, exactly what the novel is about.'" Readers may disagree. Casual, lyrical, caught between farewell and hoped-for reunion, *So Long, See You Tomorrow* is an accidental title with a lasting poetic charge. The second shift required Maxwell to sacrifice his original beginning, because "the editors were troubled by the fact that for the first twenty pages it read like reminiscence . . . So I moved things around a bit at the beginning" ("Art of Fiction"). Yet the consequence of this rearrangement—placing the murder first—is to explode the sequence of a narrative that had been, up till then, strictly chronological. As Burkhardt observes, the revised novel, by "shifting freely between the late teens, early twenties, and mid-seventies," brings "the past and present, the narrator's youth and old age" into "coexist[ence] on one plane" (236). These editorial interventions release much that was only latent in the text, making the revisionary force of Maxwell's narrative apparent in its title and structure.

When Shawn delivers his thirty-three queries on the second part of *So Long*, however, the harmful capacity of unsympathetic editing emerges into plain view. The entrance of the dog Trixie, feeling, thinking, and even dreaming, becomes a bone of contention that the editor-in-chief cannot release; the issue is again realism, the question of what can be believably portrayed in fiction. "Well, I regret this, because it makes everything else far less believable," Shawn writes in his sixteenth query. The exasperated comments pile up, the editor's outrage mounting higher:

> 23. Well, now, isn't this finally going <u>too</u> far? The author in this instance is omniscient, yes, and knows what the dog is thinking, but to know what the dog is <u>dreaming</u>? Again, all I can say is that it shakes my confidence in practically everything else.
> [. . .]
> 25. Here the author—who continues to tell us about the dog's thoughts—goes out of his

> way to comment on her intelligence directly. These dog passages are practically ruinous. I can't imagine why Maxwell is clinging to them.

Despair creeps into his tone with query 26, "What are we going to do?" Wryness joins it by number 29, when he declares "this goes farther than a Lassie picture." Shawn's final comment refers to a sentence he ultimately decides to leave in Maxwell's hands, "but I'll tell you this—that dog breaks the mood far, far more than this line ever could."

Daniel Menaker's memoir recounts the "stir [caused] in the Fiction Department" and the consensus that "the thinking dog is a mistake" (103). But though Menaker reports that "on several occasions Roger urges Maxwell to put the thinking dog to sleep," the surviving three-way editorial dialogue—preserved on the two pages of Shawn's queries, in print and pencil—demonstrates a more complex negotiation, one balancing personal and aesthetic loyalties. Next to a number of Shawn's queries, we see more conciliatory comments jotted and signed "R.A." Angell adds his thoughts to Shawn's, offering practical suggestions to cushion the force of the boss's displeasure. They fall along the lines of "a rephrasing might help a lot. R.A." At other times he defends his writer, replying "don't agree" to Shawn's "Lassie" remark, since "this is just what a dog would do and want to do." To Shawn's outburst that "there's no warrant in reality for any of this, is there?," meanwhile, a lighter pencil, in Maxwell's own handwriting, offers a firm, five-word riposte: "Yes—for all of it." In the face of a full-court editorial press, he keeps his dog, the self-aware shift into fiction that Trixie heralds, and his ever-widening understanding of what realism can allow.[7] The magazine seeks to have its own way; the writer accepts on one front, releasing the potential in his own text, and resists on another, altering, if

[7] Seemingly unaware of the extra pressure brought to bear by Shawn, Menaker adds that "Roger Angell is not and never has been an easy editor to face down, but this is no contest" (103). Would a writer without Maxwell's history at the magazine have had the strength to defy Angell and Shawn? Not to the same extent, surely, though to the extent that he does, Maxwell exposes both the creative and the destructive capacities of editing.

only by degrees, the content of *The New Yorker* and the expectations of its public.

William Maxwell is one of American fiction's most influential readers. That he is known mainly, if not widely, as a novelist is testament to the power of his writing and the invisibility of his second profession. A mid-century canon emerged from the *New Yorker* stories he curated for nearly forty years, one which reflected his established affinity for reminiscence and his growing appetite for narrative experiment. His retirement underscored these trends by reversing their relative prominence in the magazine's pages, his successors clamping down on the first tendency while accelerating the second. One may reasonably wonder whether Maxwell's canon—almost completely white and so dominant in its day—still commands readerly attention or writerly influence. A. O. Scott suggests that most of his authors' "names perhaps now ring bells as faint as Maxwell's." Updike and Cheever are lionized no longer; others, such as Mavis Gallant and Maeve Brennan, remain writers with modest if illustrious readerships.[8] The dating of literature is, however, both inevitable and exaggerated; Maxwell's writers retain a core of readers that may one day swell again (indeed, one might argue that what has dated more dramatically is the position once held by Maxwell himself, the literary editor at that occupation's mid-century meridian of power). Yet even though Ved Mehta was the only writer of color in his circle, Maxwell unquestionably expanded the range of regional, Anglophone, and female voices accepted and amplified by the *New Yorker*.[9] That expansion,

[8] As Patricia Lockwood observes, "You don't bring in a 37-year-old woman to review John Updike in the year of our Lord 2019 unless you're hoping to see blood on the ceiling." Meanwhile, Michael Ondaatje calls Gallant's stories "a well-kept secret" ("My Hero").

[9] The absence of Black fiction writers at *The New Yorker* was not entirely for want of trying on Maxwell's part, though it certainly does him no credit. An apparently unanswered letter to James Baldwin sits in the *New Yorker* records, warmly inviting submissions and declaring that "I hope to read everything that you ever write." Baldwin would eventually become the second Black contributor to the *New Yorker*, a generation after Langston Hughes, but with the non-fictional essay "Letter from a Region in My Mind" (see my own article on "James Baldwin's Readers").

the literary standards exported and the individual voices embraced, is in large part the story that will be told in the following two chapters.

IV. *The New Yorker* Beyond American Borders

Mavis Gallant and Maeve Brennan shared more than their outlet and their editor, than *The New Yorker* and William Maxwell. Authors in perpetual transit, they wrote of dislocation and domesticity, exile and revisiting, homesickness and home. One writer was Canadian, the other Irish. But though each now enjoys a settled status in her respective national canon, the circumstances of their lives and the range of their writing resist uncomplicated notions of native belonging. Both left home early and returned only as visitors. In doing so, Gallant and Brennan gravitated away from the underdeveloped editorial landscapes into which they were born and towards the concentration of literary capital embodied by *The New Yorker*. From afar—from Paris and New York—they oscillated between two poles of creative alignment, between stories that capture a cosmopolitan present and those which recreate a provincial past. On occasion they appeared in the same installment of the magazine. Opening the issue of August 14th, 1965, for instance, one turns to page 24 and find "In Transit" by Mavis Gallant. True to its title, the story observes two couples "left in the waiting room of the Helsinki airport." One is old and the other young; the first marriage has frayed badly—"'What I wonder is what I have been to you all these years,'" the woman asks—while the second is already trespassing on similarly fraught terrain. By page 30, we arrive at a second piece of fiction: "The Shadow of Kindness" by Maeve Brennan. This story looks back to a Dublin house vacated by its children for a month's holiday; "without them the house had neither substance nor meaning. The house was lonely, that is what it amounted to, and Mrs. Bagot felt the house was making her lonely." Her marriage has also

gone wrong, for "she knew things were not as they should be between them" (34). The young, already twice-married husband in "In Transit" is struck by a vision of "how his first wife had looked before he had even known her, when she was young and in love" (25); Mrs. Bagot is comforted by the sight of her dead mother's shadow on the wall. The two tales rhyme across the pages of *The New Yorker*, producing echoes and dissonances, catching each other in the light of mutual illumination.

Yet the belated canonicity of these two writers was not established simply by dint of publication in the metropolitan magazine; only the parallel editorial action of homegrown publishers secured their readership at home or, in the absence of that action, ensured long periods of neglect. It is these twin tracks that I will reconstruct and analyze: the labor that delivers works of literature as they cross and recross territorial borders. For the interplay of home and abroad within the work of Gallant and Brennan is reflected, developed, and brought into focus by a publishing dynamic which itself operates along that same polarity. Certain pressure points—moments of change in the trajectories of both authors and institutions—crystallize each editorial nexus. In mid-career, Mavis Gallant relinquished one editor and secured another, leaving her Montreal-set Linnet Muir stories unfinished while procuring a Canadian audience for the first time. In the last decade of her writing life and again after her death, Maeve Brennan was brought back to the material of her Dublin beginnings under her editor's aegis. Two collections, Gallant's *Home Truths* (1981) and Brennan's *The Springs of Affection* (1997), give form to these literary homecomings; various archives allow us to reconstruct the pressures, aesthetic and commercial, that fashioned their composition and reception. The corresponding cases of Gallant and Brennan demonstrate that the creative process remains dialectical: national and international spheres of influence intersect, writers

alter the magazine even as they are altered by it. As *The New Yorker* expanded into the wider Anglophone world, it created the very connections and frictions—between editors, writers, and readers—that give the Global Anglophone a concrete purchase on literature, and consequently on literary studies.

How has *The New Yorker* shaped the Anglophone short story beyond American borders? To ask the question is to compress its constituent parts, its elements of institution, language, form, and field. To answer it is to open them out into a series of underlying queries, each exploring the intersection between literary power and literary creativity. How does the gravitational pull of an institution exert force on both national and international literary fields? What is the role of that institution's representative, the editor, in setting the terms of creation and reception? What degree of explanatory potency does a linguistic grouping like "Anglophone" actually have? How does the dual action of editing—acceptance and rejection, facilitation and suppression, drawing out certain aspects of the text to the diminishment of others—illuminate the broader relations between a literary capital and its semi-(in)dependent regions as literatures in English expand?

Resolving these problems will rectify three species of neglect. The first is that existing scholarship about *The New Yorker* concentrates on the magazine's place in American writing, disregarding its growing role as an international arbiter and enforcer of standards in short fiction. The second is that the power of *New Yorker* fiction editors over the perimeters of what was published and read has an inverse relationship to the space they are given in critical discourse. And the third is that the two writers I will focus on—Gallant and Brennan—have never been read in concert, despite the overlapping prominence of their bylines in *The New Yorker* of the postwar decades and a common, if uncommonly and artistically fruitful, distance

from their countries of origin. The failure to unfold the juxtaposition already present in the magazine's pages is a function of a larger disconnect within English studies. While literary institutions pioneer the space where Anglophone writers and readers meet, academic inquiry keeps Gallant and Brennan apart, despite their parallel entanglements with *The New Yorker*—and those of their national literatures.

Before delving into the authors' stories and their working relationships with Maxwell, however, I must set the chapters to come against the current critical discourse surrounding *The New Yorker*. What did it mean for a mid-century American magazine, especially one that embodies the power of New York as a literary capital, to include or exclude the literatures of the Global Anglophone? Was it simply a matter of publishing a few writers from far-flung places, of occasionally incorporating their settings and characters, place names and weather patterns? Or was it also a question of standards imposed and altered? In relative terms, was the relationship unidirectional or dialectical? We could extend Mendelson's argument—that a relentlessly middlebrow formula, "the *New Yorker* story," stunted not only American literature but the literatures of other countries where it held sway—or keep his conception of the magazine's clout while reversing his value judgments. We might equally contend that it was not *The New Yorker*'s style that mattered so much as its commercial strength and cultural capital, the power to establish reputations and mobilize readerships. After all, if the precise effect of a magazine's editorial policy can be measured in manuscripts accepted and rejected, its more diffuse consequences lie in the readers reached. Mary Corey points out that while "in 1925, when the magazine was founded, virtually all of its readers lived in New York City . . . By the end of the forties, 10% of the magazine's readers resided in foreign countries" (12), a number that has only continued to grow in the decades since. One thing is certain: these

questions draw us beyond the existing scholarship on the magazine, which is comprised of criticism generally bound to national horizons of literary understanding, to frameworks that are unequal to the transnational reality of literary production and dissemination.

In works that chronicle *The New Yorker*'s progress through the twentieth century, the ambit of criticism is resolutely, confiningly American. The magazine emerges from a metropolitan youth into a national middle age; its contribution—positive or negative—is necessarily measured against the larger sweep of American literature. Though true to the geographic roots of the magazine and the majority of its contributors, this concentration comes at the cost of *The New Yorker*'s subplot: its growing, international, English-language sway. Written in 1975, Brendan Gill's intimate account, *Here At The New Yorker*, embeds the magazine's history so securely in its American context that this frame of reference is never directly named. The limits of Gill's focus can be estimated by his omissions: non-American contributors, however prolific, tend to go unmentioned (Frank O'Connor and Mavis Gallant are two of the prominent missing names). The issue of literary environments, of where borders are drawn and how they are crossed, does not arise. Mary Corey's *The World Through A Monocle* (1999) begins with a broader canvas, tying *The New Yorker*'s cultural pull to the gravity of the city it represented, a postwar cultural capital which seemed "the center of the universe amongst those who had left it, those who had immigrated to it, and those who aspired to it" (10). Yet as her book advances, the appropriateness of Corey's title reveals itself: she concentrates on how American contributors framed the world through the magazine's pages and how that refraction in turn fashioned "America's postwar consciousness" (20). Her history, and criticism, of the magazine centers on "certain significant power inequities that existed within postwar American society . . . [which] were glossed over, inverted (as in the case of gender relations), or

transformed into matters of taste or cultural preference" (206). Those writers who brought their own, more distant social landscapes into the magazine are of lesser interest. Fiction, in particular, does not factor into Corey's account, nor does the name "William Maxwell." Meanwhile, Trysh Travis's 2000 essay "What We Talk About When We Talk About *The New Yorker*" traces a distinctly American "craving for cultural distinction," and the ways in which these upper middle-class habits of consumption, literary and otherwise, brought about "the magazine's national visibility" (254-5). Again, the title's accuracy reflects the general narrowness of critical inquiry, which is narrower in fact than the magazine it investigates. More recently, Janet Carey Eldred's *Literate Zeal: Gender and the Making of a* New Yorker *Ethos* (2012) gives prominence to editors, but once more within the delimited field of "creat[ing] a readership for a self-consciously modern 'American' literature—one heavily targeted to and subscribed to by white, middle-class women" (81).

The most comprehensive narrative, Ben Yagoda's *About Town* (2000), pays closest attention to "the ever-broadening definition of what kind of fiction one could find in the *New Yorker*" (160). During the Ross years, an Englishwoman like Sylvia Townsend Warner "was able to slip in, most likely, through the offices of a mild Anglophilia that had been a characteristic of the magazine almost since the beginning." A more international horizon opened gradually, first with the war and then more widely with Shawn's accession as editor-in-chief. This expansion was both more than cosmetic and less than untrammeled, for though "some notable new faces appeared in the 1950s and early sixties . . . this talented group did nothing to reverse the prevalent climate of gentility (nor the odd overemphasis on the British Isles, especially Ireland, and the American South)" (293). Eventually that climate dissipated, and the increasing freedom of its fiction was one reason why "the *New Yorker* of the mid to late

1970s was a wonderful magazine . . . wonderful in a special, irreproducible way" (391). Yet even Yagoda does not inquire specifically into the processes by which *The New Yorker* accepted, developed, and disseminated fiction from abroad. Nor does he ask how the increasing global footprint of the magazine in turn altered the expectations of literary cultures falling within its orbit. Throughout, his critical judgments remain firmly national in scope: "In the late seventies and eighties, it was frequently remarked that a short-story renaissance was taking place in the United States. If that was the case, the *New Yorker* stood at the very center of it" (391).

Of course, this imbalance of scrutiny is rooted in real relations of power, of comparative centrality and marginality across the pages of the magazine. If *The New Yorker* stands at the center, then its rings of influence extend outward in ever-looser association: the institution is metropolitan first, American second, and international only after that. Mavis Gallant, a Canadian contributor writing from Paris, intuitively understood the magazine in predominantly, defensively American terms. When she credits Maxwell in the preface to her *Selected Stories*, she singles out his Americanness as an essential, undefinable quality.

> He seems to me the most American of writers and the most American of all the American I have known; but even as I say this, I know it almost makes no sense and that it is undefinable and that I am unable to explain what I mean. I can get myself out of it only by saying that it is a compliment. (xviii)

When the Englishwoman Tina Brown took over as editor-in-chief from Robert Gottlieb in 1992, Gallant signaled her dismay in similar terms and letters to the agent Steven Barclay. She feared that something specifically American would drown in a sea of rootless international prose. On July 11th, 1992, Gallant writes that

> It seems to me an appalling mistake to put in a non-American. <u>The New Yorker</u> is (I am tempted to write "was") uniquely American, American in the best sense of the term,

> scrupulous and level-headed. When it comes to mercenaries, no one can beat the Brits. It might survive an American Tina, but no low international flummery.

Yet the ranks of international Anglophone writers continued to swell, with Gallant prominent in the first postwar wave and maintaining her position in the decades that follow. The meeting of American institution and non-American literature, of American editor and non-American writer, was the fulcrum on which the fate of a large swathe of Anglophone short stories pivoted. The little that has been said about the effects of this exchange comes not from historians of *The New Yorker*, but from critics working within the literatures lapped by its powerful wake.

To judge by the assessments of their scholars, two Anglophone traditions of the short story have been especially subject to *The New Yorker*'s writ. A number of Canadian and Irish critics deal with the magazine as a natural consequence of studying writers whose careers have depended upon it. But whereas the American academics who pay some attention to the inner workings of the magazine do so within a restrictively national framework, non-Americans who examine the magazine's influence over other cultures tend, in turn, to ignore the intricacies of its operations. They treat *The New Yorker* as a proxy for American cultural power in general and as a measure of native institutional weakness in particular. Recognition of the magazine's imperial influence can therefore blind criticism to the subtler ways in which it has been reshaped by outside contributors and balanced by homegrown publishers. John Metcalf argues that Canadian culture passively receives its preferences from the United States, that "Canadian society is incapable of making a book a 'classic'; we cannot 'elect,' as it were, books of significance," and that Mavis Gallant "seems to be read, if read at all, more dutifully than joyfully and what lip service is paid in Canada is probably inspired by *The New Yorker* connection." In offering this polemic, he exaggerates and simplifies what is nevertheless a long-running theme of Canadian literary history: the warping effect of an international imbalance in

market share and publishing power. For Heather Ingman, writing about the postwar Irish short story, *The New Yorker* fills an arena largely vacated by "indigenous" publishers—not entirely, or even largely, to Irish literature's benefit. "Magazine outlets were all the more vital given the [feeble] state of Irish publishing" (Ingman 159), and while the native achievements of Sean O'Faolain's *The Bell* cannot be gainsaid, it is *The New Yorker* and "the lucrative nature of the American market" that "did much to publicize the Irish short story at mid-century" (5). However, the aesthetic limitations of the American magazine end up fortifying similar qualities in Irish fiction. "Though the link with the *New Yorker* might seem to suggest cosmopolitanism," she contends, "this relationship could actually be regarded as reinforcing the image of Ireland as a stagnant society since it was the conservatism of Irish writers that fitted in well with the blandness of the *New Yorker* during this period" (159). In this, Ingman echoes both Yagoda's verdict on the magazine's fiction of the fifties—his chapter on this period is titled "The Bland Leading the Bland, 1952-62" (243)—and Metcalf's judgment on the failures of domestic institutions.

There are two considerable exceptions to this trend, one an unpublished dissertation and the other a critical biography, both of which delve behind the scenes of the magazine in order to flesh out the progress of certain Canadian and Irish literary careers. They offer a foundation of scholarship while leaving room for renovation. Nadine Fladd's dissertation, *Transnational Conversations:* The New Yorker *and Canadian Short Story Writers* (2014), sets out to chart how "the short story . . . paradoxically established itself as a canonical genre in Canadian literature by way of *The New Yorker*" (16). In addition to chapters on Morley Callaghan and Alice Munro, Fladd focuses on Mavis Gallant. Describing Gallant's relationship with the magazine as "a model of collaboration that takes into account conflict, difference, and

disagreement" (40), Fladd identifies two forms of tension, the first arising from editorial "misconceptions about cultural differences between Canada, the U.S., and France" and the second emerging from the "pairing of her stories, which invoke an anti-bourgeois, anti-imperial ethos, with advertisements for products and services devoted to 'upscale urbanity' [in Yagoda's words]" (39-40). She offers only a handful of examples of the first, however, many of them centred on the editing of a single story, "Orphan's Progress" (1965). Meanwhile, her own account commits some significant errors and oversights. In writing about Maxwell, for instance, she declares that he "appears to have learned how to edit from his own fiction editor at *The New Yorker*: Roger Angell, the son of Katharine White, the magazine's original fiction editor" (137). Maxwell actually joined the Fiction Department some twenty years before his younger colleague. Moreover, the period in Gallant's career which exhibits the greatest amount of collaboration and conflict—that which sees the publication, and discontinuation, of the Linnet Muir sequence—hardly features in Fladd's analysis. When she does raise it indirectly, she makes another mistake, claiming that Gallant "was reluctant to publish the collection of stories *Home Truths* . . . because she did not want to be labeled as a specifically Canadian writer" (154). As we will see, by drawing on archives that Fladd does not examine, Gallant was in fact far from reluctant—and for reasons which merit investigation.

Meanwhile, Angela Bourke's influential biography *Maeve Brennan: Homesick at The New Yorker* (2004) offers a richly detailed account of Brennan's career at the magazine, unfolding her various relationships with *New Yorker* figures, chief among them Maxwell. Any fresh reading of Brennan must reckon with Bourke's "great work of literary reclamation," in Anne Enright's words. Yet while Bourke accounts for Brennan's life in the city and the institution, she does less to develop the connections between Brennan and other writers for the

magazine, even those also edited by Maxwell—Gallant is only mentioned on the final page of the biography, as one of the better-known authors to provide "warm endorsements for the cover" of a posthumously published book (276). Like Fladd, moreover, Brennan focuses so closely on *The New Yorker* that the flip side of the magazine's facilitation—the native editorial landscapes on which both Gallant and Brennan turned their backs—appears less clearly. The mysteries of why Gallant and Brennan went so long without significant readerships in Canada and Ireland remain mysterious in Bourke's work as well as Fladd's.

The editorial history contained in archives both personal and institutional tells a deeper story of literary entanglement that crosses borders, outlets, and markets. Charting the growth of specific short story sequences—from conception to reception—suggests a more supple and dialectical relationship between American editor and Anglophone writer, metropolitan magazine and homegrown publisher, literary capital and literary region. To follow these transnational ties is to build on existing scholarship while recognizing and rectifying its partial, nation-bound nature.

CHAPTER THREE: MAVIS GALLANT'S HOMECOMING

Mavis Gallant was an author long abroad: residing in Paris, domiciled at *The New Yorker*, and narrowly read in her native Canada. In mid-career, however, she returned home in textual form, writing a series of stories which recreate the Montreal of her childhood, acquiring for the first time a Canadian publisher and, not coincidentally, a substantial Canadian audience. Yet this story sequence, revolving around the autobiographical figure of Linnet Muir, was left strangely unfinished—a stoppage bitterly lamented by the author but unexamined by scholars. This chapter uncovers the editorial background that shaped and stunted the Linnet Muir stories, the twin movements of homecoming and rejection that characterize the multiple places of their writing and editing: the pre-war Montreal they evoke, from which the child Linnet was cast out and to which she returns as a young woman; the *New Yorker*, where Gallant's editor William Maxwell first encourages their outpouring and his successor, Daniel Menaker, then cuts off this avenue of autobiographical fiction; and the official repatriation represented by the volume *Home Truths: Selected Canadian Stories* (1981), for which the publisher Douglas Gibson carved out a Canadian canon from Gallant's corpus, with the Linnet stories taking pride of place. I argue that while the stories seek to recapture a lost home, their fitful publication history illustrates major institutional changes—shifting currents of editorial power—within both the metropolitan magazine and the Canadian publishing scene. To that end, I draw on interviews with Menaker and Gibson themselves, as well as on the *New Yorker* records and the author's own papers. "Mavis Gallant's Homecoming" reveals the creative connections—at times a contest, at others an alliance—between competing centers of literary gravity; in doing so, it illuminates the dialectic, between home and abroad, exile and return, that shapes all of Gallant's

stories. The unfinished Linnet Muir sequence emerges and sputters to a halt at three coinciding crossroads: one in the career of the writer; one in the life of the magazine, as its Fiction Department undergoes an enforced wave of retirement and renovation; and one in the growth of independent Canadian publishing. The form of these stories expresses the consequences of this convergence; they show us what happens when one editor's reading is enabling and another's is destructive, when a writer loses and gains an editorial sponsor.

I. National Culture, Continental Market

Always on the edges of larger markets, the literary culture of English Canada has a history as colonial in its way as other former territories of the British Empire, but its north star has pointed south since the late nineteenth century. The capital to which Canadian writers gravitate—the source of editorial activity that Canadian publishing both relies on and builds a bulwark against—is more New York than London. In 1965, Mordecai Richler had no compunction in locating the center of North American gravity: "We have always looked to New York, not Toronto, for our standards of excellence. New York is our cultural capital." This imbalance is as old as Confederation. Nick Mount has traced the effects, at the turn of the twentieth century, of

> the much larger American market, a market that by this time *included* Canada. Canadians had few home-grown literary models, but the flood of American magazines and American books into Canada provided models for them, models that had become features of a North American literary landscape. At a professional level, the decision by so many Canadian writers of these years to move to American cities wasn't about giving up one national literary culture for another; it was about moving from the margins to the centres of a continental literary culture. (13)

Awareness of this fundamental disparity in opportunity penetrated deep and early for both writers and critics. In 1928, the same year as he began publishing in *The New Yorker*—the

second Canadian to do so, after Stephen Leacock—Morley Callaghan points out that "granting that [Canadian writers] must make money, the fact remains that there is no publication in the country interested in the publication of decent prose and poetry for its own sake, and until such a periodical appears, there will be no local expression in literature" (57). "Economically the situation of our literature is, and always has been, unsound," E. K. Brown adds in *On Canadian Poetry* (1943), a book written after Brown himself left the University of Toronto for Cornell (6). Faced with competition from much larger markets, "every Canadian publisher acts as agent for American and British houses; and it is as an agent that he does the larger and by far the more lucrative part of his business" (7). Periodicals, meanwhile, "are in almost ruinous competition with American magazines, they cannot pay very much, they print a good deal written outside Canada, and they live so dangerous an existence they commonly defer slavishly to the standards of their average readers" (8-9). The inescapable conclusion is that "no writer can live by the Canadian sales of his books" (6). The same calculus, and its ironic consequences, endured even after the war. Canadian authors will write for American magazines and American audiences, and in doing so reach more of their fellow Canadians than if they had solely attempted to circulate their work at home. Introducing Oxford University Press's selection of *Canadian Short Stories* in 1960, Robert Weaver observes that

> It may be ironical that a Canadian short-story writer, through publication in such American magazines as *Harper's*, *The Atlantic Monthly*, *The New Yorker*, and *Esquire*, will be able to reach a substantial audience in his own country for which there is no comparable Canadian publication. It is an unhealthy situation, and Canada needs a greater variety of magazines—which are unlikely to appear because the Canadian reader has such a wealth of American periodicals easily available to him. (xii)

The rest of the century saw a concerted effort to carve out a literary nation from the continent, to redress the imbalance of power and provide the concrete means for cultural self-respect. This is precisely the sea change which the federal government's Massey Commission on "National

Development in the Arts, Letters, and Sciences" set out to provoke in 1949. Recommending massive state investment in cultural institutions—a program of protectionism in the arts—the Commission's report concedes that "neither in French nor in English have we yet a truly national literature," that while "we have gained much" from American influence, "in this preliminary stock-taking of Canadian cultural life it may be fair to inquire whether we have gained a little too much." The problem has not merely been the volume of imported material, but the consequent scarcity of viable outlets—and a corresponding lack of editorial and readerly support—within Canada. Looking back in *The Bush Garden* (1971), Northrop Frye reflects that "in surveying Canadian poetry and fiction, we feel constantly that all the energy has been absorbed in meeting a standard [set by someone else], a self-defeating enterprise because real standards can only be established, not met." To set standards of one's own requires not only writers, but an infrastructure of readership—the professional readers fostering common ones.

The subsequent endeavors of Jack McClelland, in publishing, and Robert Weaver, in all-purpose editing, were especially fruitful. McClelland inherited his firm, McClelland & Stewart, and turned it into the premier publisher of homegrown literature—the "largest Canadian publisher in all areas of Canadian interest," as Margaret Atwood accurately describes it in *Survival: A Thematic Guide to Canadian Literature* (272). Weaver, meanwhile, established himself as his country's leading Anglophone anthologist across multiple formats. As the editor of CBC Radio's *Anthology* program of short stories, of *The Tamarack Review* little magazine, and of several editions of Oxford University Press's *Canadian Short Stories*, he connected writers to readers, greatly expanding the pool of both. One of Weaver's OUP introductions maps the venues available to a young Canadian writer in the 1950s, taking Alice Munro as an example and noting that "her stories were published in *The Montrealer*, *The Tamarack Review*,

The Canadian Forum, Chatelaine, and were broadcast on 'Anthology', the successor at the CBC to the 'Canadian Short Stories' program" (1986 xviii). Yet he also acknowledges how far from self-sufficiency this small number of outlets left the Canadian literary economy: Munro "had to wait more than fifteen years before her first collection of stories, *Dance of the Happy Shades* (1968), appeared."

For the fact remains, bitter to nationalists but often salutary for writers, that the Canadian scene cannot divorce itself entirely from either its neighbor or its old imperial sovereign. Institutional rearmament may alter, but not undo, the enduring conditions of Canada's geo-cultural position, its place on the edges of two much larger markets, the American and the British. As Roy Macksimming points out in 2007, the Canadian publishing environment is still ruled by the stark reality that "English Canadians share the mother tongue of the world's two largest book-exporting nations, which between them produce some 150,000 new titles a year, compared with our 12,000" (3). As in other Anglophone territories, moreover, the burgeoning books business of the 1960s and 70s has, to a large extent, been bought and sold since. "In the first years of the twenty-first century, the dominance of English-Canadian trade publishing by a handful of multinational firms has become a fixed fact" (4). Happily, writers and writing cross borders as often as they draw them; New York is not simply a weight to be thrown off, but an ambition to strive toward, a source of editors, readers, and cash—as the second half of Alice Munro's writing life proves.

Munro had already won the Governor General's Literary Award, and been rejected by the magazine many times over, before she published her first story in *The New Yorker*. That work, "Royal Beatings," appears in the issue for March 14th, 1977 and represents its author's "first experience with serious editing" ("Art"). The stories and collections that flowed from this

point onward were international co-productions; Canadian in setting and sensibility, their entrance into the world was eased by American middlemen and money.

> Chip [Charles] McGrath at *The New Yorker* was my first editor, and he was so good. I was amazed that anybody could see that deeply into what I wanted to do. Sometimes we didn't do much, but occasionally he gave me a lot of direction. I rewrote one story called "The Turkey Season," which he had already bought. I thought he would simply accept the new version but he didn't. He said, Well, there are things about the new version I like better, and there are things about the old version I like better. Why don't we see? He never says anything like, We will. So we put it together and got a better story that way, I think.

McGrath's first letter to his new writer outlines the editorial process, two parts critical insight to one part workplace bargaining. "What I propose to do—with your permission, of course—is to undertake some preliminary editing," he begins, pointing out that "one of the story's strengths is the way it moves so easily back and forth in time—in fact, it seems to work as memory works—but, even so, I think there are a few places where events tend to run together" (18 November 1976). McGrath then reveals the presence of a second reader looming behind the scenes: "'Mr. Shawn, the editor-in-chief—who, by the way, likes 'Royal Beatings' a great deal—has questioned, on the ground of 'earthiness,' both the paragraph on toilet noises on page 3 and the rhyme about pickled arseholes.'" Until this time, Munro "had never heard of Shawn and thought that people in New York might be making him up" (Thacker 322). A third figure completed the initial New York alliance, Munro's agent Virginia "Ginger" Barber.[1] As Robert Thacker notes, Munro in middle age emerged from near-editorial isolation into a web of readerly connections, for "in Barber and, by extension, McGrath and the rest of the fiction editors at the *New Yorker*, and editors at other magazines too, Munro had a group of people who were responding to, encouraging her and, often, pushing toward a revision" (327). She

[1] Though Barber soon landed Munro a deal with Knopf and a fourth close reader, the book editor Ann Close.

eventually published fifty-eight stories in *The New Yorker* (the last of which, "Amundsen," appeared in 2012).

All of which left the editor of her Canadian collections with rather less to do than before. Douglas Gibson, who took over at McClelland & Stewart at the retirement of Jack McClelland and brought Munro with him from Macmillan of Canada, readily acknowledges that

> my editing, actually working on the stories, that role shrank over the years (from the days, when as Bob Thacker reminds me, I helpfully cut a long story into two) as Alice became such a popular writer in the *New Yorker* that all of the stories reached me carefully pre-edited. They also were benefitting from the wise editorial attention given by Anne Close, Alice's editor at Knopf in New York. (355)

At most, Gibson credits himself with keeping "Alice Munro writing short stories" (344), never placing her under any pressure to scale up and produce a novel. Yet the division of editorial labor, across borders and between formats, did in fact allow Munro to give fuller rein to her creative itch for revision. Striking differences frequently arise between a story as it is published in the magazine and that same story as it is later collected in a book. "The Progress of Love," for instance, undergoes a dramatic shift in perspective from its initial publication in the October 7th, 1985 issue of *The New Yorker* to its second appearance as the title tale in *The Progress of Love* (1986)—the very book that made the journey with Munro and Gibson from Macmillan to McClelland & Stewart. The first incarnation of this story is told from the third person: on the death of her mother, a middle-aged woman succumbs to memories of her childhood and of the difficult love between her parents, eventually realizing that she has invented the detail that elevates their mutual devotion from the mundane to the extraordinary. The woman's name "Phemie," short for Euphemia, proliferates across the text, yet the third-person distance between character and narrator strangely foreshortens the story's retrospect: she seems more of a child still and less of an adult looking back.

> All these things Phemie remembers, and things she knows, and has been told, about people she never even saw. She was named Euphemia, after her mother's mother. A terrible name, such as nobody has nowadays. At home they called her Phemie, but when she started to work she called herself Fame. Her husband, Ron Casey, called her Fame. (36)

In book form, this becomes

> All these things I remember. All the things I know, or have been told, about people I never even saw. I was named Euphemia, after my mother's mother. A terrible name, such as nobody has nowadays. At home they called me Phemie, but when I started to work, I called myself Fame. My husband, Dan Casey, called me Fame. (7)

The sentences are very nearly the same. The husband's name has changed; so too, in other parts of the story, has the paragraphing. Yet these are minor modifications compared to the effect wrought by saying "I." As it unfolds, "The Progress of Love" reveals that love to be more than half invention, its progress an ongoing construction of memory. By replanting the voice of the story in Phemie's first person, the later version accentuates the act of narration, and clarifies the narrative that love is and makes. Alice Munro's stories stretch, and subtly alter, across literary cultures. In this, and in her relationship with *The New Yorker*, she had a preeminent predecessor.

II. *Home Truths*

Mavis Gallant's *Home Truths: Selected Canadian Stories* (1981) contains the same tension in textual form, displaying the impress both of *The New Yorker*, where the stories were edited first by William Maxwell and then by his successor Daniel Menaker, and of Macmillan of Canada, where Douglas Gibson engineered her literary return, turning "this Paris-based virtually unknown short-story writer into a Canadian success" (*Unedited* 36). Like Munro, Gallant followed their shared editor, Gibson, from Macmillan to McClelland & Stewart in 1986. But though Gibson continued to cultivate her Canadian readership, his initiation and curation of *Home Truths* proved the most significant act of their working relationship—a point on which

both protagonists concurred in later-life interviews with Christine Evain. Gallant praises her Canadian editor, but only for those elements of extratextual editing which were within his power. In selecting from her *New Yorker* stories, Gibson abdicates responsibility for revision—the micro, line-by-line level of editing—while assuming an architectural grip on the macro, assembling and marketing a collection for a domestic audience. "Well, anything he got from me, had been edited at *The New Yorker*. At that time, their editing was really top-notch. He had nothing to change, so he didn't," she recalls (40). On the other hand, "he was a brilliant editor" in understanding and selling to the Canadian market, a country where "for thirty years I didn't have a publisher" (40-1). Moreover, "there were some [books] he instigated" and one for which "he had a title: *Home Truths,* which I thought was a clever title." Summing up her recollections, she repeats the crucial point: "he was right about the Canadian book" (43). A contemporaneous letter is more generous still: "Home Truths was your idea, and your title. So, as much your book as mine" (20 May 1985). The Canadian book would go on to win the Governor General's Award and finally secure Gallant a substantial audience in her native country.[2] Yet both national neglect and belated discovery invite excavation: why did Gallant lack a Canadian publisher for so long, and how did *Home Truths* strike such a Canadian chord?

In 1979, Gibson had published Gallant properly in Canada for the first time in her career, putting out a Canadian edition of *From the Fifteenth District*. Replying years later to John

[2] Gallant's working relationship with Gibson and Macmillan delivered an immediate shift in her book sales' fortunes. As Joe Fox, Gallant's American editor, notes in an internal Random House memo—dated 5 March 1980—"Macmillan sold no less than 4500 [hardcover] copies of Mavis Gallant's From the Fifteenth District, a far better figure than Random House of Canada has ever achieved even on her more saleable books." Should this number seem small, consider the size of the Canadian market for fiction: two months later, Gibson would proudly declare in a letter to the editor of *Saturday Night* magazine that "Jack McClelland, a man not unaware of the harsh realities of the Canadian market . . . was happy to bet me $100.00 that the book would not sell over 2,00 copies in the Canadian book trade," before letting the magazine's readers know that "MAVIS GALLANT—THE CANADIAN STORIES" would soon be available (5 May 1981). In 2000, Gallant's agent Georges Borchardt reported that, "between August 1980 and January 1987," *Home Truths* had sold "12, 967" copies (22 March 2000).

Metcalf's broadside, Gibson acknowledges that "he is correct when he notes that none of Mavis Gallant's first five books were published in Canada, but rather haphazardly distributed here" ("Canadian Literature"). That Gallant had been limited to poorly-distributed copies of American editions raises the now-familiar issue of homegrown capacity, the collateral question of American sway over Canadian taste, and the matter of "native" material within Gallant's work. Her obscurity was partly a function of institutional underdevelopment and unfortunate timing: the publishing scene for English Canadian fiction, so meager in Robert Weaver's account of the immediate postwar period, had only gathered significant strength over the previous decade. Margaret Atwood recalls the "considerable ferment" of the 1960s arising out of sheer necessity.

> Since there was a shortage of publishing houses in the country, some writers were inventing their own . . . It was difficult to get a novel published in Canada—where was the sufficient readership, the larger publishers wondered? (It was in this decade that a New York publisher said to me, "Canada is death down here.") ("Ariel or Caliban?")

By "the early 1970s," however, "publishing in Canada was expanding at a rapid rate and public readings were exploding." Macmillan of Canada, founded in 1905 as the "offspring of its parent company in London and cousin to its affiliate house in New York," grew "from a branch-plant operation to a mature publishing house" just in time to capture and cultivate a national flowering (Panofsky 7-8). Macmillan's centrality to this era of expansion has much to do with one editor in particular: "that [Douglas] Gibson was the heart of Macmillan and latterly the source of much of its prestige was confirmed by the rapid dissolution of the imprint [after his departure]" (262). Yet Gallant's lack of a Canadian profile until Macmillan itself collected her work is also proof that for all its prestige, *The New Yorker*'s writ did not extend so far as to guarantee the author a hearing in her home country—even though she was one of the magazine's most constant contributors, "a house favorite," as one of the house's longtime editors, Charles McGrath, told

me (Personal Interview). Finally, a certain reciprocity of interest had been lacking, a conjunction of overt Canadian interest within the stories sparking Canadian interest without. The critic Robert Fulford claims that "Canada did in fact neglect Gallant, but no more than Gallant neglected Canada." And Metcalf himself, in contradiction to his main thesis about Canadian slavishness to American attention, argues that the fact that "*Home Truths*—with its stories set in Canada—was given the [Governor General's] award" over her other collections "probably offers a clue to Canadian neglect of her. To prefer Paris to, say, Moncton was thought to be un-Canadian." It is in this context of literary estrangement that Gallant caught Gibson's enterprising eye, and that a Canadian wing was belatedly added to the Paris-New York axis of her career. The publisher's personal papers—as yet unbroached by academic inquiry—reveal the true history of this homecoming.

The Linnet Muir stories were among those Gibson selected for *Home Truths*; in fact, both their outpouring and their abrupt cessation set the terms of the resulting book. By the time Gibson writes to Gallant on January 9, 1980, looking for a follow-up to *From the Fifteenth District* and seeing a success in the "eagerly-awaited Montreal stories," five had already appeared with unusual rapidity in the pages of *The New Yorker*: "In Youth Is Pleasure" (November 24, 1975), "Between Zero and One" (December 8, 1975), "Varieties of Exile" (January 19, 1976), "Voices Lost in Snow" (April 5, 1976), and then—after a longer pause—"The Doctor" (June 20, 1977). In them, we encounter scenes from an early life. Linnet Muir grows up in the Montreal of the 1920s and 30s, returns as a teenager after a long, unspecified absence, finds her old French-Canadian nanny, gets a job on a newspaper during the Second World War, and "somehow makes her way" (Gallant, "Art")—though this is to put her experiences in a chronological order which the sequence does not quite follow. A lost city opens

up around Linnet's maturing consciousness; these stories are, Gallant tells the *Paris Review*, "as close to autobiography as fiction can be." More were anticipated; one other was eventually published, but not in *The New Yorker*. Instead, it appeared in a 1978 special issue of *Canadian Fiction Magazine*: "With a Capital T." One letter to Gibson, dated 30 April 1979, offers a tantalizing glimpse of two never-published, though considerably-developed, stories, each falling on one side of Montreal's linguistic divide: "One is an account of a Quebec convent as experienced by a quite small English child, the other about French-Canadian children as they were all those years ago. Both are notebooks, in longhand. The finishing-off, the typing is always slow for me." However, this same message hints at the writer's sudden and only semi-explained disillusionment with the sequence, revealing that the tales "have been so discussed and pawed over that I am rather sick of them . . . I'm a bit tired, more than I've ever been." And when Gallant replies to Gibson "about the Linnet stories" more than a year later, she reveals that "it will be a very long time before I complete the other two, if ever. The thread has been broken" (12 December 1980).[3]

> The editor retired to think and returned months later with a pitch:
>
> > This letter will strike you as extremely odd, but pleasantly so. I am in effect writing to tell you that you have written a book without knowing it, one that we are very eager to publish. Permit me to tell you about this book of yours . . . a book entitled something like "The Canadian Stories" by Mavis Gallant. (14 April 1981)

The editorial invitation combines readerly recognition and commercial opportunism. First, Gibson spies the seed of a collection in the not-fully-fulfilled promise of the Linnet Muir stories; he then conceives of a larger book, one that would unite Gallant's Canadian material and

[3] A few months later, Gallant's agent Georges Borchardt sent a brief note to Gibson: "Mavis Gallant confirmed that the stories you have are the only Montreal stories in existence. She was going to write two more but isn't sure she'll complete them" (20 March 1981).

consolidate her purchase on Canadian readers; finally, he and his assistants at Macmillan "ransack libraries and old book stores," identifying the stories with sufficient Canadian import and sketching an order for their arrangement.[4] "The book would fall in three parts," he goes on to suggest: the early stories going first, the "central section" consisting of the novella "Its Image in the Mirror," and "the final section made up of the six Linnet Muir stories." This initial architecture was ultimately converted into a similarly tripartite but more expansive structure: "At Home," "Canadians Abroad," and "Linnet Muir." Editing, even if it leaves the composition of sentences alone, remains an interpretative act, one that gives form and discloses analysis. Gibson's selection and sequence tell their own story about Gallant and her relationship to her native land. They proclaim the depth of that relationship, for one thing, outlining a Canadian canon within her work. And in doing so, they suggest that her stories do not have to be set in Canada to be concerned with it—that "home" and "abroad" are two sides of a single condition—while asserting that Gallant's mid-career has, in fact, climaxed with a revisiting which this book itself will cement: the creatively prodigal daughter returning to Montreal.

Gallant seizes on the proposition with unsurpressed eagerness, hungry for this lesser-seen side of her work to be displayed, at last, in book form.

> It is a staggering coincidence. A few weeks ago, I was approached, through a neutral channel, by a very small but respectable Canadian publisher to ask if I had anything uncollected they could as a book . . . I had a number of uncollected Canadian stories that, for some time, I had been longing to see in permanent form; and that even a tiny, minor, fast-remaindered volume would suit me, so long as I had <u>my</u> book. As I live and breathe, that's the God's truth. (25 April 1981)

Interviewed many years later by Evain and Bertail, Gallant plays down her enthusiasm and claims that she hesitated over the collection's nationalist tenor, that "this is what I [had] wanted

[4] As Gibson points out, "at present your admirers—especially those younger readers who have discovered your work in the past ten years, have to become literary detectives to read all of your Canadian stories."

to avoid . . . The ghetto!" (41). This may well describe what Gallant felt in the first half of her career; in light of her correspondence with Gibson, however, it is revealed as retrospective dissembling—an obfuscation that nevertheless conveys an enduring ambivalence about her country of origin and its claims on her work. Nadine Fladd's belief that Gallant "was reluctant to publish the collection" (154) is therefore understandable if mistaken, although the critic has less reason to claim that "Gallant had no desire to represent Canadian literature or have her work be associated with Canada" (159). For *Home Truths* in fact reveals the constitutive tension behind its author's career—a dialectic of creative orientation—and gives her the space to reflect upon it. The editor-in-chief of Macmillan, Anne Holloway writes to request an introduction to the volume, one that clarifies the "vanished era" the stories evoke and that will speak directly to the famously fraught sense of Canadian identity, since "Canadians are a self-centred lot, [and so] anything you have to say about them and about Canada, past or present, from your own vantage point, would be welcome" (27 May 1981).[5]

In "An Introduction," Gallant outlines a fruitful friction between the universality of art and the nationality of belonging. On the one hand, she sets the tone with a pointed epigraph from Pasternak: "*Only personal independence matters*" (xi). On the other, she *is* addressing the readers of a book of specifically Canadian stories. She argues against the reductive notion "that Canadian painters, because they are Canadian, work from a single vision," even though this idea has particular currency in the defensively insecure land of her birth and "to dissent" from

[5] Northrop Frye has argued that "the famous Canadian problem of identity may seem a rationalized, self-pitying or made-up problem to those who have never had to meet it, or have never understood that it was there to be met. But it is with human beings as with birds: the creative instinct has a great deal to do with the assertion of territorial rights" (xxi). The problem of identity is, paradoxically, universal; the textual results, meanwhile, are invariably more mixed than mere nationality allows. The creative instinct certainly has to do with territorial rights, but trespassing is as important as border protection.

it might be "considered un-Canadian, an accusation to which the expatriate writer is particularly susceptible." Yet though "the writer, like any other artist, owes no more and no less to his compatriots than to people at large," her sense of being Canadian is simple, strong, and unmovable: "a Canadian is someone who has a logical reason to think he is one. My logical reason is that I have never been anything else, nor has it occurred to me that I might be" (xiii).[6] When she recalls the springs of her Linnet Muir inspiration, moreover, she "know[s] exactly how the stories came to be written, and why" (xx). They arose as a creative counterbalance, an inward-turning response to the work of history on which she was then laboring, an account of the Dreyfus Affair which was deeply researched, long promised to her publishers, and never finished.[7] As she "thought of it [the Dreyfus book] as a river where I was drifting farther and farther from shore," so

[6] Gallant's introduction takes issue with the infelicity of a term that thoroughly permeates this dissertation: "I am English-speaking (and not, please, 'Anglophone')" (xiv). Nevertheless, "Anglophone" is itself a Canadian contribution to the language, frequently used in everyday speech to distinguish English-speaking citizens from Francophones, coined in connection to Canada and a translation of Joseph Deniker's *The Races of Man* (1900). The earliest example of usage in the *OED* is drawn from that work: "In Canada two-thirds of the white population are Anglophones, and the rest are Francophones" ("anglophone, *n.* and *adj*.").

[7] Douglas Gibson's papers bear witness to the many years Gallant's publishers spent waiting for her Dreyfus manuscript. Indeed, when he approached Gallant's editor at Random House, Joe Fox, about issuing an American edition of "Mavis's Canadian stories," Fox replied that while "[I] am delighted by them, particularly by the Linnet Muir stories," and "enthusiastic though I am about publishing this book . . . I would prefer to do it after Dreyfus" (3 September 1981). Three years later, however, Fox writes again to

> address the question, very confidentially, of Mavis's finances. For a long while Georges [Borchardt] and I shared your feeling that all that stood between the completion of the Dreyfus was lack of money, but having dealt with this problem for a number of years we no longer feel that this is anything more than a partial answer. For instance, Mavis has poured a lot of time into her play, into Home Truths, and now in to those twelve New Yorker stories, but none of these projects have produced much income. Surely she knows that if she had buckled down and finished Dreyfus (which she could easily have done in that time), she would now (or shortly) be a very rich woman. No, what has delayed Mavis more than money, I fear, is some sort of psychological barrier. This is, after all, her chef-d'oeuvre, and she can't quite bring herself to let it go. I'm convinced (as I think is Georges) that the book is finished, and has been for a long time, that she keeps fussing away at it, making tiny changes here and there, and that for some reason she's afraid to let it see the light of day. (9 August 1984)

Moreover, the Dreyfus biography constitutes only one part of Gallant's triptych of major, unreleased works—alongside a novel and her journals—next to which Linnet Muir stands as a partly-published cousin. After giving up on Dreyfus as the 1980s wore on, Gibson was similarly disappointed during the 1990s by the promised and never-delivered *Clowns and Gentlemen* (also referred to in correspondence as *Gentlemen and Clowns*):

> In the meantime, now that the wolf has been chased away from the apartment door, I would like to urge

> At the same time—I suppose about then—there began to be restored in some underground river of the mind a lost Montreal. An image of Sherbrooke Street, at night, with the soft gaslight and leaf shadows on the sidewalk—so far back in childhood that it is more a sensation than a picture—was the starting point. Behind this image was a fictional structure of several stories, in the order in which they are presented here—three wartime stories, then the rest. (xxii)

That fictional structure of restoration emerges in parallel to the main strain of her work, a provincial assignment both offsetting and echoing the cosmopolitan one. This conjunction contains the operative conflict at work in so many of Gallant's stories, her portraits of people who have left one home but not found another, who are caught between the pull of the past and the less rooted reality of the present. Michael Ondaatje rightly draws our attention to the epigraph of Gallant's early novel *Green Water, Green Sky* (1959)—"Ay, now am I in Arden, the more fool I. When I was at home, I was in a better place, but travellers must be content"—and points out how often "she catches or witnesses her subjects in waiting rooms, halfway across bridges, overhead in balloons, in transit—her very titles signal incomplete and transient states" (Ondaatje vi). Yet her mid-career restoration of Montreal results in a genuine repatriation, since Gallant not only mined her youth for stories but found an editor savvy and

---

> you with every fibre of my being to drop everything else and concentrate on finishing Gentlemen and Clowns. I know (please note the unusual certainty for a cautious publisher speaking about the future) that the Canadian market is absolutely ripe for a new Mavis Gallant novel . . . I know that at one time before other distractions—including financial ones—intervened you were confident about finishing the novel in the course of last fall[.] (7 February 1997)

Gallant's stream of contributions to, and revenue from, *The New Yorker* began to dry up; her old age was beset by financial insecurity—verging on destitution. In 1994, Gibson was already sending her the full advance for her unfinished, unseen novel, since "she is very badly short of money" (7 July 1994). Three years later, learning that Gallant "has felt obliged to discontinue her medical insurance in France," he arranged for the Writers' Development Trust "to find a way of supporting her financially, ideally by way of providing her with an 'award' in recognition of her great contribution to Canadian letters" (6 January 1997). Gallant's final project was to revise her diaries for publication; in 2012, it was announced that "the journals of the Canadian writer Mavis Gallant will be published by Knopf"—under the co-editorship of Gallant's agent Steven Barclay and the former *New Yorker* editor Frances Kiernan—and that they were "tentatively scheduled for release in 2014" (Bosman). When Gallant died in 2014, however, they had still not appeared. In 2018, the publicity department of Penguin Random House Canada informed me that "the book is still slated to be published, but as of now there is not a confirmed date" (Lee).

sympathetic enough to bring the ore of that same creative vein to the domestic market. She even followed up the success of *Home Truths* by coming back to Canada for a full year in 1983-84, serving as the University of Toronto's writer-in-residence. If Robert Fulford is correct to claim that, for the first half of her writing life, Gallant "showed no interest in having her books adequately published here," then she inaugurated the second half by making a remarkable turn—a turn which is, in fiction and in fact, a return.

III. The Broken Thread

But why was the thread of Linnet stories, the sustained backward glance, then broken? In her letter to Gibson announcing that no more will be written, Gallant claims that it snapped "not so much as the result of time, but because those [stories] already published were discussed and thrashed over and I had to answer too many questions about them in interviews and read too much speculative rubbish. It created the distance I have with early work. They have dropped over the horizon." This explanation does no more than hint at struggles in the initial round of publication. In late interviews, however, she lays the blame squarely on *The New Yorker* and a transformation in its editorial staff. William Maxwell retired in the middle of the Linnet Muir outpouring, one casualty of a larger shift in the make-up and taste of the Fiction Department—another was Gallant's story cycle. In dribs and drabs, Gallant outlines a fateful exchange in which editorial support was at stake and Maxwell's successor, Daniel Menaker, withdrew it. As *Home Truths* represents a turning point in Gallant's relationship with Canada, so too does Linnet Muir in her association with *The New Yorker*.

Gallant only expands on this dispute towards the end of her life, and once her contributions to *The New Yorker* have definitively dried up. Speaking to Sandra Martin of *The*

Globe and Mail in 2002, she reveals that Menaker "'wrote me a letter . . . in which he said: "Some of us around here wish you would go back to writing real stories"'" ("A Storied Life"). And suddenly, "it was as if a double door into that Montreal of the forties had gone, and I couldn't see through them anymore." Menaker's "weasel words" brought down a curtain. In her 2014 obituary for Gallant, Martin includes a remark left out of her original story: "'He wasn't interested in Montreal and he wasn't interested in this girl.'" Other conversations brought similar complaints. The Italian edition of *They Came Like Swallows* (*Come un volo di Rondini* 2009) contains, as an afterword, "Mavis Gallant racconta William Maxwell." There she tells Livia Manera that without Maxwell "I would not have come to Europe and I would never have lived as I lived . . . the truth is that what I wrote was everything to me, and Bill was on the other end of that thread" (217-18, translation my own). "After him at *The New Yorker*," however, "I had a competitive editor, envious of writers who had had a more fortunate career than his." In a book-length interview published that same year, *Mavis Gallant on Her Work* (2009), Gallant is even less forgiving. "I had a horrible editor after [Maxwell]," she declares, and then elaborates (Evan and Bertail 106). A decade on from the not-fully-explained Linnet Muir affair, Menaker turned down another story set in the Montreal past, "The Fenton Child."

> But anyway, he didn't like that story, and Bill Maxwell was no longer there. He [Menaker] didn't like it. He said he didn't understand it, and readers wouldn't understand it. He thought the end was "ambiguous." To me, it was very clear . . . I said, "Have you shown it to the editor?" (Tina Brown was then editor of the magazine: she would have taken it.) And he said, "Well, I can't show it to her, it's a mess." So, I really didn't want to make changes. I think it's a tight story—it doesn't wander all over the lot. He said he didn't understand it, he didn't understand Montreal, he'd never been there.

The elements of her accusation recur and deepen: Menaker had little sympathy for the autobiographical material ("'real stories'"), the setting (Montreal), or the style ("'ambiguous'")

of her Canadian stories. With "Bill Maxwell . . . no longer there," Gallant loses editorial understanding—and therefore editorial encouragement.

That, at any rate, is her version of events. We should not accept Gallant's memories unquestioningly nor her interpretation naively. A writer has an interest in displacing responsibility for a creative impasse, and a retrospective settling of accounts, in which the accused has no right of appeal, is liable to leave things out. Menaker could well have had better reasons for rejecting "The Fenton Child" and putting a damper on further Linnet Muir stories than Gallant herself offers. Her certainty that Tina Brown would have accepted the story if only she had seen it seems more wishful than well-founded. Moreover, Gallant confides in the same interview to Evain and Bertail that she dedicated her *Selected Stories* (1996) "to him [Menaker] and to William Maxwell simply because I couldn't do it to one and not the other. It would have been so blatantly rude." This assertion stands in tension with the sheer length, and frequently affectionate correspondence, of her partnership with Menaker.[8] He remained her editor from 1976 until he left *The New Yorker* in 1995, after which she published only one more piece in

[8] In fact, Gibson would occasionally suggest involving Menaker afresh in Gallant's fiction. After a series of difficult dealings with Random House's Kate Medina over the *Selected Stories*—she had taken charge of the American edition after Joe Fox's sudden death—he writes to Gallant to report

> a long and very frank chat with Dan Menaker. As you know, he was badly hurt by being shouldered out of the way of working with you by Kate Medina, and has been very unimpressed by her handling of the book. As you also know, I share that opinion in spades, and am determined to do all I can to avert the terrible fate of your having to work with her on your next book, and in turn my having to work with her also.
>
> The way to avert this apparently lies in your hands. If you were to write to Harry Evans swaying that while you appreciate what Kate medina did to complete the work on the Stories, you would like to resume your creative partnership with Dan Menaker on the new novel, which you are still writing and hope to complete in the near future. If you were then to remind him that Dan and you had worked for x years together at The New Yorker and you are used to his being a helpful and early reader of your work, that would be find too. (23 April 1997)

And in 1998, attempting to help Gallant negotiate "the roadblock you're experiencing with Clowns and Gentlemen," he suggests that "perhaps I—or Georges, or Dan or whoever you wish to involve—might be useful at this stage if you were to send us the manuscript to date. None of us, I'm sure, would turn pale and faint at the sight of an unfinished manuscript" (16 February 1998).

the magazine before her death in 2014—a selection from her journals of the early 1950s, "The Hunger Diaries" (2012). Finally, a lack of encouragement, or even active discouragement, would not necessarily have stunted the Linnet Muir sequence if the author had felt her own inspiration to be as strong as ever.

Speaking with figures in the Fiction Department of the late 1970s, I asked for insiders' accounts of this imbroglio. No one corroborated Gallant's recollections—though the *New Yorker* records bear them out to a significant extent (a point to which I will return)—but all acknowledged the contemporaneous shake-up of the Department's personnel and predilections. When I visited Menaker in his Upper West Side apartment seven months before his death in October 2020, he claimed to remember the Linnet Muir stories only "vaguely." "The name rings a bell," he told me. A young man recently promoted from copy editing, he had just completed a six-month apprenticeship with Maxwell in anticipation of the eminent editor's compulsory retirement. In his memoir *My Mistake* (2013), Menaker recalls the changes that swept through the Department in 1975.

> *The New Yorker*'s Business Department institutes a mandatory retirement age of sixty-five . . . it means that some others, including three fiction editors—Rachel MacKenzie, Robert Henderson, and Mr. Maxwell—will have to leave. Mr. Maxwell tells me that he hopes and believes this turn of events will allow me to become an editor. (99)

Menaker spent those months sitting with Maxwell in his office, reading manuscripts, comparing reactions, and learning how to deal with writers—an initiation also undergone by Charles McGrath in the same year. Maxwell's "editorial hand is the subtlest, least cavalier I will ever see" (105). When 1976 arrived, Menaker took over a number of authors, Gallant chief among them. In our interview, he readily admitted that their working relationship "started out with a disaster." To begin with, "she was ready to reject me. Who was I? She didn't know anything about me. Maxwell was her ideal literary mentor, and what would I have to offer?" In fact, he

had already helped Maxwell with her work during the transition period, but in the first story he edited alone, Menaker made a faulty geographical suggestion.

> And she sort of let me have it, because it was factually wrong. Otherwise, I made very few suggestions, because her work was very finished. In fact, I think in some ways it may be one of the problems with her fiction that it's very finished, that it's so tight and sophisticated and put together that it doesn't have any of those ragged-feeling edges that make her rival Alice Munro's work to some extent so interesting. She suffered my presence, the next story came in, and I read it, and I made some suggestions and questions, and when I sent it back to her, with a trembling hand I circled the final paragraph, put a line through it, and put out in the margin "Do you really need this? Is the dramatic point not made without it?"

He remembered her reply beginning with "well, the nerve of you"—or words to that effect. But over the course of the letter, Gallant wrote herself out of outrage, and ended by accepting the change. "And from then on, we were in good shape." That these first two stories were both Linnet Muirs, "Voices Lost in Snow" and "The Doctor," Menaker seemed not to recall. That Gallant herself remembered rather more than one mistaken suggestion and one cut paragraph is a discrepancy worth exploring. That he identified the quality of her fiction as a defect—so "finished" that it leaves little room for the reader, whether professional or lay—and made clear his preference for Munro's rougher writing also suggests an unstated strain between writer and editor. Menaker went on to offer me further insight into Gallant's work: like the manuscripts of two other Canadians which passed through his hands, Munro's and Bruce McCall's, Gallant's exhibited "an aroma of this feeling of dispossession, of not belonging," a "sensibility that included in a somewhat negative way the identity of being a Canadian." But the incident that produced such bitterness for the writer appeared to have left little trace on the editor. Separately, Charles McGrath told me that such an imbalance of feeling is hardly unusual in editorial relationships. Though he too did not remember the particular stories, Gallant's retrospective account "doesn't ring true." Her accusations struck McGrath as an instance of "the paranoid

explanation" at work, the tendency of writers, struggling to understand why a story has been refused, to believe simply that "the editor is against them."

> I don't believe it . . . He [Menaker] was nothing if not enthusiastic, as we all were. She was a kind of house favorite. And not only that . . . Mavis had a dry spell for a while. She was writing these short, kind of comic things. Frankly, I didn't think that some of them were very good at all. But Dan pushed them through in order to keep her going.

Roger Angell, a powerful editor before and after the 1975 transition, declared only that he "can't comment on her Muir stories," once again implying that they did not present an especially memorable problem for the Department as a whole. Nevertheless, there are hints in their accounts that line up with Gallant's more detailed recollections: her relationship with Menaker beginning with a "disaster," her falling into "a dry spell" not long after Maxwell's retirement. And that Gallant felt the force of editorial misunderstanding and diminished editorial appreciation more severely than the editors themselves neither strains credulity nor invalidates her characterization of its effects. That her accusations are somewhat self-serving does not nullify their potential import. Gallant's recollections take us to the heart of a time of editorial climate change at *The New Yorker*. An editor's enthusiasm can unleash creative energy; an editor's rejection can turn the tap off. An editor's protection will keep open a writer's channel to readers; its removal can jeopardize both creation and reception. Luckily, there is an editorial paper trail against which we can measure the protagonists' assertions and from which we can reconstruct the magazine's shifting standards.

IV. Maxwell's Readings and Rereadings

That trail, winding through the numerous folders of Gallant correspondence and Gallant typescripts in the *New Yorker* records, demonstrates that the Linnet Muir sequence waxed and waned in tension with the magazine's tenets for fiction. These stories represent at once a long-

sought reversal of certain editorial strictures, the culmination of a happy editorial partnership, and a development that does not survive the Fiction Department's late-1970s editorial overhaul. Tracking Gallant's history of acceptances, rejections, and revisions, three points of contention recur: setting, specifically the place of Canada within her work; structure, or what Maxwell describes as the issue of "linearity"; and mode, the particular *New Yorker* genre of "reminiscence" and its shifting weight in relation to more inventive forms of fiction. The writer must deal not only with her editors, but with the broader institutional hierarchy; the editors must balance their personal preferences against collective pressures. With Linnet Muir, Gallant overcame old constraints on linearity and, to a lesser extent, setting; yet she also found herself ambushed by a crackdown on reminiscence. The magazine had changed by the time of Maxwell's retirement—in part because she had helped to change it—but while it caught up with her creative inclinations on certain fronts, it also moved beyond her on others. To judge the effects of this editorial substitution in the middle of Gallant's writing life, however, I must first reconstruct the relationship she had developed with Maxwell.

Over the course of her first two decades with *The New Yorker*, Gallant's rejections reflect the magazine's limits—the perimeters consistently policed around acceptable geography, subject matter, and narrative structure. The stories which do not find favor, or which require greater revision, are at times too alien in setting, at others too familiar in theme, and frequently too experimental in form, too keen to subvert a fairly rigid realist principle of linear chronology. Her acceptances, in contrast, map the gradual but steady expansion of those borders, a shift partly produced by her own work. Looking at the early stories which the magazine declines, one is struck by how strongly they prefigure the material which will eventually find its published form in Linnet Muir: a concentration on childhood, on Montreal,

on a father who dies, on a girl sent to a convent school, on chronology which isn't straightforward but somewhat scrambled. The magazine's representatives—mainly Maxwell, but also Mildred Wood in the first year—discourage certain tendencies that they will later, intermittently embrace. In doing so, the editors are open about acting on behalf of a larger apparatus; criticism is often couched in collective terms, preference the product of a tradition often alluded to, if rarely explained in detail.

At the dawn of her relationship with *The New Yorker* and its editors, Gallant "was twenty-seven and becoming exactly what I did not want to be: a journalist who wrote fiction along some margin of spare time" ("Preface" xii-xiii). A features writer on the Montreal *Standard*, she vowed to make "a clean break and a try: I would give it two years." Gallant quit her job, set her sights on Paris, and decided "to send three of my stories to *The New Yorker*, one after the other. One acceptance would be good enough. If all three were refused, I would take it as decisive." Her ambitions took direct aim at two capitals of culture. Paris would remain her residence, and the American magazine her primary port of call, until the end of her life. Gallant's first and her third submissions were both turned down; the second was accepted. The "final vote went against THE FLOWERS OF SPRING," Mildred Wood writes on March 24th, 1949, employing the first-person plural, pointing to this first story's elliptical quality, and revealing a predisposition for more fleshed-out, comprehensible, character-rich realism. "We like it, but so little is told of the background of the three characters, that the result seems to us too cryptic for a New Yorker story." Curiously, and in the midst of publishing her Linnet Muir stories, Gallant would recall this first effort and remember receiving "an answer saying something like, 'This is too specifically Canadian for us, but have you written anything else'" (Hancock 32). The surviving editorial correspondence relating to this story does not in fact

contain any such remark relating, and when it is eventually published in *The Northern Review*, "The Flowers of Spring" betrays no particularly or peculiarly Canadian detail. However, a later tale called "And Planted Firm Britannia's Flag" (1953) *is* "too Canadian to work out for The New Yorker"—the title comes from the old anthem, "The Maple Leaf Forever"—though Maxwell makes this judgment only after Gallant herself submits the story with the caveat that "this story is too Canadian to be of interest to you." Even if Gallant was confusing the two stories, however, she was also voicing an apprehension, the intimation of a guideline which, directly expressed or not, shaped her sense of what the magazine was willing to accept. Her next step speaks volumes: "I got out another story, which was set in the United States, in Connecticut, where I had lived for a time, and that story was accepted. And that is exactly what happened with *The New Yorker*" (Hancock 32).

Meanwhile, Gallant's third effort, "Everything As Before," had also failed to suit the magazine but for a quite different reason: rather than treading outside the accepted canons, it draws on a vein of fiction already mined to near-exhaustion in the magazine. "We have had a number of convent stories about children of divorced parents, and I'm afraid that any story along those lines would have to be quite extraordinary in order to be accepted." Wood's letter, dated August 25th, 1949, adds that "actually, this one seems to fall down in the conversation between the little girl and her father. It just doesn't seem to ring true." Truth in fiction is of course different from the truth of events. In fact, Wood's criticisms suggest that this early story—whose typescript I was unable to track down—was drawing on the circumstances of Gallant's own childhood, anticipating the uses to which she would later put them in the Linnet stories. Unusually for the child of Anglophone parents, Gallant's "first school was a French convent school" ("Art"). She was left there "at the age of four ('The only thing I remember,'

she said, 'is my mother putting me on a chair and saying, 'I'll be back in ten minutes.' She just didn't come back')" (Treisman, "Postscript"). Moreover, Gallant's father died when she was still very young: Linnet Muir declares that her own father's "death turned my life into a helpless migration" ("In Youth Is Pleasure" 46), and one story in that series, "Voices Lost in Snow," ends with a conversation between little Linnet and her sick parent, "already mined, colonized by an enemy prepared to destroy what it fed on" (43). Dislocation was Gallant's lot from nearly the beginning, and her subject. Yet she appeared to have discovered early in her dealings with *The New Yorker* that the stories of characters scattered across Europe—shipwrecked by history, their lives the plots of "an underground map of Europe in the twentieth century" (Ondaatje vii)—were more likely to be rewarded by editors than any exploration of the provincial roots of her own rootlessness. While another convent story was turned down the following year—"the little girl and the exposure of her fear are wonderful, but the separated parents, the sad life and the child in the convent have already been done a number of times, one way and another" (Wood, 27 December 1950)—the fictions set further abroad were eagerly published. Professionally housed at *The New Yorker*, Gallant's work developed partly in reaction to the reactions she received from the magazine, an extended, generally happy tug-of-war in which both matter and manner were at stake.

Acceptance is as revealing in its own way as rejection. Though Gallant's second story, the Connecticut-set "Madeline's Birthday," was issued on September 1st, 1951—it occasioned William Maxwell's first letter to his new writer, since he and Wood shared the editing—its protracted path towards publication established certain patterns of suggestion, query, and revision. The manuscript as submitted still "isn't right for The New Yorker," the editors inform the author, and is still subject to alterations in the name of a certain idea of clarity. Wood opens

the process by informing Gallant, once again, that "one thing that prevents our using the story as it stands is the extreme difficulty of finding out, through the first few pages, who the people are." The demands for explicitness range from "the reader also ought to know where the house is and, briefly what kind of place" to "why does Edward hate Madeline?" to "one also wants to know more about the German boy" (12 July 1950).[9] Eventually, however, both author and magazine arrive at mutually acceptable forms of accommodation. Though Gallant appeals to the magazine's geographical bias with her Connecticut setting, the story seems in retrospect, and in other respects, more characteristic than compromised: the hint of postwar distress and the concern for untended children—Madeline the daughter of divorced, absent parents, Paul the German boy "half orphaned in the war" (20)—as well as the story's structure of diffusion, the way it moves less through events per se than through shifts of perspective, tracking "an unhappiness about them [the characters], a lack of ease, that trailed through the house, affecting the general atmosphere" (22). And as Maxwell writes on July 28th, 1950, "the first version of MADELINE'S BIRTHDAY seemed to us full of life, but lacking in an understandable sequence, and this has the sequence all right, but the life has gone out of it." The editors opt finally for "the first version with additional information from the second" (30 August 1950). Revision can cut both ways, the writer accepting the magazine's strictures while slowly shifting the magazine's expectations of what is possible and desirable in fiction.

Maxwell emerges as her primary editor and reveals, letter by letter, the twofold nature of this role. In attempting to draw the best out of her, as he understands it, Maxwell occasionally cajoles Gallant closer to the company line, while also defending her both within and without

[9] Furthermore, Wood illustrates the company Gallant will keep by "sending along a story we published a while back. It [sic] may be useful to you technically since some of the problems Mr. Cheever was faced with are also yours in this story."

the magazine. Rejections and calls for serious revision are usually couched within an appeal to the corporate entity of the magazine. In a typical instance of the genre, Maxwell writes on November 18th, 1954 that "neither of the two stories was right for The New Yorker." What is right is never quite spelled out, but experience reveals the sharper and softer contours of its definition. Between the period when Gallant established herself in *The New Yorker* and the eruption of Linnet Muir, Canada itself rarely arises as an issue, though Canadian settings and characters occasionally appear in her stories. The balance of Gallant's fiction, however, weighs heavily towards Europe, a cosmopolitan inclination which Maxwell both recognizes and encourages. A badly faded carbon copy of a letter dated June 20th, 1961 promises assistance to Gallant's mooted application for a Guggenheim Fellowship. Within Maxwell's expression of full-throated support, moreover, there seems to be an assurance that Europe is as much her territory as Canada, an attempt to bolster her confidence in writing far from home. "Diarmuid [Russell, her agent] is quite wrong about your Riviera pieces, and what you say about writing about Canada is supported by the Canadian stories you have written. They are exactly [illegible word] the area of your knowledge and interest . . . [illegible phrase] . . . there is no point in doubting material since you can't choose it, as you know perfectly well; it chooses you."

Structure is more often the cause of editorial conflict than geography. Maxwell's more severe critical rebukes arise out of a gently simmering struggle over attitudes to narrative construction; his impatience sporadically boils over as a result of too many subtler requests for a more straightforward, reader-grabbing approach going unheeded. On August 7th, 1951, he writes that

> Your stories, you know, are fine on <u>second</u> reading. As soon as one has been through once, and puzzled out the relationships, the situation, and the actual events, then reading becomes pure pleasure. Obviously, it is the social observation and the detail that you

> care about, but it doesn't excuse you from the labor of reasonable construction—of telling a story in such a way that the first reading is a pleasure. All that fixing with Madeline's Birthday was only so that it would read the first time the way, on your original manuscript it read the second time through. Nothing else was gained.

Gallant's first reader stands in for the public who will, in all likelihood, give her stories no more than a first reading. Identifying Gallant's strength, "social observation and detail," he continues to work on her perceived weakness. On February 9th, 1953, for instance, he declares that a story

> . . . is full of good things, but the good things are details, and your customary wit; the weakness is in the story as a story. The drastic reorganization under the guise of editing that I have several times inflicted on your stories must have made you want to go and cut your throat, but you know you have a tendency to get the hook in firmly (which is right and excellent) by telling something fairly far—too far, maybe—into the story, and then shuttling back and forth, instead of sticking to chronology.

The claims of chronology, of a linear understanding of narrative, appear to determine the editor's sense of "the story as a story." More complex constructions exceed *The New Yorker*'s limits and call for "drastic reorganization."

Yet Maxwell's correspondence with Gallant represents only one side of the editor's dual dealings. Mediating between the magazine's standards and Gallant's practice, conveying the first and advocating for the second, Maxwell manages to move both. After Gallant's death in 2014, the present-day fiction editor Deborah Treisman wrote her postscript for the magazine and opened an editorial vault usually left locked.

> "I'm forced to say that it seems very unsatisfying to me, and simply no story at all, if the ending is to be left so far in the air," a *New Yorker* editor wrote in an internal memo about Mavis Gallant's 1961 story "Two Questions." (Between 1951 and 1995, Gallant, who died last week, at the age of ninety-one, published a hundred and sixteen stories in this magazine.) "Seems to me that *something* should be completed, or it's just a long sketch. . . . It's like life, and not—to me—like fiction." William Maxwell, Gallant's editor, replied, "The older I get the more grateful I am not to be told how everything comes out."

On the one hand, Maxwell inflicts narrative reassembly in the name of *New Yorker*; on the other, he intercedes on Gallant's behalf against the demands for neat closure made by others

who shape the corporate line. Moreover, his sponsorship of Gallant extends well beyond ordinary exchanges over textual trimming in these first years with the magazine—and solidifies an unusually close working relationship. “The only time I felt that I had made a terrible mistake was near the beginning, when I was living in Madrid,” Gallant told *The Paris Review*. She had taken on an editor, Jacques Chambrun, who cheated her: “I sent him stories, which he said he was unable to place. The truth was that he did place the stories but kept the money.” Giving *The New Yorker* a false address for Gallant—“Poste Restante, Capri”—Chambrun ensured that “by the spring of 1952, in Madrid, I was destitute,” and “the worst of it was my belief that no one wanted to publish my work—I believed the agent when he said *he* appreciated the stories, but no one else did.” Then “one day in Madrid I came across a copy of *The New Yorker* (I don’t remember where or how, for I could not have afforded to buy it) that to my intense astonishment contained a story of mine.” She wrote to Maxwell to ask for an explanation; he sent her money, helped to extricate her from the agent, and set her back on the path to productivity. On June 12th, 1953, she tells him “You have really been wonderful. Thank you many times.” We understand why Gallant felt that “having him [as her editor] was an incredible stroke of luck” (“Art”). Of the two professional readers, the agent and the editor, one caused a “loss of confidence,” a “feeling of hopelessness and dismay . . . when I believed every story I sent him was a dead failure,” while the other labored to restore and maintain his writer’s necessary creative self-conviction. Maxwell’s unselfish pleasure in her successes and his protective approach to her affairs, literary and personal, emerge simply in a 1958 letter to his colleague Katharine White: “I was more delighted than I can tell you that you shared my enthusiasm, as did Shawn, with the Gallant. She's my delicate child, and I worry about her. She is so alone in the world.”

Yet despite the happy tenor of their partnership, the house preference for linearity led to occasional disappointment on Gallant's part and eventual reconsideration on Maxwell's, as he read and reread his writer into old age. While Maxwell continued to encourage Gallant to straighten out her stories in the twenty-six years between her first story and his retirement, he generally accepted her efforts. "This bothered very much my editor: what he called not being linear. But he passed those stories and he ran them in *The New Yorker*, but he had his doubts whether people were going to understand them" (Evain and Bertail 105). Rejection, however, leaves little room for negotiation. One story that Maxwell did refuse lingered long in the writer's memory; in fact, Gallant would insist that "The Pegnitz Junction" (1973) was the best of her works, as well as the most misunderstood by her editor. Speaking to Geoff Hancock in 1978, she confesses that it "is the favourite of all my writing" (37). To the *Paris Review*, she reveals that "the long story 'The Pegnitz Junction'—it reads exactly as I wanted it to . . . It was as if it was all in my head and waiting to be written—almost like taking dictation. It was extraordinary." And a few years before her death, she repeats that "it is what I consider to be my most accomplished work" and adds that "to my surprise, it was rejected by William Maxwell" (Evain and Bertail 76-7). One of a series of stories which trace the postwar German landscape of displaced persons and displaced guilt, "The Pegnitz Junction" follows a young woman, her older lover, and his little son on their seemingly endless train journey from Paris into Germany. As they travel on into the night, the voices and experiences of other passengers and of people the train passes by invade the young woman's mind—imagined or intuited, the various voices achieve a strange blending cadence of different tones and styles, sending the story back and forth in time, rendering point of view disorientingly fluid, making a deliberate mockery of the very literal sort of linearity a trip by train seems to promise. It is Gallant's most

unusual work, one characterized by such "increasing fragmentation" that by the end "so many stories have been introduced within stories that everything seems to be flying apart" (Hatch 101). Turned down by *The New Yorker*—her pride in the story sharpened perhaps by its uncomprehending reception—it was published in book form as the central part of *The Pegnitz Junction: A Novella and Five Short Stories* (1973). Years later, however, Maxwell would read the story again and think twice, those second thoughts leading to a letter of apology. His regret left as strong an impression as his rejection. To Evain and Bertail, Gallant confides that

> twenty years later—he was in his nineties and had long retired—he sent me a long letter about the story and he said, "I don't know what went wrong with me. My mind must have been out to lunch," which was a wonderful way of putting it. And he said, the problem was, my prejudice against Germany—his own—and because of the linear literature that *The New Yorker* favoured: "I couldn't get used to the changes at all, I knew a lot of it was meant to be humorous, but I unfortunately don't have much of a sense of humour"—he wrote that!—"and it's been an immense handicap to me as an editor. If I had it again now, I would run it in a minute! It's one of the best things. . ." and so on. And I cannot get over an editor, knowing how editors are, that he would write an apology after twenty years. That's something I cherish! And "My mind must have been out to lunch." That's a lovely expression. (77)

She seizes not simply on his admission, but the particular term with which he expresses it, repeating it later in the same interview: "He said that, he said that he was used to the linear rule, and often I strayed from this" (106). Maxwell's letter, kept among Gallant's papers, does indeed say some of this, but other remarks attributed to Maxwell—his want of humour, his prejudice against Germany—can at most be inferred from his actual words. Despite Gallant's insistence that "he wrote that!" her account also projects onto him certain long-held feelings of her own: he was a cherished editor, but not without handicaps.

What Maxwell's actual letter divulges is an initial reading that led to a particular editorial failure and a rereading that illustrates the critical depth, and flexibility, of Maxwell's enduring editorial success. In both instances, Maxwell makes the editorial adjudication between

a writer's style and the magazine's expectations. The first time his consciousness of the second overwhelms his attentiveness to the first; the second time, he glimpses through the prism of this single story a realm of expanding possibilities for fiction. Dated December 7th, 1996, the letter offers itself

> by way of a belated apology for my failing to appreciate—failing to understand, really—"The Pegnitz Junction" when I read it in manuscript. I am afraid my mind was out to lunch. It is perhaps your funniest story. One hilarious sentence after another and certainly no one has a better eye for the ludicrous aspects of Germans than you do here. Ever since I read the preface to the collected stories I have read your work in a different way. The medium-like intimations that flow through Christine's mind are surely related to your talking voices. When I read it the first time I was concerned—that is to say I took it personally—that the trio should get to their destination and it is of course not the right way to read the story. I think I was also somewhat blinkered by New Yorker attitudes. In any case, there has been a change in fiction, in what it is possible to do in fiction, which your writing has partly brought about. The elements of the story, the hungry woman, the American girl who is really German, the little boy and the bath sponge, the Norwegian, the stationmaster, the lovers and the culture group are marvelously woven together in a fashion that strikes me as essentially musical.

The editor's second thoughts throw light on his first impressions. The more rigid notion of structure that led him to refuse the story, arising from impulses personal and attitudes institutional, gives way to an appreciation of a quite different kind of structure, less linear than interlaced, less literal than musical. Ironically, this admission actually demonstrates his editorial ability to develop alongside his writer—even belatedly—within the constraints of his *New Yorker* environment; the editor's ideas about fiction are not static, but responsive to his reading. That this development is mutual needs to be restated. Gallant's "preface to the collected stories" describes her creative process:

> the first flash of fiction arrives without words . . . over the next several days I take down long passages of dialogue. Whole scenes then follow . . . Finally (I am describing a long and complex process as simply as I can), the story will seem to be entire, in the sense that nearly everything needed has been written. It is entire but unreadable. Nothing fits. A close analogy would be an unedited film." (xvii)

An undated letter discloses Maxwell's first response to these revelations, one which echoes the "Pegnitz" letter but also undersells his own role.

> For me the astonishment is the discussion of how a story arrives. It explains everything, including why your stories are so unlike anyone else's. I was so concerned with what my writers were writing that I never thought to ask them how they did it. I think I assumed it was linear. New Yorker editing always assumed it was linear. Your stories clearly are not. I cannot tell you how many times I have been overwhelmed with delight, at the information—the particulars of personality and background and personal history that make me accept and see the character immediately. And at the center of this non-linear exposition there is always firmly the story.

Once again, he concentrates apologetically on the conflict between non-linear creation and editing that assumes linearity, but he does not acknowledge the suggestive adjective Gallant uses, "unedited," nor the fact that her account of the process stops with the story well short of publication, "entire but unreadable." Gallant leaves room precisely for editing, and for the possibility her editor's more linear sensibility could work in fruitful, flexible tension with her own. Writer and editor learned from each other.

Maxwell carried on reading and encouraging Gallant until the end of his life. At times his support—commercial as well as personal, even at a later date—involved reversing the position that he used to take on behalf of the magazine, championing the second reading over the first. On March 14th, 1985, he writes of another Montreal story that the magazine would not publish: "1933 I have a special love for. It is one of those miracles that you occasionally pull off and that I read with my mouth open in wonder. Maybe on second look they will find it less difficult to follow." In his last years, moreover, he was still attempting to generate publishing projects for this aging writer. Gallant reveals to Evain and Bertail that "he wrote to me and and [sic] said, 'You must get Joe Fox (my editor at Random House) to bring out a *Collected* because it's now or never and Joe might retire and you must have this book!'" (43). With his permission, "I cut out of [his] letter a paragraph, stick it on a sheet of paper and send

it to [Fox].” The book was published. On January 18th, 1999—a little more than a year before he died at 91—Maxwell writes “about your journal. The thing I enjoy most is reading and I would rather read you than any living writer and my first answer is send all of it.” Those diaries, first announced for publication “in 2013 or 2014 by Alfred A. Knopf” (Treisman, “Fifty Years”), have yet to appear. And on July 12th, 1999, Gallant passes on to her agent Georges Borchardt a “letter from Christopher Carduff of Counterpoint [which] was written to William Maxwell and later forwarded to me. I had no idea that Maxwell had been in touch with anyone, anywhere. (He was responsible for The Collected Stories, as you may recall.)” Carduff had already brought out new editions of another of Maxwell’s writers, Maeve Brennan, and was replying to Maxwell’s suggestion of a similar arrangement, writing that “we would love to publish her [Gallant] at Counterpoint—stories, essays, the works.” Unfortunately, Gallant was “tied to Random [House], where I have two unfulfilled contracts.” Publishing opportunities apart, finally, Maxwell offered the ceaseless encouragement of a devoted reader. “Yesterday was Easter and Eudora Welty came to breakfast,” he writes in 1987, after *Home Truths* had been released in the United States (without the introduction or the subtitle *Selected Canadian Stories*).

> After we left the table she said, sitting on the sofa, “I’ve been reading Mavis Gallant, ‘Home Truths’. For some reason I have never read her before. What I liked best were the Linnet Muir stories. They are superb. I was so excited by ‘The Doctor’ that I couldn’t sleep afterward.”

IV. Linnet Muir

The Linnet stories mark, however, the transition from Maxwell to Menaker, making visible the alterations in the *New Yorker* Fiction Department’s personnel, standards, and output. Moreover, their editing reveals a pattern of creative return and institutional rejection that echoes

and illuminates the structure and substance of the stories themselves. Linnet Muir heralds a homecoming in two senses: the stories go back to the scene of Gallant's childhood and youth, and to the subject matter of her early, oft-refused submissions to the magazine. Douglas Gibson's eventual instigation of *Home Truths* adds another layer of repatriation. Yet the fate of the sequence also repeats the rejection—her banishment from Montreal—which the stories constantly circle. Despite his previous concerns with linearity, Maxwell welcomed and fast-tracked the publication of these stories which openly proceed along the fault line between time's arrow and the echoing, discontinuous accumulations of memory. After all, they represent just one out of a number of autobiographical story sequences which Maxwell coaxed out of his writers and which came to characterize the magazine's output. But not long after Maxwell left, *The New Yorker* clamped down on this style—for in fact, its archives *do* bear out Gallant's recollections more than Menaker's studied or genuine forgetfulness. The editorial record is not quite as simple as Gallant later portrays it, with Maxwell as her champion and Menaker as an unsympathetic saboteur. When Menaker took over, his editing at first caused Gallant relatively little consternation. Gradually, however, misreadings emerged, accumulated, and began to provoke her frustration. Rejections followed misreadings and built, finally, to a breaking point—after which no more Linnet Muir stories were written. Menaker did not act alone; caught between a well-established writer and shifting institutional tastes, without Maxwell's authority to intercede, he presented himself as enforcing the company line and applying directives from above. In a battle between the old and the new, with the younger editors keen to expand the social and aesthetic palette of the magazine, they set themselves against one of *The New Yorker*'s defining genres. The intersection of organizational intrigue and artistic argument stands revealed at the point of rejection. Gallant, whose non-linear experiments in narrative

were at times too radical for the pre-1975 *New Yorker*, found her autobiographical fiction too conventional for the post-1975 magazine.

This history has not been told before. Criticism, therefore, has hardly had the chance to absorb its lessons. The suggestive publication of the final Linnet Muir story in *Canadian Fiction Magazine* rather than *The New Yorker* seems to have excited no sense of intrigue among those scholars who specialize in Gallant. Nor have the author's more explicit statements in her late interviews, pinning the blame on Menaker. Instead, those critics who concentrate on Linnet Muir do so from an exclusively Canadian angle that locates the stories in their secondary setting—the final section of *Home Truths*—and ignores their original scene, and workshop, of publication: *The New Yorker*. Such partial focus leads to partial readings. Janice Kulyk Keefer (1989), Karen Smythe (1991), Marta Dvorak (2002), and Gerald Lynch (2004) all rightly draw our attention to the complex treatment of time in the structure and sequence of these stories. For Kulyk Keefer, "the distinguishing feature of these stories is a dreamlike treatment of time . . . the narrator's random circling through the pools of memory" (75). Smythe points out that "the story sequence is unconventional and discontinuous" (74). Dvorak examines how "the focalization of the Linnet Muir sequence . . . shifts constantly," tracking "the point of view of the narrat*ed* I at different moments of her development" (64). Yet none of them place these structural intricacies in the context of serial magazine publication or the long struggle over linearity waged between Gallant and *The New Yorker*'s editorial apparatus. A more recent contributor to the scholarly record, Kate Smyth, examines an equally eye-catching aspect of the sequence, its combined "perceptions of Canada and transnational identity" (17), without mentioning that the publication context literally crosses a transnational divide. Gerald Lynch, operating on limited evidence, offers an overreading of "With a Capital T"—"the final story,

what I have elsewhere called the characteristic 'return story' of the Canadian short-story cycle, acts as a form of frame-within-the-frame of the tripartite *Home Truths*" (8)—that does not account for the fact that Gallant hardly intended the series to end on that note. His eagerness to read the sequence within "the hundred-year continuum of the Canadian short-story cycle" (1), moreover, means that Lynch does not mention the more relevant tradition of the *New Yorker*'s autobiographical story sequences. Meanwhile, the few critics who inquire more deeply into the influence of *The New Yorker* on Gallant's fiction miss Linnet Muir as a turning point in her relations with the magazine. Kulyk Keefer argues that "her alliance with *The New Yorker* has led her to Americanize more than her spelling" (34), but does not mention that alliance, and its fraying, in her discussion of the Linnet stories. Alone among Gallant scholars, Nadine Fladd has focused on the author's editorial relations with her primary organ of publication, yet even Fladd forgoes the chance to study the most fraught period in that partnership.

Before he retires, Maxwell edits the first three Linnet stories: "In Youth Is Pleasure," "Between Zero and One," and "Varieties of Exile." Comparatively little correspondence between Maxwell and Gallant survives in the *New Yorker* records for 1975, his final year at the magazine. From the two letters and two telegrams, as well as the typescripts marked with Maxwell's edits, we must reconstruct his approach to these stories—and then measure the change when Menaker takes his place. His messages to Gallant offer praise, but more revealingly they also signal Maxwell's readiness to see the incoming manuscripts as an evolving sequence, without a necessary endpoint and with an internal logic that requires a clear, unobstructed run in a magazine famous for sitting on stories and delaying publication.[10] An undated note expresses his admiration, since "we all liked the new story immensely," and his

[10] In her introduction to *Home Truths*, Gallant notes the "unusual promptness" of each story's appearance (xx).

eagerness for more, signing off with "and meanwhile, what about the third story?" A telegram adds, simply, "It's masterly." And on October 20th, Maxwell sketches out the order of publication: "As of this moment, In Youth is Pleasure is scheduled for the issue of November 24, and Between Zero and One for the issue of December 8 . . . And since you are now typing the third piece I think everything will work out all right as to timing." That order deserves closer attention, for though the magazine runs the stories as they are written and received, their progression follows a curiously uneven pattern of regression, one which Maxwell, the advocate of linearity, nevertheless approves and cultivates. For with the editor's enthusiastic permission, this ongoing series of autobiographical stories does not disregard the linear passage of time, but explores it instead.

When collecting the tales afresh for her *Selected Stories*, Gallant rearranged them to match the succession of events, so that they present Linnet as she grows from childhood to youth—a retroactive linearity somewhat at odds with her occasional complaints about *The New Yorker*'s stodgy chronologies. This reshuffling has in fact facilitated critical misreading. Gabriele Annan asserts that "Canada is always a place to get away from" in these stories and refers to when "eighteen-year-old Linnet escapes to New York," when in fact the eighteen-year-old Linnet returns *to* Canada *from* New York. For the order of their inspiration observes a more backward-facing, less systematic journey into the past. Chronology is both observed and flouted. "In Youth Is Pleasure," "Between Zero and One," and "Varieties of Exile" follow Linnet as she moves back to Montreal during the war years and becomes a writer; "Voices Lost in Snow" then performs another about-face, going deeper into her childhood, to a moment and a conversation before her father's death; the final story *The New Yorker* publishes, "The Doctor," continues to mine Linnet's earliest years, her parents' relationship, and her own

expulsion from home for boarding school. The magazine subsequently turns down two further stories. One, "With a Capital T," jumps back to the wartime city and to Linnet's budding career as a journalist. The other, "What Is To Be Done?," was never printed, and I have been unable to recover any drafts. It may have been reworked into a play of the same title—Gallant's only work for the theatre, performed in Toronto in 1982 and set in the Montreal of 1942, though no longer featuring Linnet Muir as a character.[11]

Across the sequence, therefore, characters appear and reappear, not developing in steady, cumulative fashion, but shifting in and out of the margins of Linnet's attention, her own perspective and understanding of various relationships narrowing and widening according to age. In "Youth," the just-arrived Linnet finds her old nurse Olivia Carette in Montreal "with complete faith . . . that she would recall and welcome me," staying "with her for a while and le[aving] when her affection for me made her possessive" (48). In "Voices," the later story and the earlier tale, Mme Carette receives a single mention as "a long-vanished nurse named Olivia" (39). That same story introduces "a new doctor . . . known to me as Uncle Raoul, though we were not related" (40), who becomes Dr. Chauchard, the eponymous and central figure of "The Doctor." Visiting her godmother, Georgie Henderson, in "Voices," Linnet reveals that "she and I were to meet again once, only once, many years after this"—an encounter that finally takes place in "With A Capital T." In "Youth," her father's friend Archie McEwen is an old man; in "Voices," he is young again. Connected by echoes, and by a central character whose consciousness expands and contracts, each story seems to unfold from the others at an odd angle, following not a clear, chronological chain of actions, with one consequence leading to another, but the reverberations of those voices lost in snow: "the only authentic voices I have

[11] The play was published by Quadrant Editions in 1983 and reissued by Linda Leith Publishing in 2017.

belong to the dead" (38). Within each story too, past does not simply flow into present; rather, the returning figure of Linnet brings different periods of time into close proximity, as current and remembered encounters with characters and settings mingle. The sequence is replete with composite images drawing together the child's-eye view and the retrospective authorial glance. "Youth," for instance, brings Linnet back to the convent school which *The New Yorker* of the 1950s had rejected and "which I had remembered [as] penitentiary size, but what I found myself looking at one day was simply a very large stone house" (54). As it appears across the magazine, therefore, the Linnet sequence does not exactly refuse the *New Yorker* "rule" of linearity. Instead, it absorbs that editorial concern, acknowledging the inexorable progress of time—its irrevocable passage into the past: "I will never overtake this pair" (38), Linnet recognizes when chasing a memory of herself and her father in "Voices"—while moving back and forth within its sweep.

The first story the magazine published, "In Youth Is Pleasure," inaugurates and encompasses one homecoming within another. Sent away to various schools after her father's death, Linnet comes back to Montreal at eighteen and under her own steam: "On a bright morning in June I arrived in Montreal, where I'd been born, from New York, where I had been living and going to school" (46). Linnet's physical return is also the first step in Gallant's literary one, the character's journey from New York to Montreal mirroring the trajectory of both a typical *New Yorker* reader—turning from "The Talk of the Town" to the first page of "Youth"—and of the author herself, going back to the very childhood material she was deterred from using in her earliest exchanges with the magazine. Revisiting the "drowned world" of her memories (48), Linnet does not simply retrace her steps to Sherbrooke Street; she also goes in search of figures from the past, her childhood nurse and three of her father's friends, uncovering

the circumstances of his death which "had been kept from me" (50). Both Linnet and Gallant move forward by going back, their acts of revision unleashing a creative duality, such that Linnet's remark on "beg[inning] my journey into a new life and a dream past" can also stand for Gallant's embarking on this series in mid-career. In its minimalism, meanwhile, Maxwell's editing indicates both his respect for Gallant's writing and his attunement to the contrasts that structure the story: the crossing of borders between countries and between present and past. "As my own train crossed the border to Canada," Linnet describes that "crossing" as "my sea change" (47). It is Maxwell, however, who heightens the disparity even further with his attention to distinctions of nationality and verb tense. These small changes are enacted on behalf of both writer and reader; they draw our attention to precisely those qualities already present in the text, but which might escape an audience with little interest in Canada. One of his largest interventions consists in adding five words to a sentence that recalls Linnet's simultaneous feelings of attraction to and distance from American manners when sent to the United States as a schoolgirl: "When I heard that open [American] laughter I thought I ~~was~~ [could be] like these people too, but had been told not to be [by everyone] . . ." ("Make-Up"). The emphasis on the Americanness of that laughter and the Canadian totality insisting on her difference underlines Linnet's separateness in this other country; the replacement of the simple past with the past potential accentuates the gulf. To Linnet's account of the silence surrounding her father's death, Maxwell again adds the practical distinctions of geography and time, "for people [in Canada, then] did not speak of irrational endings to life." And in the final sentence of the story, reviewing "my youth, which I [now] considered over," the editor inserts the word that ensures "Youth" will end on a threshold, at the very border that Linnet has crossed and Gallant recrossed.

When Daniel Menaker enters the editorial record in 1976, the tone of correspondence grows less intimate and the typescripts become busier with editorial marks, though most of the activity is minor and Menaker may have even helped Maxwell with the earlier stories. Perhaps both of these changes are only to be expected, as a relationship of mutual trust and twenty-five years' standing gives way to a new collaboration and uncertainty on both sides. Despite the climate of transition, however, "Voices Lost in Snow" passes through Menaker's hands with little fuss. A telegram announcing that "VOICES LOST IN SNOW went through today" concludes with the deference and praise one would expect from a new editor dealing with an established author: "Thank you so much for starting me off with such a marvellous story." The correspondence initially tells us little more. A letter from later in that same year—regarding another story, "The Moslem Wife," accepted and published in the middle of the Linnet Muir outpouring—boasts of passing on only eleven queries "winnowed out of no less than thirty-six queries from Shawn" (8 July 1976). But though similar letters and queries must have punctuated the development of this Linnet story, they have not been kept. We are left with Menaker's marks and what they reveal of his way of reading. A number of them are slight: the insertion of commas is a persistent theme. Other alterations seem at first eminently justifiable in the interests of clarity. At several points, for instance, Menaker replaces an ambiguous "we" with "my father and I." He gathers together information initially diffused, combining two separate passages about Linnet's first doctor, Dr. Mackey. Finally, he twice asks Gallant to "reset" a scene and remind the reader where and when, precisely, events are taking place. "Voices" brings Linnet on several occasions to see her godmother Georgie, first in the company of both parents and then with her father alone. As the visits progress, the reader and the retrospectively narrating Linnet begin to realize what the child does not quite grasp: that both of her parents have

extramarital attachments, and that her father, though already ill and with only "a full winter to live after this one" (43), is considering taking up with Georgie. The catch is the little girl: "I saw only one move that Saturday: my father placed a card face up on the table and watched to see what Georgie made of it. She shrugged, let it rest." Linnet's memory of this particular social call, however, blends into recollections of earlier ones. Menaker suggests "[Reset scene slightly?]" midway through the story and then "[O.K. to reset?]" again near the end, both times to keep this last scene distinct from the previous visits. The aim is understandable, but it also introduces the first inkling of conflict; Menaker's imperative of clarity begins to clash with the tenor of the story, since "Voices" is precisely about clarity lost and only partially, belatedly found. The voices are lost in snow, and understanding is muffled as well: Linnet's child's-eye view has an off-center focus, leaning to one side of the "whispered jumble" of adult relationships that surrounds her (40). Whereas Maxwell encourages, through verb tense, a sense of sedimentation in Linnet's narration, such that her younger and older consciousnesses coexist on the page, Menaker flattens out tense as well as a few narrative knots. Maxwell replaces the simple past with the past potential; in one paragraph, Menaker substitutes simple past for the present and future, preferring consistency to a sudden jolt of immediacy: "In middle life the voice ~~will~~ [would] slide from low to harsh, and develop a chronic cough. For the moment it ~~is~~ [was] fascinating to me—opposite in pitch and speed from my mother's, which ~~is~~ [was] slightly too high and apt to break off, like a singer unable to sustain a long note." These changes are less than major, of course, but they do hint at the potential for friction between editor and writer. And while Gallant incorporates most of them, she refuses another that, in its cautious damping down, displays a tone-deaf attitude to the story's tone-setting sentence: "Their voices are [almost?] lost in snow."

The story that marks the turning of the tide, and whose editing takes a long, painful turn towards conflict, is "The Doctor" (1977). The story is initially accepted, but the batches of editorial queries which follow are to Gallant increasingly ignorant and infuriating. A letter from Menaker dated February 28th, 1977 announces that it "went through without a hitch" and declares it "a marvellous piece, and hilariously funny. It seems to me there are virtually no editing problems." Yet problems arise. A later letter outlining Menaker's editorial queries, and accompanying the galleys, has for once been kept. Menaker frames each of these questions in terms of clarity: "It seemed to me that it might slightly aid the clarity of this passage if the sentence after the 'QA' [query author] was cut"; "Would it be clearer to say something like . . ."; "frankly I'm not entirely sure about the meaning of this passage." Moreover, he "just wonder[s] whether a better ending might not be 'I ought to have heard it when I was still under ten and had all my wits about me,' and cut the rest"—the moment of editorial daring which he recalled in our interview. Menaker couches his contribution in an amusing, but rather revealing attempt to head off the author's frustration, a reaction he seems to have learned to anticipate in their still-fledgling relationship: "I can practically see your hands flying up in exasperation." In fact, Gallant accepts his suggested ending—but the paper trail does not stop there, and the dates of Menaker's letters tell their own tale. Whereas the previous Linnet stories had been fast-tracked for publication, the editing of "The Doctor" takes considerably longer and leads to an explosive exchange. The magazine's acceptance arrives on February 28th and the first round of queries on March 11th, but another batch of questions is sent along with the author's proof on May 24th. A number of these are filtered from other editorial voices at the magazine; Menaker declares that the proof has been "stripped, believe it or not, of as many queries as possible, with the aid of my trusty Artgum eraser." Questions come from Shawn, who "thinks the joke may

be too offhand or delayed here"; from "Checking," which "tells me that Napoleon III carried on a vigorous anti-papal policy"; and from "several people," who "wondered whether Linnet's family was French or 'English.'" Menaker acknowledges that "several people didn't read carefully, I guess," but asks Gallant to clarify this basic point in any case.

This time her response, mailed on May 31st, does not talk itself out of indignation. Gallant takes aim at the magazine's misunderstandings and cumbersome machinery, implicitly blaming her editor for failing to protect her from them.

> I am deeply depressed about the questions, and particularly the matter of your readers who could not tell whether this family was French or English-speaking. It is plainly said that the child is the only English and Protestant of her generation to attend French and Catholic schools . . . The atmosphere of this family is saturated with Anglo-Canadian atmosphere. I don't think I have been obscure; I have the depressed feeling that one is simply writing for people who won't take the trouble to read . . . I do feel that this checking system has become a vast machine into which prose is fed at the expense of common sense, not to speak of the claims of literature.

In comparison to Menaker's milder tone, this outburst appears to be lacking a sense of proportion. Yet if Gallant's letter is an overreaction, it is also a boiling-over of certain long-brewing frustrations. Her dejection at being misread and her exasperation with the byzantine editorial system emerge from experience and, it seems likely, from the peculiar uncertainty of this transitional period of Maxwell's retirement and Menaker's promotion. Furthermore, the particular misreading—"whether this family was French or English-speaking"—is a major one, since more than any previous Linnet story "The Doctor" is about language, about how English and French divide Montreal and intersect across Linnet's childhood. The doctor of the title is a catalyst for the bilingualism which shapes the story and its heroine. The brass plate that advertises medical services over his door is impeccably bilingual (34); his twin personae—as Dr. Chauchard and Uncle Raoul, depending on social context—follow the same linguistic logic; and "it was he who gave my mother the name of a convent where Jansenist discipline still had

a foot on the neck of the twentieth century and where, as an added enchantment, I was certain not to hear a word of English" (35). To this Francophone convent school Linnet, like the author herself, is "packed off . . . as a boarder from the age of four," the first of her own variety of exiles. From this point onward, "The Doctor" becomes extraordinarily sensitive to the registers of language, and to the social index they encode and reveal. Linnet's parents and their friends straddle the divide that otherwise defines their city, for "this overlapping in one room of French and English, of Catholic and Protestant—my parents' way of being, and so to me life itself—was as unlikely, as unnatural to the Montreal Climate as a school of tropical fish" (37). Even within this mingling there are gradations, for in certain settings the doctor speaks "not merely English instead of French but the private dialect of a younger person who was playful, charming, who smoked cigarettes in a black-and-silver holder" (36). Mrs. Erskine, another friend of the family, maintains that "if the Ursuline French of Quebec City was the best in the world after Tours, Montreal French was just barely a language" (40). The story's final revelation concerns another kind of voice, one that Linnet develops in each of her stories, since all of them, in their jagged order, amount to a portrait of the writer as a young woman. Linnet and the reader learn at last, reading the obituaries, that the doctor himself had quietly been a writer, and had possessed "his real voice, the voice that transcends this or that language" (42). In Gallant's introduction to *Home Truths*, she writes of an earlier Montreal story that "I see that it is not about a family or a society in conflict, but about language; or so it seems to me now" (xviii). But language is precisely a window onto a family and a society in conflict, particularly when, as in Montreal, it "loom[s] as cultural life-and-death." It is hardly surprising that *The New Yorker*'s deafness to such distinctions and their meanings, in a story saturated with them, would leave Gallant depressed and newly anxious about her reception at the magazine. Five

stories into the sequence, Gallant can be excused her exasperation, and her fear that she is not being read as closely or as sympathetically as before.

And "The Doctor" is, in fact, the last Linnet story *The New Yorker* will accept. Menaker's follow-up letter, dated June 6th, riven with reassurance and explanation, speaks of an editor trapped in his own unfortunate conflict, caught between magazine and author, conscious of a mistake but taken aback by the force of Gallant's anger. He does not apologize, precisely, but "feels responsibility." His divided loyalties issue in a missive that is mainly concerned to express sympathy, and partly to defend magazine practices.

> Now you've got us both disheartened and depressed. I feel responsible for your poor spirits because I passed along some queries on THE DOCTOR that I probably shouldn't have passed along. First, let me assure you that we will be faithful to the author: the story will run exactly the way you want it to, of course. Second, I can tell you that I had no trouble understanding your meaning or intention in any of the places where I relayed the questions that got you down . . . [But] The Checking Department almost has to have a dead hand in such matters.

Yet the next two stories are quickly rejected, and for the same reason: they seem "to be too nearly pure reminiscence," the style most closely associated with Maxwell. The first rejection comes a week after "The Doctor" runs in the issue of June 20th, 1977. On June 28th, Menaker acknowledges that

> there's no way to be jocular about a rejection. I hate this aspect of my job, and I'm sure you don't like it a whole lot more than I do. But I'm afraid the consensus here was that THE TRUTH WITH A CAPITAL 'T' seemed to be too nearly pure reminiscence, except near the end, and that some of the material in it—the pompous newsroomers—was a little familiar. Needless to say, there's some marvellous stuff in the story, and it is with true regret that I am returning it to you.

Thus the story—eventually published as "With a Capital T" in the more hospitable soil of *Canadian Fiction Magazine*—is turned down partly with the same phrases that greeted Gallant at the start of her career with *The New Yorker*, and partly in fresh terms. A collective "we" finds fault in the problems of familiarity and reminiscence, the former itself familiar from Mildred

Wood's reasons for rejecting an early story like "A Saint Called Elinore," given that "you've stepped innocently into a too familiar New Yorker theme here [the lonely child in the convent]" (27 December 1950). Now the familiarity flows from the "pompous newsroomers"—though this period in Linnet's life, her journalistic apprenticeship, has not yet been broached in the series, crucial as it is to her becoming a writer. The second key word, after "familiar," is "reminiscence," of which *The New Yorker* is no longer prepared to accept too pure a distillation. Menaker's response invites several questions. Is he merely communicating the "consensus" or hiding behind it? How many editorial arguments and aesthetic differences does *The New Yorker*'s first-person plural disguise? Is the magazine's verdict correct, and would it have made any difference if Maxwell had still been involved? On the one hand, "With a Capital T' is defiantly featured in *Home Truths*; on the other, it is the only published Linnet Muir piece that Gallant did not include in her *Selected Stories*. Did she quietly come to agree with Menaker and the magazine, or did she simply have to make some cuts to her corpus of well over one hundred stories? One might as well object to Gallant returning to Linnet herself and the setting of Montreal as subjects now too familiar, and in fact the magazine soon does.

A little over a month later, on August 5th, 1977, "What Is To Be Done?" is also turned down. Two refusals in swift succession leave the Linnet Muir sequence in the state in which Douglas Gibson finds it in early 1980, with no further pieces published and Gallant informing him that "the thread has been broken." In his rejection letter, Menaker continues to paint the decision as a collective one, but unfolds the corporate critical reasoning at much greater length. Gallant's series, he explains, is the collateral victim of an institutional overhaul. Her rejections flow from an internal debate, one precipitated by the recent reconstitution of the Fiction Department and overseen by the long shadow of William Shawn. In a proxy battle between the

old and the new, editors have set themselves against one of the magazine's defining genres: "reminiscence," a category whose difference from "story" consists in the degree, unquantifiable but crucial, of "narrative."

> [I]n the case of WHAT IS TO BE DONE? there are a few things I believe I ought to say, because I think they might help you understand what's going on here, if you want to know. In the fifties and sixties and into the seventies, this magazine published a lot of reminiscences—so many that their number may help to explain why the fiction department here and Shawn have a now nearly insurmountable resistance to the genre. We have run the odd memory piece now and then, but it has usually been a one-shot affair, and a short one. Since I've been an editor (not very long, I know, but still), you are the only writer whose reminiscenceshave [sic] been taken with any regularity at all. They have been taken because they usually have a strong narrative element, and, most important, because you are simply one of the very best writers alive. But Shawn (and others) have expressed the wish sometimes that you would go back to "stories," or at least pieces that had less strong a flavor of recollection . . .

The "prevailing winds on 43rd Street" have shifted. Having struggled with the strictures on linearity, Gallant has now run afoul of changing directives on reminiscence. Though phrased with a solicitude and amplitude unusual in such letters and appropriate to Gallant's position in the magazine's pages, the judgment exceeds a simple story refusal and shuts the door on an ongoing project. Gallant's later recollections are corroborated by the records, if not by the editors' memories: it would be better for all concerned if she would "go back to 'stories.'"

It is possible, of course, that Menaker was merely trying to spare Gallant's feelings, and bolster her self-respect, by pinning the blame to a larger turn in the magazine's direction. In his letters, the editor diffuses responsibility for rejection along two fronts: he represents himself as the messenger for a backroom decision taken by "Shawn (and others)"—though it is his choice to inform Gallant more fully, and illuminate the path back to publishability—while indicating that the fault lies less in Gallant's writing, per se, than in her choice of genre. Yet the institutional upheaval is genuine, and so too is the particular debate over reminiscence. Forced retirements in 1975, with Maxwell the most prominent sacrifice, make room for younger

editors, and those editors are hungry to distinguish themselves by expanding the range of *New Yorker* fiction.[12] Charles McGrath told me that a break with tradition was his aim, and his assessment of the magazine's then-limitations largely dovetails with his description of Maxwell's own taste.

> His taste was impeccable as far as it went. It was kind of traditional . . . A writer that I admired in those days was Donald Barthelme. Maxwell had no use for Barthelme. He said 'I don't know what it is, but it's not fiction.' He also had no use for some of Cheever's more experimental stories . . . Experimental writing, let's say, was not his strength or his interest.

The stubborn stereotype of *The New Yorker* story—however reductive its picture of the more nuanced reality—had meaning for editors as well as readers.

> I was determined when I became a fiction editor that whatever the so-called *New Yorker* short story was, that generic thing, I didn't want it anymore. And Maxwell, to some extent, belonged to that tradition . . . I like to think that it [*New Yorker* fiction] did change when all of a sudden you had me and Dan Menaker, who felt much the same way that I did, probably more so, and then eventually Veronica Geng. You simply had a bunch of new editors, and I think we were willing to push the envelope.

In these circumstances, reminiscence—an essential aspect of the stereotype—offered clear value as a target. In fact, the debate over reminiscence as too prominent and conservative an element in *New Yorker* writing had already been simmering for some time, though it reached its peak in the late 1970s. In 1961, a market research report carried out by "C. K. Squires of Stockholm," and kept among *The New Yorker*'s business records, announces that "'The New Yorker has acquired a reputation of over indulgence in reminiscence and old folks tales; an analysis was accordingly made . . .'" It goes on to share that analysis—"Mr. Squires discovered that in 1960, of the 148 stories that appeared in The New Yorker, 52 were 'reminiscent'"—and its data-driven, advertising-applicable conclusion. Rather ominously, the report declares that

[12] Three fiction editors leave, drawing new blood into the editorial hierarchy.

"'reminiscence, like coasting downhill, tends to depend on past performance and to have limited future interest—it is therefore a background which should be taken into account when considering advertisements intended for insertion in the magazine.'" Reminiscence endured as a defining *New Yorker* genre thanks to the support of fiction editors—and of Maxwell above all.[13] His departure, therefore, emerges as the crux of the affair. What did Maxwell's presence alternately encourage and inhibit? What did his absence allow? Maxwell, so autobiographical in his own fiction, was keenly sensitive to similar strains in others, and receptive to work that was at least "reminiscent" if not wholly "reminiscence." His retirement precipitated a more severe crackdown on the genre, and without his sponsorship in matters both textual and institutional, the particular avenue of Gallant's fiction that opened with Linnet Muir was quickly closed off.

The folder of editorial correspondence in the *New Yorker* records does not contain Gallant's reply to Menaker's second rejection letter; it can be partially reconstructed from her contemporaneous actions—the Linnet stories cease—as well as from the manner in which Menaker responds to her evident, bitter disappointment. She seems to have zeroed in immediately on the withdrawal of support, not for one or two stories in particular, but for her project as a whole. At first Menaker backtracks on the wider implications of his letter; only two years later, once their working relationship has been somewhat repaired, does he admit the justice of her feelings of deeper rejection—and acknowledge, in a revealing aside, the role that Maxwell's absence played. On August 17th, 1977, he insists that "we didn't ask you to stop sending us Montreal stories because we didn't want you to stop sending us Montreal stories, and we still don't, if that's what you're writing." But this is disingenuous, since Menaker

[13] See my discussion of Maxwell and reminiscence in the introduction to Part Two.

certainly implied that the Fiction Department was eager for Gallant to move on. By March 12th, 1980, moreover, he is ready to confess the justice of Gallant's initial interpretation, and to characterize the rejections once again as a joint editorial decision which he had the misfortune, and the juniority, to deliver.

> You're right—I was a little scarified by the Montreal-stories affaire, and I was angry too, not at you but at those who left me holding the bag. They did the same thing with Sylvia Townsend Warner and her elves. I don't understand how someone would want to take some new editor and have him be the one to send bad news . . . Well, I do understand it—cowardice—but would never be capable of doing it to someone else.

The mention of Sylvia Townsend Warner is a giveaway: another writer protected by Maxwell who, in losing his sympathetic attention and support, found her license for a series of stories withdrawn.[14] Near the end of her life, "curiously invigorated, she began a series of improvisations about elfin kingdoms" (Steinman xxii). That invigoration was sustained by her editorial reception; at the time, she writes to Maxwell and confides, "Do you know, I don't believe that I could write at all if it were not I had you for a reader" (*Element of Lavishness* 259). But as Maxwell himself later recalls, "'it is likely that *The New Yorker* would not have published the elfin stories except for me. Many readers and members of the staff protested. I was wild about them'" (Steinman xxii). Indeed, the *New Yorker* editors I spoke to all mentioned Warner's fairy stories as Maxwell's great lapse in taste. If reminiscence merely became too conventional a *New Yorker* genre, fantasy went several steps too far. Michael Steinman declares that the stories stopped "when William Shawn inexplicably wearied of the series," yet it is clear

[14] In fact, Gallant had raised Warner's feelings of editorial abandonment at the very start of her relationship with Menaker, an appeal suggestive of writerly anxiety at Maxwell's retirement and prompting the following (and perhaps temporarily reassuring) response from Menaker:

> And thank you, also, for telling me about Sylvia Townsend Warner. We shall try to Do Something to reassure her that no one here feels any personal antagonism toward her. I, too, have admired much of her writing, and it would be sad and bitter indeed, for everyone, if she continued to believe that Mr. Shawn or anyone else here had it in for her. (9 September 1976)

that they were only accepted on sufferance even while Maxwell was present. His departure almost certainly doomed them. For again Menaker was the successor editor, and again he lacked the clout and the enthusiasm to defend Warner against the combined forces of the Fiction Department and Shawn. One elfin story crossed the bridge between editors and was published after Maxwell stepped away on January 1st, 1976; two of Gallant's Linnet Muir stories made it into the magazine during the same transitional period. Then the curtain came down—until another editor, in another country, raised it again.

CHAPTER FOUR: MAEVE BRENNAN'S EXILE

When writing *O Canada: American Notes on Canadian Culture* (1965), Edmund Wilson seems to have confused Mavis Gallant with Maeve Brennan. He "thought I was an Irish writer when he met me. I think he had me mixed up with someone who has a similar Christian name," Gallant recalls in the same issue of *Canadian Fiction Magazine* that rescued "With a Capital T" after *The New Yorker* brought her Montreal stories to their bitter, premature close (Hancock 43). This was a curious mistake for a critic of his renown, but Wilson's passing confusion is more justifiable than the comprehensive critical failure since his faux pas to compare Gallant with Brennan at all. The two writers had more in common than the first syllable of their first names. Both published prolifically in *The New Yorker* from the 1950s to the 1970s (when Brennan's career came to an end, though Gallant's carried on). Both wrote between two magnetic poles of creative inspiration, Gallant occasionally complementing her European tales with Canadian stories and Brennan oscillating between New York writing, of both fictional and nonfictional varieties, and stories set in her native Ireland. Where Gallant set out to recreate her lost Montreal in mid-career, Brennan returned ceaselessly to the Dublin of her childhood. Most of all, they shared an editor: William Maxwell.

If there is consonance in their similarities, there is also symmetry in their differences. While the Canadian resided in Paris and sent her stories to New York by mail, the Irishwoman lived in New York and worked in the very offices of their mutual magazine—for Brennan was initially better known as a staff than a fiction writer, the author of the "Long-Winded Lady" columns whose sketches of the city punctuated "The Talk of The Town." The distance of one and the proximity of the other has led to inverse amounts of archival material. Where a reliance

on letters meant that Gallant filled numerous folders of editorial correspondence for the magazine, Brennan's presence in the office produced a strange absence in the *New Yorker* records. Notes and proofs survive mainly in Brennan's scattered, incomplete personal papers—and in Maxwell's own archive at the University of Illinois. The sense of Maeve Brennan's missing legacy expands vertiginously when we contrast Gallant's publishing history in Canada to the negative space which was, until quite recently, Brennan's place in the Irish canon. During her lifetime, there was no equivalent to *Home Truths* and Douglas Gibson, a collection and an editor bringing a writer home. Her posthumous revival was practically a first introduction for Irish readers. For where Gallant eventually turned to a burgeoning publishing scene in Canada, Brennan avoided an Irish literary climate riven with censorship and stripped of publishing capacity—precisely the conditions which led so many Irish writers of her generation to find release and remuneration in American magazines, and in *The New Yorker* above all. It was again under American auspices, and framed by a foreword from none other than Maxwell himself, that Brennan finally returned to Ireland in book form and found a readership there.

The reissuing of her stories in *The Springs of Affections: Stories of Dublin* (1997) and *The Rose Garden: Short Stories* (2000) was undertaken by Christopher Carduff at Houghton Mifflin and Counterpoint Press, with some collaboration from Maxwell in the last years of his life. Angela Bourke—whose biography *Maeve Brennan: Homesick at The New Yorker* (2004) secured Brennan's Irish reputation and remains the most rigorous and acute study of her work so far—points out that while Brennan lived "she was practically unknown in her own country" (1) and credits Carduff "as the editor who has almost single-handedly brought her writing back into circulation" (xii). When he brought together *The Springs of Affection,* and not long before he raised the possibility of republishing Gallant too, Carduff reached out to the Canadian for a

blurb. Gallant obliged: "How and why the voice of these Dublin stories was ever allowed to drift out of earshot is one of the literary puzzles. Now *The Springs of Affection* brings it back, as a favor to us all, and it is as true and as haunting as before." Yet even now that Brennan has been taken up by "a new generation of female Irish writers" (Enright), the puzzle of her neglect has been overshadowed by the greater—though not unrelated—drama of her life's unravelling.

She was at one time the most glamorous of *New Yorker* figures, the lover of several of its other mid-century writers: "to be around her was to see style being invented," Maxwell writes in the single-paragraph obituary which runs in the magazine on November 15th, 1993 (10). There he also explains how "her father was the Republic of Ireland's envoy to Washington, and she was brought to this country with him." Brennan stayed in the United States when her family went home, working first at *Harper's Bazaar* and then at *The New Yorker*, returning to Ireland only on visits and in fiction. Among Maxwell's papers, however, is a draft of the obituary containing a final sentence excised from the published version and explaining why, following twenty-one years of steady publication, her regular *New Yorker* bylines dried up after 1973, with only single appearances in 1976 and 1981 preceding the news of her death: "Eventually life became too much for her, and during the last two decades she moved in and out of reality in a way that was heartbreaking to watch and that only hospitals could deal with." In a letter to Gallant written some years earlier, in 1987, he is more explicit. "Now very often I dream of women I was fond of who are now dead," he writes. "Louise Bogan, Natacha Stewart, Maeve Brennan (who is not dead but a bag woman by choice, and because she went mad. If I did run into her she wouldn't want to be spoken to) but so lost to me that I think of her as dead." He is more expansive still in his introduction to *The Springs of Affection*:

> Many men and women found Maeve enchanting, and she was a true friend, but there wasn't much you could do to save her from herself . . . *The New Yorker* stepped between her and destitution by seeing to it that there was a place she could go when she chose, and be fed and sheltered. There is no way of knowing how often she took advantage of this. She had begun to have psychotic episodes, and she settled down in the ladies' room at *The New Yorker* as if it were her only home. Nobody did anything about it, and the secretaries nervously accommodated themselves to her sometimes hallucinated behavior, which could turn violent. (10-11)

If the image of Brennan living in the ladies' room is both pitiable and disturbing—in falling so far, she had in one sense only moved down the hall—the subjunctive mood of the following phrase hints at an even deeper, more distressing irony: "as if it were her only home." For the magazine *was* in fact the only true home remaining to a writer whose work, arising out of homesickness, constantly circles the homes she had possessed and lost. Angela Bourke is alive to the dissonance, noting that "the laughing, generous, carefree woman who wrote with such unsparing clarity on the theme of home herself became tragically homeless for a time" (1). Yet the loss of home in life seemed essential to its recuperation in fiction. In her second-to-last appearance in the magazine, when "after an interval we have heard from our friend the long-winded lady," Brennan reports on "a day-dream" of East Hampton during "a terrible day [of heat] in New York City" (31). This brief update in "The Talk of the Town" concludes with words that Carduff will later borrow for a preface to *The Rose Garden*: "The day dream was, after all, only a mild attack of homesickness. The reason it was a mild attack instead of a fierce one is that there are a number of places I am homesick for. East Hampton is only one of them."

Brennan's work is split between the New World and the Old. She wrote about New York in the "Long-Winded Lady" columns and in the stories set in "Herbert's Retreat," a hamlet of wealthy residents and Irish servants based on her own address for some years, Snedens Landing along the Hudson River. At the same time, she returned over and over to the scene of her childhood—48 Cherryfield Avenue in Ranelagh, Dublin—writing three series of stories

that place three families in turn within that same house which, as Joanne O'Leary observes, "stands immovable at the centre of her fiction": Brennan's own family in reminiscences published from 1953 to 1955; the Derdons and their deeply unhappy marriage in a sequence that extends from 1962 to 1964, with one story kept back until 1973; and, finally, the slightly happier Bagots in a more protracted cycle, first glimpsed in 1964 and last appearing in 1972. Brennan was finally evicted from the ladies' room and barred from entering *The New Yorker*'s offices. Thereafter, Mary Hawthorne remembers, "people sometimes saw her on the street, giving her money away to strangers or sitting on a stone bench in Grace Plaza, feeding the pigeons, but after a time she disappeared." Her last residence was the Lawrence Nursing Home in Arverne, New York, where staff "did not know that she had been a writer, and Maeve herself seemed to receive the news with some surprise" (Bourke 275).

It is hardly surprising that the fate of the woman has garnered more attention than the fate of the writing. If the former somewhat eclipses the latter, it has also been instrumental in the latter's resuscitation. As Anne Enright notes, Brennan has become a symbol for Irish women writers, "a casualty of old wars not yet won," a figure who "didn't have to be a woman for her work to be forgotten, though it surely helped," and who "did not have to become a bag lady for her work to be revived, though that possibly helped too." But the dialectic of home and abroad within her stories—of Dublin and New York—has not yet been examined through the prism of a publishing dynamic which itself operates imperfectly along that same polarity. The creative-editorial circuit belatedly completed in the case of Gallant, and at the cost of some of her clout with *The New Yorker*, was only connected posthumously for Brennan. The labor of bringing her into print, first during her life and then after her death, remained for the most part a metropolitan endeavor; the author wrote home but provoked little answering activity. Asking

why reveals that the vagaries of publishing history are largely a matter of editorial interest and power. An overdue comparison between Mavis Gallant and Maeve Brennan sheds light on the shared duality of home and homelessness in their work; on Maxwell's role in drawing out certain kinds of stories more than others; on the gravitational pull of *The New Yorker* and the geographical limits of its reach; on the comparative power and powerlessness, the freedoms and constraints, of homegrown publishing environments across the Global Anglophone; on the realities of transnational literary production and the limitations of literary criticism that refuses to acknowledge them. To draw together the cases of Gallant and Brennan, finally, is to expose the inadequacies of the nation-centric criticism that has kept them apart.

I. Scarcity and Abundance: Irish Writers and the American Market

The mystery of Maeve which Mavis herself articulated has not yet received a satisfying answer—though that may be because the reasons for literary neglect are inherently unsatisfying. Until the publications of *The Springs of Affection*, *The Rose Garden*, and the lost novella *The Visitor* (2000), Brennan had no Irish or British publisher and consequently no audience in the country she constantly wrote about. Even those posthumously edited collections appeared first in American editions. Brennan's national recuperation began on New Year's Day in 1998, when the *Irish Times* columnist Fintan O'Toole wrote a piece about "a woman called Maeve Brennan who hardly anyone in Ireland is now aware of." Holidaying "over Christmas in New York," O'Toole had picked up a copy of the freshly published *The Springs of Affection*, absorbed the "painful and deeply sad [story] that emerges gently and shockingly in an introduction by her old editor William Maxwell," and brought home the good, if bittersweet, news that unbeknown to Irish literature there had been a writer of "potential greatness" who "could write of nothing

but Ireland, a country where she had no readership." If O'Toole exaggerates in claiming that Ireland was Brennan's only subject, the overstatement is understandable: the only evidence he had to work with was a single collection edited down to her Dublin stories, positioning her for the first time in a fully Irish light. More peculiar, though accurate, is the second half of his statement, acknowledging but not explaining the curious disparity between the writer's real, if impermanent, metropolitan presence and her Irish absence—proportions which are almost the inverse of her fiction's geographical concentration. Brennan's profile in the United States plunged with the onset of madness and the dwindling of creative energy, but in Ireland it simply did not rise until four years after her death. As Una Mullally has verified, the *Irish Times* mentioned her name only three times in the decades leading up to O'Toole's article: once and most prominently in 1942 as "Miss Maeve Brennan, daughter of Mr Robert Brennan, Ireland's Minister to the United States"; again in 1976, when Brendan Gill penned a piece about *The New Yorker* and named her as one of "'the most celebrated' Irish writers who wrote for the magazine," news indeed to the paper's readers; and finally "in a short news brief in January 1987 about the retirement of William Shawn." Her own death did not merit an obituary. Why did Brennan's success in *The New Yorker* not echo across the Atlantic? Did neither the writer herself nor any enterprising editors—in either periodicals or publishing houses—think publication at home a worthwhile gamble? Why was there no Douglas Gibson, and no *Home Truths*, for Brennan until she was in the grave?

Subsequent critics have noted the striking imbalance between Irish content and Irish reception without subjecting it to much analysis. *The Cambridge History of Irish Literature*, for instance, contents itself with pointing out that Brennan's "rediscovered works" are "only now being thought canonical," and does not inquire further into the processes of forgetting and

recovery that cause canons to change (O'Brien 454-55). During Brennan's lifetime, two collections of her stories were published in the United States: *In and Out of Never-Never Land* (1969) and *Christmas Eve* (1974). Angela Bourke writes of the first that

> Had she been known in Ireland, the book must surely have been taken seriously there, and if Frank O'Connor had still been alive, he might perhaps have promoted it. As it was, without an Irish or British publisher, it was almost unobtainable in the country where most of its stories were set, and seems to have gone almost unnoticed. The feyness of the title didn't help . . . (251)

The title apart, this explanation follows the circular logic of all publishing failures: had the author been known in Ireland, the book would have found a publisher there; had the book been published there, the author might have become known in Ireland. But why was she so little known to begin with? Why would one Irish *New Yorker* writer have required such a boost from another, Frank O'Connor? Bourke notes that Brennan's agent was Diarmuid Russell, himself Dublin-born and the son of Æ, the man of letters who was "father to three generations of Irish writers" (O'Connor, *My Father's Son* 111)—yet even that seems to have made little difference.[1] Nationalist, feminist, and what might be called "fluke" interpretations of Brennan's neglect have been offered, though mainly in passing. Fintan O'Toole himself suggests, in one undeveloped sentence, that Brennan's dual nationality may have been disabling in literary environments conditioned by emphatically national understandings of literature: "She could be neither an Irish writer nor an American one." Molly Hennigan takes Brennan as an example of "a particular female symbolism we were not afforded," her decision to stay in the United States and her literary nonexistence in Ireland evidence of how "the progressive Irish female voice was muted just as the Irish voice as a whole was beginning to speak." Yet Hennigan offers no

[1] Though it does offer yet another professional connection with Gallant, who also availed herself of Russell's services for a time.

details of publishing's action or inaction in this specific silencing. Christopher Carduff himself counts Brennan among the many instances of "writers who aren't published properly the first time around" and who "only find success after being re-presented, re-published" (Personal Interview). Each of these partial explanations may well have a partial claim on the truth. All would be enriched by more rigorous reference to the larger context which unites them, and which determines Brennan's Irish fate: the fragile place of publishing first in the Irish Free State and then in the Republic that follows it. The question is not merely why Brennan's work did not find its way back across the Atlantic, but why a whole generation of mid-century Irish short-story writers—most of whom remained at home—sent their work in the opposite direction, turning to American magazines in general and *The New Yorker* in particular.

Similarly caught at the Anglo-American crossroads, Irish writers in *The New Yorker* echo the liminal case of Canada in the same pages over the same decades. If anything, their prominence in American periodicals and their dependence on the American short-story market are even more pronounced. Brian Friel speaks for a number of his compatriots when, in 1965, he declares that "if it weren't for the *New Yorker* I couldn't live. Couldn't live at all" (Morison 33). Indeed, the roll call of Irish contributors to *The New Yorker* goes some way to justifying the claim that "the Irish short story has been in domicile at the *New Yorker* from the 1940s right up to the present day" (Kennelly): Friel, Frank O'Connor, Joyce Cary, Mary Lavin, Edna O'Brien, Benedict Kiely, John McGahern, William Trevor, Sally Rooney in recent years—and, of course, Maeve Brennan. The coincidence of Irish and *New Yorker* canons across the mid-century, of national and institutional names of note, is surely no coincidence. What in Ireland encouraged this literary emigration to American magazine pages? What caused the curators of those pages to welcome them? How was each side altered by the exchange?

The conditions of literary entwining—apart from a shared language and an Irish-American base of readership—were scarcity and suppression in Ireland, abundance and license in the United States. Friel's remark has been much quoted and little examined. It comes near the end of an interview given to Graham Morison of *Acorn*, the Magee University College literary magazine, when Friel was still better established as an author of short stories than as a playwright. The living of which he speaks was a matter of markets and money, of course, but also of editing and enabling. What directly precedes that well-known line is his acknowledgment that "it's marvellous" that "they [*The New Yorker*] think so highly of your work." What directly follows it steers our attention to the editors of the magazine, to the textual, as well as material, support they provide: "And they're so—I hate to use the word—they're so respectful . . . They have such respect for work and for their contributors." Though he hates to use it, the word must be particularly appropriate, because it has already come to mind earlier in the interview; the respect travels in both directions. "There are very few editors that you can respect," Friel divulges, but "very often, I think, [Roger] Angell's right" (31). In fact, "there are no other editors—no other magazines—that I would do this sort of thing for" (33), this sort of thing being the revision that Angell occasionally requests. Naturally, money and readers are also important. When the interviewer asks "Isn't the short story market a very limited one?," Friel replies that "It is on this side of the Atlantic. It's a different thing over there." That thing "is where my living comes from" (25), and he is very lucky "that most of my work sells in America, which means I get paid by American standards" (31). The primacy of *The New Yorker* is of a piece with wider American opportunity, the magazine a privileged channel to the market that matters most. *The New Yorker* takes Friel's best stories; other American periodicals print the rest. There is a hint in his answers that the power dynamics of this relationship are not

without pressures; he does make adjustments for the American audience, since "it is my function to be intelligible to these people" (33). Nevertheless, the interview places *The New Yorker* at the center of an Irish writer's career. Why might editorial respect, as well as market access, have such weight for an author of Friel's generation—and be in such short supply elsewhere?

The decline of Irish publishing from its heyday in the eighteenth century and its brief Celtic Revival in the early twentieth placed writers in a dual position of dependence: on London publishers and New York magazines. Ireland from the 1600s "was England's largest market for book exports" (Ó Ciosáin and Hutton), seemingly condemned by geography and imperialism to satellite status—to being more of an importer than a producer of books. Yet by a curious quirk of combined proximity and distance, Dublin did find a third way through the eighteenth century, establishing itself as a reprint capital, the "buoyancy of [its] book trade" a result of Ireland's freedom from the British Copyright Act of 1710. The extension of copyright law which followed the Act of Union in 1801, however, delivered a blow to this homegrown industry from which it never quite recovered. The "publication of books in Ireland fell by three-quarters in the early decades of the 19th century" and "reinforced the trend of Irish writers publishing their works in London," a trend that further compounded the weakness of native institutions. Only the nationalist imperatives of the Celtic Revival temporarily broke the cycle. At first "when W. B. Yeats and his peers wished to gain support for their attempts to rejuvenate Irish culture more generally, the editorial response from Irish publishers was decidedly lacklustre." Consequent efforts to establish new and more adventurous presses, like Yeats's own Cuala Press, pivoted on the recognition "that it was culturally incongruous for a separatist literary movement to be dependent on the support of British publishers." Yet the political

success of Irish nationalism soon undermined the concrete gains of its cultural strain. For the violence of the independence struggle and subsequent civil war—themselves crippling editorial activity—ushered in an Irish Free State whose cultural repression was legendary, literary, and concentrated in the 1929 Censorship of Publications Act.

Lasting until 1967, this law made "provision for the prohibition of the sale and distribution of unwholesome literature and for that purpose to provide for the establishment of a censorship of books and periodical publications" ("Censorship of Publications Act, 1929"). Indecency and obscenity, broadly interpreted, constituted the unwholesomeness of such literature—and such literature, as Donal O Drisceoil notes, included "many of the major literary works of the twentieth century" (2). The Censorship of Publications Board targeted Irish writers in particular, separating them from their immediate audience, "so that none of them could make a living from the sale of their books in Ireland" (O'Toole, "Culture Shock"). Where once political and literary nationalism had shared "the ambition to transform—in fact, to transfigure—Ireland from an inefficiently and brutally administered British colony into a country of the imagination" (Deane 4), these two projects were brutally severed as the twentieth century veered towards its mid-point. "Disillusion," to use Seamus Deane's term, followed "upon the collapse of the nationalism and poverty of the period between 1930 and 1955. Ireland ceased to be a mythological centre and became a provincial backwater" (11). Until the relaxing of the censorship laws in the late 1960s, publishing deteriorated accordingly and authors understandably looked beyond Irish borders. Vincent Kinane diplomatically assesses the industry's stalled progress through the decades. The Second World War: "for the publishers it was a time of stasis" (35). The postwar years: "it was a time for reflection by the Irish publishers" (36). Into the 1960s: "restrictive censorship continued to stifle any adventure among

Irish publishers, and in the main the industry languished" (37). Only "by the early 1980s" did "considerable energy in the sector" take hold (Ó Ciosáin and Hutton). This was too late for Maeve Brennan's first life as a writer—though not, as we will see, for her literary afterlife.

Over the same period, Irish periodicals occupied a more advantageous position than the publishers while still suffering from a general climate of censorship and circumspection. Frank Shovlin valiantly argues from the evidence of periodicals "that it is wrong to dismiss these middle decades of the Irish twentieth century as some sort of artistic dark age" (3). The number of vehicles for the written word guaranteed a certain level of cultural discourse: Shovlin pays attention to *The Dublin Magazine*, *Rann*, *Envoy*, *The Irish Statesman*, *Ireland To-Day*, and, above all, *The Bell*. Nevertheless, he acknowledges that "these were difficult years for writers who wished to remain in Ireland and to stay true to their art" (1), and his chapter on *The Bell* details the difficulties that dogged even "the most influential and the most successful little magazine of the post-revolutionary period in Irish literature" (96). Launched in 1940 and edited by Seán O'Faoláin for six years, *The Bell* made a liberal, cosmopolitan stand despite twofold problems, material and political, generated by the outbreak of war. On the one hand, "paper supply became a real problem . . . by early 1943 *The Bell* had to reduce the number of pages per issue and fit more works to the page" (100). On the other, "strict new censorship laws [were] introduced in the interests of maintaining the integrity of Irish neutrality" (101). Radio offered another outlet for writers of this generation, one that paid. Shovlin points out that "at a time when unemployment was high and emigration widespread, these government-controlled bodies [Radio Éireann, the Irish News Agency, and the Advisory Committee on Cultural Relations] had the potential to offer writers a way out of obscurity, exile, and, in some cases, poverty" (142). Yet similar conditions and handicaps applied across the media of literary production,

whether on the page or over the air. Donal O Drisceoil has examined the censorship of scripts for Radio Éireann, a consequence of the same "censorship mentality which did not differentiate between a 'moral' and political agenda" (291). Stagnation is the stereotype of this era in Irish literature, and should not blind us to its achievements against the odds, but repression was also, undeniably, the rule.

The case of Frank O'Connor illustrates this reality across multiple fronts—and indicates the road to a certain kind of deliverance among American magazines, a path that O'Connor himself pioneered. In the early 1940s, O'Connor's fractious relationship with O'Faoláin played out in *The Bell*; he found himself taken off the airwaves of Radio Éireann; *Dutch Interior*, a novel, and *The Midnight Court*, a translation of Brian Merriman's poem *Cúirt An Mheán Oíche*, both ran afoul of the Censorship Board. In 1945 and at a very low ebb, he began to publish in *The New Yorker*: in context, we can see why this association had the air of a liberation. O'Connor's involvement with *The Bell* started early and quickly devolved into conflict with the editor, his friend and fellow Corkman O'Faoláin. Made Poetry Editor, he nevertheless grew impatient with the caution of the company line. A letter from O'Faoláin offers some measure of O'Connor's frustration:

> You will recollect that we set out to be a natural sort of sane, and quiet, and constructive paper such as any normal country should produce—to use one of your own phrases when 'breathing naturally'. I do not know that we are thereby 'getting anywhere'. It is just a corner of sanity and intelligence and decency. A tiny piece of construction. Barking is not our line . . . Take the long view—bit by bit we are accepted as the nucleus. Bit by bit we can spread ideas, create REAL standards, ones naturally growing out of Life and not out of literature and Yeats and all that. It is going to take years and years. Explosions and rages get nowhere. You sit down there on your backside and do the highfalutin artist, while up here, painstakingly, I am doing a spot of real construction. (quoted in Carson 7-8)

Lacking O'Faoláin's forbearance and hope that a little magazine might eventually assume a controlling share in the culture, O'Connor looked elsewhere, and "as the forties wore on he

spent more of his time working for the BBC and avoiding Ireland completely" (Shovlin 100). Yet this opening was itself curtailed when "suddenly, from February 1942, he was no longer allowed to broadcast for no stated reason. The unofficial ban was extended to broadcasts to the BBC from the Radio Eireann studios, while he was blocked from obtaining a permit to travel to London to broadcast" (O Drisceoil 211-12). The proximate cause, ironically enough, was O'Connor's attack on Irish censorship, which he published as "The Future of Irish Literature" in Cyril Connolly's *Horizon* in 1942. After the revolution, this piece explains, "Ireland became more than ever sectarian, utilitarian (the two nearly always go together), vulgar and provincial" (500). Actual emigration has been the result—"small wonder that young men and women are fleeing the country in thousands"—and literary emigration may soon follow. "Theoretically, of course, it is possible for a writer to live in a country where his books are banned, where there are no magazines to print his work, where all power is in the hands of a fanatical and corrupt middle-class, and never, never emerge from his ivory tower" (501-2). But in actuality, the constrictions of the Irish literary economy have resulted in "the complete lack of relationship between Irish literature and any form of life." The means of escape "leads to London or New York, and unless a change comes, that is where it may soon lead those of us who still hang on to Erin for choice" (501). O'Connor's subsequent and "effective 'blacklisting'" extended through the war years (O Drisceoil 291).

The crisis came to a head in 1945, and release arrived with American stamps and in American dollars. O'Connor had not been an utter stranger to the lure of American magazines before this—in 1931, and for the sum of $150, he published his great story "Guests of the Nation" in the *Atlantic Monthly*—but a new, resurgent period in his career began when his wife Evelyn "bundled together a finished version of 'News for the Church' and posted it to *The New*

Yorker magazine" (Matthews 64, 216). In it, a young woman confesses almost light-heartedly to a priest that she "'had carnal intercourse with a man, Father'" (25); the priest, offended by her enjoyment of the act, feeling himself the butt of ridicule for having "allowed her to use him as a confidant" (26), begins "stripping off veil after veil of romance, leaving her with nothing but a cold, sordid, cynical adventure from which she wanted to avert her eyes" (27). One can see why this story, comically anti-clerical, skewering the sexual misery of a repressed nation, had a much better chance of being published abroad. From the date of its acceptance in *The New Yorker*, O'Connor's biographer, James Matthews, tracks an outpouring of stories, the writer's creativity rekindled and kept aflame by the magazine's warm reception. His publications had previously slowed to a trickle, and "the banning of *The Midnight Court*, combined with abysmal sales of the other two books he published in Dublin after the war . . . suggested that Frank O'Connor was slowly fading out of favor, at least in Ireland" (224). But when his second, American-sponsored act began, "then nearly everything he sent to his agent was bought." O'Connor's "tremendous success in America" stemmed from steady publication in *The New Yorker* and eventually led to academic appointments and longer stays in the United States; "he started to receive outrageous sums from magazine editors for whimsical pieces and from university faculties for guest appearances" (234). Moreover, and in sharp contrast to the editorial suppression of the Irish state, he received *The New Yorker*'s editorial support, the respect which so impressed Brian Friel and which William Maxwell embodied. For after all, censorship is a form of editing, though the only respect it implies is of a perverse kind.

Compare the banning of O'Connor's collections in Ireland—*The Common Chord* (1947), *Traveller's Samples* (1951), *Kings, Lords, and Commons* (1959)—with Maxwell's meditation on "the editorial fallacy" in a letter dated July 6th, 1956:

> When I was a very young man, I had to go over a New Yorker proof with Edmund Wilson, who snorted from time to time and said in his youth he had been an editor on Vanity Fair, and that the editorial fallacy was changing things for the sake of changing things. Had I been older, I might have drawn him out, because he is always interesting no matter what he is talking about, but I just took it for a profound and witty remark, which it perhaps was. But some editors suffer from the fallacy of guardian angel-ism, and sincerely believe that they are put here on earth to protect authors from damaging their best efforts by after thoughts that are not an improvement. So I spent three intense, dedicated days going over your two versions of Man of the World, protecting what I feel is one of the most moving and beautiful stories of modern times from your itch to improve it. The corrections were, it seemed to me, of two different kinds—either they added to the clarity of the story, in which case, with suitable prayers that the whole would not be affected by the change of part, I left them; or they added to the explicitness of the story, in which case I struck off their heads . . . In setting myself up so sacerdotally, I am not depriving you of the opportunity of having the last word—or myself either. Read it and see what you think.

The censor believes he is guarding the public realm; the editor who suffers from Maxwell's fallacy—not "changing things for the sake of changing things" but "guardian angel-ism"—endeavors to guard the writer and his work. Far from imposing revisions, Maxwell's intervention is itself a form of restraint, a bid to shelter the first version of "The Man of the World" from the second thoughts of a writer with a well-known itch to rewrite. Basing his judgments on a working critical distinction between "clarity" and "explicitness," Maxwell operates upon and urges a delicacy acutely appropriate to a story about privacy invaded and understood. The narrator of "The Man of the World" recalls his boyhood friendship with the "sophisticated" Jimmy Leary, who one night invites him home to observe from an attic window the bedroom of the newly-married couple next door. In going and watching, the narrator believes he will finally "get behind the world of appearances" (19). But as Julian Barnes observes when reading the story for *The New Yorker*'s fiction podcast in 2010, "he thinks he might see the intimacy of sex; what he finds out about is the intimacy of religion." The couple undress, and then they kneel and pray, before putting out the light and leaving the observer to feel himself also, suddenly observed. For "even then I knew that I should never be sophisticated

like Jimmy, never be able to put on a knowing smile, because always beyond the world of appearances I would see only eternity watching" (22). We ourselves can observe the story in three incarnations: as a typescript in the *New Yorker* records, in its first published version in the issue of July 28th, 1956, and in its collected form in *Domestic Relations* (1957). We can measure the changes, if not perhaps the intentions and debates behind them, as the story enters and then exits *The New Yorker*'s sphere of influence. For while the marks of editing on the typescript mainly concern the insertion of commas and of American spellings like "pajama" for "pyjama" (8), the story nevertheless expands between typescript and published versions, not in conception but in detail, with additions that may err on the side of clarity or on that of explicitness—the line between the two is not obvious, as Maxwell "in setting [him]self up so sacerdotally" acknowledges. In fact, that boundary names an area of creative negotiation. What we find in the differences is a live and productive tension between the author's instinct to flesh out the story and the editor's urge to preserve it from didacticism. The picture that emerges is mixed, which is perhaps the sign of a healthy collaboration.

Some changes clearly fall on the side of clarification, involving the simple elucidation of an indefinite pronoun or adverb, as when the typescript's "it lies there somewhere, a fossil in my memory" (3) becomes *The New Yorker*'s "my admiration still lies there somewhere, a fossil in my memory" (19). However, we can see why Maxwell would have resisted "explicit" insertions such as "My excitability seemed to rouse in him a mixture of amusement and pity" (38) or "It wasn't that I saw anything wrong in it. It was rather that, for all my desire to become like Jimmy, I was afraid of what it might do to me" (39)—sentences that only appear in *Domestic Relations*. Other changes are more complex. Does clarity extend into explicitness, or does it appropriately thicken the atmosphere, when the Learys' house receives a richer

introduction in the magazine version, illustrating the class division previously intimated, and including details which will later prove their significance? Where the typescript offers only "a toilet on the stairs, which struck me as the last word in immodesty" (1), the *New Yorker* story adds "a piano in the sitting room, a pair of binoculars on a table near the window, furniture in the bedrooms, and an indoor toilet, on the stairs, which struck me as the last word in immodesty" (19). By the time we get to *Domestic Relations*, this final phrase has evolved into "the last word in elegance and immodesty" (35-6). Other additions continue to spell out emotions which might perhaps have been left to the reader to infer, and yet they also develop the characters of narrator and husband as the story itself develops from version to version. From typescript to magazine, the narrator's "qualms," his fear and discomfort, gain greater prominence earlier in the story. At first, he guiltily considers writing the couple a letter warning them of voyeurism, "but my envy of Jimmy was greater than my resentment" (5); the published story exchanges this reason for "but I knew that they would recognize the villain of the letter and that the villain would recognize me, so I did not write it" (20). As for the husband, his image becomes clearer. The "youthfulness of his face" in both typescript and magazine (4, 19-20) becomes "the youthfulness and ingenuousness of his face, which was long and lean" in *Domestic Relations* (39). At first, the husband kneels "with a composed expression which managed[,] in a curious way[,] to preserve respect with dignity" (8). In *The New Yorker*, that composed expression manages "in a curious way, to combine reverence with self-respect" (22) and provokes the further observation that "it was the expression of an employee who knew that he might, like the rest of humanity, have a few little weaknesses but recognized that he was somebody who deserved well of the management" (22). In *Domestic Relations*, O'Connor develops the metaphor until "it was the expression of an employee who, while admitting that he might have

a few little weaknesses like the rest of the staff, prided himself on having deserved well of the management. Women, his slightly complacent air seemed to indicate, had to adopt these emotional attitudes, but he spoke to God as one man to another" (44). Thus, the husband increasingly comes to embody a self-satisfied sort of religiosity, as O'Connor sharpens the contrast with his self-abnegating wife, who, when praying, "put her face in her hands and buried her head in the bedclothes" (21). The narrator's glimpse into religious life becomes more various and more complete.

How much is too much? The issue of repetition emerges as we track changes. O'Connor adds the phrase "world of appearances" one more time in *Domestic Relations* (37), making for a total of seven occurrences across the story as a whole; the implication is clear—appearances are deceptive, and so is the story—but is the execution slightly excessive? Another repetition is excised in the magazine but reinserted in the book. "I watched him take out his watch" (7-8) becomes "I saw him take out his watch" (21) before reverting to "I watched him take out his watch" (43). It seems the editor spotted the seemingly tin-eared doubling of "watch," yet its restoration points to the importance of the original verb, to its deeper echo of the very act taking place as the boys spy on the adults, and to its anticipation of the weighty words that close the story's penultimate paragraph: "eternity watching." That same paragraph is the subject of the final disagreement between writer and editor, though it is a difference only of degree. Maxwell inserts a white line in the typescript, and in the magazine version, between the light in the bedroom going off and the boys returning downstairs from the attic—offering the reader a pause just after the climax and just before the narrator's last reflections. When O'Connor gets his third chance in *Domestic Relations*, he alters the spacing, and thus the pacing, of the ending. He removes the white line but then splits the penultimate paragraph in two, holding on to the

editor's idea of a break but placing it further on. Thus the revelation that "even then I knew that I should never be sophisticated like Jimmy" (45)—the understanding that infuses the story's title, "The Man of the World," with its rueful irony—receives a paragraph to itself. By comparing versions, we can observe where O'Connor's desire to develop leads and approximate where Maxwell's influence reins him in. Their relationship reveals its room for give and take, just as the story's alterations across its American outlets—the collection is published by Knopf—disclose O'Connor's scope for productive revision in his adopted literary environment. At home, meanwhile, *Domestic Relations* escaped banning, but only because no attempt was actually made to publish it in Ireland (Matthews 320).

Nevertheless, the question of whether *The New Yorker* was good for O'Connor, and by extension for Irish literature, persists in Irish criticism. What compromises did he and other Irish writers make to secure their spots in the metropolitan magazine? Which avenues were left unexplored by the currency-and-censor-fueled rush to write for an international audience? O'Connor faced censure at home not only from the Censorship Board, but from peers who envied and mistrusted his American fame. James Matthews recounts an accidental meeting between O'Connor and his old teacher and mentor, Daniel Corkery: "'Well, if it isn't Mr. O'Connor, who only writes for American magazines now,' Corkery said wryly, and kept on walking" (313). Something of this attitude lingers in critical accounts. Declan Kiberd argues that success in New York and London comes at the cost of caricature, "with commercial success in foreign outlets such as *The New Yorker* [achieved] by artists willing enough to play up local colour for an international readership" (493-94). The alternative, however, was another form of distortion, or indeed silence. Of the Irish authors published in *The New Yorker*, Joyce Cary, Benedict Kiely, Edna O'Brien, and John McGahern—in addition to O'Connor—all had books

banned in their native country. Heather Ingman, examining "the way in which their relationship with the *New Yorker* shaped Irish writers' handling of the form" (4-5), takes O'Connor as a paradigmatic case study and renders a mixed judgment. On the one hand, the American demand for Irish stories "stimulated development of short fiction generally . . . [and] encouraged Irish writers towards the form" (4). On the other, it rewarded the less than radical elements of Irish literature, with the ironic result that "though the link with the *New Yorker* might seem to suggest cosmopolitanism, this relationship could actually be regarded as reinforcing the image of Ireland as a stagnant society" (159). In Ingman's interpretation, O'Connor came to personify this curious combination of cultural relevance and arrested development. He represented the strain that suits *The New Yorker*, since "it is clear that O'Connor's stories would fit easily into the mold of the ideal *New Yorker* short story but that O'Faolain's more diffuse, detached and intellectual stories would not" (159). He also stood for the fossilizing of that same strain, because the "formula" of the *New Yorker* story "was a formula that suited the O'Connor story all too well," removing the imperative for artistic advance. Yet the complicated gestation of "The Man of the World," and the relentless rewriting of many of O'Connor's other stories, belies this formulaic picture; so too does some of the evidence Ingman herself puts forward.

A more supple relationship fits the facts better: O'Connor changed in response to the magazine; the magazine altered in response to O'Connor. A writer reacts to the possibilities of publication by adjusting his aesthetic to his medium and for his audience. In shifting from his early stories and his radio work to *The New Yorker*, O'Connor moved from a more oral-inflected to a more consciously literate style. Ingman builds on James Alexander's study of O'Connor's development to declare that *The New Yorker* connection "distanced O'Connor from the oral tradition" and directed him "away from narratorial intrusion into a more complex literary story

suited to his new reading public" (158). Conversely, O'Connor himself shifted *The New Yorker*'s Overton Window, its range of acceptable possibilities—not least by making Ireland a prominent setting in the pages of the magazine. We can measure the change by comparing the stereotype of the *New Yorker* story, and the real biases which underpin it, before and after O'Connor's contributions began in 1945. In 1943, when William Maxwell writes his rejection letter to Peter Taylor, a Tennessee story still "belongs to a world that is essentially remote from New York City."[2] By the 1950s, the magazine's predominant fictional "locale [is] Irish (followed by English, and then American southern)" (Yagoda 282). The change came from within the magazine, as Shawn succeeded Ross, but it also arrived from without, as each newly accepted writer prepared the ground for others by altering expectations and whetting appetites. Ingman acknowledges that O'Connor helped to broaden the admissible subject matter to include "failed marriages, infidelity, prostitution and illegitimacy" (159), but just as importantly he blazed a path for compatriots to follow. One Irish setting made another more palatable, one Irish writer made another more likely. O'Connor himself only considered sending a story to the magazine after first learning of another Irish writer who had done so (Matthews 216). In his wake, a flood of writers pent-up for lack of publication followed. At a time when Mavis Gallant could still struggle to get an overtly Canadian story past the editors, *The New Yorker* developed its taste for Irish fiction: the first region of the Global Anglophone, apart from Britain itself, to which the magazine branched out.

That publishing in an American magazine for a primarily American market required writers writing from and about other places to compromise, to sacrifice a degree of particularity for wider intelligibility and acceptance, cannot be doubted. The dangers of such an arrangement,

[2] See the introduction to Part Two.

and of the inequalities in publishing power which produce it, are outlined in the prescient letter that launches the Irish Academy of Letters in 1932. In it, the authors—Yeats and Shaw, no less—identify two consequences that will result if the current regime of censorship continues: "There is in Ireland an official censorship possessing, and actively exercising, powers of suppression which may at any moment confine an Irish author to the British and American market, and thereby make it impossible for him to live by distinctive Irish literature" (reproduced in Gwynn 232). One is a first-order reaction which does in fact come to pass: the censorship does not cease, and Irish authors of the mid-century do turn to the British and American markets via their periodicals and publishers. The second consequence, however, is dependent on the first and somewhat more dubious. Is publishing abroad enough to dilute a literature, and would publishing at home be enough to maintain its distinctiveness? This question, and Yeats's and Shaw's prediction, assumes that the natural framework for literature is national—and implies that any deviation from that is tantamount to distortion. The constriction of homegrown channels for publication certainly renders writers more reliant on larger, and often less sympathetic, institutions. Even Frank O'Connor finally fell out of favor at *The New Yorker*. The first waning of his welcome can in fact be seen in Maxwell's letter calling "The Man of the World" "one of the most moving and beautiful stories of modern times." The warning about "explicitness" suggests a larger pattern of editorial concern when placed next to a contemporaneous note from Maxwell "to O'Connor's agent [confiding] that he seemed lately to be more interested in didacticism than in his characters" (Matthews 312). After 1961, O'Connor's stories no longer met the standard of acceptance; only posthumously was he published in the magazine again, in 1966 and 1967. These late rejections contributed to the writer's loss of creative faith: in 1964, his wife "Harriet secretly telephoned Bill Maxwell in

New York to explain that these [most recent stories to be turned down] had been Michael's first stories in some time . . . he never recovered enough self-confidence to begin another new one" (364). Maxwell and *The New Yorker*, so often enabling, could be disabling too.

The evidence of O'Connor, and of several decades' worth of other Irish writers at *The New Yorker*, is therefore mixed. They turn to the metropolitan magazine out of domestic deprivation, but also for financial reward and editorial support. Publishing via 43rd Street secures them a substantial readership, but their acceptance is conditional and that readership is largely removed from their native audience. Yet their work demonstrates that distinctive Irish literature could, and often did, arise out of creative and editorial connections which extended beyond the nation. Heather Ingman argues that "the prevailing view of Irish writers' isolation during this period is challenged by the fact that many of them, like O'Connor, had links with the *New Yorker*" (158). This is precisely backwards: Irish writers migrated towards *The New Yorker* because they *were* isolated and censored at home. The literary framework in which the mid-century Irish short story develops is not singular; to its advantage and its disadvantage, that structure is generated by the intersection of multiple networks, national and international, aesthetic and institutional.

This is the context in which Maeve Brennan published in *The New Yorker* and did not publish in Ireland, in which she wrote about Irish people but reached few Irish readers. In largely limiting her output to the magazine's pages, Brennan followed the promptings of proximity, demand, and remuneration: she lived in New York, worked for *The New Yorker*, and was far better paid in the United States than she would have been in Ireland. The gravitational pull of the magazine was strong in proportion to the weakness—the comparative vacuum—of Irish publishing activity. The residual climate of censorship and the resulting timidity of Irish

publishers accounted, at least in part, for the failure to bring Brennan's collections home. The livelier sphere of Irish periodicals presented a more complicated picture. Copies of *The New Yorker* did reach Ireland; a small number of people were aware of Brennan's fiction. Angela Bourke recounts an episode in which the *Irish Digest* reprinted three of Brennan's stories from 1953 to 1954 (198). But Maeve's father wrote at the time to warn the editor that "'she told me she was very uneasy about the Irish Digest. She said that the New Yorker never allowed anyone to reprint their material and as well as I can remember she said she had got a special concession for you in one case.'" The simple fact of having *The New Yorker* for an outlet reduced the chances of Brennan seeking publication elsewhere. Thus, she represents the Irish *New Yorker* writer at her highest pitch of Irish isolation and American cultivation, championed by an American editor and separated from an Irish readership. Frank O'Connor could have been speaking directly about her, although his audience would not have recognized the name, when he took part in a debate over censorship at Trinity College, Dublin in 1962:

> We have a Censorship Board, but we have no publishers. We have a great literature, published by Englishmen and Americans, and, thanks to our censors, ninety-nine per cent of it is out of print and unobtainable, so that, as I have said before, we have brought up a generation which knows nothing of its own country, or its own literature. ("O'Connor on Censorship" 155-56)

Yet distanced from Ireland both physically and commercially, Brennan found a creative contiguity within the magazine, a means of returning home in writing and sharing pages with other Irish writers, in drawing New York and Ireland together. In his introduction to *The Springs of Affection*, William Maxwell reproduces a letter Brennan had written as a joke and in Maxwell's name to a reader who had "express[ed] a hope that they would print more of Maeve Brennan's Herbert's Retreat stories":

> I am terribly sorry to have to be the first to tell you that our poor Miss Brennan died . . . She shot herself in the back with the aid of a small handmirror at the foot of the main

> altar in St. Patrick's Cathedral on Shrove Tuesday. Frank O'Connor was where he usually is in the afternoons, sitting in a confession box pretending to be a priest and giving penance to some poor old woman and he heard the shot and he ran out and saw our poor late author stretched out flat and he picked her up and fearing a scandal ran up to the front of the church and slipped her in the poor box. She was very small. (5-6)

The New York and the Irish sides of her life are drawn together in this funny, sad image, just as they are in the pages of the magazine—the nearness of Frank O'Connor a common factor in both cases. Brennan's final words in *The New Yorker* reproduce, and crystallize, the same productive juxtaposition. Writing as the Long-Winded Lady in 1981, taking up her accustomed position in "The Talk of the Town" for the last time, Brennan tells of "walk[ing] along Forty-second Street, directly across from Bryant Park" and seeing "a three-cornered shadow on the pavement in the angle where two walls meet" (22). This shadow sparks a memory and a correspondence, foreshortening time and space, because "I recognized it at once. It was exactly the same shadow that used to fall on the cement part of our garden in Dublin, more than fifty-five years ago." Her two cities meet in the magazine; her homelessness in New York calls back the house where so many of her stories are set, for "we lived in that house thirteen years . . . I celebrated my fifth birthday in that house, and I also celebrated my seventeenth birthday there." She ends by praying for "Blessings on your house. Happy New Year." At the beginning of his introduction, Maxwell declares that "I don't know whether in Ireland she is considered an Irish writer or an American. In fact, she is both, and both countries ought to be proud to claim her" (1). The key to Maeve Brennan's neglect is that she falls between these established categories, being too little of one thing and too much of "both": an Irishwoman and an American, an insider and an outsider, a staff writer and an outcast at *The New Yorker*, away from Ireland and writing home. The key to her work is that—through the medium of the magazine and the mediation of her editor—these two sides fuel and illuminate each other.

II. Maxwell's Readings and Rereadings

In asking how William Maxwell's reading shapes Maeve Brennan's writing, one runs into a curious problem: the evidence of the editor's late-life rereading, and of the critical reasoning which underpins its conclusions, is more readily available than any of his contemporaneous work on her stories. The *New Yorker* records maintain typescripts but no letters to or from Brennan; the editorial queries and conversations which would typically clarify cuts, additions, and other changes from proof to published story have vanished into the air or into the dustbin. The notes from Brennan which Maxwell kept among his own papers tend to be undated, disorganized, signed off with pre-emoji smiley faces, and rarely tied with explicit reference or rigorous analysis to a particular piece of writing. Meanwhile, Brennan's own surviving papers are split between the University of Delaware and Emory University, and neither collection contains writings for *The New Yorker* in any stage of composition beyond 1967—an unsurprisingly scattered state of affairs given the destitution and hospitalization which harrowed the last two decades of her life. Maxwell's introduction to *The Springs of Affection*, therefore, is not merely a survey for the uninitiated reader, but a portrait of the writer that reveals the editor's own preferences. How he presents the image of the writer posthumously—what he chooses to linger on and what he decides to pass over, where he praises and where he criticizes—gives some indication of his attitude to the work pre-publication. Whether the initial editing entirely matches the later interpretation, whether his rereading illuminates what his first reading helps to craft, is a more difficult and delicate matter. Yet I will begin with what Maxwell later emphasizes and follow the reasonable inference that it is aligned with what he earlier encourages.

The long-retired editor, three years from death himself, frames Brennan's life and work for a readership which does not yet exist, but which *The Springs of Affection* aims to generate. Maxwell portrays Brennan as belonging to both Ireland and the United States, yet does not depict the fiction that flows from the two halves of her life as equal in quality. Rather, the work he loves is unerringly directed home: to the Dublin house in which she grew up and where Maxwell in turn directs our attention. Though mediated by an American magazine and for "twenty-one years . . . pass[ing] through my hands on its way to Mr. Shawn or the printer" (2), "her best stories are always set in Ireland and have no characters that are not Irish" (3). He acknowledges the American-set stories while bluntly criticizing them. The Long-Winded Lady columns escape this comparative censure; "visually as true to nature as the prints of Hokusai" (40), they are also outside the remit of the Fiction Department, having been edited by Gardner Botsford instead. But the satirical tales rooted in Herbert's Retreat "seem to me to be heavy-handed and lack the breath of life" (5). In contrast, Maxwell's own prose breathes life into the stories which return to 48 Cherryfield Avenue, as they do in the three occasionally overlapping sequences collected and arranged in *The Springs of Affection*.

> The group of stories that are written in the first person are, I assume, autobiographical since the narrator is called Maeve and the narrator's brother and sisters have the same names as Maeve's brother and sisters. They live in a small brick family house on a dead-end street in a suburb of Dublin. It is where she lived as a child and it is her imagination's home. Also, these stories do not read as if they were fictitious. Though slight, they are definitely stories, written with great care and radiant with the safety and comfort of home . . . nothing really bad happens. The house is protected by love. (3)

Maxwell does not mention that his own writing also returns to his imagination's home—to a house once protected by love but where something terrible did happen. He maintains that disinterested distance throughout the introduction, and perhaps throughout their working relationship too: an awareness that he is not the main character of this story. Nevertheless, it

seems significant that, like John Updike before her and Mavis Gallant after her, Brennan received Maxwell's whole-hearted approval in revisiting the surroundings and material of childhood—so much so that she returned again and again. After the batch of autobiographical stories was published, from 1953 to 1955, Brennan began writing the tales from Herbert's Retreat, a series that extended through the middle of the decade and coincided with her marriage to fellow *New Yorker* writer St. Clair McKelway. Maxwell remarks that "it may not have been the worst of all possible marriages but it wasn't something you could be hopeful about" (4), and clearly feels the same way about the stories. But if he did not especially encourage this cycle of stories, he evidently did not discourage it either. When the marriage ended, however, "Maeve began to write what are clearly her finest stories. They are about a couple named Rose and Hubert Derdon, and they live in that very same small house in a suburb of Dublin" (6-7). This disconsolate relationship is the subject of stories which ran in the magazine from 1959 onwards. Maxwell's criticism is blunt, but his praise is precise.

> There is much to admire in these ferocious stories—the story-telling art; the prose, which is plain and exquisitely precise, at time passing over into poetry without ever becoming "poetic"; the gift for dramatic confrontations; the ability to suggest something devastating while seeming to be making an innocuous statement; the at times almost clinical descriptions of state of mind. (8)

The editor declares that "as a study of one kind of unhappy marriage these stories are surely definitive," and demonstrates his own acute appreciation by synthesizing the Derdons' disastrous human dynamics: "their moments of understanding do not bring them closer but instead only serve to drive them farther apart." Finally, "while Maeve continued to write stories about Rose and Hubert Derdon, she began to write stories about another couple, Delia and Martin Bagot. These stories are gentler, though the marriage is again unsatisfactory and is in some ways similar" (8-9). As Anne Enright points out, though Maxwell does not, the Derdon

stories follow on the death of Brennan's mother, and the "second rush, of more hopeful fictions, [comes] after the death of her father in 1964." Once again, the house is the same, though the inhabitants are changed, and children figure among them. The Bagots may be seen as a revision of the Derdons, their sequence another return to this fertile piece of the past. In fact, Maxwell clearly identifies the revisionary aspect of these stories in an earlier article, the very piece that he himself reworks for this introduction. His previous tribute to Brennan was published in the Summer 1988 issue of *Wigwag*—a short-lived magazine founded by refugees from *The New Yorker* who left over William Shawn's dismissal and Robert Gottlieb's appointment—and caught the eye of a young man named Christopher Carduff. There Maxwell declares that "as if she found the characters and circumstantial details of these stories too confining or not quite suited to her purpose, Maeve Brennan started over again and wrote about a couple named Martin and Delia Bagot, who live in a suburb of Dublin and have two little girls" (63). Finally, the editor's introduction calls attention to one story in particular, "one of the last stories Maeve wrote about the Bagots, "The Springs of Affection," [which] is in form, if not quite in length, a novella and far outdoes anything she had previously written. It belongs with the great short stories of this century" (10). Thus Maxwell, retrospectively at least, casts Brennan's stories of home as her central achievement and justifies the critical logic that accounts for the focus and selection of the *Stories of Dublin* which follow: first the autobiographical stories, then the Derdons, and lastly the Bagots, with "The Springs of Affection" as the culminating pièce de résistance.[3]

[3] The canonizing work of choosing, sorting, and foregrounding—undertaken by Douglas Gibson in Gallant's case—is thus performed by the partnership of Carduff and Maxwell in Brennan's.

What can we extrapolate about editorial practice from critical preference? There are no surviving letters from Maxwell which direct Brennan specifically towards her Dublin material or away from other avenues. This may have been as much an issue of office layout as it was a matter of professional delicacy. Far more than with his other writers, Maxwell's work with Brennan would have been conducted via informal notes and face-to-face conversations. After all, "her office was next to mine" (2) until "Mr. Shawn decided it wasn't good for the office morale, and Maeve was moved down the hall to the other side of the building," for while the arrangement lasted "there was so much slipping of notes under his [Brendan Gill's] door, and hers, and mine, and so many explosions of laughter as a result of our reading them" (5). Moreover, it is clear that Brennan had begun to mine the Irish vein well before her professional association with Maxwell took off. Her posthumously published novella *The Visitor*, uncovered by Christopher Carduff in the archives of the University of Notre Dame, was completed by 1945; it opens with the thought that "'Ireland is my dwelling place, Dublin is my station'" (6) and the reflection that "home is a place in the mind. When it is empty, it frets. It is fretful with memory, faces and places and times gone by" (8). Angela Bourke argues that Brennan "began work on ["A Young Girl Can Spoil Her Chances"] about the time she arrived in New York," though by the time it was published two decades later "it had become a layered, complex narrative of some 13,000 words, the longest of Maeve's stories about the Derdons" (143). Nevertheless, there are substantial traces in the William Maxwell Papers of his encouragement and her reliance. A handwritten letter dated only "Tuesday" shows how several strands of support—his friendship, his position higher up the *New Yorker* hierarchy, his role as her first reader—were woven together into the single relationship.

> Some ~~time~~ years! ago I began making tiny selections from my tiny notebooks. I got a start, as I enclose, and then stopped to do something else. I am sending here, the pages I had copied . . . Will you look over these notes and see if they mean anything to you . . . Separately I am sending what more I have done on The Remittance Man which now has another title . . . In other words, if you could <u>bring</u> yourself to <u>convince</u> yourself that you could <u>suggest</u> an advance, I have the feeling Mr G. [Milton Greenstein, *New Yorker* executive] wouldn't be all that anxious to stop you[.]

That she asks Maxwell to help with her financial matters indicates how embedded the editor was in the writer's life and her institutional entanglements. That she sends him work both unfinished and in the process of revision gives the lie to a generously self-effacing remark which Carduff includes in his afterword to *The Visitor*: "William Maxwell, Maeve's editor at *The New Yorker*, told me that she was a shrewd judge of her own prose, never showed him work in progress, and never submitted a story until she could stand by every word of it" (86-7).[4] From further fragments among his papers, it becomes clear that Maxwell's input was at least occasionally felt at earlier stages in the process of composition. A page survives of an early draft of what will become "A Large Bee" (1962), one of a series of stories featuring Brennan's dog Bluebell. It is in the first person, though the published version shifts to the third, substituting "Mary Ann Whitty" for "I"; the draft also contains a first line—"This is all between me and my conscience"—later excised. Another, seemingly separate sheet of paper in Maxwell's archives contains these words scrawled in large letters: "Everything you say is true." They later find their place as the final sentence in "A Large Bee": "No doubt about it, everything you say is true" (90). Yet another free-floating bit of paper gives us a sense of the dialogue that could develop between the two, with the writer riffing on the editor's words. Not unlike the opinion sheets that would circulate among fiction editors, the top half is taken up with

[4] And that Brennan writes about a remittance man, like Gallant in "Varieties of Exile," is intriguing—and yet more evidence of the curious overlap in their creative affairs.

Maxwell's remark—"Most people are indestructible. (signed) William"—while the bottom is left open for Brennan's reply: "It is the difference between appearance and reality. If a person looks destroyed & behaves destroyed, she is destroyed, no matter how indestructible she may be. Signed yourself." Stray remarks offer glimpses into the kind of advice Maxwell would give and the kind of editorial action Brennan might expect. "Let your inspiration run riot with the aunt story," she declares at one point, while at another she asks, "so would you tell me at once how to transfer the disgusting guilt I feel about my family to my poor work[.]" Both before and after her life begins to contract with the onset of mental illness, Brennan confides in Maxwell and trusts him as her second set of eyes: "You see it all now. I have told you everything I know, except that at last I am able to ~~express~~ offer the gratitude to you that I was never able even to admit until today."[5]

Certain aspects of their partnership cannot be proven. It seems entirely plausible that Maxwell would have heard Brennan tell stories of her childhood aloud and urged her to write them down. But though the convergence of their writing on childhood homes, one in Illinois and the other in Dublin, is highly suggestive, the intimation of influence remains a suggestion rather than a transmission we can track textually. Angela Bourke declares, but without citing her evidence, that Maxwell's *They Came Like Swallows* "offered Maeve a model of how to write about childhood, describing the interior of a house in intent detail as a way of invoking the child's consciousness that had lived there, but presenting it with the subtlety and compassion that come from seeing through layers of subsequent life" (192). Again, this is credible but not substantiated. Heather Ingman contents herself with pointing out that Brennan's Dublin stories suited "the *New Yorker*'s emphasis on realism and setting, as well as the personal interest of

[5] Another notes reads "Dear William[,] you are the only highly talented person I know" (16 May 1964).

Brennan's editor, William Maxwell, in autobiographical fiction" (174). Yet the general trend of Brennan's fiction, alongside further remarks sprinkled throughout Maxwell's papers, signals that the editor did not merely recognize the Irish stories as Brennan's central creative achievement after the fact, judging her works accordingly and prompting later readers to do the same. Rather, he actively coaxed her back to this well of inspiration and drew out further stories, including the one which he and the critics unanimously consider to be her greatest: "The Springs of Affection." In her final years of productivity, from 1968 to 1972, Brennan alternated solely between fiction set in Ireland and factual, Long-Winded Lady columns rooted in New York; the Irish strain grew stronger until her creative dialectic was distilled to its most basic parts. Moreover, an authorial confession reveals why Maxwell would have been so certain that Brennan's Dublin house was her imagination's home and why he would have urged her to follow that sure creative thread: even when "I said I was writing about West 49th street, not about Ireland," Brennan discloses, "I am writing about the only place I will ever be able to find my way about in and be sure not to be unsure. You could call it the mother-country. It is where true love is to be found, wherever that is." Finally, and as Angela Bourke asserts, two stray allusions "make clear that 'The Springs of Affection' had taken shape over a considerable period, in close consultation with [Maxwell]" (258). In one note, Brennan writes "Dear Wm, You must be reminded again that you wrote that story. Certainly you will admit that you reminded me of the springs of affection—I had forgotten . . ." In another, she adds "I suppose you know that's your story, title and all. I was scrapping it—it <u>was</u> scrapped—but there you are, it was a Tuesday and you were 'here'. And the title—I had forgotten what she said. But it is all yours and don't forget that . . ." We must beware blarney, the possibility that the writer is simply overstating her gratitude. The pronouncement that "you wrote that story" has the ring

of exaggeration; so too does her statement that it is his "story, title and all" and, again, that "it is all yours." The repetition itself is revealing, however. That Brennan returns to the title in each note is strong evidence that Maxwell did supply it. That he played a part in galvanizing or rescuing the story—or possibly both—is reflected in her insistence that "you reminded me of the springs of affection" and "I was scrapping it—it <u>was</u> scrapped—but there you are . . . and you were 'here.'" This declaration of debt provides confirmation that Maxwell's posthumous emphasis was backed up by his contemporaneous editing, that his late casting of Brennan's reputation is a continuation of his earlier sculpting of her stories.

Critics who acknowledge Maxwell's importance do not necessarily share his readerly judgments, nor welcome their authority over the course and presentation of Brennan's career. Joanne O'Leary laments the relative shortage of Herbert's Retreat stories. For while "Maxwell never liked them as much as the Dublin stories, feeling they 'lacked the breath of life,'" she maintains that "nothing is further from the truth." His relative lack of interest in Brennan's more satirical work recalls Gallant's remarks about Maxwell's main drawback as an editor being a less than copious supply of humor. Heather Ingman turns her attention from the path less travelled to the roads not taken at all. She argues that Brennan was restricted by the length allowed and the genres available to her at *The New Yorker*, pointing to the "depth and complexity" of the unpublished *The Visitor* as "indicat[ing] what Brennan might have been capable of had she broken away from her association with the *New Yorker* and tried her hand at longer fiction" (176). Ingman and the more sympathetic Bourke converge on a particular cut that Maxwell makes to "The Rose Garden" (1959), an Irish story which precedes and sits adjacent to the Derdon sequence. Its protagonist is Rose Derdon's mother, Mary Lambert, a crippled woman "well aware that she was ugly and awkward" (31), full of spite and longing,

thinking "it was all she wanted—to be allowed to hold a person in her arms" (38), but poisonously envious of any sign of "the champion spirit" in those closest to her (37). The story begins and ends with Mary sitting by her deceased husband in their bedroom; while she sits and remembers, her life and the story unfold. In Bourke's telling, "The Rose Garden" emerges as the site of an editorial struggle unusual in the stubbornness shown on both sides. Brennan was in a fallow period creatively and a wretched situation personally: *The New Yorker* "had not published fiction by Maeve since 1956" (207), and "with her mother dead, her marriage to St Clair McKelway sinking ever deeper into debt, and her own writing in difficulty, she was clearly feeling diminished" (209). Nevertheless,

> Almost from the time she arrived at the magazine, [Maxwell's assistant, Elizabeth] Cullinan witnessed battles between Maeve and Maxwell over Maeve's story 'The Rose Garden'. Maxwell wanted to cut out a long passage, but Maeve made 'the most tremendous fuss' and refused to allow it, so the story remained unpublished. Then in 1959, when she needed money badly, Maeve capitulated, and the cut version of 'The Rose Garden' appeared on 28 March[.] (210)

The capacity for frank criticism briefly exhibited in Maxwell's introduction is here supplemented by a rather ruthless display of control over the magazine's purse strings and print schedule. He made the cut against the writer's wishes and pressed his advantage when her need outweighs her preference. That said, Bourke uncovered "a surviving typescript copy" without the incision and finds it "hard not to agree with Maxwell that the story was the better for his cut." The "deleted passage is almost five typed pages—nearly one-fifth of the total," and describes Mary's memory of a visit to a lake with her father. The water draws and terrifies her, and for the rest of her life "'the thought of the powerful water, swelling and straining, bursting inside its tight binding sheet, maddened her, and she wanted to speak about it, but there was no one to speak to'" (213). As Bourke points out, "the writing is wonderful," so why did Maxwell insist on cutting it? Critics can only speculate, but their answers are revealing of their general

attitude towards this editorial partnership and the larger institutional relationship for which it stands. Bourke declares that "the whole long passage about the lake fits the story awkwardly," but beyond gesturing to its length, she does not unravel the supposed awkwardness, seeming to put her own faith in Maxwell's taste. Ingman describes the story as "heavily edited by William Maxwell in the interests of concision but in ways that arguably robbed it of even greater depth," without herself going into the depth thus abridged (177). "In the end," this incident fits into Ingman's larger argument about how *The New Yorker* "may have limited [Brennan's] range as a writer" and restricted other Irish writers of her generation too (176). Particular pieces of editing have the potential to illuminate the larger question: did the editor enable or disable the writer's career, did the magazine cultivate or stunt the mid-century Irish short story?

The cut coexists with the exhortation. Maxwell may well have scrapped the excursion to the lake because the story already contains a powerful symbol of Mary Lambert's sexual frustration and yearning, one that would have been diluted—made both redundant and obtrusive—by several paragraphs given over to water as well: the rose garden of the title, kept by nuns

> and still it was altogether a stirring place, warm red, even burning red, the way it filled the nostrils and left a sweet red taste in the lips, red with too many roses, red as all the passionate instruments of worship, red as the tongue, red as the heart, red and dark, in the slow-gathering summertime, as the treacherous parting in the nuns' flesh, where they feared, and said they feared, the Devil yet might enter in. (32)

But while Maxwell resisted the trip to the lake, he nevertheless followed and prodded Brennan down this Dublin path, the story of Mary Lambert leading to those of the Derdons, of Mary's daughter and her husband. "The Rose Garden," though atypical in the critical attention its editing has received, is true to two patterns of revision which a closer examination of Brennan's *New Yorker* typescripts reveals: the larger trajectory of creative return which produces each

Dublin story, and the specific trimming back of passages deemed too explicit by their editor. Maxwell's concern remains the one he articulates in his letter to O'Connor on the editorial fallacy—finding the line between clarity and explicitness—but where restoration was his primary means in "The Man of the World," deletion is more common in the Brennan proofs. In our interview, Roger Angell told me that "we were entirely different in our styles," with Maxwell a "keeper-inner" and Angell himself a "taker-outer." Yet the figure who emerges from the discrepancies between typescripts and published versions complicates this characterization. Maxwell could also be a taker-outer; where he strove to make Gallant clearer, he endeavored to make Brennan less explicit.

As there is a dialectic to Brennan's creative progress—the generative alternation between fact and fiction, New York and Dublin, homelessness and home—so too there is a balance to Maxwell's editing of Brennan, a combination of encouragement and excision. Following "The Rose Garden," the next two pieces of fiction Brennan published are "The Beginning of a Long Story" (1961), about an unnamed family in the same Dublin house, and "An Attack of Hunger" (1962), the first Derdon story to be printed in *The New Yorker*. Galley proofs of both survive at the University of Delaware. To the former is still clipped a memo from "Mr. Maxwell" conveying, and commenting in pencil upon, "Mr. Shawn's queries." His ripostes more than adequately illustrate one side of his editorial countenance: protecting Brennan from, and supporting her against, broader interference. At the head of the page, he writes "I always go light on the commas with your pieces—any of Shawn's you don't like, we'll talk about." The editor-in-chief's queries are essentially expressions of misunderstanding or disbelief: "Don't understand," "What does this mean?," "Well, I just don't know what she means," "I don't understand why she says this." Maxwell's annotations soften their import or

remove their sting entirely. To Shawn's skeptical declaration that "Johanna cannot be older than seven. Would she be capable of thinking and saying this?" Maxwell appends his own view: "Well, [my daughter] Kate's not 6 yet, and she's quite capable of saying something very like it." Beneath the boss's dubious "That all clear?" he writes "It is to me." And elsewhere Maxwell points the way to compromise, attaching to Shawn's stated preference for "which" over "that" first the explanation "that is, our style is to do that but you aren't bound to follow our style," and then, at the bottom of the page, the assurance that "I think 'which'es don't much belong in your style, and you don't have to have them." More than once he adds "Let's talk about it." Standing between the author and the wider editorial machinery, Maxwell makes room for Brennan's individuality, allowing her to write beyond certain boundaries of style and reductive realism. On the other hand, the proof of "An Attack of Hunger" contains numerous editorial marks, and among them several significant cuts. Marginal comments in Maxwell's handwriting include: "Not clear as you have it. Some such reworking as this?"; "awkward repeat?"; "if you say this here, don't you weaken the shock of A on next galley? What about saving it for B on galley seventeen?"; "I like all this fine, but is it the right place in the story for an aside of this length to come?" Several of the accompanying pencil marks bear out the tenor of these remarks: there are seven instances in which short passages are struck out, and two in which much longer sections are circled for possible deletion.

"An Attack of Hunger" introduces us to Rose and Hubert Derdon, to their marriage of mutual demoralization, and to the absence of their son John, departed into the priesthood. The passages which Maxwell marks for pruning, and which either vanish from the published version or appear in reduced form, all nakedly express Rose's utter loneliness without her son and her desperate hope to reunite with him—a hope which, Hubert cruelly lets her know, is not returned

on the boy's part. "There was no hope for her inside the house" or the marriage (26), except for the delusion, which returns with even greater force in the final lines, that one day "she would pack up, sell out, and go straight to John, and after that it would be roses for the two of them all the way, roses, roses all the way" (34).[6] Maxwell intervenes repeatedly to reduce Rose's self-knowledge, editorial acts which make Hubert's revelation—which is also the story's—more surprising and all the more devastating. He begins by pointing out that one paragraph too early on "suggests a flaw in the [mother-son] relationship that she has not up to now admitted," lessening the impact of Hubert's brutal dismantling of her dream:

> But "What sort of talk is that?" (That was Hubert speaking to her in her own mind, and even in her mind, even the memory of the derision and impatience in his voice brought to her lips the wavering, apologetic imploring smile that had always made John turn red and turn his face away whenever he saw it.) "What sort of talk is that. What's the matter with you." (4)

This passage does not appear in the published version. More expansively still, Maxwell then circles a long paragraph that vanishes entirely in the March 18th, 1972 issue. Once again, this section gives direct voice to the claustrophobic motherly love which drives John away, to Rose's "thin refrain," a monologue issuing from the "labyrinth of distress that had made a quicksand out of his childhood" (10). Her refrain is, naturally, repetitive:

> You'll never be ashamed of me, will you, John. You'll never be ashamed of your mother, will you? Oh, you can say that now, but you'll get to be ashamed of me just the same way he did . . . But you won't will you, you'll never be ashamed of me, will you, John? But you will. Yes, you will. (10)

As Maxwell writes in the margin, this "knocks the story right off its feet / So much more terrible if you don't explain what the story says." And so thirty-three and a half sentences evaporate. These cuts cannot be attributed solely to Maxwell: a further, unnoted stage of collaboration

[6] Rose's floral image of happiness echoes not only her own name, but her mother's equally unsatisfied longing for "The Rose Garden."

("let's talk about it") precedes the magazine going to press, and there is no hint, as with "The Rose Garden," of authorial resistance or editorial coercion. But while Maxwell circles more than he strikes out, his interventions all tend in one direction: to letting the story's events disclose the characters' unhappy situation, rather than having the characters themselves verbalize it.

In contrast to the heavily-pencilled proof of "An Attack of Hunger," the typescript of one of Brennan's final works of fiction, a Bagot story called "Christmas Eve" (1972), seems almost entirely clean. A few phrases are stroked out, a few words have been added in Brennan's own hand. Waiting for Christmas morning are the Bagots, a family beset by less severe marital strife than the Derdons and buoyed by the presence of two daughters. As the evening unfolds, the distance between Delia and Martin Bagot becomes apparent, but so too does a stubborn loving warmth in their home. The parents live apart within the one house: intimations abound of Martin's disappointment, "when he thought of the might-have-been" (28), and of Delia's anxiety, "getting what she called 'nervous' and she couldn't understand it" (29). What goes unsaid in "Christmas Eve," but which forms the subject of an earlier story, "The Eldest Child" (1968), is that they have lost their first-born boy. Yet, as Brennan writes in a sentence which she herself modifies in the typescript,

> It is the [solid] existence of love that gives life and strength to memory, and if, in ~~the long run~~ [some cases], childhood memories lack ~~to~~ the tender colour[s] given by demonstrativeness, the child grown old and in the dark knows only that what is under his hand is a rock that will never give way (9).

The adults' lives have been less than fulfilled, but the story nonetheless concludes with a sense of repletion. A white line offers a break both typographical and emotional before the final paragraph; that paragraph then focuses on the excited daughters, who "get out of bed and put on the light so that they could see what they had been given" (30). To this ending, which itself

feels like a gift, the typescript presents only one hitch: it is not, in fact, how the draft ends. There the "last" paragraph is still part of the preceding one; a white line is used, but it follows "what they had been given," and introduces a much longer, more roughly punctuated paragraph.

> The excessive shyness that existed between Delia and Martin Bagot gradually turned into ice, but at this stage, this Christmas Eve, the ice was barely forming, and there was still time and space enough for them to speak the words that would have brought ease between them. They didn't speak those words and so, that night, they lost one more of their dwindling number of chances. But it was an exceptional night anyway, and in the silence that filled the house after Delia had hurried Bennie up the stairs and into her room without Martin knowing, a number of things happened that are worth telling[.] ~~even though no certain interpretation of them can be made.~~ (10)

The story continues in this vein for another sixteen sentences. What was intimated becomes explicit, what was stated is repeated. Standing alone in the hall earlier in the evening, Martin suddenly reflects that for a moment "he was as free as any man, or at least as free anybody could be in this day and age." In this additional paragraph, he thinks again about "the one area where he felt himself to be alone and free" (10). Delia's nerves, and her inability to understand them, are supplemented here by her fear of Martin's "impatience, which made her distrust herself, so that she sounded confused, and when she sounded confused she became confused." A deeper hopelessness enters into the story, after all of which, "Christmas Eve" still circles back to "the children" and "their Christmas presents." Maxwell appears to have suggested that those "things worth telling" did not need to be told, and that the things already expressed would be stronger without them. The additional paragraph would have taken the story beyond the threshold of Christmas morning, moving its characters from a state of possibility into one of grimmer certainty. It is entirely absent from the published story.

The most striking and extensive transformation from a Brennan typescript to a Brennan story occurs during the editing of "The Springs of Affection." In Maxwell's introduction he

summarizes this near-novella, which in the March 18th, 1972 issue of *The New Yorker* took up 45 pages:

> Both Delia and Martin are dead and the whole sweep of their lives is dealt with in a masterly fashion by moving in and out of the mind of Martin's twin sister, Min, who kept house for him after Delia died and who is now a very old woman . . . What in the earlier stories was an at times almost unbearable sadness is now an unfaltering irony. Dominated by false pride, ungenerous, unreachable, unkind, the old woman is the embodiment of that side of the Irish temperament that delights in mockery and rejoices in the downfall of those whom life has smiled on. (10)

Maxwell's judgment on "Springs"—that it is Brennan's best work—has been widely echoed by later critics. Yet a textual comparison between the version in the *New Yorker* records and the version in the *New Yorker* magazine brings us back to Brennan's own verdict: the highly suggestive, if perhaps somewhat exaggerated, declaration that "Dear Wm, You must be reminded again that you wrote that story." For a sea change does occur from submission to publication, though the changes are not marked on the typescript and do not reveal themselves immediately to the measuring eye. In fact, a first glimpse at the 59 pages of type suggests an editorial exchange more akin to "Christmas Eve" than to "An Attack of Hunger." Pencil marks, whether in addition or deletion, are few. The story begins as it does in its final iteration, with Martin's unmarried, aged sister reflecting on the Bagots' deaths—"she thought it was fitting that she should be the one to remain alive, because out of them all she was the one who was always faithful to the family" (38)—and remembering their wedding day. It ends in the same way too, as she sits "in Wexford, in her own flat," surrounded by furniture that once belonged to Delia and Martin, quite satisfied with "what she should always have had" and wishing only that "they could all see it" (83).

However, a closer survey of the two texts discloses an increasing number of discrepancies, beginning with the surface of the story. The names are not the same; Nan, Tess,

and Chris—Nan being the real name of the author's aunt (Bourke 259)—become Min, Clare, and Polly. Certain lapses in narration, where Brennan's third-person free indirect discourse slips into a plain first person, have been ironed out in the published version. Moreover, moments when the narration escapes Nan/Min's presiding consciousness, rendering direct judgments on the character herself, have been cut: "Her puny little spirit was quite fearless" (10), for instance, or "She was a miser, with miserly eyes and miserly fingers" (11). Moreover, the paragraphing is radically different, primarily because there are so few in the typescript and so many more in the published story: 45 paragraphs give way to 112. This reshaping begins with the first paragraph, which in draft carries on well past the point where the edited narrative introduces a break, but the disparity grows much stronger in the second half of the story. From page 22 in the typescript, breaks become a rarity; even dialogue is increasingly contained within these growing blocks of text, rendering the single unbroken paragraph which extends from page 48 to page 56 far from an outlier. The story as printed continues to contain long paragraphs, but where previously it resembled a river of prose which had overflowed its banks (an increasing number of typos and missing punctuation marks adds to the impression), more incisive and insistent paragraphing gives the final version a more controlled, and comprehensible, appearance. Joanne O'Leary has remarked on the curious irony that "Brennan's best, most controlled stories were published just as her life was unravelling." That control seems to have emerged out of the editorial encounter.

The point in the typescript where paragraphed divisions diminish is also the point where deeper changes—cuts, principally, but also rearrangements—proliferate and produce the published story. For while the beginning and the end are roughly the same in both versions, the middle of the draft is a startling departure for someone already familiar with "Springs"—much

of it simply never appeared in print. The bulk of the story alternates between Min's sweeping memories of her family life before and after Martin's marriage and her specific recollections of that wedding day. Midway through the published version, for instance, we encounter two paragraphs in a row about her father, an outsider unloved by his own family, before returning to the events of the wedding. A single paragraph break separates "The restlessness that brought him to Wexford afflicted him till the day he died" and "Maybe if he'd learned to read he would have been more content" (52). In the typescript, by contrast, the gap between those two sentences extends from page 25 to page 35. What the finished story boils down to

> It was hard to believe that only nine years had elapsed between her father's death and Martin's marriage. Those were the best years. She remembered the day her father died, giving them all a great fright. None of them really missed him. (50)

swells in the draft to

> It was very peaceful, waiting and knowing nothing was going to happen. The strange thing was that except for the fact that she was alone in the room the feeling she had, of satisfaction and safety and peacefulness was very much the feeling she remembered long ago when she and her mother and her two sisters and Martin were all sitting together in the kitchen after her father died. It was the best time of their lives, the time between their father's death and Martin's marriage. During those few years they were all to themselves. There was nobody who had the right to walk into the house and sit down, as he used to do, the a [sic] far corner of the kitchen and stay there listening to everything they had to say, hearing things he had no right to hear, because he had nothing to contribute to any of their plans, and it made them all uneasy, knowing he was there listening to them. It was awful, not knowing what was going on in his mind, or what he understood of what they said, or what he might repeat outside the house. It was like having a spy in the house, somebody not as well off as they were and who was not well disposed toward them. Not that they could prove he had ever spoken about them, and the chances were that he never did, but you couldn't be sure, and he wandered about a lot alone, pretending to look for work, as if anybody would want him, old as he was, and not even able to write his name. Her mother's great fear always was the poorhouse, but maybe where he belonged was in the poorhouse. Maybe that's what he wanted. (25-6)

Some of these sentences have the same overflowing, quickly-written quality as the unbroken paragraphs, their clauses extending with insistent commas and simple conjunctions to the point

of seeming to be not quite in control. They lack a clear sense of direction; perhaps the draft paragraphs continue to accumulate lines *because* it is not apparent where they should end. Between versions of the story, someone has done a labor of revision. That agent, either writer or editor or a combination of the two, has drawn out what they evidently considered to be the essential sentences and subjected them to reworking and reordering. "It was the best time of their lives, the time between their father's death and Martin's marriage" is moved to the beginning of the paragraph where it can act as a topic sentence, though in an altered form that quantifies the time and situates the reader: "It was hard to believe that only nine years had elapsed between her father's death and Martin's marriage. Those were the best years." Meanwhile, "There was nobody who had the right to walk into the house and sit down, as he used to do, the a [sic] far corner of the kitchen and stay there listening to everything they had to say" becomes the more scathing—and attributable—"What was most annoying to Min was that he took it for granted he had a right to come in and join them and sit down in the corner and settle himself as though he had something to offer" (52). The lines about the poorhouse find a place much later in the story; measured by the magazine layout, they appear twelve pages further on. Everything else is compressed to the clinching sentence: "He had nothing to offer except his restlessness" (52).

Other cuts occur in other places; certain lines survive from passages otherwise stripped. By the fact that they are targeted, we can tell which sections the reviser believed to be carrying an excess freight of detail. At times, the edits winnow out a repetitiveness that verges on the relentless. Near the end of "Springs," after Delia has died and Martin is living with his insufferable sister, he responds to her typically cruel comment that "'There was nothing to Delia'" (70). In the published story "Martin was silent, and then he said, 'Nothing to Delia.

That's true. I never thought that. But as Shakespeare says, It's true. It's true, it's a pity, and pity 'tis it's true. Nothing to Delia. Shakespeare was right that time." That he defies Min by repeating her remark only becomes clear later in the scene, as his reiteration takes on a gentle sarcasm—"'There was nothing to Delia. That's a weight off my mind'"—and his actions demonstrate his enduring love: "'I'll show you a picture of her, taken when she was sixteen years old'" (72). In the draft version, the mocking quality of the repetition may be more insistent, but again it seems to spin out of control.

> But Martin was silent, and then he said "As Shakespeare said, that's true. It's true, it's a pity, and pity 'tis, it's true." That's what Shakespeare said. There was nothing to Delia, nothing to Delia, nothing to Delia. Ah it's true, it's a pity, and pity 'tis, it's true. There was nothing to Delia. Shakespeare was right. There was nothing to Delia. No, there was nothing to Delia. Yes, there was nothing to Delia. Wasn't she great, there was nothing to her. Wasn't she always kind, there was nothing to Delia. Shakespeare was right. There was nothing to Delia." "Shakespeare didn't say it. I said it" Nan cried furiously. Martin smiled. "It8s [sic] true, it's a pity, and pity 'tis, it's true." he said. "There was nothing to Delia. Nothing to Delia. Nothing to Delia. Nothing to Delia." (50)

Such a passage raises the question—particularly unfortunate in Brennan's case—of whether the character is losing his mind, or the writer is losing hers.

Most of the major changes are made to the shifting middle of the draft. Their main effect is to produce a sharper focus on the wedding as the center of the sister's revolving recollections, the scene which "always opened up in Min's memory as though it had started as an explosion" and to which she returns over the course of the story, slowly and intermittently establishing the events of the day (54). In the typescript, Brennan nearly loses this thread, choosing instead to expand into the family's history. Among other avenues which the editing curtails, she introduces a second branch of relatives—"What made things hard for Nan's mother was that she herself had taken a step up in the world when she moved into the house in Georges' street, and that one of the struggles she had was to keep her two sisters and their children from visiting

her" (34). Brennan has Nan "go up to the little attic they had" after her mother dies, rummaging through objects and flashing forward to "when Delia's room was sorted out" after her own death (30). Above all, she uses this space for Nan to pile up poisonous, and eventually quite repetitive, criticisms of Delia. What "Springs" gains in shedding so much is a clearer progression through the stages of the wedding day: the Bagot family's journey to Oylegate for the ceremony, the subsequent drive out to Delia's family's farmhouse by the Slaney River, the reception that takes place there, and the remarkable loveliness of the setting—"the day grew in beauty, coming in like the tide, minute by minute" (64)—which leaves such an imprint on everyone's memory. Even Min is transported, entering the property's orchard as if she "were walking into an unfamiliar, brilliantly illuminated place full of shadows and green caves and a floor of broken sunlight that seemed to undulate before their dazzled eyes." Near the end of the story, meanwhile, Martin will recall and repeat the words he heard that day from Delia's Aunt Mag and which give the story its title: "'The Slaney is in full flood, and the springs of affection are rising around us.' She spoke the truth" (74). Of course, there is more than a hint of irony to the title, given that the story of the Bagots is strained through the filter of Min's baleful eyes—she is, in this sense, an unsympathetic editor, recasting the lives of others in the least flattering light. Yet the title is not wholly ironic, for between the cracks and around the edges of her free indirect discourse we catch glimpses of love and beauty and even fleeting happiness. By contrast, the editing process through which the story itself passes is both extensive and sensitive. Many sentences are sacrificed or reworked, a clearer order of events is carved out; yet that order coexists with the way in which Min's recollections shift back and forth, circling this one day but encompassing many others. Like Mavis Gallant's Linnet stories, the final version of

"Springs" achieves a fine balance between the well-known linear imperatives of *New Yorker* fiction and the tidal movements of memory.

Does that balance ultimately belong to Maxwell? How seriously should we take Brennan's declarations that "you wrote that story" and that "it is all yours"? Certainly, "Springs" changes dramatically after the typescript is submitted to the editor. But those 59 pages are not a complete overview of the editorial exchange; they offer a glimpse into one stage of the story's development. We do not know when Maxwell's involvement began or ended, whether he set the changes in motion by means of suggestion or whether he himself wielded the axe and then rearranged the pieces. The typescript is stamped only with the date of the issue in which the story runs; we cannot say how closely it precedes publication, how many other versions Brennan produced and Maxwell saw. That "Springs" required a stronger editorial hand than usual can be inferred from the changes to the typescript, Brennan's notes of gratitude, and the fact that, by the early 1970s, Brennan had begun to suffer from writer's block—and worse afflictions still. Angela Bourke recounts "a story told in the office about Maxwell's relief when a new piece of Maeve's writing turned out to be publishable (perhaps her story 'Christmas Eve')" (257-8). Yet a roughly contemporaneous telegram, sent by the editor in December 1971, demonstrates that Brennan herself continued to work on the proofs: "SPRINGS OF AFFECTION RESCHEDULED FOR MID FEBRUARY. NO NEED TO STOP WORKING TO FIX THE GALLEYS. ANYTIME BEFORE THE END OF JANUARY WILL DO. LOVE, WILLIAM." Thus "Springs" represents both an editorial case in extremis, one of those instances in which the editor's reading becomes almost indistinguishable from writing, and the culmination of a creative collaboration. It displays the dual dynamics of encouragement and excision at their highest pitch. Brennan's longest story—even when cut down from its

typescript—"Springs" delves deepest into the wells of her Irish material, drawing on and recreating "the [family] history out of which Maeve's own imagination grew" (Bourke 259). For as the biographer testifies, "almost every fact in 'The Springs of Affection' is true, and yet the story is not." It brings the Bagot sequence, and Brennan's career in fiction, to a close; though "Christmas Eve" is published nine months later, it returns to an earlier time in the Bagots' lives, and Bourke declares with some confidence that "'The Springs of Affection' seems certainly to have been the last piece of fiction Maeve produced."

The question is not whether Maxwell deserves a co-author's credit, but what kind of relationship his work with Brennan reveals and which readerly interpretations of her stories his editing encourages. The flip side of the focus he brings to her writing—both on the micro level of sharpening its structure and the macro level of directing its attention Dublin-ward—is a diminishment of the writer's instinct to range more widely, and perhaps more daringly, across family narratives. For the facts can be made to fit Heather Ingman's reading of Brennan's, and Irish literature's, association with *The New Yorker*. Once again, Maxwell cut into a Brennan story; once again, her manifest, if sporadic, instinct to draw on a broader canvas was curtailed. Would Brennan have written differently had she not written for *The New Yorker*? Would she have produced more novels and fewer short stories? Might she have focused more fully on fiction to the exclusion of journalism? That is all possible, but she did write for *The New Yorker* and for Maxwell. For a writer caught between countries to find a metropolitan residence for her work, allowing her to avoid censorship while yet exploring the home she left, is no small thing. And while the work which flowed through that channel is molded by the magazine's sense of composition, each published story also represents a negotiation with *New Yorker* tradition and a slow erosion of its once strict restraints on setting and style. The editor tightens "The Springs

of Affection," yes, but he also uses his readerly nous to draw out "Maeve's swan song, or her kamikaze flight" (Bourke 259) and his institutional power to bring the story—in all its considerable length—into print. Every editorial relationship imposes some form of limitation; few are as simultaneously enabling as Maxwell's with Brennan.

Soon after the publication of "Springs," Brennan attempted an actual homecoming to match her literary ones. She spent much of 1973 in Dublin, staying with family—including her young cousin Roddy Doyle—and "typing furiously, early in the morning and late at night" (264). Yet that typing seems to have produced only book reviews for the "Briefly Noted" section in *The New Yorker*, for no further stories appeared. Her behavior grew ever more erratic and by 1974, she was back in New York (267). There her final expulsion from the *New Yorker* offices took place only after Maxwell himself retired. Angela Bourke implies a causal relationship: "William Maxwell left his job as fiction editor . . . A new Plexiglass partition was erected outside the receptionist's desk on the twentieth floor, with a locked door to keep out all but authorised visitors, and staff were instructed not to let Maeve into the offices, for fear of violence" (270). And that is where Brennan stayed—outside and unread—until the publication of *The Springs of Affection* four years after her death.

III. Revival

Why did Maeve Brennan, dead and forgotten, strike such a chord in her native land with *The Springs of Affection*? We now have a clearer idea of why Brennan was bound to an American magazine, an American editor, and a largely American readership during her lifetime. But if those were the grounds of her initial Irish obscurity, what were the conditions for her belated literary success? After all, this re-collection was itself an American production,

arranged by Christopher Carduff, in concert with Maxwell, for Houghton Mifflin. Fintan O'Toole's tide-turning column turned on his happening to pick up the book while vacationing in New York. Yet *The Springs of Affection* inaugurated a striking reversal in the author's posthumous fortunes. It did not quite secure the author's resurgence in the United States; instead, it sparked a revival in the country where she was hardly known to begin with.[7] In 1996, Brennan was absent from an anthology whose focus might have been made for her: *Home—An Anthology of Modern Irish Writing*. By 2017, when the *Irish Times* published a series of articles to mark her centenary, she had become canonical—included in the *Field Day Anthology* for *Irish Women's Writing and Traditions* (2002), added to the Anne Enright-edited *Granta Book of the Irish Short Story* (2012), the heroine of plays by Emma Donoghue (2012) and Eamon Morrissey (2013), the subject of the first extended episode of RTÉ's *Book Show* (2013), providing the title for Sinéad Gleeson's *The Long Gaze Back: An Anthology of Irish Women Writers* (2015). What is more, and though they build on Carduff's editorial foundations, independent publishing houses have finally brought Brennan out in Irish leaf: *The Visitor* was released under the imprint of New Island Books in 2001, while The Stinging Fly reissued both *The Springs of Affection* in 2016 and *The Long-Winded Lady* in 2017. The reason for Brennan's renewal—apart from sheer luck—is that the transnational reality of literary production does not eliminate the equally stubborn facts of nationally-rooted audiences, critical canons, and artistic imperatives. *The New Yorker* alone does not guarantee an Anglophone writer a domestic readership. Like Mavis Gallant's *Home Truths*, Maeve Brennan's *The Springs of Affection*

[7] By 2001, Houghton Mifflin informs the estate "that sales of your book, **The Springs of Affection (paper edition)** have fallen off considerably . . . we are reluctantly selling all or most of the remaining copies. In today's marketplace, this situation affects too many excellent books far too soon" (O'Brien, 19 October 2001).

succeeded precisely because it was packaged—re-selected, re-arranged, re-presented—as an act of literary repatriation.

Christopher Carduff first fell in love with this lost writer thanks to William Maxwell; eight years later, he took Brennan's editorial reins with Maxwell's blessing and Maxwell's introduction. Freshly employed at Houghton Mifflin, Carduff finally had the chance to do something about Brennan's neglect, and on May 29th, 1996, he writes the old editor a pitch letter.

> A former editor of *The New Criterion*, I am now at Houghton Mifflin and, for the first time in my career, in a position to publish fiction. One of the first books I would like to do here is a collection of short stories by Maeve Brennan, an idea you yourself put in my mind some eight years ago, when you wrote about Miss Brennan for the pilot issue of *Wigwag*.

Since then, the author has died, her few books long out of print, and "an entire generation of readers [has] come of age since the last of Miss Brennan's stories appeared in *The New Yorker*." Carduff hatches a plan for "the possible resurrection of these stories," one that depends on and reinforces a particular reading of her work. Carduff identifies and magnifies what the previous attempts at publishing Brennan in book form—*In and Out of Never-Never Land* and *Christmas Eve*—had obscured: her Irish dimension, the strong and expanding strain of stories which center on her childhood home.

> What I have in mind is a volume to be called **The Springs of Affection**, which would bring together most of the Irish stories from the author's two collections. The book would open with the seven "fictional memoirs" that make up the "48, Cherryfield Avenue" section of *In and Out of Never-Never Land*. These would be followed by the eight stories about Mrs. Bagot, concluding with the title novella. Rounding out the book would be the stories about Hubert and Rose Derdon, excepting "The Rose Garden," which, as it contains many details that don't square with those in subsequent Derdon stories, stands a little to one side of the series.

The emphasis which Maxwell's introduction lays on the Irish aspect of Brennan's work is his own, of course, but it must also be understood as responding to and fortifying the logic of

Carduff's selection: "What I think would help the book reach an appreciative audience is, by way of a foreword, a brief biographical memoir focusing on your and Miss Brennan's days together at *The New Yorker* and drawing out the Irish strand in her personal history and artistic temperament." Whereas both Derdon and Bagot sequences are spread across *In and Out of Never-Never Land* and *Christmas Eve*—for which Scribner's is not entirely at fault, given that the first collection came out in 1969, before either cycle was complete—Carduff will present them whole and undiluted. (*Never-Never Land* also contains the Bluebell stories, while *Christmas Eve* includes Herbert's Retreat.) Carduff makes two further, consequential decisions not sketched in his initial letter to Maxwell. In addition to giving each sequence its own section in the book, he arranges the stories chronologically—not by date of composition but by the order of events in the characters' lives. Thus, he makes visible and cumulative to other readers what he himself finds in the stories of the Derdons and the Bagots: "'the organic unity and artistic integrity of a novel'" (Iaconetti 20). Finally, Carduff makes one change from the outline he proposes to Maxwell, moving the Bagots from the middle of the book to the final third, and thus giving "The Springs of Affection" pride of climactic place by positioning it as the book's last word. His subtitle, *Stories of Dublin*, is the icing on top. As a heading, it flows from an interpretation of Brennan's body of work which gives priority to her Irish fiction—an interpretation which finds critical language in Maxwell's introduction and architectural solidity in Carduff's arrangement.

Carduff eventually edited three further volumes of Brennan's work, his concerted editorial action after her death a complement to and continuation of Maxwell's work during her life. Such work resembles Douglas Gibson's with Mavis Gallant; rather than revise stories, these editors curate collections. Still at Houghton Mifflin, Carduff followed up *The Springs of*

Affection with an expanded re-release of *The Long-Winded Lady: Notes from* The New Yorker (1998). Moving to Counterpoint Press, he continued to re-present and reconstitute Brennan's literary career, the order of his progression an order of precedence. Beginning with the twin foundations of her Irish fiction and New York journalism, he then gathered up her remaining stories in *The Rose Garden and Other Stories*—his first book for his new publisher. Carduff writes to the agent for the estate, Joe Regal at Russell & Volkening, on March 5th, 1999, declaring it "great that Counterpoint has given us this chance to complete what I always saw as 'The Maeve Trilogy.'". Still, he acknowledges that he began with the cream of the crop, describing the passage from *Springs* to *Rose Garden* as "a masterpiece [being] followed by a merely very, very, very good book" (24 January 2000). Finally, Carduff brought the unpublished novella *The Visitor* out of the Notre Dame archives and into print. Writing to Regal on January 11th, 2000, he attests to the manuscript's authenticity, offers a critical assessment, and reveals the enduring involvement—at the age of 91—of William Maxwell.

> It's improbable, but it's for real. It's early work—perhaps a little more adverbial and adjectival than the later fiction—but it's nonetheless terribly accomplished. And nobody could have written it but Maeve . . . We'll talk more soon, once you and Jack [Shoemaker, founder of Counterpoint] and Bill Maxwell have had a chance to read this little book. I want to include Bill in the loop, because though Maeve is 'our' writer—yours and mine—she's been Bill's longer than anybody else's. I want his opinion. Indeed, I crave his blessing.

Not long afterwards, Carduff left a message with the reassuring news that "Bill Maxwell likes THE VISITOR + gives his blessing—can't believe it exists . . ." A later letter outlines Carduff's light editing on *The Visitor*, while once again demonstrating his sure sense of where this new book fits in Maeve's corpus, an artistic body whose dimensions he himself is charting for the reading public. "I'm glad that its [sic] been given the honor of publication as a little book, a complement and a coda to *The Springs of Affection* and *The Rose Garden*" (23 May 2000).

Yet if the editorial labor underpinning Brennan's literary resurrection was American, the readership it reaches was decidedly Irish. When I spoke to Carduff, he pointed out that *Springs* began to catch fire in the Irish-American community before crossing over to the mother country, but conceded "that she has had a much more robust posthumous career as an Irish writer than as an American one." Already in 2001, his letters to Regal show which way the wind is blowing. On April 5th, he writes that

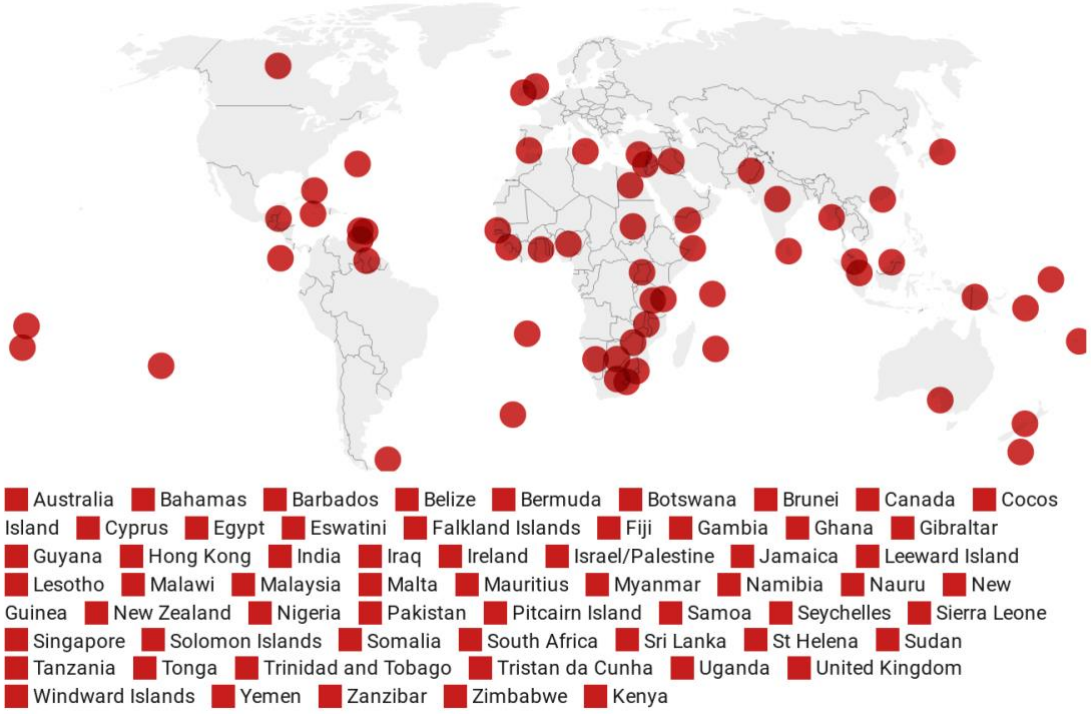
> I regret that Flamingo/HarperCollins did not pick up either *The Rose Garden* or *The Visitor* for the UK. *The Visitor*, however, has been picked up by New Island Books, Dublin, which is a very fine literary house . . . Needless to say, I'm very pleased with the way that Maeve has leapt out of total obscurity and into the limelight. She's well on her way to becoming a modern Irish classic, if she isn't there already. I'm more proud of the four Maeve books than I am of anything else I've done in publishing.

Carduff brought Brennan back into print and into a more fully Irish light. Irish readers, of both the professional and lay varieties, have since used that platform as a springboard towards reclaiming the exiled writer. In 1998, Fintan O'Toole suggests that the strains of dual nationality precipitated Brennan's descent into madness: "She could be neither an Irish writer nor an American one. Is it so surprising that her wonderful imagination was finally derailed into psychosis?" This diagnosis is sounder on the economy of literary reputations than it is on the workings of mental illness. If access to larger markets via the institutions which guard their gates is often essential to a financially-healthy, editorially-supported literary career, then identification along national lines can be equally important to maintaining critical and readerly attention into the long afterlife of literature—succeeding an author's death. O'Toole's implied explanation for Brennan's neglect, that she had fallen between the accepted categories of Irish and American, is borne out by the national nature of her revival. William Maxwell's more equitable hope that a balance could be struck, since "in fact, she is both, and both countries ought to be proud to claim her" (1), has been proved somewhat naive. The Irish edition of *The*

Springs of Affection, issued in 2016 by The Springing Fly, replaced Maxwell's introduction with a new one by Anne Enright, memories of her *New Yorker* life with an appreciation by a fellow Irish woman writer. The transition from transnational production to national canon was complete.

PART THREE: PENGUIN BOOKS

The Traditional Market Agreement (1947-1975): British Sphere of Dominance, circa 1947



Outposts of the Penguin Empire

Figs. 4 and 5

INTRODUCTION: THE PENGUIN GROUP AND PUBLISHING (IN)DEPENDENCE

The worldwide expansion of the Penguin publishing house—from Penguin Books to the Penguin Group, through the second half of the twentieth century and across the Global Anglophone, instigating and absorbing publishing enterprises, shaping first texts and then tastes through the prestige of its name and the pull of its resources—is a story that has not yet been told. Existing accounts of Penguin's institutional history concentrate almost exclusively on the business of its London headquarters and limit their analysis of its literary influence to the British home market.[1] The archives the company has made available at the University of Bristol are similarly national in scope, recording Penguin's progress from its beginnings as an imprint of The Bodley Head in 1935—kindling the mass readership for quality paperbacks—to its acquisition by Pearson Longman in 1970.[2] These documents do not extend beyond the 1980s, stopping well short of the publisher's purchase by Bertelsmann and simultaneous merger with

[1] The most recent volume of Penguin publishing history, Stuart Kells's *Penguin and the Lane Brothers: The Untold Story of a Publishing Revolution* (2015), notes that previous works on the same subject are "above all biographies of Allen Lane, the eldest, craftiest and most thrusting of the three brothers who founded and ran Penguin" (ix). These works include J. E. Morpurgo's *King Penguin: Allen Lane* (1979); Steve Hare's edited collection of primary sources, *Penguin Portrait: Allen Lane and the Penguin Editors, 1935-1970* (1995); and Jeremy Lewis's *Penguin Special: The Life and Times of Allen Lane* (2005). They hew closely not only to Allen Lane, but to the publisher's Harmondsworth headquarters and to the years leading up to 1970, when Lane died and the firm was acquired by Pearson Longman. Hare places the publisher within a specifically national context: his book offers "not simply a record of the early years of one paperback imprint, but a record that provides valuable insight into Britain's cultural, social and political development between 1935 and 1970" (xi). Kells's redress of the historiographical balance sheet is limited to personnel; his book expands our knowledge of the other Lane brothers, while maintaining the chronological and geographical inhibitions of the preceding histories. *The Penguin Companion*, whose revised edition was published in 2006, offers brief entries on the company's overseas divisions, but these are cursory and few compared to the accounts of the publisher's British operations and operators. The short paragraph on "India," for example, says no more than that "Penguin Books (India), now based in Delhi, focuses on the promotion of contemporary Indian writing in English or translation" (Yates 73). The one exception to this prevailing imbalance is Alistair McCleery's article on "Penguin and post-colonial publishing, 1948-1972" (2013), which offers a valuable overview of Penguin's global publishing agenda during (but not after) the period of the Traditional Market Agreement (TMA): 1947-1975.

[2] This purchase was itself colored by national(ist) considerations. The merger with Pearson Longman prevented "an American takeover by McGraw-Hill" and meant that "although Penguin was subsumed into Pearson Longman, and not the other way round, it remained a British institution" (Lewis 402).

Random House in 2013,[3] the most recent of its reinventions in what Dan Sinykin has named "the Conglomerate Era," our current age of multinational publishers, at once growing in market share and shrinking in number. Geographical limits accompany this chronological ceiling on the Penguin Archive at Bristol: it does not include any of the files belonging to the spreading subsidiaries of the Penguin Group, divisions progressively established in the US (1939), Australia (1946), New Zealand (1973), Canada (1974), India (1985), South Africa (1989), Ireland (2002), China (2006), and Brazil (2009).[4] What has been left out of the current historical and archival record—and consequently the literary criticism dealing not just with Penguin Books but Penguin's books—is the development of an overseas publishing empire that primarily extends to, and knits together, the world's English-reading and English-writing markets. This chapter will rectify the academic impassivity that has attended the growth of the Penguin empire, arguing for the importance of this institution, and its transnational networks, in giving a material existence to the Global Anglophone. How did Penguin gain, maintain, and increase its power? What have been the consequences of its commercial dominance for writers and readers in English? Are individual authors and smaller publishers able to alter this

[3] At the time, this merger reduced the "Big Six" publishing houses to the "Big Five," making Penguin Random House "the largest consumer book publisher in the world, with a global market share of more than 25 percent" (Pfanner and Chozick). Hachette, HarperCollins, Simon & Schuster, and Macmillan are the only other members of this league—all of them owned, in turn, by much larger conglomerates (Lagardere, News Corp, ViacomCBS, and Holtzbrinck). A 2020 deal aimed to reduce their number still further: Penguin Random House and its parent company Bertelsmann were set to acquire Simon & Schuster and thus "create the first megapublisher" (Alter and Lee). In November 2021, the Justice Department blocked the acquisition on competition grounds, but the legal proceedings and the publishers' enthusiasm for this merger are ongoing (Harris and Alter). The competition with Amazon which has partly provoked this push for even greater conglomeration lies outside the scope of this chapter. Nevertheless, the unfolding twenty-first-century history of Penguin continues to display the twin characteristics which make it such a fitting case study for the Global Anglophone: the combination of its local editorial activity, driving both competition and collaboration with homegrown publishers, and its global commercial concerns, resulting in ever-greater transnational corporate consolidation. Both are essential to understanding the shape of literatures in English across the later twentieth and into the twenty-first centuries.

[4] I have drawn together this list from information scattered through *The Penguin Companion* and the timeline available under "Penguin History" at https://www.penguin.com/penguin-history/.

institution, even as they are altered by it? What literature has its empire enabled, and what literature has it suppressed?

The overarching narrative is illuminated by two smaller ones: the fall of McPhee Gribble and the rise of Penguin India, each a case study in the consequences of Penguin's expansion. The institutional trajectories of McPhee Gribble, an independent Australian publisher emerging from and then returning to the global embrace of Penguin, and Penguin India, a subsidiary rising to subcontinental pre-eminence, illustrate larger movements in the business of books: the long-subordinate status of the former territories of the British Empire as export markets for London publishers; the collapse in 1975 of the postwar Traditional Market Agreement (TMA), which had separated the Anglophone world into spheres of British and American publishing dominance; and the strangely divided legacy of that downfall, spurring both a burst of independent publishers across the 1970s and the increasing conglomeration of multinationals in the 1980s. These developments become visible through readings of Helen Garner's *The Children's Bach* (1984), a slender novella appearing at the hinge in its press's history, when McPhee Gribble agreed to a fateful co-publishing pact with Penguin Australia, and Vikram Seth's *A Suitable Boy* (1993), the famously long novel that signaled Penguin India's arrival as a major player in the publishing world. In both cases, a central writer-editor relationship determines the book's public appearance. I have reconstructed these partnerships—between Helen Garner and Hilary McPhee, Vikram Seth and David Davidar—through archival research and personal interviews, using this hitherto unexamined editorial background to advance an analysis at once textual, institutional, and global.

For we can interpret these works in the light of their conditions of publication: one a marriage plot following four families across post-independence India and through fourteen

hundred pages, the other a story of near-divorce and an elegy for the era just passing, the 1970s now curdling into what Garner's biographer, Bernadette Brennan, calls the "destabilising influences . . . of nightclubs, drugs and extramarital sex" which enter and convulse the cozy "domestic space of the Fox family's home" (69). I will argue that the fragmented form of *The Children's Bach* mirrors the very dynamics of social splintering and corporate consolidation roiling its publisher, a small feminist press born of an Australian independent publishing revolution then slowly falling under an updated form of the old overseas dominion. Composed of snapshots, discrete tableaus held together by abundant use of white space, the shape of the novella is a triumph that foreshadows failure; the postwar cultural and sexual rebellions ebb away within *The Children's Bach*, just the Australian publishing revolution recedes around it. Meanwhile, the paradox of *A Suitable Boy*'s style sheds light on its ambiguous status as a genuinely international co-production—one involving editing teams in London, New York, and New Delhi—that nevertheless represents a partial patriation of the publishing infrastructure and energy buoying the late twentieth-century boom in Anglophone Indian fiction. At once overstuffed and transparent, narratively dense and linguistically simple, the novel's combination of sheer size and short declarative sentences amounts to an aesthetic of translation, a stretching of lucid English to accommodate a multitudinous, polyglot India—and a commercially successful mediation quite in line with Penguin India's divided place in the global publishing ecosystem.

Academic silence surrounds the history of McPhee Gribble, whose archive has until now "await[ed] future book scholars who will comb through the layers of promise and achievement represented by the company's all too brief span of a dozen or so years" (Munro, "Editors"). Hilary McPhee founded her own firm in 1975, in partnership with her friend Diana

Gribble and in the middle of a decade during which "independent publishers . . . were starting up around the world in all kinds of fields" (McPhee 131). Its literary success, financial struggle, and eventual absorption into Penguin Australia reflect the course of a cultural upheaval and its aftermath, the galvanizing 1970s giving way to a more neoliberal, globalized 1980s. "Of all the book markets in the Empire," Martyn Lyons has argued, few were more "colonised" than Australia's ("Introduction" xviii). Homegrown firms, and by extension a distinctly Australian literary culture, emerged against the long, withdrawing tide of British imports. Only in 1961 did Allen Lane of Penguin remark that "'Australia is about to emerge, speaking from a publishing point of view, into a creative phase in place of an absorbent one'" (quoted in Magner 8). His prophecy was borne out by the boom which gathered pace through the 1960s and 70s, the value of domestic publishing "doubling three times over the period 1961-79" (9). Yet the age of prosperity came to an abrupt halt, and Australian publishing experienced a curious kind of reversal. Losing money and selling out, the local scene "became virtually dominated" by foreign firms, though "now through local rather than London offices." This is the period and the path of McPhee Gribble, whose greatest success is the career of Helen Garner.

No history has yet been written of Penguin India. A hush persists despite the publisher's rapid rise to pre-eminence: from three employees, roughly ten thousand dollars in capital, "a two-bedroom flat in New Delhi," and "a boardroom table made of teak"—then the company's "most valuable asset"—to its current position as the leading English-language publisher in the world's most swiftly growing English-language market ("Publisher's Note" xi-xii). David Davidar was its founding editor, a 26-year-old fresh off the Radcliffe Publishing Course at Harvard, where he, the sole Indian in his class, had caught the eye of that year's graduation speaker: Penguin chief executive Peter Mayer. In three accounts of the Indian book business,

Penguin India receives three tantalizing, standalone sentences, one of them an endnote. Tejeshwar Singh acknowledges that "Penguin Books came to India in 1987 in partnership with an Indian media baron and has done great service to the cause of Indian writing in English as [sic] also by translating many regional language writers" (56). Abhijit Gupta notes that "Penguin India started publishing from 1987, and currently publishes 200 titles annually, with a backlist of 750 titles, making it one of the biggest publishers of English books in South Asia." And Rashmi Sadana adds that "Penguin India (part of the larger U.K. Penguin Group) began publishing in 1985 (under the editorship of David Davidar) and soon became the country's largest seller of literary fiction in English" (68). (The contradictory dates cited in these passages are easily reconciled; set up in 1985, the company released its first list two years later.) While Pavithra Narayanan pays closer attention to "the top spot" Penguin India occupies among the multinational firms that began to congregate in Delhi during the 1980s, she still limits her summary of the publisher's evolution to two paragraphs (98-9). But the coincidence of the publisher's ascendancy with "a remarkable national [Anglophone] literary renaissance" (Kapur) *is* no coincidence: writing follows where opportunity opens. How did Penguin India accumulate the power it presently wields? What place does it occupy, not simply in the hierarchy of Indian publishers, but in the turbulent debate over the status of English as an Indian language? The book that crystallizes these questions is Seth's *A Suitable Boy*; answers emerge from a close examination of its editing and its worldwide launch in 1993.

Thus, the fates of these two publishers can be plotted along axes of dependence and independence—but not in straight, uncomplicated lines. The broadest outline of each publishing house's history might suggest a simple contrast, with the Australian press resisting the currents of multinational publishing and the Indian offshoot facilitating their flow. After all, one is now

the largest English-language publisher in South Asia; the other no longer exists. Yet if Penguin India has flourished within the Penguin Group, that flourishing has also played a pivotal, and pivotally local, role in transforming Delhi into a regional English-language literary capital; if McPhee Gribble is ultimately absorbed wholesale by Penguin Australia, left to wither as an imprint without the input of its founders, McPhee and Gribble nevertheless got their start with royalties from a Penguin project and benefitted for a time from their partnership with the larger company. Each history makes visible the bonds between Anglo-American institutions and Anglophone literatures, associations which can both enable and distort creativity, shaping and stunting the development of alternative literary capitals. Both histories demonstrate that the balance of English-language literary power lies between homegrown publishing endeavors rooted in emerging hubs and swelling conglomerates reaching out from long-established centers—and that published books arise from their partial competition and partial collaboration within a transnational sphere most accurately described as the Global Anglophone.

I. The TMA and the Balance of Publishing Power

The expansion of Penguin Books takes place against a changing legal background dominated by the life, death, and lingering influence of the Traditional Market Agreement (1947-1975). Publishing, like international relations, operates according to competing spheres of influence. An individual publishing house finds a niche and attempts, through concerted editorial policy, to fill it. The various houses of a literary capital do the same on a scale as large as their linguistic and legal reach will allow. As a literary language, however, English is shaped and complicated by two outsized capitals, London and New York, by the shifting power relations between them, and by efforts in other Anglophone regions to build new concentrations

of literary capital closer to home. Thus the postwar decades are defined by the publishing equivalent of the Bretton Woods accords or—to mix historical analogies but borrow a more appropriate atmosphere—the Berlin Conference. As the first compact established rules for global economic relations, and the second codified the European carve-up of Africa, so the TMA officially divided the English-reading world into British and American zones of publishing control. It did not bring a new state of affairs into being; it formalized and prolonged the existence of an old imbalance of power. The Traditional Market refers to the former British Empire: traditionally valuable export destinations for British publishers, their markets monopolized by British editions.[5] During the Agreement's nearly thirty years of existence, therefore, "worldwide English-language publishing continued to operate along neo-colonial lines" (Squires). But though the end of the TMA arrived in fairly straightforward fashion in 1975—after the US Department of Justice filed an antitrust case and the publishers chose not to fight it in court[6]—the habits it had systematized died harder, and the aftermath was more

[5] It was a deliberate choice on the part of the British Publishers Association to substitute the vaguer, and thus more flexible, term "Traditional Market" for the more politically and temporally restricted "Empire": "It is therefore strongly urged that whenever it is necessary in an agreement to refer to Empire rights publishers should use not the term "the British Empire" but "the British Publishers' Traditional Market" (*A Guide to Royalty Agreements*, 4th edition 11).

[6] See the account of these legal proceedings in Mary Nell Bryant's "English Language Publication and the British Traditional Market Agreement" (1979). The TMA was a protective pact designed by British publishers and preserved through their solidarity; American companies merely complied with its terms:

> If an American publisher hoped to sell rights to a British counterpart, he could neither retain certain areas in the British market for himself nor sell rights to local publishers in British-market countries. If the U.S. publisher distributed a book directly to individual British-market countries, he thereby forfeited the possibility of having that book published and distributed in Great Britain. In effect, then, the agreement was a boycott of noncomplying American publishers. (374)

The complying publishers—twenty-one major American publishing houses, including Penguin Books, Inc. (the company's American division)—were the target of the case that brought about the TMA's downfall, *United States* v. *Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, et al.* Their collusion with the Agreement until 1974, when the case was filed, "gave the U.S. government its grounds for a charge of conspiracy to restrain trade and suppress competition." However, the publishers decided not to fight the foreign commerce section of the Justice Department, and the case "was never even tried in court" (372). Written four years later, Bryant's detailed analysis is lacking only in its assessment of the consequences: "the long-term implications of the case are unclear so soon after its resolution" (391).

complicated, aligning both with a rise in homegrown independents and an acceleration of the Conglomerate Era. The post-TMA era is characterized by a renewed struggle for markets in the Global Anglophone, a competition that eventually and ironically leads to greater conglomeration, but that also sets the stage for the emergence of Penguin India and McPhee Gribble.

The purpose of TMA, and its principal effect, was to guarantee British publishers exclusive sales rights for their editions to the territories of the ex-Empire. It prevented American infiltration—leaving US publishers to their own vast internal domain—while stifling the capacity of domestic Anglophone publishers to expand within and beyond their own markets. The Agreement thereby cemented London's status as the seat and source of publication for those English-language writers and readers who found themselves outside the American orbit. The colonial nature of this arrangement, persisting through a postcolonial era, is plain. As the official text drafted by the British Publishers Association in 1947 declares, "I/We will not as from this date enter into any contract for the publication of any book written by any British or foreign author . . . unless the rights granted include the sole rights of publication and distribution in the British Publisher's Traditional Market as defined below" (*A Guide to Royalty Agreements*, 5th edition 63). That definition covered roughly seventy territories, its changing vocabulary of monopoly captured in the language of British publishing contracts and helpfully tracked by Alistair McCleery.[7] The key provision was initially expressed

[7] Borders and names were, of course, far from fixed in the immediate postcolonial period. The markets listed in "American Books and the British Empire Market"—an article appearing in *Publishers Weekly* on 7 August 1948—include: Aden; Anglo-Egyption Sudan; Ascension; Australia; Bahamas; Barbados; Basutoland; Bermuda; British Guiana; British Honduras; British North Borneo; British Somaliland; British South-West Africa; British Togoland; Brunei; Burma; Canada; Ceylon; Cocos Island; Cyprus; Egypt; Eire (Ireland); Falkland Islands; Fiji; Gambia; Gibraltar; Gold Coast (including Ashanti and Northern Territories); Great Britain (including the Isle of Man and the Channel Islands); Hong Kong; India; Iraq; Jamaica (including dependencies of Cayman Turks and Caicos Islands); Kenya; Leeward Island; Malaya Union; Malta and Gozo; Mauritius (including Rodriguez); Native States

> as "British Commonwealth and Empire as constituted in 1947"; or by the early 1960s as "British Commonwealth and Empire as constituted at the date of this agreement together with the Republic of South Africa, the Irish Republic, Burma, Egypt, Iraq, Israel, Jordan and the British Trusteeships with the rest of the world an open market except the USA, its depend-encies and the Philippine Islands". From the mid-1960s some UK contracts omitted Israel; while others, in the face of aggressive US competition, clarified the position of Canada by specifying "UK and Commonwealth including Canada". (138)

Hilary McPhee captures the consequences for readers in her memoir, *Other People's Words* (2001): "the books we read in Australia were largely the result of decisions taken somewhere else." Speaking to me, from the late-life perspective of a now-retired independent publisher, she added that the TMA "produced the context for us to operate in, to operate against . . . in terms of the kinds of books we were trying to publish, the kinds of things we were trying to do in Australia that hadn't been done before, we were doing it against that Market Agreement." The rule of the TMA was not absolute during its life; its death did not spell the immediate end of the Anglo-American duopoly. Rather, the Agreement stood for a possessive publishing grip that was not so easily relinquished, a skewed system against which burgeoning literary cultures and rising literary capitals across the old Empire sought semi-successfully to define themselves.

In both Australia and, in English-language terms, India, the concentration of London's literary power and the sheer resulting weight of British imports led to a chronic underdevelopment of homegrown literary infrastructure over the first half of the twentieth century. "At the end of the Second World War," Martyn Lyons notes, "little more than 15 per cent of the books sold in Australia were of Australian origin" ("Introduction" xviii).[8] The

---

of India; Newfoundland and Labrador; New Guinea Territory and Islands; New Zealand; Nigeria and British Cameroons; Northern Ireland; Northern Rhodesia; Nyasaland; Pacific Islands including the British Solomon Islands, Ronga, Western Samoa, Naura Island, New Hebrides, Gilbert and Ellice Islands, Norfolk Island, Union Islands, Pitcairn Island; Pakistan; Palestine; Papua Territory; Sarawak; Seychelles; Sierra Leona; Singapore; South Africa; Southern Rhodesia; St. Helena; Swaziland; Tanganyika; Tasmania; Transjordan; Trinidad and Tobago; Tristan da Cunha; Uganda; Windward Islands; Zanzibar and Pamba (432-33).

[8] In *A History of the Book in Australia 1891-1945* (2001), Lyons goes on to note that the imperial order was not

country's reputation as "the jewel in Britain's book trade empire" was entirely justified by its status as "the largest market for British book exports from 1889 to 1953" (Lyons, "Britain's Largest Export Market" 19-20)—a status the TMA was designed to secure. An imbalance in infrastructure leads to an imbalance in output; a stunted domestic publishing scene had the predictable effect of dampening a distinctly Australian literary culture. In 1950, Miles Franklin gave a lecture under the auspices of the Commonwealth Literary Fund, a modest forerunner of the Australia Council for the Arts, and articulated the obvious artistic drawbacks of commercial dependency: "Without an indigenous literature people can remain aliens in their own soil . . . The fuller its libraries, the louder its radios, the more crowded its periodicals with imported stories and songs, the more clearly such dependence exposes innate poverty" (2-3). But a country interested in itself must find the means of individual talent and institutional support to nourish that interest. In spite of the TMA—and soon in active opposition to it—the "postwar phase of 'national awakening'" worked through and towards a national literature (Munro and Curtain 6).

The "period of reconstruction" following the war brought several structural developments conducive to a domestic publishing boom: the baby boom, swelling the ranks of readers and writers; the establishment of thirteen new universities (where only six had existed before), an expansion that was itself a "major factor in the development of Australian publishing . . . as income from textbooks gave publishers scope to risk promoting less commercial works" (Morrison); increased public funding for libraries, providing publishers with a certain guarantee

without allies and beneficiaries in the dependent market: "This dependence on British publishing houses would not have lasted as long as it did if it had not also been immensely profitable to Australian booksellers. They were not servile victims of the regime but very active protagonists in the imperial relationship" ("Britain's Largest Export Market" 23).

of sales; the inauguration and proliferation of prizes for Australian writing, such as the Miles Franklin Award for a novel which—according to the terms of Franklin's will—"must present Australian Life in any of its phases" ("History of the Award"); and eventually the creation of the Australia Council for the Arts in 1967, a funding body with its own Literature Board to support writers and small publishers.[9] What Brigid Magner calls "the affluent phase" of Australian publishing followed (9). This heady era of cultural nationalism culminated, in political terms, with the electrifying, reforming, chaotic Gough Whitlam-led government of the early 1970s.[10] "It was an extraordinary, but brief time," Hilary McPhee told me of "the Whitlam years" (1972-75), one drawing together "the Vietnam demonstrations, the women's movement, and perhaps a sense of national pride." In terms of publishing, it produced an Australian-led offensive against the TMA and set the scene for McPhee Gribble's founding in the same year of the Agreement's downfall. Max Harris, the editor of the *Australian Book Review*, writes of "The End of Publishing Colonialism" in 1973:[11]

> As Australia has matured, and the British Empire disintegrated, the hostile and damaging effects of this private cartel management on the publishing and retailing industry, and on the intellectual life of Australia have become totally and completely

[9] See Ian Morrison's "The History of the Book in Australia"—in *The Oxford Companion to the Book* (2010)—for a concise account of these developments.

[10] This was not, of course, the first such era of cultural nationalism in Australian history. Literary ferment accompanied the late nineteenth-century movement towards Federation, and one periodical in particular, the *Bulletin*, played an outsized role in bringing Australia writers into print—and Australian literature into being. The *Bulletin*'s nationalism was not remotely free of racism; in fact, its strapline of "Australia for the Australians" became, in 1886, "Australia for the White Man and China for the Chow" (Haigh). Nevertheless, and in the words of Sidney Baker's *The Australian Language* (1945),

> [The *Bulletin*] may be said to have formed a mould into which Australian creative talent was poured . . . Perhaps never in the history of world journalism has a paper stood nearer to the heart of a country than the "Bulletin"; probably never again will so much of the true nature of a country be caught up in the pages of a single journal. (295)

[11] Nicholas Fraser's somewhat partial account of "The Transatlantic Book War," in the *New Statesman* issue of 9 May 1975, declares that

> if the Justice Department's actions have any motive ulterior to its own judicial will, it is probably the doing of an Australian entrepreneur called Max Harris, once publisher of an acerbic literary review entitled *Angry Penguins*, and long-term opponent of the supremacy of the British 'imperialist' publishing system and its apparently stifling effects on Australian culture. Harris's histrionic blasts have been read by US government lawyers; indeed they form the basis of the Justice Department's case. (616)

intolerable.

> As a sovereign nation, Australia has to destroy the Traditional Market Agreement with force and political determination. Our intellectual life cannot be the private and exclusive property of a group of British publishers any longer. (Harris 63)

Two years later, Hilary McPhee and her friend Diana Gribble established McPhee Gribble. They did so in defiance of a publishing system stacked in the big powers' favor—but with money earned from *Practical Puffins,* their series of how-to children's books designed for Penguin and sold worldwide through the British giant's international Group.[12] This wrinkle in the story of rising literary self-determination is equally a part of the TMA's aftermath, an irony ultimately compounded by McPhee Gribble's absorption into Penguin Australia: publishing (in)dependence in the Global Anglophone requires the parenthesis; as the histories of McPhee Gribble and Penguin India will reveal, it is never an absolute achievement but only one of degree.

The struggle to establish a homegrown English-language publishing scene in India represents another partial success, won only over the course of the twentieth century and in collaboration with companies whose interests involved other nations. The potential of the English-reading Indian market—always tiny compared to the country at large, always growing at a rapid pace nonetheless[13]—had long tantalized British publishing houses. As Pavithra

---

[12] *Practical Puffins* gave them "a cash flow and a publishing project which fitted our enthusiasms like a glove" (McPhee, *Other People's Words* 132). McPhee recalls that "while we'd been writing and illustrating, Penguin editors in Canada, the United States and the United Kingdom had all ordered large quantities from sample pages . . . Something like three million copies eventually sold worldwide, a precedent within the Penguin Group for inter-group sales, we were told, and some kind of record, perhaps, for Australian publishing" (134).

[13] This asymptote in publishing history—the perennial potential of the Indian English-language market—has endured throughout David Davidar's career:

> At one time, it seemed as though the maturing of the English-language trade market in India would happen in my lifetime . . . The potential exists. According to some experts, India already has the largest number of people who use the English language in some form or the other. The number of those who use it fluently is miniscule but that number will increase and that will have an effect on writers and readers and publishers in the English language. Will there come a time where Beijing and New Delhi are the world's capitals in terms of where all the advances and the recognition lie? I certainly hope so! (Personal Interview)

Narayanan points out, "the nexus between trade policies, academia and the publishing industry in India dates . . . [to] the passing of the Charter Act of 1813 and the English Language Act in 1835," the first ending the monopoly of the East India Company and forcibly opening India to private British enterprise, and the second establishing English as an official language of education.[14] In their wake and the later nineteenth century, British publishers began arriving in India, stoking and supplying a primarily educational appetite for English books. Oxford University Press, Macmillan, Longman, and Blackie & Son set up branch offices and set about distributing their British publications as textbooks—with Macmillan in 1886 "ventur[ing] into fiction, with 'Macmillan's Colonial Library' and 'Macmillan's English Classics' for Indian Universities" (Gupta).[15] These firms stayed on and adapted after Independence, even rebranding themselves in the case of the renamed Orient Longman. However, and following the commercial logic of the TMA, they still served to direct the flow of exports far more than to discover, edit, and publish Indian authors in English. The case of R. K. Narayan, before Salman Rushdie the best-known Indian author outside the subcontinent, illustrates the largely one-way movement of English-language books. Narayan took it for granted that "there was no question of the novel"—his first, *Swami and Friends* (1935)—"being published at home. In the India of the early 1930s there were only educational publishers and there was hardly a readership for work of this kind" (Ram and Ram 143). Instead, he sent the manuscript to

[14] See the classic account of these developments, and their consequences for the study of English literature in India, in Gauri Viswanathan, *Masks of Conquest: Literary Study and British Rule in India* (1989).

[15] See Priya Joshi, *In Another Country: Colonialism, Culture, and the English Novel in India* (2002) for an examination of the Macmillan Colonial Library and its Indian readers. Joshi quotes an 1863 letter from Alexander Macmillan to George Otto Trevelyan, then a civil servant in India, that shows the groundwork and attitude paving the way for expansion: "'We are increasing our business with India both in school books and in the supply of Libraries and Book Clubs and private persons, and we could do more if it came our way. What strides education must be making among the natives! . . . I should be glad to know something about these same scientific natives'" (96).

London, suffered a string of rejections, and only found a berth with Hamish Hamilton through the unexpected offices of Graham Greene. Narayan "broke free of hack work the very day he received [his friend Krishna] Purna's cable from Oxford: 'Novel taken: Graham Greene responsible'" (142). And rather than turning to any existing Indian publishing house or branch office when the Second World War interrupted his relations with London, Narayan founded his own: the self-publishing, and still-existing, Indian Thought Publications (314). Its success in selling his books did not convince Narayan that a larger market existed. In 1985, he would tell David Davidar that establishing Penguin India "to publish Indian writers in English was a fool's errand." He "felt that Indian readers of English-language texts were basically looking for imported books" and that "there weren't enough Indian writers of quality for any new publishing company to make a go of it" (Personal Interview). Yet this was to mistake the nature of the relationship between publishers and writers: the former are not produced by a surfeit of the latter; rather, writers emerge when opportunities for publication proliferate.

Indigenous English-language publishing slowly took root after Independence. The field was long "dominated by [the scholarly] Asia Publishing House of Bombay, founded in 1943 by Peter Jayasinghe, and widely regarded as the first Indian publishing house to be organized along truly professional lines" (Gupta). Publishers such as Vikas, Jaico, Hind Pocket Books, and Orient also arose in this era, with Orient "the first to publish fiction written in English by Indian authors" (Singh 53). Rupa Publications began as a distributor in 1936, before expanding into publishing; still going strong, it entered into partnership with Davidar to launch the Aleph Book Company in 2012 ("Three Publishing Veterans Push English Fiction in India"). But with even homegrown houses concentrating on educational books, and foreign firms focusing on the reprinting and distribution of titles already issued abroad, India was an Anglophone "trade

publishing wasteland," Davidar told me. More generously, the publisher Rukun Advani describes these smaller presses as demonstrating "the considerable untapped potential for trade publishing—which then took wing via Penguin India, who began international quality paperbacks and high quality general trade publishing in hardback" (Personal Interview). For legal reforms gradually drew the two strands of Anglophone publishing activity—foreign and domestic—together, directing overseas resources towards on-the-ground editorial talent. The collapse of the TMA combined with local legislation to make a genuinely creative Indian office attractive and necessary first to the Penguin Group—and then to an increasing number of multinational publishers. In 1971, India instituted the Foreign Exchange Regulation Act (FERA), "stipulat[ing] that any foreign corporation functioning in India had to be owned to the extent of at least 60 per cent by Indian promoters" (Singh 55-6). This had the immediate effect of driving out British and American firms or forcing them into partnerships with domestic collaborators[16]—reducing imports and stimulating production in an "era of 'protectionism'" (55). Hence the triumvirate guiding Penguin India's first steps: Davidar; Peter Mayer, chief executive of Penguin; and Aveek Sarkar, owner of the media giant ABP Group. Changing political currents, not to mention Penguin's success, eventually brought the legal, economic, and literary conditions in a curious circle—with renewed foreign ownership now more deeply

[16] Such partnerships included Tata-McGraw Hill and Sage Publications. Oxford University Press India was an exception, "unaffected" by corporate regulations due to its university affiliation. It "steadily consolidat[ed] its position" and is now "India's leading publisher of scholarly and reference books, with a list of more than 3,000 titles" (Gupta). The history of the Press in India up to 1947 has been expertly documented by Rimi B. Chatterjee in *Empires of the Mind: A History of the Oxford University Press in India Under the Raj* (2006). She argues that OUP India offered and reflected a more fluid exchange than one might have expected between British and Indian employees and readers: "Did the Press's operation in India function as a mask of conquest? The only possible answer to that is yes and no" (11). Her conclusion that "colonial hegemony was far more complicated than the simple ruler/ruled dichotomies that are so seductive to theorists" is one that I have kept in mind as I examine the post-Independence, post-colonial, and in some respects neocolonial era of English-language Indian publishing (179).

integrated into the Indian market and its rising literary capital of Delhi. State liberalization caused "the restrictive FERA [to be] replaced in 1999 by the far more enabling Foreign Exchange Management Act," a shift that "has meant the return of the multinational corporation including in publishing. Recent years have seen Picador, Random House, Routledge, Pearson Education, Butterworths, HarperCollins, Scholastic and Cambridge University Press come into India" (57). Despite the competition, Penguin Random House India—as it now is—has surged from strength to strength.

II. Penguin's Progress

Thus, where one might have supposed that American companies would simply invade the territory left undefended by the TMA's demise, a more complicated, three-pronged tale unfolds. American publishers do extend themselves overseas; some British houses increase their international presence to compete; independent presses across the former colonies rise and fall. At the time, London publishers were acutely aware of the dual threat to their hegemony: one British agent writing in *Publishers Weekly* even saw "the growing strength of indigenous publishing virtually everywhere" as more of a challenge than "American competition" (Sissons 42). Meanwhile, publishing as a whole quickened the process of global consolidation, as conglomeration followed conglomeration, and the firms which remained became "increasingly international in both composition and orientation" (Thompson). Penguin contains and illustrates the whole story: bought by Pearson in 1970, taking over other enterprises in turn, building up its overseas operations. Its expansion follows two overlapping phases. In the first, the publisher establishes subsidiaries in various parts of the old Empire essentially as export offices, dumping books published in London. This is the very term—"dumping ground"—which Davidar uses to

describe the attitude of UK publishers towards the Indian market prior to the establishment of Penguin India, which "really was the beginning in many ways of the thriving English-language trade publishing ecosystem in India today." In the second phase, accelerating in the late 1970s under the leadership of Peter Mayer (1978-96), Penguin transforms these operations into genuinely creative outposts, dedicated not just to selling books produced elsewhere but to publishing their own titles, building lists of homegrown authors, and absorbing homegrown publishing efforts. The TMA secured overseas markets for Penguin; in its absence, the publisher had to adapt, spread, and invest—while making use of its decades-old distribution networks. This pressure explains, in significant part,[17] why

> Mayer's vision was global. Criss-crossing the Atlantic at least once a month, he built up Penguin US, in 1986 acquiring New American Library/Dutton (the first global deal) and was responsible for the "invention" of local publishing. On his watch, Penguin operations in Australia and New Zealand, South Africa and Canada became much more than mere outposts of empire. In India, he was 20 years ahead of everyone else, and it is to Mayer that Indian publishing (including major literary festivals) owes its vibrancy. (Thomson)

In 1978 Mayer, an English-born but American-bred publisher, was "drafted in from the US to rescue a moribund Penguin Books." The growth that followed took place within British borders, with successful takeovers of Hamish Hamilton and Michael Joseph, and also well beyond them. Penguin Australia provided a dry run for Mayer's strategy of global development; Penguin India was its crowning success. Allen Lane had, in 1961, "decided that the Melbourne office

[17] Davidar points out that Mayer had a particular passion for India and that ruthless business sense could not account entirely for his attachment to the Penguin India project (which, though very large in Indian terms, was still dwarfed by the publisher's British and American operations).

> I think Peter's decision to establish Penguin in India sprang from a kind of emotional and visceral response to what he felt he could do as a foreign publisher for India: what can we do that is not exploitative, how can we be part of the cultural milieu of the countries that we operate in and so on. He didn't like the idea of India just being an export market for Penguin companies elsewhere in the world.

Looking at the sum of Mayer's actions with Penguin, however, the larger pattern of global expansion and development is unmistakable.

should be encouraged to publish locally, and not be restricted simply to importing books from England" (Lewis 378). However, Lane's support for greater Australian independence clashed with his chief editor Tony Godwin's determination not to 'lose our controlling ability to direct and shape the Australian list'" (380). And so it was not until 1979, in Hilary McPhee's memory, that Brian Johns joined Penguin Australia as publishing director and truly "transformed Penguin's Australian operation," moving the subsidiary firmly into the field of Australian fiction. This development set the stage both for Penguin Australia's co-publishing agreement with McPhee Gribble—and its eventual acquisition of the independent press. The next step along Penguin's path came in the immediate aftermath of the TMA's downfall and clarified its perceived stakes for British publishers. The company launched a pre-emptive strike into the American market by purchasing Viking in 1975, for "according to [then-]Penguin Chairman E. J. B. Rose, one of the primary reasons for his firm's acquisition of Viking Press was the Department of Justice's action" (Bryant 392).[18] Finally, Mayer set his sights on India—where Penguin had maintained only an export office in Delhi and a relationship with Rupa as their distributor—and on the young Davidar at Harvard. On July 26th, 1985, Mayer gave a press conference at Delhi's Taj Mahal Hotel to celebrate an anniversary year, and to make an announcement.

> Fifty years ago when Allen Lane launched the first ten Penguins it is hard to know whether his vision was worldwide or parochially British . . . [But] in the most recent period Penguin has grown enormously. In 1978 we were publishing 500 books a year and we now publish nearly a thousand titles a year. Our backlist which was about five thousand after having to be cut back because of our economic difficulties is now between six and seven thousand.

[18] Although a New York office—Penguin Books, Inc.—had been established in 1939, it carried out the usual mandate of the early subsidiaries, tasked with imports and distribution rather than creative publishing. Only with the takeover of Viking did Penguin become, "at last, a presence in America as well as on this side of the Atlantic" (Lewis 402).

This background established and the essential question asked—will Penguin pursue a global or a parochial destiny?—Mayer declared that "I now want to make an announcement. I want to take this occasion of our 50th anniversary to tell you that the Government of India has kindly granted permission to us to form a publishing company in India with our partners Ananda Publishers."[19] One launch, Penguin India, harkens back to another, Penguin Books; a turning point in the publisher's history comes into view, its transition from a British firm with captive English-reading markets overseas to a modern multinational with divisions capable of originating their own books.[20] Such was Mayer's globalizing impact that, at his death in 2018, Inge Feltrinelli incorrectly gave him credit for Penguin Australia as well as Penguin India: "He founded Penguin Australia and Penguin India" ("Remembering"). Yet, precisely as a consequence of expanding Penguin's presence and devolving power to the regions of the Global Anglophone, Mayer was *not* directly involved in the daily work of Penguin India or Penguin Australia, in the relationships they cultivated and the books they produced. To understand the history of each house—how they stimulated the growth of Melbourne and Delhi as Anglophone literary capitals, and how that in turn produced the conditions of possibility for works such as *The Children's Bach* and *A Suitable Boy*—we must turn to the publishers and editors in the field: Hilary McPhee and David Davidar.

[19] Established in Calcutta/Kolkata in 1957, Ananda Publishers is to this day a division of the Bengali tycoon Aveek Sarkar's ABP Group. See "Our Portfolio" on ABP's company website: https://www.abp.in/

[20] The creative capacity of these modern divisions must be recognized but not overstated. The balance of each company, and its sales, still tilts towards the larger markets. David Davidar told me that

> in the first ten years of our existence we [Penguin India] were still largely seen as Penguin Global's distributor of books in India with a small publishing programme attached. I think this is true of the way in which all the large publishing multinationals headquartered in Europe and the US regard subsidiaries in the smaller English-language markets (India, Canada, Australia etc.)—while these subsidiaries are expected to be market leaders in their home markets, especially where local publishing is concerned, and profit generating, these profits are so small compared to those generated in the US, and to a lesser extent in Europe, that the revenues and profits generated by these companies are not of great importance to HQ. Their main value is that of a distributor and marketer of books published by the company around the world.

CHAPTER FIVE: HELEN GARNER AND THE FALL OF MCPHEE GRIBBLE

Penguin India is a success story, a commercial behemoth whose clout can be criticized but not denied. It is instructive to compare its flourishing to the fall of another publishing house ensnared in Penguin's spreading overseas empire. For if Penguin's global reach relies on the expansion of its subsidiaries, then the dominance of those branches comes at a significant, if complicated, cost to more independent publishers. One episode which illuminates this larger process, illustrating the means by which Penguin has maintained and increased its power, is the brief life of McPhee Gribble: a small, feminist, fiction-focused Australian publishing house. Concentrating on the working relationship between the writer Helen Garner and her editor Hilary McPhee, I trace the trajectory of McPhee's firm, co-founded with her friend Diana Gribble, from the mid-1970s to the late 1980s. McPhee Gribble's entanglements with Penguin—established with royalties earned through the larger press, sustained by an initially beneficial partnership, absorbed finally against its founders' will—inform my reading of Garner's short novel *The Children's Bach* (1984), which appears at the turning point in the publisher's history. I argue that the work's fragmented form both deliberately captures the atomization of Australian social life in the neoliberalizing 1980s and indirectly illuminates the effects of that broader change on its own conditions of publication. *The Children's Bach* is edited during, and published immediately after, the decisive period in which McPhee agreed to Penguin Australia's co-publishing contract, gaining access to the resources of the multinational institution but ultimately losing her hard-won independence. That watershed in turn reflects the rise and decline of an independent Australian publishing revolution, a postwar boom of creative institution-building, climaxing in the 1970s and centered in the city of Melbourne, that

eventually gives way to the renewed dominion of conglomerate groups, their Melbourne and Sydney branches staffed by Australian editorial workers but owned elsewhere. The fate of McPhee Gribble is inseparable from the worldwide progress of the Penguin Group. That inseparability and its consequences, creative *and* destructive, demonstrate that the Global Anglophone is composed of degrees of publishing independence—and by the literature those relationships of partial vulnerability and partial autonomy make possible.

I. An Editor's Education

McPhee Gribble would not have existed without Penguin; it was because of Penguin that it ceased to exist. Hilary McPhee's career, and the era of Australian literature it helped to galvanize, cannot be separated from her connections with the British giant. Her memoir, *Other People's Words* (2001), is partly the history of a complicated love affair with Penguin Books, beginning with the fact that "Allen Lane, the founder of Penguin Books in England, was one of my grandmother's heroes" (12). Yet her grandmother's deep attachment to the orange-covered paperbacks—a representative enthusiasm, since "Penguin Books rapidly embedded itself in the reading habits of Australians" (13)—coexisted with a corresponding sense of national inadequacy, a colonial insistence that "Australian literature and theater were irredeemably second rate" (15).[1] The granddaughter's path through publishing plays out this tension on a

[1] This is the "cultural cringe" of Australian cliché, a colonial inferiority complex whose psychological operation, institutional embodiments, and literary consequences are of course not limited to Australia. The phrase was coined in the title and body of an essay by Arthur Phillips, printed in *Meanjin* in the summer of 1950:

> The numbers are against us, and an inevitable quantitative in-feriority easily looks like a qualitative weakness, under the most favourable circumstances—and our circumstances are not favour-able. We cannot shelter from invidious comparisons behind the barrier of a separate language; we have no long-established or interestingly different cultural tradition to give security and dis-tinction to its interpreters; and the centrifugal pull of the great cultural metropolises works against us. Above our writers—and other artists—looms the intimidating mass of Anglo-Saxon cul-ture. ("The Cultural Cringe")

much larger scale, combining her protracted Penguin dealings with her determination to establish the necessary conditions—the national infrastructure and ensuing self-respect—for Australian literature to flourish.

McPhee's first experience of editing occurred under the tutelage of Clem Christesen and his culturally nationalist literary magazine *Meanjin Quarterly*. A student at the University of Melbourne, drawn to Australian prehistory, McPhee nevertheless shared the substance of her grandmother's literary attitudes in the early 1960s:

> It is difficult to project myself back into the mind of that girl then. What I now see as cultural dislocation and snobbery, I probably saw then as cosmopolitanism. My reading was entirely focused on the Northern Hemisphere; Australian politics was too dun-coloured and dreary to notice; Australian history was devoid of great debates and momentous events; and there was no local theatre or film-making of substance, I thought. So I was unenthusiastic about presenting myself to the editor of *Meanjin Quarterly* on that hot February day when I trailed over to the terrace house with its bow window in Royal Parade, Parkville. But I needed a job. ("Survival Struggles")

The part-time introduction to editing was therefore also the start of a cultural awakening. McPhee's first assignment was to read a story by none other than Patrick White. Learning above all to listen—"I listened to [Clem]. I listened to him dealing with authors . . . I eavesdropped a lot I suppose in those days" (Personal Interview)—she witnessed the life-changing fact that "to *Meanjin* came real writers: Dorothy Green, Judith Wright, Brian Fitzpatrick, Patrick White, A.A. Phillips, David Martin, A.D. Hope, all climbed the steep stairs to the first-floor offices during my time there" (*Words* 49). The extended epiphany was formative: "a sense of an Australian literary tradition as a struggle to be heard, and of the efforts needed by some people to support Australian creativity, I owed to those years as a lowly, part-time, eavesdropping assistant at *Meanjin*" (57). But though in retrospect she would acknowledge the truth of Allen Lane's 1961 prediction that Australian publishing was about to emerge "'into a creative phase'" (62), the young McPhee still saw Australia as "a cultural desert, a literary *terra nullius*" which

she was hungry to escape (70). She spent three years abroad, in Greece and London, and then returned in 1969 to Melbourne —and a position as editorial assistant at Penguin Australia.

It was there that her apprenticeship was completed, at a house beginning to exercise greater independence from the parent firm, where "everything the company did was considered useful background for an editor" (94), where "my lunch hours were spent sitting on the rim of the pulp bin salvaging and reading books" (92-3), and where she realized that "the long wait for orders to arrive by sea, the shortage in Australia of contemporary writing by Americans, Canadians, South Africans, New Zealanders and Australians was the direct result of the Territorial Copyright Agreement which carved the world up into copyright zones" (105).[2] During her time at Penguin Australia, they even broke the spine of Australian censorship laws, publishing *Portnoy's Complaint* and undertaking "massive clandestine distribution, only possible with Penguin's computerised invoicing and despatch system" (108).[3] McPhee's period in the belly of the Penguin operation lasted only two years, however; she and the General Manager, John Michie, left their marriages for each other—with the result, predictable given the still unreformed sexual politics of the time, that McPhee then had to leave the firm itself. There followed "a spell in the wilderness," otherwise known as a short stint at McKinsey, where she was "invited to train as 'the first woman consultant on our team'" (111). That job was succeeded by a further two-year spell of publishing at another British branch office—Heinemann, where there were "no editorial staff at all" and which came as a rather dismal "shock" after "the glories of the Penguin offices opening on to the courtyard, the fountain and

[2] Otherwise known as the Traditional Market Agreement.
[3] See the account of the *Portnoy* affair and its consequences in Patrick Mullins, *The Trials of Portnoy: How Penguin Brought Down Australia's Censorship System* (2020).

the state-of-the-art computer" (111-12)[4]—before McPhee reconnected via "the women's movement" with an old university acquaintance named Di Gribble (Personal Interview).

United by the "vague dream of one day becoming a kind of antipodean Hogarth Press" (131)—lucking into a natural division of labour, with McPhee more editorially-minded and Gribble more adept with design, office management, and "systems" (Personal Interview)—they made the partnership official in 1975: McPhee Gribble Publishers.[5] The cultural moment was ripe for independent publishing. An effervescence had been in the air, underpinned by clear government policy, since the "seismic shift" of the Whitlam government ended twenty-three years of conservative rule in 1972. Artistic energies were unleashed, the Australia Council's support for authors and presses alike expanded, and a "generation of new writers [who] would have once left Australia and . . . probably not have come back" stayed—and began looking for publishers (123). It was "an extraordinary, but brief time," McPhee told me, centred around the similarly brief, tumultuous Whitlam years, but drawing its vitality from a broader background: "the Vietnam demonstrations, the women's movement, perhaps a sense of national pride." Yet even as McPhee and Gribble's small press got off the ground, the ground being a "South Yarra back street" and their office a single rented room (132),[6] the association with Penguin never fully receded. As a publishing team, their true start took the form of designing the *Practical*

[4] While at Heinemann, editing, designing, and supervising "the printing of about fifteen hardcover books a year and reject[ing] what seemed like hundreds of others" (*Words* 113), McPhee did work with a then-unknown author named Gerald Murnane to publish his first novel, *Tamarisk Row* (1974). This was her "first experience of editing fiction" in any real depth (119).

[5] There were other names "which Diana Gribble and I toyed with throughout 1974: names like Freewomen, Lois Lane and Associates, Copycats, Fat City, reflecting the times rather than any serious ambition—and the fact that two women who had become friends wanted to start something together but did not know yet what it would be" (*Words* 130).

[6] McPhee Gribble occupied four offices across Melbourne during the fifteen years of its existence, beginning in South Yarra and moving first to "the half underground bunker in Jolimont," then to "three-storey terrace house in Carlton," and finally making their last stand in "the shabby old warehouse painted pink in the back streets of Fitzroy" (*Words* 129).

Puffins, a series of children's how-to handbooks, for McPhee's former employers. That unexpected and unprecedented success—"something like three million copies eventually sold worldwide, a precedent within the Penguin Group for inter-group sales, we were told, and some kind of record, perhaps for Australian publishing" (134)—unlocked a steady stream of royalties, providing "the income we needed to start publishing under the McPhee Gribble imprint" (138-39).[7]

II. McPhee Garner

The first book issued by the Antipodean Hogarth Press was Glen Tomasetti's "folktale" *Thoroughly Decent People*. And then

> One day in 1976, Helen Garner arrived at the Jolimont Lane bunker to tell us rather diffidently that she thought she might have written a novel. Would we take a look? And tell her *truthfully* what we thought. We each read copies of the manuscript of *Monkey Grip* overnight. And here was an original voice saying something that hadn't been said before under skies that were familiar from the opening lines. (142)

The originality and the familiarity do not contradict each other; rather, they are twin aspects of what McPhee Gribble made possible, mutually enhancing measures of what independent publishing could achieve in a historically colonized market. As McPhee told me, it "was about a world we knew and no one had written about"; in writing the at-once unbroached and near-at-hand, the author used "a language that hadn't been out and about before." Garner's biographer describes the broader "shock of recognition" that "gripped" the "vast majority of female readers" who found in *Monkey Grip* not just a Melbourne transmuted into fiction, but

[7] The "lifeline of *Practical Puffins*" would continue to be "our bread and butter in that period. We were doing maybe six titles a year for Penguin on a very lousy contract, a very small royalty and production fee. But that paid our overheads" (McPhee, Personal Interview). Needless to say, neither McPhee nor Gribble grew rich through publishing. "We earned around a school-teacher's wage most of the time. Everything else was re-invested in employing the people we needed in order to publish the books we wanted" (*Words* 150).

"the complex female experiences of motherhood, sexuality and desire, within the changing social contexts off the seventies" (Brennan 34). *Monkey Grip* is an episodic, day-to-day, almost diary-like account of shared houses in the Melbourne suburbs; a counter-culture nearing its summit; and a Garner-like protagonist, a single mother named Nora, who falls hopelessly in love with a heroin addict, while the carousel of their changing relationships carries on. In fact, the novel *was* largely carved out of Garner's actual diaries.[8] This did not endear its author to reviewers who were "mainly scathing and predictably sensational" (McPhee 143)—Peter Corris declared that "'Helen Garner has published her private journal rather than written a novel'" (Brennan 36); neither did its explosion of Australian literature's staid "notions of literary decorum" (34). But full of fucking—the word (used 120 times), the act, the "bodies with all their mess" (Wood), and the occasional ensuing heartache—*Monkey Grip* caused a stir that did not subside but gathered readers at an undiminishing rate. A *succès de scandale* was precisely the sort of success a fledgling McPhee Gribble required. The owner of the famed Melbourne bookshop Readings remembers that "'half of Carlton was buying the book to see if they were in it'" (Brennan 37). McPhee observes that those who did read it "mostly loved it, sales in hardcovers topped 4000 copies in a few weeks which was big time then for an unknown novelist without a publicity budget" (144). The number would soar to 100,000 copies by 1982 and the release of *Monkey Grip*'s big screen adaptation (Brennan 48).

The novel launched both writer and publisher—a success whose feminist foundations and implications were far from lost on its architects. A reader's report, authored by Glen

[8] In her 2002 *Meanjin* essay "I," Garner reflected that she

> might as well come clean. I *did* publish my diary. That's exactly what I did. I left out what I thought were the boring bits, wrote bridging passages, and changed all the names. It was the best fun I ever had, down there in the domed reading room of the State Library of Victoria in 1976, working with a pencil and an exercise book on one of those squeaking silky oak swivel chairs. I'll never be that innocent again.

Tomasetti and kept among the McPhee Gribble records at the University of Melbourne, declares that "what is feminist is to tell it all," adding that "it probably is a liberating kind of book, not in any sense of liberation conventionally, from conventions, but because Nora is so alive and there are many dead people who would find that a fact to be suppressed."[9] But the liberating book needed a publisher to set it loose. In 2013, Garner confided that "I'm sure that book would never have been published if there hadn't been a women's publishing company. I did show it to one bloke I know who worked for a big publishing firm, and he said 'no, Helen, no. It's too emotional'" ("Monkey Grip's Diaristic Birth"). Publishing conditions prior to the advent of McPhee Gribble were not propitious, a situation distilled into a sentence in the author's biography: "Garner believes that many male publishers would have either rejected her manuscript or required a radical change in structure" (Brennan 43). Meanwhile, and partly because of *Monkey Grip*, McPhee Gribble itself "had become, and would remain, media fodder," subject to numerous variations on "the *Brains and Beauty in South Yarra* headlines" (McPhee 145). Some of this coverage was predictably sexist; some drove increasing numbers of manuscripts and writers to the publisher's doors. And as McPhee Gribble steadily grew, the partners built a working environment for women without precedent in Australian publishing. When "the babies began arriving," it did not occur "to either of us to stop what we'd started although the advice from many people was that of course we must . . . [since] running an office and having new babies couldn't possibly mix" (McPhee 145). Instead, they moved to the Carlton terrace "where we set up a nursery on the ground floor—and McPhee Gribble kept growing on the two floors above" (145). More and more women came to work there, and the

[9] Tomasetti goes on to worry about "legal questions of protection for the writer from drug charges" and the possibility of the book "attract[ing] censorship, I mean banning." Bernadette Brennan points out that early-1970s "reforms to Australia's censorship laws . . . were essential for its publication" (44).

garden “became known as the McPhee Gribble Childcare Department” (146). The web of enabling relationships extended well beyond their Melbourne headquarters; in 1979, McPhee Gribble was one of “five women publishers” to found Sisters, a book club with an editorial board “which now reads like a who’s who of Australian feminism of the day” (16).

> In Australia we invited Edna Ryan, Eva Cox, Faith Bandler, Carmel Niland, Judith Wright, Elizabeth Riddell, Drusilla Modjeska, Dany Torsh, Fay Zwicky and many others to join the board. In the UK there was Carmen Callil and Anne Chisholm, and Paula Weideger in the States. We had links to Virago, the Women’s Press and small feminist lists and offered a range of titles by mail order.[10]

Forty years later, introducing the reissued *Monkey Grip*, Charlotte Wood concludes that “everything about the partnership between Hilary McPhee, Diana Gribble and Garner, all three aged in their 30s, was to become iconic, for it represented the wresting of Australian literature away from the grip of conservative old men into the hands of radical young women.”

Monkey Grip was the beginning of an editorial relationship that outlasted McPhee Gribble itself; as it deepened, however, the ground of Australian publishing shifted under its principals’ feet. The existence of an independent press was never less than a struggle, but the early years were ones of adventurous expansion. McPhee and Garner weathered the difficult second book well, even with its dire first draft.[11] A note from Garner a few years later speaks

---

[10] Though McPhee Gribble was associated with Virago Press, and McPhee herself maintains a close friendship with its Australian founder Carmen Callil, the relationship was not always easy. When Callil “took *Monkey Grip*, thinking it would do modestly as a paperback in England,” McPhee went to London and saw “Carmen's partner, who was Ursula Owen at the time. They'd bought several early McPhee Gribble books at this stage. Owen, who hadn't read the book that she was talking about—I can't guarantee that this was *Monkey Grip* [it might have been an earlier book]—said to me, ‘oh well, we'll have to have it re-edited of course’” (Personal Interview). McPhee acknowledges that in those days, “everywhere you went in the UK and indeed in New York, Australian editing was regarded as sub-standard.” However, “I knew our editing was not poor.”

[11] McPhee and Gribble read the first draft of *Honour & Other People’s Children* (1980), which was eventually published as two connected novellas, in Paris. Garner had received a fellowship to go and write in France. The publishers were in London, “displaying our wares to agents and publishers and barely sustained by telexes and postcards from the office with news of the children,” when “a telegram arrived from Helen asking if we could come to Paris where she had two copies of the new manuscript waiting for us” (*Words* 157). They

> read *Honour* in silence all afternoon on iron seats at opposite ends of the Tuileries. Then Helen came to the Hotel Esmeralda where we drank whisky and talked miserably for hours before trailing back to

to the importance of the partnership to their mutual progress:

> I'm terribly pleased that you like the stuff I sent you. I care a lot about what you think (di too) and trust you both, ever since that ghastly day in Paris when you so sensibly and correctly knowcked [sic] back that botch up I had presented you with. Actually until this very moment it had never occurred to me how *disappointed* both of *you* would have felt. So thanks for sticking by me. This means a *lot*. (159)

To which McPhee would add, "it meant a lot to us too." The relationship was enlivened and enhanced by proximity (which, though inimical to the piling up of letters so advantageous to archival study, allowed conversation to carry the brunt of the editing).

> Helen was living nearby and had been a friend for a long time. She called in often, arriving briskly. We'd discuss new shoes or bands and exchange instalments in the stories of our lives. She'd usually depart as fast as she'd come, leaving behind her a chapter or a short story or a letter in an envelope. Later that day or the next we'd talk on the phone. (158)

The talking means that McPhee "just can't remember editing Helen very clearly. Because we spoke rather than wrote . . . We would sit and talk about the work. I'm a great believer in that; that's why it's so important to be with the author when you can" (Personal Interview). In 1984, this method would help bring "an almost perfect little book" into the world, one "which would make [Garner's] reputation internationally" as *Monkey Grip* had made it in Australia: *The Children's Bach*. Yet when the novella appeared in paperback, its title page bore a new compounded colophon, just below an acknowledgment of "the assistance of the Literature Board of the Australia Council": "McPhee Gribble/Penguin Books" (iii).

> London having done the only possible thing: told Helen the truth—that the first draft of Honour didn't work for us. There's a telex in the files to the Carlton office dated 3 July 1979: 'Very rushed trip to Paris. Helen is fine but her book is rotten.' We thought she'd go to another publisher and that we'd lose her for good. (157-58)

To me, McPhee confided that the problem with the manuscript was that "it was so strained"—straining self-consciously after literary effect. Yet rather than changing publishers, Garner rewrote the draft into two long stories, each throwing different light on "events we'd all been through." *Honour*, in McPhee's words, is "about bringing up children, about domestic lives and not losing yourself in that frightful agony of marital breakdown. Trying to behave honourably in the teeth of a terrible demolition" (Personal Interview).

For one year earlier, McPhee Gribble had agreed to its co-publishing pact with Penguin Australia—a compromise that was initially enabling and ultimately, fatally compromising. Independent publishing conditions had taken a turn for the worse since their zenith in the mid-1970s, and the wider Anglophone context could not be ignored. A political sea change was underway: "the women's movement was compromising, there was a backlog of chaos after the 70s that was swirling through our lives, neo-liberalism was affecting everything" (Personal Interview). Meanwhile, the lingering legacy of the Traditional Market Agreement weighed on the editor, an ongoing pressure her authors little understood.

> I remember once [Garner] said to us—when we were struggling to hang on to Australian authors because the Poms were out here trying to seduce them—'It wouldn't matter if I had an English publisher, would it?' And I was flabbergasted. She didn't understand territorial copyright at all. I remember tears running down my cheeks as I tried to explain the importance of an export market for us. I couldn't believe that Helen was so naive about publishing, but she was.

The regime which the TMA enforced had stacked the odds against an independent Anglophone publisher establishing either its own export market or itself as a viable conduit for American books, bypassing the traditional literary capital of London—two central ambitions for McPhee Gribble. Meanwhile, the prosaic problems of cash flow and distribution further lowered the ceiling on the publisher's growth, and it was these troubles to which a partnership with Penguin seemed to offer the solution. McPhee recalls that "we were still deeply restricted by regular cash flow crises and poor distribution. Every independent publisher in a country the size of Australia with its markets thinly spread has still to cobble their distribution together state-by-state like we did" (164). Moreover, the arrival of Brian Johns at the head of Penguin Australia, with his hunger to publish homegrown fiction, promised an alliance without any immediately obvious downsides. "In 1983 Brian proposed a co-publishing arrangement between the two companies which seemed to all of us to provide McPhee Gribble with the best of both worlds

and Penguin with an even more expanded list" (McPhee 166). In retrospect, McPhee admits that the partnership "was probably naive of us, because we didn't really take into account what would happen if [their true partner] Brian left" (Personal Interview). In her memoir, McPhee also acknowledges a longer view of Australian publishing and artistic compromise that eluded her in the moment: "Nor did the irony of what we were doing occur to me—even, all those years before, having gleefully removed the boomerangs from Penguin's own Australian list" (167). McPhee Gribble gained access to larger marketing and distribution networks, as well as a predictable cash flow through Penguin's purchase of "whole print-runs" (166), and "we still saw ourselves as autonomous and independent, but most of our books now looked like Penguins, were often reviewed as Penguins, and much of our stock in the Ringwood warehouse was owned by Penguin" (167).

The process of absorption, once set in motion, had an irresistible momentum: always struggling for funds, and brought low by the recession of 1987, McPhee Gribble was bought outright by Penguin in 1989.[12] Brian Johns had moved on; his successors decided "we had got too big for our boots" and chose in 1988, when the press was most vulnerable, "to remind us of our status as very junior partners in an arrangement that the company 'now was reconsidering'" (254). Desperately, McPhee and Gribble sought new investors. Their archives contain a business plan for "1988-91," prepared for those investors who did not materialize, cataloguing

[12] McPhee Gribble was not the only publisher struggling with the combination of recession and Penguin's predatory attitude. Craig Munro writes of the University of Queensland Press—a renowned publisher of literary as well as academic titles—that

> as the mountain of UQP books in Penguin's warehouse grew during the 1990s, it became impossible to write off all this expensive stock without catastrophic impact on UQP's bottom line in any given year. At the same time, Penguin began penalising its customer publishers, including UQP, for every copy of excess stock in their warehouse over a certain limit—determined by each book's annual rate of sale. Penguin's over-worked computer supplied this information to them with relentless precision on a daily basis. (*Under Cover* 239-40)

the publisher's history and its unrealized hopes. The corporate language does not disguise their struggle. The predicament is clear: "Our problems over the last eighteen months have been exacerbated by a period of high interest rates and productivity affected by the impact of changed distribution terms with Penguin Books in March this year" (3). Their attempts to wrest the company back from Penguin are equally plain: "From March 1989, all McPhee Gribble titles have been appearing under its own imprint, in McPhee Gribble covers, and the relationship with Penguin Books limited to sales and distribution only" (1). The dream, even presented as a literal "mission statement," still has its grandeur: "McPhee Gribble plans to be, within five years, Australia's most effective, independent publishing operation, well-placed to acquire Australasian rights for a wide range of the world's best writers and swelling the best Australian writing into world markets . . . houses such as Farrar Straus & Giroux and Faber in the UK are comparable overseas models" (2). But it was not to be. Instead, McPhee Gribble became a Penguin imprint, or "a filing cabinet," to use McPhee's bitter term, and both founders made their exits (Personal Interview). McPhee would go on to have an illustrious later career, heading both the Picador list down under and the Australia Council, but the bitter disappointment has never left her.[13] Speaking to me, her heartache at McPhee Gribble's premature demise could not and would not be denied:

> The trajectory of it is about starting something marvellous, and that we were both enriched by, and ending up with a calamity that worked very well for the authors but didn't work terribly well for the publishers . . . When Penguin gobbled us up, we were crushed by it. It was like being run backwards and forwards over the top of us by a bulldozer, really. Penguin didn't do it well. They gobbled me up. We made a great deal of money for Penguin through authors like Tim Winton and Helen and so on. I was caught in the midst of that further demolition of the company. It remained an imprint in Penguin. Di I don't think ever visited our new office because she couldn't bear it, and I didn't want her to, because it was such a humiliating . . . I think she may have come

[13] Di Gribble, who died in 2011, went on to found the Text Media Group, with its innovative and still thriving Text Publishing arm (Heyward, "Diana").

> once. It was painful, you know. Painful for both of us. It was excruciating. The pain of it went on for quite a long time, as these things do.

III. *The Children's Bach*

The Children's Bach appears in 1984 and at the crossroads in the publisher's history. Nearly one hundred pages long, it concerns a family—Athena and Dexter Fox, a couple with two children and a happy home life (although their youngest son is alarmingly disabled and reachable only through music)—disturbed and upended by its encounters with another set of Melburnians who experienced the upheavals of the 1970s, and their consequences, rather more closely: Elizabeth, an old friend of Dexter's, her sister Vicki, her daughter Poppy, and her rock musician lover Philip. Athena has an affair with Philip, prepares to run away with him, and then realizes belatedly that he is not remotely interested; Dexter has a one-night stand with Vicki, only to discover how little it means to her. The family holds together, just. On the one hand, this novella illustrates the growing confidence of both author and publisher; McPhee Gribble's archives document the editorial exchanges that drove Garner towards a more complex fiction. On the other hand, the novel reflects the very dynamics of social fragmentation and corporate consolidation roiling its publisher, the "creative phase" of Allen Lane's prophecy shrinking into a more sour aftermath. This subsequent period is what McPhee would describe to me as "that whole trajectory of the 80s, when globalism happened to publishing, ending with the terrible crash in Australia in 87." In ways both formal and thematic, *The Children's Bach* represents a counterpoint to *Monkey Grip*—and an elegy for the era of creative explosion just passed, the 1970s which that first novel did so much to express. The scene is still suburban Melbourne, but rather than the multiple shared houses of the earlier work, Garner gives us one family home overturned. The first novel is entirely linear, a somewhat rough account that keeps going day

by day even at the risk of repetition. Whereas the short segments of *The Children's Bach*, separated by white lines, connect to each other at angles, refracting each other and achieving a glittering degree of formal polish. The first novel follows one woman's first-person perspective from beginning to end; point of view in the third "moves rapidly but somehow seamlessly among various characters, focusing on and through them, before it alights on someone else" (Lerner). The aesthetic is experimental, the social vision perhaps surprisingly conservative. The form of the novel gives shape to an atomizing society, holding together through its use of white space a series of discrete scenes and separate standpoints—or, to borrow the title's theme, musical exercises.

The first and the last page of *The Children's Bach* demonstrate the novel's awareness of social entropy, and of the uses of art in restoring connection and offering a counterbalance. The opening section of the novel consists of two paragraphs. The first describes a photograph of "the poet Tennyson, his wife and their two sons," these family members held together by the picture frame; the second places the worn photo in the Fox household, which is about to undergo its own strains. The narrative eye roves the photo, looking for the physical signs of relationship—and of detachment:

> Tennyson looks into the middle distance. His wife, holding his arm and standing very close to his side, gazes up into his face. One boy holds his father's hand and looks up at him. The other boy holds his mother's, and looks into the camera with a weak, rueful expression . . . It is a photo of a family. (1)

Contrary forces are contained within the family and by the configuration of their bodies. Though the first boy "is holding his father's hand, he is separate from the group." Garner uses three colons in this one paragraph, each simultaneously dividing a sentence while establishing a relationship of development between its parts. After all, the colon is the punctuation mark whose "best defined use is to separate clauses which are grammatically independent and

discontinuous, but between which there is an apposition or similar relation of sense" ("colon, *n*."). The shorter second paragraph then sketches the setting surrounding the picture frame, the place "between the stove and the bathroom door" where it hangs "torn and stained, and coated with a sheen of splattered cooking grease." Although "it is always peeling off, swinging sideways, dangling by one corner," the novel tells us, "always, before it quite falls off the wall, someone saves it, someone sticks it back"—the phrases themselves spilling outward before being caught by a period. Together these paragraphs introduce the themes and the structure of the novel; we will learn about family ties, about togetherness and separateness, about wear and tear, about things almost falling apart but not quite, and we will do so through snapshots of these characters' lives, segments that enact those same thematic concerns.

The McPhee Gribble archives reveal that this opening double image—the photograph within its own frame and the larger border of the Fox home—was reached only after considerable revision and editorial help.[14] Early partial typescripts show the author chatting about the different characters, employing a prominent narratorial "I" called "Helen," confessing her struggles with fiction, discussing as if her with her editor where to go next—all before arriving at the point that will later become the beginning, this throat-clearing cut away.[15] The published book contains no conspicuous narrator, but the later of two typescripts I found in the

[14] Bernadette Brennan devotes more space in her biography to the real-life inspiration for the Fox family than to the process of the novel's composition—and McPhee herself remembers that controversy more clearly than her editorial contributions. The family which provided the model for the Foxes were the Clarks: Axel, Alison, and their autistic son—Axel being Garner's long-time friend and the son of the well-known historian of Australia, Manning Clark (Brennan 65-8). McPhee revealed that "Glen [Tomasetti] came to us one day and told us we should not publish *The Children's Bach*, because it was about Axel Clark's family—whom Glen also knew. This is a very incestuous Melbourne story." Though McPhee and Gribble were determined that the book's publication "was not going to be stopped by Glen," it was "it was important to us that Helen showed Axel and his wife the manuscript, and not just warn them which Helen would have done anyway, and she did. They were immensely generous and brave about it. They didn't like the novel, but could see it was good. [They said] 'Go ahead'" (Personal Interview).
[15] A further notable change is that while present and past tenses intermix freely, and somewhat roughly, in the typescripts, the final version proceeds with a consistent past voice.

archives is still filled with the first person: "If I'm not careful, the future will catch up with me. Already since I started this book at least one thing has changed: there is now a good espresso machine at Tullamarine airport" (Second Typescript 87); "All right. Now everyone's got a roof over her head, we can get down to business. It may be that certain hinsts[sic] I dropped earlier have led you to imagine the wrong thing: that Athena is going to fall in love with Philip. Don't be silly!" (105); "~~for although I love Dexter I cannot pretend that he is not a pedant~~" (146).[16] The earlier typescript, unearthed in a different box at the University of Melbourne, displays the same characteristics in its unnumbered pages—"nobody will like her [Elizabeth] much at first, except me, and except Dexter who still loves her because she is part of his life" (First Typescript).[17] Moreover, it documents the beginnings of *The Children's Bach*'s beginning:

> Right. You've met them all now, I think, except Mrs Fox, and she'll probably appear only in Elizabeth's recollections. Let's call her Iris. A pretty, old-fashioned name. I can't decide what she looks like . . .
>
> I'm not very good at pulling things out of thin air. Every character in this book has, at its core, me. I used to worry about this. Now I think it's probably part of any novelist's job, and even a minor talent. I need to attribute to my characters ~~(indeed I invent them, or cobble them together, for this purpose)~~ certain qualities and behaviours that are my own. More exactly, I use my characters as carriers of burdens from my life . . .
>
> "But Helen!" a famous person said to me. "You are a novelist! You have a <u>story</u> to tell!" But the first forty pages of this book, which you may have just read, I squeezed out of myself like toothpaste out of a dried-up tube . . .
>
> ~~Don't get the wrong idea.~~ <u>I am capable of invention</u>.
>
> Everything in these opening forty pages was made up by me, least observed, remembered and stitched into place by me. The process is less like working out a jigsaw (somebody kicked the table) than like trying to sew a seamless garment out of a bottomless ragbag of different-sized fragments.

[16] The prominence of the first-person narrator—of a character called Helen Garner who is not an unbiased observer but an active participant in events—is a trademark of Garner's later nonfiction: her investigations of crime, gender relations, and accused or victimized men in *The First Stone* (1995), *Joe Cinque's Consolation* (2004), and *This House of Grief* (2014).

[17] I consider this typescript to be an earlier version of the novella because its pages are not numbered—suggesting a rougher stage of composition—and because it contains a mention of the unappetizing coffee on offer at the airport, a detail superseded by time and by Garner's overt correction in the other typescript: "You cannot get a decent cup of coffee at Tullamarine airport and there is nowhere civilized to sit." There is, moreover, a third incomplete typescript in Box 359, with the published beginning in place and the number "1" inked in red in the top right-hand corner.

> For example.
>
> Dexter has found, in some magazine or photo collection, a photograph of Tennyson, his wife and their two young sons walking in the garden of their house on the Isle of Wight. (Second Typescript)

It is through stages of rewriting—and this curious form of address (the second person as well as the first), seemingly directed both towards the general reader and the specific one who is her editor—that Garner moves towards the eventual opening and a less openly self-conscious attitude towards fiction. Those "first forty pages of this book" are either cut or reworked into later passages; the example becomes the first, tone-setting scene. The focus on the writer's perspective is diffused outward, her "ragbag of different-sized fragments" braided into the segments of the finished book, each a stage for the narrative's speedily shifting point of view, a third-person omniscience that hugs each character closely in turn. One such section begins with the revelation that "Athena's life was mysterious to Vicki. She seemed contained, without needs, never restless" (26); it ends with a reversal of perspective, when "Athena heard Vicki trying for Elizabeth's smart tone, and it squeezed her heart" (27). The arrival of Elizabeth and Vicki in the Fox home, where they meet Athena, prompts the following rally of impressions: "'Sisters,' thought Athena, with that start of wonder which family resemblance provokes. 'Big one's tough. Little one's miserable.' 'She's beautiful,' thought Vicki. 'It's warm. I wish I could live here.' . . . "She's a frump,' thought Elizabeth with relief" (10).

Garner's recently published diaries, *The Yellow Notebook* (2019), offer numerous glimpses into the method of composition that, in 1983-84, produced these scenes of rapidly intercutting perspective. She invariably describes her technique as a stitching together of distinct strands, "a weaving and twining of many a disparate thread" (93). In early 1983, she declares that she must "start to snip and pin and stitch my SEAMLESS GARMENT" (56). She writes of a day in 1984 that "I worked in a trance for nearly four hours," pulling together a

dinner scene "out of elements so disparate that only a compulsive note-taker like me could have had the raw material at her disposal" (89). Those elements, alchemized, combine in the characters' individual dramas: "Poppy says on the way home, 'Athena's perfect, isn't she.' Dexter sings his hymn, is crossed by Vicki, falls off his chair and breaks it. They drink a whole bottle of gin. Athena and Philip notice each other." Yet McPhee's contribution is also crucial, telling Garner after the first draft "'to slow things down . . . [to] spac[e] it out . . . to loosen the structure—relax it a bit'" (Grenville and Woolfe 66). The threads need not be pulled so tight. This advice is not unlike that which Philip, a talented musician if a callous lover, gives to an unnamed young woman about songwriting near the end of the novella.

> 'Take out the clichés . . . Cut that stuff out. Just leave in the images. Know what I mean? You have to steer a line between what you understand and what you don't. Between cliché and the other thing. Make gaps. Don't *chew* on it. Don't explain everything. Leave holes. The music will do the rest.' (89)

Put into practice, this editorial guidance results in Garner's pattern of fragments shored against the ruins—not a seamless garment, but a garment whose seams are essential to its form, a structure produced in concert with an editor who was herself torn between independence and conglomeration.

The final page-and-a-bit of *The Children's Bach* consists of a single sentence, broken into separate sections divided by white lines, strung together with commas and anaphoric "and"s, revisiting each of the characters in turn (95-6). It combines connection and diffusion, the centripetal and the centrifugal, in a single, broken syntactical structure. As such, this sentence condenses and exemplifies the whole structure of the novella, gathering its people and their actions into a continuous future tethered by the repetition of "will," ending with the musical release of "handfuls of notes high into the sparkling air!"

IV. The Retreat of the Australian Publishing Revolution

Garner's art renders and sustains the splintering. History was not so kind. *The Children's Bach* captures the ebbing tide of the postwar social rebellion for its characters—and the retreat of the Australian publishing revolution for its editor. By 2001, "six multinationals—Penguin, Random House, HarperCollins, Pan Macmillan, Hodder Headline, and Simon & Schuster—held more than 60 per cent of the general retail market. The largest Australian-owned publisher, Allen & Unwin, had 9 per cent of the market" (Morrison). The promise of McPhee Gribble, and the hopes for Australian literary independence that it helped to carry, were only partly consummated. In her memoir, McPhee acknowledges that

> The McPhee Gribble story, like all good stories, can be read on several levels. Even I can see that. Tilting at windmills and the feminine versus the masculine workplace are only the most obvious. Being difficult women probably didn't help. As a straightforward economic narrative, of how part of the world works, it has lessons perhaps for today. As I tell the story I am aware that it is a rather neat case study which proves the efficiency of the marketplace, the smooth working of global capitalism, the consolidation of copyrights. (276-77)

Yet even as she cannot escape the fact that it "did not end well," McPhee reminds herself and her readers that "through much good fortune we managed to catch a wave of Australian writing and thinking about this place that hadn't been there in quite that way before" (278). A critic must amplify this too-modest epitaph for a remarkable publishing house, whose bitter end does not diminish the creative role it played in taking advantage of the diminishing writ of the Traditional Market Agreement and stimulating the concurrent burgeoning of Melbourne's literary capital, launching the career of Helen Garner and recasting the foundations of Australian literature with a feminist alloy. Like Penguin India, McPhee Gribble did not merely launch writers; it also launched publishing figures like Sophie Cunningham, hired as a "baby

editor" when her "comments in pencil on manuscripts were [still] rather illiterate," going on to succeed McPhee as the head of "McPhee Gribble/Penguin," take over the editorship of *Meanjin*, and chair the Literature Board of the Australia Council (McPhee, Personal Interview). In her book about *Melbourne* (2011), Cunningham looks back at the little independent institution which shaped her:

> I took it for granted that my first serious job would be at a company run by two women, both of whom invested a lot of time in training me, not just to be the best editor I could be but the best person. Twenty years later, however, the radical nature of my first and most formative work environment is clear to me. I often think now about how we worked as a group, the ideas and conversations that we shared, the confidence we were given and the support we were offered. (101)

The cultural legacy of McPhee Gribble, though brutally foreshortened, is perhaps incalculably diffuse. Surveying Australian independent publishing, Michael Heyward believes "the low-water mark came in 1989 when McPhee Gribble, the stylish Melbourne publisher of Helen Garner and Tim Winton, ran out of money and was sold to Penguin" ("Word Wise"). And yet the independent scene is recovering even as the conglomerates exercise their dominion, "especially in Melbourne where at least five small houses (Black Inc, Hardie Grant, Melbourne University Publishing, Scribe, Text)" show vital "signs of life." As McPhee learned in the offices of *Meanjin* before Australian publishing's "creative phase" began, dwindled, and revived, a national literature in a transnational environment depends upon the largely unheralded efforts "by some people to support Australian creativity."

CHAPTER SIX: VIKRAM SETH AND THE RISE OF PENGUIN INDIA

The tension of Penguin India's commercial position illuminates the paradox of *A Suitable Boy*'s prose style, and vice versa. Founded with the joint blessing of Peter Mayer and Aveek Sarkar, along with a small amount of capital,[1] Penguin India grew steadily through the late 1980s and early 1990s before achieving unprecedented success for a half-homegrown Indian press with Vikram Seth's middlebrow magnum opus. Entering literary spaces—the city of New Delhi and the sector of trade publishing—characterized more by absence than bustle where the English language was concerned, this offshoot blazed a path for a now-dominant Indian literary strain: one that passes through novels in English and multinational publishing houses with Delhi offices.

The commercial and aesthetic nexus that Penguin India fused together, and which it still represents, has not been cause for universal gratitude among Indian critics. For Dina Malhotra, introducing *60 Years of Book Publishing in India, 1947-2007*, the Anglophone and the foreign are difficult to disentangle, and often function as engines of distortion in any case:

> The one fallacy that has hindered proper assessment of Indian publishing is that it has been assumed unwittingly that Indian publishing is represented only by English language publishing confined to a few metropolitan cities. This segment actually represents only about 20 per cent of the total Indian book publishing. This fallacy has been created by the so-called English National Press which is woefully ignorant about the great panorama of publishing that is presented by publications in Indian languages. (11)

Compounding the problem is "the entry of foreign publishers," who, "with their large reserves of money, . . . win the best Indian editors, production managers and others from leading

[1] "The initial investment in the company was somewhere in the region of $10,000" (Davidar, Personal Interview).

publishing houses by offering them alluring terms which cannot be matched by Indian publishers" (23). The young Pankaj Mishra, not long after his six-month stint as an editor for HarperCollins India, declares in 1999 that "writing in English seems more and more a curiously serene, if limited, deployment of the special advantages provided by a privileged education . . . to it attaches the dubious glamour of large advances from English or American publishers" ("Little Inkling").[2] Even champions of the post-*Midnight's Children* boom in English-language Indian literature recognize a distinctly semi-resident quality to its most famous writers. The *New Yorker* fiction editor Bill Buford, opening his magazine's special issue on contemporary Indian fiction (23 June 1997), notes of the solely-Anglophone writers gathered for its centrefold photograph:

> In truth, the photograph could have been taken just about anywhere, with more or less the same fortuitous mixture of Indian writers on hand—anywhere, that is, except India. On the occasion of this particular shoot, Arundhati Roy had arrived the night before from Amsterdam. Vikram Seth had arrived a few hours before that from Vienna. Others came from Toronto, Boston, New York, and Cambridge. Only one—Vikram Chandra—journeyed from India, and that was because he had been visiting his family; he lives in Washington, D. C. (8)

The ascent of Penguin India thus raises two related issues of power, one that touches on publishing and the other on English itself. The power of Penguin and the power of English are,

[2] Mishra makes these remarks, perhaps not without an awareness of the irony, in English. His signal achievement at HarperCollins was to read the manuscript of Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things* (1997) and help shepherd it into print:

> he called up Roy to congratulate her on writing "the greatest novel since *Midnight's Children*". The manuscript soon flew to London, and returned with the legendary agent David Godwin attached to it. Mishra and Godwin secured Roy an advance of Rs1.25 lakh—the largest for a work of fiction in India at that time—for what would be *The God of Small Things*. (Antony)

In his generous concern for the author and enthusiasm for the book, Mishra did "not secure exclusive rights" for HarperCollins India and consequently left the publisher somewhat acrimoniously (Narayanan 98). This scenario is strikingly reminiscent of the process that led to *A Suitable Boy*'s publication just four years earlier, with Davidar substituting for Mishra and Giles Gordon for Godwin (after Gordon's death in 2003, Seth would also enlist the services of Godwin, a renowned bridge between Indian authors and London publishers). Roy's novel was auctioned in London (where it was purchased and published by Flamingo, an imprint of HarperCollins UK) and New York (Random House). Unlike *A Suitable Boy*, however, it won the Booker Prize—an issue to which this chapter will return.

of course, mutually reinforcing; their clout in turn provokes suspicions of cultural inauthenticity. Partly responding to but also partly creating the demand for Anglophone Indian fiction, partly rooted in Delhi and partly answerable to London, Penguin India straddles national and transnational realms of reference and production. It is an instrument, like the English language itself, that simultaneously translates India to itself and to the wider world—translations whose accuracy is open to doubt, but whose influence cannot be disputed.

This is the cultural complex from which *A Suitable Boy* emerges and to which it gives expression, both in the form of its writing and the manner of its publication. Set soon after Independence, in the midst of reforms to the Zamindari system of land ownership and leading up to India's first general election, *A Suitable Boy* observes four families over a period of eighteen months as they move across the north of India and circle the fictional university town of Brahmpur. The primary plot is set in motion by marriage, by Mrs. Rupa Mehra's determination to find "a suitable boy" for her daughter Lata and by Lata's own struggle to choose between three suitors; the main subplot, among many contenders, follows the fortunes of the political Kapoor family whose father is engaged in the Zamindari Abolition Bill and whose callow son, Maan, carries on a love affair with a Muslim singer and courtesan. Minor personages teem, pages accumulate, and these not wildly eventful months in the lives of a few mainly middle-class and often English-speaking characters stretch out to extraordinary length: nearly 600,000 words and, in the Harper Perennial Modern Classics edition currently in American print, 1,474 pages. To this day Seth's novel is more often discussed as an event in publishing history—the sheer bulk of the book and of its author's advances—than as a text to be studied. As both text and event, however, it encompasses two deeply revealing, productive, and connected paradoxes. On the one hand, *A Suitable Boy* is a genuinely international co-

production, partly shaped by editing teams in London and New York; on the other, Delhi is the unquestioned scene of its creation, the city where it was composed and where Seth and Davidar insisted the final text be determined. The style of the novel, meanwhile, combines striking simplicity with staggering size. Composed of short sentences that proliferate to the furthest horizon, *A Suitable Boy* employs unobtrusive English to polyphonic effect, capturing the accents, registers, and associations of multiple Indian languages and multitudinous Indian voices. I argue that this generative tension responds to the imperatives of translation, resulting in both the novel's lucidity and its expanse, a creative mediation at once facilitated and mirrored by the institutional mediation of Penguin India itself.

I. The Founding Editor

As the founding editor of Penguin India and the primary editor of *A Suitable Boy*, David Davidar occupies the curious position common to his profession: unseen in the work itself, standing nevertheless at the crossroads of its creation. Moreover, his career in publishing progresses along overlapping avenues of literary production, at once Indian and more broadly Anglophone. He was present at Penguin India's humble inception and instrumental in its subsequent rise. He then moved to Toronto in 2004, while staying within the capacious confines of the Penguin Group, becoming the Publisher of Penguin Canada and the CEO of Penguin International—Davidar was perhaps poised to assume a rank of even greater power within the company when a workplace scandal erupted and resulted in his departure in 2010.[3] Returning

[3] Lisa Rundle accused Davidar of sexual harassment and Penguin Canada of improper dismissal. In June 2010, Penguin abruptly announced his departure, saying that he was leaving to pursue "his successful writing career and other projects." His sudden exit remained a mystery for a few days until it emerged that a recently dismissed Penguin employee, Lisa Rundle, had filed a $423,000 lawsuit against the company, and a separate $100,000 suit against Davidar, alleging that she was fired after complaining of sexual

to Delhi, he also returned to the smaller, semi-independent roots of Penguin India, forming the Aleph Book Company in a joint venture with Rupa and with the Canadian example of McClelland & Stewart in mind: "'there is a place in India for a company like McClelland & Stewart was when Jack McClelland started the place 40 years ago—a company deeply rooted in this country, with one eye firmly fixed on quality'" (Nolen). Thus, the course of Davidar's career, and the substance of his editorial actions, make visible the construction of both text and context, the launch of *A Suitable Boy* and the rise of Delhi as an English-language publishing center within the literary Global Anglophone.

Prior to the establishment of Penguin India, Bombay had been the unquestioned capital of Anglophone Indian literary culture—largely through its dominance of the magazine industry.[4] It was, Davidar freely admits, the city where he would have much preferred his offshoot to be planted in 1985. At that time, "Bombay—where I started my career as a journalist in 1979—was by far the more literary city, insofar as English-language literature was concerned. It had a very good and vigorous poetry and theatre scene . . . [whereas] when it came to literature created in English, Delhi was a bit of a wasteland" (Personal Interview). However, India's political capital did house a number of book distributors, including Penguin's own sales office, which is how for convenience and continuity's sake Davidar found himself working "in the living room of a first-floor walk-up in a green, leafy residential neighbourhood in South

harassment by her boss. (Nolen)

Davidar strongly denied the accusation, but, "while the story was inevitably an exercise in she said-he said, Penguin opted to fire Davidar, quickly settle Rundle's suit and, not long after, reinstate her to her job of director of foreign rights and digital publishing."

[4] In this chapter, I use the name "Bombay" rather than "Mumbai" advisedly. The events discussed here predate the official renaming of the city in November 1995; moreover, my editorial protagonist, Davidar, continues to refer to "Bombay," as do a considerable number of his fellow Indians. However, I am aware that this is a choice freighted with weighty political considerations on both sides (whether one seeks to repudiate the legacy of British rule or the Marathi nationalism of Shiv Sena).

Delhi called Gulmohar Park." Now, powered by novels, Delhi is the hub of homegrown publishers and the place where every Western publisher has its Indian headquarters.[5] One cannot speak of a single center in a country as complex as India, where Indian literature is created in "literally dozens of places" and even more languages—nor can one analyze English-language fiction without acknowledging, as Davidar does, that "Indian authors who write in English are spread out all over the world." Nevertheless, Anglophone trade publishing made Delhi its home in the late twentieth century, and that concentration of literary capital began to exert a gravitational pull on the artistically ambitious. In Davidar's youth,

> few of those with literary leanings in English thought of Delhi. Now, Delhi has become the magnet for any young man or woman who wants to do something literary. All the publishing houses are here. The sort of literary magazines I worked for have died out, because they've been replaced by online journals and all that. Yes, there has been a perceptible shift in the last thirty years from Bombay to Delhi.

"Recognizing Delhi as the site of the major publishing houses in English and Hindi" is what enabled the cultural anthropologist Rashmi Sadana "to see the city as a literary field" (xxvii)—and to produce her study of it in *English Heart, Hindi Heartland: The Political Life of Indian Literature* (2012). I will return to Sadana's overarching argument—that neither postcolonial nor transnational frameworks are adequate to understanding the "indigenization" of English in India—and to her particular discussion of the Hindi and Bengali translations of *A Suitable Boy*. For now, I will note that while Sadana explores certain institutions, like the Sahitya Akademi

[5] While Delhi's literary rise is both propelled and reflected by the critical mass of publishing infrastructure, a wider social context has facilitated its development. These factors are summed up by the former OUP India editor Rukun Advani: "the purchasing power of English-speaking cultural elites, a diplomatic and expatriate community, and union government funds to libraries via its education ministry and related ministries which had funds for book purchases . . . the money available for English books was seen to lie more and more in Delhi" (Personal Interview). It is also the case that Delhi benefitted from other cities becoming less hospitable to Anglophone literary culture:

> The earlier cosmopolitanism of Bombay and Poona shrank perhaps as they became more embedded in a regional and Maharashtra-centred ethos . . . Money for book purchases declined very decisively in the Bombay region—over my years at the OUP, the Bombay branch diminished into the smallest revenue-generating branch of OUP India.

and OUP India, in her attempt to grapple with "Hindi and English as competing national languages in the cultural and political arenas," she mentions only in passing and in endnotes the one institution that, more than any other, inaugurated Davidar's "perceptible shift" and Anglophone Delhi's literary ascent.[6]

Yet if Penguin India combined the global prestige of its name and the local cultivation of talent to particularly successful effect, Davidar's operation nevertheless began small. In the late 1980s, the choice of Penguin India as a home publisher would not have been obvious to Vikram Seth. Davidar himself was less than experienced. A "journalist in Bombay who was bored with his job," he applied for the Radcliffe Publishing Course, lacked the money to pay for his tuition, received a bursary from Peter Mayer (that year's graduation speaker),

> and that's how I met with Peter. It was a very brief encounter. He said, "We're going to give you an opportunity. You've never done a publishing job in your life, you're 26 years old, but you're Indian and you're here. We are thinking of starting a company in India, perhaps you could be part of it. Why don't we try and see if it'll work for us?" To cut a longish story short, that's pretty much how I became Penguin India's first editor, then Publisher and CEO. In 1985, after Peter hired me, I was sent off to Penguin UK in London to train before returning to Delhi to start my job. (Personal Interview)

Expectations for the subsidiary were not overly high: "If Penguin India made it, it would be a nice little company to have, one that was making a decent profit in its home market. It wouldn't be a drain on the parent company, and Peter would have done what he wanted to do, which was to do something constructive for a country he loved." The company took several years to achieve even that modest level of self-sufficiency. Its first list of six books was not released until 1987, there were few local models to imitate or build on,[7] and Davidar's "uncertainty

[6] Terry Karten, the American editor who handled *A Suitable Boy* for HarperCollins in New York, recalled of the 1990s that "it seemed important to all English language publishers with global ambitions to have local publishers on the ground in India. Penguin India was the first" (Personal Interview).

[7] There were few such models in English-language trade publishing, to be precise. A South Indian who works in English, Davidar is open about his relative detachment from the Hindi half of the Delhi publishing scene.

never did go away for the longest time."

> In a developed ecosystem, or a market like the US or England, you'll always find that miraculous first novel or one of your big bestselling authors will have a new book or something like that. In the early years of Penguin India, we had nothing like that to fall back on. As the losses mounted, I couldn't help feeling from time to time—at what point are Penguin and ABP going to pull the plug, saying, "oh, this is not working"? So, yes, in the first three or four years, there was certainly anxiety, which I couldn't show, because I always had to say "we're going to do it, we're going to make it."

In general terms, making it meant "reach[ing] the point where you knew it was going to go on because you had a backlist, you had reserves, you'd had profitable years, stable systems, you knew roughly what was going to happen in the next two or three years." In specific terms, that threshold was crossed "when we published *A Suitable Boy,* and it worked, [showing] without a doubt that Penguin India had come of age." Published eight years after Davidar arrived in Gulmohar Park—the growing company had since relocated to larger offices on the fourth floor of the Chiranjiv Tower in Delhi's Nehru Place—Seth's novel

> was a test of our proficiency and our expertise. Did we have the ability to edit, to print, produce, design a global book to global standards? Did we have the finances? Did we have the sales and marketing muscle to push a book like that out into the world? A book is successful when it starts reprinting, so did we have the systems to make that go according to plan? Did we arrive on the Indian publishing stage as a solid institution after this work? . . . In all those ways, the answer would be yes.

But if "*A Suitable Boy* was probably the capstone, the final seal on the maturing of the company . . . the culmination of the first phase of Penguin India," then how did Davidar secure the writer and his manuscript—and, having secured them, produce the book in its published form?

II. The Publication of *A Suitable Boy*

Three details of the novel's making are well-known: the time it took to write, the length of the resulting draft (which reached its published expanse of approximately 1,400 pages only after hundreds more were cut), and the advance it won at auction. These numbers are invariably

mentioned, with astonishment or distaste, in contemporary reviews of *A Suitable Boy*.[8] Vikram Seth was a Stanford graduate student in economics—and a poet whose first collection, *Mappings* (1980), had been published to a limited reception by a little press (the Kolkata-based Writers Workshop)—when he began writing a novel in verse, *The Golden Gate* (1986). That story of Californian love and friendship, inspired by *Eugene Onegin* and composed according to the same stanza pattern, scored a rather surprising success, on the back of which Seth travelled to London to "'meet some agents'" and chose Giles Gordon, the only one "'who seemed as interested in his poetry as anything else'" (Rocco). He then returned to Delhi and his parents' house, where he worked "for eight years on *A Suitable Boy*, the last three of these in some penury when the *Golden Gate* royalties ran out" (Hitchens). Gordon was left to wait:

> Then he [Seth] went back to India. I'd see him occasionally, and I sold two small collections of poems. I thought he was contemplating his navel. Occasionally he mentioned a novel, but he never really said anything about it. Writers don't, you know. Then one day in the summer of 1991, 5,000 pages of typescript arrived.[9] That was the novel. We sold it by auction a year later. (Rocco)

[8] This is true of reviews both within and outside India—indeed, the reviewers of 1993 could hardly ignore the elephant in the room when that elephant was their chosen or commissioned subject. In the Anglophone West and *Vanity Fair*, Christopher Hitchens remarks that "some at least of the breathless comment on the size of the book and the whopper of an advance . . . derives from the journalistically convenient fact that Vikram Seth is so amazingly small." Pico Iyer adds in the *TLS* that "the sheer bulk of the book comes as a surprise," since "Seth's has always seemed a light, an almost glancing sensibility . . . The question [the novel] raises is what happens to light comedy when it is extended across half a million words" (20). Meanwhile, a domestic critic like Tarun Tejpal, writing in *India Today*, opens his ambivalent notice by declaring that "*A Suitable Boy*, eight years in the writing, containing upwards of 600,000 words, with a cast of characters that would capsize a barge, and, joy above all joys, sold for a million dollars, is like no other novel attempted by an Indian." Susan Ram, in *Frontline*, identifies the book's most obvious feature as its "most obvious drawback . . . its overweening, endurance-testing length—over half a million words by my estimate!" (110). For Ram, the novel's ostensible narrative has been comprehensively overwhelmed by the subplot of its publication history:

> Seth, in contrast, appears to have been ill-served by his interaction with the publishing world, an impression reinforced by the current avalanche of Seth-related media hype. In a transparent bid to recoup what are reputedly the largest advances in publishing history for a first novel by any writer ("250,000 from Phoenix House, a division of Orion, for the U.K. edition, plus $600,000 from HarperCollins for the U.S. rights), Seth's publishers have been projecting *A Suitable Boy* as a landmark literary achievement. (112)

[9] This number is perhaps an exaggeration. In an earlier article—"Suitable Price" by Mohini Kent (*Indian Express*, 21 February 1993)—Gordon is quoted as having seen "the original version in March 1991 when he was in hospital. There his wife, [Maggie] McKernan, brought him 'an Everest of typescript, 3,000 pages.'"

The prospective advance, growing far beyond expectation, offers a clear, material measure of London publishing's hunger for Anglophone Indian fiction and its confidence that even a novel as long as *A Suitable Boy* could be sold to a mass non-Indian readership—the cresting post-Rushdie wave that Seth caught near its apex.[10] In the writer's own recollections, the number began at £40,000 when "'both Knopf and Faber & Faber, my poetry publishers, made offers on the first draft they saw." Unable to "accept something like this for a book that took me so long to write," Seth and Gordon moved on to the auction a year later with a revised manuscript.

> I went to sit under the fig tree. It was summer, and I liked sitting out there. From pounds 60,000 it went to pounds 100,000. Chatto dropped out at pounds 75,000. But there were four left — Little Brown, Heinemann, Penguin. And Orion. Then suddenly it was pounds 150,000. I was looking up at the sky through the branches of the fig tree while my life was changing half-hour by half-hour . . . Then the bidding went up again[:] pounds 155,000 from Picador.

The final amount, £250,000, was bid by Orion and later supplemented by $600,000 from HarperCollins in New York (Hitchens).[11] Although it rather paled in comparison to the Anglo-

---

[10] Ion Trewin, an Orion editor at the time, recalls his astonishment at the chief executive Anthony Cheetham's determination, given its size, to price *A Suitable Boy* at £20 per copy—a stance taken in defiance of the Sales Department, whose representatives thought such a price would be a non-starter with the public ("Author's Lives," British Library Sounds).

[11] In preparation for Orion's bid (*A Suitable Boy* was published under its fiction imprint Phoenix House), the editor Maggie McKernan—married to Giles Gordon—and her colleague Nicholas Pearson did a considerable amount of reading:

> Giles didn't want to risk the story being about us, I mean, the fact that he and I were married. So, when he submitted it, he sent it to my co-editor at Orion at the time, Nicholas Pearson. The ts [typescript] came in on a day I was off. I found Nicholas already buried in it on my return, looking worried. We began to read it in tandem, Nick passing chunks to me after he'd finished them. A page or two in I think I said something like 'I'm not sure,' and Nick said, 'I'm not either,' and after five pages I said, 'No, actually, forget that, this is amazing,' and Nick looked relieved and said 'Yes, I know.' We did nothing else but read it till we'd finished. After that we just wanted it, and we were naïve enough to think we could get it. (McKernan, Personal Interview)

The pre-auction operation extended well beyond McKernan and Pearson. It "took us most of the week to read the ts," and in the meantime "bits of it were getting photocopied and handed out to other editors, the paperback people, marketing." Ion Trewin, observing the publication of *A Suitable Boy* from a slight remove, remembers that Anthony Cheetham

> said that he wanted everyone to read something, and so he simply took the script and passed it out. So someone got pages 1-50, another person got to page 97 or whatever. I can't remember what I got, but it wasn't the early part. But I remember that although I didn't have the slightest idea about the background to the novel, I soon got completely taken up by the characters . . . Although I wasn't involved directly in publishing it, I could see why it was important . . . it was going to be the talked-about book of its season.

American sum, Davidar too "had no hesitation in offering him an advance that was one of the largest that had been offered in Indian publishing at the time" (Personal Interview). Size is the common theme of these details, the keynote of *A Suitable Boy's* contemporary reception and critical afterlife—which makes it strange that Seth should also choose a small Indian publisher, entrusting it with setting the final text, and doubly strange that the sentences making up this enormous novel should themselves be so relatively short.

For if David Davidar's working relationship with Seth coexists with the author's other professional alliances, it nevertheless assumes a peculiar intimacy and a particular shaping force on the text.[12] The editor seduced the writer through sonnets, the writer moved in and held the editor's nose to the grindstone, even the cook was enlisted in the titanic effort to finish the book: Davidar's memories of the momentous months which made both publisher and published novel capture something that often goes missing in Bourdieusian anatomies of the literary economy—the actual scene of creativity and the relationships which kindle and sustain it. Whereas Bourdieu's sociology of literature is so keen "to suspend the charismatic ideology of 'creation'" that it largely overlooks the actual composition of the text and the ink-stained business of editing it (167),[13] Davidar's account opens a window onto the pressures and tasks facing "a small, relatively new company . . . editing, typesetting, proofing, and dispatching electronic files to publishers around the world" of "one of the literary world's most feverishly anticipated novels." The partnership that helped to produce *A Suitable Boy* began a few years before its

("Author's Lives," British Library Sounds)

[12] So close is their continued working relationship, in fact, that when Davidar wrote his own first novel, *The House of Blue Mangoes* (2002), he entrusted the manuscript to Seth's editorial judgment (and to David Godwin as his agent). "In a bit of a role reversal," it "was edited by Vikram Seth (besides his prowess as a novelist, he'd also had a brief stint as an editor at Stanford University Press)" (Personal Interview).

[13] See my discussion of Bourdieu and mediation in the introduction to this dissertation.

publication; like Giles Gordon, the editor found poetry to be an effective entrée:

> One day, I wrote him [Vikram] on spec. And we arranged to meet at the office of his then brother-in-law at the Austrian embassy in Chanakyapuri in Delhi . . . I must have been persuasive about the advantages of publishing with Penguin, for he said to me that he had a collection of poems, *All You Who Sleep Tonight*, ready for publication, and that I should make an offer. It struck me, when I was composing my offer letter, that I might gain a slight advantage by rendering it in verse form so I composed it in the form of a sonnet, knowing Vikram's fondness for metered verse. He replied in sonnet form and the deal was clinched. I have been his publisher ever since in India.

Nevertheless, *A Suitable Boy* represented a challenge of an entirely different order, bringing Seth to a much larger readership abroad while also bringing the ultimate determination of his text home. The novel's editing was at once transnational and irreducibly Indian, multi-layered and many-handed while yet aiming at a single, shared edition. The editors involved—Davidar, Maggie McKernan and Nicholas Pearson at Orion, and Terry Karten at HarperCollins—all liaised to polish and publish the book. Their main textual tasks were to streamline while ensuring consistency; McKernan recalls "a great deal of line-editing" to that end.[14] But there was never any doubt that Davidar was, in his own words, "the primary editor."[15] McKernan told me that "David Davidar was always in charge of the final text," and pointed out that by the time the British and American publishers received the typescript Seth had already pruned the version he initially sent to Giles Gordon by several hundred pages, "with advice from Giles and David Davidar."[16] Karten confirmed that "the Indian edition was always to be published first,

[14] "None of the cuts, to my knowledge, took place because I or the other editors (from various countries who worked on the book) felt the book was too long. The cuts were suggested to Vikram purely on the basis of streamlining the narrative, and it went without saying that the final decision was always his" (Davidar, Personal Interview).

[15] While she agrees with this estimation, McKernan nevertheless makes a distinction between primary editor and major publisher that once again illustrates Penguin India's junior status next to the Anglo-American institutions: "I think we saw ourselves as the major publisher, rightly or wrongly, though Penguin India had David Davidar, we had the British audience and their visceral connection to India."

[16] The precise amount cut from the manuscript of *A Suitable Boy* is difficult to ascertain. Different editors have somewhat different estimates. Nevertheless, it appears that 500-600 pages were cut by Seth himself, followed by "another 100 pages" by Davidar, McKernan, and Pearson (McKernan). By the time Karten received the book, "it was made clear to me that Vikram was not open to edits. The manuscript had already been edited and cut."

followed by Orion and HarperCollins. After all, this is an Indian novel by an Indian author."[17]

The priority of the Indian edition and the definitiveness of its text meant that for Davidar, while "the editing went smoothly," the real "drama had to do with logistics—there were over half a million words to 'process' and Vikram had rather patriotically gone along with my somewhat brash ambition to have the book edited and typeset in India, with other publishers around the world taking our setting. Easier said than done!" Speaking to me, Davidar sketched the events of those final "crazy few months" and the scene of that "furious, whirling sphere of [editorial] activity." It was centered around Seth himself and "the dining table of that flat in Vasant Kunj in New Delhi." For "in the end, Vikram moved into my house with a portable writing desk (the first and last time an author has done so!) to ensure I did nothing but work on his book." The author got his wish:

> every waking minute was devoted to the book. Periodic shouting matches would take place, followed by long stretches of calm, concentrated work. Everyone who could be pressed into service was pressed—including my cook, who read not a word of English! One memorable evening, when neither Vikram nor I could agree on a cover option, my cook was asked his opinion. I forget whether his opinion prevailed but that's how crazy

---

Christopher Hitchens heard rumors that a thousand pages had been chopped, but when he put this to Seth, the author replied, "'Only five or six hundred pages really. And they weren't very good. Or even if they were good, they weren't useful.'" To Makarand Paranjape, Seth revealed that the draft "*was* one and a half times as long" as the published version, and that "I cut off about 500 pages, because those 500 pages struck me as being exactly the kind of thing which seemed to be more research than story, or preachment in certain parts." Maggie McKernan, who in addition to leading the editing for Orion was also married to Giles Gordon, told me that "The ts we saw when it eventually came in had been massively edited by Vikram. It was still immense."

[17] Davidar argues that an international editing team can provide the best of both worlds: the proximity of a Delhi editor—the others "couldn't really be expected to know everything about UP [Uttar Pradesh] in the 1950s"—alongside the distance of the London and New York readers: "closer to home you can tackle detail and verisimilitude more effectively, the farther away you go, the more objective your comments get about what in the book will appeal to readers." His point is rather proved by Nicholas Pearson's geographical imprecision when interviewed by Mohini Kent in February 1993:

> ["]The first thing I asked him was, 'Did you write this book in Brahmpur?' That's a university town near Calcutta where the book is set."
>
> Seth beamed. "Brahmpur does not exist," he replied.
>
> "That was the best compliment I could have paid him," says Pearson, who was "utterly mesmerised" by Seth.

Even after having learned of Brahmpur's purely fictional existence, Pearson makes a mistake: Calcutta, in West Bengal, and Uttar Pradesh, the state that Seth reimagines as Purva Pradesh and where he places Brahmpur, are not remotely "near" to each other.

> it got, with midnight runs to the typesetter, a banker who had dropped in for a drink asked to read proofs, and so on.

The sheer number of people involved in the book's making rivals its own cast of characters: "Other editors who were part of the team working on the book would come to the house to do their bit. I would do the structural editing, but there were copy-editors, proof-readers, type-setters, assistants, and so on, all working away on the book." Even securing the paper for the print run was a trial—and ultimately a triumph. The book's bulk made "special paper" necessary for the still-modest Indian press: "the sort that are sometimes used to print bibles, very lightweight and with great opacity, so the Indian hardcover was the slimmest and lightest available on the market. I remember Vikram saying to me at the time that it was his favourite edition—certainly the lightest on the wrist." In New York, Terry Karten learned of the struggle to secure a sufficient supply, because

> when I spoke to Vikram at Christmas, he was searching all over Delhi for paper for the Indian edition!!! Penguin didn't have enough! It was astonishing, I thought, an author scouring the city for paper to print his book on. I have never known anything else like this in my publishing career. For the record, Vikram found more paper!

The American publisher's purchasing power produced a strikingly different object:

> the Penguin India edition was printed on what I described to my colleagues at the time as Bible paper, paper so thin that the print on the verso was visible on the recto. It was much less than half the size of the HarperCollins hardcover. We used very good paper, and as a result, our edition was enormous, a door stopper or wrist breaker.[18]

Seth revealed his own preference in a 1993 interview, declaring that the American edition was "'absolutely un-, er, un-grippable . . . and if you compare it with this (the unbound Indian edition, printed on high-quality, thin paper), this is just right. So the Indian version is just right,

[18] Karten added that "the Indian edition arrived in my office swathed in beautiful sari-like material in a jiffy bag lined with similar sari material. I was overwhelmed. Have you ever seen American jiffy bags? Well, I have never before or since received a mailing as gorgeous as this one from India. What does it say about cultural differences?! I've never forgotten it."

it's really wonderful'" (Paranjape 20). The rightness of the Indian edition extends beyond its kindness to the reader's wrist; it manages to combine, in its material form, the same seemingly contradictory qualities of the novel's style: length and lightness.

III. Vikram Seth's English

The length and lightness of *A Suitable Boy*, the complications and the publicity of its international co-production, have all been subject to criticism—criticism which circles the quality of Seth's language and the corresponding question of his novel's cultural allegiance. That question, the not uncommon charge of Anglophone inauthenticity, is expressed in the fraught terms of address and audience: for whom is the Indian writer in English writing, for the relatively small number of compatriots who might read the resulting book or for the much larger potential market of the Anglophone West?

As Salman Rushdie insists, when refuting the existence of Commonwealth Literature, "English is an Indian literary language" (65). It links a land of overwhelming diversity, being "written, read and spoken, at least to some extent, all over India" (Singh 50). Yet it is also, and equally unquestionably, the language of a small minority within the Indian elite—and, as a consequence of colonial history and contemporary globalization, the only Indian idiom with a ready-made international audience.[19] "From the time Graham Greene arranged the publication of R.K. Narayan's first novel in the mid-1930s," Pankaj Mishra points out, "most readers of Indian writing in English have been in the West" ("Spirit"). Unsurprisingly, the fact that "the

[19] Davidar estimates that the solely Indian population of dedicated English readers is no more than that of New Zealand's, so that "our book sales"—those of Indian-based publishers—"reflect NZ's book sales almost exactly" (Lal). "People claim 20 million Indians use English as their first language. Bullshit. I think this figure includes everyone who has even a nodding acquaintance with English. I think it's about 5 to 10 million which is like the population of New Zealand."

bulk of Indian English novels are marketed and sold to readers outside of India only magnifies the questions of authenticity surrounding using the English language to write Indian literature" (Sadana 37-8). Contemporary reviews of *A Suitable Boy* are striking for the repetition of certain terms; the same aspects of style which evoke praise in some readers reappear as symbols of artistic and commercial compromise in the criticism of others.[20] Christopher Hitchens writes, in June 1993 and *Vanity Fair*, of being "borne along" by the "deceptive lightness and transparency" of the novel's prose, while pointing out that both transparency and lightness can be, deceptively, cause for censure. Lightness may also mean "no darkness or depth and no real consciousness of evil and suffering"; transparency provides, for some of the novel's partisans, "a good old-fashioned plain-English cosh with which to whack Salman Rushdie."[21] Thus, while John Lanchester remarks on the "astonishing" style *A Suitable Boy* that "Seth has striven for complete transparency," Anita Desai calls "Seth's touch . . . feather-light and airy," but finds his manner rather like "an anthropologist let loose among Pacific islanders." What Desai more delicately implies, Tim Parks and Pankaj Mishra name outright: to enter the "sprawling exoticism" of this "calculated exercise in crowd-pleasing" (Parks) requires "suppressing everything you know about the dereliction of North India" (Mishra). To such critics, size is the

[20] The paradoxical nature of the novel can perplex even those well-disposed towards it: the epic treatment given to a pleasant but unremarkable heroine and her ordinary romantic dilemma, the book's physical weight and formal weightlessness. Pico Iyer wonders "what happens to light comedy when it is extended across half a million words. Can an epic be built on charm alone?" His answer is that although "every single page of *A Suitable Boy* is pleasant and readable and true . . . I found myself thinking that inside that fat novel, a much stronger thin one was struggling to get out" (20).

[21] A contrast with Salman Rushdie is often made in contemporary coverage of *A Suitable Boy*. Iyer characterizes Seth's novel as "a counter-Rushdie epic: relatively secluded and old-fashioned where Rushdie is determinedly topical and international, somewhat conservative in style and temper where Rushdie is wilfully radical" (20). Not long after *A Suitable Boy*'s publication, rumours appeared in the British press that Rushdie himself had offered an opinion on the novel: "Seth was said to have encountered Rushdie [at a cricket match], and Rushdie to have uttered, in drop-dead fashion: 'I hear you've written a soap opera'" (Clark). And Seth's "repudiation of the story in a letter to the *Times*" does not, in fact, deny that the term was used: '[Rushdie's] tone was entirely warm-hearted and friendly and a million miles away from the snide and denigratory implications that have been placed on it.'"

book's only outstanding feature, giving magnitude to what would otherwise be recognized as something closer to mediocrity, an India repackaged primarily for literary tourists who do not wish to leave the confines of home. Both Tarun Tejpal and Susan Ram take to Indian periodicals to puncture the publishers' hype. Tejpal argues that the novel's "uniqueness is essentially owed to size," while the rest "is straightforward, bland, the writing mundane"; Ram describes a "quest for an uncomplicated, transparent prose that all too easily slides into the commonplace" and an author who "appears to have been ill-served by his interaction with the publishing world" (110-12).[22]

That publishing world refutes the charge that "the programmed success" of *A Suitable Boy* primarily illustrates a Western "vogue for exoticism" and the ability of publishers to exploit it by "manufactur[ing] bestsellers for an international public"—to return to Pascale Casanova, who sums up the case against Seth's novel (121).[23] The editors I spoke to offered concrete instances in which the authentic Indianness of *A Suitable Boy* was *not* compromised: the prosaic choice of historical period, the absence of a glossary or of italics for non-English Indian words, an Anglo-American marketing strategy partly aimed at Indian readers in the West. Davidar declares, less than accurately, that "I don't think anyone has disputed the authenticity of the novel, which is often a charge levelled against writers writing in English in India, . . . [because] it is so true to its subject." That subject of intertwined Indian families emerges against a

[22] Indeed, some critics focus precisely on a perceived failure of editing. For instance, *A Suitable Boy* was left off that year's shortlist for the Booker Prize. The jury chair, Grey Gowrie, declared that the book had not been cut nearly enough, "regrett[ing] that it was not brought to him to edit—in six months he could have made it into a worldbeater, he said" (Lister), and telling the *Daily Telegraph* that "it was poorly edited, as well as 'curiously amiable, bland almost' in tone" (Streitfeld). This snub infuriated Seth's British publisher, with Anthony Cheetham calling "the judges 'a bunch of wankers'" (Streitfeld), and McKernan maintaining to this day that *A Suitable Boy* "didn't need the Booker . . . I don't really like to comment on what Grey Gowrie said. I think he didn't know what he was talking about."

[23] See the introduction to this dissertation.

historical background that is semi-obscure even to many of Seth's compatriots: "it is set in the year 1951, which was not a memorable year in historical terms, especially when compared to some of the years that bracket it . . . I'm not entirely ignorant of Indian history but there was so much I learned about the formative years of my country from *ASB*." In fact, the novel's final form strikes Davidar as a triumph over past condescending publishing practices, the result of battles previously won over the course of the 1980s.

> For a long, long time—even in the 1980s when I joined publishing—there was a very colonial mindset that governed fiction that originated in the Indian subcontinent. Everything had to be glossed, Indian words had to be explained, footnoted . . . writers who belonged to the erstwhile colonial nations, especially in the East, were expected to explain themselves to the point of absurdity.

While "the first big, big blow struck in that cause, in the right way, was Salman Rushdie saying there would be no italicized Indian words in *Midnight's Children* and no glossary," *A Suitable Boy* helped to settle "the second battle [which] was not to give them [readers] a primer on what this situation meant or that situation meant." Maggie McKernan reveals that the British publisher did, in fact, consider a glossary, "for things like items of clothing, food, all that kind of thing," before deciding against it. In the end, "we never explained anything, except to say in our cover blurb that India was facing its first general election since Independence." Terry Karten recalls her sense that "nothing was explained" and that there was "no need for concessions to readers in other countries," adding that HarperCollins's publicity campaign involved "researching which cities in the U.S. had large Indian populations and figuring out how to reach them." For the launch event at the Scribner bookstore on Fifth Avenue, "the Indian population of NYC [came] out in droves for one of their own." Davidar, for one, sees no contradiction in naming and celebrating *A Suitable Boy* "for what it was: a book conceived in India for the world."

What is rather surprising is that, on occasion, Seth himself does. Naturally, he defends his book in terms similar to those of his publishers, particularly at the time of its release. Speaking to Makarand Paranjape, Seth maintains that "there's nothing in the book which can [easily plug into] anything Western. I mean it's not a Raj novel and there's no glossary in it and there's nothing in italics" (20). The choice of period and the sheer amount of research required counter Casanova's notion of easily manufactured exoticism. Seth spent years

> reading, just to get a spirit of those times. Meeting people, ex-freedom fighters, people who'd visited courtesans at that time, people affected by the abolition of zamindari; how musicians lost their livelihood, patronage . . . things like that; what Calcutta was like in those days, with the British civil servants leaving, but the commercial elite still hanging around. Things like that. And then staying in different places like Benaras, Allahabad, or in the countryside, or staying with a shoe-making family in Agra. Just a few years doing this sort of thing. (21-22)

In that same interview, however, while insisting that "I didn't write this book to prove my Indian credentials at all nor is it pitched to Western markets" and stung by the interviewer's assertion that "culture *is* rooted in the soil," Seth declares "fair enough, but then we shouldn't even be talking in English . . ." (24). It is on the question of English that Seth is creatively conflicted. For Indians of his class and education, the language is at once a locus of social privilege and a source of cultural insecurity. His early poem "Divali" speaks of

> English! Six-armed god,
> Key to a job, to power,
> Snobbery, the good life,
> This separateness, this fear. (24-7)

Yet even as the poet asserts its separateness (and by extension his own), English is domesticated as a six-armed god. In consolation, Seth declares "What if my tongue is warped? / I need no words to gaze / At Ajanta, those flaked caves" (116-18), but his warped words do not lapse into rapt silence; rather, they describe, circumscribe, and multiply in rhyme, this poem on the inadequacy and alienation of English extending to thirty-four quatrains. Moreover, the young

writer's productive doubt about the legitimacy of his own instrument of expression does not cease with later success.

When *A Suitable Boy* is rendered into Hindi as *Koi Achcha-Sa Ladka* (1998), Seth contributes a preface which appears to accept the astonishing implication that Gopal Gandhi's translation is more authentically Indian than the original itself.

> Since most of the events in the novel are related to the Hindi-speaking region of our country, in a way, our translator here has given them their original character. A large part of the dialogue has been reconstructed here in the language that has been ringing in my mind's ears. Many political debates, which I got from studying the speeches made in legislatures, seem more authentic here in Hindi. The poems, which I adapted from Hindi-Urdu to English, will now be able to express their intent in a much richer tone. As a writer, I am also a bit surprised to admit that some things are going to come out much more strongly in this Hindi translation than in my original work . . . While writing this novel, I was often saddened to think that Mrs. Mahesh Kapoor, a character in this novel, and whom I love dearly, would not be able to read all that I have written.[24]

Seth suggests that the Hindi brings his novel closer to both his Indian characters and his Indian readers—acknowledging, in fact, that most north Indians, who would be "able to understand this book with more interiority and familiarity than those who are outside [the country]," will only now have the chance to read it. The reception *A Suitable Boy* achieved abroad still surprises him, since "much of what is described here . . . is confusing to non-Indian readers." This preface could be a display of extreme authorial graciousness—one that actually leaves out Seth's English and Bangla-speaking characters—or perhaps an instance of ingratiation that the author did not expect to be translated back into the original language of his novel. One could just as easily interpret it as confirming Casanova's criticism.

Two Indian critics have compared these versions of the novel in depth. Harish Trivedi, though he does not share Casanova's disdain for the original, exceeds Seth's evaluation of the

[24] This translation is my own, although I have checked it against Rashmi Sadana's rendering of parts of the preface in her article "A Suitable Text for a Vegetarian Audience."

translation. In a review entitled "Translation as Recovery" (1998), he declares that "the Hindi matches the English step for step, except that there are occasions when, with a sure-footed ease, born of treading on native ground, it merrily surges ahead and even outstrips the original" (30). The translation's triumph is not merely a matter of returning the English to a language more rooted in India, with Hindi dialogue seeming "far more in character," but of supplementing the setting with details that stem from the translator's assured grasp of his native audience—a depth of description and a familiarity of address that a non-Indian readership would be unlikely to appreciate. Gopal Gandhi's "method of culturally enriched reinscription" proceeds by taking, for instance, a line from a Bollywood song—translated but not explicated in English—and then, "without any warrant from Seth's English text," adding "the names of the film, the lyricist and the singer . . . they will come as a readily recognizable nostalgia package to most Hindi readers." Thus *Koi Achcha-Sa Ladka* strikes a blow against "the dominance of the Indian languages by Indian English"—a dominance which, in a curious critical twist, Trivedi does not fully identify with *A Suitable Boy*, despite its literal and metaphorical heft, because he also admires Seth's English, which "has a doubleness, a twice-born *sanskar* and resonance of cultural heritage, which should be the envy of some other Indian novelists in English such as Rushdie and Roy." One can question Trivedi's logic. If the lyric is more immediately familiar to Indian readers, then would they not need *less* of an explanation than the international Anglophone audience? Conversely, Seth's decision to omit a clarifying gloss demonstrates his willingness to present the events of his story without extra elucidation for Indian and non-Indian readers alike—a choice which both the author and his publishers view as a matter of artistic self-respect and of increasing Indian-English self-sufficiency. Nevertheless, Trivedi's argument amounts to a fascinating paradox, one which can be developed even further: the translation is, in fact, the

original; the original, meanwhile, is a translation.

In contrast to Trivedi, Rashmi Sadana reads *Koi Achcha-Sa Ladka* not as a restoration but as an adaptation—one that conforms to certain cultural pressures which *A Suitable Boy* circumvents and which a comparable translation, Enakshi Chatterjee's Bangla version, also manages to avoid.[25] In preparation, Chatterjee "first studied the Hindi . . . [and] noticed that the translator had left out some descriptions of leather processing" ("Suitable Text" 321). The translator "conceded that the Hindi version of *A Suitable Boy* is 'a richer book, due to the speech' . . . but she also adds that 'it is a different book'" (323). The critic makes sharper use of Gandhi's deletions, citing them as evidence of the "cultural pressure of Hindu nationalism" entering the Hindi literary field and amputating "a certain authenticity that was in the English original" (324). One does not have to fully endorse Sadana's reading of the current political-cum-linguistic situation in India—as having "to a large extent pitted Hindi as a regressive nationalist language (where Indian equals Hindu) and English as a liberal secular language (where Indian identity encompasses diverse religious traditions equally)" (325)—to share her sense that, in English, Seth manages to envelop a range of social realities whose representation the supposedly more authentic translation does not always deepen. Authenticity is not a zero-sum attribute: it involves trade-offs in different directions, and an Indian writer can both sacrifice and earn a degree of authenticity in English.

If *A Suitable Boy* is already in significant part a translation, it is one that uses its transparent English to deceptively polyvocal effect.[26] What Seth loses in specificity, he gains

[25] This translation was published as *Sot Patro* (Seth, "People Are Not Fools").
[26] Translation is, in fact, a regular motif across the career of Vikram Seth. His first collection of poems, *Mappings*, contains adaptations of Du Fu, Faiz Ahmed Faiz, Suryakant Tripathi Nirala, and Heinrich Heine. *Three Chinese Poets* (1992) is composed entirely of translations, and even *The Golden Gate* was first inspired by a reading of Charles Johnston's English version of *Eugene Onegin*.

in plurality. His preface, in praising Gandhi's restorative work, simultaneously reveals the creative effort of translation that produced his original—the writing that, moving in the other direction, brings so many Indian voices into English. "A large part of the dialogue," "many political debates," "the poems": Gandhi has, in fact, the comparatively easy task of reconstructing them "in the language that has been ringing in my mind's ears." Seth instead had to transmute the language in his mind's ears—and others besides (Bangla, English, Urdu, even, briefly, Punjabi)—into a simultaneously singular but multiple English. Trivedi himself hints at an unexpected depth to Seth's light prose; in contrast to those critics who view the author's "bland" style as flattening his subject, Trivedi acknowledges its flexibility, its quality of twice-born "doubleness." One might further suggest that doubleness does not quite do justice to what is better described as multiplicity. It is for this reason that one of the sternest critics of Indian-English artistic compromise and commercially-dictated foreign address—describing R. K. Narayan's language as a "one-stringed instrument" (172)—finds in Seth's novel not "a greater pull towards a homogenization of reality, an essentializing of India, a certain flattening out of complicated and conflicting contours" (171), but a triumphant attempt "to capture the linguistic diversity of Indian life even though he is writing in English" (Mukherjee 184). Meenakshi Mukherjee declares that

> Vikram Seth's *A Suitable Boy* may have been an international best-seller, but it became so entirely on terms set by the author, not the publisher. Reading the manuscript before publication, I remember wondering if anybody except a reader like me who shares the same regional background would get so completely involved in the nuances of the story of these interlocked upper middle-class families in UP, Bihar and Bengal. (183)

We have seen, however, that the circumstances, pressures, and personnel shaping the novel's publication are not incidental. Building on Mukherjee's perception of a "polyphonic mosaic" in *A Suitable Boy* (184), I contend that it is precisely the combination of Seth's mastery of

English *and* his ambivalence towards it—his acute sense of the language having one foot inside India and another outside—that drives the aesthetic logic of the novel towards both size and simplicity. I read the imperatives of translation, clarifying and encompassing, into *A Suitable Boy*'s remarkably fertile paradox of style, its uncomplicated but proliferating English sentences attending to the sliding scale of Indian speech and experience. Like its primary publisher, the novel adopts a productively divided posture, spanning literary and commercial concerns both Indian and transnational.

IV. An Aesthetic of Translation

Barely four hundred pages into her search for *A Suitable Boy*, Lata, the young woman whose choice of a husband drives the plot back and forth across the north of India and through the year 1951, goes to a party in Calcutta.

> Meanwhile Lata, who was in the thickest part of the party, felt as if she was swimming in a sea of language. She was quite amazed by the glitter and glory of it all. Sometimes a half-comprehensible English wave would rise, sometimes an incomprehensible Bengali one. Like magpies cackling over baubles—or discovering occasional gems and imagining them to be baubles—the excited guests chattered on. Despite the fact that they were shovelling in a great deal of food, everyone managed to shovel out a great many words. (432)

The sea of language is introduced and framed in declarative sentences structured by two simple forms of parallelism, Seth's prose doubling up to match the two tongues sharing the occasion: the alliteration of "part of the party," "swimming in a sea," "the glitter and glory"; the balanced clauses turning on the repetition of "sometimes" and "shovel." The party then proceeds with fourteen paragraphs of unattributed speech, emanating from different unnamed party-goers, ranging together across an expanse of subjects: from "'the fundamental construct of Indian civilization,'" to "'the secret of Bengali food,'" to a trade war with East Pakistan, to "'the Quest

for Peace and Harmony,'" to an exam for "'commerce students of Calcutta University'" (432-33). This multiple, compounded dialogue captures different voices in overlapping succession, their individual accents and characters, as well as the background noise, rendered with italics ("'*Such* a good speaker [. . .] quite a young man but *so* spiritual'"), ellipses (seventeen used over the two pages), dashes (nineteen), rhetorical questions ("'Is this what Independence means?'"), sentence run-ons and fragments ("'They say it is—that it is, you know . . . well, liver . . . from too much drink'"). The excursion into the party's various waves of language finally returns to Lata and resolves in plain descriptive sentences, each following the standard order of subject-verb-object and re-establishing the location of characters in the room:

> Lata turned around and saw Arun's rather displeased expression. It was his friend Billy Irani. This was the third time someone had spoken to him with the sole intention of finding out where his wife was. He looked around the room for her orange sari, and spied her near the Kakoli crowd. (433)

This scene contains in miniature the structure of Seth's enormous novel, its central generative tension between singularity and plurality: the instances of stylistic virtuosity set within a framework of lucid but largely unadorned prose; the movement between a central plotline and multiple burgeoning digressions, the narrative attention span afforded a wide and widening latitude even as it follows a strictly linear passage of time; the primary figure of Lata often receding from the foreground, and giving way to dozens of more minor characters, only to return steadily to center stage; the way in which Seth's English both registers and subsumes the use and nuances of other Indian languages.

In this party passage, one conversation—concerning the fundamental construct of Indian civilization—reappears at intervals between the other exchanges, a single speaker lecturing her listener on the shape that best captures the essence of India: first it is "'the Square—the four stages of life, the four purposes of life'" (432); then "'the Trinity as Process

and Aspect—Creation and Preservation and Destruction'" (433); then "'Duality . . . The warp and weft of our ancient garment, the sari itself'"; two chapters later, "'the intrinsic essence of our being here in India is a Oneness'" (437); and, finally, as the gathering comes to an end, "'India is the land of the Zero'" (438). This is comedy, of course, the joke being that no single structure or number could sum up such a country and civilization. Yet the discourse on structure has its explicit analogue in one character's attempts to describe the architecture of a long novel—his own mushrooming work set during the Bengal Famine. One of Lata's three suitors is the poet Amit, recently returned from England and whose progress on his manuscript roughly matches the reader's place in the actual book before us—"'I'm about a third of the way'" (525), "'I'm two-thirds of the way through'" (1209). Earlier at the same party, speaking about his proliferating English pages, Amit declares that

> 'I've always felt that the performance of a raag resembles a novel—or at least the kind of novel I'm attempting to write. You know,' he continued, extemporizing as he went along, 'first you take one note and explore it for a while, then another to discover its possibilities . . . and then the more brilliant improvisations and diversions begin, with the main theme returning from time to time, and finally it all speeds up, and the excitement increases to a climax.' (426)

Though his listener replies "'What utter nonsense . . . He's just a writer, he knows nothing at all about literature'" (426), Amit tries again when escorting Lata around Calcutta. "'At the moment it feels like a banyan tree . . . it sprouts, and grows, and spreads, and drops down branches that become trunks or intertwine with other branches . . . But then it's also like the Ganges in its upper, middle and lower courses—including its delta—of course'" (524). As with the simultaneously shrinking and expanding construct for India, these comparisons are both comic and apt. The novel is so various that it is, in fact, like all of these things: tree, river, raag. The thrust of the party dialogue's division from four to zero is that India and *A Suitable Boy* are both built on multiplication: that the incommensurably diverse reality, and this novel's attempt

to render it, enfolds zero to four, and more besides.

Seth's unassuming prose is the vehicle for this multitudinousness. The novel's critics do not cite its alternately "transparent" and "bland" style without cause. Textual mining reveals that the novel's 596,699 words are separated into sentences with a median length of ten words each, that the median word is four letters long, that colons and semi-colons very rarely appear, and that the text's "readability score" results in an average grade level of 8.[27] Insofar as the novel presents the reader with difficulties, they do not lie at the level of the sentence, but in the accumulation of levels of sentences, with the escalation of characters, settings, and points of view they bring. The combination of lucidity and abundance is not limited to the clause; it characterizes the novel's structure from those basic syntactical building blocks to the macro division of chapters and sections. The book is divided into nineteen parts, each substantial but each summarized in the novel's table of contents by a single rhyming couplet: the lengthiest, which amounts to 142 pages and also happens to contain the polyglot party, is condensed as "Calcutta simmers in a stew of talk. / A cemetery affords a pleasing walk" (iii).[28] Moreover, these sizeable sections are composed of numerous much shorter chapters, the briefest of which lasts only three paragraphs (or nine sentences): "18.25," the twenty-fifth of thirty-four chapters in part 18 (1426). Seth's working paradox extends even to the appearance of the page; the short sentences and chapters fill their frame to the brim. After all, the publishers needed to save some costs in printing the work.[29] The result is a mainstream novel so broad and thick that it actually

[27] The readability score combines results from the Gunning Fog, Flesch-Kincaid, SMOG, and Coleman-Liau tests. This measure is crude, but it confirms the impressions of many readers.

[28] In addition to sheer length, a dizzying cast of characters, and the manifest ambition to encompass an entire society, *A Suitable Boy* also shares these chapter-heading couplets with *The Story of the Stone*: one of the primary ways in which the example of the Chinese classic is felt—though not by Pascale Casanova and other critics who observe only Western influences on Seth's Indian novel. See Cao Xueqin, *The Story of the Stone*.

[29] Maggie McKernan recalls the pre-auction discussion at Orion: "Nobody was against offering—the main conversation centred on how we'd publish. One volume or several volumes. And how we'd price it. It was a big

has quite narrow margins. In all its manifestations, this same organizational tension provides a surface and a structure for Seth's absorption of multiple spoken, read, and written languages (not to mention the variety of experiences they encode).

The novel has many ways of alerting us to shifts in tongue. The most basic is the parenthetical aside or adverbial modifier: "(talking in English instead of Punjabi)" (649); "(in standard Hindi)" (700); "replied Meenakshi in English" (427). At times, the reader is informed of the language spoken at the beginning of a conversation, at times towards the end, a revelation that throws new light over the preceding dialogue. It is only at the close of a discussion with his sons that "Mr Justice Chatterji [asked a question] in Bengali, with a smile" (455), thus divulging that the family's usual language is English—a fact that situates them clearly in the social strata of Calcutta, Bengal, and India itself. Indeed, throughout the novel a character's English is a clear marker of class and education. English is an active factor in the search for a suitable boy. Anglicized snobbery does for "the fifth candidate [at a meeting of prospective husbands, who], though decent enough, could not speak English properly. Try, try again" (598). At the first meeting between Lata and the man she will eventually choose, the shoe-factory manager Haresh, English partly accounts for his immediate attraction and her initial reluctance:

> her accent was not a heavy Indian accent, he was pleased to note, but light, almost British, because of her convent-school background. Haresh, on the other hand, had surprised Lata by his accent, which bore traces both of Hindi and of the local Midlands dialect which he had been exposed to in England. Why, both her brothers spoke English better than he did. (617)

English literature features in her encounters with all three suitors. She comes across the first, the Muslim Kabir, at the Imperial Book Depot in Brahmpur, as "she began to flip through a volume of Tennyson" (50). Their last meeting, many hundreds of pages and a mid-narrative

book, expensive to produce."

rehearsal of *Twelfth Night* later, also takes place at a bookseller and begins with her admission that "'I came in to buy a Wodehouse, but I've bought myself a Jane Austen instead'" (1406). When Amit shows Lata the Calcutta cemetery, he points out that Rose Aylmer (the subject of a poem by Walter Savage Landor) "'lies buried here. As does Thackeray's father and one of Dickens' sons, and the original for Byron's *Don Juan*'" (490). After seeing off Lata and her mother at Lucknow Station, even the business-minded Haresh notes that one of his life aims is to "finish reading major novels of T.H. [Thomas Hardy]" (651). This emphasis might seem like evidence for the critics who see *A Suitable Boy* as a culturally assimilated work, but lived English is only one thread in the multilingual patchwork that Seth's written English stitches.

For what is not originally in English is either printed plainly (without italics or glossary) or translated. Occasionally Seth offers direct, side-by-side translations, as in a bilingual (or, more accurately, multilingual) edition:

Ram Ram Shah	Ram Ram Shah,
Alu ka rasa,	Gravy made from spuds,
Mendaki ki chatni—	Chutney made from female frog—
Aa gaya nasha!	Drink it, and you're drunk! (240)

More often he works the accent of other tongues, as well as their terms,[30] into his own flexible English. The reader is frequently apprised of an utterance's non-English status by its slightly less than idiomatic phrasing: the cry of a rickshaw-wallah—"'You daughter-fucker!'" (214)—or the Urdu-inflected formality of a classical singer declaring that "'I know that it is not because of my voice but through your grace—and that of the one above—' she added, 'that I am here tonight'" (91). That singer is the courtesan Saeeda Bai, whose affair with Maan Kapoor

[30] Characters who are themselves fluent in different languages often mix them together—"the old man referred to himself in the very words—'purana khidmatgar'—that Maan had used mentally to classify him" (111)—in a practice shared by the presiding narrative voice.

animates much of *A Suitable Boy*'s primary subplot; in parallel fashion, her sung ghazals offer a linguistic and poetic counterpoint to the English literature and conversation that characterize much of Lata's milieu. In the scenes of her singing and in the efforts of Maan to learn Urdu, Seth offers his own translations of couplets by Ghalib and others: "'No grain of dust in the garden is wasted. / Even the path is like a lamp to the tulip's stain'"; "'The rose laughs at the activities of the nightingale – / What they call love is a defect of the mind'" (138). The translations flow from there, some by Seth's hand, others borrowed, as when the novel gives way to Tagore as "translated by William Radice," "*The Select Nonsense of Sukumar Ray* translated by Sukanta Chaudhri," "extracts from *The Bhagavad-Gita* translated by Barbara Stoler Miller," "extracts from *Mir Anis* by Ali Jawad Zaidi," and "extracts from *Sri Ramacharitamanasa* translated into English" (v). One translation in particular recurs. Interviewed in 2018, Seth reveals that among "the most rewarding response[s]" he received to *A Suitable Boy* was a reader's funeral at which "they read that thing that I translated – *Uth jaag musafir bhor bhayi* … from Gandhi's Ashram 'Rachnavali'. *Rise traveller, the sky is light – why do you sleep, it is not night*" ("Obsession"). These lines appear three times in the latter third of the novel. On each occasion they acquire fresh meaning: first as a memory of "courage in the most hopeless days of the freedom struggle" (933); then at the funeral of Mrs. Mahesh Kapoor, bringing her husband to tears and to a realization of his hitherto "unrealized loss. Gandhi was dead, and with him his ideals" (1336); and then finally in "a renewal, if not of hope, at least of determination" (1351).[31] The unostentatious English of *A Suitable Boy* stages an Indian chorus, an orchestration that swells, entwines, and grows ever more complex—finishing

[31] Seth himself is so fond of this translation that he repeats it again outside the borders of *A Suitable Boy*, using it in *The Rivered Earth* (2011), a collection of four libretti.

only when history and marriage intervene, when the general election has concluded and Lata has wed.

Towards the end of the novel and via his alter ego Amit, Seth directly addresses the issue of English for the Indian writer. The Brahmpur Literary Society had earlier held "'the 1,698th meeting of our society'" (161) and introduced the reader to yet another dialect, the pretentious English of a provincial Anglicized literary class, exhibited in two poems and the title of "a paper on the subject: 'Eliot: Whither?'"[32] Over one thousand pages later, it reassembles for a reading by the visiting poet. Asked why he does not write in Bengali, his mother tongue, Amit has two answers ready. The first is that "his Bengali was not good enough" and that it therefore "wasn't a question of choice" (1369). The second, which follows from the first, is that "'we are all accidents of history and must do what we are best at without fretting too much about it. Even Sanskrit came to India from outside.'" These modest arguments for English have the benefit of being more or less incontrovertible. Yet the novel itself offers a literally larger vindication of English, bound (if almost bursting) evidence that the compromise of the language—which expedites both entry and acquiescence to a transnational publishing system—can be, paradoxically, generative. Moreover, the fecundity that produced so many pages also extends beyond them, for the legacy of *A Suitable Boy* is twofold. Not only did it further advance the position of Anglophone Indian writers abroad—whetting the appetite for their work among publishers and readers alike—it helped, by securing the future of Penguin

[32] Dr. Makhijani's "A Hymn to Mother India" lasts 29 stanzas, although Seth only gives us 13 (163-65); Mr Nowrojee's "Haunting Passion" begins:

> I'm haunted by a tender passion,
> The ghost of which will never die.
> The leaves of autumn have grown ashen:
> I'm haunted by a tender passion. (162)

India at home, to transform Delhi into an English-language literary capital. This process has simultaneously entrenched the presence of multinational publishers and developed, through and alongside those institutions, a generation of Anglophone Indian editorial talent.

V. Penguin India's Progeny

For Penguin India and David Davidar sit at the center of an expanding constellation not solely of writers, but of editors and publishers too. Krishan Chopra, Publisher at HarperCollins India, has recorded his memories of Penguin India with the revealing title, "How almost all of today's English language publishers began in a small office in Delhi's Nehru Place." An author who had recently visited the HarperCollins office "commented how we, as indeed many of the editors and CEOs in other publishing houses, all seem connected with Penguin while it was headed by David Davidar in India," a remark that causes Chopra to draw up a shortlist of Penguin's progeny:

> Hence Ravi Singh at Speaking Tiger, VK Karthika and Sudha Sadanand at Westland, Poulomi Chatterjee and the CEO, Thomas Abraham, at Hachette, Udayan Mitra and Diya Kar as Publishers and CEO Ananth Padmanabhan at HarperCollins, besides Hemali Sodhi till recently in Penguin, Raj Kamini Mahadevan who could get the tardiest authors to complete their manuscripts, and many others one is missing out – all of us at some point in their career had worked with David Davidar.

Asked to comment on the publishers arriving and emerging in Penguin's wake, Rukun Advani immediately identified the primary source of personnel and practices shaping the new literary Delhi, the editorial professionals trained and launched by one publishing house in particular:

> You mean outfits like Bloomsbury India and HarperCollins and Westland and Hachette India and spinoffs like Juggernaut. I think their acquisitioning methods and strategies and models are based on Penguin India's, and quite a lot of their personnel, both editorial and publicity/sales, are drawn from Penguin India (Karthika, Thomas Abraham, Chiki Sarkar) . . . There's no "worse" aspect to this burgeoning that I can see. (Personal Interview)

Some critics, of course, do see a downside: the mass and power of the multinationals, whose ultimate headquarters are elsewhere, bear at least some of the classic hallmarks of neocolonial imposition. For Pavithra Narayanan, "the rise of a transnational publishing industry in India" has only heightened disparities "not only between English and regional-language publishing, but also between transnational and indigenous English-language publishers" (77). These inequalities extend from the publishers' obvious economic imbalance to the critical reception of their books, driving "an almost exclusive focus on English-language writers by the literary world market and Western academia" (76). The established conceptual framework of postcolonialism reinforces the problem, since "what defines postcolonial literature in First World institutions is what private capital enterprise makes available" (7). Rashmi Sadana similarly rejects the current critical choice between "postcolonial or transnational frameworks," though not, like Narayanan, in defense of India's many other languages against English-language erasure, but because "the place of English in India ultimately means much more than" those frameworks allow (*English* 51). Instead, she maintains that "to recognize that English emerges and exists alongside other languages in an intensely multilingual society is to repoliticize and reterritorialize Indian novels rather than read them merely in their transnational 'isolation.'"

In contrast to both Narayanan and Sadana, however, I argue that separating the transnational from the national or regional is to mistake the nature of global mercantile and aesthetic currents—the transnational does not exist in "isolation" but precisely in complex relation to the "the indigenization of [Indian] English" (66). Narayanan refers to "a transnational publishing industry in India" as if the preposition were a contradiction, the transnational a sphere of astroturf simply deposited onto Indian territory rather than a realm of culture and

commerce that emerges partly through outside influence and partly through homegrown endeavor. A publishing house like Penguin India, and a novel like *A Suitable Boy*, represent a creative synthesis—and such syntheses are the subject of the Global Anglophone. They demand to be understood in the concentric and at times competing contexts of Delhi as a literary capital, facing India while yet integrated into a broader Anglophone arena.[33] Homogenization and diversification are twin sides of Penguin's progress, though David Davidar himself believes that the balance of publishing power and literary expression bends towards diversity:

> I believe Penguin India can take a lion's share of the credit for transforming the publishing and writing landscape in India (in the English language) into what it is today. Within ten years, other multinational publishers began following Penguin into the country (many of them had export offices in the country but now they began publishing), at least half a dozen local publishers were set up, or existing publishers or book distributors received the sort of encouragement they needed to begin publishing, hundreds and then tens of thousands of English language writers of general non-fiction and fiction began to be published, Indian books began to dominate the literary sections of newspapers and magazines, and bestseller lists, and bookstores, over a score of literary prizes were established, and latterly over 70 literature festivals opened their doors to patrons. It was all quite extraordinary. Where there had been nothing, a barren plain, there was now a flourishing publishing ecosystem, that was self-sustaining and distinct, like all the other major English language publishing environments in the world. (Personal Interview)

A new organizing concept is necessary to encompass these intersecting literary environments, to explain both publisher and book—the conditions of their possibility and the consequences of their weight. The Global Anglophone can and should be molded to meet that challenge.

---

[33] In the shape of Bentsen Pryce, a firm which employs Lata's Anglophile brother Arun, *A Suitable Boy* offers a model for how transnational companies used to operate in India, a model transformed if not entirely overturned by Penguin India:

> The managing agencies typically owned controlling interests in the actual manufacturing companies that operated the factories, and supervised them all from the Calcutta head office. Almost without exception these agencies were still owned by the British, and almost without exception the executive officers of the managing agencies near Dalhousie Square—the commercial heart of Calcutta—were white. Final control lay with the directors in the London office and the shareholders in England—but they were usually content to leave things to the Calcutta head office so long as the profits kept flowing in. (456)

CONCLUSION: TOWARDS A HISTORY OF THE EDITOR

"The Empire of English Literature" has argued that editing reveals how power intersects with creativity—and that the study of such intersections can help us conceptualize the emergent, disputed, and ill-defined field of the Global Anglophone.

In doing so, this project makes two major interventions. On the one hand, it develops a more rigorous account of the editor's role in literary history, theorizing the editor's creative and at times destructive reading as an essential element of how literature enters the world and reaches its readers. And on the other hand, it uses that editing, as an activity at once commercial and aesthetic, material and imaginative—encompassing acceptance and rejection, revision and distortion—to demarcate the borders of the Global Anglophone as a literary field structured by transnational networks of production and reception.

I have substantiated these interventions by analyzing a half-century of postwar publishing history, reconstructing through archival research and original interviews the editorial relationships linking powerful publishing institutions in London and New York to Anglophone authors across five continents. "The Empire of English Literature" has examined the role of the BBC and its producer Henry Swanzy in broadcasting Caribbean and West African writers, namely V. S. Naipaul and Wole Soyinka; the influence of *The New Yorker* and its fiction editor William Maxwell on Canadian and Irish canons of short fiction, particularly the stories of Mavis Gallant and Maeve Brennan; and the expansion of Penguin Books to India and Australia, tracking the progress of Penguin Australia through its absorption of the feminist press McPhee Gribble—marking the career of its author Helen Garner—and the founding of Penguin India

through the publication of Vikram Seth's *A Suitable Boy*. This editorial background sheds new light on these writers' works, revealing how they came to be published, and so I have also made substantial interventions in their critical receptions. In each case, I have employed editorial actions and reactions—recorded in margins, letters, and interviews—to illuminate the central nexus of form and theme in my selected texts: *Miguel Street* and *The Lion and the Jewel*, *Home Truths* and *The Springs of Affection*, *The Children's Bach* and *A Suitable Boy*. "The Empire of English Literature" is therefore the first scholarly work to explore in such depth, and with such archival detail, the mediating function of radio in the early works of Naipaul and Soyinka, the place of home and homelessness in the stunted and revived *New Yorker* stories of Gallant and Brennan, the aesthetic of fragmentation in Garner's novel and the aesthetic of translation in Seth's.

Naturally, there is a significant danger of determinism in applying publishing history so closely to my close readings: a temptation to overstate the importance and the insight of editorial judgements, to assume that institutional maneuvers in the wings of literature must hold the keys to understanding words on the page. Similarly, a focus on the process of publication can bleed into an unconscious bias towards those works which have been, in fact, successfully published and which therefore provide the archival material the scholar hungrily seeks. Traces of editing accumulate when works are accepted, revised, and released; a curtailed paper trail is the unavoidable result of rejection. And yet, rejection is as necessary a dimension of editing as any other. It is the act that gives meaning to selection and that throws light on the largest part of literary endeavor: all those efforts which go unpublished and unread. I have deliberately sought to build into this dissertation an awareness of rejection and an understanding of editorial destructiveness—the flip side of the first reader's creativity. My chapter on Gallant turns on the

mid-1970s shift in *New Yorker* editorial personnel and its consequences for her unfinished Linnet Muir story sequence: encouraged by William Maxwell and rejected by Daniel Menaker. Editorial shortcomings cast a shadow over other chapters too: through Naipaul's narrow tastes and high-handed pronouncements as producer of *Caribbean Voices*; through the disproportionate amount of publishing money and critical attention lavished on Indian literature in English; through the nameless books that McPhee Gribble, absorbed and diminished by Penguin Australia, never got the chance to cultivate. Such failures can fuel further editing, however, and my dissertation also attends to the recuperative function exercised by editors. Part Two, in particular, demonstrates how Gallant's Linnet sequence, left incomplete, was only revived for a Canadian audience through the offices of Douglas Gibson, and how Maeve Brennan's stories of Dublin, which slipped out of print as the author unraveled, were posthumously recovered and reframed by Christopher Carduff. Though "The Empire of English Literature" is itself necessarily selective—its greatest lacuna being the absence of poetry—I have tried to examine the fullness of the editorial impact on Anglophone literatures across multiple authors, institutions, media, and geographies.

In short, this dissertation aims to reshape our understanding of the postwar expansion of English-language literatures by foregrounding the figure of the editor and by deploying editorial activity to develop a more critical and capacious architecture for the Global Anglophone. Its success will lie not only in the freshness of its material and the originality of its interpretations, but in the contributions it makes to the evolution and interconnection of three burgeoning academic currents. My work illuminates the rise of the Global Anglophone by harnessing a parallel development in literary scholarship—the "institutional turn"[1]—and

[1] See the synthesizing work of Jeremy Rosen on the advance of "literary institutional critique," particularly

uncovering the role of Anglo-American publishing institutions in forging a common sphere for literatures in English. The broadcaster, the magazine, and the publishing house that I study bring this realm of genuine literary activity into focus: engines of creative connection and sites of commercial control, working in conflict and cooperation with homegrown publishers, they allow us to see both similarities and divergences more clearly across English-reading and English-writing cultures. Meanwhile, my anatomy of these institutions revolves around the representative within them who wields the most immediate influence over the text—the editor who serves as the conduit between publisher and public, between the literary work as it exists before publication and as it circulates afterwards, between the effect the institution has on the writer and the impact the writer has on the institution. This engagement with the means and ends of editorial power, practically illustrated and theoretically delineated, constitutes my third disciplinary contribution: to the growing body of criticism that we can call "editorial studies."

My theory of the editor centers on editorial reading as an interpretive, imaginative act that anticipates reception and so reshapes composition. Editors are readers with power, the power to work reading back into writing. In this way, they stand at the crossroads of creation, mediating between writer and reader, between text and institution, linking the two ends of the literary exchange. Or, by the same token, they may break that circuit through their power of selection and rejection. An account of the editorial function that recognizes its agents' power of judgement must therefore integrate theories of creative reading and of literary economy, concepts of mediation and models of the field of cultural production. As my use of those terms suggests, I build on John Guillory's definition of mediation as simultaneously a transmission

"Everywhere at Once and Nowhere Specific" (2017), "The Institutional Turn" (2019), and "Conglomerate but not Homogenized" (2021).

and a recreation, and I apply it to the professional readers who populate Pierre Bourdieu's economy of art. But by foregrounding a figure—the editor—ignored by each thinker, I also make room for a revitalized account of creativity in this literary sociology, showing how middlemen play a crucial role in the making and remaking of literary works. Their textual activity suggests, finally, that the editor's reading makes visible and concrete and recoverable what is creative about all reading.

I have set literary editing within this theoretical context and against the particular background of Anglophone literatures in the second half of the twentieth century. "The Empire of English Literature" spans a period of deep and coinciding clashes over political, economic, and literary power: from the codification of the Traditional Market Agreement in 1947, and the death knell for the British Empire rung by Indian independence, to the publication of Seth's *A Suitable Boy* in 1993—from the birth of the postcolonial to the heyday of globalization. However, my thinking about the editorial function reflects the much broader historical sweep of its transformations over time. As prelude to this project, I tracked the development of editing as a profession from the eighteenth century, and its origins in both textual criticism and printing, through the nineteenth, as the publishing and periodical industries expanded and diversified, to its meridian of power in the early-to-mid twentieth century, and onwards finally to its eclipse in our current era of simultaneously conglomerated and fractured media. I now offer these notes towards a history of the editor in the English language as a fitting conclusion to "The Empire of English Literature" and as an outline for future research. It is, to begin with, a largely Anglo-American tale—one that expands, in the preceding pages, into a more comprehensively Anglophone story.

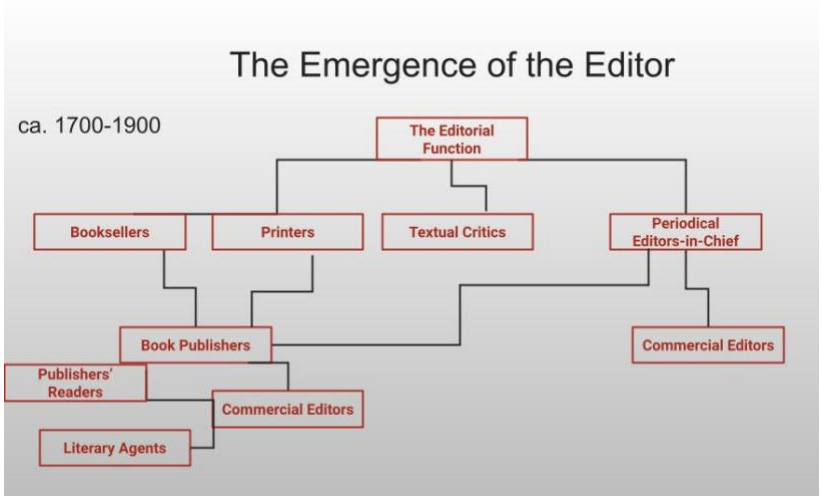


Fig. 6

The editor has been hidden in history and snubbed by scholarship. To ask why is to begin the project of bringing this obscured figure to light, and of deepening our understanding of how literary creation actually happens. Through editors, and their invisible influence over the borders of what is published and read, the social network of literary production comes into sharper focus.[2]

In 1755, Samuel Johnson defines the editor: "Publisher; he that revises or prepares any work for publication" (675). There we have the problem in a punctuation mark. The process of separating "editor" from "publisher" is long, gradual, and less than straightforward. It is difficult to pin the emergence of editing as a distinct commercial profession to a particular

[2] Though the editor has been neglected, the study of other agents and their roles in literary production has generated the robust field known as the sociology of literature. My dissertation builds on Pierre Bourdieu's work in particular—see the Introduction—but I am further indebted to a number of classic inquiries into the social life of reading and writing. They include Robert Escarpit, *Sociology of Literature* (1958); Lucien Goldmann, *Towards a Sociology of the Novel* (1964); D. F. McKenzie, *Bibliography and the Sociology of Texts* (1986); Jerome McGann, *The Textual Condition* (1991); Janice Radway, *A Feeling for Books* (1997); and Mark McGurl, *The Program Era* (2009).

moment in time. But the possibility for this division of labor is present from Johnson's first edition. The semicolon that divides "publisher" from "he that revises and prepares any work for publication" is not a marker of mere equivalence, but a border that has the potential to harden. The progress of the editor from the eighteenth century onwards is the progress of that semicolon.

It is also part of a more sweeping story, that of the editorial function and its mutations over time. Where Michel Foucault locates an "author-function," whose purpose is to offer "a principle of unity in writing" and "to neutralize the contradictions that are found in a series of texts" (128), there is also its verso, an editor function which shapes and smooths and circulates writing not by self-advertisement but by self-concealment. The activity of editing is much older than the job description, after all; it is a current of textual life that flows through various middlemen before being pooled in publishing houses and periodicals.[3] And it is in those environments, as they expand and specialize over the course of the nineteenth century, that the protean function—of revising and preparing work for publication—eventually becomes embodied in the particular position.

[3] The history of the professional editor can be tracked from the starting point that I have chosen (the early eighteenth century onwards, when novelistic fiction, magazines, and publishing houses all attained a critical mass); the history of editing itself extends into deeper reaches of time and stands in uncertain, though productive, relation to other forms of textual engagement, such as translation. I am grateful to Andrew Galloway for directing my attention to a 1373 letter from Petrarch to Boccaccio, in which the poet informs his friend that he has translated his story of Griselda into Latin—and describes his method of "re-writing your tale" in a manner which anticipates not a few editors of later centuries (194).

> So one fine day when, as usual, my mind was distracted by a variety of occupations, discontented with myself and my surroundings, I suddenly sent everything flying, and, snatching my pen, I attacked this story of yours. I sincerely trust that it will gratify you that I have of my own free-will undertaken to translate your work, something I should certainly never think of doing for anyone else, but which I was induced to do in this instance by my partiality for you and for the story. Not neglecting the precept of Horace in his Art of Poetry, that the careful translator should not attempt to render word for word, I have told your tale in my own language, in some places changing or even adding a few words, for I felt that you would not only permit, but would approve, such alterations. (reproduced in Robinson 193)

I. Critical Neglect

The lack of definition to the editor's historical development, however, has been a barrier to its academic appreciation. The term itself contains an ambiguity that hints at a history of imprecise, overlapping responsibilities. A professional editor can be scholarly or commercial, a textual critic who edits the dead or a literary editor who shapes the work of the living. One works post-dissemination, reconstructing texts injured by the passage of time; the other's domain is pre-publication, their role that of first reader—a position of priority and power, the power to knead reading back into writing. The first has been lavished with close attention by those who have an understandable interest in the methods and stakes of textual criticism. The second has slipped into the shadows cast by other middlemen in the history of print, other figures who have shared in the editorial function: printers, booksellers, publishers, literary agents. Nor is this shadowy state easily illuminated, given the multiple complications of form and context which attend the editor's slow gestation: the diverging branches of periodicals and books (the former giving editors prominence much earlier than the latter); the differing rates of expansion that shape individual publishing enterprises; the heterogeneity of global literary environments.

And so it is curious, but less than flabbergasting, to find that no monograph exists detailing the editor's rise to power over the course of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, or its decline from that summit of influence in our own time. Both the theory and the practice of book history have failed, so far, to integrate the editor fully. Robert Darnton's communications circuit of book production and dissemination has places for the author, the publisher, the printer, the supplier, the shipper, the bookseller, the binder, and the reader—but not the editor (68). Granted, his model draws upon the conditions of the late eighteenth century,

when the literary editor was still in embryo. Darnton may implicitly subsume editorial duties—tasks which will ultimately produce their own executor—into the broader remit of the publisher, the figure who "draw[s] up contracts with authors, build[s] alliances with booksellers, negotiate[s] with political authorities, and handle[s] finances, supplies, shipments, and publicity" (76). If so, the efforts of commerce dwarf those of art in Darnton's account. Giving editors their due would require us to pay more attention to the literary side of business and the fact that publisher-editors are readers as well as book-brokers; the editorial function consists in its relationship to the text, a dynamic that raises as many questions about authorship as it does about economics.

A widespread disregard for the editor's origins, and a corresponding silence over what editing might tell us about the nature of literary creation, marks and misshapes the secondary literature on publishing history. Book editors are sometimes mentioned, but rarely examined or explained. They often appear quite suddenly in these histories, cropping up at the end of the nineteenth century, shorn of ancestry. Their textual activities—Dr. Johnson's revision and preparation—receive due attention, but their development does not. Martyn Lyons's *Books: A Living History* (2011) does not have an index entry for "editor." In the British context, attention is paid to the quasi-editorial figure of the publisher's reader, or literary adviser, but not to its evolution into the more textually-involved editor (contributing to drafts as well as offering reports on potential publications). The article devoted to "Publishing" in the 1911 *Encyclopaedia Britannica* uses neither the noun nor the verb forms of "editing," though it describes the habits of both "'proof readers'" and "'publisher's readers.'" The present entry, on "History of publishing," notes that the "heart of the business lies in the editorial function," that nowadays "besides the editor, there is also an editorial department," and that their work

"receives more attention today than in the past" (Unwin). Nevertheless, the article does not explain, beyond general references to the differentiated labor produced by the pressures of expansion, how publishing arrived at the point where an editor "selects the books to be published, deals with the author, and is responsible for the critical reading of the typescript (and its revision if necessary) and for seeing the book through the press." John Sutherland's *Victorian Novelists and Publishers* (1976) rectifies one injustice, the "comparatively scant attention" which "is paid to the figures whom the publishing world threw up in the 1840s," but his study of how the "business genius" of a publisher could partner the "creative genius" of a writer stops short of the editor's rise, and only prefigures the work that may yet be done. John Feather's *A History of British Publishing* (2006) again traces the rise of the publisher's reader, alongside that of the literary agent, but neglects both the fully-fledged editor and the activity of editing. The textual engagement of publishing—that creative collaboration, or contest, over the text which is the province of editors—tends to slip between the cracks of scholarly accounts.

The American scene has been, until recently, fairly quiet on the editorial front. In 1987 and "Publishing in America: Needs and Opportunities for Research," Michael Winship observed that "literary editors . . . remain shadowy figures and it would be fascinating to know more about their relationships with publishers, what their exact responsibilities, obligations, input, and rewards were, and how these relationships developed and changed over time" (71). So it would, but the discipline has yet to move decisively in that direction. Classic texts of American book history focus on publishers to the exclusion of their employees, on the policies established at the top of the organization rather than the business of how they are carried out by various deputies. The second edition of Hellmut Lehmann-Haupt's *The Book in America* (1952) does not discuss editing or editors until the emergence of James Laughlin at New Directions

Press (348) and Maxwell Perkins at Charles Scribner's Sons (371). John Tebbel's *Between Covers: The Rise and Transformation of Book Publishing in America* (1987) promises, in its table of contents, a section on "*Author-editor relationships*" (x). In the event, however, this passage actually focuses on "the relationship between author and publisher," while giving some thought to "the rise of the agent" (171). This elision has continued to be a feature of scholarship. In *The Oxford Companion to the Book* (2010), the entries for "editor, trade" and "literary agent" offer an instructive contrast: the editor is encapsulated in two paragraphs, the second of which concerns those "literary agents" who have largely "replaced" editors (Simon); the agents themselves receive five (Flanery).

Magazines are another matter. Even so their editors suffer from a lesser species of neglect (tied, perhaps, to the residual primacy of books over periodicals in academic work). Well before the differentiation of roles within the publishing house, periodicals offer comparative clarity of organizational structure: they have editors who call themselves editors. Their centrality to nineteenth-century culture has been explored in *Innovators and Preachers: The Role of the Editor in Victorian England* (1985), edited by Joel H. Wiener.

> Editing is at the core of the Victorian experience. In an age characterized by the proliferation of print, the editor acted as a conduit between text and audience. He communicated ideas and values to a multiple readership. He enriched Victorian political and cultural life. And, perhaps of most importance, he helped create the modern newspaper and magazine, without which life for our Victorian forebears and ourselves would be considerably duller. In brief, the editor was situated at the nucleus of the Victorian world. (Wiener xiii)

Nevertheless, as Wiener goes on to lament and as the subsequent decades have yet to rectify, "no history of the Victorian editor has been written." The sheer complexity of the publishing process, and of the literary co-productions between magazines and publishing houses, remains an obstacle. Serial publication, the era's defining method of dissemination, distinguished these

two means of production—but it was also the overture to overlap, as works pioneered in monthly issues find their way between hard covers. What is more, a number of magazines maintained intimate alliances with publishing houses throughout the nineteenth century, having been founded as publicity outlets before growing into independence. Such was the case of *Harper's*, for instance, "designed to promote the firm's book business by offering serializations of, and extracts from, books it would eventually publish" (Belasco 266). Perhaps the practice of periodical editors encouraged and shaped the emerging habits of their colleagues in the world of bound volumes: academia, however, has hardly asked the question.

To the extent that neglect is a consequence of the editor's role, modesty as well as murkiness plays a part. Though its practitioners finally achieved a certain celebrity in the twentieth century—and memoirs, if not monographs, proliferated—editing has long and largely been understood as the business of a subordinate. Editors are the hidden hand in the economy of publishing, unseen and unfelt by the common reader, who remains free to imagine authorship as an essentially individual endeavor. Robert Gottlieb speaks for the code of his profession, though not all of his peers, when he declares that the "glorification of editors, of which I have been an extreme example, is not a wholesome thing. The editor's relationship to a book should be an invisible one" ("Art of Editing"). In *Avid Reader* (2016), Gottlieb's account of his storied career at Simon and Schuster, Alfred A. Knopf, and *The New Yorker*, he studiously refrains from any claim to creative possession over the works he edited. Self-effacement muffles public awareness of editorial work. It also enforces the not-unfounded suspicion that it would be treacherous to both writers and readers to drag the editor from the margins to the middle of the page.

A betrayal it would be, undoing the work of composition and making manifest what was designed to be imperceptible. But there is benefit in disloyalty for book history. The editor represents one avenue to a more complete sociology of the text, one of the "relative centers" that bring the social relations underpinning literature's construction into sharper relief (McGann 42). An inquiry into the profession's origins and development would be justified on that score alone. Of the many possible focal points, moreover, editors exert a particular, and particularly understudied, gravitational force. Their power stems from their position in relation to the text, and flows in two directions: pulling writers into their orbit and pushing writing out into the wider culture. As first readers, mediators with an ability to alter the text, editors leave us with a record of their reading (that most precious and scarce resource for historians of the book) and an illustration of how that reading shapes writing. The historical problem of the editor's rise and fall has the potential, therefore, to kindle a theoretical breakthrough: a new understanding of the creative reading that generates creative writing. Tracking the emergence of the literary editor—from an early glimpse in Choderlos de Laclos's *Les liaisons dangereuses* (1782), through William Dean Howells's work with Henry James from his perch at *The Atlantic Monthly* (1866-81), to the peak of American editorial authority in the shape of Maxwell Perkins in the first half of the twentieth century—I flesh out the crucial questions. When does the editorial function become embodied in the commercial book, or periodical, editor? How does that function change over time and across place? Or, to put it more plainly, when does interventionist editing become more the rule than the exception? How, finally, can we define editorial power, the prerogative of selection that propels literature into the world and polices its acceptable boundaries?

II. The 18th Century and Choderlos de Laclos

Like novelistic fiction itself, editing acquired considerable definition over the course of the eighteenth century. The term, as it was then understood, drew upon two streams of activity and issued in two forms of non-authorial authority—that of the publisher-bookseller and that of the textual critic. Each was a reader with power, the power of the critic to determine the appearance of the text and of the publisher to direct its subsequent reception. Though the book business did not achieve for decades to come the critical mass which gave rise to dedicated trade editors, the conceptual ground was laid for their emergence as literature's gatekeepers.

In the eighteenth century, the world of books had not yet settled into the professional categories we now recognize. Publishing itself was the province of booksellers rather than of "publishers" per se. As Duncan Eaves and Ben Kimpel note in their biography of *Samuel Richardson* (1971), "publishing"

> in the eighteenth century meant something less than it does today. A publisher was rather more like what we would call a bookseller and a bookseller more like what we would call a publisher. The booksellers generally bought copyrights from authors, arranged for printing, paid costs, and took profits, in addition to distributing books. (19)

Editing, meanwhile, meant rather more than it currently does. On the one hand, it was another name for publishing, a matter of bringing out an edition (from the Latin *ēdĕre*, to put forth). This larger significance outlasted the century; in 1828, Noah Webster still offers "a publisher" as his primary definition, ahead of "the person who revises, corrects and prepares a book for publication" (640). On the other hand, the editor in the popular imagination, if "popular" is not too broad a term, also sprang out of the tradition of textual criticism. The references to an "editor" cited in Johnson's *A Dictionary of the English Language* (1755) concern those scholarly physicians who restore the works of classical authors and of Shakespeare (675). One of these excerpts comes from No. 470 of *The Spectator*, where, in 1712, Joseph Addison

laments that "there is scarce a Solecism in Writing which the best Author is not guilty of, if we may be at Liberty to read him in the Words of some Manuscript, which the laborious Editor has thought fit to examine in the Prosecution of his Work." Addison is referring not to the lackluster efforts of professionals employed by publishing houses to whip the latest novel into shape, but to his frequent disappointment in "examining the new Edition of a Classick Author." Thus, the figure of the editor combines care for the text with a degree of control over its circulation, an aura of authority and an amorphous identity. Little wonder, then, that this figure became a renewable resource for a century's worth of novelists, who used it, in fictitious prefaces and footnotes, to bolster the seeming reality of their works.[4]

Les Liaisons dangereuses (1782) arrives at the high-water mark of European epistolary and editorial fiction—a symbiosis that comes as little surprise, given the editor's reliance on other people's documents. From its earliest pages, we are made aware that a division of labor, long potential in the business of books, has become reality. Two prefaces open Choderlos de Laclos's novel. The first comes from the pen of the "Publisher" ("*Éditeur*" in the original), while the second is by the "Editor" (or "*Rédacteur*"). These figures are far from interchangeable; in fact, they are actively in conflict. One warns the public to withhold credence, the other insists that the reader should believe. A "Publisher's Note"—the more forceful "Avertissement de l'Éditeur" has warning in its title—clarifies the terms of the debate (17). "We think it our duty to warn the public that, in spite of the title of this work and of what the editor says about it in his preface, we cannot guarantee its authenticity as a collection of letters: we have in fact, very good reason to believe that it is only a novel." On the next page,

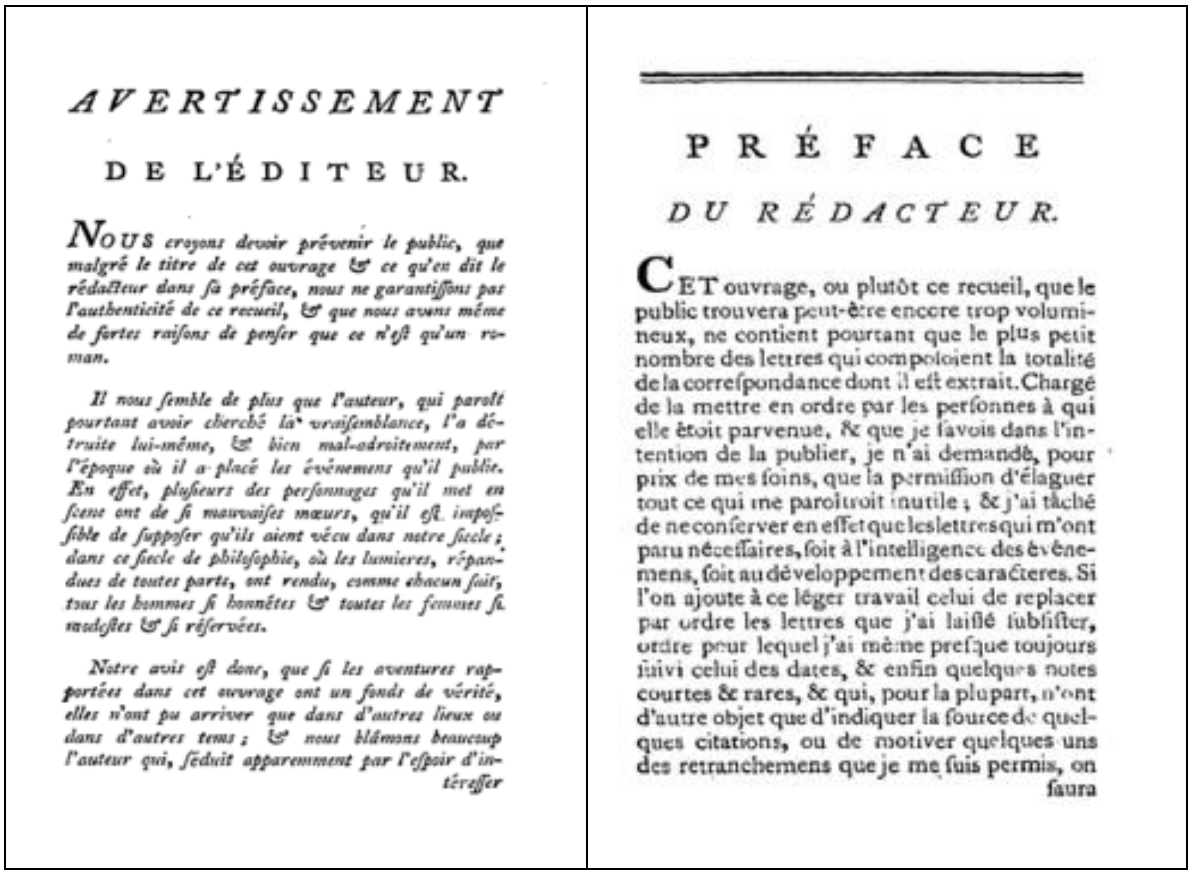
[4] See my forthcoming article on "The Invented Editor," which analyzes in much greater detail the place this fiction of the editor occupies at multiple inception points: at the opening of individual works, at the dawn of the novel's heyday, and at the origin of editing as a genuine profession.

the “Editor’s Preface” sets out in much greater detail the provenance of these letters and the effort that has gone into their presentation. The editor is both scholar and critic, arranging and cutting, caught between the contrasting imperatives of historical and aesthetic justice.

> Commissioned by the persons into whose possession the letters had fallen (and whom, I knew, intended to have them published) to set them in order, I asked nothing for my pains but permission to delete what seemed to me to serve no purpose . . . I had proposed more considerable alterations, almost all of them relating to purity of diction and style[.] (19)

Is the work authentic or is it a novel? Do we trust the publisher or the editor? That the question even arises is proof of a swelling, and self-conscious, mode of literary production. Thus, the novel seduces us in the spirit of the Vicomte de Valmont and the Marquise de Merteuil themselves: playful, witty, and, above all, duplicitous. In passing, it testifies to a world on the brink of two revolutions, one political and the other in publishing.

The dueling prefaces of *Les Liaisons dangereuses* belong to an expanding European publishing scene, one now large enough to begin the process of professional differentiation. But Laclos’s editor still owes more to the textual critic than to any firm sense of a publisher’s in-house reader. The separation of publisher and editor only became an established fact of literary life over the course of the next century.



AVERTISSEMENT

DE L'ÉDITEUR.

NOUS croyons devoir prévenir le public, que malgré le titre de cet ouvrage & ce qu'en dit le rédacteur dans sa préface, nous ne garantissons pas l'authenticité de ce recueil, & que nous avons même de fortes raisons de penser que ce n'est qu'un roman.

Il nous semble de plus que l'auteur, qui paroît pourtant avoir cherché la vraisemblance, l'a détruite lui-même, & bien mal-adroitement, par l'époque où il a placé les événemens qu'il publie. En effet, plusieurs des personnages qu'il met en scene ont de si mauvaises mœurs, qu'il est impossible de supposer qu'ils aient vécu dans notre siecle; dans ce siecle de philosophie, où les lumieres, répandues de toutes parts, ont rendu, comme chacun sait, tous les hommes si honnêtes & toutes les femmes si modestes & si réservées.

Notre avis est donc, que si les aventures rapportées dans cet ouvrage ont un fonds de vérité, elles n'ont pu arriver que dans d'autres lieux ou dans d'autres tems; & nous blâmons beaucoup l'auteur qui, séduit apparemment par l'espoir d'intéresser

PRÉFACE

DU RÉDACTEUR.

CET ouvrage, ou plutôt ce recueil, que le public trouvera peut-être encore trop volumineux, ne contient pourtant que le plus petit nombre des lettres qui composoient la totalité de la correspondance dont il est extrait. Chargé de la mettre en ordre par les personnes à qui elle étoit parvenue, & que je savois dans l'intention de la publier, je n'ai demandé, pour prix de mes soins, que la permission d'élaguer tout ce qui me paroîtroit inutile; & j'ai tâché de ne conserver en effet que les lettres qui m'ont paru nécessaires, soit à l'intelligence des événemens, soit au développement des caractères. Si l'on ajoute à ce léger travail celui de replacer par ordre les lettres que j'ai laissé subsister, ordre pour lequel j'ai même presque toujours suivi celui des dates, & enfin quelques notes courtes & rares, & qui, pour la plupart, n'ont d'autre objet que d'indiquer la source de quelques citations, ou de motiver quelques uns des retranchemens que je me suis permis, on saura

Fig. 7: Dueling prefaces in *Les Liaisons dangereuses* (Dublin, Printed by Luc White, 1784)

III. The 19th Century and William Dean Howells

Commercial editing led a bifurcated existence through the nineteenth century, divided between the dominant, intersecting forms of the book and the magazine. By the end of the 1800s, dedicated editors had come to occupy a distinct position in the literary economy, but where they gradually carved out a secondary sphere within book publishing, they held a marquee place in magazines from a much earlier date. Jonathan Rose remarks on the growth of the book business that "by 1890, most publishing firms were no longer one-man enterprises. They had become modern corporate business organizations, where publishers delegated responsibilities to specialized employees or departments dealing with editorial matters, marketing, or publicity" (342). Magazines, however, had been run by their editors since well

before even Francis Jeffrey "assumed full charge" of the *Edinburgh Review* in 1802 (Joline 7). These periodical potentates took the name of "editor" while filling out the role in its essential aspects of selection, arrangement, and revision. They determined not simply the appearance of any given article, but the shape of everything before, after, and around it: the field in which readers and texts meet. Though Roberto Calasso defines the art of publishing as "the capacity to give form to a plurality of books as though they were the chapters of a single book" (9), that form-giving function fits the magazine editor rather more neatly.

The magazine is the editor's element, the arena which depends most on this figure's abilities and which displays them most visibly. Each issue combines authorial variety with corporate character; it is the editor who carves the second out of the first. To speak of the collective life of a magazine, therefore, is to venture into editorial territory and map its topography. When, in 1987, Robert Gottlieb left his position as president of Alfred A. Knopf and began his stint as editor-in-chief of *The New Yorker*, he experienced a curious alteration in his relationship with writers and his degree of authority over their work.

> In book publishing, it's the writer who has the final authority, and properly so: It's his or her book, not yours. But if it's the writer's book, it's the editor's magazine. As I was to discover at *The New Yorker*, it's the editor who's in charge, and the writer who's there at the editor's pleasure. In other words, writers had to please me, not the other way around, which is what I was used to. I found this not only disconcerting but disturbing—it was against the natural order of things. (*Avid Reader* 226-27)

As a form, the magazine is defined by its borders, its contents shaped by their context; those borders, and that definition, is an ongoing editorial choice. The power of editors is measured not only by what they accept and shape, but by what they refuse and inhibit.

Through its various uses since entering the English language in the late sixteenth century, "magazine" has maintained its core meaning: it is a container, though what it contains can vary considerably. The original definition of "magazine" is almost indifferent to form. It

refers to "a place where goods are kept in store; a storehouse for goods or merchandise; a warehouse or depot" ("magazine, *n.*"). The walls are less important than the contents, the framework harder to see than the work it frames—and yet this sense of a nearly transparent envelope is what endures in English usage. In the eighteenth century, the "store" drifted from the robustly substantial—its military meaning is especially explosive—to the more subtly textual. It acquired what is still its most common significance as "a periodical publication containing articles by various writers." The term and the concept give shape, however loosely, to multitudinousness. Marianne Moore, in one of her editorial Comments in *The Dial,* calls its keynote "miscellany" (449). She offers the zoo or the museum—and, by extension, the circus-master and the curator—as analogues for the magazine and its conductors: "Academic feeling, or prejudice possibly, in favor of continuity and completeness is opposed to miscellany—to music programs, composite picture exhibitions, newspapers, magazines, and anthologies." Yet magazines also give unity to variety. Charles Whibley writes that "*Blackwood's Magazine* has ever had a corporate life of its own. It is not a mere medley of heterogeneous articles. It is a single work, conducted by a single mind, for a single purpose" (445). Ezra Pound, in his essay "Small Magazines" and his insistence that "there is a definite legitimate and fruitful editorial function" (703), declares that "it is, curiously enough, not so important that an editorial policy should be right as that it should succeed in expressing and giving clear definition to a policy or set of ideas" (697). The editor is both the enforcer and the servant of this distinctive tone, a presiding consciousness who diffuses the company character down its organizational flow-chart. The study of magazines must blend the languages of institutions and aesthetics—the policy and the manifesto—in such a way as to match its subject.

In the November 1907 issue of *The Atlantic Monthly*, William Dean Howells writes for his old magazine "Reflections of an Atlantic Editorship." He had been assistant editor to James Thomas Fields from 1866, and editor himself between 1871 and 1881. These reminiscences contain repeated reminders that his actions mattered less than the pattern his predecessors had set, while also sketching an anatomy of his role that demonstrates the depth of his involvement in each month's offerings. On the one hand, "the magazine was already established in its traditions when I came to it, and when I left it fifteen years later it seemed to me that if I had done any good it was little more than to fix it more firmly in them." On the other, and in Howells's order of recollection, he was almost solely responsible for selecting which submissions to publish ("it was at first surprising, and when no longer surprising it was gratifying, to find that the vast mass of the contributions fixed their own fate, almost at a glance"); producing much of the magazine's literary criticism ("in those days, and for seven or eight years afterwards, I wrote nearly all the 'Literary Notices' in the magazine"); arranging the sequence of contents ("I grouped the books according to their kinds, in the critical department, but eventually I broke from the departmental forum altogether, and began to print the different groups and the longer reviews as separate articles"); reading and proofing all the copy ("I read all the manuscripts which claimed critical attention; I wrote to contributors who merited more than a printed circular; I revised all the proofs, verifying every quotation and foreign word, and correcting slovenly style and syntax, and then I revised the author's and my own corrections"). To some extent, this account matches the conclusions drawn by Robert L. Patten and David Finkelstein in their study of *Blackwood's Magazine* in the same century.

> There seem to be at least seven functions that might be part of an editor's job: (1) overseeing finance and administration, (2) promoting an ideology, (3) commissioning contributors, (4) arranging and perfecting copy, (5) buying and selling advertising, (6)

> supervising quality, and above all, (7) giving the periodical a distinctive character. (152)

Howells, however, pays far more attention to his textual labors than to his business plans.[5] Howells would alter submissions both to bring them in line with house style and to make deeper revisions that verge on the creative.

> The proof-reading, which was seldom other than a pleasure, with its tasks of revision and research, I kept for the later afternoons and evenings; though sometimes it well-nigh took the character of original work, in that liberal *Atlantic* tradition of bettering the authors by editorial transposition and paraphrase, either in the form of suggestion or of absolute correction.

He is keenly aware of his position and priority as a *reader*: "To feel the touch never felt before, to be the first to find the planet unimagined in the illimitable heaven of art, to be in at the dawn of a new talent, with the light that seems to mantle the written page: who would not be an editor, for such a privilege?" The editor's comparative lack of ego corresponds to his ability to release the artistic egos and experiments of others. "I can truly say for myself that nothing of my own which I thought fresh and true ever gave me more pleasure than that I got from the like qualities in the work of some young writer revealing his power," a pleasure that suits him to channeling "the means of encouraging them [the stories of Sarah Orne Jewett] in the free movement, unfettered by the limits of plot, and keeping only to the reality, which no other eye than hers has seen so subtly, so humorously, so touchingly." Though Howells returns near the end of his piece to "the essential unity of the editorial tradition," he has given ample evidence of one editor's individual talent. The man and the institution work in creative concert, though the orchestra is open to dissonance.

---

[5] Let us note here that *The Atlantic Monthly* did not print illustrations, that it was unusually dedicated to literature, and that its circulation, "from a high of 50,000 in 1869," had "plummeted" to "a nadir of around 12,000" in 1880-81 (Sedgwick 127). Its status as "the leading exponent of literary realism and the most authoritative source of reviews in the country"—positions achieved under Howells—lay in inverse relation to its popularity (114).

Nevertheless, Howells's approach did not quite reach the levels of editorial intervention that became common in the twentieth century. Take the case of Henry James, who published *Roderick Hudson* (1875), *The American* (1876-77), *The Europeans* (1878), and *The Portrait of a Lady* (1880-81)—not to mention numerous short stories—in *The Atlantic Monthly* during his friend Howells's tenure. "Reflections" credits its author with "having so promptly and unremittingly recognized the unique artistry of Mr. Henry James's work," but no more than that. James, in turn, pays tribute in an open letter read aloud at the New York dinner celebrating Howells's seventy-fifth birthday in 1912.

> My debt to you began well-nigh half a century ago, in the most personal way possible, and then kept growing and growing with your own admirable growth—but always rooted in the early intimate benefit. This benefit was that you held out your open editorial hand to me at the time I began to write—and I allude especially to the summer of 1866—with a frankness and sweetness of hospitality that was really the making of me, the making of the confidence that required help and sympathy and that I should otherwise, I think, have strayed and stumbled about a long time without acquiring. You showed me the way and opened me the door; you wrote to me, and confessed yourself struck with me—I have never forgotten the beautiful thrill of *that*. You published me at once—and paid me, above all, with a dazzling promptitude; magnificently, I felt, and so that nothing since has ever quite come up to it. More than this even, you cheered me on with a sympathy was in itself an inspiration. (*Letters* 221-2)

The writer owes a debt of encouragement and opportunity to a peculiar kind of reader. Howells's "open editorial hand" held a door ajar: by appreciating James, and by being in a position to turn that appreciation into swift payment and publicity, the editor made "sympathy" a creatively enabling quality. A cheerleader can be a powerful force, especially if he has a magazine to fill. But this relationship, at least as the two participants describe it, could not be called collaborative in a textual sense. Looking into their letters, one finds more evidence of give-and-take than their public pronouncements suggest; still, Howell's editorial actions, at least with James, oscillate around a baseline of reticence. He did put pressure on the author of *The American* to provide a happy ending, but James had little difficulty resisting (though the

editor's practical criticism forced him to clarify his intentions). In a letter dated 24 October 1876, James writes that

> Your appeal on the subject of the *dénouement* fairly set me trembling, & I have to take my courage in both hands to answer you. In a word Mme de C. doesn't marry Newman, I couldn't possibly, possibly, have made her do it. The whole pivot of the dénouement was, in the conception of the tale, in his losing her; I am pretty sure this will make itself clear to you when you read the last quarter of the book. (*Letter, Fictions, Lives* 123-4)

In fact, the only recorded instance of closer, external revision to *The American* during its run in *The Atlantic Monthly*—the original manuscript having disappeared—was initiated by the author's brother, not his editor. James W. Tuttleton, in his Norton edition of the novel, notes that

> William, who may have read the first two installments before they were delivered to Howells, told his brother that he had been shocked by some of the language and had persuaded Howells "to omit one of two of the same words." Because he did not wish to offend the sensibilities of his genteel American audience, Henry James in fact told Howells in December of 1876 that he was "very glad" that Howells had deleted the offensive language and "would give you *carte blanche*." (312)

With *The Portrait of a Lady*—moving from the beginning to the end of Howells's time at the magazine—Michael Gorra points out that though "with most writers Howells didn't hesitate to offer suggestions . . . we have no record of any editorial work on the *Portrait*; the only revisions appear to have been James's own" (213). This categorical assertion neglects softer, less visible forms of editing. Howells continued to act as James's first reader, his serial sounding board. In a letter from 5 December 1880, James agrees that

> your strictures on my own story seem to me well-founded (don't say that I don't take criticism like an angel.) The girl is over-analysed, & her journalistic friend *seems* (whether she is or not) over drawn . . . That you think well of Lord W. makes me regret more than I already do that he is after all but a secondary figure. (157)

Nevertheless, if we compare these contributions—readerly reactions whose impact is too diffuse to be properly measured—to James's own revisions for the New York Edition (1907-09), we receive an object lesson in the difference between light and heavy editing.

Qualifications aside, there was a tide in the affairs of writers and editors. It rose from the end of the eighteenth century to that of the nineteenth, and beyond: an increase in editorial involvement. A tendency toward intervention developed—those "more considerable alterations" which the editor in *Les Liaisons dangereuses* dreams of but does not practice—within the deepening complexity of the publishing process. The publication of *The Portrait of a Lady,* across nations and forms, exemplifies the latter tendency. It was simultaneously issued as a serial by two magazines, and then as a book by two publishing houses in two different countries: *The Atlantic Monthly* and Houghton, Mifflin in the United States; *Macmillan's Magazine* and Macmillan in the United Kingdom. Editors carved out a sphere of power in this expanding landscape—power that would reach its peak in the coming decades.

IV. The Early 20th Century and Maxwell Perkins

Beth Luey has tracked what she calls "activist editing" to its first major American exponent. One may quarrel with the point of origin—Howells himself ascribes "the character of original work" to some of his editing, and John Murray burning Lord Byron's memoirs surely qualifies as "activist" if nothing else—but the core concept of intensive revision undeniably permeated the editorial practice of the early twentieth century.

> Activist editing was a fairly recent phenomenon: until the late nineteenth century, editors generally decided whether a manuscript was publishable but did not work with authors to develop their writing. The first well-known exception was Ripley Hitchcock, at Harper's from 1890 to 1918, who directed Edward Noyes Westcott's revision of what

> would become the bestselling novel *David Harum*. Hitchcock reorganized the manuscript, deleted subplots and characters, and altered the style. (371)

This kind of intervention—infinitely various, increasingly common for both books and periodicals—demonstrates how power over the means of circulation led to power over the matter being circulated. The gatekeeper became a secret partner in the production of literature. There remained a vital distinction of intention: the boundary between an editor suggesting changes in order to better realize the writer's own potential and an editor imposing an interpretation on the text, working through others to achieve his own aesthetic aims. However, it narrowed and, in some cases, collapsed as the century proceeded. The most famous editor of the era, Maxwell Perkins, exemplifies both the expansionist tendencies of his profession and its lingering code of self-effacement.

Maxwell Perkins: Editor of Genius, A. Scott Berg's 1978 biography, opens with its subject addressing a class on book publishing at NYU in 1946. At this point, Perkins had been shaping the American novel from his editorial perch at Charles Scribner's Sons since 1910; he would die the next year. That evening he was introduced by the editor-in-chief of Doubleday, Kenneth D. McCormick, who wanted the students to understand how the job of editor had altered in recent decades and how influential Perkins's example had been in this sea change.

> It was not, he said, as it once had been, confined mainly to correcting spelling and punctuation. Rather, it was to know what to publish, how to get it, and what to do to help it achieve the largest readership. At all this, said McCormick, Max Perkins was unsurpassed. His literary judgment was original and exceedingly astute, and he was famous for his ability to inspire an author to produce the best that was in him or her. More a friend to his authors than a taskmaster, he aided them in every way. He helped them structure their books, if help was needed; thought up titles, invented plots; he served as psychoanalyst, lovelorn adviser, marriage counselor, career manager, moneylender. Few editors before him had done so much work on manuscripts, yet he was always faithful to his credo, "The book belongs to the author." (4)

The tension between Perkins's practice and his credo cannot be ignored, however. Though he opens a letter to F. Scott Fitzgerald in 1921 with the injunction, "Don't ever *defer* to my judgment," another letter from 1924 offers "points of criticism" on the manuscript that will become *The Great Gatsby* (Perkins 30, 38). The highest terms of encouragement—"It is an extraordinary book . . . You adopt exactly the right method of telling it . . . It's magnificent!"—give way to readerly critique and practical recommendations. The main difficulty is that "Gatsby is somewhat vague . . . Couldn't *he* be physically described as distinctly as the others, and couldn't you add one or two characteristics like the use of that phrase "old sport"—not verbal, but physical ones, perhaps" (39). This is a comparatively minor instance of the editor's creative impact. The working relationship between Perkins and Thomas Wolfe was altogether more engulfing. Wolfe's *The Story of a Novel* (1936), itself cut "from fifteen thousand to seven thousand words" by his agent (Field vii), describes the extraordinary amount of revision that produced his first two novels. The typescript of *Story*, later published in *The Autobiography of an American Novelist* (1983), pays tribute to "the great editor" and unfolds the secrets of "our work—perhaps I could better say our collaboration, although that term, I know, would embarrass him" (69, 71). It is this unnamed editor with his "marvelous intuition" (70) who decided that the book eventually published as *Look Homeward, Angel* (1929) "did describe two complete and separate cycles" (73) and spun one of them out into *Of Time and the River* (1935), guiding the author through "an enormous labor of revision, weaving together, shaping, molding, ordering, and, above all, cutting" (70).

Little wonder, then, that Jack Stillinger uses Perkins's career to help prosecute the case for *Multiple Authorship and the Myth of Solitary Genius* (1991). Part of the argument is made by the sheer multiplicity of duties which jostled and mingled within the editorial function as

incarnated by Perkins. His relationships with writers extended well beyond the margin of the page, venturing deep into extra-textual territory.

> For some of these writers Perkins acted primarily as acquisitions editor (talent scout, recruiter, salesman of the special virtues of the House of Scribner), while for others he was father-confessor, psychiatrist, fishing and drinking companion, cheerleader, financial manager, legal consultant, publicist, even literary executor. For many of them he was also provider of subjects, themes, plots, and titles of their books, as well as astute critic (and sometimes line-by-line reviser) of the structures, characterizations, descriptions, dialogues, and much else comprising the substance of their writings. (146)

But Stillinger goes further than this singular (and yet manifold) example, presenting Perkins as the archetype of an editorial tradition, "the single greatest influence of the past half-century on the way editors have worked with authors" (145).

Those editors are both keepers of the authorial myth and explosives which, detonated by critical excavation, may shatter it. How should we read and think about literature in light of the editor's contributions? Is the extent of pre-publication revision in the twentieth century evidence of editorial creativity, contamination, or self-sacrifice in the service of literature (and a steady paycheck)? May revision itself be something of a red herring, a textual drama that deflects attention from larger, and even less visible, consequences of the editorial right of selection? The manner in which a writer is published matters, but so does the matter of whether a writer is published at all.

In this brisk canter through the centuries, editors have now emerged into their high noon: the mid-twentieth century. Accounts of how postwar fiction was shaped by these powerful readers, each working with their own circle of writers, can illuminate the long life of literature, the entanglements of its creation and the ongoing turns of its reception—as the preceding chapters attest. Drawing the institutional background of publishing into the foreground of

literary criticism does not detract from the words on the page; it deepens our understanding of their social *and* artistic significance.

V. The End of the Editor?

The editorial function may be as old as literature, but it has been performed by different actors in different positions over time. Literary editors have no permanent lease on the role. In fact, their decline from a peak of unprecedented influence in the postwar era began almost immediately. The conglomeration of publishing houses decreased the number of editorial departments, and led to the eventual downsizing of those that survived (Luey 379). Agents, who mediate between the manuscript and the publishing operation itself, picked up the editorial slack and assumed the position of "front-line readers" (Flanery). Now the new digital dispensation threatens to finish the job, eliminating the business model that underwrote periodical publication and flattening the gates which were formerly kept. The direction of travel is undeniable, as Jill Lepore observes:

> One of the really staggering things to me about the great 'newspaper death watch' of 2009 was the jeering jubilance of disruptors, their astounding confidence in the genius and efficiency of a new system of communication that, at the end of the day, did one thing above all: it killed the editor.

The editor may yet survive in diminished circumstances. The internet, with its endless pages, could still offer the possibility of a resurrection. But a dominant twentieth-century cultural figure has been dismantled and its concentrated power diffused. It is past time for a full retrospective.

WORKS CITED

ARCHIVAL COLLECTIONS CONSULTED

PART ONE

Collection	Location	Identifier
André Deutsch Archive, 1952-1995	McFarlin Library, Department of Special Collections & University Archives, The University of Tulsa	Coll. No. 1988.013.
Caribbean Voices Scripts	BBC Written Archives Centre, Caversham Park, Reading, UK	Catalogued by broadcast sequence
Henry Valentine L. Swanzy Papers	Cadbury Research Library, Special Collections, University of Birmingham	MS42
Henry Valentine L. Swanzy Papers	Bodleian Archives & Manuscripts, University of Oxford	MSS.Brit.Emp.s.501
Henry Swanzy Scripts	BBC Written Archives Centre, Caversham Park, Reading, UK	S529/1-27
V. S. Naipaul Archive, 1935-2000	McFarlin Library, Department of Special Collections & University Archives, The University of Tulsa	Coll. No. 1993-003
V. S. Naipaul Contributor Files	BBC Written Archives Centre, Caversham Park, Reading, UK	RCONT1, RCONT12

West Africa Scripts	BBC Written Archives Centre, Caversham Park, Reading, UK	Uncatalogued
Wole Soyinka Contributor Files	BBC Written Archives Centre, Caversham Park, Reading, UK	RCONT1, RCONT12
Wole Soyinka: *The Lion and the Jewel* Editorial Files (Three Crowns Press)	Oxford University Press Archives, Oxford, UK	OP 1619/12161
Wole Soyinka Literary Papers	Special Collections and Galleries, Leeds University Library	BC MS 20c Soyinka
Wole Soyinka Papers	Houghton Library, Harvard University	MS Thr 427

PART TWO

Collection	Location	Identifier
Alice Munro fonds.	Archives and Special Collections, University of Calgary	CA ACU SPC F0012
John Cheever Literary Manuscripts	Robert D. Farber University Archives & Special Collections Department, Brandeis University Library	MWalB02010
Katharine Sergeant White Papers	Bryn Mawr College Library	BMC-M56

John Updike Papers	Houghton Library, Harvard University	MS Am 1793
Macmillan Company of Canada fonds	William Ready Division of Archives and Research Collections, McMaster University	Fonds RC0071
Mavis Gallant Papers	Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library, University of Toronto	MS COLL 00189
McClelland and Stewart Ltd. fonds	William Ready Division of Archives and Research Collections, McMaster University	Fonds RC0051
New Yorker Records, ca. 1924-1984	Manuscripts and Archives Division, The New York Public Library, Astor, Lenox, and Tilden Foundations	MssCol 2236
Robert Brennan and Maeve Brennan Papers, 1935-1967	Special Collections, University of Delaware Library	MS 243
Russell and Volkening Records, 1940-2008	Manuscripts and Archives Division, The New York Public Library, Astor, Lenox, and Tilden Foundations	MssCol 18287
William Maxwell Papers, 1928-1998	Rare Book & Manuscript Library, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign	01/01/MSS00032

PART THREE

Collection	Location	Identifier
Hilary McPhee Papers, 1950-2012	National Library of Australia	MS Acc13.001 et al.
McPhee Gribble Pty Ltd	The University of Melbourne Archives	1999.0048
Penguin Archive	Special Collections, University of Bristol Library	DM 1107, DM 1294

Anam, Nasia. "Introduction: Forms of the Global Anglophone." *Post45: Forms of the Global Anglophone*, 22 Feb. 2019, https://post45.org/2019/02/introduction-forms-of-the-global-Anglophone/.

Anderson, Perry. "Union Sucrée." *London Review of Books*, vol. 26, no. 18, 23 Sept. 2004, https://www.lrb.co.uk/the-paper/v26/n18/perry-anderson/union-sucree.

Apter, Emily. *Against World Literature: On the Politics of Untranslatability*. Verso, 2013.

Athill, Diana. *Stet: An Editor's Life*. Grove Press, 2000.

Bourdieu, Pierre. "The Field of Cultural Production, or: The Economic World Reversed." *The Field of Cultural Production: Essays on Art and Literature*, edited by Randal Johnson, Columbia UP, 1993, pp. 29-73.

---. *The Rules of Art: Genesis and Structure of the Literary Field*. Translated by Susan Emanuel, Stanford UP, 1996.

Boyce Davies, Carole and Mũkoma wa Ngũgĩ. "Decolonizing the English Department." *Brittle Paper*, 5 Oct. 2020, https://brittlepaper.com/2020/10/decolonizing-the-english-department/.

Brouillette, Sarah. *Postcolonial Writers in the Global Literary Marketplace*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2007.

Casanova, Pascale. *The World Republic of Letters*. Translated by M.B. DeBevoise, Harvard UP, 2004.

Cheah, Pheng. *What Is a World? On Postcolonial Literature as World Literature*. Duke UP, 2016.

Cleary, Joe. "The English Department as Imperial Commonwealth, or The Global Past and Global Future of English Studies." *Boundary 2*, vol. 48, no. 1, 2021, pp. 139-76.

Cohen, B. R. “Public Thinker: Jill Lepore on the Challenge of Explaining Things.” *Public Books*, 24 Apr. 2017, https://www.publicbooks.org/public-thinker-jill-lepore-on-the-challenge-of-explaining-things/.

Cooper, Carolyn. “Cornell takes a leaf out of UWI’s book.” *The Gleaner*, 11 Oct. 2020, https://jamaica-gleaner.com/article/commentary/20201011/carolyn-cooper-cornell-takes-leaf-out-uwis-book.

Davis, Caroline. *Creating Postcolonial Literature: African Writers and British Publishers*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2013.

Elam, Daniel J. “The Form of Global Anglophone Literature is Grenfell Tower.” *Post45: Forms of the Global Anglophone*, 22 Feb. 2019, https://post45.org/2019/02/the-form-of-global-anglophone-literature-is-grenfell-tower/.

Foley, Abram. *The Editor Function: Literary Publishing in Postwar America*. University of Minnesota Press, 2021.

Gallant, Mavis. *Home Truths: Selected Canadian Stories*. McClelland & Stewart, 1981.

Garner, Helen. *The Children’s Bach*. McPhee Gribble, 1984.

Ghosh, Amitav. “The Conscientious Objector.” *Outlook*, 19 Mar. 2001, https://www.outlookindia.com/website/story/the-conscientious-objector/211102.

Greenberg, Susan L. *A Poetics of Editing*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2018.

Groenland, Tim. *The Art of Editing: Raymond Carver and David Foster Wallace*. Bloomsbury Academic, 2019.

Guillory, John. “Genesis of the Media Concept.” *Critical Inquiry*, vol. 36, no. 2, Winter 2010, pp. 321-62.

Hall, Stuart. “When Was ‘The Post-Colonial’? Thinking at the Limit.” *The Postcolonial Question: Common Skies, Divided Horizons*, edited by Iain Chambers and Lidia Curti, Routledge, 1996, pp. 242-60.

Huggan, Graham. *The Postcolonial Exotic: Marketing the Margins*. Routledge, 2001.

Kalliney, Peter. *Commonwealth of Letters: British Literary Culture and the Emergence of Postcolonial Aesthetics*. Oxford UP, 2013.

Laachir, Karima, Sara Marzagora, and Francesca Orsini. Significant Geographies: In lieu of World Literature.” *Journal of World Literature*, no. 3, 2018, pp. 290-310.

Lahiri, Madhumita. *Imperfect Solidarities: Tagore, Gandhi, Du Bois, and the Global Anglophone*. Northwestern UP, 2020.

Low, Gail. *Publishing the Postcolonial: Anglophone West African and Caribbean Writing in the UK, 1948-1968*. Routledge, 2011.

Morse, Daniel Ryan. *Radio Empire: The BBC’s Eastern Service and the Emergence of the Global Anglophone Novel*. Columbia UP, 2020.

Mufti, Aamir R. *Forget English! Orientalisms and World Literatures*. Harvard UP, 2016.

Mukherjee, Meenakshi. *The Perishable Empire: Essays on Indian Writing in English*. Oxford UP, 2001.

Naipaul, V. S. *Miguel Street*. Vintage, 2002.

---. “Words on Their Own.” *Times Literary Supplement*, no. 3249, 4 Jun. 1964, p. 472.

Ngũgĩ, Mũkoma wa. *The Rise of the African Novel: Politics of Language, Identity, and Ownership*. University of Michigan Press, 2018.

Philpotts, Matthew "The Role of the Periodical Editor." *Modern Language Review*, vol. 107, no. 1, 2012, pp. 39-64.

Rushdie, Salman. "'Commonwealth Literature' Does Not Exist." *Imaginary Homelands: Essays and Criticism, 1981-1991*. Granta Books, 1991, pp. 61-70.

Said, Edward. *Culture and Imperialism*. Chatto & Windus, 1993.

Seth, Vikram. *A Suitable Boy*. Harper Perennial, 2005.

Shohat, Ella. "Notes on the 'Post-Colonial.'" *Social Text* 31/32 (1992): 99-113.

Soyinka, Wole. *The Lion and the Jewel*. Oxford UP, 1963.

Srinivasan, Ragini Tharoor. "Introduction: South Asia from Postcolonial to World Anglophone." *Interventions*, vol. 20, no. 3, 2008, pp. 309-316.

Thiong'o, Ngũgĩ wa. *Penpoints, Gunpoints, and Dreams: Towards a Critical Theory of the Arts and the State in Africa*. Oxford UP, 1998.

Warwick Research Collective. *Combined and Uneven Development: Towards a New Theory of World-Literature*. Liverpool UP, 2015.

Williams, Raymond. *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society*. Oxford UP, 1976.

PART ONE

INTRODUCTION

Baugh, Edward. *Frank Collymore: A Biography*. Ian Randle, 2009.

---. "Introduction." *An Index to Bim, 1942-1972*, compiled and edited by Reinhard W. Sander, UWI Extra-Mural Studies Unite, 1973, pp. 7-17.

Bentsi-Enchill, Nii K. "Wole Soyinka in Stockholm." *Conversations with Wole Soyinka*, edited by Biodun Jeyifo, University Press of Mississippi, 2001, pp. 138-42.

Brathwaite, Edward Kamau. *History of the Voice: The Development of Nation Language in Anglophone Caribbean Poetry*. New Beacon Books, 1984.

Breiner, Laurence A. "Caribbean Voices on the Air: Radio, Poetry, and Nationalism in the Anglophone Caribbean." *Communities of the Air: Radio Century, Radio Culture*, edited by Susan Merrill Squier, Duke UP, 2003, pp. 93-108.

Briggs, Asa. *The History of Broadcasting in the United Kingdom, Volume IV: Sound and Vision*. Oxford UP, 1978.

Bulson, Eric. *Little Magazine, World Form*. Columbia UP, 2017.

Chinweizu, Onwuchewka Jemie, and Ihechukwu Madubuike. "Towards the Decolonization of African Literature." *Transition*, no. 48, 1975, pp. 29-37, 54, 56, 57.

Cobham, Rhonda. "The *Caribbean Voices* Programme and the Development of West Indian Short Fiction: 1945-1958." *The Story Must Be Told: Short Narrative Prose in the New English Literatures*, edited by Peter O. Stummer, Konigshanson & Newmann, 1986, pp. 146-58.

Collymore, Frank. Letter to Henry Swanzy, 22 January 1949, MS42/1/5, Papers of Henry Valentine L. Swanzy, University of Birmingham.

---. Letter to Henry Swanzy, 19 June 1949, MS42/1/5, Papers of Henry Valentine L. Swanzy, University of Birmingham.

Cordeaux, Shirley. "The BBC African Service's Involvement in African Theatre." *Research in African Literatures*, vol. 1, no. 1, Autumn 1970, pp. 147-155.

Davis, Caroline. *Creating Postcolonial Literature: African Writers and British Publishers*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2013.

Donnell, Alison. "Rescripting Anglophone Caribbean Women's Literary History: Gender, Genre, and Lost Caribbean Voices." *Beyond Windrush: Rethinking Postwar Anglophone Caribbean Literature*, edited by J. Dillon Brown and Leah Reade Rosenberg, University Press of Mississippi, 2015, pp. 79-96.

Duodu, Cameron. "Achebe Opened the Door for Us." http://cameronduodu.com/achebe-opened-the-door-for-us.

Emerson, Ralph Waldo. "Self-Reliance." *Self-Reliance and Other Essays*. Dover, 1993, pp. 19-38.

Griffith, Glyne A. *The BBC and the Development of Anglophone Caribbean Literature, 1943-1958*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2016.

---. "An Interview with Henry Swanzy." *Journal of West Indian Literature*, vol. 24, no. 1, April 2016, pp. 62-70.

---. "'This is London calling the West Indies': the BBC's *Caribbean Voices*." In *West Indian Intellectuals in Britain*, edited by Bill Schwarz, Manchester UP, 2003, pp. 196-208.

Hall, Stuart. *Familiar Stranger: A Life Between Two Islands*. Duke UP, 2017.

King, Bruce. *Derek Walcott: A Caribbean Life*. Oxford UP, 2000.

Lamming, George. *The Pleasures of Exile*. London, M. Joseph, 1960.

Lindfors, Bernth. “A Decade of *Black Orpheus*.” *Books Abroad*, vol. 42, no. 4, Autumn 1968, pp. 509-16.

Lindo, Gladys/Cedric. Letter to Henry Swanzy, 14 September 1946, MS42/1/2, Papers of Henry Valentine L. Swanzy, University of Birmingham.

---. Letter to Henry Swanzy, 31 October 1947, MS42/1/3, Papers of Henry Valentine L. Swanzy, University of Birmingham.

---. Letter to Henry Swanzy, 8 March 1948, MS42/1/4, Papers of Henry Valentine L. Swanzy, University of Birmingham.

---. Letter to Henry Swanzy, 3 April 1948, MS42/1/4, Papers of Henry Valentine L. Swanzy, University of Birmingham.

Low, Gail. “‘Finding the Centre?’ Publishing Commonwealth Writing in London: The Case of Anglophone Caribbean Writing, 1950-65.” *The Journal of Commonwealth Literature*, vol. 37, no. 2, 2002, pp. 21-38.

---. *Publishing the Postcolonial: Anglophone West African and Caribbean Writing in the UK, 1948-1968*. Routledge, 2011.

Naipaul, V. S. *Miguel Street*. Vintage, 2002.

Nanton, Philip. “London Calling.” *Caribbean Beat*, no. 63, September/October 2003 https://www.caribbean-beat.com/issue-63/london-calling.

---. *What Does Mr Swanzy Want?* BBC Radio 4, 22 Nov. 1998.

Nanton, Philip and Anne Walmsley. “Henry Swanzy.” *The Guardian*, 20 Mar. 2004, https://www.theguardian.com/news/2004/mar/20/guardianobituaries.

Niblett, Michael. "Style as Habitus: World Literature, Decolonization and *Caribbean Voices*." *Bourdieu and Postcolonial Studies*, edited by Raphael Dalleo, Liverpool UP, 2016, pp. 119-36.

Ong, Walter J. *Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word*. Routledge, 1991.

Ramsden, Gabriella. "Swanzy, Henry Valentine Leonard (1915-2004), radio producer." *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, 12 Nov. 2020, https://doi.org/10.1093/odnb/9780198614128.013.57680.

Sander, Reinhard and Ian Munro. "Chatting About Bim: Excerpts from A Conversation with Frank Collymore, Barbados, July 29, 1971." *An Index to Bim, 1942-1972*, compiled and edited by Reinhard W. Sander, UWI Extra-Mural Studies Unite, 1973, pp.18-23.

Smith, Victoria Ellen. "Introduction to the 60th Anniversary Second Edition." *Voices of Ghana: Literary Contributions to the Ghana Broadcasting System, 1955-57*. 2nd ed., edited by Victoria Ellen Smith, James Currey, 2018.

Soyinka, Wole. *The Lion and the Jewel*. Oxford UP, 1963.

Sterne, Jonathan. "The Theology of Sound: A Critique of Orality." *Canadian Journal of Communication*, vol. 36, 2011, pp. 207-225.

Swanzy, Henry. "The Last Six Months," 15 August 1948, *Caribbean Voices* scripts, pp. 1-5, BBC Written Archives Centre.

---. "The Last Six Months," 1 March 1953, *Caribbean Voices* scripts, pp. 1-5, BBC Written Archives Centre.

---. Letter to Derek Walcott, 18 November 1949, MS42/1/5, Papers of Henry Valentine L. Swanzy, University of Birmingham.

---. Letter to Frank Collymore, 7 January 1949, MS42/1/5, Papers of Henry Valentine L. Swanzy, University of Birmingham.

---. Letter to Frank Collymore, 9 February 1949, MS42/1/5, Papers of Henry Valentine L. Swanzy, University of Birmingham.

---. Letter to Frank Collymore, 30 March 1949, MS42/1/5, Papers of Henry Valentine L. Swanzy, University of Birmingham.

---. Letter to Frank Collymore, 6 December 1949, MS42/1/5, Papers of Henry Valentine L. Swanzy, University of Birmingham.

---. Letter to Gladys/Cedric Lindo, 15 January 1947, MS42/1/3, Papers of Henry Valentine L. Swanzy, University of Birmingham.

---. Letter to Gladys/Cedric Lindo, 23 July 1947, MS42/1/3, Papers of Henry Valentine L. Swanzy, University of Birmingham.

---. Letter to Gladys/Cedric Lindo, 6 August 1947, MS42/1/3, Papers of Henry Valentine L. Swanzy, University of Birmingham.

---. Letter to Gladys/Cedric Lindo, 22 March 1948, MS42/1/4, Papers of Henry Valentine L. Swanzy, University of Birmingham.

---. Letter to Gladys/Cedric Lindo, 20 April 1948, MS42/1/4, Papers of Henry Valentine L. Swanzy, University of Birmingham.

---. Letter to Gladys/Cedric Lindo, 23 June 1948, MS42/1/4, Papers of Henry Valentine L. Swanzy, University of Birmingham.

---. Letter to Gladys/Cedric Lindo, 20 August 1948, MS42/1/4, Papers of Henry Valentine L. Swanzy, University of Birmingham.

---. Letter to Gladys/Cedric Lindo, 18 October 1948, MS42/1/4, Papers of Henry Valentine L. Swanzy, University of Birmingham.

---. Letter to Mr. Debysingh, 18 October 1948, MS42/1/4, Papers of Henry Valentine L. Swanzy, University of Birmingham.

---. "Prolegomena to a West Indian Culture." *Caribbean Quarterly*, vol. 1, no. 2, July August September 1949, pp. 21-28.

---. Review of *Guerrillas* by V. S. Naipaul, 1975, S529/17/2, Swanzy, Henry – Scripts 1975, BBC Written Archives Centre.

---. "A Trading Family in the Nineteenth Century Gold Coast." *Transactions of the Gold Coast & Togoland Historical Society*, vol. 2, no. 2, 1956, pp. 87-120.

Theroux, Paul. *Sir Vidia's Shadow: A Friendship Across Five Continents*. Houghton Mifflin, 1998.

Túbọ̀sún, Kọ́lá. "A House for Mr. Soyinka." *Popula*, 24 Aug. 2018, https://popula.com/2018/08/24/a-house-for-mr-soyinka/.

Walcott, Derek. Letter to Henry Swanzy, 11 February 1952, MS42/1/8, Papers of Henry Valentine L. Swanzy, University of Birmingham.

Athill, Diana. "Diana Athill on VS Naipaul: 'I worked very hard at keeping affection for him." *The Guardian*, 17 Aug. 2018, https://www.theguardian.com/books/2018/aug/17/diana-athill-vs-naipaul-delighted-stories.

---. *Stet: An Editor's Life*. Grove Press, 2000.

Barnouw, Dagmar. *Naipaul's Strangers*. Indiana UP, 2003.

Biswas, Bakwas. "Sir Vidia, the Poet." *Outlook*, 21 Jan. 2004, https://www.outlookindia.com/website/story/sir-vidia-the-poet/222698.

Brown, J. Dillon. *Migrant Modernism: Postwar London and the West Indian Novel*. University of Virginia Press, 2013.

Brown, J. Dillon and Leah Reade Rosenberg. "Introduction." *Beyond Windrush: Rethinking Postwar Anglophone Caribbean Literature*, edited by J. Dillon Brown and Leah Reade Rosenberg, University Press of Mississippi, 2015, pp. 1-23.

Cobham, Rhonda. "The *Caribbean Voices* Programme and the Development of West Indian Short Fiction: 1945-1958." *The Story Must Be Told: Short Narrative Prose in the New English Literatures*, edited by Peter O. Stummer, Konigshanson & Newmann, 1986, pp. 146-58.

Cudjoe, Selwyn R. *V. S. Naipaul: A Materialist Reading*. University of Massachusetts Press, 1988.

Donnell, Alison. "Rescripting Anglophone Caribbean Women's Literary History: Gender, Genre, and Lost Caribbean Voices." *Beyond Windrush: Rethinking Postwar Anglophone Caribbean Literature*, edited by J. Dillon Brown and Leah Reade Rosenberg, University Press of Mississippi, 2015, pp. 79-96.

Dooley, Gillian. *V. S. Naipaul, Man and Writer*. University of South Carolina Press, 2006.

French, Patrick. *The World Is What It Is: The Authorized Biography of V.S. Naipaul*. Picador, 2008.

Griffith, Glyne A. *The BBC and the Development of Anglophone Caribbean Literature, 1943-1958*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2016.

---. "An Interview with Henry Swanzy." *Journal of West Indian Literature*, vol. 24, no. 1, April 2016, pp. 62-70.

Guillory, John. "Genesis of the Media Concept." *Critical Inquiry*, vol. 36, no. 2, Winter 2010, pp. 321-62.

Kalliney, Peter. "Metropolitan Modernism and Its West Indian Interlocutors: 1950s London and the Emergence of Postcolonial Literature." *PMLA*, vol. 122, no. 1, January 2007, pp. 80-104.

King, Bruce. *V.S. Naipaul*. 2nd edition. Palgrave Macmillan, 2003.

Mustafa, Fawzia. *V.S. Naipaul*. Cambridge UP, 1995.

McLuhan, Marshall. *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man*. MIT Press, 1994.

McNearney, Allison. "Lost Masterpieces: How the story of V.S. Naipaul's Early Life Went Up in Flames." *The Daily Beast*, 18 Aug. 2018, https://www.thedailybeast.com/how-the-story-of-vs-naipauls-early-life-went-up-in-flames.

Naipaul, V. S. "Comments on West Indian Literature," 31 August 1958, pp. 1-4, *Caribbean Voices* Script 1392, BBC Written Archives Centre.

---. *The Enigma of Arrival: A Novel*. Knopf, 1987.

---. "Foreword to *The Adventures of Gurudeva*." *Literary Occasions: Essays*, edited by Pankaj

Mishra, Knopf, 2003, pp. 112-127.

---. *Half a Life*. Knopf, 2001.

---. *A House for Mr. Biswas*. Penguin, 1992.

---. "Introduction." *Collected Short Fiction*. Knopf, 2010, pp. vii-xiv.

---. "Introductory Comments," 21 August 1955, *Caribbean Voices* scripts, BBC Written Archives Centre.

---. "Introductory Comments," 5 February 1956, *Caribbean Voices* scripts, BBC Written Archives Centre.

---. Letter to Henry Swanzy, 7 March 1952, MS42/1/8, Papers of Henry Valentine L. Swanzy, University of Birmingham.

---. Letter to Henry Swanzy, 4 June 1953, MS42/1/9, Papers of Henry Valentine L. Swanzy, University of Birmingham.

---. Letter to Henry Swanzy, 17 August 1953, MS42/1/9, Papers of Henry Valentine L. Swanzy, University of Birmingham.

---. Letter to Henry Swanzy, 19 February 1954, MS42/1/10, Papers of Henry Valentine L. Swanzy, University of Birmingham.

---. Letter to J. Grenfell Williams, 14 May 1954, RCONT1, V. S. Naipaul Talks, File 1: 1953-1958, BBC Written Archives Centre.

---. *Letters Between a Father and Son*. Picador, 2009.

---. *The Middle Passage: The Caribbean Revisited*. Vintage, 2002.

---. *Miguel Street*. Vintage, 2002.

---. *Miguel Street* typescript manuscript draft, 1955, 1993.001.1.B.1.4.1, Box 1, Folder 4, V. S. Naipaul archive, University of Tulsa.

---. "The Mourners," 16 September 1951, *Caribbean Voices* Script 648, pp. 5-9, BBC Written Archives Centre.

---. "The Mourners." *A Flag on the Island*. André Deutsch, 1967, pp. 55-62.

---. "My Aunt Gold Teeth," 22 August 1954, *Caribbean Voices* Script 976, pp. 1-9, BBC Written Archives Centre.

---. "My Aunt Gold Teeth." *A Flag on the Island*. André Deutsch, 1967, pp. 11-22.

---. "Postscript: Our Universal Civilization." *The Writer and the World: Essays*, edited by Pankaj Mishra, Knopf, 2002, pp. 503- 517.

---. "Prologue: Reading and Writing, a Personal Account." *Literary Occasions: Essays*. pp. 3-34.

---. "Prologue to an Autobiography." *Literary Occasions: Essays*. pp. 53-111.

---. "Survey of the Literary Output of West Indian Writers in 1955," 22 January 1956, *Caribbean Voices* Script 1122, pp. 1-6, BBC Written Archives Centre.

---. "Two Worlds (The Nobel Lecture)." *Literary Occasions: Essays*. pp. 181-195.

---. "V.S. Naipaul, The Art of Fiction No. 154." *Paris Review*, no. 148, Fall 1998, https://www.theparisreview.org/interviews/1069/the-art-of-fiction-no-154-v-s-naipaul.

---. *A Way in the World*. Knopf, 1994.

Newby, P. H. Memo to Miss Cohn on "Short Stories by V. S. Naipaul," 7 May 1958, RCONT1, V. S. Naipaul Talks, File 1: 1953-1958, BBC Written Archives Centre.

Nixon, Rob. *London Calling: V.S. Naipaul, Postcolonial Mandarin*. Oxford UP, 1992.

Ong, Walter J. *Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word*. Routledge, 1991.

Ramchand, Kenneth. *The West Indian Novel and Its Background*. Ian Randle, 2004.

Simpson, Hyacinth M. "The BBC's *Caribbean Voices* and the Making of an Oral Aesthetic in the West Indian Short Story." *Journal of the Short Story in English*, no. 57, Autumn 2011, pp. 1-12.

Swanzy, Henry. Letter to V. S. Naipaul, 31 August 1953, MS42/1/9, Papers of Henry Valentine L. Swanzy, University of Birmingham.

---. Letter to Guy Wint, 9 June 1954, MS42/1/10, Papers of Henry Valentine L. Swanzy, University of Birmingham.

---. "Voices of the Caribbean: A program compiled from the regional programme, Caribbean Voices," 24 March 1953, *Caribbean Voices* scripts, pp. 1-18, BBC Written Archives Centre.

Thomas, Sue. "V. S. Naipaul." *West Indian Intellectuals in Britain*, edited by Bill Schwarz, Manchester UP, 2003, pp. 228-47.

Vera, Eugenia Roldan. "The History of the Book in Latin America (including Incas, Aztecs, and the Caribbean)." *The Oxford Companion to the Book*, edited by Michael F. Suarez, S.J. and H.R. Woudhuysen, Oxford UP, 2010.

Walcott, Derek. "The Garden Path: V. S. Naipaul." *What The Twilight Says: Essays*. Farrar Straus and Giroux, 1998, pp. 121-133.

Williams, J. Grenfell. Letter to V. S. Naipaul, 8 June 1954, RCONT1, V. S. Naipaul Talks, File 1: 1953-1958, BBC Written Archives Centre.

Wyndham, Francis. "The New West Indian Writers." *Harper's Bazaar* (UK), Jun. 1958, pp. 63, 94-5.

Xu, Weiwei. "Elitist versus Vernacular Cosmopolitanism in Naipaul's *Miguel Street*." *Journal of Narrative Theory*, vol. 46, no. 3, Fall 2016, pp. 287-311.

Achebe, Chinua. "From London to the Provinces," 2 August 1956, *Calling West Africa*, Box 20, Folder August-September 1956, West Africa Scripts, BBC Written Archives Centre.

---. *Home and Exile*. Oxford UP, 2000.

Akar, John. "Famous Folk of Colour: Talk 10: George Lamming – novelist," 3 February 1955, *Calling West Africa*, Box 14, Folder Jan-February 1955, West Africa Scripts, BBC Written Archives Centre.

Akst, Florence. Letter to Wole Soyinka, 11 October 1982, bMS Thr 427, Box 15, Wole Soyinka Papers, Houghton Library, Harvard University.

---. Letter to Wole Soyinka, 19 October 1982, bMS Thr 427, Box 15, Wole Soyinka Papers, Houghton Library, Harvard University.

Armour, Charles. "The BBC and the Development of Broadcasting in British Colonial Africa, 1946-1956." *African Affairs*, vol. 83, no. 332, July 1984, pp. 359-402.

BBC Yearbook 1947. BBC, 1947.

Bainbridge, Emma and Florian Stadtler. "Calling from London, Talking to India: South Asian Networks at the BBC and the Case of G. V. Desani." *India in Britain: South Asian Networks and Connections, 1858-1950*, edited by Susheila Nasta, Palgrave Macmillan, 2013, pp. 164-79.

Banham, Martin. "Wole Soyinka and His Theatre." *WS: A Life in Full*, edited by Bankole Olayebi, Bookcraft, 2011, pp. 110-119.

Barker, Nick. Letter to Wole Soyinka, 6 May 1982, bMS Thr 427, Box 15, Wole Soyinka Papers, Houghton Library, Harvard University.

Beier, Ulli. "The Birth of Mbari Mbayo." *WS: A Life in Full*, edited by Bankole Olayebi, Bookcraft, 2011, pp. 102-105.

---. “Editorial.” *Black Orpheus*, no. 1, September 1957, p. 4.

Bell, Gordon. “West Africa & the West Indies,” 7 October 1954, *Calling West Africa*, Box 13, Folder September 1954, West Africa Scripts, BBC Written Archives Centre.

Bell, John. Report to Mr. Collings on *The Lion and the Jewel*, 19 July 1962, OP1619/12161, *The Lion and the Jewel* – Soyinka, Oxford University Press Archives.

Benson, Peter. Black Orpheus, Transition, *and Modern Cultural Awakening in Africa*. University of California Press, 1986.

Bentsi-Enchill, Nii K. “Wole Soyinka in Stockholm.” *Conversations with Wole Soyinka*, edited by Biodun Jeyifo, University Press of Mississippi, 2001, pp. 138-42.

“Book Reviews: *People of the City*, Caribbean Little Reviews, *Voices of Ghana*.” *Black Orpheus*, no. 4, October 1958, pp. 53-55, 58-59, 59-60.

Breiner, Laurence A. “Caribbean Voices on the Air: Radio, Poetry, and Nationalism in the Anglophone Caribbean.” *Communities of the Air: Radio Century, Radio Culture*, edited by Susan Merrill Squier, Duke UP, 2003, pp. 93-108.

Briggs, Asa. *The History of Broadcasting in the United Kingdom, Volumes I-V*. Oxford UP, 1961-1995.

Brown, J. Dillon and Leah Reade Rosenberg. “Introduction.” *Beyond Windrush: Rethinking Postwar Anglophone Caribbean Literature*, edited by J. Dillon Brown and Leah Reade Rosenberg, University Press of Mississippi, 2015, pp. 1-23.

“CASE HISTORIES: WOLE SOYINKA.” PEN America, 16 Apr. 2012, https://pen.org/case-histories-wole-soyinka/.

“Caversham Park & The BBC Written Archives Centre.” Exhibition, BBC Written Archives Centre, Caversham, Reading, UK.

Cobham, Rhonda. "The *Caribbean Voices* Programme and the Development of West Indian Short Fiction: 1945-1958." *The Story Must Be Told: Short Narrative Prose in the New English Literatures*, edited by Peter O. Stummer, Konigshanson & Newmann, 1986, pp. 146-58.

Collings, Rex. Letter to Joan Littlewood, 14 February 1962, OP1619/12161, *The Lion and the Jewel* – Soyinka, Oxford University Press Archives.

---. Letter to Neal Burton, 14 March 1962, OP1619/12161, *The Lion and the Jewel* – Soyinka, Oxford University Press Archives.

---. Letter to Thompson Tanimowo "Tani" Solaru, 22 February 1962, OP1619/12161, *The Lion and the Jewel* – Soyinka, Oxford University Press Archives.

---. Letter to Thompson Tanimowo "Tani" Solaru, 5 July 1962, OP1619/12161, *The Lion and the Jewel* – Soyinka, Oxford University Press Archives.

---. Letter to Thompson Tanimowo "Tani" Solaru, 30 July 1962, OP1619/12161, *The Lion and the Jewel* – Soyinka, Oxford University Press Archives.

---. Memorandum to Mr. Bell, 14 February 1962, OP1619/12161, *The Lion and the Jewel* – Soyinka, Oxford University Press Archives.

---. Report to Mr. Neale on *The Lion and the Jewel*, 4 July 1962, OP1619/12161, *The Lion and the Jewel* – Soyinka, Oxford University Press Archives.

The Companion to African Literatures, edited by Douglas Killam and Ruth Rowe, Indiana UP, 2000.

Currey, James. *Africa Writes Back: The African Writers Series & The Launch of African Literature*. Ohio UP, 2008.

---. "Literary Publishing After Nigerian Independence: Mbari as Celebration." *Research in*

African Literatures, vol. 44, no. 2, Summer 2013, pp. 8-16.

Davis, Caroline. *Creating Postcolonial Literature: African Writers and British Publishers*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2013.

Donnell, Alison. "Rescripting Anglophone Caribbean Women's Literary History: Gender, Genre, and Lost Caribbean Voices." *Beyond Windrush: Rethinking Postwar Anglophone Caribbean Literature*, edited by J. Dillon Brown and Leah Reade Rosenberg, University Press of Mississippi, 2015, pp. 79-96.

Esslin, Martin. "Two African Playwrights." *Black Orpheus*, no. 19, March 1966, pp. 33-39.

Figueroa, John. *Caribbean Voices: An Anthology of West Indian Poetry*. Evans Bros., 1966-70.

Gibbs, James. "The BBC Became a Glutton for Punishment: Wole Soyinka's Dealings with the BBC (1953-1959)." *Crisis and Creativity in the New Literatures in English*, edited by Geoffrey V. Davis and Hena Maes-Jelinek, Rodopi, 1990, pp. 205-217.

---. "Caribbean and African Writing in the BBC's Written Archives." *The Yearbook of English Studies*, vol. 20, 1990, pp. 152-61.

---. "'Yapping' and 'Pushing': Notes on Wole Soyinka's 'Broke Time Bar' Radio Series of the Early Sixties." *Africa Today*, vol. 31, no. 1, 1986, pp. 19-26.

George, Olakunle. "The Oral-Literate Interface." *The Cambridge Companion to the African Novel*, edited by F. Abiola Irele, Cambridge UP, 2009, pp. 15-30.

Griffith, Glyne A. *The BBC and the Development of Anglophone Caribbean Literature, 1943-1958*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2016.

Ibironke, Olabode. *Remapping African Literature*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2018.

Introductory Comments to "From London to the Provinces," by Chinua Achebe, 2 August 1956, *Calling West Africa*, West Africa Scripts, BBC Written Archives Centre.

Inyang, Ifreke. “Calling Achebe the father of African literature is literary ignorance or momentary exuberance – Soyinka.” *Daily Post* (Nigeria), 18 May 2013, https://dailypost.ng/2013/05/18/calling-chinua-achebe-the-father-of-african-literature-is-literary-ignorance-or-momentary-exuberance-wole-soyinka/.

Irele, Abiola. “The African Imagination.” *Research in African Literatures*, vol. 21, no. 1, Spring 1990, pp. 49-67.

---. “Wole Soyinka at Ibadan.” *WS: A Life in Full*, edited by Bankole Olayebi, Bookcraft, 2011, pp. 56-58.

Jeyifo, Biodun. *Wole Soyinka: Politics, Poetics and Postcolonialism*. Cambridge UP, 2004.

Kalliney, Peter J. *Commonwealth of Letters: British Literary Culture and the Emergence of Postcolonial Aesthetics*. Oxford UP, 2013.

Krieger, Milton. “The Formative Journals and Institutions.” *The Cambridge History of African and Caribbean Literature*, Volume 1, edited by F. Abiola Irele and Simon Gikandi, Cambridge UP, 2000, pp. 398-407.

Lamming, George, *The Pleasures of Exile*. M. Joseph, 1960.

Lindfors, Bernth. “*The Lion and the Jewel* on BBC Radio: An Audience Survey.” *Engaging with Literature of Commitment, Volume 1: Africa in the World*, edited by Gordon Collier, Marc Delrez, Anne Fuchs, and Bénédicte Ledent, Rodopi, 2012, pp. 207-218.

Littlewood, Joan. Letter to Rex Collings, 20 February 1962, OP1619/12161, *The Lion and the Jewel* – Soyinka, Oxford University Press Archives.

“Lives in Brief: Mary Treadgold.” *The Times* (London), 23 Jun. 2005, p. 67.

Maclean, Una. “Wole Soyinka.” *Black Orpheus*, no. 15, August 1964, pp. 46-51.

Moore, Gerald. Report to Rex Collins on *A Dance of the Forests*, 2 August 1962, OP1619/12161, *The Lion and the Jewel* – Soyinka, Oxford University Press Archives.

---. *Wole Soyinka*. Africana, 1971.

Morse, Daniel Ryan. *Radio Empire: The BBC's Eastern Service and the Emergence of the Global Anglophone Novel*. Columbia UP, 2020.

Naikar, Basavaraj S. "The Conflict Between Tradition and Modernity in *The Lion and the Jewel*." *Twentieth Century Literature in English*, edited by Manmohan K. Bhatnagar, Atlantic Publishers, 2000, pp. 171-183.

Nasta, Susheila. "1940s-1970s." *The Cambridge Companion to British Black and Asian Literature*, edited by Deirdre Osborne, Cambridge UP, 2016, pp. 23-39.

--. "Sealing a Friendship: George Orwell and Mulk Raj Anand at the BBC (1941-43)." *Wasafiri*, no. 26, 2011, pp. 14-21.

Nell, Dawn D'Arcy. "Africa." *The History of Oxford University Press, Volume IV: 1970-2004*, edited by Keith Robbins, Oxford UP, 2017, pp. 653-688.

Newell, Stephanie. *West African Literatures: Ways of Reading*. Oxford UP, 2006.

Ngũgĩ, Mũkoma wa. *The Rise of the African Novel: Politics of Language, Identity, and Ownership*. University of Michigan Press, 2018.

Niblett, Michael. "Style as Habitus: World Literature, Decolonization and *Caribbean Voices*." *Bourdieu and Postcolonial Studies*, edited by Raphael Dalleo, Liverpool UP, 2016, pp. 119-36.

Nicol, Davidson. "The Congress of Negro Writers and Artists, Paris," 12 October 1956, *Calling West Africa*, Box 20, Folder October-November 1956, West Africa Scripts, BBC Written Archives Centre.

Nwakanma, Obi. *Christopher Okigbo: Thirsting for Sunlight, 1930-67*. James Currey, 2010.

Odamtten, Helen and Audrey Gadzekpo. "Frances Ademola in Conversation with Helen Adamtten (2017) & Audrey Gadzekpo (2018)." *Obsidian: Literature and Arts in the African Diaspora*, vol. 44, no. 2, Fall 2018, pp. 98-105.

Ong, Walter J. *Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word*. Routledge, 1991.

Osadebay, D. C., E. L. Lasebikan, and J. H. Nketia. "West African Voices." *African Affairs*, vol. 48, no. 191, April 1949, pp. 151-158.

Osofisan, Femi. "Wole Soyinka and the Living Dramatist: A Playwright's Encounter with the Drama of Wole Soyinka." *Perspectives on Wole Soyinka: Freedom and Complexity*, edited by Biodun Jeyifo, University Press of Mississippi, 2001, pp. 172-188.

Patel, Ian Sanjay. *We're Here Because You Were There: Immigration and the End of Empire*. Verso, 2021.

Pratt, Mary Louise. "Arts of the Contact Zone." *Profession*, 1991, pp. 33-40.

Procter, James. "The Empire Scripts Back." BBC History Research Blog, 26 Oct. 2018, https://www.bbc.co.uk/blogs/bbchistoryresearch/entries/75ecb85c-7c40-4eca-b9bb-8e5f5195ce70.

---. "Transnational Cultural Exchange: The BBC as Contact Zone." *The Cambridge History of Black and Asian British Writing*, edited by Susheila Nasta and Mark U. Stein, Cambridge UP, 2019, pp. 148-62.

---. "Una Marson at the BBC." *Small Axe*, no. 19, 2015, pp. 1-28.

---. "Wireless Writing, World War II and the West Indian Literary Imagination." *Postwar: British literature in Transition, 1950-60*, edited by Gill Plain, Cambridge UP, 2018, pp. 117-35.

Quayson, Ato. *Strategic Transformations in Nigerian Writing: Orality & History in the Work of Rev. Samuel Johnson, Amos Tutuola, Wole Soyinka & Ben Okri*. Indiana UP, 1997.

Ramsden, Gabriella. "Swanzy, Henry Valentine Leonard (1915-2004), radio producer." *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, 12 Nov. 2020, https://doi.org/10.1093/odnb/9780198614128.013.57680.

Ranasinha, Ruvani. "South Asian Broadcasters and the BBC: Talking to India (1941-1943)." *Journal of South Asian Diaspora*, no. 2, 2010, pp. 57-71.

Ritter, Caroline Barnes. *Imperial Encore: The Cultural Project of the Late British Empire*. University of California Press, 2021.

Sales, Sam. "Re: Questions about Swanzy Papers and Copying." Received by Ben Fried, 3 Aug. 2020. Email Correspondence.

Solaru, Thompson Tanimowo "Tani." Letter to Rex Collings, 26 June 1962, OP1619/12161, *The Lion and the Jewel* – Soyinka, Oxford University Press Archives.

Soyinka, Wole. Contract for "Calling West Africa: Writers' Club," 27 June 1959, RCONT1, Wole Soyinka Talks, File 1: 1955-1962, BBC Written Archives Centre.

---. "Every Goat Must Have Its Day," 24 May 1957, *Calling West Africa: West African Voices*, Box 18, Folder May-June 1957, pp. 1-7, West Africa Scripts, BBC Written Archives Centre.

---. *From Zia, With Love; and, A Scourge of Hyacinths*. Methuen Drama, 1992.

---. "Gbohun-Gbohun—the Nigerian playwright Wole Soyinka on his dealings with the BBC," *The Listener*, 2 November 1972, pp. 581-83.

---. *Ibadan: The Penkelemes Years: A Memoir, 1946-1965*. Methuen, 1994.

---. *The Invention & The Detainee*, edited by Zodwa Motsa, Unisa Press, 2005.

---. "Johnny Just Come," 23 March 1955, *Calling West Africa*, Box 15, Folder March-April 1955, pp. 1-8, West Africa Scripts, BBC Written Archives Centre.

---. "Johnny Versus the Post Office," 26 December 1955, *Calling West Africa: West African Voices*, Box 15, Folder November-December 1955, pp. 1-7, West Africa Scripts, BBC Written Archives Centre.

---. Letter to Producer (Home Service) "Folk Songs", 3 April 1959, RCONT1, Wole Soyinka Talks, File 1: 1955-1962, BBC Written Archives Centre.

---. Letter to Nick Barker, 23 July 1982, bMS Thr 427, Box 15, Wole Soyinka Papers, Houghton Library, Harvard University.

---. *The Lion and the Jewel*. Oxford UP, 1963.

---. *The Lion and the Jewel* corrected typescript, BC MS 20c Soyinka/1/1, File 2, pp. 1-67, Wole Soyinka Literary Papers, Special Collections and Galleries, University of Leeds.

---. "The Olumo Rock," 3 November 1953, *Calling West Africa*, Box 12, Folder November-December 1953, pp. 1-8, West Africa Scripts, BBC Written Archives Centre.

---. "A Place for West African Literature: Talk 3: The Problem of Language," 1 March 1956, *Calling West Africa*, New Box, January-May 1956, pp. 1-4, West Africa Scripts, BBC Written Archives Centre.

---. "A Place for West African Literature: Talk 4: The Intrusion of Foreign Influence," 8 March 1956, *Calling West Africa*, New Box, January-May 1956, pp. 1-4, West Africa Scripts, BBC Written Archives Centre.

---. "A Tale of Two Cities." 15 February 1957, *Calling West Africa: West African Voices*, Box 19, Folder January-February 1957, pp. 1-6, West Africa Scripts, BBC Written Archives Centre.

---. “Telephone Conversation.” *Modern Poetry from Africa*, edited by Gerald Moore and Ulli Beier, Penguin African Library, 1963, pp. 144-145.

---. “Three Poems: ‘The Immigrant,’ ‘And the Other Immigrant,’ ‘My Next Door Neighbour.’” *Black Orpheus*, no. 5, October 1958, pp. 9-13.

---. “Trials of a Bowler,” 10 August 1955, *Calling West Africa*, Box 16, Folder July-August 1955, pp. 1-7, West Africa Scripts, BBC Written Archives Centre.

---. *You Must Set Forth At Dawn: A Memoir*. Random House, 2006.

Stradling, Sheila. Letter to Wole Soyinka, 18 October 1955, RCONT1, Wole Soyinka Talks, File 1: 1955-1962, BBC Written Archives Centre.

Swanzy, Henry. Introductory Comments, 9 June 1954, *Calling West Africa*, Box 13, Folder May-June 1954, West Africa Scripts, BBC Written Archives Centre.

---. Introductory Comments, 22 September 1954, *Calling West Africa*, Box 13, Folder September 1954, West Africa Scripts, BBC Written Archives Centre.

---. Letter to Frank Collymore, 7 January 1949, MS42/1/5, Papers of Henry Valentine L. Swanzy, University of Birmingham.

---. Letter to Frank Collymore. 25 March 1954. MS42/1/10, Papers of Henry Valentine L. Swanzy, University of Birmingham.

---. “West African Voices,” 10 March 1949, S529/27/1, Swanzy, Henry – Calling West Africa Scripts, BBC Written Archives Centre.

---. “West African Voices: 2.” *African Affairs*, vol. 48, no. 192, July 1949, pp. 242-249.

ten Kortenaar, Neil. “West African Literature in English.” *A Companion to African Literatures*, edited by Olakunle George, Wiley & Sons, 2021, pp. 319-332.

Thiong'o, Ngũgĩ wa. *Penpoints, Gunpoints, and Dreams: Towards a Critical Theory of the Arts and the State in Africa*. Oxford UP, 1998.

"Three Crowns: Towards a Definition of Policy," 19 September 1966, section vii b, Three Crowns Series file 1967-71, LOGE ooo221, Oxford University Press Archives.

Webb, Alban. *London Calling: Britain, the BBC World Service and the Cold War*. Bloomsbury Academic, 2014.

Whittington, Ian. *Writing the Radio War: Literature, Politics, and the BBC, 1939-1945*. Edinburgh UP, 2016.

Wilkinson, J. F. "The BBC and Africa." *African Affairs*, vol. 71, no. 283, April 1972, pp. 176-185.

Wilkinson, Jane. "Wole Soyinka." *Conversations with Wole Soyinka*, edited by Biodun Jeyifo, University Press of Mississippi, 2001, pp. 143-66.

"Wole Soyinka: Nigerian Author." *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 9 Jul. 2020, https://www.britannica.com/biography/Wole-Soyinka.

WS: A Life in Full, edited by Bankole Olayebi, Bookcraft, 2011.

PART TWO

INTRODUCTION

Bailey, Blake. *Cheever: A Life*. Knopf, 2009.

Begley, Adam. *Updike*. Harper, 2014.

Bourke, Angela. *Maeve Brennan: Homesick at* The New Yorker. Counterpoint, 2004.

Burkhardt, Barbara. *William Maxwell: A Literary Life*. University of Illinois Press, 2005.

Campbell, James. *Syncopations: Beats, New Yorkers, and Writers in the Dark*. University of California Press, 2008.

Carduff, Christopher. "The Library of America Interviews Christopher Carduff About William Maxwell." *The Library of America e-Newsletter*, January and September 2008.

---. Personal Interview. 1 March 2020.

Cheever, John. "The Country Husband," Typescript, 20 November 1954, MWalBO2010, Box 1, Folder 16, John Cheever Literary Manuscripts, Robert D. Farber University Archives & Special Collections Department, Brandeis University Library.

---. *The Journals of John Cheever*, edited by Robert Gottlieb, Vintage International, 2008.

---. *The Letters of John Cheever*, edited by Benjamin Cheever, Simon & Schuster, 2009.

---. "The Swimmer." *The New Yorker*, 18 Jul. 1964, pp. 28-34.

Cheever, Susan. *Home Before Dark: A Biographical Memoir of John Cheever by His Daughter*. Houghton Mifflin, 1984.

Corey, Mary F. *The World Through a Monocle: The New Yorker at Midcentury*. Harvard UP, 1999.

"Dear Sylvia." *The New York Times Magazine*, 7 Jan. 2001, https://timesmachine.nytimes.com/timesmachine/2001/01/07/250171.html?pageNumber=319.

Deresiewicz, William. "'A Great Symphony of American Junk': What David Foster Wallace Misunderstood About John Updike." *The New Republic*, 8 Sept. 2014, https://newrepublic.com/article/119200/updike-reviewed-william-deresiewicz.

Eldred, Janet Carey. *Literate Zeal: Gender and the Making of a* New Yorker *Ethos*. University of Pittsburgh Press, 2012.

Feinberg, Cara. "Bringing Life to Life: A Conversation with Alice Munro." *The Atlantic*, 1 Dec. 2001, https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2001/12/bringing-life-to-life/303056/.

Fladd, Nadine. *Transnational Conversations:* The New Yorker *and Canadian Short Story Writers*. 2014. University of Western Ontario, PhD dissertation.

Franzen, Jonathan. "The Birth of 'The New Yorker Story.'" *The New Yorker*, 27 Oct. 27 2015, https://www.newyorker.com/books/page-turner/the-birth-of-the-new-yorker-story.

Fried, Ben. "James Baldwin's Readers: White Innocence and the Reception of 'Letter to a Region in My Mind.'" *African American Review*, vol. 55, no. 1, Spring 2022, DOI: 10.1353/afa.2022.0004.

Gallant, Mavis. "The Art of Fiction No. 160." *The Paris Review*, no. 153, Winter 1999, https://www.theparisreview.org/interviews/838/the-art-of-fiction-no-160-mavis-gallant.

---. Letter to Steven Barclay, 11 July 1992, MS COLL 00189, uncatalogued folder of Steven Barclay correspondence, Mavis Gallant Papers, Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library, University of Toronto.

---. “Preface.” *The Selected Stories of Mavis Gallant*. Bloomsbury, 2004, pp. ix-xix.

Gill, Brendan. *Here at The New Yorker*. New York: Da Capo, 1997.

Gottlieb, Robert. “Editing Books Versus Editing Magazines.” *The Art of Making Magazines: On Being an Editor and Other Views from the Industry*, edited by Victor S. Navasky and Evan Cornog, Columbia UP, 2012, pp. 155-64.

Ingman, Heather. *A History of the Irish Short Story*. Cambridge UP, 2009.

Kiernan, Frances. “Fiction at ‘The New Yorker.’” *The American Scholar*, vol. 67, no. 4, Winter 1998, pp. 81-91.

Lockwood, Patricia. “Malfunctioning Sex Robot,” *London Review of Books* 41, no. 19, 10 Oct. 2019, https://www.lrb.co.uk/the-paper/v41/n19/patricia-lockwood/malfunctioning-sex-robot.

Macfarlane, Robert. *The Old Ways: A Journey on Foot*. Penguin, 2012.

Market Research Report. *The New Yorker*, 24 May 1961, MssCol 2236, Box 1324, File 5, *The New Yorker* Records Manuscripts and Archives Division, The New York Public Library.

Maxwell, William. *All the Days and Nights: The Collected Stories of William Maxwell*. Harvill Press, 2002.

---. *Ancestors: A Family History*. Vintage International, 1995.

---. “The Art of Fiction No. 71.” *Paris Review*, no. 85, Fall 1982, https://www.theparisreview.org/interviews/3138/the-art-of-fiction-no-71-william-maxwell.

---. *The Folded Leaf*. Vintage International, 1996.

---. Letter to James Baldwin, 13 November 1958, MssCol 2236, Box 758, File 10, *The New Yorker* Records, Manuscripts and Archives Division, The New York Public Library.

---. Letter to Paul Taylor, 30 April 1943, MssCol 2236, Box 399, File 14, *The New Yorker* Records, Manuscript and Archives Division, The New York Public Library.

---. Letter to John Updike, 19 February 1958, MssCol 2236, Box 765, File 2, *The New Yorker* Records, Manuscript and Archives Division, The New York Public Library.

---. Letter to John Updike, 7 May 1958, MssCol 2236, Box 765, File 2, *The New Yorker* Records, Manuscript and Archives Division, The New York Public Library.

---. Letter to John Updike, 30 July 1992, MS Am 1793, Box 254, File "Maxwell, William," John Updike Papers, Houghton Library, Harvard University.

---. *So Long, See You Tomorrow*. Vintage, 2011.

---. *They Came Like Swallows*. Vintage International, 1997.

McGrath, Charles. Personal Interview. 3 April 2020.

Menaker, Daniel. *My Mistake*. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2013.

Mendelson, Edward. *Moral Agents: Eight Twentieth-Century American Writers*. New York Review Books, 2015.

Metcalf, John. "Canada's successful writers must rely on blessings from U.S. first." *National Post*, 17 June 2000, pp. E4-5.

Meyers, Jeffrey. "A Narcissist with a Thesaurus." *The New Statesman*, 2 May 2014, https://www.newstatesman.com/culture/2014/05/judging-john-updike.

O'Connor, Frank and William Maxwell. *The Happiness of Getting It Down Right: Letters of Frank O'Connor and William Maxwell*, edited by Michael Steinman, Knopf, 1996.

Ondaatje, Michael. "My Hero: Jhumpa Lahiri and Michael Ondaatje on Mavis Gallant," *The Guardian*, 20 Feb. 2014, https://www.theguardian.com/books/2014/feb/20/my-hero-ondaatje-lahiri-mavis-gallant.

Overbey, Erin. Twitter thread. 14 September 2021, 9:18-9:36 a.m.

"revision, *n.*" *OED Online*, Oxford University Press, March 2022, www.oed.com/view/Entry/164894.

Ross, Virginia and Sally Wolff. "Conversations with Eudora Welty and William Maxwell." *South Atlantic Review*, vol. 64, no. 2, Spring 1999, pp. 128-145.

Scott, A. O. "In William Maxwell's Fiction, a Vivid, Varied Tableau of Midwestern Life." *The New York Times*, 29 Aug. 2021, https://tinyurl.com/2p8sb297.

Shawn, William. Queries on *So Long, See You Tomorrow*, 1979, 01/01MSS00032, Box 24, File 2, William Maxwell Papers, 1928-1998, Rare Book & Manuscript Library, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

Travis, Trysh. "What We Talk about When We Talk about 'The New Yorker.'" *Book History*, vol. 3, 2000, pp. 253-85.

Updike, John. "The Alligators." *The New Yorker*, 22 Mar. 1958, pp. 28-31.

---. "Foreword to the Vintage Edition." *Olinger Stories*. Everyman's Pocket Classics, 2014, pp. 11-15.

---. "Imperishable Maxwell." *The New Yorker*, 8 Sept. 2008, https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2008/09/08/imperishable-maxwell.

---. Letter to William Maxwell, 29 August 1958, MssCol 2236, Box 765, File 2, *The New Yorker* Records, Manuscript and Archives Division, The New York Public Library.

---. Letter to William Maxwell, 21 January 1958, MssCol 2236, Box 765, File 2, *The New Yorker* Records, Manuscript and Archives Division, The New York Public Library.

---. Letter to William Maxwell, 23 January 1992, 01/01/MSS00032, Box 9, File 18a, William Maxwell Papers, 1928-1998, Rare Book & Manuscript Library, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

---. "Three *New Yorker* Stalwarts." *More Matter: Essays and Criticism*. Knopf, 1999, pp. 779-86.

David Foster Wallace, "John Updike, Champion Literary Phallocrat, Drops One; Is This Finally the End for Magnificent Narcissists?," *New York Observer*, 13 Oct. 1997, https://observer.com/1997/10/john-updike-champion-literary-phallocrat-drops-one-is-this-finally-the-end-for-magnificent-narcissists/.

Welty, Eudora and William Maxwell, *What There Is To Say We Have Said: The Correspondence of Eudora Welty and William Maxwell*, edited by Suzanne Marrs, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2011.

Wolfe, Tom. "Lost in the Whichy Thickets: *The New Yorker*." *Hooking Up*. Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2000, pp. 268-287.

Yagoda, Ben. *About Town: The New Yorker and the World It Made*. Scribner, 2000.

Angell, Roger. Personal Interview. 27 March 2020.

"anglophone, *n.* and *adj*." *OED Online*, Oxford University Press, March 2022, www.oed.com/view/Entry/7603.

Annan, Gabriele. "That's Life." *New York Review of Books*, 17 Oct. 1996, https://www.nybooks.com/articles/1996/10/17/thats-life/.

Atwood, Margaret. "Introduction I." *The Oxford Book of Canadian Short Stories in English*, edited by Margaret Atwood and Robert Weaver, Oxford UP, 1986, pp. xiii-xvii.

---. *Survival: A Thematic Guide to Canadian Literature*. Anansi, 1972.

Borchardt, Georges. Letter to Douglas Gibson, 20 March 1981, Fonds RC0071, Box 406, Folder 14, Douglas Gibson Papers, Macmillan Company of Canada fonds, Archives & Research Collections, McMaster University.

---. Letter to Douglas Gibson, 22 March 2000, Fonds RC0051, Box 14, Folder 2, Douglas Gibson Papers, McClelland & Stewart Fonds, Archives & Research Collections, McMaster University.

Bosman, Julie. "Mavis Gallant Journals." *The New York Times*, 1 Jul. 2012, https://www.nytimes.com/2012/07/02/books/mavis-gallant-journals.html.

Brown, E. K. *On Canadian Poetry*. Ryerson Press, 1943.

Callaghan, Morley. "Looking at Native Prose." *A Literary Life: Reflections and Reminiscences, 1928-1990*. Exile Editions, 2008, pp. 55-60.

Dvorak, Marta. "Mavis Gallant's Fiction: Taking the (Rhetorical) Measure of the Turning Point." *Varieties of Exile: New Essays on Mavis Gallant*, edited by Peter Sabor and Nicole Côté, Peter Lang, 2002, pp. 63-74.

Evain, Christine and Christine Bertail. *Mavis Gallant on Her Work*. Publibook, 2009.

Fladd, Nadine. *Transnational Conversations:* The New Yorker *and Canadian Short Story Writers*. 2014. University of Western Ontario, PhD dissertation.

Fox, Joe. Letter to Douglas Gibson, 3 September 1981, Fonds RC0071, Box 406, Folder 14, McMaster University.

---. Letter to Douglas Gibson, 9 August 1984, Fonds RC0071, Box 406, Folder 18, McMaster University.

---. Memorandum to Gerry Hollingsworth and Milly Marmur, 5 March 1980, Fonds RC0071, Box 406, Folder 13, McMaster University.

Frye, Northrop. "Conclusion to a Literary History of Canada." *The Bush Garden: Essays on the Canadian Imagination*. Anansi, 1971.

Fulford, Robert. "A life spent abroad: Mavis Gallant's relationship with Canada was once one of mutual neglect." *National Post,* 20 Apr. 2004, http://www.robertfulford.com/2004-04-20-gallant.html.

Gadpaille, Michelle. *The Canadian Short Story*. Oxford UP, 1968.

Gallant, Mavis. "The Art of Fiction No. 160." *The Paris Review*, no. 153, Winter 1999, https://www.theparisreview.org/interviews/838/the-art-of-fiction-no-160-mavis-gallant.

---. "Between Zero and One." *The New Yorker*, 8 Dec. 1975, pp. 38-47.

---. "The Doctor." *The New Yorker*, 20 Jun. 1977, pp. 33-42.

---. "The Flowers of Spring." *Northern Review*, 1950, pp. 31-39.

---. *Green Water, Green Sky*. Houghton Mifflin, 1959.

---. *Home Truths: Selected Canadian Stories*. Macmillan of Canada, 1981.

---. "The Hunger Diaries." *The New Yorker*, 2 Jul. 2012, https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2012/07/09/the-hunger-diaries

---. "An Interview with Mavis Gallant." By Geoffrey Hancock, *Canadian Fiction Magazine*, no. 28, 1978, pp. 18-67.

---. "In Transit." *The New Yorker*, 14 Aug. 1965, pp. 24-5.

---. "In Youth Is Pleasure." *The New Yorker*, 24 Nov. 1975, pp. 46-54.

---. "In Youth Is Pleasure," Magazine Make-Up: Copy and Source, MssCol 2236, Box 2306, Folder 1, *The New Yorker* records, ca.1924-1984, Manuscripts and Archives Division, The New York Public Library.

---. Letter to Douglas Gibson, 30 April 1979, Fonds RC0071, Box 422, Folder 2, McMaster University.

---. Letter to Douglas Gibson, 12 December 1980, Fonds RC0071, Box 406, Folder 14, McMaster University.

---. Letter to Douglas Gibson, 25 April 1981, Fonds RC0071, Box 406, Folder 15, McMaster University.

---. Letter to Douglas Gibson, 20 May 1985, Fonds RC0071, Box 406, Folder 15, McMaster University.

---. Letter to Daniel Menaker, 31 May 1977, MssCol 2236, Box 894, File 11, *The New Yorker* records, Manuscripts and Archives Division, The New York Public Library.

---. Letter to Georges Borchardt, 12 July 1999, MS COLL 00189, uncatalogued folder ("M.G. to and for Georges Borchardt 1999"), Mavis Gallant Papers, Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library, University of Toronto.

---. Letter to William Maxwell, 12 June 1953, MssCol 2236, Box 720, Folder 8, *The New Yorker* records, Manuscripts and Archives Division, The New York Public Library.

---. "Madeline's Birthday." *The New Yorker*, 1 Sept. 1951, pp. 20-24.

---. "The Pegnitz Junction." *The Selected Stories of Mavis Gallant*. Bloomsbury, 2004, pp. 517-574.

---. "Preface." *The Selected Stories of Mavis Gallant*. Bloomsbury, 2004, pp. ix-xix.

---. "Varieties of Exile." *The New Yorker*, 19 Jan. 1976, pp. 26-35.

---. "Voices Lost in Snow." *The New Yorker*, 5 Apr. 1976, pp. 38-43.

---. "Voices Lost in Snow." Magazine Make-Up: Copy and Source, MssCol 2236, Box 2314, Folder 8, *The New Yorker* records, Manuscripts and Archives Division, The New York Public Library.

---. *What Is To Be Done?* Linda Leith Publishing, 2017.

---. "With a Capital T." *Canadian Fiction Magazine*, no. 28, 1978, pp. 8-17.

Gibson, Douglas. "Canadian Literature strong and free: U.S. role exaggerated." *National Post*, 24 Jun. 2000, p. B2.

---. Letter to the Editor of *Saturday Night*, 5 May 1981, Fonds RC0071, Box 406, Folder 13, McMaster University.

---. Letter to Mavis Gallant, 9 January 1980, Fonds RC0071, Box 406, Folder 13, McMaster University.

---. Letter to Mavis Gallant, 14 April 1981, Fonds RC0071, Box 406, Folder 15, McMaster University.

---. Letter to Mavis Gallant, 7 February 1997, Fonds RC0051, Box 13, Folder 2, McMaster University.

---. Letter to Mavis Gallant, 23 April 1997, Fonds RC0051, Box 13, Folder 2, McMaster University.

---. Letter to Mavis Gallant, 16 February 1998, Fonds RC0051, Box 14, Folder 3, McMaster University.

---. Letter to Nancy Kroeker, 6 January 1997, Fonds RC0051, Box 13, Folder 10, McMaster University.

---. Memorandum to Avie Bennett, 7 July 1994, Fonds RC0051, Box 13, Folder 8, McMaster University.

---. Personal Interview. 19 April 2020.

---. *Stories About Storytellers: Publishing Alice Munro, Robertson Davies, Alistair MacLeod, Pierre Trudeau, and Others*. ECW Press, 2011.

Gibson, Douglas and Christine Evain. *Douglas Gibson Unedited: On Editing Robertson Davies, Allice Munro, W. O. Mitchell, Mavis Gallant, jack Hodgins, Alistair MacLeod, Etc.* European Interuniversity Press, 2007.

Hancock, Geoff. "An Interview with Mavis Gallant." *Canadian Fiction Magazine*, no. 28, 1978, pp. 18-67.

Hatch, Ronald. "The Three Stages of Mavis Gallant's Short Fiction." *Canadian Fiction*

Magazine, no. 28, 1978, pp. 92-114.

Holloway, Anne. Letter to Mavis Gallant, 27 May 1981, Fonds RC0071, Box 406, Folder 14, McMaster University.

Howells, Carol Ann. *Private and Fictional Words: Canadian Women Novelists of the 1970s and 1980s*. Methuen, 1987.

Keefer, Janice Kulyk. *Reading Mavis Gallant*. Oxford UP, 1989.

Lee, Angela. "Re: Inquiry about the publication of Mavis Gallant's journals." Received by Ben Fried, 14 August 2018. Email Correspondence.

Lynch, Gerald. "An Intangible Cure for Death by Homesickness: Mavis Gallant's Canadian Short-Story Cycle 'Linnet Muir.'" *Transient Questions: New Essays on Mavis Gallant*, edited by Kristjana Gunnars, Rodopi, 2004, pp. 1-28.

Macskimming, Roy. *The Perilous Trade: Book Publishing in Canada, 1946-2006*. McClelland & Stewart, 2007.

Manera, Livia. "Mavis Gallant racconta William Maxwell." *Come un volo di Rondini*, by William Maxwell, BUR, 2009, pp. 213-222.

Market Research Report. *The New Yorker*, 24 May 1961, MssCol 2236, Box 1324, File 5, *The New Yorker* records, Manuscripts and Archives Division, The New York Public Library.

Martin, Sandra. "A Storied Life." *The Globe and Mail*, 6 Apr. 2002, https://www.theglobeandmail.com/arts/a-storied-life/article4141835/.

---. "Writer Mavis Gallant dies at age 91." *The Globe and Mail*, 18 Feb. 2014, https://tinyurl.com/p3et84vj.

Massey-Lévesque Commission. "Report, Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters and Sciences, 1949-1951." *Collections Canada*, 1951,

https://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/massey/h5-400-e.html.

Maxwell, William. Letter to Katharine White, 1958, BMC-M56, Box 7, Folder 16, Katharine Sergeant White Papers, Bryn Mawr College Library.

---. Letter to Mavis Gallant, 28 July 1950, MssCol 2236, Box 490, File 13, *The New Yorker* records, Manuscripts and Archives Division, The New York Public Library.

---. Letter to Mavis Gallant, 7 August 1951, MssCol 2236, Box 506, File 14, *The New Yorker* records, Manuscripts and Archives Division, The New York Public Library.

---. Letter to Mavis Gallant, 9 February 1953, MssCol 2236, Box 720, File 8, *The New Yorker* records, Manuscripts and Archives Division, The New York Public Library.

---. Letter to Mavis Gallant, 29 October 1953, MssCol 2236, Box 720, File 8, *The New Yorker* records, Manuscripts and Archives Division, The New York Public Library.

---. Letter to Mavis Gallant, 18 November 1954, MssCol 2236, Box 728, File 2, *The New Yorker* records, Manuscripts and Archives Division, The New York Public Library.

---. Letter to Mavis Gallant, 20 June 1961, MssCol 2236, Box 785, File 21, *The New Yorker* records, Manuscripts and Archives Division, The New York Public Library.

---. Letter to Mavis Gallant, 20 October 1975, MssCol 2236, Box 879, File 7, *The New Yorker* records, Manuscripts and Archives Division, The New York Public Library.

---. Letter to Mavis Gallant, undated (1975), MssCol 2236, Box 879, File 7, *The New Yorker* records, Manuscripts and Archives Division, The New York Public Library.

---. Letter to Mavis Gallant, 14 March 1985, MsColl 00189, uncatalogued folder of "Bill Maxwell" correspondence, Mavis Gallant Papers, Fisher Rare Book Library, University of Toronto.

---. Letter to Mavis Gallant, 20 April 1987, MsColl 00189, uncatalogued folder of "Bill

Maxwell" correspondence, Mavis Gallant Papers, Fisher Rare Book Library, University of Toronto.

---. Letter to Mavis Gallant, 7 December 1996, MsColl 00189, uncatalogued folder of "Bill Maxwell" correspondence, Mavis Gallant Papers, Fisher Rare Book Library, University of Toronto.

---. Letter to Mavis Gallant, undated (on "the discussion of how a story arrives"), MsColl 00189, uncatalogued folder of "Bill Maxwell" correspondence, Mavis Gallant Papers, Fisher Rare Book Library, University of Toronto.

---. Letter to Mavis Gallant, 18 January 1999, MsColl 00189, uncatalogued folder of "Bill Maxwell" correspondence, Mavis Gallant Papers, Fisher Rare Book Library, University of Toronto.

---. Telegram to Mavis Gallant, undated (1975), MssCol 2236, Box 879, File 7, *The New Yorker* records, Manuscripts and Archives Division, The New York Public Library.

McGrath, Charles. Letter to Alice Munro, 18 November 1976, boxFile 02.30.01, Alice Munro Fonds, University of Calgary.

---. Personal Interview. 3 April 2020.

Menaker, Daniel. Letter to Mavis Gallant, 8 July 1976, MssCol 2236, Box 886, File 10, *The New Yorker* records, Manuscripts and Archives Division, The New York Public Library.

---. Letter to Mavis Gallant, 9 September 1976, MssCol 2236, Box 886, File 10, *The New Yorker* records, Manuscripts and Archives Division, The New York Public Library.

---. Letter to Mavis Gallant, 28 February 1977, MssCol 2236, Box 894, File 11, *The New Yorker* records, Manuscripts and Archives Division, The New York Public Library.

---. Letter to Mavis Gallant, 11 March 1977, MssCol 2236, Box 894, File 11, *The New Yorker* records, Manuscripts and Archives Division, The New York Public Library.

---. Letter to Mavis Gallant, 24 May 1977, MssCol 2236, Box 894, File 11, *The New Yorker* records, Manuscripts and Archives Division, The New York Public Library.

---. Letter to Mavis Gallant, 6 June 1977, MssCol 2236, Box 894, File 11, *The New Yorker* records, Manuscripts and Archives Division, The New York Public Library.

---. Letter to Mavis Gallant, 28 June 1977, MssCol 2236, Box 894, File 11, *The New Yorker* records, Manuscripts and Archives Division, The New York Public Library.

---. Letter to Mavis Gallant, 5 August 1977, MssCol 2236, Box 894, File 11, *The New Yorker* records, Manuscripts and Archives Division, The New York Public Library.

---. Letter to Mavis Gallant, 17 August 1977, MssCol 2236, Box 894, File 11, *The New Yorker* records, Manuscripts and Archives Division, The New York Public Library.

---. Letter to Mavis Gallant, 12 March 1980, MssCol 2236, Box 924, File 2, *The New Yorker* records, Manuscripts and Archives Division, The New York Public Library.

---. *My Mistake*. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2013.

---. Personal Interview. 10 March 2020.

---. Telegram to Mavis Gallant, undated (1976), MssCol 2236, Box 886, File 10, *The New Yorker* records, Manuscripts and Archives Division, The New York Public Library.

Metcalf, John. "Canada's successful writers must rely on blessings from U.S. first." *National Post*, 17 June 2000, pp. E4-5.

Mount, Nick. *When Canadian Literature Moved to New York*. University of Toronto Press, 2005.

Munro, Alice. "Alice Munro, The Art of Fiction No. 137." *The Paris Review*, no. 131, Summer 1994, https://www.theparisreview.org/interviews/1791/the-art-of-fiction-no-137-alice-

munro.

---. “The Progress of Love.” *The New Yorker,* 7 October 1985, pp. 35-58.

---. “The Progress of Love.” *The Progress of Love*. Knopf, 1986, pp. 3-31.

---. *The Progress of Love: Stories*. McClelland & Stewart, 1986.

Ondaatje, Michael. “Introduction: A Handful of Small Shipwrecks.” *Paris Stories*, by Mavis Gallant, New York Review Books, 2002, pp. v-x.

Panofsky, Ruth. *The Literary Legacy of the Macmillan Company of Canada: Making Books and Mapping Culture*. University of Toronto Press, 2012.

Richler, Mordecai. “Wilson in Canada.” *The New York Review of Books*, 30 Sept. 1965, https://www.nybooks.com/articles/1965/09/30/wilson-in-canada/.

Scheiding, Oliver. “Migrant Fictions: The Early Story in North American Magazines.” *REAL: The Yearbook of Research in English and American literature*, vol. 28, no. 28, 2012, pp. 197-218.

Smyth, Kate. “‘No Such Thing As A “Canadian”’: Memory, Place, and Identity in Mavis Gallant’s Linnet Muir Stories.” *IJAS Online*, no. 4, 2015, pp. 15-25.

Smythe, Karen. “To Be (And Not To Be) Continued: Closure and Consolation in Gallant’s *Linnet Muir* Sequence.” *Canadian Literature*, no. 129, Summer 1991, pp. 74-89.

Steinman, Michael. “Introduction.” *The Element of Lavishness: Letters of Sylvia Townsend Warner and William Maxwell, 1938-1978,* edited by Michael Steinman, Counterpoint, 2001, pp. xv-xxvii.

Thacker, Robert. *Alice Munro: Writing Her Lives: A Biography*. 2nd ed., Emblem, 2011.

Treisman, Deborah. “Mavis Gallant: Fifty Years of Notebooks.” *The New Yorker*, 29 Jun. 2012, https://www.newyorker.com/books/page-turner/mavis-gallant-fifty-years-of-notebooks.

---. “Postscript: Mavis Gallant, 1922-2014.” *The New Yorker*, 19 Feb. 2014, https://www.newyorker.com/books/page-turner/postscript-mavis-gallant-1922-2014.

Warner, Sylvia Townsend and William Maxwell. *The Element of Lavishness: Letters of Sylvia Townsend Warner and William Maxwell, 1938-1978*, edited by Michael Steinman, Counterpoint, 2001.

Weaver, Robert. “Introduction.” *Canadian Short Stories*, edited by Robert Weaver, Oxford UP, 1960, pp. ix-xiii.

---. “Introduction II.” *The Oxford Book of Canadian Short Stories in English*, edited by Margaret Atwood and Robert Weaver, Oxford UP, 1986, pp. xvii-xix.

Wood, Mildred. Letter to Mavis Gallant, 24 March 1949, MssCol 2236, Box 476, File 2, *The New Yorker* records, Manuscripts and Archives Division, The New York Public Library.

---. Letter to Mavis Gallant, 25 August 1949, MssCol 2236, Box 476, File 2, *The New Yorker* records, Manuscripts and Archives Division, The New York Public Library.

---. Letter to Mavis Gallant, 30 August 1950, MssCol 2236, Box 490, File 13, *The New Yorker* records, Manuscripts and Archives Division, The New York Public Library.

---. Letter to Mavis Gallant, 27 December 1950, MssCol 2236, Box 490, File 13, *The New Yorker* records, Manuscripts and Archives Division, The New York Public Library.

---. Letter to Mavis Gallant, 12 July 1950, MssCol 2236, Box 490, File 13, *The New Yorker* records, Manuscripts and Archives Division, The New York Public Library.

Alexander, James. "Frank O'Connor in *The New Yorker*, 1945-1967." *Éire-Ireland*, vol. 30, no. 1, Spring 1995, pp. 130-144.

Angell, Roger. Personal Interview. 27 March 2020.

Beckett, Samuel. "Censorship in the Saorstat." *Disjecta: Miscellaneous Writings and a Dramatic Fragment*, edited by Ruby Cohn, John Calder, 1983, pp. 84-88.

Bourke, Angela. *Maeve Brennan: Homesick at* The New Yorker. Counterpoint, 2004.

Bourke, Angela et al., editors. *The Field Day Anthology of Irish Writing, Volume V: Irish Women's Writings and Traditions*. Cork UP, 2002.

Brennan, Maeve. "An Attack of Hunger." *The New Yorker*, 6 Jan. 1972, pp. 26-34.

---. "An Attack of Hunger." MS 243, Box 6, Folder 39, Robert Brennan and Maeve Brennan Papers, 1935-1967, Special Collections, University of Delaware Library.

---. "The Beginning of a Long Story." MS 243, Box 6, Folder 36, Robert Brennan and Maeve Brennan Papers, Special Collections, University of Delaware Library.

---. "A Large Bee." *The New Yorker*, 18 Aug. 1962, pp. 88-90.

---. "A Large Bee" undated draft, 01/01/MSS00032, Box 1, Folder 37a, William Maxwell papers, 1928-1998, Rare Book & Manuscript Library, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

---. "Christmas Eve." *The New Yorker*, 23 Dec. 1972, pp. 27-30.

---. "Christmas Eve." Magazine Make-Up: Copy and Source, MssCol 2236, Box 2243, Folder 8, *The New Yorker* records, ca.1924-1984, Manuscripts and Archives Division, The New York Public Library. Astor, Lenox, and Tilden Foundations.

---. *Christmas Eve: 13 Stories*. Charles Scribner's Sons, 1974.

---. *In and Out of Never-Never Land: 22 Stories*. Scribner, 1969.

---. Letter to William Maxwell, Tuesday, 01/01/MSS00032, Box 1, Folder 37a, William Maxwell papers, Rare Book & Manuscript Library, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

---. Letter to William Maxwell, 16 May 1964, 01/01/MSS00032, Box 1, Folder 37a, William Maxwell papers, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

---. Letter to William Maxwell, undated ("Everything you say is true"), 01/01/MSS00032, Box 1, Folder 37a, William Maxwell papers, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

---. Letter to William Maxwell, undated ("the difference between appearance and reality"), 01/01/MSS00032, Box 1, Folder 37a, William Maxwell papers, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

---. Letter to William Maxwell, undated ("the aunt story"), 01/01/MSS00032, Box 1, Folder 37a, William Maxwell papers, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

---. Letter to William Maxwell, undated ("the mother-country"), 01/01/MSS00032, Box 1, Folder 37a, William Maxwell papers, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

---. Letter to William Maxwell, undated ("the disgusting guilt"), 01/01/MSS00032, Box 1, Folder 37b, William Maxwell papers, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

---. Letter to William Maxwell, undated ("you see it all now"), 01/01/MSS00032, Box 1, Folder 37b, William Maxwell papers, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

---. Letter to William Maxwell, undated ("you wrote that story"), 01/01/MSS00032, Box 1, Folder 38, William Maxwell papers, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

---. Letter to William Maxwell, undated ("it was scrapped"), 01/01/MSS00032, Box 1, Folder 38, William Maxwell papers, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

---. *The Long-Winded Lady*. The Stinging Fly, 2017.

---. "Notes and Comment." *The New Yorker*, 20 Sept. 1976, p. 31.

---. "Notes and Comment." *The New Yorker*, 5 Jan. 1981, p. 23.

---. "The Rose Garden." *The New Yorker*, 28 Mar. 1959, pp. 31-38.

---. *The Rose Garden: Short Stories*. Counterpoint, 2000.

---. "The Shadow of Kindness." *The New Yorker*, 14 Aug. 1965, pp. 30-36.

---. "The Springs of Affection." *The New Yorker*, 18 Mar. 1972, pp. 38-83.

---. "The Springs of Affection." Magazine Make-Up: Copy and Source, MssCol 2236, Box 2228, Folder 1, *The New Yorker* records, Manuscripts and Archives Division, The New York Public Library.

---. *The Springs of Affection: Stories of Dublin*. Houghton Mifflin, 1997.

---. *The Springs of Affection*. The Stinging Fly, 2016.

---. "Stories of Africa." *The New Yorker*, 10 Aug. 1968, pp. 24-32.

---. *The Visitor*. Counterpoint, 2000.

Carduff, Christopher. "Editor's Note." *The Visitor*, by Maeve Brennan, Counterpoint, 2000, pp. 83-87.

---. Letter to William Maxwell, 29 May 1996, 01/01/MSS00032, Box 2, Folder 7,William Maxwell papers, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign..

---. Letter to Joseph Regal, 5 March 1999, MssCol 18287, Box 63, Folder 8, Russell and Volkening records, 1940-2008, Manuscripts and Archives Division, The New York Public Library. Astor, Lenox, and Tilden Foundations.

---. Letter to Joseph Regal, 11 January 2000, MssCol 18287, Box 63, Folder 7, Russell and Volkening records, Manuscripts and Archives Division, The New York Public Library.

---. Letter to Joseph Regal, 24 January 2000, MssCol 18287, Box 63, Folder 7, Russell and Volkening records, Manuscripts and Archives Division, The New York Public Library.

---. Letter to Joseph Regal, 23 May 2000, MssCol 18287, Box 63, Folder 7, Russell and Volkening records, Manuscripts and Archives Division, The New York Public Library.

---. Letter to Joseph Regal, 5 April 2001, MssCol 18287, Box 63, Folder 6, Russell and Volkening records, Manuscripts and Archives Division, The New York Public Library.

---. Personal Interview. 1 March 2020.

---. Phone message left for Joseph Regal, 11 February 2000, MssCol 18287, Box 63, Folder 7, Russell and Volkening records, Manuscripts and Archives Division, The New York Public Library.

Carson, Niall. *Rebel by Vocation: Sean O'Faolain and the Generation of* The Bell. Manchester UP, 2016.

"Censorship of Publications Act, 1929." *Irish Statute Book*, https://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/1929/act/21/enacted/en/html

Deane, Seamus. "Irish Poetry and Irish Nationalism: A Survey." *Two Decades of Irish Writing: A Critical Survey*, edited by Douglas Dunn, Carcanet, 1975, pp. 4-22.

Donoghue, Emma. *The Talk of the Town*. Unpublished play, Dublin Theatre Festival, 2012.

Enright, Anne. "In Search of the Real Maeve Brennan." *The Guardian*, 21 May 2016, https://www.theguardian.com/books/2016/may/21/anne-enright-real-maeve-brennan-new-yorker.

Enright, Anne, editor. *The Granta Book of the Irish Short Story*. Granta, 2010.

Gleeson, Sinéad, editor. *The Long Gaze Back: An Anthology of Irish Women Writers*. New Island Books, 2015.

Gwynn, Stephen. *Irish Literature and Drama in the English Language: A Short History*. T. Nelson, 1936.

Hennigan, Molly. "Maeve Brennan: A Centenary More Bitter Than Sweet." *The Irish Times*, 5 Jan. 2017, https://www.irishtimes.com/culture/books/maeve-brennan-a-centenary-more-bitter-than-sweet-1.2926638

Hu, Jane. "A Maeve Brennan Revival?" *The New Yorker*, 18 Mar. 2014, https://www.newyorker.com/books/page-turner/a-maeve-brennan-revival.

Iaconetti, Joan. "At Houghton Mifflin, reprints & rediscoveries." *Publishers Weekly*, vol. 244, no. 45, 3 Nov. 1997, p. 20.

Ingman, Heather. *A History of the Irish Short Story*. Cambridge UP, 2009.

"Julian Barnes Reads Frank O'Connor." *The New Yorker Fiction Podcast*, 12 Feb. 2010, https://www.newyorker.com/podcast/fiction/julian-barnes-reads-frank-oconnor.

Kennelly, Maureen. "A 'New Yorker' State of Mind." *The Irish Times*, 10 Apr. 2010, https://www.irishtimes.com/culture/books/a-new-yorker-state-of-mind-1.650671.

Kiberd, Declan. *Inventing Ireland*. Harvard UP, 1996.

Kinane, Vincent. *A Brief History of Printing and Publishing in Ireland*. National Print Museum, 2002.

"Maeve Brennan." *The Book Show*, RTÉ Radio 1, 2 Nov. 2013, https://www.rte.ie/radio/radio1/clips/20465060/

Matthews, James. *Voices: A Life of Frank O'Connor*. Atheneum, 1983.

Maxwell, William. Letter to Mavis Gallant, 20 December 1987, MsColl 00189, uncatalogued folder of "Bill Maxwell" correspondence, Mavis Gallant Papers, Fisher Rare Book Library, University of Toronto.

---. Letter to Frank O'Connor, 6 July 1956, MssCol 2236, Box 745, File 23, *The New Yorker* records, Manuscripts and Archives Division, The New York Public Library.

---. "Maeve Brennan." *Wigwag*, Summer 1988, pp. 62-63.

---. "Maeve Brennan [Obituary]." *The New Yorker*, 15 Nov. 1993, p. 10.

---. Maeve Brennan Obituary draft, 01/01/MSS00032, Box 1, Folder 37a, William Maxwell papers, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

---. Telegram to Maeve Brennan, December 1971, 01/01/MSS00032, Box 6a, Folder 5, William Maxwell papers, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

Morison, Graham. "An Ulster Writer: Brian Friel." *Brian Friel in Conversation*, edited by Paul Delaney, 1965, pp. 24-34.

Morrisey, Eamon. *Maeve's House*. Unpublished play, Dublin Theatre Festival, 2013.

Mullally, Una. "Maeve Brennan, a writer who was at home in neither Ireland nor America."

Irish Times, 15 Sept. 2019, https://tinyurl.com/w3m2kbp5.

O'Brien, George. "Contemporary Prose in English: 1940-2000." *The Cambridge History of Irish Literature, Volume 2 1890-2000*, edited by Margaret Kelleher and Philip O'Leary, Cambridge UP, 2008, pp. 421-477.

O'Brien, William. Letter to the Estate of Maeve Brennan, 19 October 2001, MssCol 18287, Box 63, Folder 6, Russell and Volkening records, Manuscripts and Archives Division, The New York Public Library.

Ó Ciosáin, Niall and Clare Hutton. "The History of the Book in Ireland." *The Oxford Companion to the Book*, edited by Michael F. Suarez, S.J. and H. R. Woudhuysen, Oxford UP, 2010.

O'Connor, Frank. "Frank O'Connor on Censorship." *Banned in Ireland: Censorship & The Irish Writer*, edited by Julia Carson, University of Georgia Press, 1990, pp. 151-57.

---. "The Future of Irish Literature." *Irish Writing in the Twentieth Century: A Reader*, edited by David Pierce, Cork UP, 2000, pp. 500-503.

---. "The Man of the World." *Domestic Relations*. Knopf, 1957, pp. 35-45.

---. "The Man of the World." *The New Yorker*, 28 Jul. 1956, pp. 19-22.

---. "The Man of the World." Magazine Make-Up: Copy and Source, MssCol 2236, Box 1847, Folder 13, *The New Yorker* records, Manuscripts and Archives Division, The New York Public Library.

---. *My Father's Son*. Macmillan, 1968.

---. "News from the Church." *The New Yorker*, 22 Sept. 1945, pp. 24-27.

O'Connor, Frank and Maxwell, William. *The Happiness of Getting It Down Right: The Letters of Frank O'Connor and William Maxwell*, edited by Michael Steinman, Knopf, 1996.

O Drisceoil, Donal. "'The best banned in the land': Censorship and Irish Writing Since 1950." *The Yearbook of English Studies*, vol. 35, 2005, pp. 146-160.

---. *Censorship in Ireland, 1939-1945: Neutrality, Politics and Society*. Cork UP, 1996.

O'Leary, Joanne. "What makes a waif?" *London Review of Books*, vol. 40, no. 17, 13 September 2008, https://www.lrb.co.uk/the-paper/v40/n17/joanne-o-leary/what-makes-a-waif.

O'Toole, Fintan. "Culture Shock: Disgraceful, disgusting, disreputable: it's high time to ban the censorship board." *The Irish Times*, 2 Nov. 2013, https://www.irishtimes.com/culture/culture-shock-disgraceful-disgusting-disreputable-it-s-high-time-to-ban-the-censorship-board-1.1580643.

---. "No Fairy Tale Ending." *Irish Times*, 1 Jan. 1998, https://tinyurl.com/3f23tm2j.

Shovlin, Frank. *The Irish Literary Periodical, 1923-1958*. Clarendon Press, 2003.

Yagoda, Ben. *About Town: The New Yorker and the World It Made*. Scribner, 2000.

PART THREE

INTRODUCTION

Alter, Alexandra and Edmund Lee. "Penguin Random House to Buy Simon & Schuster." *The New York Times*, 25 Nov. 2020, https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/25/books/simon-schuster-penguin-random-house.html.

"American Books and the British Empire Market." *Publishers Weekly*, 7 Aug. 1948, pp. 432-33.

Baker, Sidney. *The Australian Language: an examination of the English language and English speech as used in Australia, from convict days to the present, with special reference to the growth of indigenous idiom and its use by Australian writers*. Angus & Robertson, 1945.

Bryant, Mary Nell. "English Language Publication and the British Traditional Market Agreement." *The Library Quarterly*, vol. 49, no. 4, October 1979, pp. 371-98.

Buford, Bill. "Declarations of Independence: Why are there suddenly so many Indian novelists?" *The New Yorker*, 23 June 1997, pp. 6-8.

Chatterjee, Rimi B. *Empires of the Mind: A History of the Oxford University Press in India Under the Raj*. Oxford UP, 2006.

Davidar, David. Personal Interview. 27 July, 16 October, 21 November 2020.

Franklin, Miles. *Laughter, Not For a Cage: Notes on Australian Writing*. Angus & Robertson, 1956.

Fraser, Nicholas. "The Transatlantic Book War." *New Statesman*, 9 May 1975, pp. 616-18.

Garner, Helen. *The Children's Bach*. McPhee Gribble, 1984.

A Guide to Royalty Agreements. 4th edition. Publishers' Association, 1959.

A Guide to Royalty Agreements. 5th edition. Publishers' Association, 1972.

Gupta, Abhijit. "The History of the Book in the Indian Subcontinent." *The Oxford Companion to the Book*, edited by Michael F. Suarez, S.J. and H.R. Woudhuysen, Oxford UP, 2010.

Haigh, Gideon. "Packed it in: The demise of the 'Bulletin.'" *The Monthly*, Mar. 2008, https://www.themonthly.com.au/issue/2008/march/1268869044/gideon-haigh/packed-it.

Hare, Steve, editor. *Penguin Portrait: Allen Lane and the Penguin Editors, 1935-1970*. Penguin, 1995.

Harris, Elizabeth and Alexandra Alter. "Penguin Random House Defends Effort To Buy Simon & Schuster." *The New York Times*, 13 Dec. 2021, https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/13/books/penguin-random-house-simon-schuster.html.

Harris, Max. "The End of Publishing Colonialism." *Australian Book Review* 11, Apr. 1973, pp. 53-54.

"History of the Award." Miles Franklin Literary Award, https://web.archive.org/web/20150906153522/http://www.milesfranklin.com.au/about_history.

Huggan, Graham. *Australian Literature: Postcolonialism, Racism, Transnationalism*. Oxford UP, 2007.

Joshi, Priya. *In Another Country: Colonialism, Culture, and the English Novel in India*. Columbia UP, 2002.

Kapur, Akash. "Subcontinental Divide." *The New York Times Book Review*, 31 Mar. 2002, https://www.nytimes.com/2002/03/31/books/subcontinental-divide.html.

Kells, Stuart. *Penguin and the Lane Brothers: The Untold Story of a Publishing Revolution*. Black Inc., 2015.

Lewis, Jeremy. *Penguin Special: The Life and Times of Allen Lane*. Viking, 2005.

Lyons, Martyn. "Introduction." *A History of the Book in Australia, 1891-1945: A National Culture in a Colonised Market*, edited by Martyn Lyons and John Arnold, University of Queensland Press, 2001, pp. xiii-xix.

---. "Britain's Largest Export Market." pp. 19-26.

Magner, Brigid. "Case-study: Anglo-Australian Relations in the Book Trade." *Paper Empires: A History of the Book in Australia, 1946-2005*, edited by Craig Munro and Robyn Sheahan-Bright, University of Queensland Press, 2006, pp. 7-9.

Malhotra, Dina N. "The Panorama of Indian Book Publishing." *60 Years of Book Publishing in India, 1947-2007*, edited by Dina N. Malhotra, Federation of Indian Publishers, 2007, pp. 10-24.

Mayer, Peter. Speech at the Taj Mahal Hotel, 26 July 1985, DM1294/5/23, Penguin Archive: Penguin Books Ltd. Historical Files, University of Bristol Archives.

McCleery, Alistair. "Penguin and post-colonial publishing, 1948-1972." *The Journal of Commonwealth Literature*, vol. 48, no. 1, March 2013, pp. 131-44.

McPhee, Hilary. *Other People's Words*. Picador, 2001.

---. Personal Interview. 18 August, 26 August 2020.

Morpurgo, J. E. *King Penguin: Allen Lane*. Hutchinson, 1979.

Morrison, Ian. "The History of the Book in Australia." *The Oxford Companion to the Book*, edited by Michael F. Suarez, S.J. and H.R. Woudhuysen, Oxford UP, 2010.

Munro, Craig. “Editors at Large.” *Meanjin*, vol. 61, no. 3, 2002.

Munro, Craig and John Curtain. “After the War.” *Paper Empires: A History of the Book in Australia, 1946-2005*, edited by Craig Munro and Robyn Sheahan-Bright, University of Queensland Press, 2006, pp. 3-6.

Narayanan, Pavithra. *What Are You Reading? The World Market and Indian Literary Production*. Routledge, 2012.

Pfanner, Eric and Amy Chozick. “Random House and Penguin Merger Creates Global Giant.” *The New York Times*, 29 Oct. 2012, https://www.nytimes.com/2012/10/30/business/global/random-house-and-penguin-to-be-combined.html.

Phillips, A. A. “The Cultural Cringe.” *Meanjin Quarterly*, Summer 1950, https://meanjin.com.au/essays/the-cultural-cringe-by-a-a-phillips/.

Poland, Louise and Ivor Indyk. “Rejected by America? Some Tensions in Australian-American Literary Relations.” *Reading Across the Pacific: Australia – United States Intellectual History*, edited by Robert Dixon and Nicholas Bims, Sydney University Press, 2010, pp. 309-22.

“Publisher’s Note.” *The Fiction Collection 1: Twenty Years of Penguin India*. Penguin India, 2007, pp. xi-xii.

Ram, Susan and N. Ram. *R. K. Narayan*. Viking, 1996.

“Remembering Publisher Peter Mayer.” *Literary Hub*, 18 May 2018, https://lithub.com/remembering-publisher-peter-mayer/.

Sadana, Rashmi. *English Heart, Hindi Heartland: The Political Life of Literature in India*. University of California Press, 2012.

Seth, Vikram. *A Suitable Boy*. Harper Perennial, 2005.

Singh, Tejeshwar. "English: The Link-Language in India and Abroad." In "The Panorama of Indian Book Publishing." *60 Years of Book Publishing in India, 1947-2007*, edited by Dina N. Malhotra, Federation of Indian Publishers, 2007, pp. 49-58.

Sinykin, Dan. "The Conglomerate Era: Publishing, Authorship, and Literary Form, 1965-2007." *Contemporary Literature*, vol. 58, no. 4, Winter 2017, pp. 462-491.

Sissons, Michael. "British Agent Finds Indigenous Publishing, Not American Competition, the Factor to Watch in the World Book Market." *Publishers Weekly*, 21 Feb. 1977, pp. 41-42.

Squires, Claire. "The History of the Book in Britain from 1914." *The Oxford Companion to the Book*, edited by Michael F. Suarez, S.J. and H.R. Woudhuysen, Oxford UP, 2010.

Thompson, John B. *Books in the Digital Age: The Transformation of Academic and Higher Education Publishing in Britain and the United States*. Polity, 2015.

Thomson, Liz. "Peter Mayer obituary." *The Guardian*, 16 May 2018, https://www.theguardian.com/books/2018/may/16/peter-mayer-obituary.

"Three Publishing Veterans Push English Fiction in India." *Zee News*, 12 Apr. 2012, https://zeenews.india.com/entertainment/bookworm/bookworm-s-trail/three-publishing-veterans-push-english-fiction-in-india_2269.htm.

Viswanathan, Gauri. *Masks of Conquest: Literary Study and British Rule in India*. Columbia UP, 2015.

Yates, Martin. *The Penguin Companion*. Penguin Collectors' Society, 2006.

Brennan, Bernadette. *A Writing Life: Helen Garner and Her Work*. Text Publishing Company, 2017.

Clark, Alex. "Who are you looking at?" *The Guardian*, 7 Apr. 1999, https://www.theguardian.com/theguardian/1999/apr/07/features11.g26.

"colon, *n*.2." *OED Online*, Oxford University Press, June 2022, www.oed.com/view/Entry/36513.

Cunningham, Sophie. *Melbourne*. University of New South Wales, 2011.

Garner, Helen. *The Children's Bach*. McPhee Gribble, 1984.

---. *The Children's Bach* first typescript, 1999.0048, Box 359, McPhee Gribble Pty Ltd., 1975-1990, the University of Melbourne Archives.

---. *The Children's Bach* second typescript, 1999.0048, Box 240, Files 1-2, McPhee Gribble Pty Ltd., the University of Melbourne Archives.

---. *The Children's Bach* third typescript, 1999.0048, Box 359, Files 1-2, McPhee Gribble Pty Ltd., the University of Melbourne Archives.

---. *The First Stone: Some Questions about Sex and Power*. Picador, 1995.

---. *Honour & Other People's Children: Two Stories*. McPhee Gribble, 1980.

---. *This House of Grief: The Story of a Murder Trial*. Text, 2014.

---. "I." *Meanjin*, 2002, https://meanjin.com.au/essays/i/.

---. *Joe Cinque's Consolation: A True Story of Death, Grief and the Law*. Picador, 2004.

---. *Monkey Grip*. Seaview Books, 1977.

---. "Helen Garner on Monkey Grip's Diaristic Birth." *Youtube*, uploaded by the Wheeler Centre, 25 Aug. 2013, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gi-u-0w7vDM&ab_channel=WheelerCentre.

---. *The Yellow Notebook: Diaries Volume 1, 1978-1987*. Text, 2019.

Grenville, Kate and Sue Woolfe. *Making Stories: How Ten Australian Novels Were Written*. Allen & Unwin, 1993.

Heyward, Michael. "Diana Gribble, as remembered by Publisher Michael Heyward." text publishing, 7 Oct. 2011, https://www.textpublishing.com.au/blog/diana-gribble-as-remembered-by-publisher-michael-heyward.

---. "Word wise, book poor." *The Age*, 8 Sept. 2007, https://www.theage.com.au/entertainment/books/word-wise-book-poor-20070908-ge5rop.html.

Lerner, Ben. "Unheard Melodies: On Helen Garner's 'The Children's Bach.'" *The New Yorker*, 23 Oct. 2018, https://www.newyorker.com/books/second-read/unheard-melodies-on-helen-garners-the-childrens-bach.

McPhee, Hilary. *Other People's Words*. Picador, 2001.

---. Personal Interview. 18 August, 26 August 2020.

---. "Survival Struggles." *Meanjin*, vol. 63, no. 1, 2004, pp. 119-125.

McPhee, Hilary and Diana Gribble. Business Plans, 1988-1991, 1999.0048, Box 80, McPhee Gribble Pty Ltd., the University of Melbourne Archives.

Morrison, Ian. “The History of the Book in Australia.” *The Oxford Companion to the Book*, edited by Michael F. Suarez, S.J. and H.R. Woudhuysen, Oxford UP, 2010.

Mullins, Patrick. *The Trials of Portnoy: How Penguin Brought Down Australia’s Censorship System*. Scribe, 2020.

Munro, Craig. “Editors at Large.” *Meanjin*, vol. 61, no. 3, 2002.

---. *Under Cover: Adventures in the Art of Editing*. Scribe, 2015.

Phillips, A. A. “The Cultural Cringe.” *Meanjin Quarterly*, Summer 1950, https://meanjin.com.au/essays/the-cultural-cringe-by-a-a-phillips/.

Tomasetti, Glen. Reader’s Report on *Monkey Grip*, 1999.0048, Box 20, McPhee Gribble Pty Ltd., 1975-1990, the University of Melbourne Archives.

---. *Thoroughly Decent People: A Folktale*. McPhee Gribble, 1976.

Wood, Charlotte. Wood, Charlotte. “Helen Garner's Monkey Grip makes me examine who I am.” *The Guardian*, 24 Oct. 2018, https://www.theguardian.com/books/2018/oct/25/helen-garners-monkey-grip-makes-me-examine-who-i-am

Advani, Rukun. Personal Interview. 17 June 2021.

Antony, Navin J. "Interpreter of Maladies." *The Week*, 13 Sept. 2020, https://www.theweek.in/theweek/leisure/2020/09/04/interpreter-of-maladies.html.

Bourdieu, Pierre. *The Rules of Art: Genesis and Structure of the Literary Field*. Translated by Susan Emanuel. Stanford UP, 1996

Buford, Bill. "Declarations of Independence: Why are there suddenly so many Indian novelists?" *The New Yorker*, 23 Jun. 1997, pp. 6-8.

Casanova, Pascale. *The World Republic of Letters*. Translated by M.B. DeBevoise, Harvard UP, 2004.

Chopra, Krishan. "How almost all of today's English language publishers began in a small office in Delhi's Nehru Place." *Scroll.in*, 2 Nov. 2019, https://scroll.in/article/942238/how-almost-all-of-todays-english-language-publishers-began-in-a-small-office-in-delhis-nehru-place.

Clark, Alex. "Who are you looking at?" *The Guardian*, 7 Apr. 1999, https://www.theguardian.com/theguardian/1999/apr/07/features11.g26

Davidar, David. *The House of Blue Mangoes*. HarperCollins, 2002.

---. Personal Interview. 27 July, 16 October, 21 November 2020.

Desai, Anita. "Sitting Pretty." *New York Review of Books*, 27 May 1993, https://www.nybooks.com/articles/1993/05/27/sitting-pretty/.

Gupta, Abhijit. "The History of the Book in the Indian Subcontinent." *The Oxford Companion to the Book*, edited by Michael F. Suarez, S.J. and H.R. Woudhuysen, Oxford UP, 2010.

Hitchens, Christopher. “A Suitable Sensation.” *Vanity Fair*, Jun. 1993, https://archive.vanityfair.com/article/1993/6/a-suitable-sensation.

Iyer, Pico. “India Day by Day.” *Times Literary Supplement*, 19 Mar. 1993, p. 20.

Karten, Terry. Personal Interview. 1 Feb. 2021.

Kent, Mohini. “Suitable Text.” *Indian Express*, 21 Feb. 1993.

Lal, Nandini. “'You Must Have The In-Built Shit-Detector',” *Outlook*, 8 May 2002, https://www.outlookindia.com/website/story/you-must-have-the-in-built-shit-detector/215491.

Lanchester, John. “Indian Summa.” *London Review of Books*, vol. 15, no. 8, 22 Apr. 1993, https://www.lrb.co.uk/the-paper/v15/n08/john-lanchester/indian-summa.

Lister, David. “A suitable case for prize treatment: David Lister talks to Vikram Seth, whose award-winning novel Lord Gowrie thought too long to succeed,” *The Independent*, 9 Mar. 1994, https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/suitable-case-prize-treatment-david-lister-talks-vikram-seth-whose-award-winning-novel-lord-gowrie-thought-too-long-succeed-1427864.html.

Malhotra, Dina N. “The Panorama of Indian Book Publishing.” *60 Years of Book Publishing in India, 1947-2007*, edited by Dina N. Malhotra, Federation of Indian Publishers, 2007, pp. 10-24.

McKernan, Maggie. Personal Interview. 8 December 2020.

Mishra, Pankaj. “Little Inkling: Writing in English, an Indian elite discovers nothing.” *Outlook*, 15 Nov. 1999, https://magazine.outlookindia.com/story/little-inkling/208414.

---. “A Spirit of Their Own.” *New York Review of Books*, 20 May 1999, https://www.nybooks.com/articles/1999/05/20/a-spirit-of-their-own/.

Mohapatra, Himanshu S. and Sawrna Renue Mohapatra. "A Mapping Function Gone Awry: Appraising the Realistic Aesthetic of Vikram Seth's *A Suitable Boy*." *Indian English Novel in the Nineties*, edited by Sheobhushan Shukla and Anu Shukla, Sarup & Sons, 2002, pp. 39-49.

Mukherjee, Meenakshi. *The Perishable Empire: Essays on Indian Writing in English*. Oxford UP, 2000.

Narayanan, Pavithra. *What Are You Reading? The World Market and Indian Literary Production*. Routledge, 2012.

Nolen, Stephanie. "A Canadian scandal behind him, David Davidar surges in India." *The Globe and Mail*, 20 Aug. 2011, https://www.theglobeandmail.com/arts/books-and-media/a-canadian-scandal-behind-him-david-davidar-surges-in-india/article591099/.

"'Obsession kept me going': Writer Vikram Seth on 25 years of *A Suitable Boy*." *Hindustan Times*, 22 Oct. 2018, https://www.hindustantimes.com/books/what-kept-me-going-was-obsession/story-y2rTlzLUZBUmIJX22CmxiP.html.

Paranjape, Makarand. "A Conversation with Vikram Seth: Mixed Beasts and Cultural Products," *Indian Review of Books*, 16 Mar. - 15 Apr. 1993, pp. 20-24.

Parks, Tim. "Sentimental Education." *New York Review of Books*, 15 Jul. 1999, https://www.nybooks.com/articles/1999/07/15/sentimental-education/.

"Publisher's Note." *The Fiction Collection 1: Twenty Years of Penguin India*. Penguin India, 2007, pp. xi-xii.

Ram, Susan. "Disappointing Work." *Frontline*, 9 Apr. 1993, pp. 110-12.

Rocco, Fiammetta. "How We Met: Vikram Seth and Giles Gordon." *The Independent*, 4 Apr. 1993, https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/how-we-met-vikram-seth-and-giles-gordon-1453217.html.

Roy, Arundhati. *The God of Small Things*. Random House, 1997.

Rushdie, Salman. "'Commonwealth Literature' Does Not Exist." *Imaginary Homelands: Essays and Criticism, 1981-1991*. Granta, 1991, pp. 61-70.

Sadana, Rashmi. *English Heart, Hindi Heartland: The Political Life of Literature in India*. University of California Press, 2012.

---. "A Suitable Text for a Vegetarian Audience: Questions of Authenticity and the Politics of Translation." *Public Culture*, vol. 19, no. 2, 2007, pp. 307-328.

Seth, Vikram. *The Golden Gate*. Faber, 1986.

---. *Koi Achcha-Sa Ladka*. Translated by Gopal Gandhi, Vani Prakashan, 1998.

---. "Divali." *Mappings*. Writers Workshop, 1980, pp. 74-82.

---. "People Are Not Fools." *Outlook*, 26 Jan. 2012, https://www.outlookindia.com/website/story/people-are-not-fools/279743

---. *The Rivered Earth*. Hamish Hamilton, 2011.

---. *A Suitable Boy*. Harper Perennial, 2005.

---. *Three Chinese Poets: Translations of Poems by Wang Wei, Li Bai, and Du Fu*. Harper Perennial, 1992.

Singh, Tejeshwar. "English: The Link-Language in India and Abroad." In "The Panorama of Indian Book Publishing." *60 Years of Book Publishing in India, 1947-2007*, edited by Dina N. Malhotra, Federation of Indian Publishers, 2007, pp. 49-58.

Streitfeld, David. "Roddy Doyle Wins U.K.'s Booker Prize." *Washington Post*, 27 Oct. 1993, https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/lifestyle/1993/10/27/roddy-doyle-wins-uks-

booker-prize/177c7e35-0af8-44a4-82c9-5e5e72593e9d/.

Tejpal, Tarun. "Book review: Vikram Seth's 'A Suitable Boy.'" *India Today,* 15 Mar. 1993, https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/lifestyle/1993/10/27/roddy-doyle-wins-uks-booker-prize/177c7e35-0af8-44a4-82c9-5e5e72593e9d/.

Trewin, Ion. "Author's Lives (12 of 12)." British Library Sounds, https://sounds.bl.uk/Oral-history/Authors/021M-C1276X0030XX-0012V0.

Trivedi, Harish. "Translation as Recovery: A Suitable Boy as Koi Achcha-Sa Ladaka." *The Book Review*, vol. 22, no. 9, 1998, pp. 30-31.

Xueqin, Cao. *The Story of the Stone*. Translated by David Hawkes, Penguin, 1973.

Addison, Joseph. "*Spectator* no. 470." *The Spectator: A New Edition*, edited by Henry Morley, London, Routledge and Sons, 1891.

Belasco, Susan. "The Cultural Work of National Magazines." *A History of the Book in America, Volume 3: The Industrial Book, 1840-1880*, edited by Scott E. Casper, Jeffrey D. Groves, Stephen W. Nissenbaum, & Michael Winship, University of North Carolina Press, in Association with the American Antiquarian Society, 2007, pp. 258-70.

Berg, A. Scott. *Max Perkins: Editor of Genius*. Dutton, 1978.

Calasso, Roberto. *The Art of Publishing*. Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2015.

Cohen, B. R. "Public Thinker: Jill Lepore on the Challenge of Explaining Things." *Public Books*, 24 Apr. 2017, https://www.publicbooks.org/public-thinker-jill-lepore-on-the-challenge-of-explaining-things/.

Darnton, Robert. "What Is the History of Books?" *Daedalus*, vol. 111, no. 3, pp. 65-83.

"editor, *n.*" *OED Online*, Oxford University Press, March 2022, www.oed.com/view/Entry/59553.

"Editor, *n.s.*" *A Dictionary of the English Language*, by Samuel Johnson, London, printed by W. Strahan, 1755.

Eaves, Duncan and Ben Kimpel. *Samuel Richardson: A Biography*. Clarendon Press, 1971.

Escarpit, Robert. *Sociology of Literature*. Translated by Ernest Pick, Lake Erie College Press, 1965.

Feather, John. *A History of British Publishing*. 2nd ed., Routledge, 2006.

Field, Leslie. "Preface." *The Autobiography of an American Novelist*. By Thomas Wolfe, edited

by Leslie Field, Harvard UP, 1983, pp. vii-xi.

Flanery, Patrick Denman. "literary agent." *The Oxford Companion to the Book*, edited Michael F. Suarez, S.J. and H.R. Woudhuysen, Oxford UP, 2010.

Foucault, Michel. "What Is an Author?" *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice: Selected Essays and Interviews*. Translated by Donald F. Bouchard and Sherry Simon, edited by Donald F. Bouchard, Cornell UP, 1977, pp. 113-138.

Goldmann, Lucien. *Towards a Sociology of the Novel*. Translated by Alan Sheridan, Tavistock Publications, 1975.

Gorra, Michael. *Portrait of a Novel: Henry James and the Making of an American Masterpiece*. Liveright, 2012.

Gottlieb, Robert. "The Art of Editing No. 1." *The Paris Review*, no. 132, Fall 1994, https://www.theparisreview.org/interviews/1760/the-art-of-editing-no-1-robert-gottlieb.

---. *Avid Reader: A Life*. Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2016.

Greenberg, Susan L. *A Poetics of Editing*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2018.

James, Henry. *The Letters of Henry James, Volume II*, edited by Percy Lubbock, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1920.

James, Henry and William Dean Howells. *Letters, Fictions, Lives: Henry James and William \ Dean Howells*, edited by Michael Anesko, Oxford UP, 1997.

Howells, William Dean. "Reflections of an Atlantic Editorship." *The Atlantic Monthly*, November 1907, https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/1907/11/recollections-of-an-atlantic-editorship/304475/.

Joline, Adrian H. *A Famous Reviewer*. New York, 1910.

Laclos, Choderlos de. *Les Liaisons dangereuses*. Dublin, printed by Luc White, 1784.

---. *Les Liaisons Dangereuses*. Translated by P.W. K. Stone, Penguin, 1961.

Lehmann-Haupt, Hellmut in collaboration with Lawrence C. Wroth and Rollo G. Silver. *The Book in America: A History of the Making and Selling of Books in the United States*. 2nd ed., Bowker, 1952.

Luey, Beth. "Modernity and Print III: The United States 1890-1970." *A Companion to the History of the Book,* edited by Simon Eliot and Jonathan Rose, Blackwell Pub., 2007, pp. 368-80.

Lyons, Martyn. *Books: A Living History*. Los Angeles, J. Paul Getty Museum, 2011.

"magazine, n." *OED Online*, Oxford University Press, June 2022, www.oed.com/view/Entry/112144.

McGann, Jerome J. "The Socialization of Texts." *The Book History Reader*, edited by David Finkelstein and Alistair McCleery, Routledge, 2002, pp. 39-46.

---. *The Textual Condition*. Princeton UP, 1991.

McGurl, Mark. *The Program Era: Postwar Fiction and the Rise of Creative Writing*. Harvard UP, 2009.

McKenzie, D. F. *Bibliography and the Sociology of Texts*. Cambridge UP, 1999.

Moore, Marianne. "Comment." *The Dial*, no. 82, May 1927, pp. 449-50.

Patten, Robert L. and David Finkelstein. "Editing *Blackwood's*; or, What Do Editors Do?" *Print Culture and the Blackwood Tradition, 1805-1930,* edited by David Finkelstein, University of Toronto Press, 2006, pp. 146-83.

Perkins, Maxwell E. *Editor to Author: The Letters of Maxwell E. Perkins*, edited by John Hall Wheelock, Scribner, 1950.

Pound, Ezra. "Small Magazines." *The English Journal*, no. 9, Nov. 1930, pp. 689-704.

"Publishing." *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. 11th ed., 1911, Wikisource, https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/1911_Encyclop%C3%A6dia_Britannica/Encyclopaedia

Radway, Janice. *A Feeling for Books: The Book-of-the-Month Club, Literary Taste and Middle-Class Desire*. University of North Carolina Press, 1997.

Robinson, James Harvey and Henry Winchester Rolfe. *Petrarch: The First Modern Scholar and Man of Letters*. G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1914.

Rose, Jonathan. "Modernity and Print I: Britain 1890-1970." *A Companion to the History of the Book*, edited by Simon Eliot and Jonathan Rose, Blackwell Pub., 2007, pp. 341-53.

Rosen, Jeremy. "Conglomerate but not Homogenized." *American Literary History*, vol. 33, no. 2, Summer 2021, pp. 416-431.

---. "Everywhere at Once and Nowhere Specific: The Generic Sites of the Contemporary Global Novel," *ASAP/Journal*, vol. 2, no. 3, 2017, pp. 627–52.

---. "The Institutional Turn." *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Literary Theory*, edited by John Frow, Oxford UP, 2022.

Sedgwick, Ellery. *The Atlantic Monthly, 1857-1909: Yankee Humanism at High Tide and Ebb*. University of Massachusetts Press, 1994.

Simon, Daniel. "editor, trade." *The Oxford Companion to the Book*, edited by Michael F. Suarez, S.J. and H.R. Woudhuysen, Oxford UP, 2010.

Stillinger, Jack. *Multiple Authorship and the Myth of Solitary Genius*. Oxford UP, 1991.

Sutherland, John. *Victorian Novelists and Publishers*. London, Athlone Press, 1976.

Tebbel, John. *Between Covers: The Rise and Transformation of Book Publishing in America*. Oxford UP, 1987.

Tuttleton, James W. "A Note on the Text." *The American*, by Henry James, edited by James W. Tuttleton, W.W. Norton & Co., 1978, pp. 311-15.

Unwin, Philip Soundy, George Unwin, and David H. Tucker. "History of publishing." *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 13 Mar. 2019, https://www.britannica.com/topic/publishing.

Webster, Noah. *An American Dictionary of the English Language*. New York, printed by S. Converse, 1828.

Whibley, Charles. "A Retrospect." *Blackwood's Magazine*, Vol. CCI. New York, Leonard Scott Publication Co., 1917, pp. 433-46.

Wiener. Joel H. "Introduction." *Innovators and Preachers: The Role of the Editor in Victorian England*, edited by Joel H. Wiener, Greenwood Press, 1985, pp. xi-xix.

Winship, Michael. "Publishing in America: Needs and Opportunities for Research." *Needs and Opportunities in the History of the Book: America, 1639–1876*, edited by David D. Hall & John B. Hench, American Antiquarian Society, 1987, pp. 61-102.

Wolfe, Thomas. *The Autobiography of an American Novelist*, edited by Leslie Field, Harvard UP, 1983.